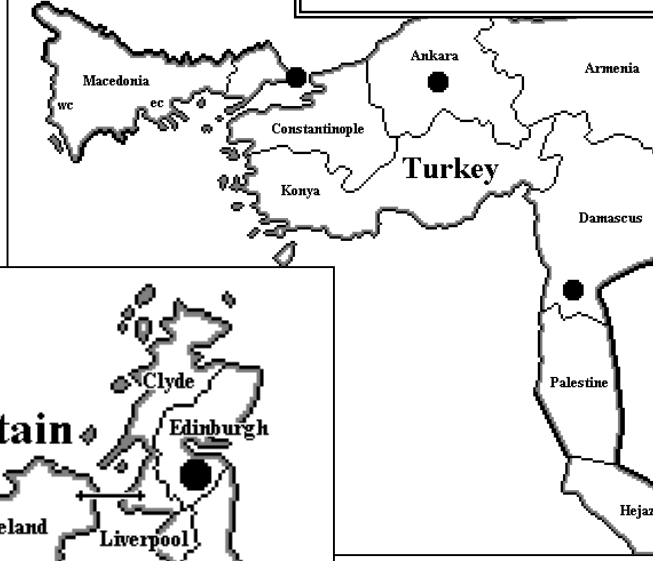




GAMERS' GUIDE TO 1900
by B.M. POWELL



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1900 was made possible by the contributions of a great number of people. It seems appropriate at this time to thank them. I'll start with all of the pioneers who helped me get **1900** off of the drawing board. In particular, I want to mention Tim Frankovich, Eric Greneoux, Bob Hannon, and Eric Scheid. Their encouragement and/or contributions to the overall game design were invaluable. Next, I want to acknowledge all of the people who helped me "fine-tune" the variant and improve it in several areas. I am particularly indebted to Charles Feaux de la Croix, Jerry Fest, and Aki Halme in this regard. I especially want to express my appreciation for the support and assistance that I received from Manus Hand, Scott Morris, and Steve Reul. I am certain **1900** would never have made it to where it is now without them. Of course, I would be seriously remiss if I failed to thank all of the folks who have played **1900** since I introduced the variant. I hope they found the experience to be an enjoyable one. Lastly, I want to thank Allan B. Calhamer for inventing the wonderful game of **Diplomacy** in the first place.

If you have any questions or comments on what I've included here in the *Gamers' Guide*, please contact me at VonPowell@aol.com. I'd be delighted to hear from you.

FORWARD

When I first read about **1900**, I was not all that interested in variants. I reasoned that **Diplomacy** was the perfect game and that it did not need any alteration. I saw that Baron Powell had put a lot of time into his articles in *Diplomacy World* and he had some interesting things to say, but the question had to be asked: what could **1900** offer us that had not been offered to the blood lust of Dip players before? As it turned out, quite a bit.

I consider myself a student of **Diplomacy**. I have looked at the various openings, studied the stalemate lines, and averaged out what situation gives me the best chance of winning. In his creation of **1900**, Baron has turned the **Diplomacy** clock back to its origins and wiped the slate clean. The mystery and charm of **Diplomacy** are there and more. The stated goal of **1900** is to create better play balance and still rely on historical accuracy. It is too early to know if Baron has achieved this, but one thing he has been able to do, in no uncertain terms, is create a variant that is by far the most interesting one I have ever played. Believe me, I have played a lot of variants, especially since I took over as Variant Editor of the new incarnation of *Diplomacy World*.

In the world of **1900**, we have the classic game of **Diplomacy** with a brand new board that is very similar to the original, yet quite different. Austria-Hungary starts with only armies. Britain is master of the seas, but is put into some interesting situations in the Mediterranean that make it necessary to deal urgently with Italy and Turkey. Germany is given its historical due as the strongest country in Europe. Switzerland is no longer a black hole on the map. Next we must look at the play of the game once the countries are put into this new **Diplomacy** universe. The game is exciting because of the new interaction and the new possibilities that exist. The tapestry is much more tightly woven. If you want to watch and play the same old Eastern and Western blocks, you don't need **1900**. In this game anything goes. How many times can you order vanilla ice cream? Try some rocky road for a change.

If you bother to read Baron's articles, you will see that he has studied the map in great detail. This is not a variant that has been thrown together and it is not your father's **Diplomacy** game. Baron has thought out how every change will affect the different countries. He has considered how to make all the countries engage in earnest negotiation with each other. All you have to do to see this is to notice that Britain and Turkey are in direct contact from the first move. In regular **Diplomacy**, England and Turkey would only exchange pleasantries to each other in the opening. I believe Baron's map is much more dynamic.

I like to think of **1900** as playing **Diplomacy** with the wonder I had upon learning the original game. The possibilities are endless. The game need not bog down in a race to the stalemate line. A successful player must rely on his wits and his negotiating style. Most importantly, he must keep his eyes on the entire board. If Baron is correct in his efforts, everyone has a more equal chance of success.

It is my hope that we play enough **1900** games to collect that data. So if you dare, take the long way around South Africa and attack Turkey with me! This is why we began playing the game to begin with. No dice, no luck, just seven men and the strength of their words. **1900** is taking us to the next level.

Scott Morris
December 2000

Chapter 1: ABOUT 1900

Welcome to **1900**! **1900** is my attempt to take our favorite game, conventional **Diplomacy** (hereafter simply **Diplomacy**), and make it better. To help new players like you transition from **Diplomacy** to **1900**, I've put this *Gamers' Guide to 1900* together. The *Gamers' Guide* evolved from a series of articles I originally wrote for Scott Morris's 'zine *The Flat Earth Society*. These articles discussed how **1900** came into existence and provided a broad overview of how **1900** differed from **Diplomacy**. They also described in detail how the changes between **Diplomacy** and **1900** affected the play of the seven Great Powers. Then, as now, my ultimate goal was to get people interested in this variant so that they would contact me (at VonPowell@aol.com) and ask to play. If you do ever give **1900** a try, I think you'll agree that it was well worth your time. In fact, I expect you'll be so impressed with **1900** that you may have a tough time going back to **Diplomacy**!



So where to start? I guess the seed for **1900** was planted after I read an article by Stephen Agar in issue #80 of *Diplomacy World*. The article was entitled "New Improved Diplomacy?" and it suggested a number of ideas to improve the basic game. I thought some of Stephen's ideas were very good.

Others...hmmm...let's be kind and say that they didn't appeal to me much. I also wasn't entirely convinced that Stephen's suggestions were sufficient to make the game "better," which was his stated goal. What would make the game better? I thought that any solutions worth considering needed to address three items: play balance, player interaction, and historical accuracy.

Play Balance. **Diplomacy** does not have a level playing field. Consider the following numbers:

GREAT POWER	GAMES	POINTS	GPR	SOLO	2-WAY	3-WAY	4-WAY	5-WAY	6-WAY	7-WAY	LOSS
AUSTRIA-HUNGARY	3723	82821	22.28	284	126	179	159	56	15	5	2899
ENGLAND	3723	98454	26.48	300	183	280	194	54	17	5	2690
FRANCE	3723	110418	29.70	364	176	285	200	68	17	5	2608
GERMANY	3723	95019	25.56	327	156	214	139	69	18	5	2795
ITALY	3723	70896	19.07	221	124	172	150	66	17	5	2968
RUSSIA	3723	112800	30.34	449	140	185	126	60	15	5	2743
TURKEY	3723	98832	26.58	329	149	275	160	57	15	5	2733

as of 29 December 2002

Game results come from three sources: an excellent study of 3485 games that appeared in issue #81 of *Diplomacy World* ("The Strongest Country on the Diplomacy Map" by Thaddeus Black), my records of 223 games played on America Online, and 15 games played in Tim Richardson's *The Old Republic*. The GPR, short for Great Power Rating, is based on a simple formula. Basically, I divide 180 points by the number of Great Powers that participated in a solo or draw. Simply surviving does not earn a Great Power any points. The GPR is the number of points each Great Power earned divided by the number of games played.

If **Diplomacy** was perfectly balanced, the GPR for each Great Power would be approximately 25.71 (i.e., 180 divided by 7). While we should expect some degree of variation from this figure due to simple randomness, the numbers clearly show that some Great Powers are more equal than others are. France and Russia are heads and shoulders above the pack, while Austria-Hungary and Italy are scraping the proverbial barrel bottom. It's true that if we wanted total equality between positions we would play Steve Koehler's **Migraine** variant. The "personality" each Great Power has is one of the charms of **Diplomacy**. Even so, I couldn't help but believe that each of the Great Powers could be given a more equal chance of doing well without sacrificing those aspects of **Diplomacy** that make it appealing. In fact, as I'll discuss shortly, I believed I could enhance the quiriness of each Great Power along historical lines while leveling the playing field at the same time.

Player Interaction. While the good diplomat ensures he contacts all of the other players on a regular basis, the truth is that certain Great Powers demand more attention than others do when the game starts. The typical Prime Minister is likely to write at length to the President and Kaiser, but odds are that his missives to the Archduke and Sultan will tend to be shorter and less substantive. Why? Because there is really little that Austria-Hungary and Turkey can do for England when the game begins. If this situation could be changed so that it truly is in the best interests of each Great Power to negotiate in earnest with all of the other Great Powers, something good would be accomplished.

Historical Accuracy. This one may need some explaining. I firmly believe that a game based on historical events should create situations where the historical outcomes can occur, but don't necessarily have to occur. **Diplomacy** does attempt, in a satisfyingly abstract way, to replicate the "Balance of Power" that existed in Europe at the start of WWI. Some things are done, however, that remove the "feel" of the period. As I saw it, the challenge was to give the variant some historical flavor without adding complexity (i.e., minimize new or special rules) or, most importantly, destroying the delicate balance of play as mentioned above.

I was inspired enough by these thoughts to write a letter to Douglas Kent, then the editor of Diplomacy World. This letter discussed a variant proposal that combined my own ideas with those ideas from Stephen Agar's article that I liked. Most significantly, my proposal was based on a map of Europe at the turn of the century. After all, **Diplomacy** is supposed to start in 1901, but the map is of Europe around 1913. Douglas, ever desperate for material, turned my letter into a full-fledged article ("Improving New Improved Diplomacy") and printed it in issue #81 of Diplomacy World.

I figured that was pretty much the end of it. I was quite surprised then when I received a letter from Steve Reul saying that he thought the variant had merit and suggesting that we actually playtest it. If I would serve as Gamemaster, he would round up the players. I responded to this proposal with an enthusiastic yes and the ball started rolling.

I soon found out how much work was needed to turn a rough proposal into a game that could be played over the Internet. A suitable map had to be drawn, variant rules had to be finalized, and house rules had to be determined. As soon as I set out to do these things, I realized my variant needed a name. Since the map was of Europe at the turn of the century, I decided on **1900**. Pretty clever, don't you think? Each of my tasks took some time, but the most effort by far was invested in the map. When I finished everything and was ready to start the playtest, I'll admit I was quite pleased with the various products. All in all, I thought I had a pretty decent variant.

Sadly, reality intruded on my visions of grandeur. Playtesting the original concept showed me that not all of my "brilliant" innovations were particularly good. In fact, a few were spectacularly bad such as making Iceland a supply center (SC). The truth is that Britain, ably played by Scott Morris, won the first playtest in a rout of epic proportions. I had no recourse but to go back to the drawing board. A second playtest was soon organized and the revised variant was put through its paces. This time the results were much more encouraging. Only one deficiency involving the boundaries of Vienna and Galicia was discovered and it was easily fixed. Over the next six games, the map and rules underwent a few more tweaks that primarily impacted on Turkey. Finally, by the ninth game (1900 000329), **1900** appeared to be ready for primetime.

The timing could not have been better. In 2001, both Manus Hand and Millis Miller contacted me. The former was interested in putting **1900** on DPJudge (<http://www.floc.net/dpjudge/>), while the latter had put **1900** on USTV (<http://www.floc.net>). The ultimate success of these ventures meant that **1900** was now available to any **Diplomacy** player with access to the Internet. Naturally, this meant that many more **1900** games were started and completed than I ever could have run on my own. Over the next few years, fifty-four **1900** games were started using the same map (V2.6.1.) and set of rules. These games gave me the opportunity to observe how the various Great Powers performed. After forty of those fifty-four games had been completed, with another seven being aborted before a conclusion was reached, I decided to make another rule change involving Russia that was intended to enhance play balance. I also made a cosmetic change to the map that affected Germany. Now, both the map (V2.6.2.) and rules appear locked in stone...at least for the time being!

Though I'm hardly an unbiased observer, I can truthfully say that I've generally been satisfied with how **1900** plays. Still, it's far too soon and too few games have been played for me to categorically state that all of **Diplomacy's** ills, real or imagined, have been fixed. I am optimistic, though, that **1900** has what it takes to be an interesting and fun game to play.

So what makes **1900** different from **Diplomacy**? The changes can be broken down into three categories: map changes, unit changes, and rule changes. I'll briefly discuss each of these in turn.

MAP CHANGES

As I alluded to earlier, something that has always bothered me about **Diplomacy** is the fact that the game begins in 1901, but the map is of Europe after 1912. I'm sure each of you has lost some sleep over this transgression as well. So much for historical accuracy! I thought using a map of Europe at the turn of the century would be a significant step towards correcting this "deficiency." I also believed a revised map could help establish the conditions for a more balanced game.

I immediately had a tough decision to make. If my map was to be historically accurate, several potentially significant map changes were required. This was a scary prospect for two reasons. First, I was concerned that major alterations might make **1900** seem too alien to players comfortable with the familiar **Diplomacy** map. This, in turn, might discourage some players from giving **1900** a try. Second and perhaps more important, I was worried that even minor changes to **Diplomacy's** boundaries might result in unforeseen ramifications that would undermine some of my basic assumptions on how the Great Powers interacted. Experiences with Turkey, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8, seemed to confirm that this worry was a valid one. In the end, I decided to keep the internal boundaries of the Great Powers largely the same as they are on the **Diplomacy** map and to only introduce major changes where absolutely necessary (i.e., where play balance issues were involved). Though I sometimes wish I had been more willing to draw the map "from scratch," when all is said and done I can truly say that I'm pleased with the finished product.

The version of the map that appears on page 5, V2.6.2., was my fifth attempt at getting it right. I'll discuss the various map changes that occurred along the way when I get to the Great Powers themselves. In the meantime, if you look carefully at that the map, you'll notice the following:

- o There are now thirty-nine SCs. The Great Powers control twenty-five at game-start: Britain, France, Germany, and Russia have four SCs each and Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Turkey have three SCs each. The remaining fourteen SCs are neutral at game-start. Note that only eighteen SCs are needed to win, just as in **Diplomacy**. The motive behind this was to encourage solo victories and preclude stalemates.
- o Morocco is separated from North Africa and is a neutral SC. This reflects the fact that Morocco was independent in 1900 and also a tremendous source of friction between the Great Powers.
- o What's left of North Africa is split into two spaces: Algeria and Southern Algeria. Algeria is a French SC. This represents France's dominant presence in the area.
- o The Tyrrhenian Sea touches Algeria, where it doesn't touch North Africa in **Diplomacy**. This makes it easier for Italy to stake a claim on French territory.
- o Tunisia is no longer a SC. It is now simply a buffer between two SCs, French Algeria and neutral Tripolitania.
- o Libya appears on the map and is represented by two spaces: Tripolitania, a neutral SC, and Cyrenaica, which serves as a buffer between Tripolitania and British Egypt. Though Turkey controlled Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1900, the fact that the former is a neutral SC rather than Turkish reflects the Ottoman Empire's increasingly loose hold on the area.
- o Egypt appears on the map and is a British SC. The British undeniably felt Egypt was a key territory in their vast empire. Never mind that the Turks felt Egypt belonged to them. Having a British SC within arms reach of Turkish territory dramatically increases the need for British, and therefore French and German, interaction with not only Turkey, but also Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Russia.
- o Syria has been renamed Damascus and is a Turkish SC. At the same time, Smyrna has been renamed Konya and is no longer a Turkish SC. This flip-flop makes it more difficult for Turkey to establish a dominant position in the southeast corner of the map.
- o Two additional Turkish spaces appear on the map, Palestine and Hejaz. Palestine's primary purpose is to serve as a buffer between Turkish Damascus and British Egypt.
- o A new neutral space, Arabia, is sandwiched in between Damascus, Palestine, and Hejaz.
- o Turkey controls a large territory in the Balkans called Macedonia. Macedonia has two coasts, east and west, and touches no less than eight other spaces. Albania, which came into existence in 1912 after the Balkan Wars, no longer exists.

- o Moscow is split into two spaces: Moscow and Siberia. This division frustrates the formation of stalemate lines.
- o Trieste is split into two spaces: Trieste and Bosnia. In 1900, Bosnia was under Austro-Hungarian administration, but was not technically a part of the Dual Monarchy. The Dual Monarchy's annexation of nominally Turkish Bosnia in 1908 nearly resulted in WWI erupting six years early.
- o Vienna no longer touches Galicia. Instead, Budapest now touches Bohemia. Not only is this geographically correct, just look at a map of the Czech Republic today, it also prevents a particularly nasty tactic that Austria-Hungary and Germany could use against Russia given the new unit at-start positions discussed shortly.
- o Venice is no longer a SC. This diffuses the tension between **Diplomacy's** weak sisters, Austria-Hungary and Italy. Venice is also renamed Venetia.
- o A new space, Milan, is an Italian SC.
- o Tuscany no longer exists. Rome now borders the Gulf of Lyon, Piedmont, and Milan. This helps Italy reinforce its northern position.
- o A Gibraltar space is added. Gibraltar divides the south coast of Spain in two (i.e., Spain now has three coasts: north, east, and west). Gibraltar is a sea space for convoy purposes, but an army can move there from either Morocco or Spain, and prevent a fleet from entering.
- o Ruhr is renamed Cologne and is a German SC. This additional SC makes the Reich more formidable and allows it to serve as more of a counterweight to **Diplomacy's** Big Boys, France and Russia. From a historical perspective, this change makes perfect sense. **Diplomacy's** Germany is, in my mind, somewhat wimpy. Curiously, its record in America Online games was particularly abysmal during those 223 contests included in my study. Now Germany has some teeth.
- o A new space, Alsace, separates French Burgundy from German Cologne and Munich. This prevents the Kaiser from taking advantage of the new German unit at-start position to perpetrate evil on France during the first game-turn.
- o Holland is renamed Netherlands.
- o Switzerland is a neutral SC. This makes for some very (very!) interesting dynamics between Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, and Italy.
- o Ireland borders the Mid-Atlantic Ocean.

UNIT CHANGES

Given the map changes above, my desire to capture some of the historical feel of the period, and the critical goal of maintaining, if not improving, play balance, I felt changes to the at-start forces of some of the Great Powers needed to be made. These changes can be summed up as follows:

- o Austria-Hungary starts with an army in Trieste instead of a fleet. The Imperial and Royal Army was the glue that held the Empire together. The undernourished Austro-Hungarian Navy was little more than an afterthought. This third army greatly enhances the Dual Monarchy's flexibility and options.
- o Britain starts with four units: F London, F Edinburgh, F Gibraltar, and F Egypt. Note that Liverpool is still a SC, but the army that starts there in **Diplomacy** is gone. At the same time, note that Gibraltar is not a SC. Britain was the premier sea power at the turn of the century, but its puny army was almost embarrassing for a nation of Britain's stature. The vaunted, and diminutive, British Expeditionary Force wasn't formed until just before WWI.
- o France starts with four units: A Paris, F Brest, A Marseilles, and A Algeria. The last unit reflects the military presence France maintained in its African territories. The strong French garrison was no doubt a prudent deterrent given Italian ambitions to establish an African empire that the Romans themselves would have been proud of.
- o Germany starts with four units: A Berlin, A Cologne, F Kiel, and A Munich. The supremacy of the German army was acknowledged, grudgingly, by all of the Great Powers. In **Diplomacy**, however, Germany seems pathetically weak when compared to the actual colossus that was the Second Reich. The additional army gives the Kaiser real options to conduct a two-front war if necessary or desired.

- o The Italian army that started in Venice now starts in Milan.
- o The Turkish army that started in Smyrna now starts in Damascus.

RULE CHANGES

As I said earlier, I did not want to make dramatic changes to **Diplomacy's** basic rules. With the few exceptions discussed below, the rules for **Diplomacy** apply to **1900** as well. In all but two cases, the rule changes represent little more than minor revisions to account for the new map. The two major exceptions are the Suez Canal Rules and the Russian Steamroller Rule. The Suez Canal Rules (hereafter SCR) are a series of rules governing movement and combat between the Mid-Atlantic Ocean space and the Egypt/Hejaz spaces. The SCR serve to give **1900** a distinct character primarily because they dramatically increase the need for all of the Great Powers to talk to each other from the beginning of the game, an end state I definitely hoped to achieve. The Russian Steamroller Rule (hereafter simply Steamroller) was a late addition to the variant rules that I felt was necessary to enhance play balance. I'll discuss the reasons why I implemented the Steamroller in great detail when I talk about Russia in Chapter 7. For now suffice it to say that the Steamroller's purpose is to boost Russia's offensive and defensive prospects after repeated game play showed that Russia was not achieving the results that had been anticipated.

The minor rule changes go as follows:

- o Victory conditions have not changed. If a Great Power gains control of eighteen SCs, the game ends and the player controlling that Great Power is declared the winner. With thirty-nine SCs, though, it is now possible for two Great Powers to get eighteen SCs on the same game-turn. Should this happen, the player representing the Great Power with the most SCs is the winner. If the two Great Powers each control the same number of SCs, play continues until one Great Power controls at least eighteen SCs and that Great Power controls more SCs than any other Great Power.
- o Iceland, Ireland, and Switzerland are now passable.
- o Movement between Clyde and Ireland is allowed. This is true even if an enemy fleet is in the North Atlantic Ocean. A convoy is not required to move an army back and forth between Clyde and Ireland.
- o Army movement is allowed between Gibraltar and Morocco. No convoy is required in this case. Gibraltar is considered a sea space for convoy purposes.
- o Egypt and Algeria, while controlled by Britain and France respectively at game-start, are not considered home SCs. This means that Britain may not build in Egypt and France may not build in Algeria. This also explains why Egypt is not called Cairo and Algeria not called Algiers.

The SCR go like this:

- o A fleet may move back and forth between Egypt and Hejaz.
- o Movement between Egypt or Hejaz and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean is allowed. It is assumed the unit travels around the southern tip of Africa. A unit that moves in this manner does so at half strength. This means that a unit adjacent to Egypt or Hejaz succeeds in moving there if opposed only by a fleet moving from the Mid-Atlantic Ocean and a fleet adjacent to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean succeeds in moving there if opposed only by a fleet moving from Egypt or Hejaz.
- o A fleet in Egypt or Hejaz cannot support a unit holding in or moving to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. This is true even though the fleet in Egypt or Hejaz can itself move to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Likewise, a fleet in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean cannot support a unit holding in or moving to Egypt or Hejaz.
- o A fleet moving from Egypt or Hejaz to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean does not cut support being provided by a fleet already in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean unless the attack results in F Mid-Atlantic Ocean being dislodged. The opposite is equally true. A fleet moving from the Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Egypt or Hejaz does not cut support being provided by a unit already in Egypt or Hejaz unless the attack results in the unit being dislodged.

- o F Mid-Atlantic Ocean can convoy an army from or to Egypt or Hejaz. An army convoyed from Egypt or Hejaz attacks its destination space at full strength. An army convoyed to Egypt or Hejaz attacks at half strength.

- o If two units are retreating to Egypt or Hejaz, or the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, and one of them must travel around the southern tip of Africa, the unit that does not travel around southern Africa may retreat while the other unit is disbanded.

The Steamroller reflects the seemingly endless reserves of manpower that were available to the Tsar at the turn of the century. In game terms, Russia is allowed to have one additional unit while the Tsar controls at least one of the four Russian home SCs. If other Powers control of all four Russian home SCs, with control being determined after the Fall retreats, the ability to maintain an additional unit is lost and Russia may only field a number of units equal to the number of SCs it actually controls. Should Russia regain a home SC, it would again be eligible to field an additional unit, though this unit would need to be built in an open home SC as per normal build rules. Note that the additional unit does not appear at the start of the game, as there is no vacant home SC to put it in.

So, there you have it. As you can see, **1900** is, at heart, just like the game of **Diplomacy** that we have all come to know and love. The map, unit, and rule changes do, however, alter the dynamics of how the Great Powers interact with each other. I'll address these new dynamics in-depth in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2: AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

I'm going to start my examination of the Great Powers in **1900** with a look at Austria-Hungary. I do so not only because it comes first alphabetically, but also because I'm an Austro-phile at heart. I don't really know why, but I've always wanted to play the "White Coats" when I had the chance. This is considered a



little odd by most gamers since Austrian armies usually fared poorly on the battlefield, particularly after the fall of Napoleon. From 1859 until the end of the Empire in 1918, the Imperial and Royal (K&K) Army suffered an almost unbroken string of defeats against the other Great Powers (unless, of course, it was facing Italians, in which case there was usually cause for celebration in Vienna).

The sorry military record, the extremely conservative leadership, the lack of colonies, and the unwieldy relationship that existed between the Austrian

and Hungarian portions of the Empire have combined to give Austria-Hungary an undeserved reputation, particularly among British historians, as a decrepit, ramshackle relic on the verge of collapse. I think such an impression is off the mark. Despite some glaring problems, and all of the European nations had glaring problems of some kind, Austria-Hungary was well governed, prosperous, strong, and stable. If it failed to compare to Germany in terms of military and economic power, all that can be said is that it was not alone.

To quote Lawrence Lafore in The Long Fuse: "Austria-Hungary was in area the second largest state in Europe. By 1914, it had grown to have a population of fifty million people, ranking third after Russia and Germany. In industrial output, it ranked fifth among the European nations; in foreign trade, fourth; in the brilliance of its intellectual and artistic achievements, second only to France. In contrast to its neighbors to the east and the south, it provided stable government, a commendable degree of civil liberty, an efficient civil service, a strong army, and unity, security, and protection for the tangled nationalities that occupied it."

So what's the point of all this? I'm glad you asked. The point is that Austria-Hungary was a Great Power, not the "Sick Man of Europe." Even if it wasn't as strong militarily or economically as the other Powers, the Dual Monarchy still had clout. In **Diplomacy**, however, Austria-Hungary is in actuality the weakling most people imagine it was. Looking at the game results shown in Chapter 1, we see that Austria-Hungary performs well below average in the number solos and draws attained (284 versus 325 and 535 versus 616 respectively). It has also suffered far more losses than it should have on average (2899 versus 2777). Only miserable Italy has a worse overall record.

In my mind, there are several reasons for Austria-Hungary's comparatively inferior results.

First, it has a supply center (SC), Trieste, that borders directly on another Great Power's SC, Italy's Venice. No where else on the map does such a situation exist. This puts both Austria-Hungary and Italy

under tremendous pressure right from the start and ensures any relationship between the Dual Monarchy and its Italian neighbor will have a significant amount of inherent potential for conflict or what I will hereafter call "friction." I'm sure this friction contributes directly to the relatively poor showings of each nation.

Second, Austria-Hungary and Turkey do not make particularly good long-term allies. Once Russia is dispatched, the Dual Monarchy generally finds itself sitting squarely astride the Ottoman Empire's primary expansion routes. With Turkish armies moving north in the east and west in the south, Austria-Hungary best resembles a nut caught in the jaws of a giant Turkish nutcracker. While any alliance can work given enough trust and communications between the allies, Rod Walker is correct when he mentions in the original *Gamers' Guide to Diplomacy* that A/T is an uncomfortable relationship for both parties. It's no coincidence that A/T is still considered somewhat noteworthy when one actually forms in a game.

What does this mean for the Dual Monarchy? In a balanced game, an Archduke would reasonably expect to have an ally within the eastern triangle (A/R/T) at least two thirds of the time. The widely held belief that A/Ts are relatively uncommon logically implies that the other two eastern alliances, A/R and R/T, are more common. If true, and I believe perception is reality in this case even though I have no hard data to go by, both Austria-Hungary and Turkey are at a disadvantage vis-à-vis Russia over a large number of games. Each is more likely than Russia to find itself the "odd Power out" or OPO at game-start (i.e., the Power that doesn't have an ally within its triangle). As we all know from bitter experience, not having a friend when the game begins is often tantamount to early elimination.

Third, and perhaps most significant, Austria-Hungary's defensive position is decidedly inferior to those enjoyed by its eastern neighbors. While Russia and Turkey both have at least one secure flank, Austria-Hungary must look in all directions. While it's true that peace with Germany is usually easy to obtain in the early going, Austria-Hungary has to maintain constant vigilance against the possibility of aggression by Italy, Russia, and Turkey. Even if an early alliance is formed with Russia or Turkey, the fact is Austria-Hungary is much more vulnerable to a stab that threatens its core territories than Russia or Turkey is to an Austro-Hungarian invasion. Also, the Dual Monarchy is almost always vulnerable to an attack from the west while fighting its erstwhile ally in the east.

1900 attempts to address each of these shortcomings by adjusting the map and changing Austria-Hungary's at-start forces. At the same time, Archdukes are given new problems to puzzle over. What follows are brief discussions on the map and unit changes that affect Austria-Hungary directly.

To begin with, the Italian SC in Venice, now Venetia, is gone. The Italian SC has moved to a new space called Milan. Venetia is simply a buffer between Milan and Austro-Hungarian Trieste. This diffuses the tense situation with Italy significantly since an army or fleet can no longer be built in one Power's SC in the Winter and then moved directly into the other Power's SC in the Spring. Additionally, a unit that might otherwise have been forced to pull garrison duty can be used more effectively elsewhere since the controlling player knows he has a turn to react to a potential attack.

Next, new SCs in Algeria, Switzerland, and Tripolitania, and the increased vulnerability of the critical Tyrrhenian Sea space to British or French seizure all contribute to a subtle shift in Italy's orientation westward away from Austria-Hungary, at least initially. I'll discuss this shift more when I talk about Italy, but suffice it to say for now that these changes should work to make an Italian attack into Austria-Hungary less likely at game-start.

This is not to imply that an Italian opening of A Milan to Tyrolia and/or A Rome to Venetia is out of the question. In fact, as long as relations with France are cozy, Italy will be largely free to follow an irredentist policy at Austria-Hungary's expense. Archdukes must understand that they cannot afford to

ignore the Pope or take Italian neutrality at game-start for granted. Fortunately, Italian concerns about the fate of Switzerland and North Africa should make it easier for the Archduke to convince the Pope that conflict between Austria-Hungary and Italy should be avoided.

Italy's westward orientation is not all good news as far as Vienna is concerned, however. Consider:

- o Active military cooperation between Austria-Hungary and Italy as the game begins, a common occurrence in **Diplomacy**, is far less likely in **1900**. If conflict between France and Italy over Switzerland or North Africa appears imminent, Popes simply won't be willing to commit Italy to a crusade against the heathen Turks. As an aside, I should mention that military cooperation between Austria-Hungary and Italy is further frustrated by the realities of the new map. The introduction of Turkish Macedonia in the heart of the Balkans creates a barrier between the Austro-Hungarian and Italian axes of advance against the Ottoman Empire. This barrier hampers the ability of Austria-Hungary and Italy to support each other's units until the campaign is well along. I suspect that in most games the Archduke will have to be content with a non-aggression pact with his Italian neighbor.

- o Should Austria-Hungary find itself facing a R/T, there may be no Italian white knight to come to its rescue since Italy may be too heavily engaged in the west to intervene immediately. By the time the Pope does turn his gaze eastward, the Dual Monarchy's position could be so precarious that Italy opts to join in the kill by annexing its "fair share" of the Austro-Hungarian pie.

As you can see, the changes around Italy have both positive and negative repercussions for the Dual Monarchy. With Turkey the news is almost universally good.

The first thing that jumps out at us when we look at the **1900** map is that the world has been made round and "Fortress Turkey" is just a little more vulnerable. Not only does Turkey now have a legitimate southern flank, it has a southern flank with a potential enemy unit already in it, Britain's F Egypt. Worse still for the Turks, a potential enemy, most likely Britain or France, can reinforce this flank quickly through the Suez Canal if the situation is favorable. I'll address this further when I get to Britain and Turkey, but the impact is clear: should the Sultan decide to attack Austria-Hungary, he will have to look over his shoulder just like the Archduke does currently when he attacks a neighbor. I also think it's worth mentioning that having Turkey as a common neighbor gives the Archduke and Prime Minister more reasons to talk to each other than they currently have in **Diplomacy**.

The changed geography around Turkey affects Austria-Hungary in another fundamental way. The addition of the dot-rich North African coast to the game-map, the placement of Greece squarely within Turkey's sphere of influence, and the existence of buffer zones in Macedonia and the Adriatic Sea all combine to provide Turkey with an expansion route that doesn't pass dangerously close to Habsburg territories. This facilitates the formation of A/Ts, thereby enhancing Austro-Hungarian prospects coming out of the blocks.

A quick gaze to the northwest reveals another significant change. Germany is rather wimpy in **Diplomacy**, at least in my opinion. This is particularly true considering how strong Germany actually was in relation to the other Great Powers in 1914. In **1900**, Germany looks much more formidable with three armies and one fleet on hand at game-start, and lots of easy-to-get-at neutrals nearby. In my judgement, the powerful Germany of **1900**, which is more than capable of fighting on two fronts, creates a new triangle, A/G/R, that is just as important in determining the outcome in the east as is the traditional A/R/T triangle. In fact, I'd go a step further and say the east is now a quadrangle that consists of Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia, and Turkey.

Germany's ability to intervene in the east right away poses both a problem and an opportunity for the Dual Monarchy.

One problem stems from the fact that Germany may decide to use its newfound muscle to try and annex parts of the Empire. Fears that Prussia might do just that contributed to the quick resolution of the Austro-Prussian War and to Austro-Hungarian neutrality in the Franco-Prussian War. An opening move of A Munich to Tyrolia or Bohemia is likely to cause panic in Vienna. Since Germany can use A Munich in this manner and still have a reasonable expectation of getting three builds, as I'll discuss when I get to Germany, such a move represents a terrible threat to Austria-Hungary.

Even if Germany does not attack Austria-Hungary, cordial German-Russian relations might lead directly to an A/T advance into the Russian steppes being stopped dead in its tracks. This is because the Russian Steamroller Rule that is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 allows Russia to defend itself quite well from an Austro-Turkish assault, as long as there is no pressure on Russia coming from another direction. Should A/T forces get bogged down in the Russian mud, the Archduke may have some problems to address. For starters, the Sultan's loyalty may waver as he looks longingly at the Balkan SCs held by his Austro-Hungarian ally. Next, the Pope may try to take advantage of the Dual Monarchy's predicament on the Russian front to invade from the west. Certainly, the Tsar can be counted on to plant nefarious ideas in the minds of the Archduke's neighbors.

Given these potential problems, it seems clear that the Archduke should strive to convince the Kaiser that Russia is a looming menace that must be dealt with sooner rather than later. My hunch is he'll succeed most of the time. Due to the high level of friction between Germany and Russia, most Kaisers will probably conclude that Russia is a greater threat to the Reich than the Dual Monarchy is. As was the case historically, Austria-Hungary is more likely to be viewed by Berlin as a bulwark against the Slavic hordes from the east. Archdukes cannot afford to be the least bit lax, however. A Kaiser who likes to be unorthodox or who is worried about British power may find the entreaties of the Tsar quite appealing. Should Germany and Russia reach an agreement at game-start, the fortunes of the Habsburg Empire are seriously compromised.

On the plus side, Germany might be willing to send one or two of its armies rolling east right away to help Austria-Hungary against Russia. This was, incidentally, exactly the expectation in Austria-Hungary at the start of WWI and, had it happened, the war might have been over quickly. Archdukes must be forewarned, however: a game-start alliance with powerful Germany involves risk. On the one hand, Germany may come to dominate the Dual Monarchy and reduce Austria-Hungary to puppet status, as happened historically. On the other hand, alliance with Germany does not necessarily mean German units will move east in force. Just as in WWI, Germany may focus on B/F and leave the Dual Monarchy largely to its own devices. Tepid German involvement in the east may only serve to create a stalemate in which Austria-Hungary may survive, but is unlikely to thrive.

Assuming for now that the Kaiser is an "Easterner," it's probably safe to say that the movement of A Berlin or A Munich eastward is sure to cause any Russian advance against the Dual Monarchy to lose its momentum right away. Should both armies head east in Spring '00, A Berlin to Prussia and A Munich to Silesia, in conjunction with an Austro-Hungarian move into Galicia, the potential exists to knock the Tsar back into Siberia.

In fact, the danger to Russia that these moves posed was so great that I was forced to make a map change early on in the life of the variant. The adjustment involved the enlargement of Bohemia so that Vienna no longer bordered Galicia while, on the flip side, Budapest now bordered Bohemia. Without this change, it was far too easy for Austria-Hungary and Germany to take Warsaw and deny Russia any neutral SCs. The attack, as demonstrated so forcefully by Chris Connor as Austria-Hungary and Eric Greneoux as Germany in the second **1900** playtest, went as follows:

- o Germany ordered A Berlin to Prussia and A Munich to Silesia.

- o Austria-Hungary ordered A Trieste to Serbia, and yes, I do mean A Trieste. I'll discuss this unit more shortly.
- o Freed from the obligation to seize Serbia, A Budapest supported A Vienna to Galicia.

Even with perfect knowledge of the impending attack, an unlikely eventuality, Russia was almost powerless to prevent the early loss of Warsaw. Nor was that the end of the trouble for the Tsar. With three Austro-Hungarian units on Rumania (A Galicia, A Budapest, and A Serbia), Russian prospects for capturing any neutral in '00 were virtually nil without Turkish support and a great deal of luck. At best Russia came out even. At worst, Russia was already down one (or two if Turkey was in on the slaughter) and facing the prospect of an avalanche of red and black (and yellow!) units carving up the rest of the carcass. In effect, the contest would be one turn old and the Tsar would already be asking if anyone else had time for another game. This was certainly not a desirable outcome, especially for whoever had the misfortune to draw the white block.

Adjusting the boundary of Bohemia-Galicia as described above precludes the possibility of Austria-Hungary forcing its way into Galicia from Vienna against Russian resistance. Russia thereby gains at least a fighting chance against an A/G. Austria-Hungary can still put armies in Galicia, Budapest, and Serbia in Spring '00, but doing so now requires diplomatic skill. Further, it is diplomacy, versus any inherent advantage, that will determine whether Austria-Hungary gains control of Rumania instead of Russia or Turkey. I personally think this is as it should be.

I should point out that game results from early in the life of the variant showed that, far more often than not, Germany and Russia came to blows by at least '02, if not sooner. German military action against Russia, whether in alliance with the Dual Monarchy or acting on its own, frequently allowed Austria-Hungary to gain a decisive advantage over Russia that few Archdukes could resist exploiting. This was evidenced by the fact that A/R alliances against Turkey would end approximately 60% of the time in an Austro-Hungarian stab that seized Rumania in '01 or '02 (i.e., when Rumania was undefended and Russian units were largely tied up fighting the Germans and Turks). It appeared as though the scales had tipped too far in favor of the Dual Monarchy. The Russian Steamroller Rule referred to earlier was implemented to restore the balance of power within the A/G/R triangle.

Interestingly, while the Vienna-Galicia border change just discussed was installed to prevent Russia from being overrun by an A/G, the cumulative effect of all the changes in **1900** means that Germany must deal with the very real prospect of an A/R threatening the Reich from the east. Before I go there, however, I want to examine the situation that brought about the army in Trieste that I mentioned earlier.

Trieste has been divided into two provinces, Bosnia and Trieste. I did this because Bosnia was not "officially" part of the Dual Monarchy at the turn of the century. For you history buffs (i.e., for you wretched souls like me who don't have a life and enjoy looking at old maps), Trieste consists of the provinces of Dalmatia, Croatia-Slavonia, Istria, and Carniola. Anyone familiar with the Dual Monarchy's internal arrangement will appreciate that this is a lousy grouping of territories from a historical perspective since Croatia-Slavonia belonged to Hungary, while the other provinces belonged to Austria, but it works wonderfully from a game-mechanics point of view. The fall-out from separating Bosnia and Trieste was that F Trieste was rendered practically useless both offensively and defensively.

In **Diplomacy**, if relations with Italy permit, F Trieste can sail to Albania in Spring '01 and grab Greece that Fall. In **1900**, the journey is longer and tougher. Sailing at full-steam, F Trieste doesn't come within sight of Greece until the second game-year. By that time, Greece is likely to be in Italian or Turkish hands. This doesn't even take into account the fact that F Trieste would have to violate Turkish Macedonia or lay claim to the Ionian Sea to reach Greece in three turns. While the Sultan might find an Austro-Hungarian fleet landing in his territory annoying, the Pope may become absolutely incensed by

the sight of an uninvited Austro-Hungarian fleet in "his" sea space, especially if that fleet has designs on Greece, which Italy tends to view as within its sphere of influence.

Rather than burden Austria-Hungary at game-start with a fleet that can do little more than wallow around in the Adriatic Sea or start unwanted wars with the Dual Monarchy's sea-faring neighbors, I decided to expand the K&K Army. Clearly, in **1900**, if Austria-Hungary is going to win the game, it will be because its armies march to victory, not because its fleets sail there. I think this is historically correct. The Imperial Navy was a mere afterthought in Vienna, good for controlling the Adriatic Sea, but not much else. The K&K Army, on the other hand, formed one of the key pillars of the Empire.

So what are the impacts of A Trieste? Actually, they are many.

First, A Trieste greatly enhances the Empire's defense. Consider that in **Diplomacy**, Russia initially has two units to throw directly at Austria-Hungary (A Warsaw and A Moscow) and a third (F Sevastopol) that can influence the fighting in Rumania and Bulgaria. Austria-Hungary initially has only two units to counter Russian aggression, A Budapest, that normally takes Serbia, and A Vienna, that often moves to Galicia. All other things being equal, which they admittedly never are, Russia has the initiative against Austria-Hungary in every case. By replacing F Trieste with A Trieste, the pendulum swings toward Austria-Hungary. A Trieste can be used to take Serbia, while A Budapest halts a Russian advance into Galicia or Rumania, and A Vienna moves to Bohemia or Budapest to block or provide support. Any Austro-Russian War is likely to be a stalemate, with the other Powers, particularly Turkey, determining whether the Habsburgs or the Romanovs prevail. Since the statistics referenced earlier show that Russia claims a solo victory much more often than Austria-Hungary (449 to 284) and loses fewer times (2743 to 2899), any leveling of the playing field between these two Powers is probably good for the game as a whole.

Second, A Trieste virtually guarantees that Austria-Hungary will get two builds in '00 as long as the Archduke is able to secure an alliance with either Russia or Turkey.

At first glance, alliance with Russia appears to be more problematic. Many Archdukes (and Tsars) immediately spot the Dual Monarchy's increased ability to compete for Rumania and seek out an alliance with Turkey. With A Trieste taking Serbia, A Budapest can open to Rumania. This will either thwart Russia's F Sevastopol to Rumania or claim Rumania directly if Russia opened F Sevastopol to Black Sea. Even better for Austria-Hungary, A Serbia is now in position to support A Rumania, if the move from Budapest succeeded, or support an attack from Budapest to Rumania, if a bounce occurred. A friendly Turkey that orders A Damascus to Armenia and/or F Ankara to Black Sea virtually ensures that the pressure on Russia will result in Austria-Hungary winning the battle for Rumania. Note that the Archduke should probably not count on direct support into Rumania in Fall '00 from a Turkish army in Bulgaria. This is because the Sultan is more likely to open A Constantinople to Macedonia in Spring '00. I'll discuss this opening and its ramifications when I get to Turkey.

In their haste to fight over Rumania, many Archdukes and Tsars fail to appreciate that, through cooperation, it is possible for Austria-Hungary to get two builds in '00 while Russia claims Rumania for at least one build. Just as significantly, the Ottoman Empire is immediately imperiled and put on the defensive. If the Archduke orders A Trieste to Serbia and A Budapest to Rumania, while the Tsar orders A Warsaw to Galicia, A Moscow to Ukraine, and F Sevastopol to Black Sea, the two allies can ensure that Austria-Hungary takes Bulgaria and Russia captures Rumania regardless of how the Sultan moved. If the Sultan uses the traditional **Diplomacy** opening of A Constantinople to Bulgaria, it's likely Turkey will be kept without a build! Many Archdukes may be squeamish about allowing Russian troops to enter Galicia, but the fact that Galicia no longer touches Vienna largely eliminates the immediate threat to the Dual Monarchy. If there are any doubts about Russian intentions, A Vienna to Budapest will ensure the

Empire is as safe as it can be against Russian perfidy. If, on the other hand, the Archduke trusts the Tsar or can convince him to stay out of Austro-Hungarian territory (i.e., by using A Warsaw to Ukraine, A Moscow to Sevastapol, and F Sevastapol to Black Sea), A Vienna can be used in other ways.

Third, and perhaps more interesting, A Trieste gives Austria-Hungary the capability of weighing into central European affairs directly. Doing so makes for good alternative history. After all, until 1859, Austria-Hungary was considered the premier Power in Italy and until 1866, it was considered the most powerful German state. By 1900, it had been effectively excluded from both Italian and German affairs. This did not mean, however, that the traditionalists in Vienna gladly accepted the lesser role they were assigned. There is no reason to believe that Austria-Hungary might not have been tempted to reassert old claims in northern Italy and southern Germany if the European diplomatic situation in the last part of the 19th century had been different.

A "western" strategy is not really feasible for Austria-Hungary in **Diplomacy** at game-start. Almost always, A Budapest is used to take Serbia. F Trieste can seize Venice, but then it has pretty much exhausted its offensive potential. A Vienna is often needed to defend against a Russian invasion of Galicia from Warsaw. A Trieste, in combination with the map changes discussed earlier, alters these dynamics. Consider the following:

- o Earlier I mentioned that the Archduke can use A Trieste to take Serbia thereby freeing A Budapest to cover Galicia or attack Rumania. Instead of moving to Bohemia or Budapest, as would be the case in a typical eastern strategy, A Vienna can move to Tyrolia where it is adjacent to three foreign SCs (Munich, Switzerland, and Milan). This is sure to raise eyebrows in Berlin and Rome, as well as London and Paris, and provide the Dual Monarchy with considerable diplomatic leverage.

- o If the Kaiser is being difficult while the Tsar appears cooperative, Austria-Hungary can open by sending armies to Tyrolia and Bohemia, while simultaneously grabbing Serbia. If accompanied by a Russian move from Warsaw to Prussia or Silesia, these moves may just cause the Kaiser to start choking on his wurst. Take THAT you arrogant Prussians! Even better from Austria-Hungary's point of view, an A/R against Germany can easily be expanded into a workable triple: A/B/R, A/F/R, A/I/R, or A/R/T.

- o Austria-Hungary can now open by moving armies to Tyrolia and Venetia, and still take Serbia. Though Field Marshal Radetzky would be pleased with this powerful anti-Italian opening, sending the bulk of the K&K army into Italy is probably suicidal in '00. The right circumstances must exist for the Dual Monarchy to be able to use this set of moves. Specifically, Russia almost certainly must be friendly and Germany must be either neutral or friendly (A/G/R: the Three Emperors' League reborn!).

In all three cases above, Archdukes must keep in mind that moves that appear risky or even disastrous in '00 may work wonderfully in '01. If Austria-Hungary gets two builds in '00, as it should if allied with either Russia or Turkey at game-start, the opportunity to head west in force and make life tough for the Kaiser or Pope should still be there in Spring '01.

I believe Austria-Hungary will continue to focus eastward at game-start on most occasions. Western openings, while exciting and potentially rewarding in the long run, particularly A/R against Germany, generally don't offer the immediate and relatively risk-free payback that a purely eastern campaign does. However, given that the game is all about bluffing, negotiating, and gambling, the fact that Austria-Hungary CAN move westward in '00, and certainly in '01, gives the Dual Monarchy options and influence, perhaps out of proportion to its actual capabilities. The threat of being able to intervene in the west effectively transforms the Dual Monarchy from an after-thought for both Britain and France, as it is in **Diplomacy**, into a viable ally worth courting. I think this kind of increased interaction between the players can only serve to make the game more interesting.

In summary, the key differences between Austria-Hungary in **Diplomacy** and in **1900** are as follows:

- o Trieste is divided into two provinces: Bosnia and Trieste.

- o Vienna no longer touches Galicia, while Budapest now touches Bohemia.
- o A Trieste replaces F Trieste. This has a significant impact on the Dual Monarchy's ability to defend itself, expand, and explore "western" options. From this last point it follows that Austria-Hungary is a more viable alliance partner for Britain, France, and Russia at game-start.
- o The tense situation between Austria-Hungary and Italy is diffused. Further, the prospects of a game-start attack by Italy are diminished.
- o Alliance between Austria-Hungary and Turkey is facilitated by the new map. This increases the likelihood of an A/T in any given game.

The bottom line to all of this is that Austria-Hungary appears more flexible in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. This flexibility allows the Dual Monarchy to work well with any of its neighbors, except possibly Italy, and gives the Archduke more options as the game opens.

Chapter 3: BRITAIN

A convincing argument can be made that Britain was the most powerful nation on Earth as Victoria's reign drew to a close. While the British army was almost laughably small for a Great Power (Bismarck once commented that he would have the British army arrested if it invaded Germany), the British navy



was absolutely supreme. This navy guarded the lifelines of an empire that stretched across the globe. It was this huge empire, and the relationship Britain enjoyed with it, that contributed so greatly to Britain's economic dominance of Europe through the 19th century.

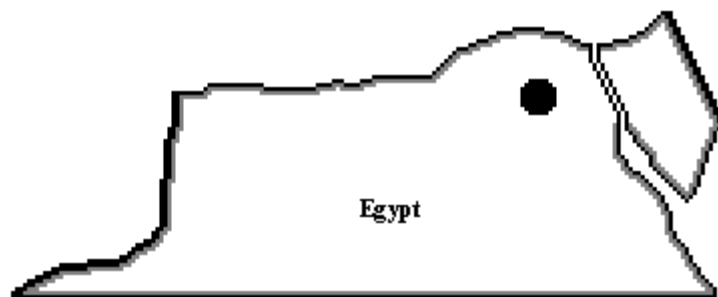
All was not well in Britain, though. D.J. Goodspeed remarks in *The German Wars*, "as the century drew to a close, Britain suddenly felt a little chilly in the sunlight." Economically, the United States had already left Britain far behind. Germany was gaining rapidly and would soon overtake it. Politically, Britain was completely isolated. In the international crises that occurred at the end of the 19th century, Britain learned that it had no friends it could count on. Only the strength of the British navy provided any reassurance to a nation watching its once undisputed position being challenged.

Britain's strong, but no longer dominating position figured heavily in many of the decisions I made while transforming *Diplomacy's* England into 1900's Britain. I'll say up front that the final arrangement may trouble some people who are comfortable with *Diplomacy's* "business-as-usual," but I think the changes that impact on Britain are entirely justifiable from a historical perspective. More importantly, I feel Britain's unique circumstances contribute to 1900's play balance, as I'll soon explain.

England once had a fearsome reputation in *Diplomacy*. It became known as the Wicked Witch of the West because its corner position gave it impressive defensive strength, second only to Turkey, and its offensive potential was tremendous. Allied with either France or Germany, England could quickly sail to victory while its ally was slogging its way across the continent. Should the ally balk at England's success, it was usually much easier for England to terminate the alliance and turn on the ally than vice-versa.

Of course, *Diplomacy's* Pax Britannica did not last forever. As Rod Walker points out in the original *The Gamers' Guide to Diplomacy*, England's initial success started to work against it, an example of the "Leader Syndrome," and it began to fare poorly. Interestingly, at one time its record was particularly bad in U.K. postal games. Other players, sensing England's strength, would either gang up on it right away or demand stiff concessions to make the alliance "more equal."

Currently, England is no longer considered a superpower, but it isn't a doormat either. The game results shown in Chapter 1 indicate England is about average. Out of 3723 games studied, England won 300. This places it fifth, ahead of Austria-Hungary with 284 solos, but behind Germany with 327 solos. England drew 733 times and lost only 2690



times. Only France, with 751 draws and 2608 losses, fared better. England's Great Power Rating of 26.48 is slightly above average (25.71) and ranks fourth overall. These numbers might indicate that little needed to be fixed as far as England was concerned. I felt otherwise. If nothing else, the name of the Great Power needed to be changed from England to Britain!

When I first set about designing **1900**, I hoped to level the playing field by improving the positions of Austria-Hungary and Italy, while simultaneously bringing France and Russia back to the pack. I thought I could accomplish both of these objectives by making Britain and Germany stronger. My "logic" was that both Britain and Germany tend to interact with France and Russia in the early going, but they seldom bother Austria-Hungary or Italy until later in the game. Distracted by a more powerful Britain and/or Germany, France and Russia would probably not be able to carry the war as effectively to Austria-Hungary and Italy. Added incentive for this course of action was the fact that making Britain and Germany stronger would more accurately reflect the actual balance of power at the turn of the century.

With this idea in mind, I began redesigning Britain and Germany. Germany turned out to be an easy fix and I'll address what was done to the Reich in a later Chapter 5. In Britain's case, the "strengthening" was accomplished as follows:

- o Iceland was made playable and also turned into a supply center (SC). Given its proximity to Britain, Iceland was sure to fall into British hands every game.

- o The **1900** map includes the entire coast of northern Africa. Britain was given control of a SC (Egypt) in this new territory and also provided with a unit (F Egypt) that could defend this SC. Of course, F Egypt could also be used to capture other SCs that are nearby.

- o To enable Britain to quickly reinforce its position in Egypt or exploit any success achieved by the fleet there, direct movement between Egypt and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean was allowed using the Suez Canal Rules or SCR, which I'll cover later.

I'll admit I was rather pleased with these changes. Unfortunately, I didn't get the results I hoped for. <sigh> So much for good intentions. The first **1900** playtest revealed some flaws with the initial design, particularly in regards to Britain. I had made Britain absolutely fearsome. Aply played by Scott Morris, Britain cruised to a distressingly easy victory. While Scott's superb diplomacy and tactical play were essential to Britain's tremendous success, it seemed obvious to me that major revisions were called for. But what to do?

Some fixes designed to make Britain less potent seemed self-evident:

- o Iceland was removed as a SC, although it did remain playable. This eliminated a "gimme" SC for Britain.

- o The initial playtest map had two spaces, Syria and Palestine, between the Turkish army in Smyrna and the British SC in Egypt. This arrangement made it impossible for Turkey to attack Egypt in '00 and gave the Sultan little incentive to move A Smyrna southward. After experimenting with a few ideas, I settled on a map that effectively moved the Turkish SC from Smyrna (now Konya) to Syria (now Damascus). This change allowed the Sultan to move A Damascus to Palestine in Spring '00 and then threaten Egypt in Fall '00.

- o Libya, a neutral SC next to Egypt, was divided into two smaller provinces: Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. Tripolitania was given the SC while Cyrenaica was to serve as a buffer between Tripolitania and Egypt. The presence of Cyrenaica makes it a little more difficult for Britain to claim Tripolitania, especially when combined with the potential Turkish threat mentioned above.

These fixes did not seem sufficient, however, particularly since they did nothing to curb French power. The first **1900** playtest showed that France, far from being brought back to the pack, was stronger than ever, although not as powerful as Britain. Something was needed to rein France back in. As usual, I looked to history for an answer. What jumped out at me was the need for a set of conditions that would

recreate the friction that traditionally existed between Britain and France. I reasoned that this friction would succeed in keeping both nations in check, as they would need to focus considerable attention on each other. Luckily, the first playtest revealed a possible solution.

During that first playtest, Eric Scheid, who played Austria-Hungary, suggested that a Gibraltar space be placed between Spain and Morocco (north to south) and the Western Mediterranean and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean (east to west). Eric's primary motive was to put an area of great strategic and historical importance on the map. I decided to take this suggestion a step further by having a British fleet start there. Not only would this replicate historical British control of Gibraltar and the entrance to the Mediterranean, it would also recreate some of the Anglo-French friction I desired. A British unit would now sit directly in the middle of territories (Portugal, Spain, Morocco, and Algeria) that all French Presidents naturally regard as being within France's sphere of influence.

The trouble was I didn't want Britain to start with five units. If F Gibraltar was going to be added, I felt one unit had to go to make room for it.

I decided that the unit in question was definitely not going to be F Egypt since it simply had too many things going in its favor.

- o First, there was the historical justification. Britain was entrenched in Egypt by 1900 and maintained a significant naval presence there.

- o Second, the British fleet and the potential for reinforcement via the Suez Canal added an interesting dimension to the power balance in the eastern Mediterranean. Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, and Turkey would all have to consider British reaction to events in the Balkans, Middle East, and northern Africa. This increased interaction between the players would, in my opinion, only be good for the game.

- o Third, F Egypt and any subsequent reinforcements allow for the recreation of historical British intervention in the affairs of other nations in that part of the world. This ability to replicate historical events, such as Britain's support of Greek independence or the Dardenelles Campaign, without forcing players to follow the historical path or requiring the historical outcome was something I always thought important in games based on real-world situations.

Of the three units remaining, A Liverpool seemed the best candidate for elimination. It's true that the ability to land a British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in Norway or on the continent in '00 was taken away, but I could live with this given Britain's almost total reliance on the Royal Navy, its traditional disdain for its army, and the fact that Britain did not have a BEF capability at the turn of the century. Until 1900, the tiny British Army was used primarily to maintain a presence in Britain's far-flung colonial possessions. It was not until the years immediately preceding WWI that the vaunted BEF came into existence. My feelings were that sea power would suffice Britain initially. If the Prime Minister wanted armies, he could build them later in the game.

Interestingly, though A Liverpool is gone, Liverpool itself remains a SC. Gibraltar, on the other hand, is simply a British-controlled space. This makes Britain unique among the Great Powers in that it is the only nation that does not have all of its at-start forces in provinces that are SCs.

The final disposition of the Britain's at-start fleets (London, Edinburgh, Gibraltar, and Egypt), besides being historically accurate, further increases the inherent friction between Britain and France.

- o If Britain controls the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, France must deal with the very real prospect of a stab. I think it can easily be argued that the Mid-Atlantic Ocean is as important to France as Burgundy is. It will take a President with nerves of steel not to flinch while a British fleet stands off of the French coast.

- o If France controls the Mid-Atlantic Ocean or it is left vacant, Britain is effectively cut in two. Any conquests made by British units in the Mediterranean, now legitimately part of Britain's area of interest, will be difficult to hold on to since the Prime Minister will be unable to send reinforcements there.

Additionally, a French fleet in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean could easily end up in the Irish Sea or Ireland (yes, Ireland!) and pose a dangerous threat to British security, or sail into Egypt and deny Britain a SC.

At this time, it is probably best that I review the "Suez Canal Rules" since I have mentioned them several times already and they are absolutely critical to British play in **1900**. Basically the rules go like this:

- o Movement is allowed between British Egypt and Turkish Hejaz.
- o Movement directly between Egypt and Hejaz, and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean is possible. If moving around southern Africa in this manner, a fleet moves at half-strength.
- o A unit in Egypt or Hejaz cannot support a unit moving to or holding in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Likewise, a fleet in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean cannot support a unit moving to or holding in Egypt or Hejaz.
- o An attack from Egypt or Hejaz to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean does not cut any support provided from the Mid-Atlantic Ocean unless the attack succeeds in dislodging F Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Likewise, an attack from the Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Egypt or Hejaz does not cut any support provided from Egypt or Hejaz unless the attack succeeds in dislodging the unit in Egypt or Hejaz.
- o F Mid-Atlantic Ocean may convoy an army to Egypt or Hejaz. This army attacks its destination space at half-strength. F Mid-Atlantic Ocean may also convoy an army from Egypt or Hejaz. This army attacks its destination space at full-strength.
- o If two units are retreating to Egypt or Hejaz, or the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, and one of them must travel around the southern tip of Africa, the unit that does not travel around southern Africa may retreat while the other unit is disbanded.

The Suez Canal Rules represent a significant departure from **Diplomacy's** standard rules. After considering several alternatives (e.g., eliminate movement between Egypt and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean entirely; eliminate movement between Egypt and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, but allow Britain to build in Egypt; allow Britain, but no one else, to move fleets between Egypt and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean), I still believe the current Suez Canal Rules represent the best arrangement. I feel this way for several reasons, but chief among them is that the Suez Canal Rules contribute to the friction between Britain and France that I find so desirable.

I have one last comment on Britain's at-start position. Even given the loss of A Liverpool, things are pretty much business as usual in and around the British Isles. While the boundaries are redrawn, the relationships between most of the spaces remain the same. What is different? First, Ireland is now playable. Second, movement directly between Ireland and Clyde is possible. This makes the western flank of the British Isles slightly more vulnerable, especially since Ireland now borders the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Making Britain's corner of the world a little less secure is, in my mind, probably a good thing.

Now that we've discussed how we got to Britain's at-start situation, the question that needs to be asked is this: what are Britain's options? Certainly, the Prime Minister has much to consider. In **Diplomacy**, England basically has three neighbors to worry about: France, Germany, and Russia. In **1900**, Britain figures directly in the calculations of all of the Great Powers, with the possible exception of Austria-Hungary. Even relations with the Dual Monarchy cannot be ignored since Austria-Hungary and Britain may share common allies or opponents.

Personally, I think relations with France more than anything else will determine what Britain does. Given the **1900** map and unit game-start positions, it should not surprise anyone to learn that the level of Anglo-French friction is extremely high. In fact, no other pairing of Great Powers has a higher Friction Rating. What may surprise some people is that, despite the friction, conflict between Europe's two democracies is not inevitable. On the contrary, B/F is a popular and successful alliance.

If Britain's relations with France are cordial, the following strategy seems in order:

- o F Edinburgh to Norwegian Sea and F London to North Sea seem to be the logical moves in the north. These moves virtually guarantee Britain gets Norway in Fall '00. They also give Britain an opportunity, however slim, to claim Belgium, Denmark, or the Netherlands depending on what France and Germany both do.

- o F Gibraltar can be used to take Algeria, Morocco, Portugal, or Spain based on any agreements reached with France. The Prime Minister may also decide to order F Gibraltar to Mid-Atlantic Ocean in anticipation of sending it to Egypt in the Fall. While moving F Gibraltar to Egypt prevents it from acquiring any SCs in '00, doing so does give Britain an intimidating presence in the eastern Mediterranean. What the Prime Minister chooses to do with his eastern armada will depend primarily on relations with Italy, Russia, and Turkey. Of course, sending F Gibraltar to Egypt removes the chief obstacle to French claims on Morocco, Portugal, and Spain. This is sure to make the President happy. Whether it will make him grateful is another matter, but for now we're assuming France is friendly.

- o F Egypt can move to the Eastern Mediterranean, Palestine, or Cyrenaica. The first two options may be best if Russia is an ally or if the Prime Minister anticipates the Sultan ordering A Damascus to Palestine. The latter allows Britain to try for Tripolitania.

Given these combinations, Britain can usually acquire two SCs in '00 and three is not out of the question. If the moon and stars line up just right, Britain could even claim four SCs in '00! To make a B/F work, however, one or both of the allies will have to settle for a position it would probably rather not be in, as discussed earlier. This means a lot of trust and cooperation is required. This trust and cooperation may be in short supply as the game progresses. Also, the effort Britain and France put forth to get out of each other's way in '00 is sure to be noticed by the other Great Powers, particularly Germany and Italy. Without the element of surprise, it may be tough for B/F to get moving unless a third ally is involved.

If, on the other hand, Britain's relations with France are poor, the overall picture becomes much more complicated. Consider the following:

- o Instead of opening to the North Sea, F London will likely head towards the English Channel to bounce France's F Brest or to threaten Brest directly.

- o To take Norway, F Edinburgh will probably open to the North Sea or the Norwegian Sea. While the conquest of Norway is still likely even with only one fleet involved, things could become unpleasant for the Prime Minister if the Tsar moves A Moscow to St. Petersburg in the Spring or the Kaiser sails into the North Sea in the Fall. If these things do occur, they probably signal extremely close ties between Berlin and St. Petersburg (and presumably Vienna as well...the Three Emperors' League). Should Britain find itself fighting France, Germany, and Russia at the same time (Yikes!), the Prime Minister should just move his office straight into the Tower of London and wait patiently for his beheading.

- o F Egypt presents the Prime Minister with a dilemma. With support from F Gibraltar, F Egypt can force its way into the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Once there, it is like a knife pointed directly at France's heart. If F London to English Channel is successful, Brest is in grave danger. If Brest is covered, either Morocco or Spain can be attacked with support. Britain may also launch separate attacks from Gibraltar and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean on Morocco, Portugal, or Spain. The down side is that Turkey might order A Damascus to Palestine, a move that will be suggested to the Sultan by several Great Powers, especially France. If this happens, Egypt is effectively lost. With the loss of Egypt, Britain gives up a SC and also any realistic prospect of getting back into the eastern Mediterranean quickly.

- o If the Prime Minister keeps F Egypt in the eastern Mediterranean, either to defend Egypt or try for Tripolitania, he still has F Gibraltar at his disposal. Unfortunately for Britain, F Gibraltar by itself is not nearly as effective as when it is teamed up with F Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Go figure! If the Prime Minister successfully moves F Gibraltar to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, Portugal or Spain might be taken, but France is almost sure to grab Morocco and one of the two Iberian SCs. If the move to Mid-Atlantic Ocean is unsuccessful, France may get both Morocco and Spain while Britain gets nothing. If the Prime Minister moves F Gibraltar to Morocco or Spain directly, he may be able to prevent France from taking one, but probably not the other, and again Britain may get nothing. The voters at home won't like that at all.

What if Britain's relations with both France and Germany are poor? Well, this certainly puts a damper on things, but there's no need for the Prime Minister to panic right away. Britain's defensive position is very strong. Even though Britain has only two units in the British Isles at game-start, Britain can easily prevent the loss of a home SC in '00. After the '00 builds, Britain is likely to have as many units in and around the British Isles as it has currently in **Diplomacy**. This being the case, the key to survival, quite naturally, will be the success of British diplomacy.

- o Italy's natural orientation is towards France. It shouldn't be too hard to convince Rome that its interests coincide with London's. Promises of Tripolitania, Algeria, Marseilles, and, if desperate, Morocco certainly will be hard for the Pope to pass up.

- o Russian pressure on Germany will make a German offensive against Britain far less formidable. If Germany prevented Russia from taking Sweden in Fall '00, the Tsar almost certainly will be receptive to British overtures. The promise of British support that enables Russia to take Sweden in '01 will probably clinch the deal.

- o If Germany is making bellicose noises right from the start, it would be worthwhile for the Prime Minister to try and get Austria-Hungary to work with Russia. If Austria-Hungary and Russia do work together against Germany, the Prime Minister may find the Kaiser standing on his doorstep, hat in hand, begging forgiveness. Obviously, however, the Kaiser is unlikely to be so truculent towards Britain if he has any misgivings about the Dual Monarchy's loyalty.

- o Turkey can make things difficult for Britain by threatening Egypt. If the Prime Minister can keep the Sultan focused north or west against Austria-Hungary, Russia, or Italy, F Egypt can be used for other purposes besides defending Egypt. Not having F Egypt pinned down in this manner help's Britain's overall position tremendously.

As can be seen, Britain can be a tough opponent to take on. Given this, I suspect someone is asking the million-dollar question: what prevents Britain from forming a triple with France and Germany? Working together, the three nations can get two to three builds apiece with no trouble at all. With nineteen to twenty-one of the thirty-nine SCs under their control, the "Big 3" can easily sweep the board.

Well, maybe not.

Fortunately for Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, and Turkey, B/F/G does not occur as often as some might think it would and when it does take shape at game-start, it usually doesn't last long. There are several reasons why B/F/Gs have not dominated the action in **1900** to date. These reasons include personality conflicts between the Prime Minister, President, and Kaiser; unwillingness on the part of any one partner to accept a 3-way; difficulty in overcoming the considerable internal friction within B/F/G; and, particularly relevant for this article, Britain's superior position within the alliance. The simple fact is that B/F/G gives Britain such an advantage over its two partners that both of them would be justified in becoming suspicious immediately if the Prime Minister even suggests it.

Even while each member of the Big 3 is picking up its allotment of neutral SCs in '00, the Prime Minister will probably be negotiating with both partners to work out either a B/F versus Germany or B/G versus France. In the meantime, Britain, if alert, really has relatively little to fear from F/G treachery. This is because French and German units are not likely to be well positioned to attack Britain and getting them into position will probably be noticed in London well in advance of any Franco-German offensive. Additionally, Britain should be able to easily cultivate friends in Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Russia since those nations are potentially threatened most by French and German aggression. Finally, with French units tied up in the Mediterranean and a significant number of German units located deep in the east, both of Britain's "allies" will be extremely vulnerable to a British stab. Even better from the Prime Minister's point of view, Britain is likely to grab the lion's share of the spoils from the stab because of its position behind both France and Germany.

In summary, the differences between England in **Diplomacy** and Britain in **1900** are significant, as are the implications of these differences.

- o Ireland is playable and accessible from the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Further, direct movement from Ireland to Clyde is possible.

- o A Liverpool no longer exists, although Liverpool remains a SC.

- o Britain starts with fleets in London and Edinburgh, as usual, and two new fleets in two new spaces, Egypt, which is a SC (though not a home SC), and Gibraltar, which is not a SC. It follows from this that Britain is now a major player in the Mediterranean at the beginning of the game. This will require Britain to be much more active diplomatically since it can expect to interact directly with all of the Powers immediately.

- o The "Suez Canal Rules" allow Britain and other Powers to quickly move units from the eastern Mediterranean to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean.

I've had some **1900** players rank Britain as the weakest Great Power on the map because they feel it is too spread out. I've had other players suggest that Britain, if properly played, should never lose. My own opinion is that Britain is a strong nation, much stronger than **Diplomacy's** England. Since Germany is also stronger, France remains a potentially dangerous adversary, and British interests are spread across the map, the Prime Minister will need to negotiate aggressively if Britain is to maintain its position as Europe's premier Power.

Chapter 4: FRANCE

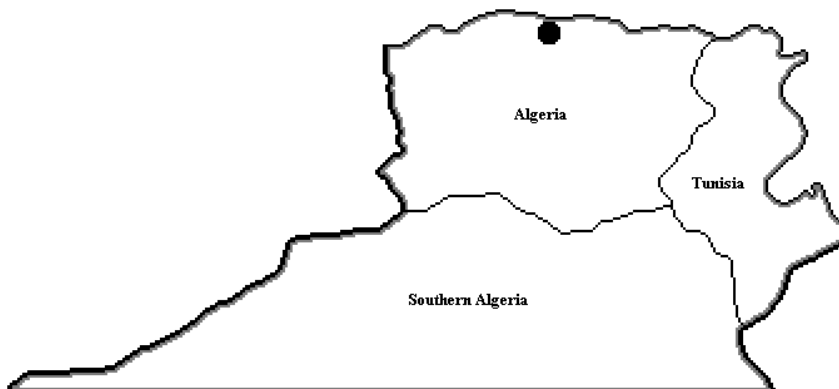
I'll start this chapter by saying that some Franco-philes are sure to think I've placed France in a hopeless situation. When compared to **Diplomacy's** strong and relatively secure Third Republic, 1900's France is unquestionably in a more compromising position. This is because I intentionally worked some things to France's disadvantage. I don't believe for a second, however, that I've reduced France to "meat" as a player once claimed that I did. Instead, I contend I simply leveled the playing field.

Yes, I do think the current playing field needs leveling. Though Russia has more solos, France is, in my opinion, the strongest Great Power in **Diplomacy**. Statistics appear to back me up.

o As shown in Chapter 1, France won 364 of the 3723 games played. This put the Third Republic well behind Russia, the leader with 449 wins, but comfortably ahead of third place Turkey and its 329 wins. Additionally, France lost fewer times than any other Great Power (2608). England, with 2690 losses, is a distant second. Compare these numbers to those of hapless Italy with its meager 221 wins and its whopping 2968 losses, both of which put it in last place.

o An article by Melinda Holley in *Diplomacy World* #76 ("7x7 Gunboat Tournaments: An Analysis") looks at the results of twelve 7x7 Gunboat tournaments where each player played all seven Great Powers and there was no negotiating between players. Overall, France claimed the most wins (fourteen) and had the fewest eliminations (fifteen) of any Great Power. In comparison, Italy had the fewest wins (one) and Austria-Hungary had the most eliminations (thirty-nine).

These numbers clearly demonstrate that France is a force to be reckoned with. Why is this so? To begin with, France has unopposed access at game-start to two neutral supply centers (SCs), Portugal and Spain. Unless things go seriously wrong, France should get two builds in '01. A third build for grabbing Belgium is not out of the question. Next, France is an excellent ally for both England and Germany. Odds are in France's favor that either an E/F or an F/G will form early in the game. Either alliance will normally ensure France continues to grow in a slow, but steady manner as the game progresses. France's corner position is also a big advantage. While France's corner is not quite as secure as the corners inhabited by the two Wicked Witches, it still makes France better off defensively than Germany or Italy.



With no enemy at its back, France can focus all of its energy on pushing units north and east. A hostile Italy is sure to make things more difficult for France, but Italy's extremely limited growth potential, its position in the center of the board, and its isolation from potential anti-French allies all combine to give France the edge.

So what could be done to bring France back to the pack? I decided on four courses of action that I'll discuss in turn:

- o Eliminate France's corner position.
- o Create friction between Britain and France.
- o Make Italy a more viable opponent.
- o Toughen up Germany.

As mentioned earlier, both Portugal and Spain usually go to France in '01 in **Diplomacy**. This gives France at least five units heading into '02 and a relatively secure corner position. A quick look at the **1900** map shows that Portugal and Spain are still there for the taking. Additionally, to the south, we see that France begins the game in possession of a new SC, Algeria, in northern Africa. To guard its African outpost, France is given a third army, A Algeria, representing the vaunted *Armee di Afrique*. It so happens that A Algeria has access to two new neutral SCs, Morocco to the west and Tripolitania to the east. That's four neutral SCs within easy reach of French units and we haven't even mentioned two others yet, Belgium and Switzerland. So far, so good.

The bad news is that Britain, France's traditional nemesis, is a major player in the southwest corner of the map. As mentioned in the previous chapter on Britain, a new space, Gibraltar, forms a juncture between Spain, the Western Mediterranean, Morocco, and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Sitting squarely in the middle of the Gibraltar space, and therefore squarely in the middle of France's potential empire, is a shiny new British fleet. Needless to say, Britain's F Gibraltar can wreak all kinds of havoc on French plans for expansion.

If Britain is friendly, the President may as well accept the fact that the Prime Minister is going to use F Gibraltar to grab a nearby SC as Britain's "fair share." If Britain is hostile, the Prime Minister can use F Gibraltar to contest French attempts to seize Morocco, Portugal, or Spain. The actions of F Gibraltar and French commitments elsewhere may mean France will struggle to get even one neutral SC. Even worse, F Gibraltar can support the movement of Britain's F Egypt into the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Such a move is sure to ruin the President's day. Consider the following:

- o The movement of F Egypt to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean in Spring '00 will almost guarantee F Brest remains in port instead of being available for movement to Portugal or Spain.
- o With two fleets at his disposal, the Prime Minister can attempt to make a supported attack on either Morocco or Spain. He can also effectively keep French units out of any neutral SC not already occupied.
- o If Britain also succeeds in moving F London to English Channel in Spring '00, Brest might be in danger. Brrrrr!

Obviously, the disposition of F Gibraltar is likely to be a lively topic in any talks between London and Paris. Of course, getting this "small" matter resolved may seem like a walk in the park compared to the issue of access to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. I can't imagine any President ever feeling truly comfortable while a British fleet is cruising around in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. The chance that a British dreadnought might suddenly sail into a French-controlled territory is simply too great to ignore. As a result, French units that could be used on the eastern front against Germany and/or Italy may end up pulling garrison duty. Conversely, the Prime Minister isn't likely to shout for joy at the prospects of a French fleet patrolling the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Not only would this cut Britain off from its Mediterranean holdings, it might actually threaten the security of Egypt or Britain itself. While it is certainly possible for Britain and France to reach an accord on how to handle traffic in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, the potential for friction between the two Great Powers is likely to remain high.

Having to contend with the greedy moneylenders of perfidious Albion is bad enough, but the President's concerns don't end there. To the southeast lies Italy. Unlike the weak Italy found in **Diplomacy**, the Italy

in **1900** is more than capable of making the President's life unpleasant. Unfortunately for France, a number of map-related changes potentially increase the chance of conflict with Italy occurring. For starters, France and Italy must wrestle with the issue of Switzerland, a new neutral SC. This is an extremely ticklish matter for France and Italy since Switzerland touches home SCs in each Great Power. Noting that France has access to several neutral SCs while Italy does not, the Pope will almost certainly claim that Switzerland should go to Italy and will often move to take it in '00. Given that the northern Italian army is now in a new Italian SC, Milan, instead of Venetia, formerly Venice, the Pope can send troops to Switzerland right away. Even more alarming for France, the elimination of Tuscany means that A Rome can be moved directly to Piedmont. An Italian opening of A Milan to Switzerland and A Rome to Piedmont may give Italy Switzerland and threaten Marseilles at the same time.

France has several tactical options available that should prevent Marseilles from falling to an Italian attack in '00. The next year, however, matters may become more problematic. France's access to the Mediterranean is limited to Marseilles or the path through Gibraltar. Regarding the former, it is not difficult for Italy to keep Marseilles bottled-up so French fleets cannot be built there. As to the latter, moving French fleets from Brest through Gibraltar is slow and generally requires British cooperation. Without reinforcement, France's African holdings are extremely vulnerable. Italy, on the other hand, can easily position units against French targets in the Mediterranean. If Italy enjoys any growth at all, Italian units may soon overwhelm French defenses, both in southern France and in Africa. Ugh!

Before discussing Germany, I want to briefly mention Austria-Hungary. Making Switzerland passable technically establishes the Dual Monarchy as a French neighbor. While it's true that for centuries France and Imperial Austria were bitter rivals for influence over the many minor German and Italian states that stood between them, this rivalry largely came to an end after 1859 with the establishment of an independent Italian kingdom. In **1900**, the dynamics are such that the Dual Monarchy is unlikely to get involved directly in French affairs early on. While an Austro-Hungarian thrust westward at game-start, almost certainly in alliance with Russia, cannot be discounted, it's something the President is unlikely to lose sleep over.

No, if the President does get nightmares when he thinks about his eastern frontier, it will be due to the large shadow cast by Germany. The Reich in **Diplomacy** is something for Paris to be concerned about. The Reich in **1900**, on the other hand, is something to be feared. Germany now starts with four units: A Berlin, A Cologne, A Munich, and F Kiel. With little difficulty at all, the Reich can capture Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands in '00, and annexing Switzerland is not out of the question. Those three (or four!) builds represent a lot of *sturmtruppen*.

So great is German strength that Germany was modified to give France some much-needed breathing room. Specifically, Alsace was inserted between French Burgundy, and German Cologne and Munich. Without Alsace, the Kaiser could order A Munich to Burgundy, supported by A Cologne, and immediately place France in dire straits. While the President could take action to prevent this, I felt that placing France in such a critical "do or die" situation right at game-start seemed far too harsh. Despite the buffer Alsace provides, there is still a lot for the President to be concerned about. Germany can often grab its three neutrals without using A Munich. This leaves A Munich free to meddle in Swiss affairs or, even more ominous, advance towards France by moving into Alsace. Needless to say, the President may notice that the room seems to have gotten a lot hotter when '01 starts and he sees German armies in Alsace, Munich, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Cologne pressing against the French border. If the Kaiser is set upon France's destruction, he may risk getting his three builds in '00 for the chance of putting a dagger in France's heart. A Cologne to Belgium and A Munich to Alsace in the Spring followed by A Alsace to Burgundy supported by A Belgium might just do that.

Even if Germany is friendly, the President may feel like someone who keeps a pet tiger in his house: if the tiger ever turns on you, things could get ugly.

My goodness! This is all bad news! With British, Italian, and German (oh my!) units buzzing all around him, what's a President to do?

Well, as bleak as the picture I've painted above appears, I should point out that the situation France faces in **1900** is actually far better than the one that France had to deal with in the years following the Franco-Prussian War. Crushed and humiliated by Prussia, France was in a truly vulnerable position. First, to the east, it had to face the new, powerful, and menacing German Empire sitting squarely in France's former playground. Germany's army had already shown itself to be superior to France's army and no amount of French *elan* was going to close the gap, although the French earnestly began believing that it would. Second, Britain, France's rival for two centuries, ruled the seas and was leaving France far behind in the race for colonies. French weakness vis-à-vis Britain was exposed to all of Europe during the Fashoda Crisis of 1898. Third, the newly formed Kingdom of Italy was casting covetous eyes on French possessions in North Africa. The two nations nearly went to war when France occupied Tunisia in 1881. Fourth, France was completely estranged from both Austria-Hungary and Russia, each of which distrusted French republicanism. Finally, France's once dominant position of influence in the Porte had dwindled to virtual insignificance.

By 1914, France's fortunes had changed dramatically. France counted both Britain and Russia as solid allies and it had effectively separated Italy from its partners in the Triple Alliance. This stunning turnaround was a credit to French diplomacy, although one could argue that France might not have achieved these successes had German diplomacy been handled more competently. According to D.J. Goodspeed in [The German Wars: 1914-1945](#), "The historian is almost tempted to conclude that between 1890 and 1914 France possessed the only really skillful diplomats in Europe." In **1900**, the Frenchman is going to have to work just as hard as his historical counterparts did to ensure the Third Republic does not stand alone in a hostile world.

Fortunately, France does have a number of advantages that can be exploited.

To begin with, I must reemphasize the fact that six neutral SCs can be reached by French units in '00. Only Britain, with access to eight neutral SCs in '00, can boast more neutral SCs within its sphere of influence. While it's true that Britain, Germany, and Italy can contest French access to these SCs, six SCs still represent considerable potential for growth.

Next, France makes a great ally for any Great Power that feels threatened by Germany. Since Germany effectively borders every nation except Turkey, France may have lots of suitors expressing concern about the seven (or eight!) SC Germany that is likely to appear in '01. Turkey should not feel left out, however. France also happens to be an excellent ally for any country wanting to keep mighty Britain in check. Since Russia, as much as France, is likely to be keeping a watchful eye on all of those blue and black blocks on the map, it wouldn't be surprising to see Republican France and Tsarist Russia come to terms, much as they actually did when they formed the Entente. Need makes for strange bedfellows indeed!

The irrefutable key to French survival, however, is to ensure the Third Republic is not the odd man out in the B/F/G triangle. This is entirely a diplomatic matter and failure is almost sure to mean a quick exit from the game.

Relations with Italy are just as critical. Far more so than in conventional **Diplomacy**, the Pope is likely to openly side with whichever Great Power, Britain or Germany, is opposed to France. Presidents need to either convince Popes that it is not in Italy's interest to attack France or be prepared for a potentially

arduous war on France's southern flank. Selling the Pope on an alliance with France or, at least, benign neutrality may be a difficult task, but it's not an impossible one. Almost certainly it will involve giving Italy a free hand or even support in Switzerland and Tripolitania in '00. Also, there is a significant element of risk involved since Italy can easily stab an unprepared France. However, the freedom of action Italian friendship or neutrality gives France may be worth the effort.

Needless to say, if the President finds himself fighting Britain, Germany, and Italy in '00, his diplomacy has been a complete bust. Any President in this situation should find a quiet place and start writing his memoirs while he waits for his appointment with *Le guillotine*.

In looking at France's options in Spring '00, it's clear the President is going to have to take risk somewhere. He simply doesn't have enough units to cover every contingency. Given this, it's important that he have a good feel for how successful his diplomacy has been. Let's examine several different scenarios for Spring '00:

Scenario 1: France is allied with Britain against Germany, and Italy is neutral or friendly.

Given this situation, the President should consider A Paris to Picardy, F Brest to Gascony, A Marseilles to Burgundy, and A Algeria to Morocco. These moves bring France's two armies to bear against Germany, start moving F Brest to the north coast of Spain where it is unlikely to offend either Britain or Italy, and provide a small measure of insurance against British or Italian treachery. When combined with Britain ordering F Gibraltar to Mid-Atlantic Ocean, F London to North Sea, and F Edinburgh to Norwegian Sea, B/F is in excellent position to take four neutral SCs in the Fall: Norway and Portugal to Britain, Morocco and Spain to France. Also, B/F has three units on Belgium, a development that puts all kinds of pressure on the Reich.

Scenario 2: France is allied with Britain against Germany, and Italy is hostile.

The primary danger in Scenario 1 is that Italy will take advantage of France's trust to grab Marseilles. The resulting builds from the acquisition of three SCs (Switzerland, Tripolitania, and Marseilles) combined with the lack of an effective B/F presence in the Mediterranean would put Italy in tremendous position to dominate the area. Certainly, the Kaiser is going to point this fact out to the Pope. Few Popes could be blamed for succumbing to the temptation, weak creatures of flesh that they are. Because of this, the President may decide to take some precautions or, like a true Frenchman, go on the offensive.

- o Under Scenario 2, B/F would want to get naval power in position to attack the Italian Peninsula. For France, this means moving F Brest to Mid-Atlantic Ocean. In the Fall, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean would continue sailing to Morocco to pick up a neutral SC for France. In '01, F Morocco would continue on to the Western Mediterranean or Algeria depending on what Italy's F Naples did.

- o A Algeria would move to Southern Algeria. This would allow it to cover Algeria in the extremely unlikely event Italy opens with F Naples to Tyrrhenian Sea. If Britain opened with F Egypt to Cyrenaica, A Southern Algeria can support a British move into Tripolitania or be supported by Britain into Tripolitania. As a minimum, A Southern Algeria can prevent Italy from taking Tripolitania in the Fall. BTW, I suggest moving to Southern Algeria instead of Tunisia because a French army in Southern Algeria gives France greater flexibility. France can cover Algeria or attack Tripolitania from both Southern Algeria and Tunisia, but the former also enables France to move to Morocco should that prove necessary, as might be the case if Britain proves faithless.

- o A Paris would move to Burgundy. From there, it forces Germany to make a supported attack to take the space. A Burgundy also allows France to put pressure on Belgium or, more likely, Switzerland.

- o A Marseilles has two options. The first is to move to Piedmont. If Italy has ordered A Milan to Switzerland and A Rome to Piedmont, then Marseilles will be safe in '00 and France has two units on Switzerland. Germany must support Italy into Switzerland or France can take it and get at least two

builds. The other option is to order A Marseilles to Switzerland directly. Unless Germany is supporting Italy's A Milan into Switzerland, the Pope cannot claim Switzerland in the Spring and again Marseilles is probably safe in '00.

In executing the moves above, the President would like to see Britain order F Gibraltar to Spain(ec) and F Egypt to Cyrenaica. If Marseilles is not in danger of falling to an Italian attack, Britain can order F Spain(ec)-Gulf of Lyon to really put the heat on Italy and F Cyrenaica to Tripolitania. If Marseilles is threatened, Britain can have F Spain(ec) support France in or into Marseilles while France's A Southern Algeria takes Tripolitania.

There are problems with these moves though. First, while they put considerable pressure on Italy, the President won't be able to ignore the fact that the bulk of the German army is poised to spill into northern France. The sooner the British can land the BEF on the continent, the better. Second, and just as frightening from the President's point of view, Britain comes out rather well in the bargain. With British units next to many French SCs, the President may crack under the strain of waiting for the seemingly inevitable British stab.

Scenario 3: France is allied with Germany against Britain, and Italy is neutral or friendly.

Any game-start war with Britain forces the President to determine whether or not F Egypt will be moved to the Mid-Atlantic and, if it is moved, whether F Gibraltar will be used to support the movement. If the President believes F Egypt to Mid-Atlantic Ocean is likely and F Gibraltar will support the move, then it's probably best for him to order F Brest to English Channel in the Spring. This will ensure Brest does not face a 2:1 attack in the Fall. If the President thinks he'll catch an unsupported British fleet moving to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, he should order F Brest to Mid-Atlantic Ocean. If he does this, however, it is probably best to position A Paris where it can support F Brest in the Fall in the event the President guessed wrong. Regardless of what is done with F Brest and A Paris, the President should order A Marseilles to Spain and A Algeria to Morocco. Taken together, these orders give France its best chance of maximizing its own builds in the Winter while minimizing British builds.

Given British options in this scenario, the Great Power that emerges on top initially, Britain or France, is likely to be the one whose leader guesses best. Fortunately, France only needs to hold on. The pressure of Germany's High Seas Fleet on the Royal Navy should eventually allow France to seize and hold the initiative.

Scenario 4: France is allied with Germany against Britain, and Italy is hostile.

This does not represent a pleasant situation for France since the odds are that any coordinated B/I activity will be directed squarely at the Third Republic. In particular, France's African Empire will probably be lost and Iberia/southern France put under intense pressure.

France's moves under this scenario are similar to those discussed under Scenario 3. A Paris should move to where it can protect Marseilles from an Italian attack. I initially favored moving A Paris to Burgundy, but, as Chris Dziedzic and Bill Leake point out in Chapter 10, A Paris to Gascony is probably better if Germany is friendly. The key to success, however, may be to get the Kaiser to open with A Munich to Switzerland. If the Kaiser does this, Marseilles is safe in '00 since the Italian can have at most one unit, A Piedmont, facing it. The question then becomes whether Franco-German forces can work their way down Italy's boot faster than Anglo-Italian forces can push through Africa, Iberia, and southern France. If the Third Republic is lucky, B/I will not be as effective as it could be due to friction over the division of spoils.

In many ways, France's lot in **1900** is comparable to that of Austria-Hungary in conventional **Diplomacy**. Both are surrounded by potential foes and can be attacked from all sides at once. Both enjoy inherent strengths, but are unlikely to survive long if unable to develop a strong relationship with a trustworthy ally. Both are likely to be viewed as the junior partner in any alliance for the first few game years. However, just as a seven or eight SC Dual Monarchy can be a handful in **Diplomacy**, a seven or eight SC Third Republic in **1900** is a force to be reckoned with. The challenge for the President will be to get his Great Power through those dangerous early years.

In summary, the key differences between France in **Diplomacy** and in **1900** are as follows:

- o France controls an additional SC in Africa, Algeria, and has an new army there to defend it.
 - o France's corner position is compromised by the presence of a new British unit, F Gibraltar.
 - o Britain's need to control the Mid-Atlantic Ocean to link its new Mediterranean possessions with the home islands serves to increase friction between Britain and France.
 - o A passable Switzerland that is also a SC serves to increase the friction between France and Italy.
- Additionally, Italy is better able to take the fight to France.

The bottom line to all of this is that France is more vulnerable in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. Given France's record of superior performance, as discussed earlier in this chapter, increasing its vulnerability should enhance overall play balance between the Great Powers. Ironically, the fearsome reputation France has established in **Diplomacy** may be the single greatest handicap the President has to overcome. Rumors of France's demise in the **1900** variant should not be exaggerated though. When Presidents exercise solid diplomacy and use sound tactics the Third Republic has not only thrived, it has prospered.

Chapter 5: GERMANY

In my opinion, **Diplomacy** does not do the Second Reich justice. At the outbreak of World War I, Germany had the single strongest army in the world by a significant margin, the second strongest navy behind Britain's, and the second strongest economy behind that of the United States. As James



Stokesbury remarks in *A Short History of World War I*, "For more than three years [during World War I] the Germans, with substantial help from their friends, had stood the world on its ear. It was a stupendous feat of arms." By contrast, Germany in **Diplomacy** seems downright pathetic. Fight a two-front war? Forget it! Germany is unlikely to last long against a determined Anglo-French alliance. Should the Russians invade from the east in strength, the Kaiser will soon be asking if there is time for another game that evening.

Of course, having a dominant Germany, though it might make for good history, does not necessarily make for a better game. The game results shown in Chapter 1 suggest that Germany is just about right

in terms of performance. The Reich has recorded 327 solos, 596 draws, and 2795 losses out of 3723 observed games. The average number in each of these three categories is 325, 617, and 2777 respectively. Germany's Great Power Rating (GPR) of 25.56 is closer to the average (25.71) than the GPR of any other Great Power. If play balance is something sought after, the question must be asked: why tinker with Germany at all?

The answer to this question has to do with the impact of German changes on the other Great Powers as well as on Germany itself. The same statistics that show Germany to be "about right" in terms of solos, draws, and losses also show that **Diplomacy** has its "haves" and "have-nots." France, with 364 solos and only 2608 losses, and Russia, with a staggering 449 solos, are superpowers. On the flip side, Austria-Hungary is a weakling with only 284 solos and 2899 losses, and Italy is practically comatose with a meager 221 solos and a horrendous 2968 losses. If the goal was to knock France and Russia down a peg or two, while resuscitating Austria-Hungary and Italy, it seemed to me that the best way to do so might be to make Germany and Britain a little stronger.

As I discussed in the chapter on Britain, the logic behind strengthening these two Great Powers went like this. First, Germany and Britain were the acknowledged powers on land and sea at the turn of the century. Making them strong, therefore, had a sound historical basis. Second, and more important, both nations have a great deal of military interaction with France and Russia in a typical **Diplomacy** game, but usually not as much, at least at game-start, with Austria-Hungary and Italy. This means that any advantages gained by Germany and Britain were likely to be used against France, Russia, and each other. If France and Russia were distracted, this should benefit Austria-Hungary and Italy since the former often contends with Russia for supremacy in the Balkans while the latter frequently matches up against France for dominance in the Mediterranean. There was the danger that Germany might use its new found muscle to try to annex the German portions of Austria-Hungary, while Britain might attempt to exercise claims in the Mediterranean at Italy's expense, but I was optimistic that this solution would work.

In fact, game results early in the life of the variant suggested that the stronger Germany was working too well as a deterrent against Russia. Unless he was distracted by a solid Anglo-French alliance, the Kaiser was usually anxious to turn the German military machine east as quickly as possible. Bouncing Russia's northern fleet out of Sweden in Fall '00 became a common tactic and a full-fledged invasion of Mother Russia usually followed shortly thereafter. Typically, Russia was unable to take on Germany, and often Britain too, while simultaneously fighting Austria-Hungary or Turkey. With the Tsar distracted in the north, the Archduke or Sultan would frequently turn on their Russian ally in '01 or '02, and grab their share of the Russian spoils, either in alliance with Germany or independently. As a result, Russia's GPR after forty **1900** games was absolutely awful. While Austria-Hungary and Turkey both benefited from German-Russian conflict, no Power gained more than the Reich itself did. To correct this situation, the Russian Steamroller Rule, hereafter simply Steamroller, was implemented. This rule will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7 when it is time to examine Russia.

Well, I've said I made Germany stronger. Let's take a look now at how this was accomplished.

At first glance, Germany appears to have undergone a dramatic transformation. In reality, though, all but two of the changes are cosmetic. The new internal boundaries for Germany reflect the borders of the many German states that were incorporated into Prussia and then into the German Empire during the 19th century, as well as the boundary of the German Confederation in 1815. What's important to note is that the relationship between the German spaces remains the same as it does in **Diplomacy**, except as noted below. My thanks to Charles Feaux de la Croix for "encouraging" me to abandon the original Berlin space that I had drawn and that looked remarkably like the 20th Century's "East" Germany, and replacing it with something that Wilhelm II himself would have recognized.

The two significant changes to Germany's internal arrangement are as follows:

- o First, Ruhr is renamed Cologne. Further, Cologne is a German supply center (SC). Interestingly, after I made this change, I learned that the original **Diplomacy** map designed by Allan Calhamer had a Cologne space that also was a German SC. In that original Calhamer map, Germany had SCs in Berlin, Cologne, and Kiel, but not Munich, which was called Bavaria. The Germany in **1900** has four SCs: Berlin, Cologne, Kiel, and Munich. Along with the new SC, Germany also gets a new army. This third Germany army changes the dynamics for the Second Reich considerably, as will be discussed shortly.

- o Second, a new German space, Alsace, serves as a buffer between Germany and France. Contrary to what many first time **1900** players initially believe, Alsace was included on the map to provide a measure of security to the Third Republic, not the Reich. Without this buffer, the Kaiser could use the German armies in Cologne and Munich to launch a devastating attack on France in Spring '00 (i.e., A Munich to Burgundy supported by A Cologne). I also like the fact that a space of tremendous historical significance, arguably the catalyst for World War I, is now part of the game.

I mentioned above that Germany now starts the game with a third army. What exactly are the implications for Germany given this additional unit?

In **Diplomacy**, Germany can usually count on getting Denmark and Holland in '01. Occupation of Belgium is usually more problematic, but it happens often enough not to be remarkable. In **1900**, Germany will most likely get Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands (Holland renamed) with little difficulty if it wants them. Additionally, gaining a fourth SC is not out of the question. A German thrust from Munich into Tyrolia in Spring '00 puts an army adjacent to four foreign SCs: Switzerland, which I'll discuss in a moment; Milan, a new Italian SC; Vienna; and Trieste. Germany can also move east and threaten Warsaw in coordination with Austria-Hungary, just like Conrad von Hotzendorf envisioned. With three (or four!) builds likely in '00, '01 will see a seven (or eight!!) SC Germany dominating the center of the board. The game is barely one year old and Germany is already nearly halfway to victory and the unquestioned leader of the pack. *Leben ist gut, ja!*

Well, maybe not...

First, Germany may be big and bad, but it's certainly not invulnerable, particularly when both Britain and France have very good chances of reaching six or even seven SCs themselves in '00.

Second, as Scott Morris points out in his article "Winter 1901: The Three Build Opening" in *Diplomacy World* #82, explosive early growth has not always benefited Germany. To quote Scott: "Germany had a three build opening in 8 of the 56 games studied. Unfortunately, of those 8 games, Germany went on to win BUTKUS! ZIP! NADA! The Kaiser closed the deal 0 of 8 games after a three build opening. This tells us that Germany, more than any other country on the board is susceptible to the early leader syndrome. When you have five neighbors and you expand quickly, your odds of being noticed are greater." Very true!

Thaddeus Black, in his article "The Strongest Country on the Diplomacy Map" in issue #81 of *Diplomacy World*, writes: "It is a curious Diplomacy fact that the very perception among a particular circle of players that one country is stronger than another has a big impact on the game; if England, Germany, Austria, and Turkey all believe Russia is unstoppable, for example, then you had better hope that you don't get stuck with Russia, hadn't you, because those guys are going to knock the poor Tsar back to Siberia."

Third, in addition to being noticeable and having lots of neighbors, the Kaiser has to deal with an image problem. Admit it...what first comes to mind when you think of Germany? How about sneering, monocle wearing Prussian officers; endless ranks of gray-coated soldiers trampling over the land in their hob-nailed boots; burning villages; poison gas; submarines sinking defenseless ships in icy waters; air raids; concentration camps; etc.; etc. You get the picture. I don't think it's a coincidence that the German units are black.

So what's a Kaiser to do? Germany almost can't help but be seen as the Power to watch in '01. The Reich's neighbors are likely to view Germany's concentration of forces with both suspicion and alarm. Potential allies may be wary of Germany based on the perception that having the Reich as an ally is like having a pet tiger: you never know when the tiger may decide to eat you. Interestingly, it was growing fear of German dominance in Britain, France, and Russia that contributed directly to World War I.

I think part of the answer to this dilemma may be for Germany to play like the 600-pound gorilla it is perceived to be. When you're a giant, don't be shy. Instead of moving timidly or being apologetic about Germany's virtues, I feel the Kaiser should act like he really does belong to the master race. While there's no need to be as arrogant and clumsy as the Germans actually were, there should also be no need to molycoddle the other players or be overgenerous in dealing with them. Failure by Germany to grab its "fair share" and then some when the opportunity presents itself is probably self-defeating in the long run. No doubt Germany will need all of the builds it can get to expand against determined resistance on several fronts, the curse of having abundant neighbors.

In any case, a powerful Germany bulging with units may not need to search as hard for allies as my discussion above might lead one to believe. There are bound to be countries that will look to Germany for help after the first game-year shows how the alliance picture is shaping up. If Britain and France are sliding towards war, both will be knocking on the Kaiser's door and asking for assistance. If, on the other hand, Britain and France are looking chummy, and a B/F is relatively hard to hide, then the Pope is sure to call. In the east, the Kaiser can probably count on the Archduke seeking aid if the Dual Monarchy and Russia are bumping heads over Rumania. For his part, the Tsar will almost certainly have on his most pleasant face and offer his support in a war against the ramshackle Habsburg Empire or the untrustworthy democracy in Albion in return for German guarantees regarding Sweden. Even the Sultan, if he is smart,

will chat with the Kaiser on a regular basis since a strong Germany may be just the tonic to relieve pressure on the Ottoman Empire being applied by an expanding Austria-Hungary or Russia.

Let's spend some time now discussing other differences between **1900** and **Diplomacy** that potentially impact on German strategy.

Germany's neighbor to the southeast, Austria-Hungary, begins the game with three armies instead of two armies and a fleet. Also, the map has been redrawn to allow movement between Budapest and Bohemia. Finally, the Italian SC that was in Venice has now been moved to a new space, Milan, and no longer borders Trieste. These subtle changes carry significant implications for Germany's diplomatic efforts.

The Kaiser might not consider Austria-Hungary much of a threat at game-start in **1900**. Peace between the two Powers is the norm in **Diplomacy**. In fact, an immediate attack by one on the other is usually considered sheer folly. This perception, when combined with a more muscular Reich, may lead the Kaiser to believe that it would be suicidal for Austria-Hungary to take on the German behemoth. Such is not necessarily the case, however. First, not having to worry about an immediate Italian thrust into Trieste, as discussed in the chapter on Austria-Hungary, gives the Archduke more freedom of action. Second, the cumulative effect of having three armies and being able to move directly from Budapest to Bohemia is that the Dual Monarchy can put two armies adjacent to Munich in Spring '00 and still capture Serbia. If the Archduke makes such an opening in conjunction with a Russian thrust from Warsaw into Prussia or Silesia, things could suddenly get very uncomfortable for the Kaiser. If A/R is cooperating with Britain and/or France, German life expectancy might be shorter than anyone expected.

Obviously, to avoid such an embarrassing situation, the Kaiser must attempt to remain on good terms with the Archduke. I suspect this will not be too difficult, at least early on. Austro-Hungarian concerns about Russian or Turkish intentions will tend to be high in most games. Playing on Vienna's justifiable fears of Russians spilling into the Hungarian Plains or Turks driving north through the Balkans or a Juggernaut doing both, should work to discourage any western options the Archduke might otherwise consider. The Kaiser should also point out to the Archduke how vulnerable Rumania is and how its capture allows for a second Austro-Hungarian build in '00 while at the same time denying Russia a build. If, right up front, the Kaiser offers German support against the Tsar's hordes in the form of A Berlin or A Munich to Silesia, the Archduke might not even bother to fully explore his other alliance alternatives. This is especially true if the Archduke is new to the variant and, therefore, used to the dynamics of **Diplomacy** where "Tsar" is often synonymous with "the Bogeyman" in Vienna.

As for Russia, it looks much the same as it does in **Diplomacy**. Other than splitting Moscow into two spaces, Moscow and Siberia, Russia has not been changed. Russia's position, however, is not as favorable as it is in **Diplomacy**. The three armies possessed by both Germany and Austria-Hungary enable each Great Power to take on a more aggressive attitude towards the Russian Empire. In fact, the Kaiser might even want to consider an eastern opening in alliance with the Dual Monarchy. If Germany successfully opens with F Kiel to Denmark, A Cologne to Belgium, A Berlin to Prussia and A Munich to Silesia, while Austria-Hungary is able to move A Budapest to Galicia, A Vienna to Budapest, and A Trieste to Serbia, the results can be devastating for Russia. Consider:

- o With help from the Dual Monarchy, Germany can take Warsaw in the Fall giving Germany three builds and denying Russia a home SC.

- o Russia can be kept out of Sweden in the Fall with F Denmark to Sweden.

- o Austria-Hungary may get Rumania or, at least, keep it out of Russian hands.

Even if all of these moves are not all successful, as will probably be the case, the pressure on Russia will be tremendous. If Turkey can be convinced to join in on the slaughter, the Bear is sure to be killed quickly, even with the additional unit it enjoys due to the Steamroller. With Russia's demise, Germany's

eastern frontier becomes much more secure. I know that somewhere Hindenburg and Ludendorff are smiling.

I call this A/G opening, which is sure to give the Tsar indigestion, the Connor-Greneoux Gambit in honor of the players to first use it successfully in a **1900** game. Even if such an aggressive anti-Russian opening is not pursued, the Kaiser can still move to keep Russia out of Sweden in Fall '00 with considerably less fear of retribution. This ability gives the Kaiser significant diplomatic leverage with his Russian counterpart.

Of course, nothing says Russia has to be an enemy. If the British look to be a problem, the Kaiser may find that the Tsar's friendship is a valuable asset. In return for Russian assistance in the north, the Kaiser might even send an army east with the idea of working with the Tsar, especially if an A/T is in the works. An opening move of A Munich to Tyrolia will probably cause panic in Vienna, all the more so if there are Russians in Galicia.

The Kaiser needs to be careful, though, in choosing sides. On the one hand, the demise of Russia frequently means that the Dual Monarchy is now free to meddle in central European affairs, something all true-blooded Habsburgs love to do. The Archduke may demonstrate his "gratitude" for earlier German support by moving aggressively against German gains in Russia or against Munich and Berlin. On the other hand, Austria-Hungary often serves as the Reich's primary buffer against a Slavic invasion from the east, particularly if Russia and Turkey are cooperating. If Germany participates in the partitioning of the Dual Monarchy, the Kaiser may discover, to his horror, just how lonely it can be in the center of the map.

Any discussion of relations with Austria-Hungary and Russia must include mention of the Three Emperors' League (A/G/R). If Austria-Hungary and Russia appear friendly, it might be prudent for the Kaiser to join ranks with them in such a triple. An A/G/R has the potential to hit Britain, Italy, and Turkey hard. In this case, Germany would probably use A Berlin, A Cologne, and F Kiel to take Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands, while A Munich assists the Dual Monarchy against Italy or into Switzerland.

Turning our attention to the south, we see that Switzerland has not only been made passable, it is now a SC. Opening up Switzerland gives the Reich another opportunity for expansion and allows Germany to apply pressure against France or Italy on a broader front. The problem, of course, is that Switzerland also provides an avenue for France or Italy to use to attack the Reich. Since Switzerland is adjacent to a home SC in each Great Power, the Alps are likely to be a cauldron of activity as Germany, France, and Italy all vie for control of the strategically important Swiss SC.

It should be noted, however, that Switzerland is arguably of far greater importance to both France and Italy than it is to Germany, at least initially. This and the fact that Germany has an "extra" army (i.e., Germany can acquire three neutral SCs and still have an army left over for other uses) gives the Kaiser a powerful "chip" to use in his opening negotiations with the President and the Pope. Frequently, the Kaiser will determine which Great Power, France or Italy, wins the battle for possession of Switzerland

A quick glance west at France may give the impression that the Third Republic is stronger than ever. Not only are Portugal and Spain still within France's sphere of influence, a fourth French unit now appears in Algeria, a new French SC in northern Africa. A Algeria gives France access to two other new African SCs, Morocco and Tripolitania. If we throw in Belgium and Switzerland, France can reach six neutral SCs in '00. Egad! Before prospective Kaisers get too alarmed, however, they should know that France has its hands full. A British fleet in the new Gibraltar space compromises France's relatively secure corner position and gives the President a number of diplomatic and tactical problems to solve. Italy also requires much more of the President's attention. Several map changes (i.e., making Switzerland passable

and a SC, moving the Italian SC from Venice to Milan, eliminating Tuscany, and adding Gibraltar) make conflict between France and Italy both more likely and more balanced.

In **Diplomacy**, France makes a tremendous German ally against a hostile England. An alliance with France is probably even more favorable for Germany in **1900**. This is because the disposition of British fleets virtually ensures that the Third Republic, not the Reich, will feel the heat of Britain's wrath. Germany should be able to dominate an F/G in the early going. This is even truer if Italy has joined Britain against France. If a B/I exists, French survival may depend directly on German intervention. This intervention might take the form of an opening move into Switzerland from Munich. Such an opening keeps Italy out of Switzerland in the Spring and greatly eases France's defensive problems. The upshot is that Germany might even get Switzerland out of the bargain and gain four builds in '00!

If France is hostile, there is really no need for the Kaiser to panic. This is because Germany stands a very good chance of successfully recruiting Italy to its side. Often, all that will be required is the promise of support into Switzerland in '00. Working together, G/I can easily arrange to have four units on the French border at the end of Fall '00. These units and the new builds Germany and Italy each get in the Winter are sure to give the President a huge headache as '01 begins.

Turning towards Britain, the first thing the Kaiser should notice is that it starts the game with four fleets, but no army. This means no pesky BEF deploying to the continent or to Norway in Fall '00. Also, two of the British fleets start in the Mediterranean, far from Germany's shores. While Britain is likely to get two builds in Winter '00, its initial position vis-à-vis Germany will probably not be as strong as it is in **Diplomacy**.

The Kaiser should not be fooled into thinking that Britain will be a pushover, however. Even with French help, Germany will have a tough time against Albion. This is because Britain has good growth potential, its fleets control the seas, and the Prime Minister carries considerable diplomatic clout. Just as Germany can hope to play the Italian trump card against France, so too can Britain using Tripolitania as the bait. Also, if Germany bounced Russia out of Sweden, British promises of support into Sweden may bring the Tsar into the conflict on the Prime Minister's side.

If Britain is such a potentially tough opponent, then perhaps the Kaiser should consider an alliance with Britain. In my mind, this is the alliance to fear in **1900**. In all likelihood, a B/G would defeat France easily, particularly if Italy joins in the slaughter. Assuming the situation in the east permits it, the Kaiser can go for the President's jugular by ordering F Kiel to Denmark, A Berlin to Kiel, A Munich to Alsace, and A Cologne to Belgium in the Spring. These moves would be followed by F Denmark H, A Kiel to Netherlands, A Alsace to Burgundy, and A Belgium S A Alsace to Burgundy in the Fall. When this attack is combined with British pressure, the Third Republic should collapse quickly. At this point, both Germany and Britain would be huge and ready to roll over the rest of the board.

From Germany's perspective, there are two problems in a long-term alliance with Britain, either alone or as part of a triple.

- o To begin with, a B/G in **1900** should be even more of a flag to the other Great Powers than a Juggernaut is in **Diplomacy**. If the other Great Powers can recognize the terrible danger and drop their quarrels, admittedly a huge "if," then B/G will have a tough go of it since all of the other Great Powers, to include Turkey, can hit B/G directly in some way.

- o Perhaps more important, Germany is ripe for a stab at just about any time. While the Reich is sloggng its way through the center of the board, Britain will be sitting like a vulture on its shoulders. Just as in **Diplomacy**, it will undoubtedly be much easier for Britain to engineer a devastating stab of Germany than vice-versa.

So what happens if Germany finds itself the odd man out in the B/F/G triangle. Both Britain and France have the potential to grow quickly themselves. If they team up, as they did historically, they can ensure the Kaiser sleeps uneasily. Fortunately for Germany, it enjoys several advantages over its western rivals:

- o Three builds, Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands, are basically there for the taking. While there are no guarantees, Germany will probably have to work less to pick up its neutral SCs than Britain and France will have to work to get theirs.

- o Because Germany doesn't have to go beyond its own backyard to grab three neutral SCs, it can make its Spring '00 moves without tipping its hand. This enables the Kaiser to see how Anglo-French relations shape up before committing himself to a specific plan in the west. On the flip-side, the juggling Britain and France will have to do to keep out of each other's way while grabbing neutral SCs will be readily apparent to all right from the start.

- o I believe Italy's "natural" inclination is to turn towards France. While good diplomacy on the part of the President can get the Pope to go searching for SCs that do not belong to France, the Kaiser will not have to work nearly as hard to get Italy on Germany's side. This will particularly be the case when the Pope sees British and French units cooperating in the conquest of Iberia and northern Africa.

- o After the builds, German units will be well positioned for either offensive or defensive action. Britain and France, after grabbing nearby neutrals, are far more likely to find that their units are not as well placed as they would like them to be.

In summary, the key differences between Germany in **Diplomacy** and in **1900** are as follows:

- o Ruhr is now called Cologne and is a German SC. Additionally, a third German army starts the game in this new SC.

- o A buffer space, Alsace, has been inserted between German Munich and French Burgundy.

- o Switzerland has been made passable and a SC. This opens up Germany's border with both France and Italy.

- o Germany's position vis-à-vis France and Russia has been improved.

- o Germany must be more concerned with a game-start attack from Austria-Hungary.

- o Germany is better able to conduct an "eastern" strategy at game-start.

The bottom line to all of this is that Germany is stronger in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. All of its inherent strength is wasted, however, if not supported by a solid diplomatic effort on the part of the Kaiser. This is because Germany, more so than any other Great Power, suffers from the dreaded "Early Leader Syndrome." The Kaiser will need to ensure fear of German expansion does not cause the rest of the board to unite against him. If he can't do this, he'll probably suffer the same fate as his real world counterpart.

Chapter 6: ITALY

Italy received much of my attention while I worked on **1900**. This is because I believed Italy needed help. Let's face it, **Diplomacy's** Italy requires a transfusion. How bad are things? In a face-to-face game, the person who draws Italy receives condolences from the other players before the game even



starts. Tournaments are designed so players won't be "burdened" with Italy in more than one game. Player rating systems that don't weigh a win or a draw by the Pope higher than a similar accomplishment by the President or Tsar are called into question. I don't know about you, but these things concern me. I think the game of **Diplomacy** suffers if, as seems to be the case, a universal perception exists that some Great Powers are inherently stronger or weaker than others. After all, who wants to be saddled with some "red-headed step-child" of a country?

Unfortunately, all indications are that Italy's poor reputation is very much deserved. Italy's overall record is nothing short of horrendous. Consider:

- o In an article by Melinda Holley that appeared in *Diplomacy World* #77 ("7x7 Gunboat Tournaments – An Analysis"), the results of twelve 7x7 Gunboat tournaments, a total of eighty-four games, are examined. Not surprisingly, the results

show that Italy finished at the bottom. The Pope managed just one win out of the eighty-four games played. In comparison, France ran away from the field by winning fourteen games.

- o The numbers from Chapter 1 that I've referenced many times already confirm Italy's reputation as the most pathetic of "Great Powers." Out of 3723 conventional **Diplomacy** games recorded, Italy has won a paltry 221 times. Italy has also suffered 2968 losses. These numbers put Italy in last place on both accounts by a large margin. Austria-Hungary, almost everyone's consensus pick as the next weakest Great Power, looks like a titan in comparison with 284 solos and 2899 losses. Russia, with 449 solos has lapped Italy, while France has lost 360 fewer times.

- o The game results just mentioned give Italy a Great Power Rating (GPR) of 19.07. This is a staggering 6.64 points below the average GPR of 25.71. Austria-Hungary, with a "nothing to be proud of" GPR of 22.28, is a speck far in the distance from Rome's perspective. If Italy were to win 200 straight games (fat chance!), its GPR would still be less than the GPR of France or Russia. Such is the depth of the hole Italy has dug for itself.

As I've said before, Italy appears to be the '62 Mets of **Diplomacy**.

This is not to say that Italy's terrible performance doesn't reflect actual history quite well. D. J. Goodspeed in The German Wars: 1914-1945 quotes Bismark as saying that Italy "had a large appetite but very poor teeth." Goodspeed further remarks that "Italy since her creation in 1861 had shown herself incompetent on every battlefield." Italy's pretensions to Great Power status were not helped when it suffered the humiliation of being the only European nation to lose a war to an African nation, Abyssinia, in 1889. Yikes! Even Turkey, the supposed "Sick Man of Europe," was holding its own against the Italians in 1911 until events in the Balkans forced the Turks to give up the fight in Libya and focus on matters closer to home. Italy's "victory" in the Italo-Turkish War left its finances in desperate shape and

its military in shambles. Frankly, from a purely historical perspective, it's hard, if not impossible, to justify Italy being the equal of the other Great Powers.

Good history, though, does not necessarily translate into a good game. If Italy (and Turkey) were as weak in **Diplomacy** as they were historically, the game would simply not be as appealing. Allan Calhamer recognized this fact when he designed **Diplomacy**. To give Italy a chance to compete, Allan made Tunis a neutral Supply Center (SC) when, in fact, it clearly belonged to France at the turn of the century. Even this historical liberty seems insufficient, however. This leads us to the following questions: why is Italy's performance so bad when compared to the other Great Powers and what, if anything, can be done to balance things out without completely twisting historical reality?

The first problem that jumps out at most people is that Italy's SC in Venice is directly adjacent to Austria-Hungary's SC in Trieste. No where else on the map does such a situation exist. Having SCs that touch can't help but create tension between the two neighbors since each has to worry about the other opening the game with an attack. I think Austria-Hungary has much more to fear in this regard, but the problem does work both ways, particularly as the game progresses. Each Great Power is almost forced to have one unit pull garrison duty close to home to preclude the possibility of the other building in the Winter and attacking in the Spring without warning.

There is no doubt in my mind that this situation is annoying for both the Archduke and Pope, and contributes in some measure to each Great Power's poor record. Still, I don't believe the Venice/Trieste issue is a fatal flaw. Instead, I think Italy's woes stem directly from the basic dynamics of the game. This position takes some explaining.

It's generally accepted that Italy's growth potential is limited, but why this is so is seldom addressed. It's easy to say Italy's generally poor growth is due to a paucity of surrounding neutral SCs. Tunis is a given, but after that, Italy must bump heads with its neighbors to get additional SCs. This means that Italy will normally get only one build in '01. The lack of surrounding neutral SCs is not a sufficient explanation, however, since this situation is not unique to Italy. England and Turkey both commonly enter '02 with only four units. There is a key difference, though, between Italy's situation and that of England or Turkey, or any other Great Power for that matter: Italy is not part of either the eastern (A/R/T) or western (E/F/G) triangles.

A common pattern in **Diplomacy** is that the three Great Powers on each side of the board sort themselves out so that two form a dual alliance and fight the remaining one. While it's true there is some cross over between the eastern and western triangles, generally in the north involving Russia on one side and England and/or Germany on the other, and triple alliances can alter the dynamics somewhat, this basic "2:1 Rule" is fundamental to **Diplomacy**. The "odd Power out" (hereafter OPO) in each triangle is usually in deep trouble and its home SCs and traditional neutrals often end up in the hands of the two allies. The conquerors thus have new units that can be used to fuel further expansion on the other side of the board.

Italy is not a member of either triangle. This is not entirely a bad thing. Italy has to worry less about a game-start attack than the other Great Powers do and Italy invariably will have many suitors. In particular, the OPOs in the east and west will almost certainly appeal to Italy for help. Being "above the fray" is not always a good thing, though. With only four units on hand at the start of '02, Italy lacks the muscle to get actively involved in both the eastern and western triangles right away. Generally, the Pope will have to choose one or the other. If, after making his east-west decision, the Pope sides with the OPO, the resulting 2-vs-2 situation often becomes stalemated. Italy's growth, if any, is likely to be extremely limited. In the meantime, the dual alliance in the other triangle will be looking for new worlds to conquer after finishing off the OPO. Unfortunately for Italy, it lies directly in the path of any Great Power that is

expanding in the Mediterranean. All too often, Italy is hit in the rear while its forces are tied up on another front.

The scenario described above might lead one to conclude that Italy's best option is to join in a triple alliance with the two partners in one of the dual alliances or, if the Pope is the devious type, to form one or two dual alliances within the triple. With three Great Powers lined up against it, the OPO will likely go down quickly. Its demise will presumably allow Italy to pick up some SCs. Further, a new triangle is created and the "2:1 Rule" comes into effect. With good diplomacy, the Pope can ensure Italy is not the new OPO.

While this arrangement sounds promising, there are some problems. For one thing, as one of three, Italy's share of the spoils when the OPO is destroyed is going to be small. This means Italy may still be smaller than the Great Power racing at it when the victorious dual alliance in the other triangle moves out of its side of the map. More importantly, Italy is not always well positioned to participate in a triple alliance. Of the six triple alliances involving the three Great Powers in one triangle and Italy (i.e., no cross-triangle triple alliances such as E/I/R), only three seem to offer real opportunities for sustained Italian growth: E/G/I versus France, A/I/R versus Turkey, and I/R/T versus Austria-Hungary. E/G/I and A/I/R appear to give Italy its best prospects. In the case of I/R/T, the Pope is playing with fire. Unless he is very confident that either the Tsar or the Sultan will be his friend after the Archduke is disposed of, feeding the Dual Monarchy to the Juggernaut may be tantamount to suicide. Also, if the friend turns out to be the Sultan, the Pope will be living on the edge for as long as the I/T alliance lasts.

Well, this is a pretty bleak picture. What has been done in **1900** to fix it? I'm glad you asked.

First, Italy itself has undergone a significant transformation. Venice is no longer a SC. Instead, it is simply a buffer space that is now called Venetia. The SC reappears in a new Italian space in the north called Milan. These changes work to eliminate the inherent friction that exists between Austria-Hungary and Italy in **Diplomacy** over Venice/Trieste. Also, Tuscany is no more. Its removal means that Rome touches Milan, Piedmont, and Gulf of Lyon directly. This has tremendous implications for Italy both offensively and defensively as will be discussed shortly.

Next, we see that things around Italy have also changed.

Switzerland, impassable in **Diplomacy**, is now a neutral SC. Because Switzerland borders three Great Power home SCs, Marseilles, Milan, and Munich, its occupation by any one Great Power is likely to be viewed with trepidation, if not outright hostility, by the other two Great Powers. Given that both France and Germany have other neutral SCs nearby they can claim, I imagine most Popes will regard Switzerland as falling within Italy's sphere of influence, a position I whole-heartedly support. While the President and Kaiser might agree that Italian possession of Switzerland is the "fair" thing, neither is likely to view Italian occupation of Switzerland with much enthusiasm unless they are confident that Italy is friendly.

To the southwest, the boundaries of the Tyrrhenian Sea have been drawn so that it touches the new French SC, Algeria, in Africa. (NOTE: The Tyrrhenian Sea in **Diplomacy** does not touch the North Africa space.) This change was made to facilitate Italian operations against French possessions in Africa in the event the two Great Powers come to blows. It should be mentioned that France has a new army in Algeria at game-start.

Moving east along the coast of Africa, we see that Tunis, now Tunisia, is no longer a neutral SC. Instead, it is a buffer space under French control at game-start. Having Tunisia as a buffer means that France and Italy each have an equal chance of occupying Tripolitania in '00 if they both go for it. Tripolitania is a

new neutral SC on the far side of the Ionian Sea from the Italian mainland. Immediately to Tripolitania's east is another buffer space, Cyrenaica. Cyrenaica separates Tripolitania from Egypt. Egypt is a British SC and is occupied by a British fleet at game-start. This means the Prime Minister can also make a move for Tripolitania and, if he does, his odds of getting it in '00 are as good as the Pope's. What gives Italy an advantage in the quest for Tripolitania is that France's A Algeria and Britain's F Egypt might be needed elsewhere while Italy's F Naples will almost certainly open to the Ionian Sea.

In addition to Egypt in the eastern Mediterranean, Britain also controls Gibraltar in the west. Unlike Egypt, Gibraltar is not a British SC, but a British fleet does begin the game there. Besides the obvious fact that Britain is a major player in the Mediterranean because of its possessions and fleets, the Pope should also note that Gibraltar makes it more difficult for France to reinforce its southern flank. This is because Gibraltar divides Spain's southern coast into two separate coasts, east and west. In conventional Diplomacy, French fleets built in Brest can progress quickly to the Mediterranean by moving from Brest to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean in the Spring followed by a move to Spain(sc) in the Fall. In just two turns, a French fleet built in Brest is in position to support Marseilles or enter Gulf of Lyon. Now, a newly built French fleet has to go from Brest to Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Gibraltar to Spain(ec)/Western Mediterranean or Brest to Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Morocco to Western Mediterranean. In either case, the going is slower. Given Italy's ability to quickly reinforce its position in the Mediterranean and the relative ease with which Italy can prevent France from building in Marseilles, the Pope can make things quite uncomfortable for France in the south.

Looking to the east, we see that Albania, which didn't come into existence until 1912, is replaced by a new Turkish space, Macedonia, that stretches from the Adriatic Sea to Constantinople. This Macedonian space creates a situation where the Ottoman Empire, not the Dual Monarchy, is likely to take Greece in '00. Turkish options will be addressed in Chapter 8, but the point to be made here is that it's possible, even probable, that Turkey will get two builds (maybe three!) in '00. Most Popes will not greet such prospects with great joy. While Italy can stop the Sultan from taking Greece in '00, the price for doing so, besides certain Turkish animosity, is an Italian build because Italy cannot block Turkish growth and claim Tripolitania at the same time.

While on the subject of Turkey, I should point out that the Turkish SC that was in Smyrna, now Konya, has moved to Syria, now Damascus. The full impacts of these changes will be discussed in detail when I look at Turkey, but I will say that the impetus behind them was to help Italy (and Austria-Hungary) by curbing Turkish power in a small way and by facilitating the formation of anti-Turk alliances, specifically A/R and B/I.

Finishing our tour around Italy, we note that Austria-Hungary has an army in Trieste at game-start instead of a fleet. This technically allows the Dual Monarchy to send units to Tyrolia and Venetia in Spring '00 while still taking Serbia. Such an opening will almost certainly cause the Pope to start repeating rosaries. Fortunately for Italy, such audacious moves are unlikely for Austria-Hungary unless its relations with both Germany and Russia are exceptionally good. Still, the Pope should not take for granted the fact that the Archduke will use his third army in the east.

So what are the cumulative effects of all these changes. Apparently, a few people believe they actually make Italy's plight worse! Comments that appeared in Scott Morris's 'zine *The Flat Earth Society* when **1900** was introduced included the following:

- o "Austria and Italy look weaker."
- o "I see ... Italy pummelled (sic) into oblivion, since England (sic) has him flanked on both sides and France can keep him from any neutrals in 1901(sic)."
- o "Italy is a big hairy dog with fleas!"

Oh my! Such damning remarks! It's a good thing I'm not easily discouraged. In my opinion, Italy is better off for the following reasons:

- o First, many of the changes described earlier, plus others not mentioned, have gone some way towards breaking down the traditional triangles. Austria-Hungary, if allied with Russia, can engineer an effective western strategy at game-start while still battling Turkey in the east, something unheard of in **Diplomacy**. Britain, with F Egypt, is now truly a factor in the eastern triangle in both the north and south. Germany has also entered into the eastern equation. With four units at game-start and three builds expected after the first game-year, the Reich has the ability to be a major player on two fronts. Lastly, just as the Sultan must take British options into account, the Prime Minister must consider Turkish options when planning his moves. The breakdown of the traditional triangles means new game-start alliance possibilities for Italy.

- o Second, interaction between Italy and the western Powers is unquestionably more feasible. In fact, I'd go so far as to say the western triangle is now a quadrangle that includes Italy. Making Switzerland passable allows Italy to cooperate directly with France against Germany or Germany against France. Likewise, the two British fleets in the Mediterranean facilitate Anglo-Italian combined operations against France and/or Turkey from game-start.

- o Third, Italy's ability to avoid conflict with both Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire appears to be slightly improved. Austro-Italian friction over SC control in the Balkans is minimized, particularly regarding Greece. In **Diplomacy**, Austria-Hungary often occupies Greece in '01, yet Italy frequently considers Greece its "just compensation" for taking part in an anti-Ottoman crusade. In **1900**, Turkey or Italy will initially gain control of Greece, not Austria-Hungary, so the Archduke is not faced with the unpleasant prospect of surrendering a SC he controls to buy Italian cooperation. On the other hand, if the Pope is considering an I/T, it is now possible for Italy to control both the Ionian and Tyrrhenian Sea spaces, both critical to the defense of Italy, without cutting off Turkish movement westward.

A few people have told me that the map changes in and around Italy, particularly the opening up of Switzerland and elimination of Tuscany, mean that a game-start war with France is inevitable. I don't deny that Italy's "natural" orientation is westward. This is, in fact, by design. I wanted to curb French power and avoid making it easy for the Pope to hit the Dual Monarchy at game-start. Also, I've done things, intentionally, to improve Italy's prospects against France. In the vast majority of **1900** games played, the Pope and President have gone to war. This is good history by the way. Italy entered into the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, even though most Italians detested the Austrians, because France inspired intense fear and hatred.

Certainly, the Pope can make life absolutely miserable for the President. A successful opening of A Milan to Switzerland and A Rome to Piedmont gives Italy possession of Switzerland and puts two units on Marseilles in '00. If the Pope suspects France will move A Marseilles to Piedmont or Switzerland in the Spring, he can open A Rome to Piedmont supported by A Milan and give himself an excellent chance of taking Switzerland while protecting Italy proper. Meanwhile, F Naples opens to Ionian Sea where it can try for Tripolitania or Greece in the Fall depending on which neutral is most likely to be open. If Italy captures even one neutral SC in '00, it can build F Rome and really turn the heat on France. If Italy captures two neutral SCs in '00, F Rome and F Naples are sure to give Italy dominance in the Western Mediterranean. In all likelihood, either Britain or Germany, and possibly both, will be quite happy to see Italy decisively engaged with France and will render aide.

Sending the two Italian armies north to do battle with France over Switzerland is certainly a viable option and has been quite popular with Popes. However, as tempting as it might be to plunge into southern France and show the President he isn't so big and bad anymore, the sad truth is that this could result in Italy being caught in a deadly quagmire. If either Britain or Germany sides with France, an easy Italian conquest of the Third Republic is probably out of the question. In fact, stalemate and lack of growth is

much more likely. Should Italy get caught in a two-on-two western slugfest, it is probably only a matter of time before the Dual Monarchy or the Ottoman Empire hits it in the rear and takes it out of its misery.

Of course, I don't think a Franco-Italian War is inevitable, just as it wasn't in 1914. The tense Trieste/Venice situation in **Diplomacy** certainly doesn't mean that an Austro-Italian War is a sure thing in '01. On the contrary, an A/I in **Diplomacy** can be very strong. Despite the seeming obstacles, I happen to believe a F/I in **1900** has much to offer each partner. The two allies each get a secure flank, they can expand without stepping on each other's toes, and they can cooperate directly in the center of the map.

In my mind, any Italian accommodation with France would have to involve the President's acceptance of Italy's "just claim" to Switzerland and possible support into the SC. In return, the Pope would probably have to agree to send A Rome south, the traditional Italian opening in **Diplomacy**, instead of north. Why would the President agree to allow an Italian army next to Marseilles? Well, when your neighbors are the British leviathan and the German behemoth, you really shouldn't be looking to make enemies. Even if one of the two is a French ally, the other will probably be a big enough challenge to take down without the distraction of a hostile Italy complicating things, particularly when Italy is likely to focus primarily on France and leave France's ally alone. Looking at it from Rome's perspective, an accommodation with France almost guarantees Italy will get two builds in '00. A five SC Italy in '01 will surely get people's attention. Additionally, Italy can become a major player in the east.

French friendship or neutrality allows Italy to pursue a "traditional" approach. Consider these moves:

Spring '00: A Milan to Switzerland, A Rome to Naples, and F Naples to Ionian Sea.

Fall '00: A Naples to Tripolitania, F Ionian Sea C A Naples to Tripolitania, and A Switzerland either hold or support an ally.

Winter '00: Build A Milan and F Naples.

From this position, Italy is fairly well situated to take the war to Austria-Hungary, British occupied Egypt, or Turkey while still maintaining a viable presence in the center of the map. This position also allows Italy to fight effectively along side France should the Third Republic be the OPO in the west while still maintaining a respectable defense against an expanding eastern Power. Interestingly, the moves above also appear to facilitate a scenario where France has been hit hard in '00 and seems likely to collapse quickly. If such a situation occurs, the Pope might be well advised to grab what fragments of the crumbling French Empire he can while negotiating heavily with both the Prime Minister and Kaiser in an attempt to break-up B/G and install either B/I or G/I in its place.

While I think it will be rare, an Italian thrust into Austria-Hungary at game-start is a possibility. The Archduke is likely to start choking on his breakfast pastry if he opens up the Spring '00 adjudication and sees that Italy has opened with A Milan to Tyrolia and A Rome to Venetia, with the *Regia Marina*, of course, moving to the Ionian Sea. In most cases, the Dual Monarchy will be able to defend itself, but all of its prior planning will probably end up in the circular file. I say such an aggressive Italian opening will be rare, however, because it implies that relations with France are extremely cozy. France would either take Switzerland itself, something I don't recommend Popes condone except under exceptional circumstances, or help Italy take it later. If F/I is this tight, though, the Kaiser is sure to notice. As a result, German assistance to the Archduke might be forthcoming. If this occurs, Italy might not benefit much from its attack.

In summary, the differences between Italy in **Diplomacy** and in **1900** are:

- o Venice is renamed Venetia and is no longer a SC.
- o A new space, Milan, exists between Piedmont and Venetia. Milan is a SC.
- o Tuscany has been removed. This means that Rome borders the Gulf of Lyon, Piedmont, and Milan directly.

- o Italy has more opportunity to cooperate with all three western Powers.
- o Friction between Italy and Austria-Hungary has been reduced, so much so that it is unlikely either Great Power will move against the other at game-start. Friction between Italy and France, on the other hand, has increased significantly.

The bottom line from my perspective is that Italy is indeed better off in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. This really isn't saying much, however, since, in truth, it could hardly be worse off. Just how much better Italy will perform in **1900** over the long haul than it does in **Diplomacy** remains to be seen.

Chapter 7: RUSSIA

In most of the previous chapters, the chapter on France being the exception, I argued that I made the subject Great Powers stronger than they are in **Diplomacy**. Further, I stated that this newfound muscle translated directly into a more balanced game. I won't make this same claim for Russia. In fact, I'll state up front that I worked to make Russia weaker in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. What I intend to do in this chapter is explain why I felt it was necessary to weaken Russia, describe all of the actions taken to make Russia an "average" Great Power, and demonstrate that the Russia of **1900** is still a formidable opponent.

Why would I attempt to curb Russian strength? For starters, there are historical reasons for doing so.

Paul Kennedy, in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, provides interesting commentary on Russia at the turn of the century. To begin with, Russia had the most men under arms (1,162,000) of any European Power. This figure put it well ahead of second place France (715,000). Next, Russia had the third largest navy in terms of tonnage behind Britain and France. Russia's population was larger than that of Austria-Hungary and Germany combined (136,000,000 to 103,000,000). Also, several key economic indicators showed that Russia was enjoying incredible economic growth. Given all of these numbers, it's not surprising that Russian power was feared in Berlin, Constantinople, London, and Vienna.



These impressive figures do not tell the whole story, however. Despite its advances, Russia was still a comparatively backward nation with a predominantly agrarian economy, an inadequate transportation network, and an illiterate population. Russia's small industrial capability, 48% of Britain's and 67% of Germany's, could not keep pace with the shock and strain of a major war of more than a few weeks duration. Though the army was large, it was under-equipped and poorly supplied. Worse still, officers and NCOs generally lacked adequate training. Internal cohesiveness in society at large and in the military in particular was weakened by the many non-Russian nationalities (e.g., Finns, Poles, Tartars, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Armenians, Latvians, Georgians, Estonians, etc.) that chafed under St. Petersburg's "Russification" policies. The appalling conditions the average peasant or worker dealt with every day contributed directly to ever increasing social unrest. Kennedy reports that troops were needed on over 114, 000 (!!!) separate occasions in 1908 to keep the peace.

An indicator of Russia's war readiness was provided in the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War. All of Europe anticipated a quick and decisive Russian victory over the stereotypical "inept oriental." Such was not to be the case. The Japanese army handily defeated its Russian counterpart in Manchuria and the Japanese navy destroyed Russia's Baltic squadron at Tsushima, though the fact that the ill-fated Baltic squadron

made it all the way to Tsushima in the first place was somewhat miraculous. Even as the reality of complete defeat in the Far East sank in, open rebellion broke out in the European portion of the Empire. For a brief period, it looked like the Tsar's rule might come to end. Though the government's authority was eventually restored, Russian society remained a powder keg. WWI proved to be the match that set off the explosion. It should not be surprising to anyone upon reflection that the first Power to drop out of the conflict was Russia and not one of its supposedly weaker neighbors.

Historical considerations aside, there is another important reason to bring Russia back to the pack: Russia, like France, appears to be too strong in **Diplomacy**. Looking at the numbers in Chapter 1, Russia ranks as the strongest of the Great Powers by a comfortable margin. Its 449 solos out of 3723 games played easily outdistance the 364 solos accumulated by second place France and are more than twice the paltry 221 solos that pathetic Italy has managed to scrape together. The one seeming dark spot on Russia's otherwise bright record is that it either wins outright or it loses. Russia participated in fewer draws (531) than any other Great Power. By comparison, Italy has the next lowest draw total with 534, while France has the highest draw total with 751. Certainly, these figures suggest that Russia's "Do or Die" reputation is very much deserved. Still, on the strength of its solos alone, Russia is clearly a Great Power to be reckoned with.

Why is this so? To answer this question, I think we have to look at the game dynamics that exist in **Diplomacy**. Where these dynamics appear to work against Italy, they seem to generally work in Russia's favor.

Let's start by stating the obvious: Russia is part of the eastern triangle (A/R/T). If we assume the A/R/T triangle is balanced, Russia should have an ally in the east, either Austria-Hungary or Turkey, approximately two thirds of the time. An eastern ally allows Russia to compete for a Bear's share of the Balkan supply centers (SCs) and also gives it access to a portion of the SCs controlled by the "odd Power out" (OPO), the Power that doesn't have an ally within its triangle at game-start. "So what?" you say. "This situation is hardly unique to Russia." Yes, this is true. All of the Great Powers except Italy are members of a triangle and can theoretically follow this same formula to success. Russia's record is superior because it enjoys advantages within its triangle that the other Powers don't enjoy within theirs. Consider:

- o For starters, I contend the A/R/T triangle is not balanced. Instead, Russia is the ally of choice within the eastern triangle. By this I mean that the two alliances involving Russia, A/R and R/T, occur more than the expected two-thirds of the time. I don't have statistical evidence to support this claim, but I'm willing to bet that A/T occurs less frequently in games than either A/R or R/T. In the original *Gamers' Guide to Diplomacy*, Rod Walker states that A/T is rare and uncomfortable for both partners. This is because Austria-Hungary effectively constricts Turkey's best expansion routes. Control of Greece, in particular, is often a major source of friction between Vienna and Constantinople. Rod suggests that the strongest argument in favor of A/T is that it may catch the other Powers by surprise simply because it is so unexpected! It's possible that A/T is not as unusual now as it once was and I'm sure that good diplomats can make it work, but it does seem that A/T has more obstacles to overcome than either A/R or R/T, the vaunted Juggernaut. If I'm correct, Russia will have a partner in more than the expected two thirds of all games started. This is a tremendous advantage!

- o If an A/R is in place at game-start, Russia appears to have the superior position. Even after Turkey is dispatched, potentially covetous neighbors will still surround Austria-Hungary. The Archduke will have to use a combination of diplomacy and military deterrence to prevent an invasion from the west should he want to turn on his Russian ally. The Tsar, on the other hand, with a secure eastern flank and a southern flank that is much less of a danger once the Ottoman menace is eliminated, can focus on pushing his forces outward from the edge of the map without fear of being hit from behind. Then there are naval considerations. The Dual Monarchy's navy is likely to be of limited utility in an Austro-Russian conflict, while Russia, with its iron grip on the Black Sea, has a base of naval operations that can be useful both

offensively and defensively against Austria-Hungary in the Balkans or Northern Anatolia. Finally, if A/R continues after the fall of Turkey, newly built Austro-Hungarian units will usually march away from Mother Russia to get to the front while newly built Russian units will generally flow past Austro-Hungarian home SCs to get into the action. Given these dynamics, it is easier for the Tsar to orchestrate a devastating stab of the Dual Monarchy than it is for the Archduke to fatally wound the Russian Bear.

- o If a R/T is in place at game-start, the balance of power between the two allies is more equal, at least initially. Turkey is a much more difficult nut for the Tsar to crack than Austria-Hungary is. As will be discussed shortly, though, Russia enjoys far greater offensive potential than its southern neighbor does. Even as the Sultan is slogging his way through the congested Mediterranean, Russia is often exploding into the center of the board. Since an expanding Russia can be difficult for Turkey to stab, Russia can potentially race off to victory before the Sultan can react effectively.

- o While it's true that Russia's defensive position is not nearly as strong as the corners inhabited by the two Wicked Witches, its offensive potential is arguably second to none. Russia alone among the Great Powers starts with four units. These units enable the Tsar to dedicate three units to southern operations, thereby matching the forces that any one of his potential opponents can bring to the fight, and still have a unit, F St. Petersburg, available to meddle in the affairs of the western triangle. F St. Petersburg claims Sweden in the majority of games played. This is due to the fact that many Kaisers, their attention focused on events in the west, are loath to hinder Russian expansion for fear of angering the Bear. Even if Germany does block Russian entry into Sweden in '01, England may be happy to support Russia into Sweden in '02, if Albion is at odds with the Reich. To borrow a metaphor, once the Bear's nose is in the cabin, the rest of him is likely to follow. If the build resulting from control of Sweden is dedicated to business in the north, the Tsar may find himself in a strong position to sell his services to the highest western bidder. It's also worth noting that Russia sits astride the primary stalemate lines. As Walker points out, once those white blocks start rolling, they can be very hard to stop.

- o As discussed in Chapter 6, Italy is not truly a member of either triangle at game-start. If the Pope looks east, the one member of the eastern triangle that does not have to worry about immediate Italian designs on its home SCs is Russia. Far from being a direct threat, Italy provides Russia with an outstanding mid-game ally. After Russia and its initial partner dispatch the OPO in the east, the Tsar can work with the Pope to crush Russia's erstwhile ally. The end result of such a strategy is often a very large Bear that can be quite intimidating.

Given all of these advantages, why does Russia draw so infrequently. Good question. I think there are two answers. The first is because Russia wins so often. Its offensive potential is so vast that it either crushes its early allies outright or leaves them in its wake. The second is that Russia, as much as any other Great Power, is extremely vulnerable at game-start. None of the advantages I describe above are decisive or guarantee Russian success. Despite its position on the edge of the map, Russia has no shortage of neighbors. Unless Italy intervenes on Russia's behalf, an A/T should quickly eliminate Russia as a factor in the eastern triangle. Likewise, if an E/G forms in the west, the Tsar's dreams of a Scandinavian empire will probably go unfulfilled. Worse still, northern Russia itself may soon have to deal with an Anglo-German assault. Good diplomacy, sound tactics, and some luck are absolutely necessary or the Bear's head will be mounted on someone's wall. Over a large number of games, however, a competently played Russia should do well. The data available seem to confirm this supposition.

The Great Power that appears to suffer most from Russia's success is Austria-Hungary. Russia's three other neighbors all perform about where we would expect "average" Powers to perform, but the Dual Monarchy clearly has an inferior record. One of my challenges while designing **1900** was to figure out how to level the playing field between Austria-Hungary and Russia without ruining balance elsewhere. Let's take a look now at how I attempted to accomplish this objective.

Russia itself is little changed in **1900**. The only difference is that Moscow is split into two spaces: Moscow, which remains a Russian SC, and Siberia, a new space to the east that touches St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Sevastapol. I borrowed this idea from Stephen Agar who discussed it in his article “New Improved Diplomacy?” in issue #80 of *Diplomacy World*. The primary reason Stephen championed this change to Russia’s internal organization was to help defeat the traditional stalemate lines that exist in **Diplomacy**. Since elimination of stalemate lines has always struck me as a worthy goal, Siberia made its appearance on the **1900** map.

Given that Russia itself looks much the same as always, how exactly has the playing field between it and Austria-Hungary been made more level? I’m glad you asked. I’ll discuss what’s been done in the paragraphs that follow.

Earlier I stated that Russia appears to be **Diplomacy’s** ally of choice in the east. In **1900**, this is not the case. Russia has lost its “Most Favored Nation” status. This is primarily due to the fact that the sources of friction that make A/T cooperation so awkward in **Diplomacy** have been largely eliminated in **1900**, a topic I’ll address in the next chapter when I get to Turkey. As a result, A/T is just as workable as R/T and, therefore, just as likely. Initial game results do indeed suggest the A/R/T triangle is fairly well balanced. If true, the question of which eastern monarch won’t have a chair to sit on when the music stops playing should be settled primarily by their respective diplomatic skills, which is as it should be.

Looking at Austria-Hungary, we see that there are two changes that impact directly on Russia. The first is that A Trieste has replaced F Trieste. The second is that Galicia no longer touches Vienna. Together, these two changes significantly alter the balance of power between the Dual Monarchy and Russia. Every Archduke or Tsar will almost certainly notice that A Trieste makes the competition for Rumania far more intense than it is in **Diplomacy**. This is because the Dual Monarchy can now arrange to capture Serbia and attack Rumania with support in Fall ’00 without any difficulty. At the same time, a Russian invasion of Galicia, a major concern of Archdukes in **Diplomacy**, is easily shrugged off in **1900**. As a result, A Vienna, a unit frequently used purely for defensive purposes at game-start in **Diplomacy**, is now available to do other things in **1900**. Because Austria-Hungary can bring more firepower into the fight against Russia, the Tsar may find that his opening options have become more limited. Both A Moscow and A Warsaw will probably be required in the battle for Rumania and to discourage an all-out blitz on Russia itself.

A third design change intended to help Austria-Hungary and slow down Russia involves the strengthening of Germany. Germany has relatively little to do with the Dual Monarchy early on in a typical **Diplomacy** game, but normally interacts with Russia in Scandinavia right away. As I’ve explained before, I felt that a more powerful Germany might distract Russia enough to compensate for the Dual Monarchy’s inferior position vis-à-vis its eastern neighbor. In the chapter on Germany, I pointed out how the Reich is much more muscular in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. With an expectation of three builds in ’00 and a total of seven units on the board when ’01 begins, the Kaiser is unlikely to lose much sleep over Russia’s reaction to a bounce in Sweden. In fact, if the Tsar protests too loudly, the Kaiser may respond by sending his army and navy eastward to teach the Tsar manners. Then again, the Kaiser may send his army and navy eastward in any case. This is particularly likely to occur if Britain and France are at odds in the west.

Even a few German units sent to the eastern front in ’01 could prove decisive in an Austro-Russian war. Should the Archduke and Kaiser decide to go Bear hunting right away, things could get ugly for Russia in a hurry. If the Archduke successfully orders A Budapest to Galicia, A Vienna to Budapest, and A Trieste to Serbia, while the Kaiser orders A Berlin to Prussia and A Munich to Silesia (the Connor-Greneoux Gambit), A/G has three units on both Warsaw and Rumania. The Tsar can be forgiven for breaking out in a cold sweat at the mere thought of such a scenario. In fact, the original Connor-Greneoux Gambit was so

potent that it was the driving factor in the decision to separate Vienna from Galicia by enlarging Bohemia. This historically justifiable change, while making a Russian invasion of Galicia far less threatening to Austria-Hungary, also works to prevent the Archduke from forcing his way into Galicia against Russian resistance by ordering A Vienna to Galicia supported by A Budapest.

Of course, A/G is not the only alliance involving Germany that the Tsar needs to be concerned with. If Britain and Germany work together, the implications for Russia are serious. While the dispersion of British units at game-start (i.e., only F London and F Edinburgh begin the game in Britain itself) probably means that Britain's northern position will take slightly longer to develop, increased German strength more than compensates for any British weakness. Once B/G has France under control, the two western allies are likely to turn their full attention to Mother Russia. Unless the Tsar has enjoyed considerable success against Austria-Hungary or Turkey, he may have a difficult time stemming the B/G tide in the north.

To make the gloomy picture complete, the Tsar cannot count on Italy distracting a hostile Austria-Hungary or Turkey at game-start. While Italian intervention in the east early in the game is a possibility, the tense nature of F/I relations usually results in France and Italy getting caught up in a war soon after the game starts. If Russia is the OPO in the east, the Pope is unlikely to be the white knight the Tsar needs.

When commenting on how to play Russia early in the life of the variant, one **1900** veteran stated, "This looks real hard!" Game results over time seemed to justify his pessimism. **Diplomacy's** Great Bear had been seemingly rendered toothless. After forty games had been played to completion, Russia was limping along with a horrific GPR of 9.15 (an average GPR is 25.71) and was the only Great Power that had not soloed. Meanwhile, Austria-Hungary (GPR of 28.05 and three solos), Germany (GPR of 37.20 and four solos), and Turkey (GPR of 31.95 and five solos), were all playing at a level well above average. In those forty games, Russia had reached thirteen or more SCs only four times, the worst showing of any Great Power, while it had been held to seven SCs or less twenty-six times, which put it next to last. Ugh! While forty games represented too small a sample size from which to draw any firm statistical conclusions, enough games were in the books for me to start worrying that I had shifted the balance of power in the east too far against Russia.

So what was wrong? At first, I blamed Russia's poor record primarily "uninspired" play by many Tsars and something I called the "Diplomacy Hangover." It was clear that many players new to **1900** relied on their understanding of a "typical" **Diplomacy** game to determine how they were going to proceed. For Tsars, this frequently meant trying to play **1900's** Russia using strategies that are generally successful in **Diplomacy** and discovering that those strategies don't work as well against **1900's** stronger Austria-Hungary and Germany. Archdukes and Kaisers often looked at Russia, saw the bully that dominates **Diplomacy**, and figured it was their turn to get even. They quickly found clever ways to use their new units and exploit the **1900** map to make the Tsar's life short and miserable. Initially, I was confident that game results would even out and Russia would end up somewhere in the middle of the pack. Some strong showings by Russia in the first few **1900** games played encouraged such thinking. As more game results came in, however, I increasingly came to believe that my confidence had been misplaced. Far from getting better, Russia's record went from bad to worse. Though Russia did enjoy some truly excellent campaigns, such performances were the exception to the rule. Clearly, some serious study of the situation was in order.

When defending Russia from its critics, I had taken solace in the fact that Russia managed to keep pace with the other Great Powers after the first game year. The table on the next page shows how frequently, in terms of percentages, a Great Power had five or six units at its disposal after the Winter '00 builds:

	Percentage of games that Great Power has	
	5 or more units in '01	6 or more units in '01
Austria-Hungary	57.4%	7.4%
Britain	92.6%	75.9%
France	77.8%	53.7%
Germany	100.0%	100.0%
Italy	50.0%	11.1%
Russia	72.2%	29.6%
Turkey	35.20%	5.6%

Based on 54 games

Based on the numbers above, I thought it was hard to argue that Russia was at a disadvantage relative to the other Great Powers. Indeed, when compared to the other members of the traditional eastern triangle, Austria-Hungary and Turkey, Russia appeared comparatively well off. Unfortunately, this quick analysis ignored a few important considerations.

For starters, while Russia was more likely to have five or six units entering '01 than either Austria-Hungary, Italy, or Turkey, this did not mean that it enjoyed good growth prospects. After all, Russia started the game with four units so getting to five or six units should not have been nearly as great a feat for the Tsar as it was for the Archduke, Pope, or Sultan. Based on fifty-four games, though, Russia was the only Great Power that failed to average at least one build in '00 (Germany 2.83, Britain 1.96, Austria-Hungary 1.61, Italy 1.52, France 1.48, Turkey 1.17, and Russia .81). Russia was kept to zero builds or actually lost ground in a higher percentage of games than any other Great Power (Russia 27.8%, Turkey 24.1%, France 22.2%, Italy 9.3%, Britain 7.4%, Austria-Hungary 3.7%, and Germany 0.0%). Clearly these numbers suggested that Russia had trouble getting out of the blocks.

Even as Russia was mobilizing slowly, its greatest enemy, Germany, always got off to fast starts. Germany never failed to get at least two builds in '00. The Reich started '01 with three builds a staggering 75.9% of the time and four builds 7.4% of the time. Unless Germany was facing an Anglo-French alliance in the west, something we would expect to occur about one third of the time, those “extra” black units were likely to head east as the Kaiser searched for new worlds to conquer. For several reasons, Kaisers almost universally chose to open the second front against Russia instead of Austria-Hungary. Those reasons included the extremely high level of friction between Germany and Russia, the belief that more SCs and a superior position were available if Russia was taken down, the “Diplomacy Hangover” mentioned earlier, and the reluctance to help the edge Powers by attacking a fellow center Power. Perhaps most significant, however, was the fact that Russia was generally unable to put up an effective defense against a German invasion while heavily engaged in the south.

This last point is key. Despite bordering the map's edge, Russia still has abundant neighbors, a lot of ground to cover, and too few units with which to accomplish everything. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, these are not great problems in **Diplomacy** where Russia often faces a weak and distracted Austria-Hungary, and a four or five unit Reich that is normally preoccupied with events in the west. In **1900**, where Italy tends to look west, Austria-Hungary frequently has five armies at its disposal after Winter '00 builds, and Germany is typically bristling with weapons of war entering Spring '01, Russia's far flung frontiers and paucity of units created a dangerous situation for the Tsar.

In most **1900** contests, Tsars sent both A Moscow and A Warsaw south in Spring '00. Moving A Moscow north or A Warsaw west at game-start, though not unheard of, was generally considered risky since doing so raised the potential of the southern campaign being stopped dead in its tracks. Of course,

rushing all available units south left F St. Petersburg all alone to champion the Tsar's claims in Scandinavia. After Winter '00 builds, Russia was likely to have only this fleet and one other unit available to campaign in the north and center. Even if Russia was fortunate enough to get two builds in '00, its troops were often divided evenly between the north and south, and little was left to defend the middle. Not surprisingly, opportunistic neighbors frequently exploited any weaknesses in Russia's position. Given its troop dispositions, Russia was often forced to give ground somewhere critical. Quite regularly, any success enjoyed on one front was offset by setbacks on another front. As a result, Russia had a tough time getting beyond the five to seven SC range over the course of a game.

For me, the most obvious indicator that Russia's poor record might be a design flaw was that Russia took Rumania first in thirty-five of fifty-one games, almost exactly the ratio we would expect, but had considerable trouble holding on to it. Russia lost Rumania within two years in fifteen contests or in 43% of those thirty-five games. Because Russia is unlikely to get Rumania at all if it is the OPO in the eastern triangle, the implication was clear: the Tsar's game-start ally was likely to stab Russia extremely early in the contest. In most instances, it is rare for a game-start alliance to break down so quickly since the initial OPO is usually still viable and, theoretically, available to work with the stabbed party against the openly perfidious ally. Clearly, however, this was not too much of a concern for the Archduke (nine quick stabs) or the Sultan (six quick stabs) in **1900**. Why was this so? I believe two key factors were involved.

- o First, when examining Austria-Hungary's unit locations after the Winter '00 builds, it became clear that the Dual Monarchy was usually in superb position to take Rumania from Russia and then hold it. Almost always, a five SC Dual Monarchy had three units directly adjacent to Rumania (A Budapest, A Bulgaria, A Serbia) and at least one army, usually two, that could march east if needed. Though Russia normally had three units itself in or next to Rumania, those units were usually moving to continue the attack on Turkey or were being cut by a Turkish attack from Black Sea or Armenia. The seizure of Rumania left the Dual Monarchy in an easily defended position with a build on the way, while Russia had to deal with both the loss of a unit and, usually, a heated war with Turkey.

- o Second, and arguably more important, the Germans were usually distracting Russia to such an extent that Russia's game-start ally felt it could stab without much fear of reprisal by the Tsar.

Naturally, once Rumania was taken, Sevastopol was just a short march away. With Germans pushing east, a traitorous ally moving up from the south, and, quite often, the British laying claim to St. Petersburg, it is small wonder that Tsars often felt the world was against them.

Having identified a possible problem, the question then became what to do about it. Finding a solution involved a lot of thought and numerous discussions with **1900** veterans. Several interesting proposals were put forward, but the idea that appealed to me most was one submitted by Aki Halme. With only slight modifications, Aki's idea became the Russian Steamroller Rule (hereafter simply Steamroller). Basically, the Steamroller allows Russia to have "n+1" units as long as it controls "n" SCs and one of those SCs is a home SC. The extra unit needs to be built following normal build rules (i.e., during a Winter turn in an open home SC). If, after a Fall turn, Russia has lost all four home SCs, Russia can only maintain one unit for each controlled SC. If an extra unit is on the map, the Tsar has to disband something to meet this provision. Russia is entitled to an extra unit once again if it reclaims a home SC, but the extra unit has to be built.

I liked this proposal for several reasons:

- o It was historically justifiable. As addressed at the start of this chapter, Russia was the most populous nation in Europe and had seemingly endless reserves of manpower. At the turn of the century, the leaders in Berlin, Constantinople, London, and Vienna all worried about Russia's hordes, while the leaders in Paris saw their Russian ally as the "Steamroller" that would crush the Germans should they be so bold as to attack France. The Russian general staff maintained large garrisons across the length and breadth of the Empire to cow local populations into submission, break up anti-government gatherings, defend the

borders, and take advantage of opportunities that might be found across the frontiers. Russia also had the vast resources of Siberia at its disposal, though exploiting them was often problematic for a nation with a primitive transportation infrastructure and limited industrial capacity.

- o It didn't require any map revisions or adjustments to at-start forces that might have had unanticipated consequences on play balance.

- o It seemed likely to impact directly on those nations that most benefited from Russian weakness: Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and, especially Germany. A stronger Russia would probably turn the east into a more evenly balanced quadrangle. Instead of viewing Russia primarily as a delicacy to be consumed, Germany might instead give more serious consideration to a partnership with Russia, particularly if Austria-Hungary or Britain is proving troublesome. Meanwhile, both Austria-Hungary and Turkey might not find an early stab of their Russian ally quite as inviting and instead remain faithful on a more consistent basis.

Some people have argued, with justification, that the Steamroller makes Russia appear even more fearsome, particularly to new players, and leads to the almost certain collaboration of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Turkey against it. This is, of course, exactly the situation the real Tsar got Russia into in 1914. Fortunately for the Tsar in **1900**, I believe he has a good chance of avoiding a Bolshevik firing squad. It's time now to show what the Tsar can do to ensure that Russia doesn't follow down the path of its historical counterpart and bow out of the war early.

To begin with, the Tsar must realize that Russia is extremely vulnerable at game-start. Though Russia begins the game with four units just like Britain, France, and Germany all do; the Bear is a mere cub when compared to the "Big 3." In fact, the Tsar will probably feel that his four units are totally inadequate for the tasks required of them. Even with the additional unit allowed by the Steamroller, the Tsar probably cannot expect all gaps to be filled by an influx of new units. To compensate for Russia's military shortcomings, the Tsar must be active diplomatically. More than anything else, Russia needs friends and it needs them in both the east and the west. It is absolutely critical that the Tsar talks with everybody, not just with the Archduke and Sultan. Only by communicating with everyone will the Tsar be able to determine what is most likely to happen and what areas he needs to focus on. He can then allot his units accordingly.

Naturally, the Tsar's first priority should be to secure an alliance with one of his neighbors. <Duh!> If he fails to accomplish this, he might as well board the next train to Siberia.

Not surprisingly, an alliance with Turkey works well for Russia in **1900**, just as it does in **Diplomacy**. With Russia's eastern flank against the map edge and its southern flank secured by treaty, the Tsar can concentrate on pushing his forces westward as quickly as possible. Any builds obtained by Russia as the Juggernaut rolls over the Balkans and Dual Monarchy can be used to reinforce the center or strengthen the north depending on the situation in the west. The appropriate Russian moves in alliance with Turkey appear to be A Warsaw to Galicia, A Moscow to Ukraine, and F Sevastapol to Rumania. [In almost every situation, it is probably best to open with F St. Petersburg(sc) to Gulf of Bothnia.] This opening gives Russia its best chance of securing Rumania in Fall '00 regardless of what the Austro-Hungarian enemy or the Turkish ally do.

If the Dual Monarchy is fighting on its own or German intervention in the east is only half-hearted, R/T should be well on its way. If, however, the Archduke and Kaiser work together closely in the east right from the start, the situation for Russia becomes far more difficult. The Russian moves listed above will slow down the aggressive Connor-Greeneux Gambit discussed earlier, but even with the build allowed by the Steamroller, Russia will struggle to do much more than hold its own against A/G. Most likely, a Western Power will break any deadlock between A/G and R/T. This means that the Tsar must strive to

ensure any intervention in eastern affairs by the Western Powers works to Russia's benefit. This is an extremely complex proposition, but in general the Tsar wants the following:

- o He wants the Prime Minister to respect the Norwegian/Russian border. British intervention against Russia in the north would likely cause the chain of dominos to start falling in a way detrimental to the Tsar's plans. Ideally, the Tsar can work out a deal with the Prime Minister to cooperate against the Germans in and around Scandinavia, the Baltic Sea, and northern Germany.

- o He wants the Kaiser to be sufficiently distracted so that he is unable to focus his powerful military machine against Russia, but not so overwhelmed that the Reich collapses quickly UNLESS Russia is in position to pick up the majority of the German spoils.

- o He wants Turkey kept in check enough so that the Sultan continues to believe that alliance with his neighbor to the north is his best option. Should the Ottomans start to pull ahead of the Russians, the likelihood increases that the Sultan will leave the Tsar to his own devices or turn on him. Actually, given that the Sultan may see A/G pressure on Russia as an opportunity to grab Russian SCs and gain complete control of the critical Black Sea space, the Tsar must work hard to ensure Turkey remains loyal and dedicated to the fight against Austria-Hungary.

What if, instead of fighting the Dual Monarchy, Russia enters into an alliance with Austria-Hungary? Such an alliance has a lot going in its favor. In particular, A/R is well positioned to conduct operations against the overbearing Prussians to the west. This is something an alliance with Turkey doesn't offer.

If the Germans are preoccupied in the west, A/R can safely adopt a "Turkey First" policy. If they do so, the advantage of Austria-Hungary's A Trieste becomes apparent. The optimal Russian moves (from St. Petersburg's perspective) are probably F Sevastapol to Black Sea, A Moscow to Ukraine, and A Warsaw to Galicia, while Austria-Hungary moves A Budapest to Rumania, A Vienna to Budapest, and A Trieste to Serbia. Regardless of what Turkey does, Russia should take Rumania in the Fall for one build, while Austria-Hungary gets Serbia and Bulgaria for two builds. Since the most logical division of SCs places Bulgaria and Rumania under the Dual Monarchy's control while Constantinople and Ankara go to Russia, the two allies will need to work out when and how to transfer SCs between themselves.

There are two potential problems with the moves suggested above:

- o First, the Archduke may balk at the idea of his Russian ally "invading" Galicia and prefer A Warsaw to Ukraine and A Moscow to Sevastapol. While this option works just as well against Turkey as the moves given above, it forces the Tsar to correctly guess what Germany is doing. If the Tsar placates the Archduke and an A/G is in place, Russia is probably in deep trouble. Unless the Tsar is comfortable that Germany is not heading east, I feel the Tsar should press for A Moscow to Ukraine and A Warsaw to Galicia. He should point out that the Dual Monarchy is in no danger from his army in Galicia, especially since Galicia no longer borders Vienna. Also, moving A Warsaw to Galicia allows A/R to maintain the illusion of conflict, something that might be useful in getting information from Germany and Turkey. Should the Archduke continue to protest, the Tsar needs to decide whether to give in or try working a deal with the Sultan.

- o Second, if Germany, on its own, moves to Prussia or Silesia in Spring '00, Russia may have to use A Galicia, or A Ukraine if the Archduke's preferred moves are used, to defend Warsaw. If Turks are threatening Sevastapol at the same time by having ordered A Damascus to Armenia in the Spring, the capture of Rumania may have to wait until '01. There is no need to risk the loss of a home SC in '00.

When allied with Austria-Hungary, the Tsar needs to be especially mindful of the possibility of treachery. The temptation to grab Rumania while Russia is engaged with the Turks, and likely the Germans too, may simply be too much for the Archduke to resist. To mitigate against Habsburg perfidy, I like the idea of a more aggressive approach for A/R. If the situation appears to be shaping up favorably, Austria-Hungary and Russia should seriously consider taking on Germany and Turkey at the same time. Under this scenario, Russia orders F Sevastapol to Black Sea, A Moscow to Ukraine, and A Warsaw to Silesia or

Prussia while Austria-Hungary moves its three armies to Tyrolia, Bohemia, and Serbia respectively. As a minimum, each ally should get one build apiece. If the Kaiser is caught by surprise, the Dual Monarchy should be able to take Munich in the Fall and eliminate any concerns in St. Petersburg of a German invasion. Such a bold opening is risky, but probably not as perilous as it may appear at first glance. Turkey should be isolated, and Britain and/or France should be quite willing to join the anti-German crusade. Even better from St. Petersburg's point of view, the Austro-Hungarians are unlikely to cast covetous glances toward Russian SCs while engaged hammer and tong with the Germans.

What about alliance with Germany? Since Germany is very much a part of the eastern equation, it makes sense that the Tsar should explore this option. Friendship between Germany and Russia actually does offer both parties quite a lot. From the Tsar's perspective, a G/R probably ensures that Russia will capture Sweden and get at least two builds in Winter '00. Next, if an A/T is in place, any Austro-Turkish advance northward is likely to move along at a snail's pace, if that fast, due to the presence of five defending Russian units. The Archduke and Sultan are probably not going to make any real progress into Russia itself unless Britain intervenes in the north. By that time, however, the Tsar may be able to exploit his attackers' frustrations and get them to turn on each other in alliance with Russia. Finally, if the units can be spared from the south, Russia can work with Germany to solidify the Tsar's grip on Scandinavia and then take the war to Britain. Then again, instead of attacking Britain, the Tsar might decide to work with Britain against the Reich.

This last point underlines the difficulty of a G/R. There is a great deal of inherent friction between the two Powers, second only to the friction between Britain and France. However, while Britain and France can and do cooperate quite successfully, true G/R cooperation is rare. The simple truth is that Germany and Russia find themselves competing for many of the same SCs and growth for one usually comes at the expense of the other. As each Power expands, the Kaiser is likely to feel increasingly surrounded by his Russian ally, while the Tsar may get more and more uncomfortable with the powerful German mailed fist pointed at Russia's vulnerable middle (i.e., Warsaw and Moscow). While determined and skillful diplomats can make peace between Teuton and Slav last and I've seen contests where G/R have worked together successfully to their mutual benefit, games results suggest that in most cases Germany and Russia will be foes sooner or later.

In this entire chapter, I've barely mentioned France. This is somewhat ironic considering that the Franco-Russian Entente was the historical counterweight to German power. The sad truth, however, is that France and Russia can do little for each other at game-start except exchange information. This should not be too surprising, however, given historical events. Militarily, France could do little for Russia during WWI either, though the French expected the Russians to do a lot for them by distracting the Reich. This does not mean the Tsar should ignore France as the game gets underway. Like Italy, France makes an outstanding mid-game ally. Cultivating friendly relations with Paris early in the game may pay handsome dividends later as both Powers work together to bring down an enemy located in-between.

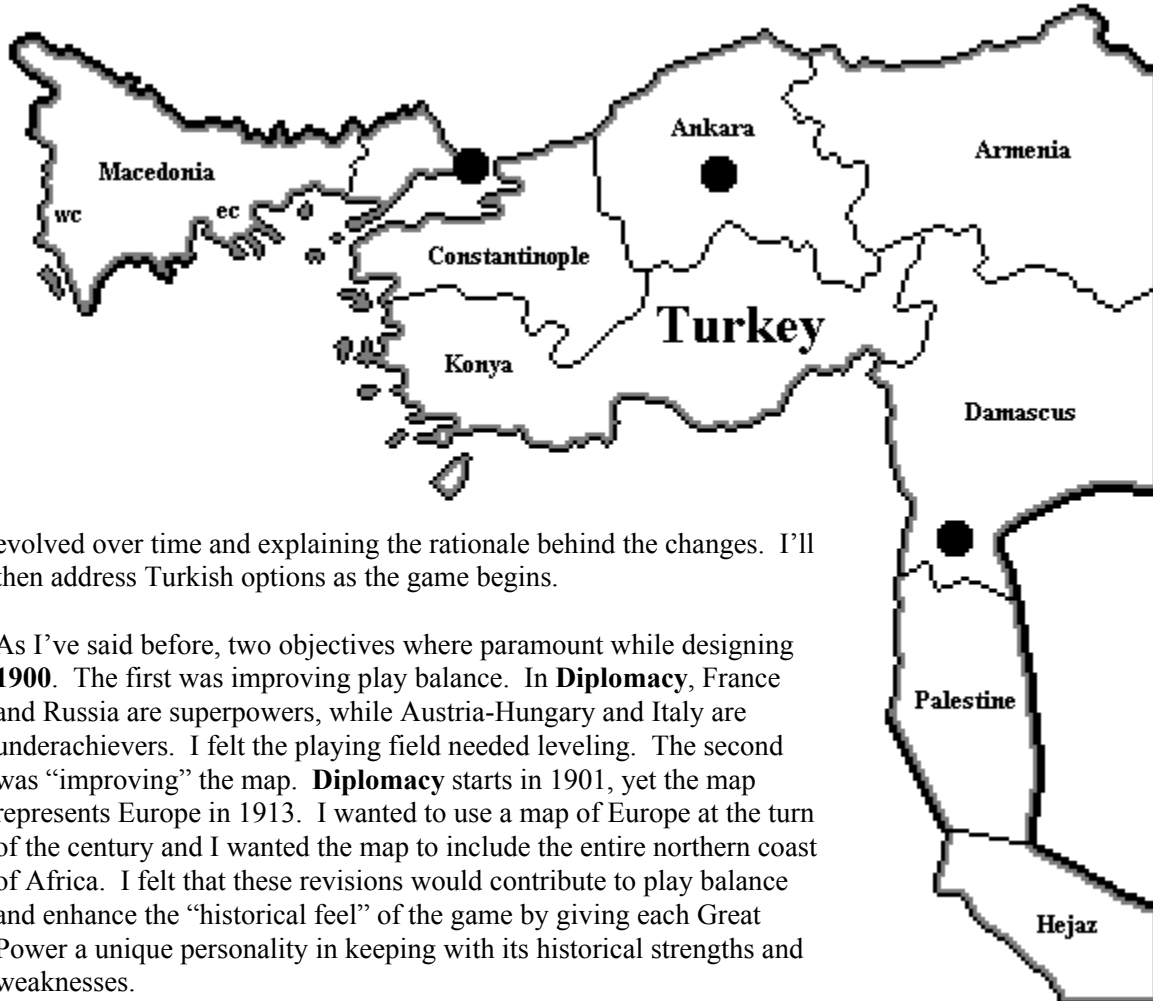
In summary, the key differences between Russia in **Diplomacy** and in **1900** are as follows:

- o Moscow is divided into two spaces: Moscow and Siberia.
- o Russia is no longer the ally of choice in the east.
- o Austria-Hungary and Germany are much better able to stand up to Russian aggression. This works as a constraint on Russia's offensive potential.
- o Russia is able to build and maintain an extra unit as long as it controls at least one of its four home SCs.

Russia has enjoyed tremendous success in **1900**. It has also flamed out in spectacular fashion. Whether Russia soars to new heights or crashes in ruin is now much more a reflection of the Tsar's diplomatic and tactical acumen.

Chapter 8: TURKEY

Much to my surprise, the Ottoman Empire proved to be the most vexing Power to develop. Each time I thought I had it about right, I discovered another adjustment needed to be made. As a result, Turkey underwent more transformations than any other Power. I'll begin this chapter by looking at how Turkey



evolved over time and explaining the rationale behind the changes. I'll then address Turkish options as the game begins.

As I've said before, two objectives were paramount while designing **1900**. The first was improving play balance. In **Diplomacy**, France and Russia are superpowers, while Austria-Hungary and Italy are underachievers. I felt the playing field needed leveling. The second was "improving" the map. **Diplomacy** starts in 1901, yet the map represents Europe in 1913. I wanted to use a map of Europe at the turn of the century and I wanted the map to include the entire northern coast of Africa. I felt that these revisions would contribute to play balance and enhance the "historical feel" of the game by giving each Great Power a unique personality in keeping with its historical strengths and weaknesses.

A "problem" surfaced immediately. Given my desire to capture the period's historical feel, how was I to reconcile Turkey's reputation as the "Sick Man of Europe" with my goal of ensuring each player had an "equal" chance of winning?

I felt part of the solution to this conundrum could be found by adjusting the at-start forces of each Great Power. In **1900**, the weaker Powers, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Turkey, were kept at three units each at game-start, albeit with changes to unit starting locations and composition. The Powers considered strongest at the turn of the century, Britain, France, and Germany, joined Russia in having four units each at game-start. Though this might seem to give Britain, France, Germany, and Russia an edge over their neighbors, I didn't feel this would be the case. **1900**, like **Diplomacy**, is a game of alliances. Instances of a three-unit Power fighting a four-unit Power one-on-one would be rare. Far more often, coalitions would fight either single Powers or other coalitions. As long as a three-unit Power had an ally at game-start, it was probably going to be successful.

The other part of solving the “Sick Man” problem was realizing that the Ottoman Empire, while no longer feared throughout Europe, was not dead yet. Though not on par militarily with the major European Powers, perhaps excepting Italy, Turkey was, in the words of Lord Kinross from The Ottoman Centuries, “by far and away the most powerful, efficient, and enlightened Moslem state in existence.” In truth, its performance on the battlefield was actually impressive at times. Turkey’s accomplishments during WWI are best described by David Nicolle in The Ottoman Army: 1914-1918: “Over the four years of the ‘Great War’, the Ottoman Army, Navy, and two tiny air services fought on five major fronts (Gallipoli, Sinai-Palestine, Arabia, Iraq, and the Caucasus). Ottoman troops also served in many other war zones (Romania, Galicia, on the Eastern front, the Salonika front, Libya, Arabia, Yemen, and Iran). In addition, Ottoman agents stirred up trouble for the Allies much further afield, in the French Saharan territories, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Oman, Afghanistan, Russian Central Asia and even the East Indies – no small feat for an Empire which had been called the ‘Sick Man of Europe’ for almost a hundreds years!”

Without question, Turkey’s reputation suffers from having lost the Great War. Had the Central Powers prevailed, history books might not speak so disparagingly of the Ottoman Empire’s military prowess

So how does the Sick Man fare in **Diplomacy**? To answer this question, let’s look at the game results shown in Chapter 1. These results show that Turkey is a solid performer. Its 325 solos place it third overall, its 644 draws are third best, and its 2701 losses are third fewest. Sick Man indeed! Compared to pathetic Italy, Turkey is the very picture of health.

While the numbers tell us that Turkey is stronger in **Diplomacy** than it was historically, there is nothing in them to suggest radical changes needed to be made to Turkey to improve play balance. In fact, just the opposite is true. The numbers imply that Turkey needed very little, if any, “fixing.”

Unfortunately, the map changes I wanted impacted on Turkey significantly. Consider that in 1899:

- o Turkey controlled much of the Balkans. European Turkey stretched from Constantinople in the east to the Adriatic Sea in the west and effectively separated Greece in the south from Serbia in the north. It wasn’t until after the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 that an independent Albania was established and the victorious Balkan League divided up the bulk of European Turkey between them.

- o Bulgaria and Bosnia-Hercegovina technically belonged to Turkey. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, Bulgaria was established as an autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary was given the right to occupy and administer Bosnia-Hercegovina. It wasn’t until 1908 that Bulgaria declared formal independence and the Dual Monarchy annexed Bosnia-Hercegovina outright.

- o Turkey governed several large provinces in Africa. These provinces stood between French Algeria and Tunisia to the west and British Egypt to the east. Significantly, they were located due south of Italy. The Kingdom of Italy, eager to recreate the glories of Rome, declared war on Turkey in 1911 and seized what was to become Libya. As an aside, Egypt was officially Turkish in 1899, though there was no doubt in Europe, particularly in London, who really called the shots along the Nile River.

- o Turkey ruled the Levant and the coasts of the Arabian Peninsula.

These historical realities were reflected in the original Concept Map (V1.0) for **1900** that first appeared in issue #81 of *Diplomacy World*. While Turkey had the same three home SCs (Constantinople, Ankara, and Smyrna) and two buffer spaces (Armenia and Syria), the world around it looked very different.

- o Albania disappeared and a new Turkish space, Macedonia, was placed in the Balkans. On the Concept Map, Macedonia included most of eastern Thrace (i.e., the lands immediately to the west of the city of Constantinople). This arrangement meant that Macedonia stood between Bulgaria and Constantinople and the traditional opening A Constantinople to Bulgaria was no longer valid.

- o I took some minor historical liberties by keeping Bulgaria as a neutral supply center (SC) even though it belonged to Turkey, at least according to treaty. In truth, Bulgaria usually followed its own agenda after 1878 and the Porte’s influence steadily waned as time passed.

- o Trieste was split into two spaces: Trieste and Bosnia. Trieste remained an Austro-Hungarian SC, while Bosnia was simply a buffer space.

- o Just as Bulgaria was made into a neutral SC even though it was legally Turkish, I also decided to make Turkey's African provinces into a neutral SC. Admittedly this decision was harder to justify from a historical perspective than the Bulgarian decision, but I was confident a neutral SC south of Italy would result in the dynamics I desired. The provinces in question were lumped into one large space named Libya. Libya was located between two other new SCs: British Egypt and French North Africa.

- o The extension of the map southward meant that the Ottoman Empire's Levantine territories were shown. Borrowing from Stephen Agar's article "New Improved Diplomacy?" in issue #80 of *Diplomacy World*, I placed a new Turkish space, Palestine, between Syria and British Egypt. I also inserted another Turkish space, Arabia, between Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the eastern edge of the map. Both Palestine and Arabia were buffer spaces.

In addition to these map changes, I made two other significant changes to the basic game that affected Turkey directly. One was that Britain started with a fleet in Egypt. The other was a series of rules, the Suez Canal Rules, that addressed movement between Egypt and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. The intent behind these decisions was twofold. First, I wanted to weaken Turkey's strong defensive position. I felt placing an enemy unit in Turkey's backyard and giving potential opponents the ability to reinforce the eastern Mediterranean would accomplish this. In truth, I considered increased Turkish vulnerability a fair tradeoff for what I believed were vastly improved Turkish offensive possibilities. Second, I wanted to increase interaction between Turkey and the western Powers. With British and Turkish SCs next to each other, I was sure that negotiations between Constantinople and London, as well as Constantinople and Paris, would be much more intimate in **1900** than they are in **Diplomacy**.

I thought all of these changes taken together would suffice to accomplish my objectives. <Sigh> It was not to be. In fact, the changes were just starting.

Even before the first **1900** game was played, I altered Turkey's appearance. The version of the map used during the initial playtest, V1.1, saw the restoration of eastern Thrace to the Constantinople space. I did this because I feared that life might become too difficult for the Sultan if he was not allowed to move his army directly into Bulgaria from Constantinople.

A number of significant map changes came about as a result of the first playtest. These changes were incorporated into V2.4 of the map, the version used during the second playtest. Not surprisingly, Turkey was affected in several areas.

- o The first playtest showed that Italy had little chance of claiming Libya given that SC's proximity to British Egypt and French North Africa. Since I wanted Italy to have a better chance of getting the SC, I split Libya into two spaces: Tripolitania, a neutral SC, and Cyrenaica, a buffer space. In combination with changes made to French North Africa (i.e., splitting it into Algeria, Southern Algeria, and Tunisia), the new arrangement arguably gave Italy an edge over Britain and France in the race for Tripolitania

- o The first playtest also proved that British power was potentially overwhelming. One measure taken to curb British strength was to merge Palestine with Syria. This merger allowed the Sultan to menace Egypt right away by ordering A Smyrna-Syria in Spring '00. I hoped this threat would make the Prime Minister think twice before moving F Egypt to Mid Atlantic Ocean to do battle with France or F Egypt to Cyrenaica to contest Italian occupation of Tripolitania.

The publication of the V2.5 map after the second playtest saw another change to Turkey's boundaries. This one, however, had nothing to do with play balance. Instead, I wanted to rectify an error in the map's historical accuracy. I noticed that most, though not all, maps of the Ottoman Empire implied that Turkey didn't exercise active control over the interior of the Arabian Peninsula. Based on this, the Arabia space

was split into two spaces: Hejaz, the Turkish-controlled strip of land along the eastern edge of the Arabian Peninsula, and Arabia, a neutral space surrounded by Turkish territory on three sides.

Not everyone was enamoured with what I had done to Turkey. Several people offered the opinion that Turkey was much weaker in **1900**. One person flatly stated that Turkey was reduced to a minor power and had virtually no chance of winning. Despite Turkey's poor showings in the two playtests, I felt such comments were mistaken. Turkey's crushing victory in 1900 980601 seemed to vindicate my position. This win was followed in quick succession by two more Turkish victories. As a result, I began hearing whispers that Turkey had been transformed into an unstoppable monster. I felt that these comments were off the mark as well. Turkey's victories in 1900 981101 and 1900 981201 resulted from a combination of factors, most notably superior diplomacy by the Sultan. In each case, Turkey might have been stopped had the other surviving players not thrown in the towel.

This is not to say that I felt comfortable with how things were shaping up. Indeed, something was off and whatever it was affected play balance in Turkey's favor. As I studied the map, it seemed to me that I had created a situation where Turkey had become the ally of choice in the east. Turkey had started every game played with either the Dual Monarchy or Russian Empire standing by its side. Not once had an A/R formed to crush the Ottomans. Clearly, if Turkey had a better than 67% chance of finding an ally at the game-start, the Sultan had a huge advantage over his eastern rivals in the long run. In examining why Turkey had seemingly become the most attractive partner in the east, two obvious explanations emerged:

- o An alliance between Austria-Hungary and Turkey is more feasible in **1900** than it is in **Diplomacy**. This is because the new map and the Suez Canal Rules provide Turkey with expansion routes that don't put it at odds with Austria-Hungary. Also, potential friction between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires over Greece is eliminated. The redrawn Balkan boundaries prevent Austria-Hungary from taking Greece in the first game year as it does in **Diplomacy**. Instead, Italy or Turkey will normally get to Greece first. As a result, the Archduke is relieved of the unpleasant task of turning over Greece, normally earlier than he would like to, to his Turkish ally.

- o Austria-Hungary and Russia are not natural allies. It generally takes a lot of trust and cooperation for them to stay out of each other's way, especially in the Balkans and Turkey. The relationship can be particularly uncomfortable for the Archduke since he has to watch the units of his Russian partner move around Austro-Hungarian SCs on their way to the front. As I've stated before, the Tsar can usually execute a devastating stab of the Dual Monarchy much easier than the Archduke can fatally wound the Russian Bear. The natural friction between Austria-Hungary and Russia that is clearly evident in **Diplomacy** is exacerbated in **1900** by Austria-Hungary's enhanced ability to contest Russia's occupation of Rumania at game-start.

This last point, possible conflict between Austria-Hungary and Russia, led me to what I thought was the true source of Turkey's newfound diplomatic power. Turkey could move in such a way that it was assured of claiming Bulgaria in '00 regardless of what Austria-Hungary or Russia did. Even more important, Turkey could determine which rival Power, Austria-Hungary or Russia, got Rumania. Taken together, these results gave Turkey a tremendous bargaining chip to use at game-start. If Austria-Hungary allied with Russia, it would only get Serbia. If, on the other hand, Austria-Hungary allied with Turkey, it was virtually assured of claiming both Serbia and Rumania in '00. Given this, whom would you want on your side at game-start if you were the Archduke, Russia or Turkey? Further, if you were the Tsar, would you spend lots of time trying to convince the Archduke that getting only one build was to his advantage in the long run or would you concentrate your efforts on winning over the Sultan? It seemed to me that the Sultan was left in the enviable position of being able to choose his ally.

But was this really a problem? The scenario described above was predicated on the traditional Turkish opening of A Constantinople to Bulgaria. Given the new boundaries in the Balkans and elsewhere, however, A Constantinople to Bulgaria no longer seemed optimal. Different openings gave Turkey the

chance to acquire two or three builds in '00 instead of one. It clearly made more sense for the Sultan to order A Constantinople to Macedonia. This opening allowed Turkey to try for Greece in the Fall. Only an Italian attack into Greece would prevent Turkey from being successful in this regard. While such an attack could not be ruled out entirely, it was unlikely to occur if Tripolitania was open for Italian occupation. In the meantime, another Turkish unit could go after Bulgaria.

If Turkey opened with A Constantinople to Macedonia, Austria-Hungary and Russia could work together to ensure Austria-Hungary claimed Bulgaria and Serbia, while Russia got Rumania. Obviously, such a result would make an A/R more attractive to both parties. Unfortunately, the A/R moves necessary to ensure such spectacular results involved risk for each party. The big question in my mind was this: would Archdukes and Tsars be willing to overcome the inherent friction between their respective Powers and use risky moves in order to cooperate against Turkey? After giving the matter some thought, I felt the answer to this question was going to be “no” more often than not, especially when simply siding with Turkey in the first place involved little or no risk at all.

Something else bothered me as well. Turkey's “best” opening moves given the new map presented Turkey with an excellent chance of capturing two neutral SCs in '00 and provided a solid defensive position in the event Turkey faced an A/R. If successful, however, these moves would most likely result in two Turkish armies sitting in the Balkans, one in Bulgaria and one in Greece. If Turkey were allied with Austria-Hungary, these two armies would be completely hemmed in. The Sultan would have to exercise patience while maneuvering them into battle against Italy or Russia. On the other hand, if Turkey were allied with Russia, Turkish units would be superbly positioned to take on the Dual Monarchy. I thought this situation might predispose Sultans towards an agreement with Russia.

I felt something needed to be done to facilitate the formation of anti-Turk alliances and ensure Turkey could work equally well with either of its eastern neighbors. At the same time, I didn't want to do anything that would cripple Turkey or unfairly limit the Sultan's options. After a few false starts, I finally hit upon something. I moved the SC in Smyrna to Syria and then renamed each space. Smyrna became Konya, while Syria became Damascus. I also restored Palestine to the map so there would be a buffer between Damascus and Egypt. I had always disliked eliminating a space that had so much historical significance and was the site of such heated fighting between Britain and Turkey during WWI, so I was happy when the opportunity surfaced to return Palestine to the map.

These changes allowed the Sultan to pursue a two or three build opening in '00. If Turkey did claim both Bulgaria and Greece in '00, its units would be positioned in a way that allowed it to work equally well with Austria-Hungary and Russia. Further, Turkey's ability to develop its position in the eastern Mediterranean was slightly, though not significantly, impaired. This would help Italy in a small way. Finally, Austria-Hungary and Russia, if they worked together, could ensure that they captured Bulgaria, Rumania, and Serbia in '00 regardless of what Turkey did. This would hopefully facilitate the formation of A/Rs. Even in the face of a determined A/R, however, the Sultan still had the ability to obtain one or two builds in '00.

When I published the V2.6.1. map with Konya, Damascus, and Palestine on it, I hoped I was done tinkering with Turkey. As it turned out, one more change was in the works. The two games played using the new map seemed to verify that the changes would have the desired effects as described above, but they also confirmed a disturbing trend. Basically, if Turkey took Egypt, it became a true Wicked Witch. Given Turkey's proximity to Egypt and Britain's commitments elsewhere, such a conquest seemed likely to occur in many games. I wanted to give western Powers the chance to regain a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean should Turkey occupy Egypt. The simple answer was to tweak the Suez Canal Rules so that a fleet or convoyed army could move directly from the Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Hejaz, as well as to Egypt. A British or French army appearing in Hejaz would be sure to make life interesting for the Sultan.

The Sultan could defend his southern front easily enough, but doing so would mean one less Turkish unit was available to terrorize Turkey's neighbors. Turkey's spectacular performance in the games played to that date suggested that this small change was probably good for play balance purposes.

So what's a Sultan do to in this brave new world? Actually, many of the same things he has always done.

First, the Sultan does not want to see an A/R. The two Christian Powers can make short work of Turkey if they cooperate. The good news for the Sultan is that Archdukes and Tsars have a tendency to clash over their respective spheres of influence just as they did historically. If the Sultan is any kind of diplomat, his chances of preventing an A/R from forming are probably good. In an ideal world, the Sultan will convince his two eastern neighbors that they should both open to Rumania in Spring '00.

Next, the Sultan wants to see Italian forces heading west instead of east unless, of course, Italy is going to distract a hostile Austria-Hungary. Fortunately from a Turkish point of view, Italy's orientation in **1900** appears to be westward. It might not take much effort on the Sultan's part to get the Third Republic and Kingdom of Italy to come to blows. If Italy does get involved in a war with France, the Sultan should have ample time to establish a strong position in the eastern Mediterranean before Italy can become a threat. This is not to suggest that Italy and Turkey are automatically doomed to fight. On the contrary, I believe the **1900** map and the Suez Canal Rules make Italian-Turkish cooperation slightly more feasible than it is in **Diplomacy**, though it is still a difficult proposition. The two Powers will almost certainly need to help each other should a B/F manifest itself early in the game.

Finally, the Sultan generally wants to cultivate good relationships with France and Germany. Both of these Powers could prove to be Turkey's salvation should one of its immediate neighbors turn bellicose.

What needs to be examined is Turkey's relationship with Britain. In **Diplomacy**, these two Powers usually have little interaction until the game is well along. This situation changes in **1900**. British and Turkish units start the game on top of each other. Additionally, the Suez Canal Rules mean that Britain may participate actively in Middle Eastern and African affairs. The presence of British units in the eastern Mediterranean is not necessarily a bad thing for Turkey, but I question whether Turkey can win when surrounded by the Royal Navy. Turkey can make its corner of the map more secure by taking Egypt, but doing so early may be problematic and doing so later will invite British hostility. Since Britain can be a powerful ally against both Italy and Russia, it might not make sense for the Sultan to upset the Prime Minister. It's a tough call. My gut feeling is that Turkey must take Egypt eventually if it hopes to claim a solo and it should do so before Britain starts pumping units through the Canal.

Tactically, the Sultan needs to reexamine his game-start options.

A Constantinople to Bulgaria is probably not the best option any longer. This opening limits the number of SCs Turkey can potentially capture in '00 since Greece cannot be taken and places Turkey at risk of getting no builds. Should Austria-Hungary order A Budapest to Rumania, A Vienna to Budapest, and A Trieste to Serbia, while Russia orders F Sevastapol to Black Sea, A Warsaw to Galicia, and A Moscow to Ukraine, the allies can take Bulgaria and the Sultan gets nothing. If, however, A Constantinople opens to Macedonia, the Sultan can try for Greece even as A/R is grabbing the rest of the Balkans.

Even if Turkey has an ally in the east, there is another disadvantage to ordering A Constantinople to Bulgaria in Spring '00: Italy may get a unit into Greece in the Fall. Once the Pope has Greece, it may be hard for the Sultan to take it from him. I think it's better to dampen Italian enthusiasm for Balkan intervention by opening to Macedonia in the Spring and making it absolutely clear that the army will continue on to Greece in the Fall. The Pope is sure to think twice about a bounce in Greece, especially if Tripolitania is open.

Whether the Sultan actually orders A Macedonia to Greece or uses A Macedonia to support the Turkish fleet into Bulgaria will depend on the situation at the start of Fall '00. I feel A Macedonia should move to Greece if Turkey is allied with Austria-Hungary. If Turkey is allied with Russia, I feel A Macedonia should support the Turkish fleet into Bulgaria. Turkey can send a newly built fleet sailing to the Aegean Sea in '01, while A Macedonia is available to support a Greece invasion or attack the Dual Monarchy.

The Sultan has two familiar options regarding F Ankara: move to Constantinople or move to Black Sea. The good news for Turkey is that either opening has a good chance of succeeding. Austria-Hungary's ability to contest Russian control of Rumania in '00 means the Tsar is less likely to open to Black Sea than he might be in **Diplomacy**. The Russian fleet probably won't sail into the Black Sea unless the Tsar is either allied with the Archduke or absolutely convinced that an A/T exists. Generally, moving F Ankara to Constantinople signals an alliance with Russia, while moving F Ankara to Black Sea indicates an alliance with Austria-Hungary, but these conclusions might not be valid. A Damascus probably provides a better indicator of Turkish intentions.

Where A Damascus moves to signals who the Sultan's friend is.

- o A Damascus to Armenia is an anti-Russian opening, particularly when combined with F Ankara to Black Sea. If both moves succeed, the Sultan can attack Sevastapol with support or attack Sevastapol with just A Armenia, while sending the fleet to Bulgaria. Note, though, that the Tsar and the Sultan can set the Archduke up for a big disappointment. If Russia orders F Sevastapol to Rumania, A Warsaw to Galicia, and A Moscow to Ukraine, while Turkey orders A Constantinople to Macedonia, F Ankara to Black Sea, and A Damascus to Armenia, the Archduke is likely to feel he has a good shot at Rumania. Imagine his surprise then when F Black Sea convoys A Armenia to Bulgaria, while A Macedonia moves to Greece.

- o A Damascus to Konya is Turkey's most likely option if it is allied with Russia, but it does not want to offend Britain. Unfortunately, it is not a particularly strong move because A Konya will not be of much use offensively for a full year. Since the Archduke is likely to counter Turkey's opening by attempting to block Turkish occupation of Bulgaria, the Sultan must use A Macedonia to ensure he captures Bulgaria. This leaves Greece neutral. To capture Greece, the Sultan should probably build a fleet in Constantinople in Winter '00 and move it to the Aegean Sea in Spring '01. Obviously, a fleet cannot be built in Constantinople in Winter '00 if A Konya is moved there in the Fall '00. This means A Konya will probably sit in place until Spring '01. The only real consolation is that A Konya is well positioned to defend Damascus should Britain open aggressively.

- o A Damascus-Palestine is a generally pro-Russian opening for Sultans who like to play on the edge. If the Sultan has convinced the Prime Minister that it is safe to move F Egypt to Mid Atlantic Ocean, then A Palestine can simply walk into Egypt in the Fall. The bad news is that F Egypt to Mid Atlantic Ocean might not happen and the Sultan's move to Palestine may only cause Anglo-Turkish relations to turn nasty. Should this happen, Turkey, at best, will be distracted and, at worst, will face a major invasion as Britain rushes to reinforce its position in the eastern Mediterranean.

In summary, the key differences between Turkey in **Diplomacy** and in **1900** are as follows:

- o Smyrna is renamed Konya and is no longer a SC, while Syria is renamed Damascus and is a SC.
- o The Balkans are dominated by a large Turkish territory called Macedonia. Macedonia includes the territory that used to be Albania and separates Greece from Serbia and Bulgaria.
- o Turkey controls additional spaces, Palestine and Hejaz, in the Middle East
- o Turkey, not Austria-Hungary, has the best chance at capturing Greece first.
- o Turkey's offensive potential has been increased.
- o The presence of a British unit in Egypt and the Suez Canal Rules make Turkey's corner position much more vulnerable.

The bottom line is that Turkey in **1900** is potentially stronger, but at the same time it is more vulnerable. While its diplomatic options are similar to those exercised in **Diplomacy**, except as regards Britain, its tactical options at game-start are significantly different.

Chapter 9: SWITZERLAND

From the Designer: *While GMing 1900 000329, the Italian player, Stephen Miller, provided me with a copy of a note he had sent to the French player. In that note, Stephen discussed how making Switzerland accessible changed the dynamics of the game considerably. I thought Stephen's note was extremely insightful and I asked him if he would be interested in expanding it into a full-fledged article for the Gamers' Guide to 1900 that I was in the process of putting together. Since Stephen is arguably the most methodical and analytical player I have ever encountered, as well as a superb tactician and strategist, I could not think of a better choice to explain the subtle nuances surrounding the opening of Switzerland.*



Stephen agreed to write the article and sent me a draft shortly after his game ended (I should mention that Stephen claimed Italy's first 1900 solo in that game). Unfortunately, his draft arrived too late to be included in the first edition to the Gamers' Guide that I published in December 2000. Also, Stephen's article focused primarily on the impact of Switzerland on Italy, his favorite Great Power, and I knew I would want to say more about France and Germany before I included the article in the Gamers' Guide. Because of this, Stephen's work sat in my "things to do" pile for many months.

Stephen's article might have remained buried indefinitely, but events conspired to bring it back to the surface. While organizing a new 1900 game, I got involved in a rather spirited debate with one of the players, Charles Feaux de la Croix, about the merits of an open Switzerland. I found myself quoting from Stephen's article shamelessly. Eventually, I sent the entire article to Charles and to all of the other players scheduled to participate in the upcoming game. Not surprisingly, the comments I received on the article were very positive. This told me that it was time to get going and to make my editorial changes to Stephen's original composition. The end result combining Stephen's thoughts with my own is provided below. Enjoy!

Perhaps no other single aspect of 1900 has elicited as many negative comments as my decision to turn Switzerland into both a passable space and a supply center (SC). Almost universally, the critics decry the Great Powers' potential to violate Swiss neutrality. Their logic generally goes as follows: Switzerland was neutral at the turn of the century, the Swiss more than any other people accept the policy of neutrality as a way of life, and the other Powers of Europe have respected Swiss neutrality for two centuries. "Not even Hitler invaded Switzerland," is a common remark.

While these arguments are undeniably true, I believe they overlook several key points:

- o History provides us with several examples of armies using the passes through the Swiss Alps to conduct offensive operations. No doubt one of the reasons the Swiss developed the formidable infantry for which they were long famous was to deter foreign troops from entering Swiss territory. The vaunted Swiss infantry was insufficient, though, to prevent the Austrians, the French, and even the Russians from using the Swiss passes during the Napoleonic Wars. Switzerland, as the Helvetic Republic, was little more than a French puppet state during the majority of the Napoleonic period. This is an important consideration. The historic framework of 1900 is set at a time that is less than a century removed from when Switzerland was just another small state to be trampled over by the Great Powers.

o The fact that Switzerland's boundaries have not been violated since the days of Napoleon does not mean that they could not have been had the situation merited it. As the Swiss themselves realize, there is no impenetrable barrier around their nation, though being located in a formidable mountain range doesn't hurt. Certainly if a neighboring Great Power had felt the rewards of invading Switzerland were worth the risks, the notion of "inviolate Swiss neutrality" would not have meant much. Germany's willingness to overrun neutral Belgium during WWI, as part of an offensive into France, and both neutral Denmark and Norway twenty-five years later, to protect German interests in Scandinavia, amply demonstrate this point. It's worth noting that France's infamous Plan 17 allowed for the possibility of a German invasion via Switzerland

o The Swiss were fortunate for over a century in that there was no need for an invader to make the arduous journey across their lands. For much of the early 19th century, the Austrians and French could avoid the Swiss Alps and use far easier routes to get into Germany and Italy. Later, after Germany and Italy were established as nation states, there was never a question of Germany attacking south into Italy or Italy crossing the mountains to attack Germany. Entering the 20th century, Switzerland's position became much more precarious. The Swiss used a combination of tactics to remain outside of the conflicts that surrounded their nation. In addition to abiding by a policy of strict neutrality, these tactics included pursuing an active diplomatic program, offering significant economic inducements to forestall invasion, and maintaining a formidable military, at least for a small state, to deter aggression. The fact that Switzerland was on a full war footing during both World Wars is, in my opinion, telling.

Curiously, while many bemoan the concept of Switzerland being turned into a SC, no one seems the least bit perturbed by Sweden being just another prize for the British, Germans, and Russians to fight over. Neutrality has been as much a cornerstone of Swedish policy since the Napoleonic period as it has been for Switzerland and it has been over two centuries since an "uninvited" foreign army has crossed the Swedish border. What makes Swiss neutrality sacrosanct when Swedish neutrality is so easily shrugged off? My guess is that **Diplomacy** players have simply come to accept Allan Calhamer's impassable Switzerland as being "inherently" correct when, in fact, it is merely a parameter he established to make the game play like he wanted it to.

There's no need to go into much depth concerning the role of Switzerland in **Diplomacy**. It is very much at the center of the map and several stalemate lines converge upon it. Being impassable, Switzerland serves as a superb defensive barrier between France, Germany, and Italy. Invaders must follow an axis of advance that goes around Switzerland when attacking a neighbor. Knowing this, the defender can often concentrate its forces appropriately and keep the attacker at bay. This is especially true for Italy, which, as a sage player once remarked, is basically an island with land approaches. The flip side, of course, is that Switzerland is an offensive barrier. The effect of this barrier on Italy is particularly severe. Switzerland makes Italian expansion north or west extremely difficult, even if Italy is allied with another Power. Further, Italy's ability to provide direct support to either France or Germany in the early going is greatly handicapped. Italy's relative offensive inflexibility and its limitations as an ally in the early stages of a game serve to constrain Italian options. This in turn reduces Italy's diplomatic clout and contributes directly to the phenomenon described in Chapter 6 in which Italy is relegated to the margins of the two great triangles (A/R/T and E/F/G).

Given that an impassable Switzerland facilitates the formation of undesirable stalemate lines and hampers Italian play, it seemed to me that making Switzerland passable might have several positive effects.

Of course, the idea of a passable Switzerland is not new. It is, in fact, an integral part of the **Milan** variant, as are a few other ideas that were incorporated into **1900**. In his article "New Improved Diplomacy?" that appeared in issue #80 of *Diplomacy World*, Stephen Agar discussed the pros and cons of opening Switzerland in some depth. In the end, Stephen believed that Switzerland should be made passable. His justifications included providing a focus for actions involving Austria-Hungary, France,

Germany, and Italy; eliminating established stalemate lines; enhancing east-west conflict; and removing the “Piedmont Bottleneck.” These were all objectives I supported enthusiastically.

However, Stephen also felt that Switzerland should not be a SC because it would force France and Germany, and presumably Italy, into conflict right at game-start. Here, Stephen and I disagreed. How can wealthy Switzerland not be a SC when comparative backwaters like Serbia and Bulgaria are? More to the point, we all know that Austria-Hungary and Italy are not “forced” into conflict by having home SCs that actually touch. If this is true, why must two Great Powers fight because one of them controls a SC that is adjacent to a home SC belonging to the other? The solution is clearly a matter for the diplomats to sort out.

Given that Switzerland is both a passable space and a SC in **1900**, what are the impacts? Actually, they are quite profound.

Switzerland in **1900** is still at, or at least very near, the center of the map. While it’s true that Switzerland no longer anchors any known stalemate lines, it remains within two spaces of twelve other SCs. Nearly one-third of the SCs in **1900** are included in a two-space radius centered on Switzerland! By contrast, only eight SCs are within two spaces of Budapest or about one-fifth of the total. Obviously, effective control of Switzerland early in the game provides the controlling Power with a key strategic asset for both offensive and defensive purposes. As I’ll discuss further on, though, “effective control” of Switzerland involves more than simply occupying it.

Perhaps the most significant impact of the open Switzerland of **1900** is that it reduces the roles played by the triangles and forces players to consider new strategic options. It does so by facilitating, rather than blocking, diplomatic interaction between Italy and its neighbors in the west. Italy must immediately become involved in negotiations with both France and Germany over control of Switzerland and the consequences of that control. Indeed, the very fact that Italy is an integral rather than marginal player in a new diplomatic triangle is a gain for Italy in that these negotiations can easily broaden into alliance talks with either neighbor.

At this point, I must mention that it can be argued convincingly that Switzerland really creates a new diplomatic quadrangle instead of a triangle. The redrawn map and changes to its at-start forces allow Austria-Hungary to order A Vienna to Tyrolia in Spring ‘00. With an army in Tyrolia, the Dual Monarchy instantly gains a voice in western affairs in general and in the Switzerland conundrum specifically. Despite this, I still prefer to view the dynamics around Switzerland as a triangle involving France, Germany, and Italy. I feel this way for the following reasons:

- o Unlike France, Germany, and Italy, Austria-Hungary can choose to remain aloof from the game-start negotiations concerning Switzerland without jeopardizing its immediate future. This is largely because Switzerland does not border an Austro-Hungarian home SC. More often than not, I suspect the Archduke will consider resolution of the Switzerland question as a western matter, choose to look east initially, and use A Vienna accordingly. Even if the Archduke would like to meddle in western affairs, relations with Russia may prohibit him from doing so.

- o Austria-Hungary cannot move directly into Switzerland in Spring ’00 like France, Germany, and Italy can. Additionally, it cannot bring a second unit into the equation without violating the territory of its neighbors and/or seriously jeopardizing its position in the east. This being the case, the Dual Monarchy is extremely unlikely to gain Switzerland for itself early in the game. Even if it did, it would have a great deal of trouble holding on to it.

- o A Vienna to Tyrolia may not signal Austro-Hungarian interest in getting involved in Swiss negotiations as much as it might reflect concern over German and/or Italian intentions. While Switzerland might not be of particular interest to the Dual Monarchy in the early going, keeping Tyrolia vacant or occupied by an Austro-Hungarian army certainly is.

Thus, while the Archduke may make himself a player in Swiss affairs, his motivation for doing so and the results he hopes to achieve are almost surely going to differ from the motivating factors and expectations of the President, Kaiser, and Pope.

If we accept that Switzerland creates a new diplomatic triangle, F/G/I, we must also accept that this triangle has uneven legs. France, Germany, and Italy each have a home SC adjacent to Switzerland and each can arrange to have two units next to Switzerland after the Spring '00 moves. There are, however, three important considerations that will make the leaders in Paris, Berlin, and Rome look at the Swiss situation differently.

The first consideration is the priority each Power assigns to the occupation of Switzerland as a means to stimulate growth.

Most Pope's playing **1900** will be well aware of Italy's "whipping boy" status in **Diplomacy**. With this humiliation in mind, they will tend to view Switzerland as being Italy's fair share in the new division of neutrals. After all, France still has access to Spain and Portugal, and can now claim Morocco, while Germany is "virtually assured" of gaining Belgium, Denmark, and Netherlands. Italy can only claim Tripolitania, and both Britain and France can contest possession of that SC. A typical Pope may view French or German designs on Switzerland as nothing more than testimony to their greed. This perspective, if it exists, is certain to color Italian negotiations. The neighbor, France or Germany, that is willing to give Italy its "due" without quibbling may be well on its way toward establishing an alliance with Rome.

While Italy is often viewed as being SC-poor, Germany faces the opposite problem. Because the Reich starts with four closely grouped units and can reasonably expect to build three more units in Winter '00, Germany must deal with the never welcome perception that it is the dreaded "early leader." Given this, the Kaiser is probably going to be less interested in claiming Switzerland right away than his counterparts in Paris or Rome might be. In fact, the acquisition of a fourth SC in '00 may actually make all but the most daring or ruthless Kaisers a bit squeamish. Unlike the President or Pope, the Kaiser is likely to approach Switzerland as a diplomatic coin he can spend to acquire an ally in either Paris or Rome through offers of German support into the space. This does not mean, however, that the Kaiser should write off annexation of Switzerland. Both France and Italy might be willing to let Germany occupy Switzerland if it will lead to an alliance with the Reich. This is particularly true if relations between Paris and Rome are acrimonious or either nation feels threatened by Britain.

France is in a difficult position. The President must deal with the perception, exacerbated by the results of countless **Diplomacy** games, that France is sitting on top of a small gold mine of SCs in Iberia and North Africa. It might not take much to convince any of the Third Republic's neighbors that "powerful" France might become a true monster if it gets Switzerland in addition to its "normal share" of neutrals. While there may be truth to this Franco-phobic scenario, it must also be conceded that France faces many challenges in **1900** that don't exist in **Diplomacy**. The British fleet in Gibraltar is likely to put a damper on French plans for Iberia and North Africa whether Britain is a French ally or foe. Further, the President must live with the reality that he has very powerful neighbors. When the British leviathan and the German behemoth are sitting on the doorstep of Metropolitan France, the prospect of getting only one or two builds might be a trifle frightening to the folks in Paris. On top of this, Italy now has the wherewithal to make life difficult for the Third Republic. Under these circumstances, Presidents may be forgiven for believing that France has a much greater need for the build available in Switzerland than the Italians do.

The second consideration is the risk or difficulty involved in putting armies into position to either take Switzerland or prevent it from being taken.

At first glance, Italy appears to have few problems engaging its two armies in the conquest of Switzerland and considerable incentive to do so. By sending A Rome and A Milan north, the Pope gives Italy its best chance to take Switzerland by force and has units positioned to defend Italy against Austro-Hungarian or French aggression. Exactly how A Rome and A Milan are ordered will depend on the Pope's best guess regarding the President's and Kaiser's plans.

While moving both Italian armies northward may appear like the natural thing to do, there are tradeoffs the Pope must mull over. Perhaps the most significant is that such an opening is likely to heighten tensions with France. Any Italian move into Piedmont is sure to be greeted with alarm in Paris. Once blows are struck, Italy may find itself engaged in a difficult and distracting war that prevents it from being able to sufficiently curb Austro-Hungarian or Turkish expansion westward. Also, it is worth remembering that, if A Rome heads north in the Spring, it cannot be convoyed to Africa or Greece in the Fall. Italy must then "waste" a turn bringing a newly constructed unit to bear. This seemingly small delay might prove decisive in the extremely competitive race to establish control of the Mediterranean, which, unlike central Europe, should be Italy's primary area of interest at game-start.

The President can easily arrange to have two units bordering Switzerland entering Fall '00 and he will probably do so if he senses trouble on his eastern border. However, it is both riskier and costlier for the Third Republic to commit two units to Switzerland than it is for Italy. Much more so than either Germany or Italy, France has to consider what the British may be up to at game-start. Each French unit invested in Switzerland is one less unit that can be positioned to participate in the conquest of Iberia or defend against an all-out British blitz (i.e., F Egypt to Mid-Atlantic Ocean supported by F Gibraltar). If the President is particularly intransigent in his negotiations over Switzerland, it could signal that he believes he has a friend in London.

Unlike France or Italy, Germany is generally moving out of its way to deploy two units to the Swiss front. Doing so diminishes the Reich's chances of claiming Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands in Fall '00 against British and/or French resistance. The exception to the rule is if Germany is invited by France or Italy to move A Munich to Switzerland with French or Italian support in Spring '00. Such an invitation would most likely be made in return for German support into Piedmont or Marseilles in the Fall. In such a scenario, A Berlin to Munich makes perfect sense. With Switzerland in the bank, the Reich can grab the neutral in '01 that he didn't claim in '00. While it might seem far-fetched to some players that either France or Italy would be willing to let powerful Germany into Switzerland, the reality is that German friendship at game-start may be of critical importance to Paris or Rome depending on their relationship with each other and with Britain.

The third consideration is the threat perceived by each Power in having one of its neighbors control Switzerland.

Looking at this from Italy's perspective, having a hostile France occupy Switzerland is a scarier prospect than having a hostile Germany there. This is because France can use its position in Switzerland to put tremendous pressure on Italy's northern defenses. If Marseilles is open in Winter '00 for a fleet build, Italy's very survival might be at stake. Germany's ability to take the war to Italy is far more limited. For starters, Austria-Hungary is unlikely to willingly allow German troops to pass through Tyrolia on their way into the Italian Peninsula. Even if the Germans do take this route, the Italians can make a purely overland invasion very slow going. The Kaiser might reasonably expect to capture Milan, but that's probably all of Italy he'll be able to secure before being stopped, either by Italian units or by the units of other Powers who have taken advantage of Italy's plight to grab Rome and Naples for themselves.

Likewise, the Kaiser would probably rather see a hostile Italy occupy Switzerland than a hostile France. French occupation of Switzerland places pressure on Munich and Alsace, and thereby on Belgium, if

Germany controls it. While Germany will likely have the resources to keep France out of German territory in the short run, the situation is clearly unfavorable and, if not corrected, is likely to jeopardize Germany's long term success and even its viability. Italy, on the other hand, is much less threatening. The Dual Monarchy is just as likely to take a dim view of Italian armies marching through Tyrolia as it would German armies. Perhaps more important, Italy is, at least initially, a Mediterranean Power, not a Continental one. Generally, Italy should avoid Continental battles where possible. Clearly, if the Reich has the forces at its disposal to keep France at bay, it will have even less trouble with the Italians. Investing in the armies needed to march north into the Fatherland just detracts from Italy's naval power while playing to the strengths of its rivals. If, in the early going, Italy tries to expand its Swiss bridgehead into central Europe, it is likely to find itself caught in a quagmire.

If occupation of Switzerland by a hostile France represents a serious threat to both Germany and Italy, it stands to reason that the opposite is also true: occupation of Switzerland by a hostile Germany or Italy represents a serious threat to France. If Germany occupies Switzerland, it gains a tactical advantage in any struggle for control of Burgundy. German control of Burgundy renders the French position desperate. Likewise, Italian occupation of Switzerland makes French control of Marseilles problematic. The fall of Marseilles effectively cuts France off from its North African territories and threatens French interests in Iberia. Obviously, France can ill afford to have any hostile Power place an army in Switzerland. At the same time, the President needs to ensure Germany and Italy don't find common cause in preventing France from getting Switzerland. While this certainly appears to be a diplomatic challenge of the first order, the solution seems self-evident. If the President doesn't think his claims to Switzerland will be supported, then he will probably have to swallow his pride and "generously" agree to support the claims of the Power most willing to work with France.

This leads us directly to the final aspect of the Swiss Triangle that makes it so fascinating. Switzerland can typically be occupied and held only if two of the three Powers involved agree on its disposition. This means that usually there will be one Power holding Switzerland, one Power assisting in the occupation, and one "odd Power out" (OPO). The OPO has every incentive to try to convince the Power assisting in the occupation to switch sides and can offer Switzerland itself as an incentive to do so. The assisting Power will have not only Switzerland, but its own security concerns to motivate it to switch sides. Until one of the three members of the triangle actually falls, this dynamic will continue to exist.

As the game moves through mid-game and into endgame, there is likely to be a build-up of forces around Switzerland. As noted earlier, almost one-third of the thirty-nine total SCs in **1900** are near Switzerland. Ironically, this actually tends to reduce the importance of Switzerland over time. Seven territories border Switzerland and fourteen other land spaces border those seven. As the build-up of forces around Switzerland develops, the resulting tactical situations become so complex that Switzerland itself declines in relative importance. The more powerful and better-positioned army will more than likely gain Switzerland on its way to victory; it will not necessarily be more powerful and better positioned because it holds Switzerland.

What does all this mean for the French, German, and Italian players?

First and most obviously, each should approach the Swiss situation with caution. While Switzerland is important, the game will neither be won nor lost by Switzerland alone.

Next, if an unfavorable situation develops, the player controlling the OPO should not respond by cutting off diplomatic relations with his neighbors. Instead, he should remember that the Swiss situation is inherently unstable in the early going. This year's winner could very well be next year's loser. Patience and diplomatic flexibility must be exercised. France, in particular, absolutely must avoid burning any bridges over Switzerland.

Finally, a player should use the Swiss situation to test his neighbors, while keeping in mind that those same neighbors are likely using it to test him. With a little diplomatic skill, a player should be able to find out a lot about the diplomatic style and strategic plans of the other members of the Swiss Triangle. This can not only give a player early warning of a hostile neighbor or alliance, but also enable him to determine just how trustworthy his neighbors are. It might be prudent to be relatively straightforward about policy concerning Switzerland. Given the instability of the Swiss situation, telling an early lie to gain what may prove to be a temporary advantage is probably not a wise move and straight talk early on can build a reputation that could be quite useful later in the game.

Chapter 10: THE FRANCO-GERMAN ALLIANCE

From the Designer: *This article was written by Chris Dziedzic and Bill Leake shortly after the completion of 1900 030319. In that game, Bill's France and Chris's Germany worked together for much of the contest and had little trouble dominating the action. At the very end, Bill tried for and achieved a solo for the Third Republic, but the point was proven: F/G can be a powerful alliance.*

Inspired by their success, Chris and Bill drafted an article on the benefits of F/G cooperation for both Great Powers. They then sent their draft to several 1900 veterans for comment. Among those who provided input were Charles Feaux de la Croix, Aki Halme, Charles Roburn, and myself. Combining the input they received with their original draft, Chris and Bill came up with a final version and sent it to me and to Edward Hawthorne, the Editor of The Diplomatic Pouch 'Zine.

I was impressed enough with Bill's and Chris's piece to include it here in the Gamers' Guide. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first article on 1900 that I did not have a major role in writing myself, though I did some editing with the permission of the authors to better blend their material with the other chapters of the Gamers' Guide. My hope is that players who have enjoyed 1900 will be sufficiently inspired by Chris's and Bill's effort to compose their own articles on some aspect of the variant's strategy or tactics. Consider this a challenge to all of you!

Players new to 1900 usually come to the variant armed with assumptions they formed based on playing **Diplomacy**. This leads them to follow strategies that make sense in a **Diplomacy** game, but that might not be optimal given the new playing field offered by 1900. Some people call this phenomenon the "Diplomacy Hangover." Since France and Russia have fearsome reputations in **Diplomacy** due to their success, many 1900 rookies are drawn quickly to alliances designed to counter French or Russian play. Three of the most popular coalitions are A/G/I, A/G/T, and B/G/I. Each of these triples has enjoyed tremendous success. Not too surprisingly, that success has stimulated many 1900 veterans to form counter alliances aimed at thwarting the Powers involved in a particular coalition and enhancing their own prospects. One option that is definitely worth considering, but that has received little attention to date is the Franco-German alliance.

There are certainly historical justifications for an F/G alliance. France and Germany exhibited a large measure of cooperation in the late 1890s. Both France and Germany resented British expansion in Africa. France nearly went to war with Britain over the Fashoda Crisis in 1898 and Germany gave public moral support to the Boers during the Boer War of 1899-1902. Both France and Germany intervened against Japan, Britain's ally, and its large demands on China in 1895 at the close of the Sino-Japanese War. France and Germany were also able to successfully press for ports and territories along the coast of China in 1898. The foundation clearly appeared to be there for a larger set of commitments between the two nations. Only German insistence on the recognition of the borders of 1871 prevented a possible F/G détente in the closing years of the 19th Century. No French government could survive the domestic outcry of forever forgoing the reclamation of Alsace-Lorraine. Fortunately, domestic outcry is something that Presidents and Kaisers need not worry about when playing 1900.

Why choose an F/G alliance? Good question. Consider the following.

First, F/G relations are not as tense at game-start in 1900 as they are in **Diplomacy**.

In **Diplomacy**, Germany is France's worst nightmare and friction between the two Powers is extremely high (i.e., second only to the friction between Germany and Russia). In 1900, Germany ranks third behind Britain and Italy in terms of the danger it poses to the Third Republic. Given this, it makes little sense for the President to antagonize the Kaiser. On the contrary, powerful Germany might be just the ally needed to keep the Prime Minister and the Pope in check. From Germany's perspective, the gains to be made from attacking France are less in 1900 than they are in **Diplomacy**. This is because, neutral

Belgium, a source of friction at game-start between Paris and Berlin, is now firmly within Germany's orbit. All that the Kaiser might reasonably expect to capture if France falls is Paris, as both Britain and Italy are much better positioned to profit from France's early demise.

Possibly even more important for reduced Franco-German tensions, the provinces of Alsace and Burgundy are significant buffer spaces that can be quickly transformed into a large and easily maintained DMZ between the two Powers. This DMZ gives both France and Germany a sense of security for many of their home supply centers (SCs) (i.e., Paris and Marseilles, Cologne and Munich), and also for a pair of the neutrals that F/G should be able to quickly dominate (i.e., Belgium and Switzerland). Good fences often make good neighbors and lowering fear is almost certain to contribute to alliance stability. With an F/G alliance, a significant stab will typically take two full seasons to execute. This helps keep both parties honest since they will each be able to see a stab coming at them from a mile away. In many cases, the most that will be obtained from a stab when Alsace and Burgundy are kept empty is one SC, either Switzerland or Belgium. Such a meager gain hardly makes a stab worthwhile.

Second, an alliance by either Power with Britain may prove increasingly difficult to maintain as the game progresses.

Friction between France and Britain is likely to be quite high over control of Mid-Atlantic Ocean. British control of that space presents a serious risk to France's security. French control of Mid-Atlantic Ocean effectively cuts off Britain from its African holdings and threatens the British Isles directly. Further, alliance with Britain almost certainly requires France to surrender a "French" SC in Iberia or North Africa, most likely Morocco or Portugal. This is something that most Presidents are sure to find distasteful. A great deal of cooperation and trust will be required to make a B/F work, and tension between the two Powers is likely to remain extremely high.

Viewed from Berlin, a dual alliance with Britain can be problematic, as is the case in standard **Diplomacy**. Though a B/G alliance generally does not have to overcome the friction that exists between Britain and France at game-start, Germany is likely to start feeling more and more pressure as the game progresses. This is because it is usually easier for Britain, with its numerous fleets and control of the seas, to stab the Reich than it is for Germany, with its smaller navy, to stab Albion. Even mounting a defense against a British stab can be a challenge for the Kaiser. As a minimum, a significant number of German units are likely to be tied up pulling garrison duty instead of conquering new territories.

Both the President and Kaiser may come to the conclusion that allying with each other against Britain is a better option for their respective nations. Working together, France and Germany can potentially eliminate Britain quickly. Taking down Britain will go a long way towards removing French and German concerns about being encircled and having to fight on multiple fronts simultaneously. Given Britain's strong defensive position, its growth potential, and its diplomatic clout, it would seem to be in F/G's best interest to tackle Britain sooner rather than later.

Third, an F/G alliance offers some magnificent tactical and strategic advantages.

In addition to combined operations against Britain, France and Germany possess the ability to work together effectively in the heart of Europe. Such cooperation would almost certainly include the early conquest of Switzerland, followed by a joint campaign through the Alps against Italy and Austria-Hungary to capture Milan and Vienna. Even as F/G armies push through the center of the map, each Power can throw the remainder of its considerable military might into well-defined spheres of interest. France's attention is likely to be focused on the Mediterranean, while Germany presses its claims to Scandinavia and the SCs of Austria-Hungary and Russia. Unless the opposition is well organized, the prospects for explosive F/G growth are tremendous.

Fourth, using a novel approach is frequently a key to being successful.

Constantly relying on “standard” alliance patterns will not always be successful, particularly if the intended victims suspect that those alliance patterns will emerge at the start of a game. An F/G alliance represents an alternative to “standard” play. As mentioned earlier, F/G alliances have not been common in **1900** games played to date. Given this, the appearance on an F/G could take the other Powers by surprise since they will be looking for other alliance patterns and might be unwitting fodder for some well-executed early stabs.

So how does an F/G alliance best take advantage of its strengths in an early war against Britain? As discussed in Chapter 4, there are two potential scenarios. The first and less complicated is when France and Germany are allied against Britain, and Italy is neutral or friendly. The second, and more daunting, is when France and Germany are allied against Britain, but Italy is hostile. An important, if not the primary, diplomatic goal in preparation for a war against Britain should be the prevention of that second scenario.

One way to keep Italy’s attention off of France and gain tactical mastery over Britain at the same time is to ensure the Royal Navy remains scattered across the board, thus deflecting its strength. Britain must be discouraged from making a supported move into the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Instead, Britain should be encouraged to maintain its fleets within the Mediterranean, Italy’s primary area of interest. This can be accomplished by suggesting that the British fleet in Gibraltar take Morocco in Spring ’00 or by pointing out the vulnerability of Egypt to a Turkish attack. Ideally, the Prime Minister can be convinced to order F Egypt to Cyrenaica, thereby threatening Tripolitania. This achieves both the dispersal of the British fleets and the souring of B/I relations over the disposition of Tripolitania. The issue of which Power, Britain or Italy, ultimately gets Tripolitania may serve to delay effective B/I cooperation against the F/G alliance until it is too late. Negotiations with Italy should point out the dangers posed by Austria-Hungary, Britain, and Turkey, and the gains to be made in the Mediterranean. The intent here is to encourage the Pope to look east instead of west. If the Italians are engaged in a war with the Habsburgs or Ottomans, they will be less likely to intervene on Britain’s side in the developing western war.

These diplomatic initiatives to prevent the second scenario will not always be successful. Italy’s orientation is shifted significantly to the west in **1900**. Getting the Pope to look eastward will be more difficult than it would be in **Diplomacy**. France, therefore, needs to be able to defend itself against a hostile Italy. Does this preclude F/G from operating against Britain? Most certainly not! Maarten Oosten, in the Fall 1997 Movement issue of *The Diplomatic Pouch ‘Zine* (“William and Mary or the Flemish Sealion”) developed a variation of the Sealion opening for France and Germany to use in standard **Diplomacy** specifically when faced with a diplomatic situation that included a hostile Italy. The moves are:

	S’01	F’01
France	F Brest to English Channel	F English Channel to Mid-Atlantic Ocean
	A Paris to Gascony	A Gascony to Marseilles
	A Marseilles to Spain	A Spain to Portugal
Germany	F Kiel to Holland	F Holland to Belgium
	A Berlin to Kiel	A Kiel to Denmark
	A Munich to Ruhr	A Ruhr to Holland

Since France is even more likely to face a hostile Italy in **1900** than in **Diplomacy**, any opening France considers needs to offer protection for Marseilles against a possible, perhaps likely, Italian attack. Fortunately, the principles of Maarten Oosten’s opening can be applied to France and Germany in **1900**. In fact, in the DPJudge game 1900S [*a.k.a. 1900 030903. Baron*], the President and Kaiser made a series of opening moves that applied the principles of Maarten Oosten’s opening to the **1900** game-start scenario. Those moves were:

	S’00	F’00
France	F Brest to English Channel *bounce*	F Brest to Mid Atlantic Ocean
	A Paris to Gascony	A Gascony to Spain
	A Marseilles to Spain	A Spain to Portugal
	A Algeria to Morocco *bounce*	A Algeria to Morocco *bounce*
Germany	F Kiel to Netherlands	F Netherlands supports A Belgium
	A Berlin to Kiel	A Kiel to Denmark
	A Cologne to Belgium	A Belgium supports F Netherlands
	A Munich to Switzerland *bounce*	A Munich supports Austro-Hungarian A Tyrolia to Switzerland

In both cases, France opens with F Brest to English Channel, A Paris to Gascony, and A Marseilles to Spain. The army in Gascony protects Marseilles against a potential Italian attack, if Italy orders A Rome to Piedmont in the Spring. In fact, it is arguable that the move to Gascony is stronger than the move to Burgundy that Baron Powell advocated in the Fall 2002 Retreat issue of *The Diplomatic Pouch ‘Zine* (“1900: France”). The move to Burgundy might sour budding relations between France and Germany, while an army in Gascony can protect Marseilles just as well. If Italian hostility does not manifest itself, the move to Gascony also offers France another unit that can advance into Spain in the Fall or support a renewed attack on Spain if there was a bounce in the Spring. [*OK, I’m convinced moving to Gascony is superior as long as Germany is friendly. Baron*]

Marseilles is protected from a supported Italian attack in the Fall by Germany’s Spring order of A Munich to Switzerland. The German army in Munich is available for this duty because the newly added army in Cologne can be used to take Belgium. In both the 1900S orders and Maarten Oosten’s opening, Germany orders A Berlin to Kiel and F Kiel to Netherlands (i.e., Holland in standard **Diplomacy**). This reduces G/R tensions over Sweden at game-start, while allowing Germany to place pressure on the North Sea in the Fall.

Players should note that there is nothing in these moves that openly states F/G is in place. Certainly, however, the Prime Minister is likely to start squirming in Winter ’00 when a new French fleet appears in Brest, if open, and a new German fleet pops up in Kiel.

In fairness, it should be mentioned that an F/G alliance is not simply a walk in the park. Balanced against the advantages discussed earlier in this chapter are several potential sources of friction between France and Germany. This is not surprising given that France and Germany each have a different view of Europe. France’s primary concern at game-start is sure to be the neutralization of Britain and Italy. While Germany has to worry about the British too, it must also deal with the eastern powers, Austria-Hungary and Russia. It is possible that France might come to expect its German partner to take an extremely active

role in the west, while Germany might expect France to carry the bulk of the workload against B/I and thereby allow German forces to be committed in the east.

Perhaps the first test of F/G solidarity will be over which of the two Powers gains control of Switzerland at game-start. Disagreement over this issue can cause F/G to fall apart before it even gets started.

In the early going, France will probably feel very much like the junior partner of the alliance. More often than not, the Third Republic will be bearing the brunt of Anglo-Italian hostility and will be doing so with less units than its Germany ally has. Even as France is grappling with its neighbors, it has to keep a wary eye on Germany's many armies, both the ones on garrison duty that are lurking near the French border and the ones that are making progress in Austria-Hungary or Russia. If the President is not careful, he may wake up one day to discover that German forces have "accidentally" wandered into the agreed upon DMZs or, worse, that the opposition in the east is about to collapse leaving the Reich with a good shot at a solo. As the game progresses and both Powers grow, the Kaiser may start feeling increasingly uncomfortable with his French ally pressed up against his back. This is especially true if Britain and Italy are defeated fairly quickly, while Austria-Hungary or Russia remains a viable opponent in the east, a scenario that is not at all far-fetched.

F/G tensions can usually be kept low, however, as long as parity between the two Powers is maintained. If either France or Germany feels that only one of them is truly reaping the benefits of the alliance, the chances of the alliance breaking down are much higher. The good news here is that the arrangement of SCs between France and Germany facilitates the goal of maintaining F/G parity. Switzerland, Milan, the SCs in the Low Countries, and the three British SCs can easily be swapped back and forth as needed to keep France and Germany in balance.

The implications of F/G as a straight dual alliance, as opposed to it being two-thirds of a triple alliance, need to be discussed. In **1900**, the victory conditions are such that a dual alliance cannot achieve a 2-way draw by force alone. This situation was created deliberately in an attempt to encourage more solos. Given the victory conditions, the President and Kaiser must consider their end-game options. These include relying on a concession by the surviving powers, looking for an acceptable partner or partners for inclusion in a larger draw, or stabbing their former ally for the solo victory. Relying on a concession by the other Powers may be a long shot, but it does happen on occasion as some players are willing to acknowledge that they didn't "earn" a piece of the draw or they are anxious to move on to other contests. More likely, however, F/G will either have to stab or find a partner. Assuming France and Germany are committed to the end, the President and Kaiser should probably consider themselves as the "hard core" of any larger alliance that forms. If they cannot identify a worthy partner immediately, there is little need to worry or allow F/G to break down. This is because the strength of an F/G standing by itself is impressive and, with that strength openly displayed, it is possible that a third party will come begging to be included in the triple as time passes.

Though any triple alliance can work if the players involved are determined to make it work, it is obvious that some triple alliances are easier to start and to maintain than others are. Examining the strengths and weaknesses of each of the other Powers as a possible third partner for F/G yields the following:

- o Austria-Hungary. The Dual Monarchy is a potentially strong partner for F/G. For starters, it can help offensively against both Italy and Russia. Next, Austria-Hungary provides the alliance with immediate access to the Balkans and Turkey, an area of the map that France and, especially, Germany usually have trouble reaching. Finally, the location of each member of the alliance relative to each other allows for considerable growth before the potential of direct conflict over the spoils of war becomes too great. In particular, none of the members of the triple need be overly concerned about being sandwiched between the other two. An argument can certainly be made that the A/F/G triple is a much better option than the more common A/G/I triple (a.k.a., the Central Alliance).

o Britain. The Western Triple is well known in standard **Diplomacy**. If Britain, France, and Germany can work together successfully, this is arguably the most powerful triple in **1900**. The problem is that B/F/G contains a tremendous amount of inherent friction. Almost inevitably, this friction leads two of the Powers to stab the third very early in the contest. Usually, it is the Kaiser that is the most squeamish about agreeing to such a triple and for good reason. Having powerful Britain and France pressed against the Reich's flanks on three sides is, in most cases, simply too much pressure for a Kaiser to bear. Even if Britain is not included in F/G's long range plans, it will almost always prove beneficial, particularly for France, to be extremely cordial with Britain in the early going. Besides the obvious benefits of avoiding a British attack and catching Britain by surprise when the time to stab finally arrives, cooperation with Britain helps disentangle the Anglo-French forces, which are somewhat jumbled at game-start. If properly played, France is likely to gain command of the all-important Mid Atlantic Ocean and gain itself a large measure of security.

o Italy. Italy is a difficult power to include in a triple alliance with F/G. This is because France is almost sure to feel trapped between its two allies. Germany blocks French growth in the north and Italy does the same in the Mediterranean and North Africa. The President's frustration at being relegated to the back seat is almost certain to lead to a stab. Perhaps inevitably, Italy will be an early target of F/G aggression.

o Russia. On the plus side, alliance with Russia usually facilitates three things. The first is the quick downfall of Britain. Even with all of its inherent strength, the British are unlikely to last long when fighting France, Germany, and Russia at the same time. The second is the rapid subjugation of Italy. Since Germany will have a secure eastern flank, F/G can more effectively double-team Italy. The third is the ability to set up the eastern Powers for easy conquest. At worst, the east should be stalemated until F/G can bring their forces into the action. At best, one of the eastern Powers, Austria-Hungary or Turkey will be effectively eliminated as a factor. On the negative side, Germany is likely to feel like the tasty meat in an F/R sandwich. Tensions between Germany and Russia are usually extremely high and problems often develop between the two Powers over the partition of the Scandinavian neutrals, the possible inclusion of Russia in a partition of the British Isles, and Russian claims on Austro-Hungarian territory.

o Turkey. Turkey's location on the map makes it a potentially strong partner for F/G. It is the one Power on the map that does not have a conflict with either France or Germany at game start. In fact, F/G's enemies tend to be Turkey's enemies too. As was the case with Austria-Hungary, none of the three Powers should be too concerned with being sandwiched by the other two. The issue with Turkey is that it is somewhat difficult to execute an F/G/T triple effectively in the short term because mutual support for military actions is not possible. If both Russia and Austria-Hungary attack Turkey in force, the Sultan is likely to be in serious trouble even if Germany intervenes. Even if the President and Kaiser do not consider the Sultan a full-fledged member of their alliance, Turkey can still be a useful element in F/G's opening strategy. Hints to London that the Turkish army in Damascus might be heading south towards Egypt could prevent the British fleet in Egypt from moving to Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Also, Turkey's involvement in the Balkans can keep both Austria-Hungary and Russia focused on the southeast corner of the map. Obviously, F/G diplomacy should try to maintain a chaotic stalemate in the east and prevent any one Power or alliance of Powers from achieving a significant early victory.

In summary, F/G can be a masterful combination. By itself, it is quite intimidating and, if played smartly, can dominate action throughout the game. In a well-coordinated triple alliance with another Power, F/G may be hard to stop.

Chapter 11: DEMONSTRATION GAME: 1900 040414/MONTE CARLO

From the Designer: I have always wanted to include a demonstration game in the *Gamers' Guide*. My inspiration for this idea came from the two versions of *The Gamers' Guide to Diplomacy*, both of which contained demonstration games. I felt these demonstration games contributed a lot to the reader's understanding of how **Diplomacy** is played. The primary problem I had was finding a good game to write about. As luck would have it, the perfect game fell right into my lap. This game was 1900 040414/Monte Carlo, a contest played via e-mail. It had many things going for it. It was not too long or too short, it was generally well played, and it was special because it was the first recorded Russian solo in a "standard" **1900** game that I had either GM'd or observed. What made it ideal for my purposes was the fact that the Tsar, Charles Roburn, provided an incredibly detailed account of the game from Russia's perspective. I would barely have to write a thing! Instead, I could simply use Charles's comments nearly verbatim to describe the ebb and flow of the war from start to finish. What more could a lazy editor ask for?

Charles provides us with what I think are fascinating insights on how he balanced Russia's priorities against the priorities of the other Great Powers, allies and enemies alike. As we all know, a player's ability to pursue his own goals without alienating other players to the point where they will no longer work with him is one of the great challenges of **Diplomacy**. Clearly the final result, a Russian solo, showed that he navigated this potentially dangerous path quite ably. The journey was not always an easy one, however.

As a format note, I should mention that throughout this chapter, Charles's comments are in italic, while my own are in regular script. Enjoy!

GAME NUMBER/NAME: 1900 040414/Monte Carlo

GAMEMASTER: B.M. Powell (with Jeff Dwornicki handling the Spring '02 and Fall '02 turns)

DATE GAME STARTED: 14 April 2004

DATE GAME ENDED: 18 August 2004

THE PLAYERS:

Austria-Hungary: Robert Stein. Robert was a veteran of many **1900** campaigns on USDP Judge. In seven **1900** games that started prior to this contest, he had soloed as France, Italy, and Turkey; and he had managed a 3-way as Britain. Since Robert had played every Power except Austria-Hungary, it seemed appropriate to assign him the Dual Monarchy this time around. While Robert didn't object too strenuously, he did have reservations about playing a predominantly land power. This is because he enjoyed fleet maneuvers and didn't expect to have much of a navy in this game.

Britain: Mike Oliveri. Mike had never played **1900** before, but he was hardly a rookie. On the contrary, he had a long history of involvement in the **Diplomacy** hobby. I met Mike while we were both serving as officers in the AOL Diplomacy Club and I was anxious to get him into one of my games. After turning me down several times, he finally agreed to play in this contest. His primary concern was grasping the new dynamics **1900** offered as quickly as possible, particularly since **1900's** Britain would clearly play very differently from **Diplomacy's** England.

France: Jerry (JT) Fest. JT was another **1900** veteran with a proud record of success. In four **1900** games that started prior to this one, JT had secured a solo as Germany (the Reich's first recorded solo in a **1900** game), a rare 2-way as Austria-Hungary, and a 3-way as Italy. JT's involvement in **1900** went far beyond simply playing it, however. Almost from the beginning, he was actively involved in discussions concerning the development of the variant, and his support and contributions over time were invaluable. JT had never played France before, so this would be his opportunity to shine as the President.

Germany: George Collins. George had played **1900** twice before, once as Britain and once as Italy, but in both of those games he had entered as a replacement. This was going to be his first opportunity to actually start a game. While George had been successful in those earlier games, with a 4-way as Britain

to his credit, he wanted to try a new more aggressive approach to negotiating in this contest. He felt the Reich provided him with an excellent tool with which to experiment.

Italy: Tiago Barros. Tiago was another player I recruited from the ranks of USDP Judge subscribers. He had played in three **1900** games on USDP Judge and had earned two 3-ways, one as France and another as Russia. Originally from Portugal and living in Finland at the time this game started, Tiago had to overcome two obstacles. The first was that English was his second (or third!) language. The second was that Tiago was several time zones ahead of the other players. Given his strong performances in his other games, it seemed unlikely to me that these disadvantages would handicap him too much.

Russia: Charles Roburn. Charles, who hailed from Canada, had played one game of **1900** previously. In that game, he had enjoyed some initial success as Austria-Hungary, but had eventually been overwhelmed and forced to settle for survival. Post game comments from other players in that game suggested that Charles's negotiating style worked against him, so he, like George, was going to use a different technique when having discussions with the other players.

Turkey: Markus Kellner. Markus lived in Austria. He had contacted me about playing in a **1900** game and had waited patiently for months until a new game started. Of all the players in this game, he was the one I knew the least about since I had not seen him in any USDP Judge games or GM'd a game he had played in previously. Given the quality and quantity of his correspondence, however, I was not the least bit concerned that there would be any language or time zone difficulties.

Now that the introductions are out of the way, let's get to the game.

Introduction

I'd like to start by thanking Baron for once again providing an excellent gaming experience – it's always a pleasure playing in one of his games. I'd also like to thank all my fellow players – the quality of the participants is one of the main reasons why Baron's games are so much fun! The fact that there were no replacements or even NMRs throughout this entire game is a testament to everyone's exceptional commitment and reliability.

I've been taking notes all along, so this End-of-Game report is, um, kind of long -- even for me. I hope that everyone will find it interesting in spite of its length!

*I started preparing for 040414 shortly after accepting Baron's invitation to play. I had played in one previous game, 1900 030319, where I was the Archduke. That had ended in a French solo (by Bill Leake) and saw Austria surviving with 4 SCs. I suppose it wasn't too bad for a first try at **1900**, but this time I wanted to do better!*

I wanted to win a solo this time round if I could, so I tried to plan my general approach. I began by revisiting the Diplomatic Pouch site and re-reading articles there. I then reviewed the End-of-Game comments from 1900 030319. I hoped to remind myself of some of the important general lessons I'd learned in that game and apply them in 040414 regardless of the country I got (my thanks to Baron, Chris Dziedzic, Bjoern Lengens, and Chris Pickrell in particular for their comments on my play in that game).

*The two **1900** games that I'd seen already were both solo wins (by Bill Leake as France in 1900 030319 and Lynn Mercer as Germany in 1900 030827). In both cases, the winner kept pace with one or two main allies for most of the game (there were several draw proposals in each). One ally was then attacked by a second (Germany in 1900 030319 was stabbed by my Austria, while Austria in 1900 030827 was stabbed by Turkey [played by our own Jerry Fest]). In the ensuing scuffle, the third ally managed to seize the prize. Clearly, this is a good general pattern to follow.*

In both cases, the country stabbed had been situated in between the winner and the stabber. Once I received my country assignment, I would try to identify countries that would fit this pattern and start my initial negotiations with this general long-term plan in mind. Failing that, I would try to have two allies closer to each other than to me, to facilitate their stabbing each other. At the very least, I should make sure that I would never find myself sandwiched between two 'allies', lest I get stabbed myself.

Winter '99

The View from St. Petersburg
by Charles Roburn

*The Kaiser, Archduke, Sultan, King:
These four are my good neighbors dear,
Encircling Russia in a ring
That fills my heart with dread and fear.*

*Monsieur and Pontiff, I will bet,
Are safe. They can't invade me...yet.
And since we have no common borders
I need not fear their armies' orders.*

*But from the rest I must find friends,
For if I don't, they'll overwhelm
My poor defenseless Russian realm,
And then my dream of empire ends.*

*I must make choices. Which are wiser?
The Sultan, Archduke, King, or Kaiser?*

*When Baron told me that I would be the Tsar, I was actually quite pleased. I studied some Russian in school and it's the one European country that I've actually visited for over a week. In regular **Diplomacy**, Russia is one of my favorites and I had a number of theories that I wanted to try out in **1900**. Besides, Russia in **1900** had never yet won a solo – quite a challenge! [Just to clarify, Russia had not won a solo in any game that I had GM'd or observed.]*

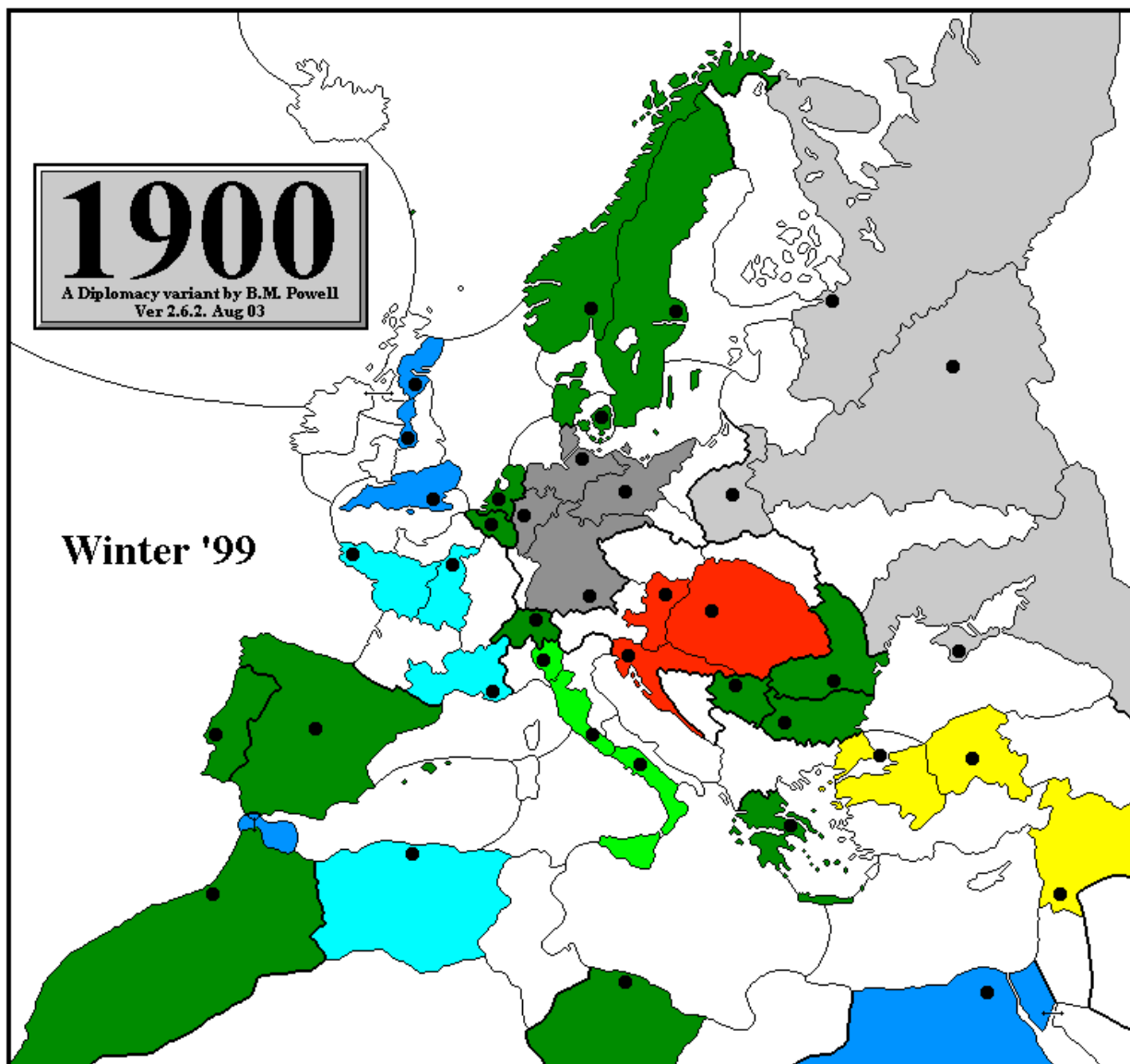
Looking at the board and considering my earlier analysis, I could see that I would have a lot of options available to me. I could set up a 'sandwich' configuration with either Germany or Austria in the middle, and France or Italy (or even Britain) on the other side. Any of these combinations would set up the right configuration for a Russian solo.

*I could also encourage an F-I. Such an alliance was long overdue in **1900** (according to Baron, it had NEVER been tried). From my point of view it would be critical to ensure that France and Italy did not come to blows early on or at least not until I was sure that I would not be attacked by B-G-A-T. I needed France to be ready to help against Britain and Germany, and Italy to help against Austria and Turkey. So encouraging F-I non-aggression would almost certainly be a cornerstone of my early policy. If that continued further into end game, so much the better. I think Baron has done a good job of creating friction between the two countries, so if they both continued to be my main allies to the end, there would be a better likelihood of one stabbing the other, which could lead to a Russian win.*

First, though, I would have to keep from being eliminated by my four neighbors! I was well aware of Russia's poor performance to date. In the short- to mid-term, I would need at least one ally in the north and one in the south. I must choose between Britain and Germany, and Austria and Turkey.

*In the North, Britain seemed the better choice if I could manage it. In both **1900** and **Diplomacy**, I'm amazed at how often Russia and Britain seem to end up fighting very early in the game. In my view this is potentially catastrophic for them both. I thought Germany would be less comfortable as a long-term ally. The Kaiser poses far more of a threat to Russia than the Prime Minister does in that he's closer and he has the armies required to invade and hold Warsaw and Moscow. I was perfectly willing to give up Sweden to Britain to gain British friendship, especially if that caused B-G conflict.*

In the South, I had a slight bias for an A-R. Austria could be a big help against Turkey and especially Germany, while still being able to expand west (or be hit from the west if needed).



Given my druthers, I would pick Britain and Austria over Germany and Turkey. However, I would do my best to restrain my geopolitical biases in favor of the players I found easiest to work with, since that ultimately is much more important. I also knew that as Russia I couldn't afford many mistakes. I would probably be well served by a careful and conservative playing style, at least at first, until I had a good sense of what was going to happen overall.

In the long term I hoped to be part of a triangle of some kind: F-I-R, B-I-R, F-A-R, or F-R-T. Those seemed to me to offer the best chance of a Russian win or draw. My eighteen centers would most likely come from Russia (4), Germany (4), Austria (3), Turkey (3), and the Balkan states (4), though these could be adjusted as the game developed, particularly if I invaded Scandinavia.

Spring '00

The starting gun went off. I immediately sent friendly messages to all the others and waited to see how they would reply.

I saw that JT had been cast as President of France, which pleased me since I'd had a chance to read his End-of-Game comments for 1900 030827 [in which JT survived as an 11 SC Turkey] and he seemed like a possible ally. He was the first to reply to my message. Initially he seemed a bit suspicious, but after I answered his questions I seemed to pass the test, and we soon had fairly open communications between us that lasted to the very end of the game. I still believe that between us we accounted for over half of Baron's 040414 related e-mail! [Very true] We were soon discussing game-long plans and whom to approach as the third member of a three-way alliance. We agreed that we would see how things went before making any final decisions, but it seemed that France and Russia would be solid allies throughout the game.

The second to answer was Sultan Markus. I'd asked for DMZs in Armenia and Black Sea, and casually suggested a bounce in Black Sea. I didn't seriously want one, but I did want to see how he'd react. He very properly pointed out in the friendliest way that the proposed bounce would guarantee two Balkan centers for Austria, and he'd rather see me order F Sevastapol to Rumania while he did F Ankara to Constantinople. It was exactly the kind of reply I would have written myself. So I wrote back agreeing that a bounce in Black Sea would be wasteful. I didn't promise (yet) to order F Sevastapol to Rumania, but I assured him that it was under serious consideration.

To Germany I'd written asking for DMZs in Prussia and Silesia, and telling Kaiser George that it would be most friendly for him to let me take Sweden. His first reply made me uneasy. He said that he had no objections on either point, but that he didn't want to make firm commitments before talking to everyone, since they could be seen as provocative. I had a hard time seeing how DMZs in Prussia and Silesia would be 'provocative' unless he was hoping to convince my neighbors to gang up on me! In the next paragraph, he then suggested that we could get together to stomp on Austria. Coming right after his cautious answer on the DMZs and Sweden, it didn't seem particularly sincere. However, I didn't want to discourage him so I responded positively and suggested that we each take a few days to gauge everyone else before finalizing anything. For some reason this seemed to make him defensive, but I tried not to read too much into that.

I heard from Britain next. Prime Minister Mike responded very positively, though I had the feeling that part of his message was a sort of form letter. No matter...we seemed to get along well. He asked me not to order A Moscow to St. Petersburg and I agreed at once. He also spoke about a long-term B-R-T alliance. I wasn't sure about that and I was skeptical of his commitment to it, but it didn't seem worth the trouble to make a fuss about it at this stage.

Finally I heard from Austria. Archduke Robert was fairly blunt about his conditions for an A-R. He insisted that I not move to Galicia, that I let him have Serbia (no problem, it's not like I could prevent it!), and requested that I take Rumania with a fleet and support him into Bulgaria afterward. At first this worried me, because the direct tone reminded me of Germany's blunt 'no' to my DMZ request. After re-reading Robert's message, I decided that it was actually a good sign that he was discussing specific terms and commitments. We exchanged a few more messages. I suggested that we talk about my going to Galicia, which he argued against extensively, and I gave way. He then spoke strongly in favor of F Sevastapol to Black Sea. I was reluctant, having already agreed with Turkey that the bounce would be wasteful. I decided I might ask for (demand) a bounce at the last minute, though.

I heard from Italy last of all. After so much silence I was afraid my opening message had made Pope Tiago afraid to talk to me because I'd asked him not to attack France when (it seemed) he was aiming for a B-G-I. Still, I wanted to forge a good relationship with him with an eye toward the mid-game. It turned out that his silence was due to real-life concerns. When I did hear from him, Tiago expressed good wishes and agreement that Russia and Italy would be good long-term allies.

As the week went on, I had the best communication with France. Every day we seemed to exchange at least three messages. Britain wrote less frequently, but the messages I did receive were friendly and fairly long. Toward the end of the week, there was a lot of silence from everyone, even though I was waiting for replies from G, A, T, and I. Germany finally did write to apologize for the delay and to ask whether I'd build F St. Petersburg (nc) in exchange for Sweden, but I politely declined to do so in Winter

'00. JT and I seemed headed for a B-F on his side and an A-R on mine; we would choose which of our respective allies to keep as the third when we'd had a chance to witness them both in action.

Still, I agonized over the choice between A and T. If I picked Austria, would I be going for position over personality? I wasn't getting the same level of warning signals from Robert that I'd gotten from false allies in previous games, but after a few days' silence I was a bit concerned. I finally heard from Robert again on Tuesday (five days after his last message!). He said that unless I agreed to order F Sevastapol to Black Sea, he must ask for a bounce in Galicia and would let me into Rumania with the fleet. Five days earlier I'd actually started to consider whether I could cancel my arrangements with Turkey at the last minute and demand a bounce in Black Sea—it would have been only slightly less annoying to Turkey than an outright stab, but would have kept my honor intact.

However, I wasn't willing to make this demand on such short notice when Markus had been writing me on a regular basis. I was especially not interested in making a last minute demand given the time zone difference. Markus would have been justifiably very angry. Instead I cheerfully accepted Robert's request for the bounce (all the more so since it meant that I could put off the final decision between him and Markus for longer) and tried to make the point that his long silence had hurt the relationship. He apologized and we resolved to compare notes after the moves. I hoped my refusal to attack Turkey would not affect Austria's plans to order A Vienna to Tyrolia, which I thought would have very interesting diplomatic consequences. At that time I actually favored Turkey (in spite of my strategic misgivings).

I heard from Germany, finally confirming the DMZs in Prussia and Silesia. He still wouldn't guarantee Sweden, but I tried to take that calmly. When I asked, he said Britain had asked him to bounce me and if he ended up allied to Mike he would. The day of moves, George sent a message asking whether I'd consider an arrangement where he would move north and west, and I would go west and south (eventually giving up Scandinavia, presumably). I replied that I was very open to that idea and we should discuss it in detail after the Spring moves.

The same day, Mike indicated that he would open in a somewhat anti-Italian fashion rather than go for the all-out attack on France. He'd previously hinted that he was more pro-French than anything else (in spite of Italy's attempts to form a B-G-I, he said), and I passed that on to France with the warning that Mike probably expected me to do so.

So I went into the Spring '00 moves feeling that things were going reasonably well. I wasn't sure what would happen in the west, but I thought the east was under control.

And of course, everything started to go wrong right away.

- o DUAL MONARCHY DECLARES WAR ON SERBIA
- o K&K ARMY CLASHES WITH RUSSIAN COUNTERPART IN GALICIA
- o ARCHDUKE RUSHES, PERHAPS TOO LATE, INTO THE SWISS CAULDRON
- o PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES TO THE BRITISH PUBLIC THAT THE BLITZ IS ON
- o LA MARINE FRANCAISE SENT SCURRYING BACK TO BREST
- o FRENCH ACCEPT "INVITATION" TO OCCUPY SPAIN
- o KAISER IGNORES "SCRAPE OF PAPER"...ORDERS INVASION OF BELGIUM
- o DANES WAKE UP TO FIND HIGH SEAS FLEET AT ANCHOR IN CAPITAL
- o GERMANS SOLDIERS RUSH TOWARDS THE FRENCH FRONTIER
- o ITALIANS MOVE INTO SWITZERLAND TO HALT SPREAD OF BOLSHEVISM
- o RUSSIANS RACE INTO RUMANIA FIRST
- o OTTOMANS REESTABLISH THEIR DOMINATION OVER BULGARIA
- o WATERS OF THE BLACK SEA SURPRISINGLY CALM

Spring '00 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Trieste to Serbia, A Vienna to Tyrolia, A Budapest to Galicia (Fails)

Britain: F Edinburgh to North Sea, F London to English Channel, F Egypt to Mid-Atlantic Ocean, F Gibraltar S F Egypt to Mid-Atlantic Ocean

France: F Brest to Mid-Atlantic Ocean (Fails), A Paris to Gascony, A Marseilles to Spain, A Algeria H

Germany: A Cologne to Belgium, F Kiel to Denmark, A Berlin to Kiel, A Munich to Alsace
Italy: A Milan to Switzerland, A Rome to Milan, F Naples to Ionian Sea
Russia: F St. Petersburg (sc) to Gulf of Bothnia, A Warsaw to Galicia (Fails), A Moscow to Ukraine, F Sevastapol to Rumania
Turkey: A Constantinople to Bulgaria, F Ankara to Constantinople, A Damascus to Konya

Fall '00

Things went pretty much as I'd expected in the east. Turkey didn't attack me, but instead moved as planned; Austria did indeed order an army to Tyrolia; and Italy didn't attack France. However, both Britain and Germany did move against France. Very decisively.

*I've been told since then that the joint British-German moves were a coincidence, not the result of a strong B-G alliance. That's ironic because JT and I (and I think the rest of us) were absolutely convinced that there ****WAS**** a strong B-G, very likely with Turkey involved as a silent third partner, and this fear proved to be the catalyst for the F-A-R alliance. It was the primary reason why I allied with Robert against Markus (sorry Markus!). I personally was convinced that B-G had an entire master plan worked out: Russia and Austria were to keep each other busy while B-G decimated France with Italy's help. B-G would then hit Italy and me next. Turkey would thus get the lion's share of R-T efforts against Austria, and then turn against Russia and Italy. It all made sense! [Not one bit of this was true, but perception is reality in **Diplomacy**.]*

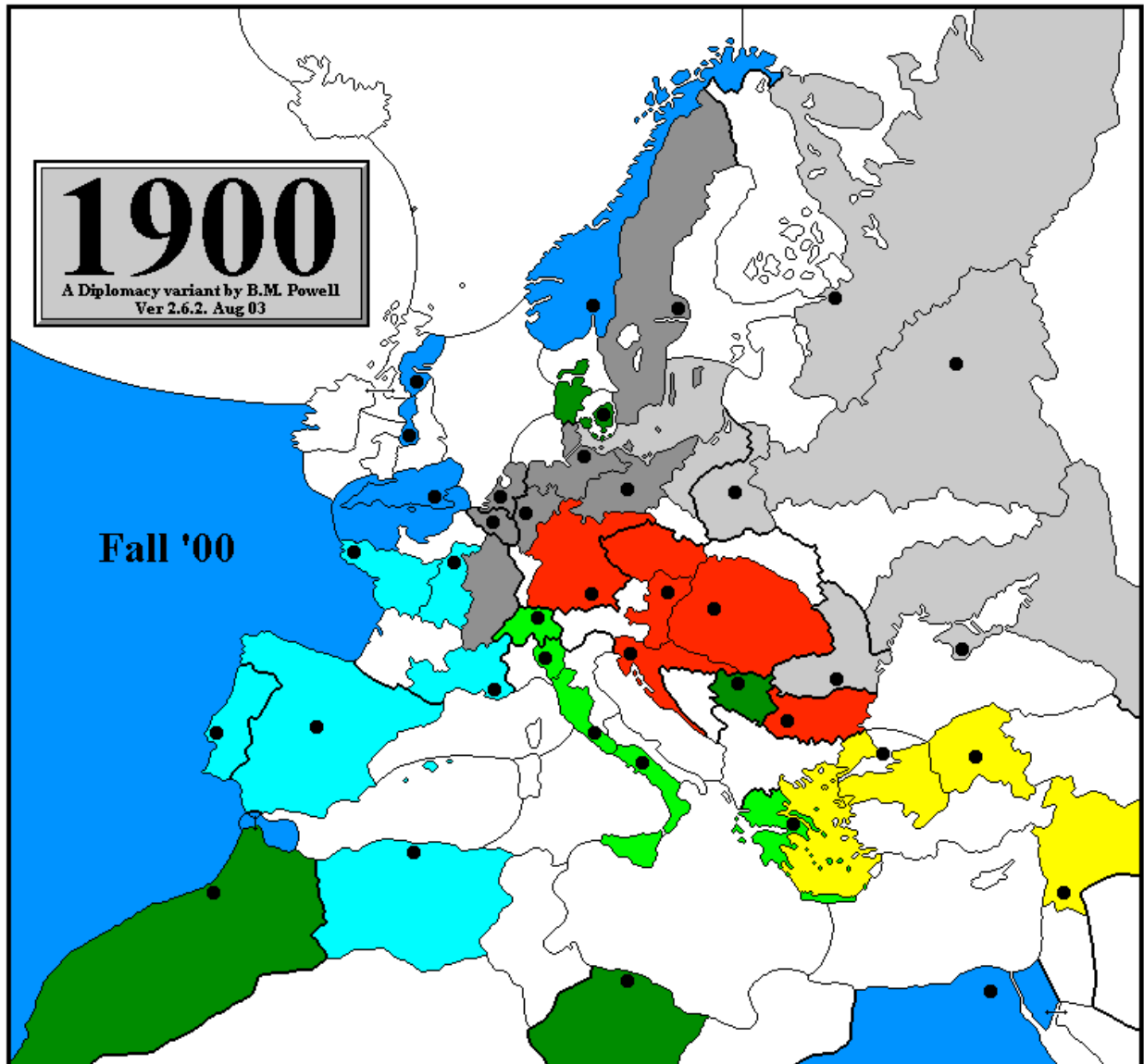
JT immediately sent out a message to the rest of us asking for help against the obvious threat of B-G, and a private message to me to discuss the situation. We compared notes and decided that Turkey was probably on B-G's side, while Italy was probably being cautious. JT was hopeful that Austria would help save him and thought (after a few exchanges with George) that Germany might not be so committed to the anti-French alliance. I wasn't sure that Turkey was as deeply involved as JT feared, though the revelation that Markus had sworn F Egypt would not hit Mid-Atlantic Ocean seemed to be a point against him. Of course, it may be that Mike had deceived Markus in order to discourage A Damascus to Palestine and to pass false information to France just as he'd done with me. But I was also highly suspicious of Mike's repeated talk of a B-R-T alliance—I thought that it might really be a B-T and that I was being set up between the two of them.

I didn't agree with JT's read of Germany. I had several exchanges with George and got the impression that he was deliberately evading my questions and jerking me around. In any case, it was practically moot; I would have to attack him and once begun there would be no stopping. JT hoped George could be convinced to let me take Sweden and build a fleet St. Petersburg (nc), but I was pretty sure this was a pipe dream. We decided that it would be better for me to head straight for the Baltic Sea rather than make a futile bid for Sweden (JT expressed admiration that I was willing to do it – he thought most Tsars wouldn't have been able to resist trying for Sweden).

As the week went on, our fears of a B-G-T grew stronger. However, it looked like a solid F-A-R was forming to counter it. Italy was the wild card. We barely heard from Tiago and were not sure what he would do. JT said that he had discussed an alliance with Tiago, but in my own exchanges with Italy it seemed there had been a miscommunication. In the Spring, Tiago had expected French support for a move to Switzerland. However, I made it clear that I wished Italy would move to Greece and NOT attack France. We hoped Italy would be benevolently neutral at worst.

In the last two days, Robert asked whether we thought it wouldn't be better for him to order his army Tyrolia to Bohemia and Budapest to Serbia, because he thought for sure that he would only bounce Germany in Munich, but that we would take Bulgaria. George had apparently told Robert that he was covering Munich, so it wouldn't be worth trying for it. JT and I talked Robert around to trying for Munich after all, pointing out that George had already tricked him once (having apparently promised to support Austrian A Tyrolia to Switzerland after bouncing Italy in Switzerland in the Spring, something he didn't do). Robert reluctantly gave in, although the event proved us right. This incident was uncomfortable for me. The abrupt last-minute suggestions made me feel like Robert was trying to worm

his way out of attacking Germany directly. However, I'd already given in to his request that I order A Warsaw to Prussia instead of A Warsaw to Silesia, so he in turn went with JT's and my votes to try for Munich.



- o HABSBURGS AND ROMANOV'S CEMENT ALLIANCE
- o K&K ARMY MARCHES INTO AN UNDEFENDED MUNICH
- o RUSSIA HELPS DUAL MONARCHY TAKE BULGARIA FROM TURKEY
- o NORWEGIANS DON'T RESIST BRITISH OCCUPATION FORCE
- o THIRD REPUBLIC THWARTS BRITISH AMBITIONS IN MOROCCO
- o FRENCH TROOPS OVERRUN ALL OF IBERIA
- o GERMANS COMPLETE CONQUEST OF LOW COUNTRIES
- o GERMAN ADMIRALS SURPRISED BY FAILURE TO FIND RUSSIAN FLEET
- o EVENTS IN THE EAST COMPLICATE KAISER'S WAR AGAINST FRANCE
- o POPE ALIENATES SULTAN BY ANNEXING GREECE
- o RUSSIA HOLDS NOTHING BACK IN WAR AGAINST THE GERMAN FOE

o OTTOMANS SHOCKED AND DISMAYED BY RUSSIAN TREACHERY

Fall '00 Moves:

- Austria-Hungary: A Tyrolia to Munich, A Budapest to Bohemia, A Serbia to Bulgaria
- Britain: F North Sea to Norway, F English Channel H, F Gibraltar to Morocco (Fails), F Mid-Atlantic Ocean S F Gibraltar to Morocco
- France: A Algeria to Morocco, A Spain to Portugal, A Gascony to Spain, F Brest to Mid-Atlantic Ocean (Fails)
- Germany: A Kiel to Netherlands, A Alsace to Burgundy, A Belgium S A Alsace to Burgundy, F Denmark to Sweden
- Italy: A Milan S A Switzerland, A Switzerland S A Milan, F Ionian Sea to Greece
- Russia: A Warsaw to Prussia, A Ukraine to Warsaw, F Rumania S AH A Serbia to Bulgaria, F Gulf of Bothnia to Baltic Sea
- Turkey: F Constantinople to Aegean Sea, A Konya to Constantinople, A Bulgaria S RU F Rumania (Cut, Dislodged)

Winter '00

[I should mention here that negotiations prior to retreats and adjustments are prohibited by the rules of **Diplomacy**. However, given my inability to enforce this provision in an e-mail contest, I allowed them.] *The Fall '00 moves went about as well as we had dared to hope. France prevented Britain from getting a single western build; Austria did indeed take Munich; the German fleet sailed into Stockholm while I went to Baltic Sea; and our joint attack forced Turkey out of Bulgaria. Turkey even moved A Konya to Constantinople, thus guaranteeing that he would lose either Black Sea or Armenia in the next season!*

I proposed that I build F St. Petersburg (sc) and A Sevastapol. [Remember, the Russian Steamroller Rule allows Russia to have "n+1" units as long as it controls "n" SCs and one of those SCs is a home SC.] I didn't want to build F St. Petersburg (nc), since that would be tantamount to a declaration of war against Britain (whom I actually didn't want to fight at all), but I knew France would request it. To my moderate surprise, Robert agreed with my reasons for F St. Petersburg (sc) (which were sensible in their own right). Robert decided on armies in Trieste and Budapest. JT decided on armies in Paris and Marseilles. We all agreed that F Marseilles would not be a good idea just yet.

Markus wrote to warn me that F Sevastapol would make peace between Russia and Turkey impossible. I said I'd take that into account (pointing out that such a fleet could always be dislodged and disbanded later), but that surely it offered strategic benefits? He repeated his point and I continued to let him think I was building F Sevastapol, the better to make A Sevastapol look like I was responding to his wishes. To my surprise, he built A Ankara instead of F Ankara. I think I accidentally psyched him into thinking I really would build F Sevastapol and that A Ankara was thus more useful!

When Markus sent out the message about wanting to build in Damascus, I suspected it might be a ruse (as I pointed out to JT) to make us all think there were problems in the B-T relationship. Baron confirmed that such a ruse would be permissible, if it were indeed a ruse.

In the last day before builds were due, George wrote me and offered to support my A St. Petersburg into Norway and to build F Kiel. JT had been plying him with encouragement to build F Kiel and hope A-R fell apart. I told him I'd already committed to F St. Petersburg (sc), but I would talk to my allies and might change it if there were time. I encouraged him to build F Kiel, saying it would send a positive diplomatic message about his willingness to fight Britain, and I outlined how we could seize the North Sea in 1901. None of this came to pass. Germany built two armies and our war continued.

o OTTOMANS ABANDON EUROPEAN TURKEY

o HUNGARIANS AND CROATS FLOCK TO THE HABSBERG BANNER

o BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE PARADES THROUGH LONDON

o FRENCH ADMIRALS DISAPPOINTED BY LACK OF SUPPORT FROM PARIS

- o GERMAN GENERAL STAFF POSITIONS UNITS IN BERLIN AND KIEL
- o POPE VISITS NAPLES...BLESSES NEWEST SHIPS IN REGIA MARINA
- o TSAR KEEPS BOTH HIS GENERALS AND ADMIRALS HAPPY
- o TURKS MOVE TO DEFEND ANATOLIAN HEARTLAND

Winter '00 Retreat:

Turkey: A Bulgaria OTB

Winter '00 Adjustments:

Austria-Hungary: builds A Budapest and A Trieste

Britain: builds A London

France: builds A Paris and A Marseilles

Germany: builds A Berlin and A Kiel

Italy: builds A Rome and F Naples

Russia: builds F St. Petersburg (sc) and A Sevastapol

Turkey: builds A Ankara

Spring '01

The F-A-R alliance discussed possibilities for Spring '01. Diplomatically, JT seemed to think that both Germany and/or Britain might change sides given the A-R intervention. In private messages with me he rejected the proposal that we ask Italy to take Alsace on the grounds that Germany must be allowed to retreat out of Burgundy. He seemed confident that George would so order. We also discussed the likelihood of Italy coming in completely on our side to make it an F-A-I-R alliance.

Robert wrote a long message to F-R with his tactical suggestions for Spring. He pointed out that B-G could convoy the new A London to Brest right away (something which I stupidly hadn't noticed) and suggested moves that would destroy the German A Burgundy, including Italian A Switzerland to Alsace.

JT tried to veto this, repeating that it was crucial for his survival that Germany move A Burgundy out to Alsace. I sent him a few messages pointing out that Robert was probably right and it wouldn't hurt his position even if Germany did order Burgundy to Alsace. I pointed out privately that we needed an allied A Alsace to crack Germany's western frontier, and Austria and Italy might be discouraged if that didn't happen. Publicly I repeated that A Burgundy would be destroyed, so there was no need to worry.

Then Robert wrote back. He was very, VERY blunt in telling JT that the suggestion of letting Germany back into Alsace was outrageous and that he had no interest in an F-A-R where A-R only served to run interference for France. I was both surprised and delighted at this tone. It would force JT to go for Robert's suggestions (which were good and would dismantle Germany ASAP) and also make JT more willing to go for F-I-R over F-A-R when push came to shove.

Privately, Robert expressed doubts about JT's commitment and said that A-R should keep the bridges open to a B-A-R instead of an F-A-R, if need be. I replied that I hoped JT was just worried about A Burgundy and we would see what he said. Robert revealed that he'd already asked Tiago to order Switzerland to Alsace and asked whether I'd heard from him. I replied truthfully that I hadn't mentioned Switzerland to Alsace as such, but had hinted at it. I was a bit dismayed that Robert had made his request without consulting JT and myself first, but didn't want to challenge him over it.

I didn't tell JT about this conversation at this time, since he was already giving way on the Alsace issue and there seemed to be no point in making him more nervous about Robert. However, I did keep it in mind for later. JT and I had agreed that if Italy joined us we would eventually distill the F-A-I-R down to a three-way alliance with France, Russia, and whoever we agreed was the better ally between Italy and Austria. Geo-politically I preferred Italy, but so far Robert was communicating far more regularly and reliably than Tiago. Still, if Tiago got drawn into the alliance more fully and proved trustworthy, he might be the better choice.

From this point onward, my diplomacy with Germany and Turkey died down. George started to behave in a way that I thought of as frivolous and I decided to respond in kind. I was friendly and tried to be funny, but did not discuss serious matters with him. Markus only sent me very short messages to which I also replied in kind. Thus, while I continued to talk to each of them and keep communications open, nothing of great import was said.

I made a few moderate noises in Italy's direction about keeping an eye on Austria, but encouraged him to join the attack on Germany and Turkey. Tiago seemed perfectly willing.

I continued on friendly terms with Britain. Mike appreciated my build on the south coast of St. Petersburg, which he correctly interpreted as a sign that I had no (immediate) designs on Norway. [To answer a question from Chris Dziedzic, that's why I built the fleet and kept it there for a year. It was a concrete way of showing peaceful intent toward Britain and encouraging him to move out of Norway.] JT told me that Mike had promised to convoy his new army to Egypt, which I found doubtful. Relations between France and Britain were obviously bad. It seemed, as Mike commented at one point, that they were in a death grip with each other. I thought this could be a good thing for me, as long as neither of them got the upper hand over the other.

- o K&K ARMY ONCE AGAIN MARCHES INTO BELGRADE
- o AUSTRO-FRANCO-ITALIAN OFFENSIVE DESTROYS GERMAN ARMY
- o BEF DEPLOYS TO BRITISH BASE IN GIBRALTAR
- o L'ARMEE D'AFRIQUE OCCUPIES MOROCCO
- o NEW GERMAN GOVERNMENT ORDERS EVACUATION OF BERLIN
- o GERMANS TAKE OVER ADMINISTRATION OF DENMARK
- o ITALIAN AND RUSSIAN SHIPS SIGHTED OFF THE ANATOLIAN COASTS
- o GERMANS TELL OF RUSSIAN ATROCITIES IN PRUSSIA AND SILESIA
- o OTTOMANS RUSH FORCES TO ARMENIA, BUT RUSSIA REMAINS QUIET

Spring '01 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Munich S IT A Switzerland to Alsace, A Bohemia S A Munich, A Bulgaria H, A Budapest to Serbia, A Trieste to Bosnia

Britain: F Norway H, F Gibraltar to Western Mediterranean, A London to English Channel to Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Gibraltar, F English Channel C A London to Gibraltar, F Mid-Atlantic C A London to Gibraltar

France: A Marseilles to Burgundy, A Paris S A Marseilles to Burgundy, F Brest to Picardy, A Spain to Gascony, A Portugal H, A Algeria to Morocco

Germany: A Kiel to Denmark, F Sweden S A Kiel to Denmark, A Berlin to Kiel, A Netherlands S A Berlin to Kiel, A Burgundy to Alsace (Fails, Dislodged, Destroyed), A Belgium S A Burgundy to Alsace

Italy: F Naples to Ionian Sea, A Rome to Naples, F Greece to Aegean Sea, A Switzerland to Alsace (Fails), A Milan to Switzerland (Fails)

Russia: F Baltic Sea to Kiel (Fails), F St. Petersburg (sc) H, A Warsaw to Silesia, A Prussia S A Warsaw to Silesia, A Sevastapol H, F Rumania to Black Sea

Turkey: A Constantinople to Konya, F Aegean Sea to Constantinople, A Ankara to Armenia.

Fall '01

The Spring moves were ambiguous, but favorable overall. Germany's withdrawal surprised me and gave him a strong defensive position, which was annoying. However, in the south my gambit of ordering A Sevastapol H worked. Turkey ordered to Armenia, leaving Constantinople vulnerable for a Fall attack. In the west, the German army was destroyed as hoped. Expectedly, Britain did not convoy to Egypt as Mike had told JT he would, but to Gibraltar instead—not good, but better than Brest!

Overall I was reasonably satisfied, though I didn't like the look of the German defenses in the north. I thought I might have to make a deal with Britain to finish him off or it would be a long war.

There was a bit of a breach early in negotiations. The fireworks started when I suggested to Robert that we should support Italy into Constantinople instead of Austria. Robert went ballistic and accused me of being in an I-R alliance that was plotting to surround him. I replied calmly, reiterating my reasons, pointing out why Tiago might ask for it, and why it might be a good idea to agree.

Robert sent back a message stating that the point was mostly moot anyway because Tiago had just agreed to Austrian occupation of Constantinople without the slightest murmur. Robert went on to ask insultingly for my assurance that I would not try to change Tiago's mind. SEVERAL TIMES. JT then told me that Robert had BCC'd him on the message and suggested that France might have to make peace with Germany and Britain if war broke out between Russia and Austria. It was at this point that I let JT know of Robert's earlier threats to drop F-A-R for B-A-R. I was annoyed and worried about Robert's reliability. I assured Robert that I wasn't going to get Tiago to change his mind and things seemed to settle down after that. However, I didn't forget this episode.

Tiago then sent a message asking about Damascus and Egypt, and whether I saw any problems with the proposed arrangement—I can only assume Robert had said something to him. I replied that I thought he might want Constantinople first, but it was too late now. I agreed that Damascus and Egypt should be his. Again, we agreed to keep an eye on Austria.

Britain warned me of his intent to order F English Channel S German A Belgium and expressed the hope that this would not harm B-R relations. I replied that I knew his reasons were anti-French rather than anti-Russian or anti-Austrian, but it implied that Germany would bounce Austria in Cologne. We discussed the situation amicably, but in the end it didn't matter because Germany unexpectedly bounced himself in Cologne anyway, leaving it open to rebuild the sixth army (curses!).

- o HABSBURGS AND ROMANOVS BEGIN PARTITIONING OF TURKEY
- o K&K ARMY, WITH ITALIAN AND RUSSIAN HELP, STORMS CONSTANTINOPLE
- o BRITISH TOMMIES BOOT FRENCH OUT OF MOROCCO
- o FRENCH SOLDIERS MAN THE BEACHES, BUT NO INVASION LANDS
- o NEW GERMAN GOVERNMENT FORCED TO RELOCATE TO COLOGNE
- o ITALIANS STAKE CLAIM TO FAIR SHARE OF GERMAN & TURKISH SPOILS
- o ITALIAN ARMY DEPLOYS TO LIBYA...RESISTANCE QUICKLY SUBDUED
- o "UNDISCIPLINED RUSSIAN HORDES" TERRORIZE CITIZENS OF BERLIN
- o OTTOMAN SULTAN APPEARS RESIGNED TO THE END OF HIS HOUSE

Fall '01 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Munich S IT A Switzerland to Alsace, A Bohemia S A Munich, A Bosnia to Macedonia, A Serbia S A Bosnia to Macedonia, A Bulgaria to Constantinople

Britain: A Gibraltar to Morocco, F Western Mediterranean S A Gibraltar to Morocco, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Gibraltar, F English Channel S GE A Belgium, F Norway H

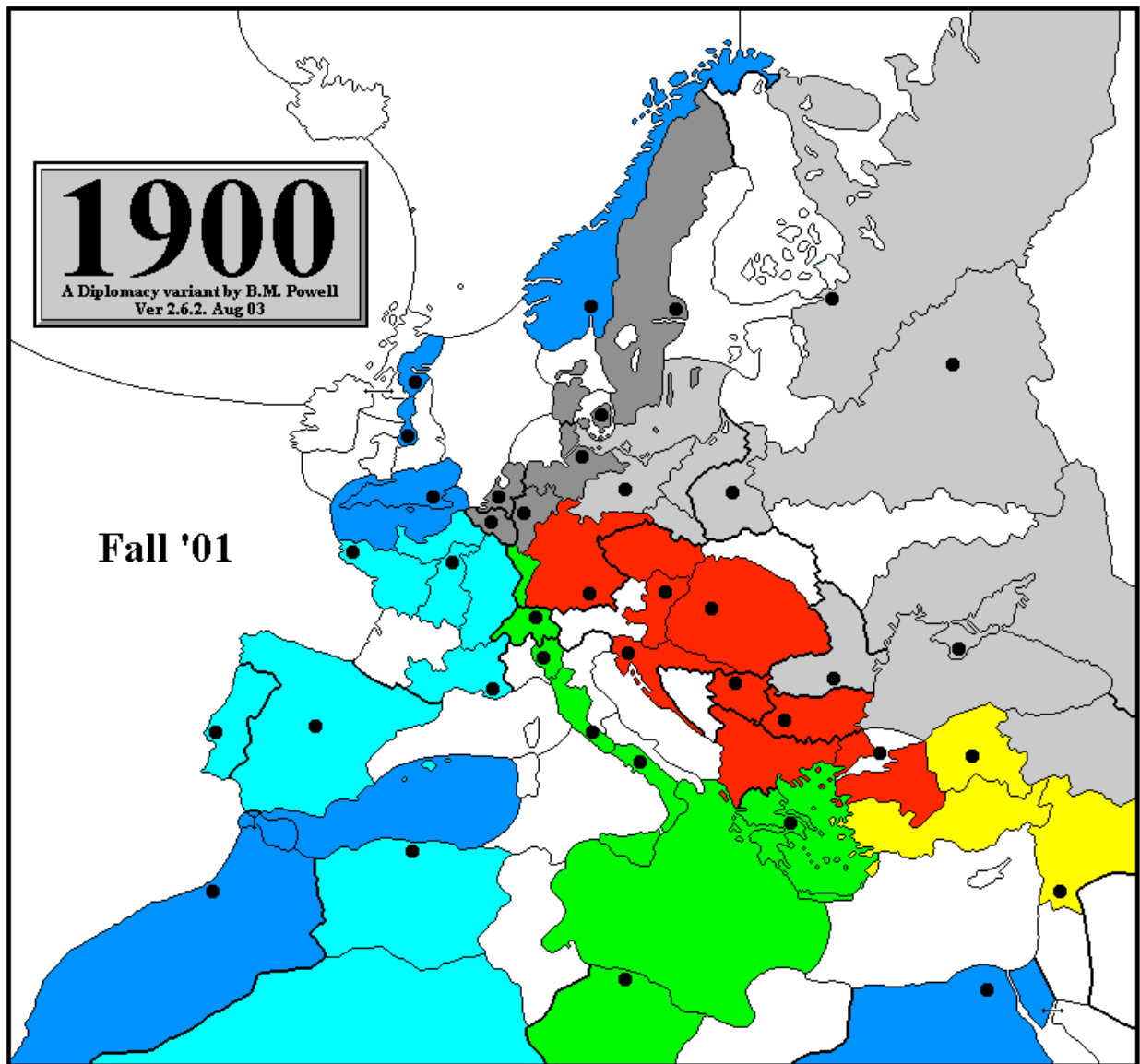
France: A Paris to Brest, F Picardy S A Paris to Brest, A Burgundy S IT A Switzerland to Alsace, A Gascony to Spain, A Portugal S A Gascony to Spain, A Morocco H (Dislodged)

Germany: F Sweden S A Denmark, A Denmark S F Sweden, A Kiel to Cologne (Fails), A Netherlands to Cologne (Fails), A Belgium H

Italy: A Switzerland to Alsace, A Milan to Switzerland, F Aegean Sea S AH A Bulgaria to Constantinople, A Naples to Ionian Sea to Tripolitania, F Ionian Sea C A Naples to Tripolitania

Russia: F St. Petersburg (sc) H, F Baltic Sea to Kiel (Fails), A Silesia to Berlin, A Prussia S A Silesia to Berlin, F Black Sea S AH A Bulgaria to Constantinople, A Sevastapol to Armenia

Turkey: A Armenia to Ankara, F Constantinople S RU F Black Sea to Bulgaria (Void, Dislodged, Destroyed), A Konya S F Constantinople



Winter '01

The main issue here was Austria's builds. Robert had two. According to a previous agreement, he couldn't build in Budapest, so he was building an army in Vienna. That left a unit in Trieste. Robert had asked Tiago what he would prefer, but did not hear back for a long time. I convinced Robert first not to build a fleet, which would have been a direct threat to Italy, and then to waive the second build altogether. I was very annoyed when Tiago finally answered, telling Robert to build whatever he pleased!

Well, at least it proved I hadn't been conspiring with Italy...

- o L'ARMEE D'AFRIQUE ESTABLISHES BASE IN THE DESERT
- o AUSTRO-GERMANS AND SLOVENES FLOCK TO THE HABSBURG BANNER
- o SHIPYARDS IN ENGLAND WORK AT FULL CAPACITY
- o GERMAN ARMY HASTILY SETS UP DEFENSES AROUND COLOGNE

- o REGIA MARINA OVERTAKES ROYAL NAVY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
- o RUSSIAN CONSCRIPTS BEGIN TRAINING OUTSIDE OF MOSCOW

Winter '01 Retreat:

France: A Morocco to Southern Algeria

Winter '01 Adjustments:

Austria-Hungary: builds A Vienna and A Trieste

Britain: builds F London

Germany: builds A Cologne

Italy: builds F Naples

Russia: builds A Moscow

Spring '02

An Austrian convoy to Tunisia and an Italian move to Burgundy were the main points of discussion. Tiago agreed to go to Burgundy, although he did so reluctantly. This plan was originally Robert's suggestion. Looking back now, it seems he was setting Italy up for the stab. However, the suggestion of the convoy to Tunisia was mine, which made it less suspicious. Robert also proposed moving an army out of the Balkan centers and into Macedonia, using the need for an A-R DMZ as an excuse – an argument I supported.

I was worried about how long it was taking to reduce Germany. I approached Mike with the idea of working together against Germany in Scandinavia. I would support F Norway to Sweden and F North Sea would support a Russian convoy to Denmark. Mike liked the idea. I then broached the subject with France, Austria, and Italy. Only France was against it. As things turned out, I'm glad the joint B-R operation went ahead. If it hadn't, Germany would still have been at six when I was forced to change direction and the game might have ended very differently.

George started talking to me about becoming a puppet. I responded positively, saying that I felt no need to destroy Germany for destruction's sake, but I thought he was premature – Germany wasn't crippled yet! We agreed to keep talking. In my messages to Austria I stuck to a strict "Germania delenda est" line, but I was afraid that I would need to declare a truce with Germany if the F-A-I-R alliance fell apart, so I was laying the groundwork for that. It was a good call, as it turned out.

- o HABSBURGS TIGHTEN THEIR GRIP ON SOUTHERN GERMANY
- o K&K TROOPS DEPLOY TO AFRICA ABOARD ITALIAN SHIPS
- o BRITISH SEIZE ALGERIA...FRENCH ADMINISTRATORS IMPRISONED
- o FRENCH RAID ON MOROCCO EASILY REPULSED
- o PARISIANS NERVOUS ABOUT ITALIAN SOLDIERS IN BURGUNDY
- o GERMAN ARMY GOES COMPLETELY ON THE DEFENSIVE
- o LONDON PROTESTS ITALIAN MOVE TO EGYPTIAN BORDER
- o TURKISH GARRISON IN ANKARA ANNIHILATED BY RUSSIANS
- o SULTAN PREPARES TO MAKE LAST STAND IN DAMASCUS

Spring '02 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Munich to Alsace, A Bohemia to Munich, A Vienna to Bohemia, A Constantinople S IT F Aegean Sea to Konya, A Macedonia to Ionian Sea to Tunisia, A Serbia to Macedonia, A Trieste to Bosnia

Britain: F English Channel S GE A Belgium (Cut), F London to North Sea, F Norway S F London to North Sea, F Gibraltar H, F Western Mediterranean to Algeria, A Morocco S F Western Mediterranean to Algeria (Cut)

France: A Spain H, A Portugal S A Spain, A Southern Algeria to Morocco (Fails), F Picardy to English Channel (Fails), A Brest to Gascony, A Burgundy to Marseilles

Germany: A Cologne S A Belgium, A Belgium S A Cologne, A Kiel S A Cologne, A Netherlands S A Kiel, A Denmark S A Kiel, F Sweden to Baltic Sea (Fails)

Italy: A Alsace to Burgundy, A Switzerland S AU A Munich to Alsace, F Aegean Sea to Konya, A Tripolitania to Cyrenaica, F Ionian Sea C AH A Macedonia to Tunisia, F Naples to Tyrrhenian Sea

Russia: F St. Petersburg (sc) to Gulf of Bothnia, F Baltic Sea S F St. Petersburg to Gulf of Bothnia (Cut), A Berlin S AH A Bohemia to Munich, A Prussia S A Berlin, A Moscow to Livonia, F Black Sea to Ankara, A Armenia S F Black Sea to Ankara

Turkey: A Konya to Damascus, A Ankara to Konya (Fails, Dislodged, Destroyed)

Fall '02

This turn ended up being a decisive moment in the game. I wasn't directly involved in any of the A-F-I negotiations that led to Italy's Fall '02 moves, so I can't really comment on how they happened. I had some hints of what was coming, but I didn't put them together in time.

It began when Tiago asked me anxiously whether Robert had been complaining about him (apparently as a result of Austrian demands on Italy). He pointed out that he'd been a loyal member of F-A-I-R and deserved the SCs that had been promised to him. I replied that Robert had said a few things, but didn't seem about to stab and hadn't asked me not to support Italy to Damascus. I assured him I would support him there and warn him if Robert told me he was attacking Italy.

I then suggested to JT that Italy might want to cover Greece with F Ionian Sea and left it to him to pass that thought on. Robert's earlier accusations of I-R plotting made me wary of making the suggestion directly (a benefit of his aggressive style, I guess!), so I counted on France to drop the hint instead. I later wished I had been more direct, but at the time I didn't want to risk being linked to such an Italian demand of Austria.

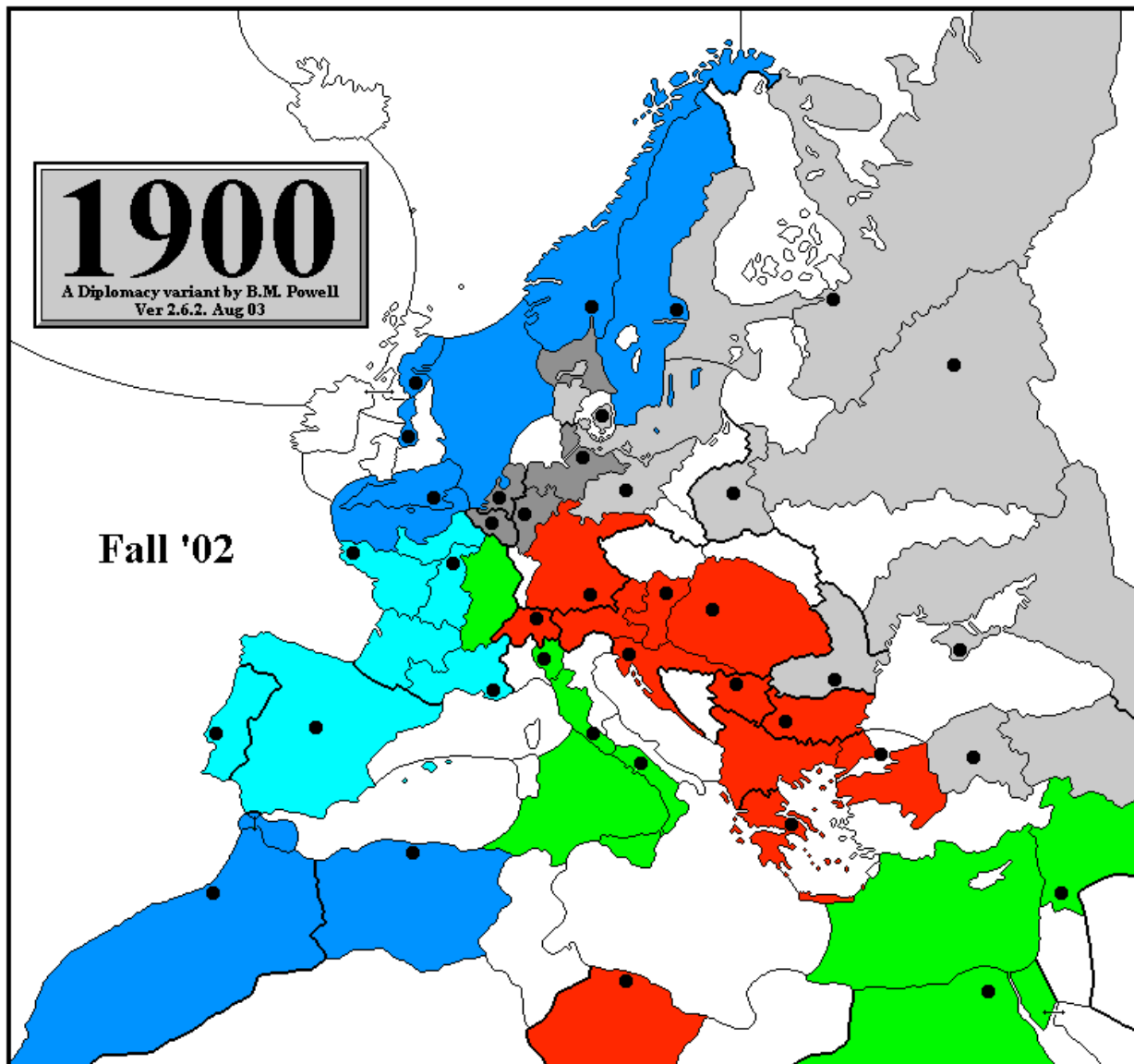
*Mike wrote to ask me whether I knew what Austria was going to do with A Tunisia. I replied that I wasn't sure, but thought he was going to support France into Algeria. Mike expressed disappointment at this, but we agreed he should take it up with Robert. Meanwhile, we finalized the plan to hit Denmark and Sweden. I warned Mike that I might order A Livonia to St. Petersburg to keep from having to build F St. Petersburg (nc), but said he shouldn't be alarmed because I *still* wasn't going to attack him. At the time, it was true. I saw the bitter feud between France and Britain as a good development for Russia. While I would intervene on JT's side if necessary to save France, what I really wanted was to keep them stalemated against each other for as long as possible. Helping Britain stay at six while France grew minimally to seven would help achieve this objective.*

The F-A-I-R alliance made further plans for the Fall moves. I would work with Britain in the north, while France, Italy, and Austria would make attacks against Germany in Belgium and Cologne. In the south, F-I-A would support the Grande Armee back into Algeria; A-I-R would finish off Turkey; and (a last-minute arrangement) Italy would cede Switzerland to France so JT would be able to build a fleet in Brest. It all seemed to be settled.

Then at the last minute Robert asked me to get Mike to order F North Sea to Netherlands, to cut a support so I wouldn't get two and he would be sure of taking Cologne. I was annoyed at this sudden, selfish proposal, but tried not to show it. I replied that there wasn't enough time for last-minute changes, that it was tactically inferior (since it gave up a guaranteed Denmark without guaranteeing Cologne, and made it harder to press Germany even if it worked), and that I could waive a build or place a fleet in Sevastapol if he was worried about my growth (though I suggested that he make a fuss about it in F-A-I-R messages, so a build of F Sevastapol would look like something to placate him, not a threat to Italy). I also sent a message to Mike reiterating my request for support to Denmark in case Robert had already asked him to make the move of F North Sea to Netherlands instead.

Overall Robert seemed to be making all his allies uneasy. His style was extremely nerve-wracking – pre-emptive accusations, relentlessly pushing for his own advantage, abrupt last-minute changes of plan.

*This was great from my point of view, as long as he didn't make people *so* nervous that they attacked him prematurely – or he attacked them. I doubted he would go for a huge stab, but I couldn't rule it out completely. I didn't really expect it, though, so his actual moves were a shock.*



- o HABSBURGS SETTLE OLD SCORES WITH “UPSTART” ITALIANS
- o K&K UNITS SEIZE GREECE, SWITZERLAND, AND TRIPOLITANIA
- o BRITAIN & RUSSIA DIVIDE GERMANY’S SCANDINAVIAN HOLDINGS
- o ROYAL NAVY STANDS FIRM AGAINST FRANCO-ITALIAN ASSAULTS
- o MINOR ANGLO-FRENCH SKIRMISHING PROVES INCONCLUSIVE
- o FRENCH FIND SWISS PASSES ALL HELD AGAINST THEM
- o GERMAN DEFENSES PROBED ACROSS ALL FRONTS
- o POPE ORDERS TURKISH EXPULSION FROM DAMASCUS
- o ITALIANS TAKE OVER ADMINISTRATION OF EGYPT
- o RUSSIAN BUTCHERY CONTINUES IN DENMARK...GERMAN GARRISON SLAIN

Fall '02 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Alsace to Switzerland, A Munich S A Alsace to Switzerland, A Bohemia to Tyrolia, A Macedonia to Greece, A Bosnia to Macedonia, A Constantinople S A Bosnia to Macedonia, A Tunisia to Tripolitania

Britain: F English Channel S GE A Belgium, F Norway to Sweden, F Gibraltar to Spain (Fails), F Algeria H, A Morocco S F Algeria, F North Sea S RU A Prussia to Denmark

France: F Picardy to Brest (Fails), A Gascony to Brest (Fails), A Marseilles to Switzerland (Fails), A Spain to Gibraltar (Fails), A Portugal H, A Southern Algeria to Algeria (Fails)

Germany: A Kiel S A Cologne (Cut), A Netherlands S A Kiel, A Cologne S A Kiel, A Belgium S A Cologne (Cut), F Sweden S A Denmark (Cut, Dislodged), A Denmark S F Sweden (Cut, Dislodged, Destroyed)

Italy: A Switzerland to Milan, A Burgundy to Belgium (Fails), F Konya to Damascus, A Cyrenaica to Egypt, F Ionian Sea to Eastern Mediterranean, F Tyrrhenian Sea S FR A Southern Algeria to Algeria

Russia: F Gulf of Bothnia S BR F Norway to Sweden, A Livonia to St. Petersburg, A Prussia to Baltic Sea to Denmark, F Baltic Sea C A Prussia to Denmark, A Berlin to Kiel (Fails), F Ankara H, A Armenia S IT F Konya to Damascus

Turkey: A Damascus H (Dislodged)

Winter '02

Austria had stabbed Italy massively. Robert supported A Alsace into Switzerland and slipped into both Tripolitania and Greece. Austria gained three, Italy went down one, and poor France – which had been counting on getting Switzerland after Italy's generous donation – also lost one. Mike's and my attacks on Denmark and Sweden both went through smoothly. Britain grew by one and Russia by two.

As soon as I saw the results, I was in turmoil. In quick succession I realized this meant I would have to build A Warsaw and A Sevastapol, and rush to the rescue of Italy. Then I reluctantly realized I would probably have to make peace with Germany and attack Britain too.

Of course, if things worked out, I would be in a potentially winning position. Britain and France already had a bitter feud between them and now there was one between Austria and Italy. If I was careful, I need have little fear that JT or Tiago would suddenly switch sides on me, even if I started to become the clear leader.

However, I would be sabotaging my relationship with Britain, which had so far been pretty good. I was displeased. It honestly had never been my intention to attack Britain until the very end if I could avoid it. But I didn't think I could avoid it. I needed more SCs to build armies to face Austria and the vulnerable British holdings were the only place I could get them. Furthermore, I needed to take pressure off both Italy and France so they'd be able to help me against Austria.

*Making peace with Germany was something I was extremely reluctant to do. Not only might I have to give back Berlin, but it would open the door to a possible A-G alliance – a sure harbinger of death for the Rodina! Besides, one of the valid criticisms of my play in my previous **1900** game had been my failure to complete any offensives. I was afraid that making peace with George would be a similar mistake. But I honestly couldn't see any alternative. If I took the time to finish off Germany, a bloated Austria would destroy Italy and France. I couldn't afford that.*

I decided that I would probably have to attack both Mike and Robert. This was potentially very high-risk. If Germany rejected my overtures, I thought an A-B-G alliance would make short work of me. I wasn't terribly afraid of that, though, at least until Germany recovered Munich. Besides, until Austria was knocked down again, he was a clear threat to win. The main risk to Russia wasn't direct. The real danger was that I would find myself stalemated against Austria in the east, while Robert picked up enough centers to win in the west.

The alternative was an awkward B-A-R, with me right next to aggressive Robert – hardly an appealing situation. Mike later commented that a B-A-R would have left me squeezed between my allies with little room to expand, compared with a F-I-R that gave me free access to all the centers in the middle of

Europe. This was undoubtedly true and I did think of it at the time. However, it was my fear of Austria that was the deciding factor. Better to face Robert now while I still could do so with a chance of winning.

I also have to admit that greed and glory played a factor. I liked the idea of seizing Scandinavia. Something about attacking the two other largest countries on the board appealed to me. I also realized that, if I could pull things off well enough, I would be in an excellent position to go for the solo.

This phase actually saw a lot of negotiations. I had two main objectives: to get Germany to join F-I-R rather than A-B and to convince Robert not to build A Budapest so I could move to both Galicia and Rumania without opposition in Spring '03. We had already established that he wouldn't build there without my express consent, as part of our larger Balkan DMZ, but things had just changed dramatically!

Robert wrote saying he was sure that I wasn't pleased with his Fall '02 moves, but that I should understand why he had done it. There followed a long exchange of messages in which he at first offered to let me build in Warsaw, then qualified that as only one of Warsaw or Sevastapol (and F Sevastapol at that). I did toy with the idea of building A Warsaw and F Sevastapol as Robert suggested early on, but I continued to insist that he hold to our original bargain and not build in Budapest. He continued to push for that, saying that without it he couldn't pursue the attack on Germany. Ultimately, he insisted that if he didn't build in Budapest, I must only build in Moscow. I was left gasping with indignation – here he had just destroyed the F-A-I-R alliance and yet was demanding that ****I**** make all the concessions!

I couldn't refuse him outright or he would build in Budapest, so I agreed to his conditions – but I insisted that he not build in Budapest or I would have to come after him with everything, even (gasp!) if that meant making peace with Germany. Evidently this hit the right psychological note. He reluctantly agreed, reiterating one final time that this meant he would not be able to help against George. I feared he might build in Budapest anyway despite my warning. It made no difference to my builds. I went ahead with A Warsaw and A Sevastapol exactly as planned.

F-I-R was firming up solidly. Both JT and I promised our full support to Tiago and we all consulted each other on builds and disbands. For France, the removal of A Southern Algeria was obvious. Italy's choice was harder, but we determined that A Egypt should be the one to go. I asked JT to act as a mediator between George and myself. I was afraid to send George anything directly for fear he would forward it to someone. While I hated to give up my offensive, I thought it was important to get George on our side before Robert got him on his! In the end Germany retreated to Skagerrak and removed Netherlands, just as I had asked him to do through JT's mediation.

When the adjudication came, it turned out that Robert did indeed waive his build in Budapest, while I built in Warsaw and Sevastapol. Normally I wouldn't have wanted to destroy my credibility with Robert for such a small advantage, but I think that this may have been the determining point in the game. In any case, Galicia and Rumania were now open to me.

- o HIGH SEAS FLEET PATROLS THE SKAGERRAK
- o HUNGARY RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE MANPOWER QUOTA FOR ARMY
- o ENTHUSIASM FOR WAR RUNS HIGH IN CISLEITHANIA
- o BRITISH SHIPYARDS BUSY AS ROYAL NAVY CONTINUES TO EXPAND
- o TROOPS OF L'ARMEE D'AFRIQUE DESERT EN MASSE
- o GERMAN HIGH COMMAND DEMOBILIZES NETHERLANDS GARRISON
- o ITALIAN ARMY IN EGYPT FALLS VICTIM TO THE "PHARAOH'S CURSE"
- o RUSSIAN PRESS GANGS "RECRUIT" POLES AND TARTARS
- o THE SICK MAN OF EUROPE FINALLY EXPIRES

Winter '02 Retreats:

- Germany: F Sweden to Skagerrak
- Turkey: A Damascus OTB

Winter '02 Adjustments:

- Austria-Hungary: builds A Vienna and A Trieste. Third build is waived.

Britain: builds F London
France: disbands A Southern Algeria
Germany: disbands A Netherlands
Italy: disbands A Egypt
Russia: builds A Sevastapol and A Warsaw

Spring '03

Robert was predictably irate at my builds and basically declared total war. I wrote back saying that his aggressive stance had driven me to it. If I had done anything else the entire board would have thought me an idiot and been right. I said that perhaps he was angry that I'd managed to trick him, but we could talk after that had passed. There was no need for war.

Many, many messages were sent between St. Petersburg, Paris, and Rome. We reiterated our commitment to each other, agonized over whether Germany would join us, and tried to come up with the best tactical moves possible. We were under the gun because JT was leaving for a business trip from Tuesday morning until Thursday. [Moves were due on Wednesdays.] However, I felt confident in both him and Tiago. The only question mark for me was George. He claimed he hadn't been hearing from Austria or Britain a lot, which was sort of suspicious. Then again, George's messages tended to be brief with JT and JT said they had a good relationship. Since Mike apparently wasn't sending messages to JT either, silence between Britain and Germany actually seemed plausible. [This was, in fact, the case.]

After JT left I exchanged a few tactical messages with George. The discussions seemed to go okay. I was still nervous about whether he would follow through, but overall hoped he would. I wasn't sure of how to handle him, though. I'm glad I never followed through with my original impulse to offer to return Berlin to him. I now think that the mass of units I kept in his area were instrumental in persuading him to work with F-I-R. These units were the iron fist that I was careful to keep covered in a velvet glove.

Mike was anxious to create a B-A-R alliance. He sent a few three-way messages to try to keep things under control. Robert and I both adopted a more reasonable tone. Robert proposed that I order Warsaw to Silesia and Sevastapol to Armenia. We discussed exchanging Rumania for Constantinople. He offered me temporary control of Munich. His primary demand in return was that I not order Warsaw to Galicia and Sevastapol to Rumania. If Robert had approached me with these proposals the turn before, I might have reacted much more favorably to them. It was too late now, though. I went along with these negotiations even though I didn't really intend to follow through with them. I was convinced that if I did go for the B-A-R, the game would end in an Austrian win.

In my private correspondence with Mike, I sounded him out on his attitude about all this and awaken him to the danger of an Austrian solo. I pointed out that in a B-A-R he wouldn't be able to use his fleets to keep Austria in check and delicately inquired about him leaving Italy alone for a while. Mike's response was that Italy had been a thorn in his side from the beginning due to Tiago's refusal to hit France. Mike was glad to see Italy being attacked. That, as much as anything, finally made me decide that I had no choice other than to attack Britain, as well as Austria, in spite of my reluctance to do so.

*JT and I had long suspected that the A-B relationship was stronger than either Mike or Robert was letting on and I saw Mike's attitude as more evidence of that. He was interested in surrounding and destroying the German fleet, but didn't suggest a direct attack through Helgoland Bight to finish off Germany quickly. To be fair, I only hinted at this option. I think the press had made him worry about the isolation of his lone F Sweden so he wanted to reinforce it. But whether there was a strong A-B alliance or not [Vienna and London were cordial, but not working together too closely at this time], I felt that I *HAD* to take pressure off of Italy and France, or it would be all over. While I believed Mike's claim that I could safely leave St. Petersburg open to him, he didn't seem to appreciate the threat that Robert posed and the necessity to counter immediately.*

I wrote orders to smash the British fleet in Sweden and set up a Fall attack on Norway, while coordinating with France and Germany to stymie British fleet movements and set up a Fall attack on

Munich. F-I-R discussions came up with a plan to hinder the Austrian advance into Italy and put pressure on Switzerland. It looked grim, though. Italy was in bad shape.

- o HABSBURGS REASSERT OLD CLAIMS TO MILAN
- o K&K RAILROADS BOG DOWN BETWEEN VIENNA AND VENETIA
- o PRIME MINISTER NOT AMUSED BY THE TSAR'S PERFIDY
- o FRENCH SUCCESSFULLY HARASS BRITISH UNITS DURING DEPLOYMENT
- o HIGH SEAS FLEET SORTIES AGAINST ROYAL NAVY IN THE NORTH SEA
- o POPE PRAYS THAT ITALY WILL BE DELIVERED FROM THE HABSBURGS
- o ITALIANS IN EGYPT START BURNING CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS
- o REGIA MARINA STEAMS TOWARDS CONSTANTINOPLE
- o RUSSIAN AGGRESSIVENESS ALARMS LEADERSHIP IN VIENNA
- o AMBUSH BY RUSSIANS TRAPS AND DESTROYS ENTIRE BRITISH FLEET

Spring '03 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Switzerland to Milan, A Tyrolia S A Switzerland to Milan, A Munich to Switzerland (Fails), A Trieste to Venetia (Fails), A Vienna to Trieste (Fails), A Tripolitania to Cyrenaica, A Constantinople to Bulgaria, A Macedonia to Constantinople, A Greece H

Britain: F North Sea to Norway, F Sweden S F North Sea to Norway (Cut, Dislodged, Destroyed), F London to North Sea (Fails), F English Channel S F London to North Sea (Cut), F Gibraltar to Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Morocco to Gibraltar (Fails), F Algeria H

France: A Portugal H, A Spain to Gibraltar (Fails), A Gascony H, A Marseilles H, F Picardy to English Channel (Fails)

Germany: A Cologne S A Belgium, A Belgium S A Cologne, A Kiel S A Cologne, F Skagerrak to North Sea (Fails)

Italy: F Tyrrhenian Sea H, F Damascus to Konya, F Eastern Mediterranean S F Damascus to Konya, A Milan to Venetia (Fails, Dislodged), A Burgundy to Switzerland (Fails)

Russia: A Denmark to Sweden, F Baltic Sea S A Denmark to Sweden, F Gulf of Bothnia to Finland (Fails), A St. Petersburg to Finland (Fails), A Warsaw to Galicia, A Sevastopol to Rumania, F Ankara to Black Sea, A Armenia to Ankara, A Berlin S AH A Munich (Void)

- o ITALIAN SOLDIERS RETURN TO ROME TO RECEIVE POPE'S BLESSING

Summer '03 Retreats:

Italy: A Milan to Rome

Fall '03

My Spring moves worked reasonably well. I was set up to take Bulgaria, Sweden, and Norway. It was only after looking at the board for a while that I realized how vulnerable I was to a German stab. I would have to be extremely careful to keep George's attention focused on Austria and to get JT to do everything in his power to make sure George stayed on our side. I immediately sent a message to George in which I casually mentioned that he and JT should split the British home SCs because I didn't want to get too big. I asked if he'd be interested in Vienna. Thus began my campaign to play down my imminent success.

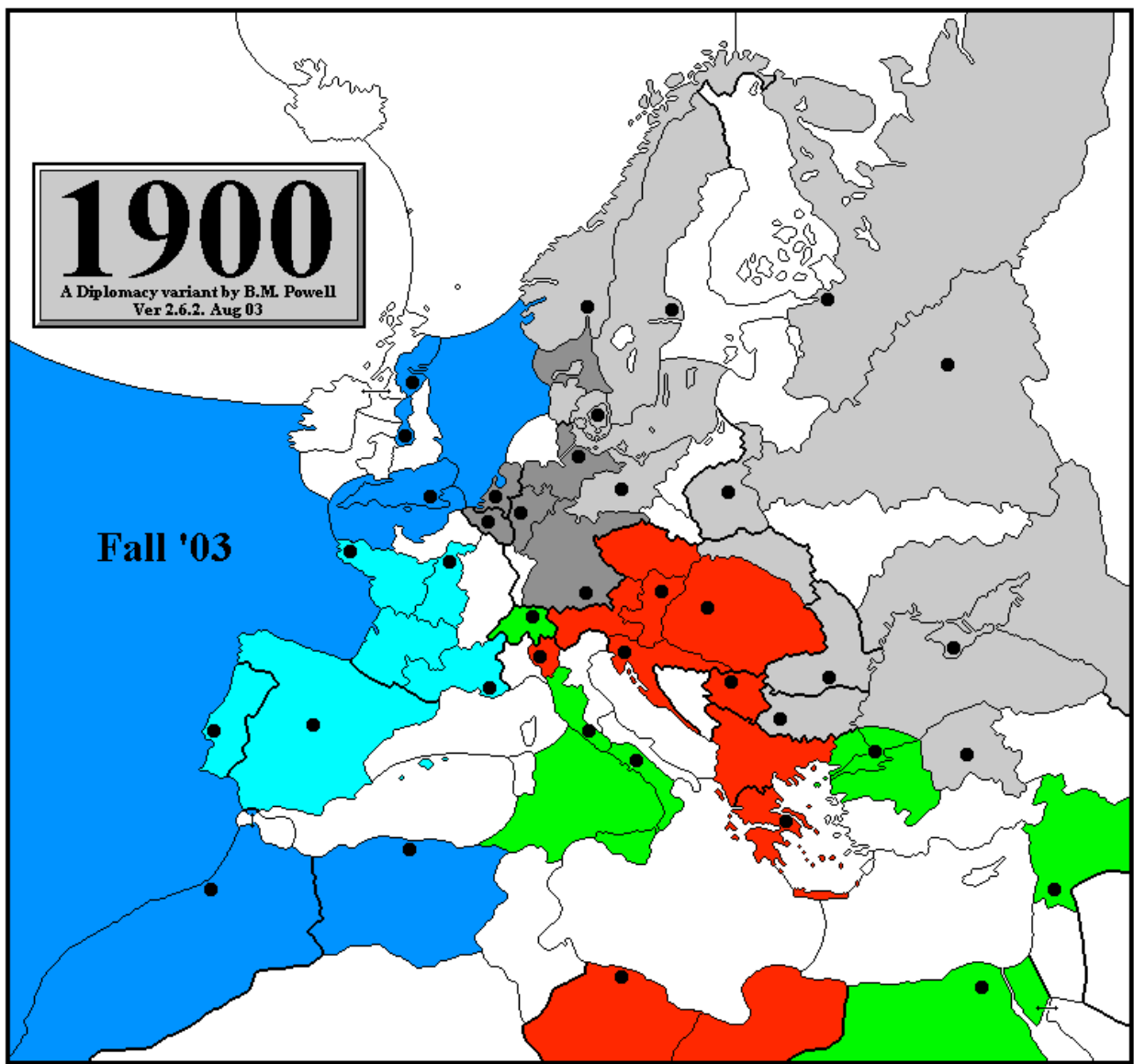
*I was apologetic when I wrote Mike. I explained that I just *needed* the SCs to fight Austria (which was indeed another reason I'd attacked him). I didn't expect he would accept this excuse, but we'd had a pretty good relationship so far and I wanted to keep that door open as wide as possible.*

Robert was (obviously) displeased, especially after I offered a lame excuse for the stab. We exchanged a message or two, and then that was the last I heard from him for a while. I continued to send brief greetings "just to say hello," but didn't receive any reply this season, nor for the next few turns.

George continued to be friendly and undemanding, and I continued to be friendly and not offer anything more than I had to. I started to think that keeping a whole bunch of units near his centers might be the key to keeping him in line, along with keeping all my promises to him.

F-I-R discussed several tactical options. We expected to lose Egypt without getting anything in return, while keeping Switzerland vacant (but still Austrian-held) for capture in '04. It looked pretty grim for Italy. In a private mail sent around this time, I told JT that if Italy had to disband (as seemed likely), F Constantinople should be the one to go since I could still cover it with A Ankara. I might end up taking Constantinople accidentally, however. His response woke me to the dangers of getting too cocky. He told me bluntly that my message had frightened him and that friendly though we were, France was no keener to see a Russian solo than a solo by anybody else. I tried to excuse myself by pointing out that it might be tactically necessary, but decided to try to be less forthright in the future.

We also discussed whether we might be forced to end up in F-G-R, but we both agreed that we would much, much prefer a F-I-R as a reward for Tiago's exemplary loyalty.



- o WERE TWO EMPIRES LOST FOR WANT OF A FUNCTIONING TELEGRAPH?
- o ITALIANS AND RUSSIANS ROUTE K&K IN BALKANS AND TURKEY
- o HOMVEDS MANAGE TO KEEP THE HORDES OUT OF HUNGARY
- o COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN WITH VIENNA COSTS BRITISH DEARLY
- o ROYAL NAVY PUT TO SEA BY RUSSIAN ADVANCE INTO NORWAY
- o FRENCH SUPPORT PROVES DECISIVE IN SWITZERLAND
- o GERMANS THROW “MONGROL” AUSTRO-HUNGARIANS OUT OF MUNICH
- o POPE PRAYED FOR A MIRACLE AND GOT ONE
- o RUSSIAN STEAMROLLER CRUSHING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH

Fall '03 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Munich to Switzerland (Fails, Dislodged), A Milan S A Munich to Switzerland (Cut), A Tyrolia to Bohemia, A Vienna to Budapest, A Trieste S A Vienna to Budapest, A Bulgaria to Serbia, A Constantinople to Bulgaria (Fails, Dislodged), A Cyrenaica S BR A Morocco to Egypt (Void), A Greece H

Britain: F London to North Sea, F English Channel S F London to North Sea, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Egypt (Fails), F Algeria H, A Morocco to Gibraltar, F Norway H (Dislodged)

France: A Portugal S A Spain, A Spain S A Portugal, F Picardy to Brest, A Gascony S F Picardy to Brest, A Marseilles S IT A Burgundy to Switzerland

Germany: A Kiel to Munich, A Cologne S A Kiel to Munich, A Belgium S A Cologne, F Skagerrak to North Sea (Fails)

Italy: A Rome to Milan (Fails), A Burgundy to Switzerland, F Konya to Constantinople, F Eastern Mediterranean to Egypt, F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria (Fails)

Russia: A St. Petersburg to Norway, A Sweden S A St. Petersburg to Norway, F Baltic Sea to Denmark, F Gulf of Bothnia to Baltic Sea, A Berlin S GE A Kiel to Munich, A Galicia to Budapest (Fails), A Rumania to Bulgaria, F Black Sea S A Rumania to Bulgaria, A Ankara S IT F Konya to Constantinople

Winter '03/Spring '04

There was a wide gap between Winter '03 and Spring '04, since JT had asked for a delay. In my memory, the two seasons get confused easily.

The Fall '03 moves were a pleasant surprise for Italy. Tiago held on to Egypt due to an Austro-British misunderstanding in the orders and he also managed to take Switzerland and Constantinople from Austria – Switzerland being an unexpected bonus that let Italy grow! Austria also used both A Vienna and A Trieste to cover Budapest, which meant one less army on the Italian front. For the rest, everything went as expected: Russia took Norway and Bulgaria, and Germany recovered Munich. Austria was knocked down from ten to seven, while I jumped ahead from eight to eleven, placing me far in the lead.

Almost immediately, JT warned me that there were rumblings about my size. That surprised me a bit, because I'd thought it was obvious for a while that I'd get eleven. Of course I set out immediately to reduce fears as best I could. I advertised to both Tiago and George (separately) that I had no intention of growing any more in 1904, that my job now was to pin down Austria and Britain while they recovered a bit, and that they should get gains from now on.

George asked me not to take Kiel in exchange for his support into Edinburgh. I was puzzled at this, but assured him I had no designs on Kiel. I said F Baltic Sea was there only to support Berlin or cover Prussia if Austria retreated A Munich to Silesia. Germany had nothing to fear from me. I repeated that he and JT should be the ones to make gains in Britain, but allowed that I could live with taking Edinburgh for myself if we all agreed it was okay. I promised to help his advance toward Britain regardless. We also discussed whether I should build F St. Petersburg (nc).

Tiago seemed grateful for my repeated pledge of loyalty. We discussed with JT what Italy should build in Naples. I favored an army, but Tiago and JT both wanted a fleet, so a fleet it was.

For myself, I obviously had to build A Warsaw and A Sevastopol. The main question was whether the third unit should be A Moscow or the dreaded F St. Petersburg (nc) that I had fought against for so long. Even though I had just stabbed Britain, I still didn't particularly want to see it invaded. In some ways I thought A Moscow was a better choice, but diplomatically F St. Petersburg (nc) seemed the best. It was a way to demonstrate that I was committed to the fight against Britain and to reassure Germany.

I had had no (substantial) exchanges with Mike and Robert, so their retreats and removals surprised me. It seemed that they were both ignoring me to hit west. I had ambivalent feelings about that. On the one hand, I'd attacked primarily to get their attention and force them to face me instead of beating up on Italy, so their refusal to be distracted was smart in that sense. On the other hand, I didn't think they could take down everyone else in time to turn against me and prevent a Russian solo, so I wasn't sure why they were doing it. As it turned out, they were reportedly both threatening to throw the game to me unless France and Germany helped them conquer Italy in time to turn against me. Naturally, JT wasn't keen on this idea. He didn't tell of the Austro-British diplomatic tactic until the Spring deadline approached.

This A-B strategy made me nervous about being attacked, of course, but I was already holding strictly to my stated line of just gaining position to threaten more Austrian centers without actually taking any for Russia and encouraging my allies to make all the gains for themselves. I'd been doing my best to reassure them (especially Germany, my unfairly-not-very-trusted-ally) that my new size hadn't gone to my head and I was fully prepared to help them gain like stature. I could only hope that approach would go over better than any A-B "join us or die" ultimatum.

In another sense, the suicide threat was actually a positive development for me. If their attempts to break up F-I-R-G didn't work, Mike and Robert would have a reason to help me win (i.e., to maintain diplomatic credibility, presumably only in future games, but hey). This would be ideal once it came time for me to make a solo push. I had already thought of how to approach them with the argument that a Russian solo would guarantee them a survival, while a F-I-R draw would see them both eliminated. This "suicide" strategy added a new incentive for them to help me win.

First, though, I had to be sure I'd be in a position to try for it! As always, Germany was the one causing me the most headaches – not that George had done anything. It was just that I was paranoid.

*Well, actually, George *had* done something in our tactical discussions. He was thinking of ordering Cologne to Netherlands, Belgium to Netherlands, and Kiel to Helgoland Bight. That would cover all possible retreats, if Britain was forced out of North Sea in the Spring. However, I thought Britain would just support North Sea in place or possibly go for a supported attack on Belgium (English Channel S North Sea to Belgium). I tried to recommend Cologne S Belgium and Belgium S Kiel to Netherlands instead to protect Belgium and set up the attack for the Fall. I didn't want to make a big deal about it because I didn't want George to worry that I was planning to order Denmark to Helgoland Bight or something equally dumb. It occurred to me (belatedly), however, that a G-F Helgoland Bight could be used in a successful attack on Denmark in the Fall. While unlikely, the prospect did set my Tsar-sense tingling.*

Also, prior to this there had been an issue in F-I-R discussions. I wanted to see the Italian fleet sail out of Constantinople to Aegean Sea so I could move through to Macedonia in the Fall. JT was against this, partly because he feared it favored me and ostensibly because Germany might see it as a stab and turn to the A-B side. JT had emphasized this with me before. How accurate JT's concerns were, I didn't know, because George had always seemed content in my direct dealings with him. Nonetheless, JT was afraid that if seen as a stab of Italy, George would take my move to Constantinople as his cue to join Mike and Robert.

Of course, JT was (unfortunately for me) very aware of the potential for a Russian solo. He had already suggested I might give up Ankara to prop up Italy, a prospect that filled me with horror, though of course I couldn't say so. He reiterated a previous point that sometimes it was diplomatically wisest not to make the best tactical moves. I (nervously!) agreed, but said that in this one instance at least the advantage in moving aggressively was so great, and the threat of a Russian solo so distant, that it didn't

make sense to hold back. This was especially true when time was of the essence if we were to save Italy from certain doom given the A-B strategy.

Ironically, Tiago didn't seem to mind the idea of my passing through Constantinople at all, so that basically cut off the argument, though JT ended by repeating his warning that Germany might react badly (which he later admitted might just be his own paranoia at work). I was slightly amused because it reminded me of all the effort I'd put in to convince Robert to make concessions to Italy, only to have Tiago turn around and declare them completely unnecessary. JT continued to drop a few hints that I was getting too powerful, like saying George might consider Italy to be Russia's "dupe," but didn't go further than that – or not in F-I-R mail. I suspect he was beginning to work behind the scenes to prepare against any Russian solo shot. [Actually, France's relations with Austria-Hungary and Britain had deteriorated so badly by this point that JT didn't generate any anti-Russian messages that I can recall.]

Anyway, with the Constantinople issue resolved our tactical plans fell into place. Italy would try for Mid-Atlantic Ocean with French support, and we hoped that would be a nasty surprise for A-B, while I helped Germany against Britain and Austria, and brought my armies up to the Austrian border. I would indeed move through Constantinople, but move out in the Fall.

- o HUNGARIANS NOT HAPPY WITH VIENNA'S PRIORITIES
- o DUAL MONARCHY LEAVES THE GREEKS TO THEIR OWN DEVICES
- o ROYAL NAVY SAILORS SCUTTLE FLEET IN ICY WATERS OFF NORWAY
- o GERMAN NAVAL PROPONENTS PLEASED WITH BUILDING EFFORTS
- o ADMIRALS IN REGIA MARINA SEE CHANCE TO DOMINATE MED
- o RUMORS OF COSSACK SIGHTINGS RUN RAMPANT ACROSS EUROPE
- o TSAR DECIDES RUSSIA WILL BE A NAVAL POWER TOO

Winter '03 Retreats:

- Austria-Hungary: A Munich to Tyrolia
- Austria-Hungary: A Constantinople to Macedonia
- Britain: F Norway OTB

Winter '03 Adjustments:

- Austria-Hungary: disbands A Greece and A Budapest
- Germany: builds F Kiel
- Italy: builds F Naples
- Russia: builds F St. Petersburg (nc), A Sevastapol, and A Warsaw

- o K&K QUILTS ITALY...RUSHES EAST AT FULL SPEED
- o BRITISH ONCE AGAIN LEAVE AUSTRO-HUNGARIANS FRUSTRATED
- o ROYAL NAVY FEELING THE HEAT ON ALL FRONTS
- o FRENCH MORALE FALLS AS SOLDIERS FIGHT BOREDOM
- o GERMAN AND RUSSIAN NAVIES POSITION TO FORCE NORTH SEA
- o JOYOUS CROWDS WELCOME ITALIAN SOLDIERS IN MILAN
- o REGIA MARINA FORCES MID-ATLANTIC OCEAN
- o ITALIANS LEAVE CONSTANTINOPLE ONLY TO SEE RUSSIANS MOVE IN
- o RUSSIAN STEAMROLLER APPEARS TO GATHER SPEED

Spring '04 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Bohemia to Budapest, A Trieste S A Bohemia to Budapest, A Tyrolia to Vienna, A Milan to Tyrolia, A Macedonia S IT F Constantinople (Void), A Serbia S A Macedonia, A Cyrenaica S BR F Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Egypt (Void)

Britain: F Mid-Atlantic Ocean to North Atlantic Ocean, F North Sea S GE F Skagerrak to Denmark (Void), F English Channel S F North Sea, A Gibraltar to Morocco, F Algeria H

France: F Brest S IT F Egypt to Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Gascony S F Brest, A Spain H, A Portugal S A Spain, A Marseilles S IT A Switzerland

Germany: F Skagerrak to North Sea (Fails), F Kiel to Helgoland Bight, A Munich S IT A Switzerland, A Belgium S FR A Spain (Invalid), A Cologne S A Belgium

Italy: F Egypt to Mid-Atlantic Ocean, F Naples to Ionian Sea, A Rome to Milan, A Switzerland S A Rome to Milan, F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria (Fails), F Constantinople to Aegean Sea

Russia: A Norway S Finland, F St. Petersburg (nc) to Norway, A Sweden S F St. Petersburg to Norway, F Denmark S GE F Skagerrak to North Sea, F Baltic Sea S F Denmark, A Berlin S GE A Munich, A Warsaw to Silesia, A Sevastapol to Rumania, A Galicia S A Sevastapol to Rumania, A Ankara to Constantinople, A Bulgaria S A Ankara to Constantinople, F Black Sea S A Bulgaria

Fall '04

The Spring moves went almost exactly as planned. Italy took Mid-Atlantic Ocean, Russia moved to Silesia, Germany went to Helgoland Bight (ignoring an offered British support to Denmark), and Italy deployed fleets into the Aegean and Ionian Seas. Better still, Austria and Britain failed to take Egypt. Britain, in fact, didn't even try for Egypt, though evidently Austria had expected it to. This was evidenced by Austria's support for a non-existent British move to Egypt. I thought this tactic odd if Robert was trying to put together a real stop-Russia coalition with Italy in it.

There was an unexpected bonus: Austria pulled back from Italy completely. As a result, Italy was able to take back Milan and seemed sure to hold it. Austrian armies rushed back to the east where I could keep them pinned down. It seemed Robert's threat to throw the game to Russia might just be a bluff, though I hoped that eventually he would have to live up to his suicide threats. [Robert rebuked himself rather harshly after the game ended for turning east in the Spring instead of crippling Italy when he had the chance.]

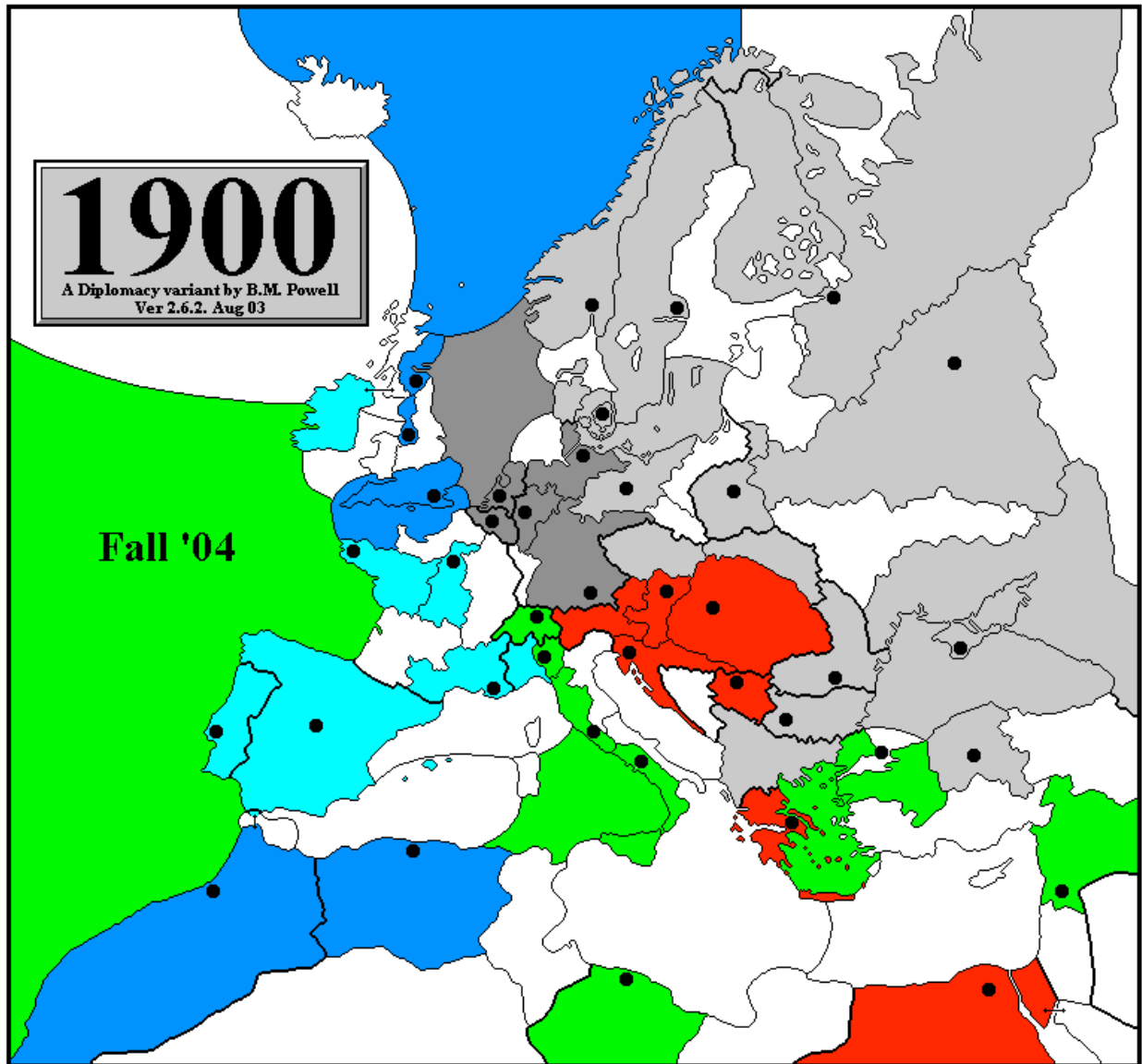
JT and Tiago were both happy with the results. So was I. I felt we had turned the corner and that F-I-R would now be able to hold it together even if Germany turned against us. Russia seemed guaranteed a draw and had a very good shot at a solo if I could manage things right. JT almost immediately started pointing out the path for me (inadvertently, of course) by saying that when the time came to stab Germany I should hit him first, so he wouldn't suspect France and Italy until it was too late. Otherwise George might try to throw the game to Russia. Hmmm...

An unplanned one-week delay was declared on the day of the Fall adjudication. There was a lot of silence until the next Monday. I sent one or two messages to Mike and Robert (eventually confirming that they were still receiving them, though many to Robert were returned undelivered for a while). Mike was very gracious about my stabbing him, saying that it had been a much better choice for me than the B-A-R. Other than that, we didn't discuss anything.

*I sent a message to George in which I apologized for my silence and stated that nothing had changed. He replied, claiming that Robert hadn't contacted him. I didn't believe him, as JT had already assured me there was "stop Russia" movement underway. However, I didn't want to press the issue, especially as these negotiations were apparently going badly (due to unspecified unreasonable demands – from Austria?). JT assured me that George wasn't going to attack me unless A-B-F-G-I all stopped fighting each other and that simply wasn't going to happen. I got the impression that this was either because Tiago refused to turn against me (according to JT, which sort of implied that JT *would* turn against me if necessary) or because Robert was making demands that Tiago and/or JT were not willing to meet. Mostly I was just grateful it didn't work out! [Nothing much was happening actually. A/B relations with F/I remained dreadful. I suspect that JT made the claim in the vain hope that the threat of a "stop Russia" campaign would make Charles nervous about trying for a solo.]*

In fact, it seems that negotiations were going so badly that in a subsequent e-mail JT said outright that he thought a Russian solo was only a matter of time unless I decided otherwise. He asked me to stick to the F-I-R draw for the sake of justice or at least to wait on the solo until both Britain and Austria were eliminated. I was both elated and taken aback by this missive, and not sure of how to respond. I could

never admit that I was going for a solo, but JT was appealing to me to “cut through all the crap” he was getting from others. In the end I wrote back reiterating several times that I was not about to get a solo. I ended my note by saying that in the extremely theoretical case of my going for a solo, I could try to eliminate Austria and Britain, but it would depend on whether I could do so without endangering my win.



- o AUSTRO-GERMAN ASSAULT ON SWITZERLAND REPULSED BY ITALIANS
- o AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN SOLDIERS MARVEL AT THE PYRAMIDS
- o ROYAL NAVY DRIVEN FROM NORTH SEA BY HIGH SEAS FLEET
- o IRISH WELCOME FRENCH AS ALLIES AGAINST BRITISH OPPRESSORS
- o FRANCE SENDS TROOPS INTO PIEDMONT
- o ITALIANS RECAPTURE TRIPOLITANIA...AUSTRIAN GOVERNOR SHOT
- o RUSSIAN SOLDIERS ADVANCE DEEP INTO THE BALKANS
- o RUSSIANS HOPE TO RECRUIT CZECHS TO FIGHT HABSBURGS

Fall '04 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Tyrolia S GE A Munich to Switzerland, A Budapest S RU F Black Sea to Rumania (Cut), A Vienna S A Budapest, A Serbia S RU F Black Sea to Rumania (Cut), A Trieste S A Serbia, A Macedonia to Greece, A Cyrenaica to Egypt

Britain: A Morocco S F Algeria, F Algeria S A Morocco (Cut), F North Atlantic Ocean to Norwegian Sea, F North Sea S F North Atlantic Ocean to Norwegian Sea (Cut, Dislodged), F English Channel S F North Sea

France: F Brest S IT F Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Portugal to Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Ireland, A Spain to Gibraltar, A Gascony to Spain, A Marseilles to Piedmont

Germany: A Belgium S A Cologne, A Cologne S A Belgium, F Skagerrak to North Sea, F Helgoland Bight to Netherlands, A Munich to Switzerland (Fails)

Italy: A Switzerland S A Milan (Cut), A Milan S A Switzerland, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean C FR A Portugal to Ireland, F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria (Fails), F Ionian Sea to Tripolitania, F Aegean Sea S RU A Constantinople to Macedonia

Russia: F Norway S GE F Skagerrak to North Sea, A Finland S F Norway, F Denmark S GE F Skagerrak to Norway, A Sweden S F Denmark, F Baltic Sea S F Denmark, A Berlin S GE A Munich (Void), A Silesia to Bohemia, A Galicia to Budapest (Fails), A Constantinople to Macedonia, A Bulgaria to Serbia (Fails), A Rumania to Serbia (Fails), F Black Sea to Rumania (Fails)

Winter '04

The Fall moves went ahead with only one surprise: Germany attacked Switzerland with Austrian support. This was a hint that Germany had turned or was turning. I asked George about it. He claimed it was a last-minute decision and that he knew ahead of time that it wouldn't work because Tiago had told him he was supporting Switzerland in place (which was true). This obviously didn't sound too convincing, but I didn't call him on it.

The Winter builds/disbands themselves included no surprises. Britain retreated to Edinburgh and Austria disbanded A Budapest as part of his suicide ploy. Italy built A Rome, the only sensible choice.

- o BRITISH SHIPS SCURRY BACK TO THE SAFETY OF EDINBURGH
- o HUNGARIAN ENTHUSIASM FOR THE WAR WANING QUICKLY
- o NEW ITALIAN REGIMENTS PARADE THROUGH STREETS OF ROME

Winter '05 Retreat:

Britain: F North Sea to Edinburgh

Winter '05 Adjustments:

Austria-Hungary: disbands A Budapest

Italy: builds A Rome

Spring '05

Slight cracks began to appear in F-I-R when JT opposed the idea of my growing this year. I tried to convince him that I had to attack Austria, but he insisted that I could just sit tight and contain A-G while France and Italy grew. He said that if I went on the offensive, that meant I was going for the solo and to please not pretend otherwise.

Of course he was right, but I think he also misunderstood my previous message in which I had outlined a plan for the Spring moves which he seemed to interpret as "you guys sit tight while I grow" – obviously not a good message to send. I explained how my suggestions for this year would help France and Italy too. At the end I said that I still thought there was danger from A-G, but I didn't want to argue about

fighting them if it was only going to make JT think I was jerking him around. I repeated that I wanted to hit Austria hard in 1905.

Soon after I received a reply from George. He didn't answer my questions about supporting me to Norwegian Sea, whether things were patched up with Italy, or if he'd be able to help against Austria. Instead he said that he was trying to decide whether to convoy an army to Britain in Spring, or support France into the Channel and ask for support to London. He asked whether I thought he could trust JT. This immediately made me suspicious that he was just trying to pretend that his relationship with JT wasn't as close as it was and that JT was already asking George to turn against me in the near future. I replied neutrally by saying I had been thinking of the convoy as well.

F-I-R continued to hammer out plans. Tiago responded to my suggestions and I further outlined how France and Italy might get two SCs each this year. Taking Trieste would depend on my hitting Serbia in the Spring so I said I hoped he and JT would agree to that at least, especially since it would be a shame not to when the move could not fail.

In the following days I heard little from anyone. JT finally sent a mail explaining he had real-life things that were taking priority and submitted some orders. Tiago decided to order F Aegean Sea to Eastern Mediterranean, which might leave me in the position of having to take Constantinople in the Fall, but I could live with that. I ordered the attack on Serbia and also tried for Budapest with the one army. That would cause problems if it worked and Germany had ordered to Silesia; but after considering, I decided it was worth the risk. George too had been largely incommunicado. I feared it might be because he was plotting against me (I took this suicide stuff with a big grain of salt), but decided to try for Budapest anyway. Even if it worked and left Warsaw open, I'd be getting Budapest to compensate.

- o EUROPE VIEWS RUSSIAN SUCCESS WITH ALARM AND SUSPICION
- o K&K ARMY COMPLETELY STYMIED BY ITALIAN COUNTERTHRUSTS
- o ROYAL NAVY DEFEATS GERMAN INVASION OF HOME ISLANDS
- o BRITISH GOVERNMENT URGES CIVILIANS IN LIVERPOOL TO STAY CALM
- o FRENCH SURPRISED BY EASE OF CROSSING FROM IRELAND TO CLYDE
- o FRANCO-ITALIAN OFFENSIVE DRIVES BRITISH FROM MOROCCO
- o KASIER RUSHES REINFORCEMENTS TO THE SWISS BORDER
- o HUNGARIANS ROLL OVER TO RUSSIANS WITHOUT A FIGHT
- o SERBS WELCOME RUSSIANS AS LIBERATORS
- o RUSSIAN FLEET ANCHORS OUTSIDE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Spring '05 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Tyrolia to Venetia (Fails), A Trieste S A Tyrolia to Venetia, A Vienna to Tyrolia (Fails), A Serbia to Macedonia (Fails, Dislodged), A Greece S A Serbia to Macedonia, A Egypt to Cyrenaica (Fails)

Britain: F English Channel to London, F Edinburgh to Yorkshire (Fails), F Norwegian Sea to Edinburgh (Fails), A Morocco S F Algeria (Cut, Dislodged), F Algeria S A Morocco (Cut)

France: A Ireland to Clyde, F Brest to English Channel, A Gibraltar to Morocco, A Spain to Gascony, A Piedmont S IT A Switzerland

Germany: A Belgium to North Sea to Yorkshire (Fails), F North Sea C A Belgium to Yorkshire, F Netherlands to Belgium (Fails), A Cologne to Alsace, A Munich S AH A Vienna to Tyrolia

Italy: F Mid-Atlantic Ocean S FR A Gibraltar to Morocco, F Tripolitania to Cyrenaica (Fails), F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria (Fails), A Rome to Venetia (Fails), A Milan S A Rome to Venetia, A Switzerland S A Milan, F Aegean Sea to Eastern Mediterranean

Russia: F Norway to Norwegian Sea (Fails), A Finland to Norway (Fails), A Sweden S A Finland to Norway, F Denmark S GE F North Sea, A Berlin S GE A Munich, F Baltic Sea S A Berlin, A Bohemia to Tyrolia (Fails), A Galicia to Budapest, A Macedonia to Serbia, A Rumania S A Macedonia to Budapest, A Bulgaria S A Rumania to Budapest, F Black Sea to Constantinople

Summer '05 Retreats:

Austria-Hungary: A Serbia to Bosnia

Britain: A Morocco to Southern Algeria

Fall '05

The Spring moves went well. George didn't move to Silesia or Burgundy. Robert seemed to follow through on his suicide threat, which meant that I got into both Serbia and Budapest. Instead of racing for Damascus, Austria bounced Italy in Cyrenaica. Germany did support an Austrian move to Tyrolia, which increased my uneasiness about him. To my surprise, Mike didn't cover Clyde at all, leaving Liverpool open for French occupation in the Fall.

I decided that Fall would be the turn when I would stab Germany and begin the final push. I wasn't sure whether this would work, but so far it seemed likely. However, I didn't want to tell my French and Italian allies until after the fact, in case they objected and tried a last-minute effort to prevent a Russian solo. This was probably wise. I think JT may have been hoping to work with George to stop me once Mike and Robert were out of the way.

JT implied that G-A were trying to get him to help against Italy and would let him know what their plans were. However, in the end this didn't happen. F-I-R discussed whether I should order my F Constantinople to Macedonia or Aegean Sea. At first I was going to try for Macedonia, but at the last minute it was agreed that Aegean Sea was the safer move.

On Monday, I finally sent a longer message to George (who had ignored my earlier message). I probed for a little information on what was going on. Was he supporting France to London or vice versa? Would he convoy the army again? He avoided the question.

A little before the moves, JT asked me to support F English Channel to North Sea. I agreed. While I did have some idea of offering Mike a survival if he helped me solo, I didn't see what he could do for me other than what he was already doing. JT mentioned a Russian solo in a message, but I didn't comment. Henceforth I tried to ignore it whenever the subject came up.

Just before the Fall adjudication, I received another message from George asking me to support him in North Sea and offering support into Norwegian Sea. I didn't answer, since I was about to stab him!

- o AUSTRIANS FIGHT FIERCELY WHEN ITALIANS ARE THE OPPONENT
- o PRIME MINISTER FATALISTIC AFTER FALL OF LIVERPOOL
- o BRITISH MAINTAIN TENUOUS FOOTHOLD IN NORTH AFRICA
- o FRENCH ARMAMENT INDUSTRY ANTICIPATES BOOM SEASON
- o LOOTING IN BURGUNDY PROVES GERMAN DISCIPLINE IS FALTERING
- o ITALIANS LOSE CHESS MATCH IN AFRICA TO HATED AUSTRIANS
- o RUSSIAN BEAR HAS APPETITE FOR SAUSAGE, BEER, AND PRETZELS
- o DOMINANCE OF RUSSIA CASTS A PALL OVER EUROPE

Fall '05 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Tyrolia to Milan (Fails), A Trieste to Venetia (Fails), A Vienna to Budapest (Fails), A Bosnia to Macedonia, A Greece S A Bosnia to Macedonia, A Egypt H

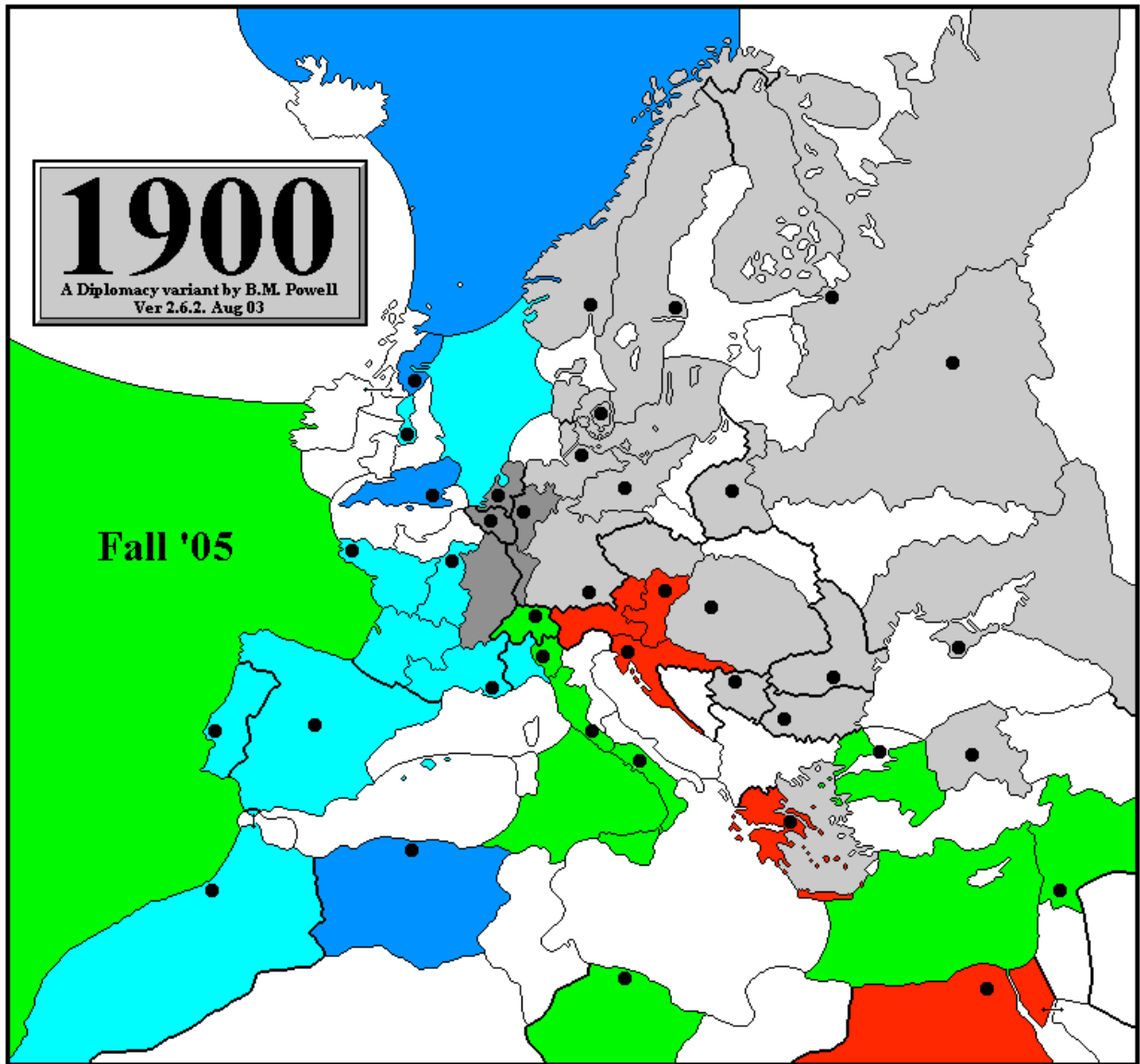
Britain: F London to Yorkshire (Fails), F Edinburgh to Yorkshire (Fails), F Norwegian Sea to Edinburgh (Fails), F Algeria H, A Southern Algeria S F Algeria

France: A Piedmont S IT A Switzerland, A Morocco S IT F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria, A Gascony to Burgundy (Fails), F English Channel to North Sea, A Clyde to Liverpool

Germany: A Belgium to Burgundy, A Alsace S A Belgium to Burgundy, F Netherlands to Belgium, A Munich to Switzerland (Fails, Dislodged), F North Sea S RU F Norway to Norwegian Sea (Void, Dislodged)

Italy: F Mid-Atlantic Ocean S FR A Morocco, F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria (Fails), F Eastern Mediterranean to Egypt (Fails), F Tripolitania H, A Rome to Venetia (Fails), A Switzerland S FR A Gascony to Burgundy (Cut), A Milan S A Switzerland (Cut)

Russia: F Norway S FR F English Channel to North Sea, A Finland S F Norway, A Sweden to Baltic Sea to Kiel, F Baltic Sea C A Sweden to Kiel, F Denmark S A Sweden to Kiel, A Berlin to Munich, A Bohemia S A Berlin to Munich, A Serbia S A Budapest, A Bulgaria S A Serbia, A Budapest S A Serbia (Cut), A Rumania S A Budapest, F Constantinople to Aegean Sea



Winter '05

My turn proceeded well. I stabbed Germany for two of his remaining home centers, supported France into the North Sea, and ended up growing by four. Somebody (George, as I later found out) proposed a concession to Russia.

Very soon after the adjudication came out, I wrote to both George and Robert (separately) pointing out that my immediate victory was now their best chance for survival and expressing the hope that they

would see things this way too. While this might not have been necessary, I didn't want to rely completely on the suicide threat reports. At the least, I wanted to reassure them that I was indeed thinking of a solo bid so they would continue to help me by facing west!

I apologized to George for stabbing him, saying it was my F-I allies in F-I-R who had insisted on it (this was of course false, but I wanted to make him angry at them). George was a very good sport about it, saying he had expected the stab at some point and he was the one who had proposed a Russian solo. He very kindly told me I'd played a great game and said, "If you don't play for a solo you are a weenie," a message I took to heart!

JT wrote begging me to hold off from the solo until Britain was done and also asking me to get my eighteen without taking any from Tiago. My reply was non-committal. I had real-life reasons for wanting to finish the game before September, since I was going back to school. Besides, I didn't feel any need to see Robert or Mike punished for frustrations they had caused me. I was the one who had attacked them, after all! I knew that from a ruthlessly pragmatic point of view that it was in my best interest to keep all the countries alive until I actually reached eighteen. It would be much easier to force a solo against a coalition of five small, war-weary nations than against a strong Italy and France. I was sure that JT was thinking of this aspect of things as well.

Robert seemed happy at my message. He wanted to keep his home centers, if he could, and asked me what Austrian disbands would suit my purposes best. After discussion and negotiation, I agreed to leave Vienna alone in Spring '06 in return for his removal of A Greece and A Macedonia, which would leave both Constantinople and Greece open to me. I would build A Sevastapol and order it to Armenia in Spring. If Damascus was open, I would take that instead of Vienna for my eighteenth center in Fall '06. I didn't expect to have to follow through on this offer, since even before the F-I-R tactical discussions I was pretty sure Italy would keep F Eastern Mediterranean in position.

- o HABSBURGS RECOGNIZE RUSSIAN DOMINANCE IN BALKANS
- o BRITISH ABANDON AFRICA
- o FRENCH EUPHORIA OVER FALL VICTORIES QUICKLY FADING
- o ONCE PROUD GERMAN NAVY SCUTTLED TO THE LAST SHIP
- o RUSSIA'S ENDLESS SUPPLY OF MANPOWER NOW OBVIOUS TO ALL

Winter '05 Retreats:

- Germany: F North Sea OTB
- Germany: A Munich to Cologne

Winter '05 Adjustments:

- Austria-Hungary: disbands A Macedonia and A Greece
- Britain: disbands F Algeria and A Southern Algeria
- France: builds A Paris and F Brest
- Germany: disbands F Belgium
- Russia: builds F St. Petersburg (nc), A Moscow, A Sevastapol, and A Warsaw

Spring '06

There were many tactical discussions, with more pleas from JT to postpone victory. My preliminary orders were very conservative, but I changed them after negotiations. F-I-R worried about whether the G-A alliance could take Switzerland, but JT was not willing to cut support in Burgundy, instead fearing a German thrust to Picardy. In the end we went for a less sure option. This served my purposes, since it meant I didn't have to risk losing Munich.

Robert asked whether my not attacking Vienna would apply to Trieste and Tyrolia too. I replied that I wouldn't attack Trieste, but couldn't promise to leave Tyrolia alone. He seemed pleased at this much warning.

JT wanted to take out Britain in a single year, but it didn't seem very likely. He wanted to make sure that French units seized all British centers, which made it even harder. I proposed a plan where France would support me into Edinburgh, but this was rejected. JT then asked again for me to wait on the solo until Britain was completely conquered, but for all the reasons previously discussed I couldn't do that, so I didn't promise it. Of course, I thought he might just be delaying for time anyway. In spite of what JT was saying, I didn't think he was resigned to a Russian win and I wasn't about to count my solo as assured until I hit 18! In the end I agreed to cut support in Norwegian Sea. [JT confided to me that he wouldn't hold off on claiming a solo if he was in Charles's position, but he had to try something or the game was over.]

I mentioned that JT should order his army back up to cover Spain in case Germany hit Gascony. He asked whether I was dropping hints to the enemy, which I denied (accurately, at least in this case). There followed more discussion about whether JT could order Piedmont to Marseilles without endangering Switzerland. We decided that we couldn't guarantee it, but that it might be okay to lose Switzerland in the Spring if we could take it back in Fall. It was decided that I would have a crack at Tyrolia.

At the last minute I sent a message saying I would order units 'south' to defend against an Austrian dash for Damascus. I meant this to explain A Bulgaria to Constantinople and A Sevastapol to Armenia.

- o DUAL MONARCHY FINDS ITSELF AT MERCY OF THE TSAR
- o K&K ARMY FULL OF FIGHT WHEN HATED ITALIANS ARE THE FOE
- o BRITISH STAVE OFF FRENCH INVASION OF SCOTLAND
- o FRANCE PREPARES TO HALT GERMANY'S ADVANCE WESTWARD
- o GERMANS BUILD DEFENSIVE POSITIONS IN THE LOW COUNTRIES
- o REGIA MARINA FINALLY SUCCESSFUL IN CAPTURING ALGERIA
- o THE RUSSIAN BEAR DEVOURS GREECE AND CONSTANTINOPLE
- o "THE STEAMROLLER" APPEARS UNSTOPPABLE

Spring '06 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Tyrolia to Venetia, A Trieste S A Tyrolia to Venetia, A Vienna to Tyrolia (Fails), A Egypt to Palestine

Britain: F Edinburgh to North Sea (Fails), F Norwegian Sea S F Edinburgh to North Sea (Cut), F London S F Edinburgh to North Sea

France: A Morocco to Gibraltar, A Piedmont to Marseilles, A Paris to Picardy, A Gascony to Paris, F Brest to English Channel, F North Sea to Edinburgh (Fails), A Liverpool S F North Sea to Edinburgh

Germany: A Burgundy to Belgium, A Alsace S A Burgundy to Belgium, A Cologne to Netherlands

Italy: F Mid-Atlantic Ocean S FR F Brest to English Channel, F Tyrrhenian Sea to Algeria, F Tripolitania to Cyrenaica, F Eastern Mediterranean S F Tripolitania to Cyrenaica, A Rome to Venetia (Fails), A Switzerland S RU A Bohemia to Tyrolia

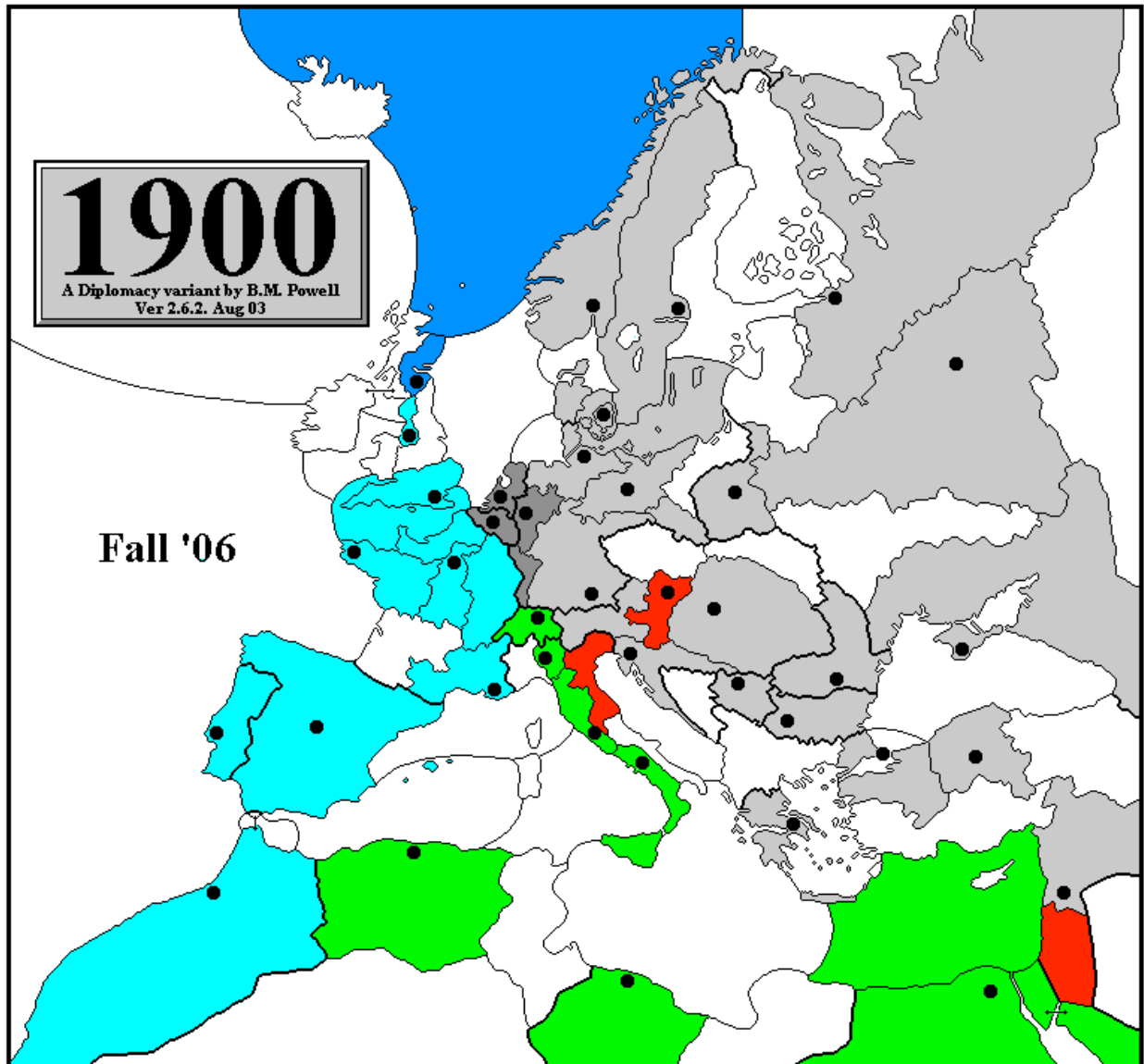
Russia: A Finland to Sweden, F Norway to Norwegian Sea (Fails), F St. Petersburg (nc) to Norway (Fails), F Denmark to North Sea (Fails), F Baltic Sea to Denmark (Fails), A Bohemia to Tyrolia, A Munich S A Bohemia to Tyrolia, A Kiel S A Munich, A Warsaw to Silesia, A Sevastapol to Armenia, A Moscow to Sevastapol, A Serbia to Bosnia, A Rumania to Serbia, A Budapest S A Rumania to Serbia, A Bulgaria to Constantinople, F Aegean Sea to Greece

Fall '06

The A-G alliance didn't attack Switzerland after all. Austria hit Venetia, while Germany retreated back toward the Rhine. Tiago advanced toward Egypt, but was dismayed to see me occupy Greece. I tried to excuse this by pointing out that if I didn't, Austria would keep it another year, but there was no answer. I think war fatigue was beginning to set in.

Right after the Spring moves, I sent in my preliminary Fall orders. I was determined not to NMR!

Austria did indeed order A Egypt to Palestine in what looked like a dash for Damascus, but which I thought might be a bid to support me in instead. Sure enough, Robert wrote immediately offering the support in exchange for my leaving both Vienna and Trieste alone. My initial impulse was to accept, but JT's talk about ending F-I-R on an amicable note was starting to have an effect. If I hadn't been so close to winning I would probably have agreed to support Austria as a Janissary/puppet, but it seemed unnecessary. I delayed answering Robert until after the weekend, when I finally replied that I felt I had to go for all the centers I could in the Fall. However, I pointed out, as I had previously, that he could at least save Vienna by ordering Trieste to Budapest and Venetia to Tyrolia, so he would get a survival.



The proposal for a Russian solo failed. I had forgotten to vote, but I was pretty sure JT would veto it anyway. Besides, having come this far, I wanted to win outright with a clear 18+ centers!

*George wrote me and we started talking about the game as though it was already over, exchanging a few such mails. I thought this **might** be a ploy to make me overconfident, but I really wasn't that worried.*

In F-I-R discussions I agreed to hit Norwegian Sea again so that JT would be assured of taking London. Soon after that, he too started talking like the game was already over.

I decided to change my default orders somewhat to include an attack on Germany. I sent them in (along with press) and waited. And that was it!

- o WAR IS OVER...RUSSIA IS MASTER OF EUROPE
- o HABSBURGS GIVE UP THRONE...VIENNESE REPUBLIC IS DECLARED
- o AUSTRIANS TAKE ONE LAST SHOT AT HATED ITALY IN THE LEVANT
- o BRITISH GOVERNMENT HASTILY RELOCATES TO EDINBURGH
- o FRENCH DISMAYED THAT UNION JACK STILL FLIES OVER SCOTLAND
- o GERMAN PEOPLES ARMY DEFENDS COLOGNE AGAINST RUSSIANS
- o ITALIANS ARREST AUSTRIAN AGENTS AND SABOTEURS IN EGYPT
- o COSSACKS CUT DOWN POLYGOT DEFENDERS OF TRIESTE
- o ROMANOV'S REPAY POPE'S FRIENDSHIP BY TAKING DAMASCUS

Fall '06 Moves:

Austria-Hungary: A Venetia to Tyrolia (Fails), A Trieste to Budapest (Fails, Dislodged, Destroyed), A Vienna S A Trieste to Budapest (Cut), A Palestine S RU A Armenia to Damascus

Britain: F Norwegian Sea to North Sea (Fails), F London S F Norwegian Sea to North Sea (Cut, Dislodged), F Edinburgh S F Norwegian Sea to North Sea (Cut)

France: North Sea to London, F English Channel S F North Sea to London, A Liverpool to Edinburgh (Fails), A Marseilles S IT A Switzerland, A Paris to Burgundy, A Picardy S A Paris to Burgundy, A Gibraltar to Morocco

Germany: A Alsace to Cologne (Fails), A Belgium S A Alsace to Cologne, A Netherlands S A Belgium

Italy: A Switzerland S FR A Paris to Burgundy, A Milan S A Switzerland, A Rome to Venetia (Fails), F Algeria H, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Hejaz, F Cyrenaica to Egypt, F Eastern Mediterranean to Damascus

Russia: F Norway to Norwegian Sea (Fails), F St. Petersburg (nc) to Norway (Fails), A Sweden S F St. Petersburg to Norway, F Denmark to North Sea (Fails), A Kiel to Cologne (Fails), A Munich S A Kiel to Cologne, A Silesia S A Munich, F Baltic Sea to Kiel (Fails), A Tyrolia to Vienna (Fails), A Budapest S A Tyrolia to Vienna (Cut), A Bosnia to Trieste, A Serbia S A Bosnia to Trieste, A Sevastapol to Rumania, A Armenia to Damascus, A Constantinople H, F Greece H

Final Thoughts

Thoughts on various issues that came up during the game...

*British-Russian Relations: As I said earlier, I'm amazed at how often Russia and Britain seem to end up fighting very early in the game. I think that such conflict is pointless and dangerous for both of them. For Britain, St. Petersburg is a dead end—especially in **1900**, where the British start without any army to press further inland. Even if the BEF did exist, it would be no match for the large German, Austrian, and Turkish armies that will also be competing for the other Russian centers. Britain has no business building armies on that scale and doubly not in sending them so far away from the homeland. Even if Britain remains content with St. Petersburg alone, it may still have to defend its prize against a three-unit assault from the south (or more, if the attacker is Germany using the Reich's Baltic fleet). On the Russian side, the situation is similar. Britain is too far away to invade, and the Tsar has no business building many fleets on his north coast. [Of course, there are those who, with merit, disagree with this assessment.]*

On the positive side, this army/fleet dichotomy means that Britain and Russia have no need to get in each others' way. In fact, their natural axes of expansion lie on opposite sides of the board. Russia is most concerned with the east and Balkans, while Britain is concerned with the West and the Mediterranean. The only real area of direct conflict is in Scandinavia. If that can be resolved

satisfactorily, I think that Britain and Russia are among the most compatible neighbors on the map. The Scandinavian border is easily demilitarized – a Russian F St. Petersburg (sc) cannot attack Norway, which can then be safely vacated. If one of Britain or Russia is being invaded, it makes sense for the other to seize what he can. Barring that, I think war between them is generally ill advised.

Of course, things turned out rather differently in this game. That was due to pressing factors that made me want to get Britain's attention—namely, the need to rescue France and Italy so I would have reliable allies on the other side of Austria. If not for the immediate need to distract Mike from attacking JT and Tiago, I doubt I would have taken the British holdings in Scandinavia until the very end of the game, as per my initial plans.

Russian Steamroller Rule: I now appreciate how necessary this rule is! Without it, Russia would have been crippled. I could never have faced both Turkey and Germany at the same time. As it was, it was a close thing. If B-G had been fully committed, they could have taken both Brest and St. Petersburg in 1901. As I pointed out during the game, I didn't actually overtake Germany (who had lost a home supply center!) in terms of numbers of units until the beginning of 1902. Even then, I was vulnerable. After Robert's stab I had only two armies in position to face him in 1903. It was only when I grew to eleven in 1904 that I started to feel a little secure.

Baron already explains his rationale for the Russian Steamroller Rule in the Gamers' Guide to 1900 [in Chapter 7], and I would add that Russia's two starting fleets mean that at least one unit will normally be unable to intervene on either the northern or southern front.

As far as balance is concerned, I don't believe the Russian Steamroller Rule is unbalancing. While Russia's alliances did well in this game, I believe that was due less to the extra unit than to carefully considered tactics and superb co-ordination between the allies. While Russia did well individually, I think that was simply because I was never attacked. If the "stop Russia" negotiations had worked out or if the A-B alliance had been better coordinated, I think I could still have been contained.

A-R Alliance vs Germany and Turkey: In the Fall '00 adjudication, Baron said that Robert and I had just shown how effective an A-R alliance could be against both Turkey and Germany at the same time. He even called us "ruthless" – a compliment I will treasure forever. However, I'm not sure the A-R proved as effective against the Kaiser as Baron had hoped it would be.

While we were able to dispatch Turkey in record time, especially with Italy's help, we had a much harder time of it against Germany. Even with French and Italian aid against the Reich, Germany managed to stay at six for two years while fending off our combined might. It was only by working with Britain that I managed to knock George down to four (and just in time, too!). If it had held together (a big if) I think the awkward F-A-I-R alliance would eventually have worn Germany down on its own, but it would have been more difficult than you would normally expect in a four-against-one fight.

Given this, I think that A-R has only limited prospects against Germany unless they are joined by at least one other power able to hit the Kaiser with fleets on the other side or Russia is able to send a fleet or two to the North Sea. In this game, the alternative to getting British help would have been a long Russian march through Scandinavia, leaving me open to an Austrian stab.

[I think Charles is being pessimistic about A/R's chances against Germany. In this contest, Britain didn't pile on Germany until '02, French units never entered Germany proper, Italian aid against Germany was actually rather minimal, and A/R "cooperation" was strained at best. Even so, Austria-Hungary reached 10 SCs by '02, while Russia was at 8 SCs. In the meantime, Germany had been reduced to 4 SCs and Turkey had been utterly destroyed. From my perspective, that's an impressive performance for A/R. Needless to say, if the 4-Power A/F/I/R alliance had held, Germany would have been crushed like a bug, not slowly worn down as Charles suggests. I estimate the Reich would have been eliminated in '03. Only the ensuing Austro-Russian conflict enabled Germany to avoid complete annihilation.]

F-I Alliance: The F-I alliance in this game was obviously very solid. I don't think we got to see the full potential of an F-I because both countries spent most of their time in defense. We didn't even get to see them co-operate fully against Germany. They were only able to fight Britain and not with their full strength.

One thing that struck me, however, was how vital they were to each other's defense. Thanks to early Italian neutrality (which I thought made sense, since Italy didn't seem likely to get much territory if France fell to a B-G alliance) and later help, JT was able to weather the initial B-G attack and eventually turn the tide against Britain, even though Mike held a positional advantage. France's survival was also due to A-R interventions, of course, but I think Italy's role was crucial.

From the Russian point of view, the F-I alliance was a huge plus. I'm surprised F-I hadn't happened before. I would expect any Tsar to push for it as hard as possible! As it was, F-I-R was my preferred combination from the start and I was glad to see it form. As an added bonus, relations between France/Britain and Italy/Austria each became terrible. It wasn't exactly the kind of sandwich I'd envisioned when planning my strategy for this game, but it was close enough. Under these circumstances I was able to attack Scandinavia and the Balkans with impunity.

Austrian Stab in Fall '02: I've already identified Robert's stab of Italy as a turning point in the game. It was a bold gamble. Diplomatically it did him a lot of damage, ending any hope of good Austrian relations with Italy and France. However, the truth is that by that point JT and I had already agreed that Tiago would be a better long-term ally than Robert. The diplomatic damage had already been done and we were headed toward F-I-R anyway. [Just as Robert feared all along.] Given this, the stab wasn't really such a bad choice. If anything, it may have been Robert's best chance of changing the diplomatic scene and forcing me into a B-A-R. However, it did sabotage his relationships with everyone except Britain and I suspect that hurt him when he later tried to organize an alliance to stop me.

Militarily, the stab was brilliantly done and it was made all the more effective by the way Tiago left himself open to it (presumably due to Robert's negotiations). I remain utterly convinced that if I had hesitated to come to Italy's rescue, the game would have ended in an Austrian solo. Even as it was, it was a very close thing. For several turns afterward, it looked like Italy would be slowly ground down, center by center. If Robert had focused exclusively on finishing off Italy before turning eastward again to face me or if he had made more efforts to get Germany on his side, [or if Britain had taken Egypt in Fall '03 as Austria-Hungary had planned,] I think he might have pulled it off.

Fortunately for me, though, he didn't win over George and my attack seemed to distract him. There were also problems in the Austrian relationship with Britain – Robert and Mike failed to coordinate their moves properly. In contrast, the F-I-R alliance discussed tactics thoroughly, and made sure that our moves were completely coordinated. Combined with a few A-B mistakes (particularly the failure to take Egypt), that turned the tide. But it was a worthy effort!

So I guess that's all I have to say (more than enough, eh?), except to thank everyone again for a most enjoyable game!

SUPPLY CENTER HISTORY:

	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06
AH	3	5	7	10	7	6	4	1
BR	4	5	6	7	5	5	3	1
FR	4	6	6	5	5	5	7	8
GE	4	6	6	4	5	5	3	3
IT	3	5	6	5	6	7	7	7
RU	4	5	6	8	11	11	15	19 (Solo)
TU	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-

I seriously considered including the end game comments of all of the players, but given the extreme length of this chapter (!!!) I decided against it. I hope you all found Charles's observations as interesting and educational as I did.