

Crypto-Diplomacy II

a Diplomacy* variant

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0.0 General

0.1 Objective. Crypto-Diplomacy is, quite simply, an attempt to write a good limited-intelligence variant of Diplomacy* that does not have the drawbacks inherent in hidden-movement variants - primarily the problem of writing (in effect) eight adjudications for the same game.

0.2 Parameters. Crypto-Diplomacy is a SIX-player game. The game is NOT suitable for face-to-face play, thus a gamesmaster is required. Players need only a Diplomacy* set and these rules in order to play.

0.3 Rules. The 1976 rules of Diplomacy* and the houserules of same for a host zine shall be in effect in all cases where they do not conflict with these rules.

1.0 Cryptography and Cipher Construction

1.1 Each player shall construct a substitution cipher as outlined below. This cipher shall be used to encode the player's orders prior to publication.

1.11 A legal cipher shall use 28 symbols (the letters A-Z, plus # and %) to stand for 22 letters of the alphabet. J, Q, X, and Z do not need substitutes, as they never appear in the course of publishing orders.

1.12 Each of the 22 letters must have at least one substitute.

1.13 No letter may be assigned more than three substitutes.

1.14 Examples of legal and illegal ciphers:

A. TEXT	a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p r s t u v w y	(Legal.)
SUBS	U V A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T W X # Y % Z	
B. TEXT	a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p r s t u v w y	(Illegal. C is used
SUBS	Q W E R T Y U I O P A S D F G H J K L Z X C C V B N M % #	twice as a sub.)
C. TEXT	a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p r s t u v w y	(Illegal. e has
SUBS	M N B V C X Z L K J H G F D S A P O I U Y T R E W % Q #	more than 3 subs.)
D. TEXT	a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p r s t u v w y	(Illegal. g has
SUBS	L K J H G F D S A P O I M N B V C X Z U Y T R E % # Q W	no sub.)

1.2 The GM shall construct a legal cipher for Italian orders.

1.3 In published adjudications, all references to the units/orders of a given country shall be printed IN THAT PLAYER'S CODE. This includes listing possible retreat spaces, etc. Names of countries (unless part of the orders) and names of players should not be encoded.

2.0 Italy

2.1 Italy is not a player in this variant. Italian units begin in the normal set-up and are ordered by the other players as outlined below.

2.2 Each turn, the players may cast one vote for a possible Italian order for each supply center they own. For instance, a three-center power might vote for A Ven-Tri, F Nap-Ion, and A Rom-Ven in Spring '01, or two votes for A Ven-Pie and one for A Rom-Tus, or even plunk three votes for F Nap-Tyh. Votes are submitted with orders.

2.3 For each unit each turn, all votes from all players are tallied, and the order with the most votes becomes the order that unit will follow. If two or more orders to a unit are equally popular, the unit HOLDS. Thus, players have an extra avenue for their diplomacy...

2.4 In the case of winter builds, a similar rule applies - the most popular build is made, then the next most popular (eliminating any build of a different unit in the same place, of course), and so on until all builds are made. An unresolvable tie results in loss of that build for that winter.

2.5 Removals for Italy are made as though Italy is in Civil Disorder.

3.0 Tank Units

3.1 Tank units (abbreviation T) are added as a third type of unit.

3.2 Tank units require two supply centers for support. They function as armies in all other respects save combat strength...a tank unit has a strength of 2 for all purposes.

3.21 Tank units may not retreat into occupied spaces or spaces left vacant by standoff, their double strength notwithstanding.

3.22 Any attack on a tank unit cuts all support given by that unit.

3.3 Tank units may be built as follows:

From scratch, counting as two builds at any time when two or more builds are possible;

By conversion of an army unit in a home center, counting as one build.

3.4 Tank units may be removed counting as a double removal when needed; it is not allowable to "un-convert" a tank into an army for 1 removal.

4.0 Winter 1900/Spring 1901

4.1 On the first turn of the game, players build units in their vacant home centers AND give these units their first turn orders. In effect, the game starts with free set-up and hidden initial deployment.

5.0 Order Writing

5.1 All orders shall be submitted to the GM UNCODED. This includes votes for Italian orders.

5.2 In a case where there are two or more ways to encode a given order, the player may submit the way he/she wishes it printed with the clear text of the order...but clear text must always be given.

5.3 A player will often wish to submit fictitious orders, orders to non-existent units or impossible locations, etc. to use their code as a "smokescreen." Such orders are allowed, but no more orders may be printed than the player has supply centers. (This includes "valid" orders.)

6.0 Adjudications

6.1 Adjudications shall be typed in the format normal to Diplomacy* games regularly run in that zine.

6.2 Unordered units should never be mentioned in an adjudication.

6.3 If a player submits more orders than allowed under rule 5.3, only those orders pertaining to existent units shall be published.

6.4 If two or more ways exist to encode orders, and the player does not include a preference, the GM should randomly select a substitute each time two or more exist for the same letter.

6.5 A Russian fleet in St. Petersburg should never have the coast it is on published, to avoid placing Russia at an unfair disadvantage in the early going. However, the GM must of course know where it is.

6.6 Space abbreviations are the first three letters of each space except for the following: Nwy-Norway; Nat-North Atlantic; Naf-North Africa; Nth-North Sea; Nwg-Norwegian Sea; Stp-St. Petersburg; Tyo-Tyrolia; Tyh-Tyrrhenian Sea; Lvp-Liverpool; Lvn-Livonia; Bot-Gulf of Bothnia; Lyo-Gulf of Lyons. Note that NAT, NAF, and StP are not favored forms, as they give away too much data if printed with two capital letters.

7.0 Seven Player Version

7.1 Seven players may play by ignoring rule 1.2, all of section 2.0, and the second sentence of rule 5.1.

8.0 Designer's Notes

There is a lot of detail in this set of rules. Especially noticeable is a large amount of material normally left up to the GM's houserules.

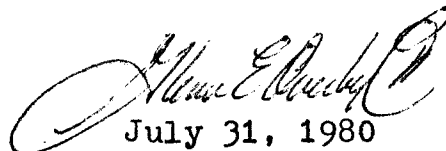
However, all of this is done for a purpose - either to standardize the game so players anywhere know what to expect, or to keep one or more players from gaining unfair advantage.

The prospective GM is urged to follow every detail of the rules closely, lest the game deteriorate. Follow the regular format of your Dip adjudications as closely as humanly possible - remember, the players will be using their powers of deduction on every scrap of adjudication! Be precise, be legalistic, and a fairer game will result.

I sincerely hope that other people enjoy this game as much as I did designing it. It provides ample room for individual "skull sweat" and creative diplomacy, while sacrificing little if any playability.

If anyone has suggestions for possible revisions of this variant, please send them to me. Human error being what it is, I'm sure there's a loophole or two yet to be found, though I think I got most of the biggies.

Happy gaming!!


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