

THE ABYSSINIAN PRINCE #379

December 24, 2016

Jim Burgess, 664 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02908-4327 USA, (401)351-0287, jfburgess of gmail.com

Merry Christmas to all and Happy New Year!!!

E-MAIL/WEB ONLY ISSUE! PDF will be available on the website when diplom.org is back up. Yes, you are NOT dreaming, the whole site unfortunately presently is unavailable, but we WILL get it back up. We also are being reproduced in *Eternal Sunshine* which is running down to a fold.

Web Page Address: <http://www.diplom.org/Postal/Zines/TAP/index.html>

YOU can still join Kendo Nagasaki, hop in!!! As you can see, we did get this issue out before Christmas!!!

This issue continues the szine/subszine inversion. As most of you know, this thing began as a "subszine" to Terry Tallman's *North Sealth*, *West George* in *NSWG* #16, then became its own szine with a host of subszines. Since Terry's passing, we lose our thirty year fervent hope that someday *NSWG* would have been resurrected and I could go back and swear my fealty to the Toadfather. The subszines remaining will appear as sub-subszines to our flipfopped home in Doug Kent's *Eternal Sunshine*. I'm set on continuing my GMing, and I'm starting to write a bit, hope there might be more, especially when I feel better. Feel free to communicate with me about how you want to help or what you want to play, or if anyone else wants *TAP* subszine status.

For production, in addition to the HTML's of each separate product on the web page, I also have a PDF that you can print of the entire subszine (including my famous handdrawn maps!). You can just print the maps if you like, but remember maps are for pikers anyway, you don't need no steenkin' maps, keep them up in your head where they belong. I'm having trouble with the upload interfaces, part of the diplom.org site move consequences. I'll get it fixed as soon as I can. I need to stay within the security of the site (which is very important!!!!) while getting access to change the web site's index and files for the szine. It shouldn't be that hard, but my first, second, and third attempts didn't work.

The website address is still: <http://diplom.org/>. I had a glitch in the webpage update process, but I hope that will be fixed when the site as a whole comes back. I was hoping to provide an update today, but as I write, I don't really have one.

There are currently 77 members of the official *TAP* subscriber list, which is starting to come back up. <http://lists.asciiking.com/mailman/listinfo/tap> is the current list website. YOU need to make sure you're on this list. I'm trying to add some of the newer subscribers who aren't there. It's really easy, just click on that link or copy and paste it into your browser. If you have questions or problems, PLEASE ask. There you can check your subscribing options and whether you're registered. Register if you want to get *TAP* E-Mailed regularly. Some people have had trouble with the attachments, so I have switched to sending the link in the announcements, I see that does help. Please let me know about other issues, but it puts priority on getting the link up again. Apologies for the recent confusions.

THE ABYSSINIAN PRINCE FEATURES SECTION (CONS/LETTERS/MUSIC)

((For upcoming cons around the world: <http://www.diplom.org/Face/cons/index.php>, success, we have badgered all the Con directors to post their Cons, so it is reasonably up to date now. And there remains lots of interest in the FTF community, and linking E-Mail/Web players to FTF. Also, the Facebook page for European Tournament Diplomacy, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1500292310187264/>, Diplomacy in Europe, has been really active and the place to be in the hobby these days. If you're on Facebook, hook up there! The Nor'Easter sequence of four tournaments will be continuing next year, culminating in North American DipCon this next year at Carnage in Vermont!

Remember that I'm leading TotalCon again, which has MOVED! TotalCon will be February 24-26, 2017 at Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, 181 Boston Post Road West, Marlborough, MA. For those following

closely, this is basically where the Boston tournament was last year, before Randy and Alan Levin moved it to Cambridge.

TotalCon is New England's largest general gaming convention and is one of the places that we as a hobby reach out and make the Diplomacy tournament circuit known to other gamers. We picked up quite a host of brand new players last year, and expect to do more of that this year. Thanks to the entire TotalCon staff for their hospitality and helpfulness. The Rounds will be: Round 1 on Friday night at 7PM, Round 2 at 10AM on Saturday morning, Round 3 at 7PM on Saturday, and Round 4 at 1PM on Sunday, with an ending by 5PM. The first three rounds are unlimited in length. Please think about making plans to come. Pre-registration for the whole weekend is 65 dollars or 75 dollars at the door. But we do have a special 50 dollar deal for this convention! Check with me if you're coming to make sure you get this great deal, which includes a 15 dollar voucher!!! I will be having two crash rooms with pay what you can, feel free to start reserving your spot now! Brad Blitstein is first to claim a spot.)

FEATURE: ROCK AND ROLL BANDS AND MOMENTS THAT MATTER

((If anyone from TAP or ES has ideas for more things to talk about here let me know. I do have four or five ideas lined up here already that I just have to write. I have been nudged... comments from any of you also are welcome.))

THE ABYSSINIAN PRINCE LETTERS SECTION

More are welcome!!!

THE ABYSSINIAN PRINCE GAMES SECTION

Standby lists: Brad Wilson, Jack McHugh, Drew James, Paul Rauterberg, Doug Kent, Paul Kenny, and Hugh Polley stand by for regular Diplomacy. Just let me know if you want on or off these lists. Note that I called Paul Rauterberg this time, most of you are in one of the games already, so I would like a few more interested parties, once we get back on the web.

GAME OPENING INFORMATION

I'd love to do another game of Spy Diplomacy, but it requires commitment that seems in short supply. Especially with Doug Kent bowing out, is there some other Variant in which there is interest? Please ask!!!

REGULAR DIPLOMACY: Two games continue. Is there something else we want to start? I have some ideas on how to do "By Popular Demand" differently... Let's see if there is interest in a new regular game. Signups please?

BREAKING AWAY: Shooting toward the Final Finish Line, who will win? I will start a new game after next issue, Andy Bate is first to sign up. I was warned about a game with seven players, but I liked the way this one came off, so we will be looking for six or seven, and I'm inclined to do another game with seven if we can find enough of you interested.

KENDO NAGASAKI: Send in your guesses!!!

THE TERRY TALLMAN MEMORIAL: 2016A, Regular Diplomacy

THE DUE DATE FOR WINTER 1903 IS JANUARY 21ST, 2017

Fall 1903

AUSTRIA (Black): a VIE S a boh-gal, a BUD S a vie-gal, f alb-TRI, f GRE S a bul, a boh-GAL, a BUL h.

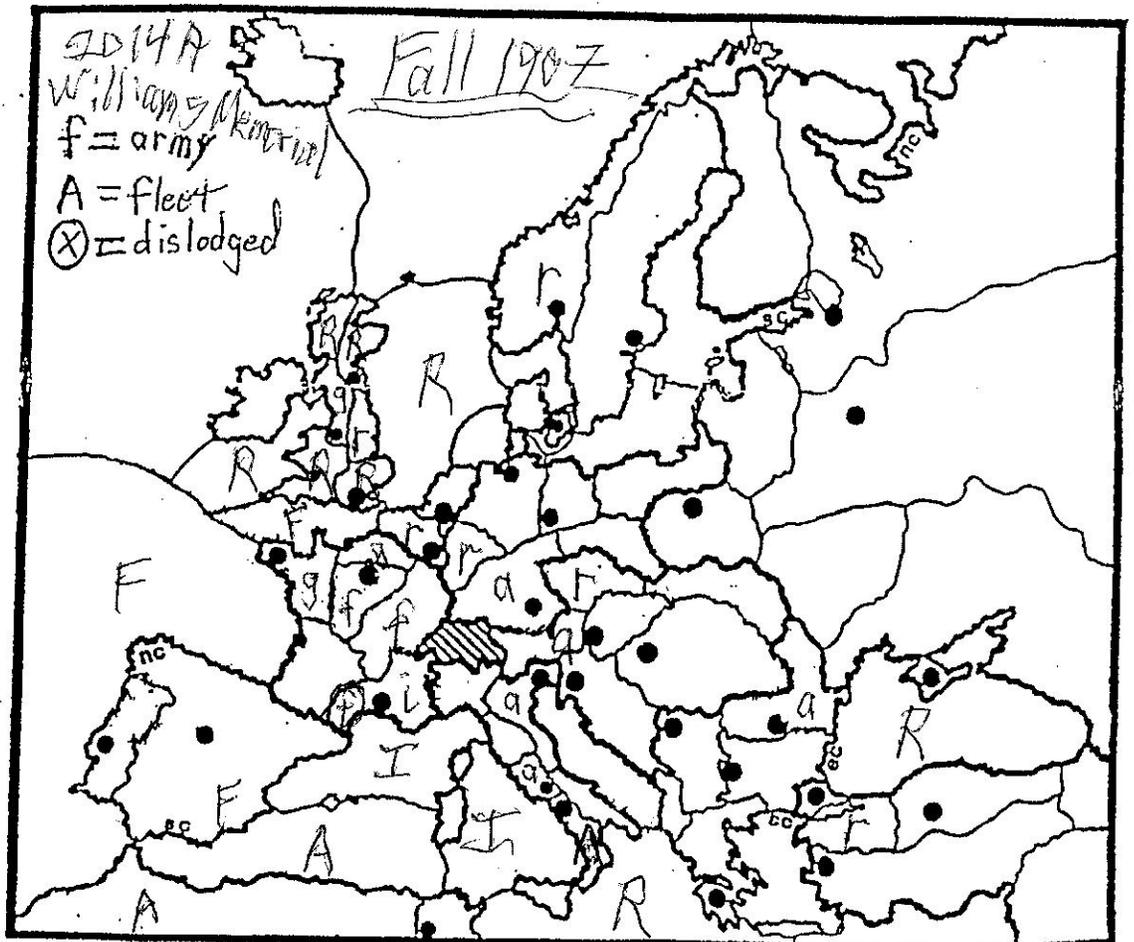
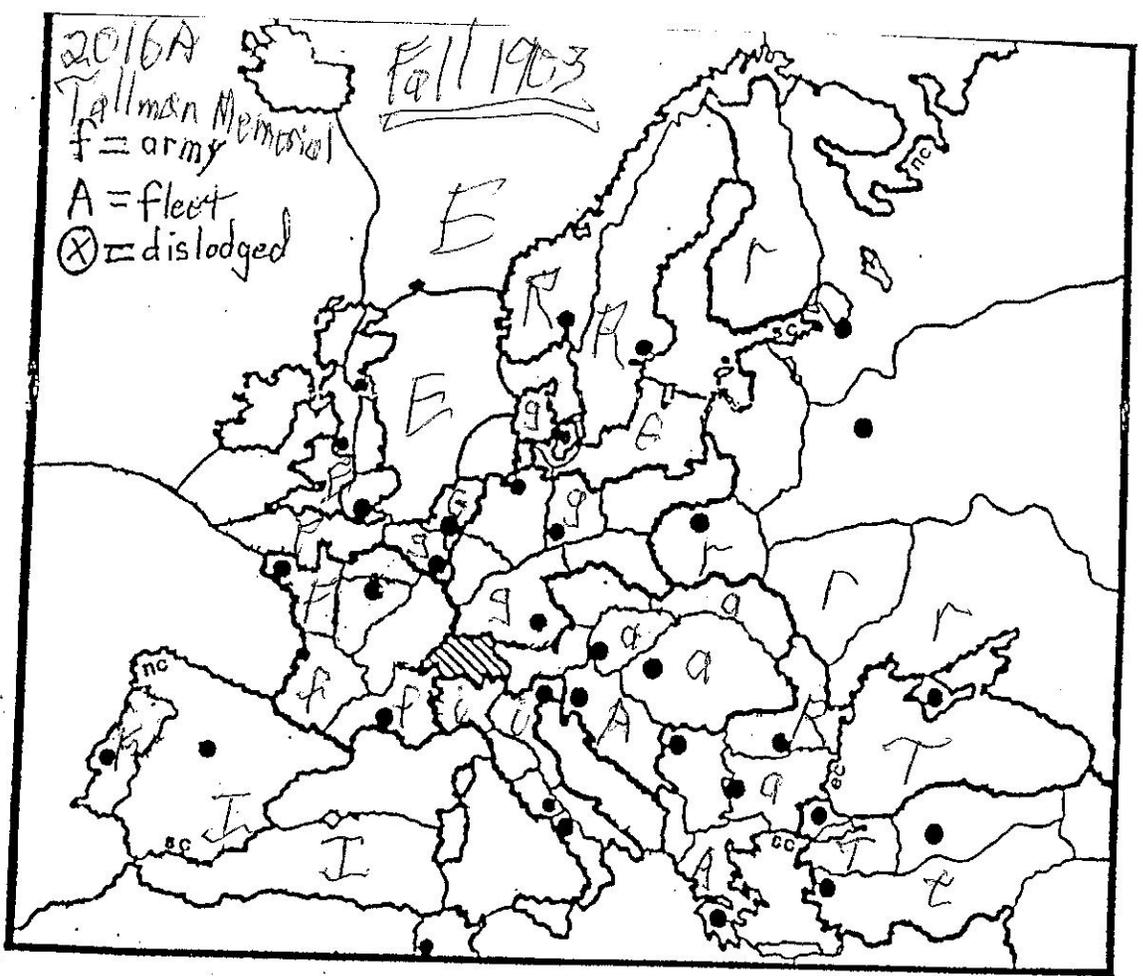
ENGLAND (Cohen): f WAL h, f NTH h, f NWG S f nth.

FRANCE (Begbie): NMR, PAUL RAUTERBERG CALLED AS STANDBY; f ENG h, f POR h, f BRE h, a MAR h, a GAS h.

GERMANY (Polley): a BER S a mun, f BAL S a kie-den, a MUN s ITALIAN a tyo (otm), f HOL S a bur-bel, a kie-DEN, a bur-BEL.

ITALY (Ellinger): f WES S f mid-spa(sc), f mid-SPA(SC), a PIE h, a tyo-VEN.

RUSSIA (Zarr): a WAR S a ukr-gal, f NWY S f swe, a FIN S f nwy, f SWE s ENGLISH f nth-den (nso), a SEV s f rum, a UKR-gal, f RUM S a sev.



TURKEY (Wiedemeyer): f aeg-CON, f *BLA-sev*, a *SMY s syr* (nsu).

Supply Center Chart

AUSTRIA (Black):	TRI,VIE,BUD,ser,gre,bul	(has 6, even)
ENGLAND (Cohen):	LVP,LON,EDI	(has 3, even)
FRANCE (Begbie):	PAR,BRE,MAR,por	(has 5, rem 1)
GERMANY (Polley):	KIE,MUN,BER,hol,bel,den	(has 6, even)
ITALY (Ellinger):	ROM,NAP,VEN,tun,spa	(has 4, bld 1)
RUSSIA (Zarr):	WAR,STP,MOS,SEV,swe,rum,nwy	(has 7, even)
TURKEY (Wiedemeyer):	SMY,ANK,CON	(has 3, even)
Neutral:	none	(Total=34)

E-Mail Addresses of the Participants

AUSTRIA: Thaddeus Black, thaddeus.h.black of gmail.com
ENGLAND: David Cohen, zendip18 of optonline.net
FRANCE: Gavin Begbie, gavinbegbie of gmail.com
FRANCE: Standby is Paul Rauterberg, paul.rauterberg of att.net
GERMANY: Hugh Polley, hapolley of yahoo.ca
ITALY: Marc Ellinger, mellinger of blitzbardgett.com
RUSSIA: Harold Zarr, skip1955 of hotmail.com
TURKEY: Fred Wiedemeyer, wiedem of telus.net

Game Notes:

1) According to my house rules, if Gavin wants to return, by the Winter deadline he needs to provide draft Spring orders in addition to the removal, or he will be replaced. I sent him multiple reminders, so I'm not sure what's up, but hope you do return, Gavin!!! But either way, by Spring, everyone will know who is playing France.

Press:

None to be spotted...

THE DON WILLIAMS 57 MEMORIAL: 2014A, Regular Diplomacy

THE DUE DATE FOR AUTUMN AND WINTER 1907 IS JANUARY 21ST, 2017

Fall 1907

AUSTRIA (Ozog): a tri-TYO, f ion-NAP, a ROM S f ion-nap, f *WES-spa(sc)*, a bur-PIC, a VEN S a tri-tyo, a bul-RUM, a *MUN-bur*, f tun-NAF.
FRANCE (Ellinger): f *SPA(SC) s a mar*, f *ENG-mid*, a PAR S a gas-bur, f *MID-nao*, a *mar s a gas-bur* (d r:gas,otb), a gas-BUR.
GERMANY (Abbott): a LVP h, a pic-BRE.
ITALY (Wilson): f GOL S a pie-mar, f nap-TYH, a pie-MAR.
RUSSIA (Rauterberg): a nwy-YOR, f BLA C a rum-con, a sil-BOH, a stp-NWY, f nao-IRI, f *EDI-cly*, f yor-LON, f lon-WAL, a BEL S AUSTRIAN a bur-pic, f *CLY-nao*, f NTH C a nwy-yor, f aeg-ION, a RUH S a bel, a rum-CON.

Supply Center Chart

AUSTRIA (Ozog):	TRI,VIE,BUD,ser,smy,tun, mun,ven,nap,rom,rum	(has 9, bld 2)
FRANCE (Ellinger):	PAR,spa,por	(has 5 or 6, rem 2(r:otb) or 3)
GERMANY (Abbott):	lvp,bre	(has 2, even)
ITALY (Wilson):	gre,mar	(has 3, rem 1)
RUSSIA (Rauterberg):	WAR,STP,MOS,swe,nwy,ank, SEV,ber,den,kie,hol,edi,bul,con,lon,bel	(has 14, bld 2)
Neutral:	none	(Total=34)

E-Mail Addresses of the Participants

AUSTRIA: Eric Ozog, elferic of junoo.com
ENGLAND: Fred Wiedemeyer, wiedem of telus.net
FRANCE: Marc Ellinger, mellinger of blitzbardgett.com
GERMANY: Will Abbott, wjja9 of yahoo.com
ITALY: Brad Wilson, fullfathomfive675 of gmail.com
RUSSIA: Paul Rauterberg, paul.rauterberg of att.net
TURKEY: David Burgess, burgesscd of roadrunner.com

Game Notes:

1) The concession to Russia, DIAS, FR, FAR, and a concession to Germany all are rejected. New proposals are Concession to Russia, AR, Concession to Germany, GAR, and DIAS. Please vote with Winter orders, failure to vote or send in orders (if you don't need any) rejects all the proposals.

Press:

(HERR GALLANT ORCZOG to SIGNORINA HOLLEY: My lady, I am coming to save you from the dreaded El Capitano!

(MOSCOW to BERLIN-IN-EXILE): If you want to swap Lpl-Edi, by all means do. "It" can be quicker and quieter that way. [Add suspenseful music]

(ELFERIC to ROADWORM): Let's finish 'em off! It is the logical thing to do.

THE DIPLOMACY GAME: Breaking Away, Designer's Rules

THE DUE DATE FOR TURN 12, WHICH WILL BE THE FINAL TURN, IS JANUARY 21, 2017!!

Turn 11

122 (no replenishment)	Heart of Oak (WINS! 20 points)
121 (no replenishment)	Angst (16 points)
-F-I-N-A-L- -F-I-N-I-S-H- -L-I-N-E-	
120 (no replenishment)	Empty
119 (replenish with a 3)	Constipated
118 (replenish with a 4)	White Cliffs
117 (replenish with a 5)	Anastasia, Smirky
116 (replenish with a 7)	Charlie
115 (replenish with a 8)	Alexis de Tocqueville, Donatello, Michelangelo, Alpha, Terrorised
114 (replenish with a 13)	Lafayette
113 (replenish with a 14)	Christian Doppler, Jefferson
112 (replenish with a 16)	Leonardo
111 (no replenishment)	Empty
110 (replenish with a 3)	Alexandra
109 (no replenishment)	Empty
108 (replenish with a 3)	Jerusalem, Hope and Glory
107 (no replenishment)	Empty
106 (replenish with a 3)	Raphael
105 (no replenishment)	Empty
104 (no replenishment)	Empty
103 (replenish with a 3)	Rousseau,
102 (replenish with a 4)	Baker, Nicholas II
101 (no replenishment)	Empty
100 (no replenishment)	Empty
99 (no replenishment)	Empty
98 (no replenishment)	Empty
97 (no replenishment)	Empty

96 (no replenishment)	Empty
95 (no replenishment)	Empty
94 (no replenishment)	Empty
93 (no replenishment)	Empty
92 (no replenishment)	Empty
91 (replenish with a 3)	Arnold Schwarzenegger
90 (no replenishment)	Empty
89 (no replenishment)	Empty
88 (replenish with a 3)	Daniel Swarovski
87 (no replenishment)	Empty
86 (no replenishment)	Empty
85 (no replenishment)	Empty
84 (no replenishment)	Empty
83 (no replenishment)	Empty
82 (no replenishment)	Empty
81 (no replenishment)	Empty

-S-P-R-I-N-T- -F-I-N-I-S-H- -L-I-N-E-

80 (no replenishment)	Empty
79 (no replenishment)	Empty
78 (no replenishment)	Empty
77 (no replenishment)	Empty
76 (no replenishment)	Empty
75 (no replenishment)	Empty
74 (no replenishment)	Empty
73 (no replenishment)	Empty
72 (no replenishment)	Empty
71 (no replenishment)	Empty
70 (no replenishment)	Empty
69 (no replenishment)	Empty
68 (no replenishment)	Empty
67 (no replenishment)	Empty
66 (no replenishment)	Empty
65 (no replenishment)	Empty
64 (no replenishment)	Empty
63 (no replenishment)	Empty
62 (no replenishment)	Empty
61 (no replenishment)	Empty
60 (no replenishment)	Empty
59 (no replenishment)	Empty
58 (no replenishment)	Empty
57 (replenish with a 3)	Billy Wilder
56 (no replenishment)	Empty
55 (no replenishment)	Empty
54 (no replenishment)	Empty
53 (no replenishment)	Empty
52 (replenish with a 3)	Delta
51 (no replenishment)	Empty
50 (replenish with a 3)	Alexei

Addresses of the Participants – Their Teams and Their Cards

AUSTRIAN TEAM (Andy Bate): andydbate of gmail.com (0 points)

A: Arnold Schwarzenegger

4, 4, 3, 3 (4)

B: Billy Wilder

3, 3, 3 (3)

C: Christian Doppler 3, 3, 14 (7)
D: Daniel Swarovski 3, 3, 3 (4)
Total Replenishments: $21 + 28 + 55 + 23 + 36 + 53 + 27 + 14 + 14 + 16 + 23 = 310$

ENGLISH TEAM (Jim Reader): jim_reader of hotmail.com (32 points)

A: Jerusalem 3, 3, 4, 3 (10)
B: Hope and Glory 3, 3, 3 (14)
C: White Cliffs 3, 8, 4 (21)
D: Heart of Oak WINS! (11)

Total Replenishments: $16 + 91 + 29 + 30 + 27 + 16 + 79 + 35 + 52 + 18 + 10 = 403$

FRENCH TEAM (Hank Alme): almehj of alumni.rice.edu (5 points)

A: Marquis de Lafayette (Captain): 4, 10, 10, 13 (11)
B: Alexis de Tocqueville: 5, 10, 8 (12)
C: Jean-Jacques Rousseau: 3, 4, 3 (5)
D: Thomas Jefferson: 9, 14, 14 (9)

Total Replenishments: $22 + 62 = 29 + 38 + 26 + 49 + 86 + 32 + 46 + 33 + 38 = 461$

GERMAN TEAM (Marc Ellinger): mellinger of blitzbardgett.com (8 points)

A: Player Alpha 6, 6, 3, 8 (13)
B: Player Baker 3, 3, 4 (4)
C: Player Charlie 3, 3, 7 (13)
D: Player Delta 3, 3, 3 (3)

Total Replenishments: $17 + 50 + 26 + 32 + 31 + 45 + 30 + 40 + 23 + 33 + 22 = 349$

ITALIAN TEAM (Rick Desper): rick_desper of yahoo.com (43 points)

Team Name: Artists in a Half-Shell?

Coach: Master Splinter

Team Leader A: Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci 3, 4, 3, 16 (5)
Team Mechanic B: Donato di Niccol di Betto Bardi 7, 3, 8 (8)
Team Navigator C: Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino 3, 3, 3 (7)
Team Sprint Specialist D: Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni 3, 3, 8 (14)

Referred to by common appellations in the report: Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael, and Michelangelo.

Total Replenishments: $17 + 96 + 12 + 22 + 67 + 61 + 25 + 15 + 51 + 23 + 35 = 424$

RUSSIAN TEAM (Andy York): wandrew88 of gmail.com (0 points)

Team Royal

A: Anastasia 3, 8, 5 (20)
B: Nicholas II 3, 3, 4 (4)
C: Alexandra 3, 3, 3 (3)
D: Alexei 3, 3, 3 (3)

Total Replenishments: $14 + 30 + 32 + 40 + 43 + 29 + 22 + 26 + 34 + 18 + 15 = 303$

TURKISH TEAM (Brendan Whyte): BWHYTE of nla.gov.au (26 points)

The Turkeys

A: Angst of Ankara FINISHED (14)
B: Constipated of Constantinople 13,8,3 (14)
C: Smirky of Smyrna 6,4,5 (7)
D: Terrorised of Syria 4,7,8 (14)

Total Replenishments: $16 + 49 + 38 + 57 + 53 + 53 + 45 + 51 + 29 + 16 = 407$

Press:

None this time...

Game Notes:

1) The rules are on the TAP website in the *Tinamou* section. Ask if you have any questions. Rules at: <http://www.diplom.org/Postal/Zines/TAP/Tinamou/rules/BreakingAway.htm>

Up above in parentheses is the card you played to get to where you are in the field. The replenishment card is the last card in your list. Be careful to note that the card you played (the one in parentheses) is not available for you, for next turn. Just for fun, I keep track of total replenishment, by turn, which is a rough measure of how the teams are doing. Of course, it is lining up to get across the sprint and final lines in the right places that really counts. We can calculate an "efficiency score" later, which will be the ratio of scoring points per replenishment.

2) About half the riders now have been dropped from the pack, but I keep them moving along with their "3" for the rest of the game! This is amazing!!! Some of them don't look like they have been dropped, but they really have no chance of catching the main pack. All the points should be wrapped up next time. It could be close for the victory!! Remember the final line is AFTER 120.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KENDO NAGASAKI

DEADLINE FOR TURN 7 OF THIS GAME IS JANUARY 21ST, 2017

Kendo Nagasaki for me comes from the series in *Eternal Sunshine...* The full rules for Where in the World is Kendo Nagasaki are in: <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/es58.pdf>. Send a guess!!!

TURN 1

Brendan Whyte:

Bernie Sanders, on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean
No Guess Received

Hank Alme:

Hank Alme in Ellicott City, MD

Rick Desper:

Wavy Gravy in West Hartford, CT

Andy York:

Jim Burgess in Portland, ME

Tom Howell:

No Guess Received

Marc Ellinger:

Christian De Castries in Caracas, Venezuela

Doug Kent:

Robert E. Lee in Lhasa, Tibet

Peter Sullivan:

Joan Collins in Dallas, TX

HINT to the Person with the Closest Geographic Guess: You have my gender correct, but I did most of the things I'm famed for a decade or two before your active period.

TURN 2

Brendan Whyte:

Eleanor Roosevelt in Baton Rouge, LA

Hank Alme:

Boris Johnson in Moscow, Russia

Rick Desper:

Eleanor Roosevelt in Belize City, Belize

Andy York:

Al Capone in Rio, Brazil

Jim Reader:

Nelson Mandela in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Tom Howell:

No Guess Received

Marc Ellinger:

F.D.R. in Lagos, Nigeria

Doug Kent:

Eisenhower in Gettysburg, PA

Peter Sullivan:

Dwight D. Eisenhower in Culzean Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland

HINT to the Person with the Closest Geographic Guess: I had a somewhat more formal leadership position than you.

TURN 3

Brendan Whyte:

Huey Long in Baton Rouge, LA

Hank Alme:

Eleanor Roosevelt in Los Angeles, CA

Tom Howell:

No Guess This Time

Marc Ellinger:

Herbert Hoover in Santiago, Chile

Rick Desper:
Simon Bolivar in La Paz, Bolivia

Andy York:
Kenesaw Mountain Landis in Sao Paulo, Brazil

Jim Reader:
Donald Trump in the White House

Doug Kent:
Rommel in La Paz, Bolivia

Peter Sullivan:
Dwight D. Eisenhower in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Mark Firth:
Lyndon B. Johnson in Salonika, Greece

HINT to the Person with the Closest Geographic Guess: We knew each other and interacted with each other in our professional lives, but there was a famous meeting I once helped to orchestrate that you were not invited to.

TURN 4

Brendan Whyte:
No Guess This Time

Hank Alme:
FDR in Valparaiso, Chile

Rick Desper:
Teddy Roosevelt in Brasilia, Brazil.

Andy York:
George Marshall at Asuncion, Paraguay

Jim Reader:
Che Guevara Nazca Desert of Peru looking at lines

Tom Howell:
No Guess This Time

Marc Ellinger:
Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov in Asuncion, Paraguay

Doug Kent:
No Guess This Time

Peter Sullivan:
No Guess This Time

Mark Firth:
Winston Churchill in Beverly Hills

HINT to the Person with the Closest Geographic Guess: You were dead before the famous meeting I alluded to last time, but of course I did work with you closely across our careers.

TURN 5

Brendan Whyte:
Fidel Castro in Santiago, Cuba

Hank Alme:
Harry Truman in Concepcion, Chile

Rick Desper:
No Guess This Time

Andy York:
Harry Hopkins in Concepcion, Chile

Jim Reader:
Harry S Truman in Mendoza, Argentina

Tom Howell:
No Guess This Time

Marc Ellinger:
Harry Truman in Cordoba, Argentina

Doug Kent:
Winston Churchill in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Peter Sullivan:
FDR in Santiago, Chile

Mark Firth:
FDR in New York City, US

HINT to the Person with the Closest Geographic Guess: Well, you were at that famous meeting... or maybe you weren't. How could it be both? That is a VERY interesting story, certainly you were instrumental in the "orchestration" in multiple ways!

TURN 6

Brendan Whyte:
Rudolf Hess in Caracas, Venezuela

Hank Alme:
George Marshall in Los Angeles, Chile

Rick Desper:
No Guess This Time

Tom Howell:
No Guess This Time

Marc Ellinger:
Alger Hiss in Punto Arenas, Chile

Doug Kent:
No Guess This Time

Andy York:
Joseph Stalin in Port Darwin

Peter Sullivan:
Harry S Truman in Brasilia, Brazil

Jim Reader:
Winston Churchill in Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Mark Firth:
Robert Oppenheimer in Iquique, Chile

HINT to the Person with the Closest Geographic Guess: Your guess of my identity is moving in the wrong direction, but someone else has identified me.

LAST WORD: So, it is Christmas Eve. I'm not sure what your traditions around this night are, and of course if you don't really celebrate Christmas, it may just be "another Saturday Night and I ain't got nobody", but I hope that isn't true for any of you. My thing for the last thirty-five years or so has been singing in my church choir at my church. And it was another such wonderful evening tonight. We sang a gorgeous "small piece" about Joseph that I never had heard before – always fun learning new music for Christmas – plus all of the usual Christmas carols. Silent Night felt particularly beautiful this year. I hope all of you that celebrate similar traditions had a wonderful singing Christmas this year. I, of course, feel blessed even being able to sing. One wouldn't think from my physical state at the moment that this would be so possible, or that my voice would sound as good as it does. Interestingly, I've lost two or three notes D/E/F at the lower end of my register, as I've picked up two or three at the top of my register. I don't really entirely know why, but I am down nearly 40 pounds from where I was when all this started, my body is simply smaller. Anyway, I feel blessed for everything I can do, and that's all any of us can feel at this time, or any time of year.

I seriously do hope to see many of you make the effort, where warranted, to come to TotalCon this year and see me run this year's Diplomacy tournament, and play, and maybe win!!! I have managed to do this through my illnesses, but have had great trouble getting to other tournaments. The timing for TotalCon and my feeling and treatment is shaping up excellently, and I have some backup people to help should I be incapacitated. But please, if I've never met you before, consider making the effort, and I have, I'd love to see you again!!! The details are above in the Diplomacy Tournament section. The tournament diplomacy world has gotten much more exciting and active in the last few years, with relatively few travelers coming to TotalCon (formerly when I did it at TempleCon). I hope that changes this year. Late February weather in New England is famously variable, but we've always managed to have good enough weather to get people in and out. For where we are this year, flying into Logan/Boston is looking more feasible, if that matters to you. Let us know when/where you're coming in, and I'll try to help.

I am likely to start another regular Diplomacy game and SURELY another Breaking Away game, so now is the time to signal your interests and sign up. It's looking like Doug Kent is really winding down, and soon I'll have more games and content than him! I also intend to find time to write more in the coming year. We'll see how it goes. The *Diplomacy World* deadline also is coming up in a few days, January 1. If you're off this week think about writing something for us!!! With *The Pouch* still off-line for an uncertain period, *DW* is the only hobby-wide place to write. Take advantage of that and write us something!!!