
O⁵ by Dan Alderson for APA L #15, January 28, 1965

is Wibble Scribble #96

The Rules for SUPERDIPLOMACY

I have devised a modification of Diplomacy which has some interesting properties, and I herewith present its variations on the basic Diplomacy rules for consideration by the IASFS Diplomatic Corps. I would be very interested in getting a game of Superdiplomacy going at IASFS similar to the old Diplomacy games reported in Worldip and Witdip, or even a postal version (I have devised a procedure, involving "pseudo-random numbers" for simulating Avalon Hill dice-throwing in an unbiased, reproducible, prediction-proof manner: it requires only a desk calculator ((or much patience)) and generalizes without significant increase in complexity to areas in which the use of dice or suchlike implements would be impractical). In either case, I will gladly take the position of Gamesmaster and put out a Witdip-Ruritania-Graustark type game bulletin which will be put through APA L and available for postage elsewhere. So far, the development of Superdiplomacy has been severely hampered by lack of a sufficient number of players (the active membership of the Tujung Game Design Club has held steady at three for half a year or so, and is now falling to two as Larry Kanner has been Selected to Serve in the Armed Forces for the next few years), but it seems to me that it has considerable possibilities when played with a full Concert of Powers. Incidentally, the game is not much more complex than regular Diplomacy, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. For example, moves are written out exactly as in the regular game except that a number is added: A Vien-Trie becoming perhaps 3A Vien-Trie. Enough, however, of generalities. The rule changes ((TGDC rule set #5 or 6)) follow:

The Board: Let us define a minor province or nation to be one which does not have a supply-center dot, and a major province or nation to be one that does. Further, let us use the term "sector" for a major or minor province or nation, or a body of water. The Superdiplomacy board is the same as the Diplomacy board except that eight more sectors have been added: Switzerland (as a major nation like Spain or Greece - it is a moot point whether this addition improves the game, and it may be dispensed with by returning Switzerland to its Diplomacy status of neutral impassibility), Iceland (as a minor nation like Finland), Ireland (as a minor English province like Wales), Corsica (as a minor French province like Gascony), Sardinia and Sicily (each as a minor Italian province like Tuscany), Crete, and Cyprus. Each of these last two presents a special problem: After a dispute between Greece & Turkey over Crete in 1897-98, the island was occupied and "neutralized" by England, France, Italy & Russia, acting as the Concert of Europe, from 1898 to 1906. During this period, Crete was still legally a Turkish possession, although the population was overwhelmingly in favor of union with Greece (a goal which they achieved in 1912) and Turkey was forced to remove her troops from the island and grant autonomous rule. Thus, I list Crete as a minor province of Greece, which is indistinguishable as far as the rules of the game go from a minor nation. Cyprus I list as a minor province of Turkey like Syria and Armenia, but since it had been occupied and totally controlled by England since 1878 (although it was still legally Turkish territory) I place two English fleets there at the start of the game.

or nation,

Next, each major province is advanced from one supply center to five, and each minor province or nation is granted one supply center. Correspondingly, the replacement &/or construction capabilities of the provinces or nations are modified: each major province or nation can produce one unit at the end of each Spring move, and one or two at the end of each Fall move, and each minor province or nation can produce one unit at the end of each Fall move. In all cases, these productions of units are conditional upon control of sufficient supply centers and of there being sufficient "room" in the province or nation under consideration. Also, there is one circumstance under which a minor nation can produce a unit at the end of a Spring move (See Small Powers). Finally for the board rules, the capacity of each sector is increased from one unit to six.

05 page two

SUPERDIPLOMACY

Units: The units and their rules of movement are the same as those in Diplomacy, except that each Great Power starts off with just twice the number of each unit (so that, for example, Germany starts off with two armies in Berlin, two more in Munich, and two fleets in Kiel), England has two fleets in Cyprus at the start of the game, and each major nation (such as Portugal, Norway & Serbia) starts the game with two armies. The fact that up to six units (all of which must be of the same Power) may occupy the same sector at the same time should also be mentioned here. (See also Supply Lines and Battles)

Small Powers: At the start of the game, none of the Powers are fully armed. Except for the two English fleets on Cyprus, each major province or nation contains two units and can support five, and each minor province or nation contains no units and can support one. Thus, the game begins with a mobilization phase which, if no new supply centers are gained, the Great Powers will complete by the end of the Fall 1901 move. The Small Powers, however (namely all nations on the board except the Big Seven), do not necessarily take part in this mobilization. The actions of the Small Powers are controlled in the following manner: If no Small Power has been attacked by a Great Power, they remain in their initial state. However, starting immediately after the first move during which an attack is made on a Small Power, the Small Powers go into a new, "armed" mode of operation in which, whenever they can, they build as many armies as they can. In any case, their armies (there's no way for a Small Power to obtain a fleet) have consistent orders to stand, and they fight to the death rather than retreat (see Battles). Furthermore, if the first attack on a Small Power is made during a Spring move, the minor nation Small Powers are allowed to build their armies immediately, although they are then not allowed to build just after the following (Fall) move.

Supply Lines: Not only must each Great Power keep its total number of units no more than its total number of supply centers, but there must be a network of "supply lines" - chains of adjacent sectors running from a sector containing a supply center to a sector containing a unit - such that each unit of each Great Power is supplied from a different supply center by a supply line not passing through any sector either owned or controlled by another Great Power (here, Small Powers don't count). These supply lines do not need to be described in detail, or even in outline, unless some sceptical Great Power demands it, but units must be removed if they cannot be so supplied. As with removals due to loss of supply centers, these removals take place just after the Fall moves. Paradoxically enough, with this rule a Great Power may have to remove units even though he is building more units on the same move.

Battles: The final distinguishing feature of Superdiplomacy is its manner of dealing with battles. In general, it is very similar to Diplomacy, but one property is added - there can be "casualties". Whenever two forces dispute the same sector, each side throws a number of dice (or one die a number of times) determined by its number of units.* The other side loses as many units as there are sixes up. Which units are to be removed is again determined at random, except that directly involved units have twice the chance of being removed that supporting units have. The number of dice to be thrown is the number of supporting units plus twice the number of directly involved units, and if there is an attacker and a defender, the defender throws first and only the remaining units of the attacker are used in figuring his number of dice. If both (or all) sides are attackers, then both use their initial strengths to compute their numbers of dice. The final outcome of any battle is decided, exactly as in Diplomacy, on the total numbers of units left in each side after all casualties have occurred. If any force must retreat but cannot do so, then it fights "to the death" - it continues to exchange casualties with its opponents until either it is totally decimated or it no longer is required to retreat (the latter in the unlikely chance that it succeeds in reducing the enemy forces sufficiently without suffering too much itself).