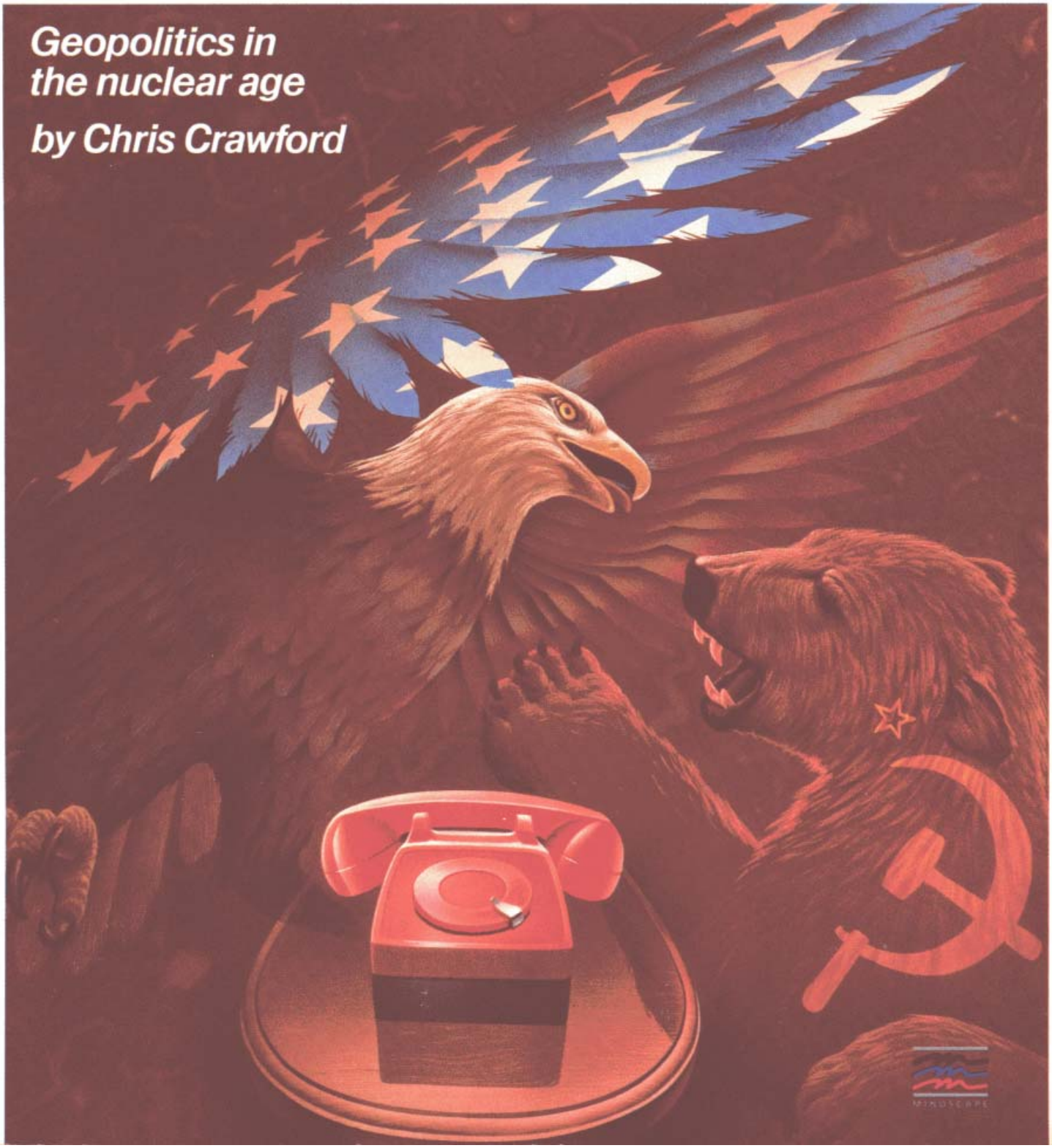
BALANCE OF POWER

Geopolitics in the nuclear age

by Chris Crawford



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Introduction

How are we to prevent, or at least avoid, the nuclear annihilation of our civilization? After forty years, we still have no clear answer to this most fundamental question. *Balance of Power* is a game about this question. It presents the question; you must find the answer.

You are cast as the President of the United States, or, if you wish, as the General Secretary of the Soviet Union. Your term in office is eight years. During those years, your goal is to enhance your superpower's prestige while avoiding nuclear war. You do this by supporting friendly governments, eliminating unfriendly governments, and foiling the similar efforts of the other superpower. Three mechanisms are available: insurgency, coup d'etat, and Finlandization (each of these is explained in detail later on). You can encourage these processes of internal change or you can resist them. Your weapons in this diplomatic battle are arms shipments, interventions, economic aid, the CIA (or KGB), treaties, and diplomatic pressure. You cannot alter the fact of rivalry; a behavior pattern established over decades cannot be reversed in eight years. But you can set the tone and mood of the rivalry. You can try to bring the rivalry to a state of restraint, or you can heat things up to the teeth-baring, saber-rattling brink. If you play well, the world will survive the eight years of your term in office and you will win the game. Make one serious mistake and the world will careen from crisis to ever-deepening crisis until at last the missiles fly.

A great deal of information is available to assist your planning. You can monitor critical national variables for each of the 54 nations represented in this game. (Note that because of technical considerations, and to improve playability, not all of the world's nations have been included.) You can observe diplomatic relationships, the progress of insurgency, the political stability of governments, and a host of other quantities. A special closeup option gives you detailed information on any given country. You can also monitor the flow of money, weapons, and troops between nations. International events are recorded and presented as news items. All this information must be sifted and considered as you make your plans and respond to your adversary's provocations.

Although the data used in the game are culled from a variety of sources and are, almost invariably, accurate, bear in mind that the world changes greatly from day to day. Therefore, statistics that may have been accurate two months ago may already be outdated. Entire government structures and philosophies may have changed overnight. Also, despite all our best efforts to the contrary, undoubtedly certain personal biases have crept into descriptions and news items. So remember that *Balance of Power* is less a totally accurate simulation of the world as we know it

than it is a game that places you into the dynamic political arena that underlies all we do.

In learning to play the game, keep in mind that *Balance of Power* is a complex and subtle game that requires considerable expertise to master at its most difficult levels. Don't expect to be able to just shove the disk into the machine and start playing — you'll have to read the manual. Hopefully, the learning process has been made easier by breaking the manual into separate smaller sections so you can read only as much as you need for each level of the game.

The section entitled "Getting Started" includes system requirements, loading instructions, instructions about how to make menu selections, and information about saving games and loading saved games. Read the section entitled "A Quick Walk-Through," as you play the game the first time. When you have finished, go on and read "Your First Real Game." If you like, you can improve your game later by reading the chapter entitled "Mastering the Beginner Level Game."

Once you feel you have mastered the Beginner Level game, you can move on to the Intermediate and then to the Expert level. If you ever feel you have the Expert level mastered, feel free to try the Nightmare level. This manual devotes a section to each level of the game. These sections are necessarily somewhat cursory in their treatment of the game. If you are interested in more detailed information, you can consult the section entitled "Reference to Commands and Game Play" and the appendices. The reference section provides detailed information about every aspect of the game and how to play. In the appendices, you'll find a *Balance of Power* world map that identifies the locations of each country that plays a role in the game.

Getting Started

What You Need

- Apple® IIe, IIc, or IIGS computer; 128K minimum
- Single disk drive
- Monitor or TV (color recommended)
- Joystick or mouse (optional)

Loading Instructions

1. Plug a joystick or mouse, if you plan to use either one, into the appropriate port of your computer.
2. Turn on your monitor or TV.
3. Carefully slide the *Balance of Power* disk, label side up, into the disk drive.
4. Turn on the computer. The game will load into your computer's memory.

Game Setup Options

After the game loads and the title screens appear, a series of five screens appears to prompt you for information about the input device that you intend to use and to offer you some choices about how you want to set up the game. Instructions for each of the five screens follows. The subtleties of some of the game setup choices are discussed in detail under the heading "Options" in the section of the manual entitled "Reference to Commands and Game Play."

INPUT DEVICE

Press **1** if you intend to use a joystick. Press **2** if you intend to use the keyboard. Press **3** if you intend to use a mouse.

NEW GAME/OLD GAME

Press **1** if you want to start a new game of *Balance of Power*. If you want to load a game that you saved previously, press **2**.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Next, you are prompted to select either a one-player or two-player game. Press **1** for a one-player game in which the computer plays as your opponent. Press **2** for a two-player game.

SIDE TO PLAY

Press **1** if you wish to play the game as the President of the United States, or press **2** to play as the General Secretary of the Soviet Union. In a one-player game against the computer, the computer assumes the role of the leader that you did not choose. In a two-player game played at the "Nightmare" level, this option allows you to choose which side to handicap. The country selected will play the game at a severe disadvantage.

LEVEL OF PLAY

Choose the level at which you wish to play by pressing the number that corresponds to your choice as indicated on the screen. If you are playing the game for the first time, press **1** to choose the Beginner level. In the tutorial in the section of the manual entitled "A Quick Walk-Through," the assumption is made that you have selected the Beginner level.

The Mechanics of Making Selections

When you have finished making selections from the option screens, the *Balance of Power* map appears on the screen. Before you begin to learn to play *Balance of Power*, read this section to learn how to use your particular input device (joystick, mouse, or keyboard) to make selections from menus. Ensuing sections of the manual instruct you to select various items from the *Balance of Power* menus, but do not specifically tell you how to make the selection with your particular input device. If, in the course of reading the remainder of the manual, you become confused or forget how to make selections from a particular menu, refer to this section for clarification.

JOYSTICK AND MOUSE USERS

To "pull down" or open the Game, Countries, USA, Soviet, Policies, or News menus from the top of the map screen: First use the joystick (or mouse) to position the cursor over the heading of the menu that you want to open. Then press and hold down the joystick (or mouse) button. A "window" menu opens that contains a list of choices. To select an item from the opened menu, continue to hold down the joystick (or mouse) button and move the joystick or mouse forward or back until your choice is highlighted (in black) on the menu. Then, to select the highlighted choice, let go of the joystick (or mouse) button. Note: You must select a country before any of the options on the "Policies" menu become available to you.

To select a country from the map: Move the joystick (or mouse) to position the cursor within the border of the country that you want to select and click the joystick (or mouse) button.

To de-select a country: Move the joystick (or mouse) to position the cursor over any area of the on-screen map that represents a body of water and click the joystick (or mouse) button.

After selecting an item from the "News" menu or during diplomatic communication (the "Crisis" window) after choosing "Next Turn": Move the joystick (or mouse) forward or back until your choice is highlighted (in black). To select the highlighted choice, click the joystick (or mouse) button. If you choose "Closeup" from the "News" menu, click the joystick (or mouse) button or press any key to page through the three "Closeup" screens. When you have finished viewing the third "Closeup" screen, click the joystick (or mouse) button or press any key to exit "Closeup."

After selecting an item from the "Policies" menu: The current policy is highlighted when the window opens. To make a new selection, press and continue to hold down the joystick (or mouse) button. Then move the joystick (or mouse) forward or back until your choice is highlighted (in black). To select the highlighted choice, release the joystick (or mouse) button. The window will close.

To close an opened window without making a selection: Press the **Esc** key. The window will close.

KEYBOARD ONLY USERS

To "pull down" or open the Game, Countries, USA, Soviet, Policies, or News menus from the top of the map screen: Press the key that corresponds to the first letter of the heading of the menu that you want to open. A "window" menu opens that contains a list of choices. For example, to open the USA menu, press **U**. To select an item from an opened menu, press the number key that corresponds to the number that appears to the left of the selection that you wish to make. Alternatively, press the up or down arrow key until your choice is highlighted (in black) on the menu. Then, to select the highlighted choice, press **Return** or the **space bar**. Note that once you open any of the menus, you can move from one menu to the next by pressing either the left or right arrow keys. Note: You must select a country before any of the options on the "Policies" menu become available to you.

To select a country from the map: Note the numbers one through five in various areas of the on-screen map. To select a specific country, first press the number key that corresponds to the general area of the on-screen map in which the country that you want to select is located. A menu listing the countries within the selected geographical region appears. Suppose, for example, that you wish to select Canada, located in North America. The number on the map that covers North America and that is nearest to Canada is the number one. Press the **1** key. A menu of North

(and Central) American countries, including Canada, appears. Next, press the number or letter key that corresponds to the number or letter that appears to the left of the specific country that you wish to select. For example, to select Canada from the North/Central America menu, press the **2** key. Alternatively, press the up or down arrow key until the country that you wish to select is highlighted (in black) on the menu. Then, to select the highlighted country, press **Return** or the **space bar**. Note that once you open one of the area menus, you can move from one area menu to the next by pressing either the left or right arrow keys.

To de-select a country: Press the **Esc** key (when no windows are opened on the screen.)

After selecting an item from the "News" menu, or during diplomatic communication after choosing "Next Turn": Press the number key that corresponds to the number that appears to the left of the desired choice on the screen. Alternatively, when the on-screen choices include "Next item" or "Previous item" you can press the left arrow key to see the previous item or the right arrow key to see the next item. If you choose "Closeup" from the "News" menu, press any key to page through the three "Closeup" screens. When you have finished viewing the third "Closeup" screen, press any key to exit "Closeup."

After selecting an item from the "Policies" menu: Press the number key that corresponds to the number that appears to the left of the desired selection. Alternatively, press the up or down arrow key until the desired selection is highlighted (in black) on the menu. Then, to select the highlighted option, press **Return** or the **space bar**.

To close an opened window without making a selection: Press the **Esc** key. The window will close.

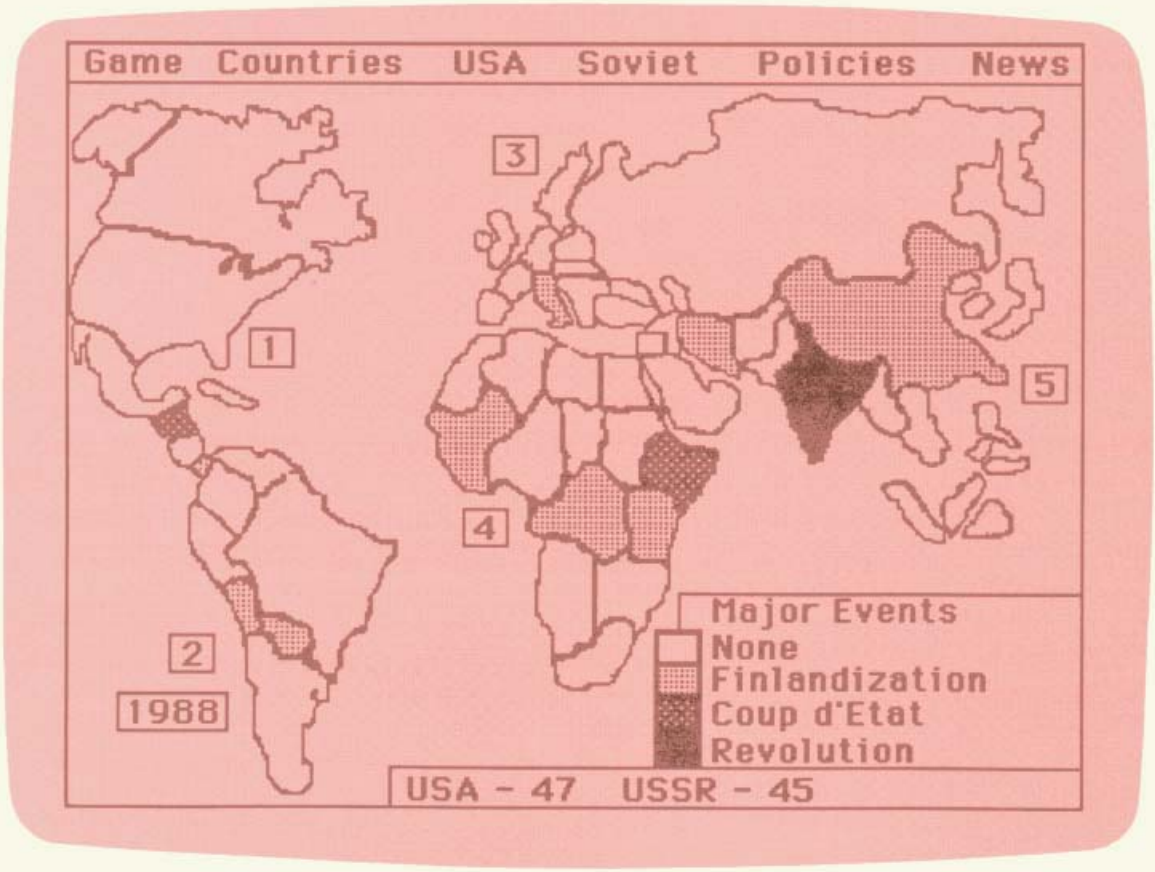
Saving Games/Loading Saved Games

To save a game in progress: Open the **Game** menu and select "Save Game." A dialog window opens to ask you if you are sure you want to save the game. Press **1** to save the game, or press **2** if you change your mind. Keep in mind that only one game at a time can be stored. When you save a game, any previously saved games will be erased from the disk and replaced with the current game. When you save a game, the game in progress, including scores, policy decisions, and all other details of the game, will be saved to your program disk.

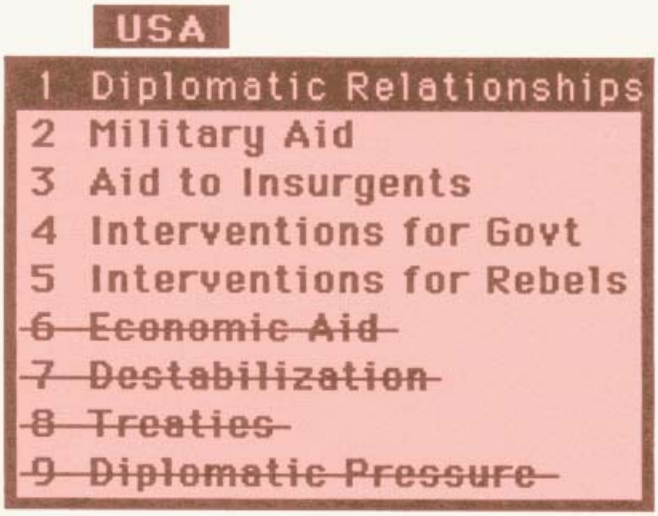
To load a saved game: You can load a saved game by choosing **Old Game** from the second option screen that appears at the beginning of the program. Alternatively, you can load a saved game after the *Balance of Power* map appears. To do

so, open the **Game** menu and select **Load Game**. A dialog window opens to ask you if you are sure you want to load a game. Press **1** to load the saved game, or press **2** if you change your mind.

A Quick Walk-Through

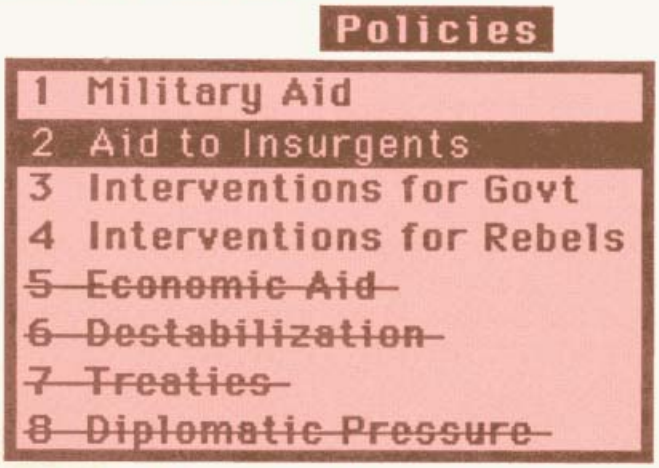


Start up the game according to the loading instructions given earlier in the manual. In the option screens that appear before the game begins, select a new game, choose the one-player game, play as the President of the USA, and select the Beginner level. The world map is your playing ground. Each country is shaded to reflect the occurrence of major events within that country. Since you are playing as the President of the U.S., "Pull down" the menu labeled **USA**. If you don't know how to pull down a menu, see the section of the manual entitled "The Mechanics of Making Selections."

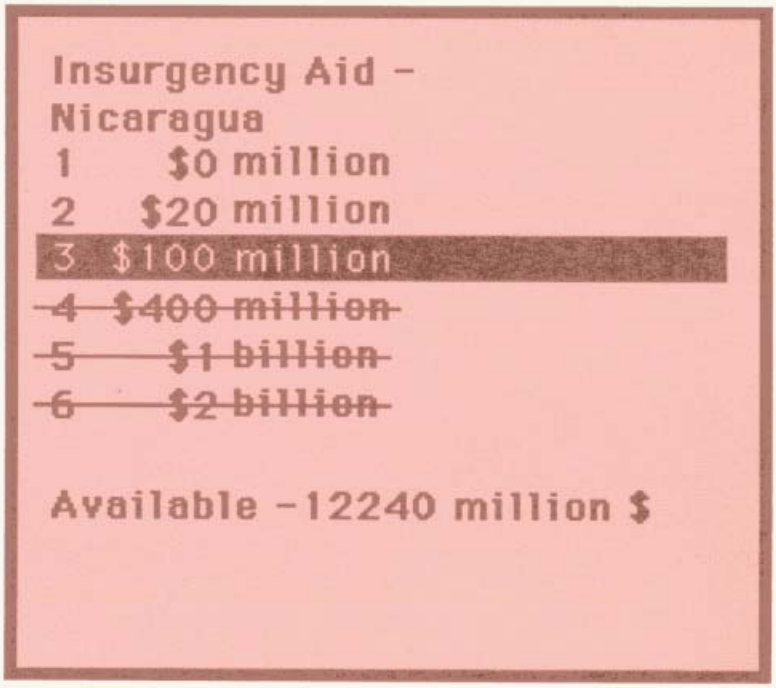


The first item on this menu is **Diplomatic Relationships**. Choose this item; the computer will shade each of the world's countries to show its diplomatic relationship with the United States. If you look at Nicaragua (the middle country of the three Central American countries) you will note that the shading indicates a cool, or hostile, relationship with the USA.

You'll show them! Select Nicaragua. To select a country, follow the instructions for your particular input device (joystick, mouse, or keyboard) in the section of the manual entitled "The Mechanics of Making Selections." The country will turn black and its name will appear on the screen. You have selected Nicaragua for further consideration. "Pull down" the menu labeled **Policies**.



This menu is used to make decisions about the world. Select **Aid to Insurgents**. A policy options window will appear with selections ranging from no aid to a very high level of aid.



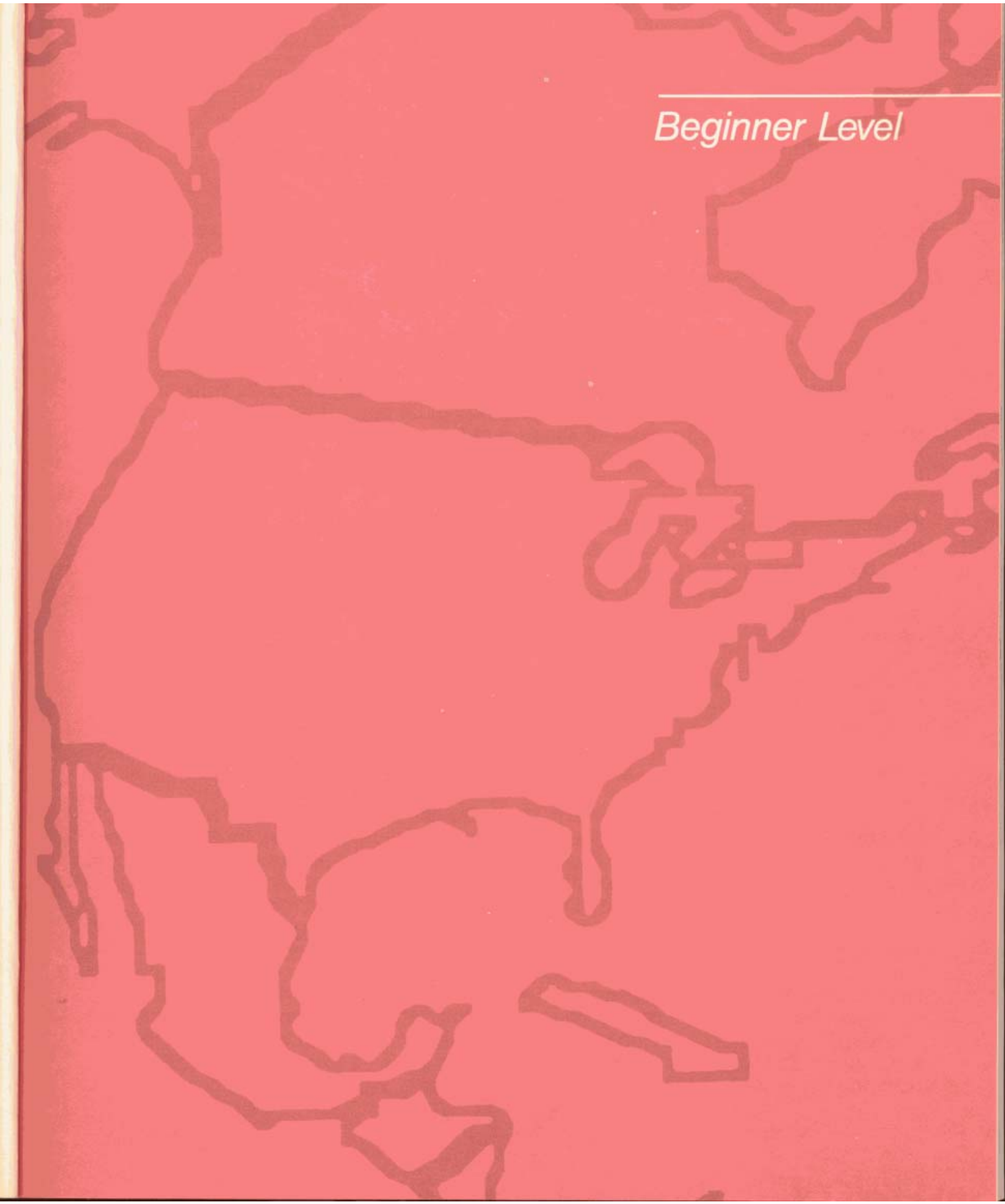
Select the highest possible level of aid. You have just issued a presidential order — you are shipping lots of weapons to the Contras. (Note that not all options may be available in a given situation. Any invalid choices will be crossed out and thus, inactive. The reasons will be explained later on.)

Say that this is all you want to do for this turn. "Pull down" the **Game** menu and select **Next Turn**. The computer will calculate the activity of the world for one year. The computer now takes on the role of your adversary. If the Soviet Union takes exception to your arms shipment, it may start a crisis over it. In a crisis you always have two options: escalate or back down. Each time you escalate, you bring the world closer to the brink of war. If either side escalates beyond DefCon 4, an accidental nuclear war may start. If either side goes to DefCon 1, a nuclear war is certain. (DefCon is short for Defense Condition, a term which is used to indicate a state of military preparedness. The lower the DefCon number, the closer a country is to starting a war.) In either case, both sides lose. On the other hand, each time you back down, you lose international prestige, without which you cannot win the game. Your task is to find a balance of power between the two extremes; a task requiring strategy and foresight.

When all crises are resolved and the computer has calculated the events of the year, the calendar will be advanced one year and the scores will be updated. If you have done well, your geopolitical prestige will have risen. If your prestige has fallen, you are losing. The game continues for eight years. If, at the end of that term, you

and your opponent have managed to avoid a nuclear confrontation, the side with the highest prestige score wins.

This is just the briefest of introductions to *Balance of Power*. There are many other options available from the menus that will give you more information on the state of the world. Weaken your enemies and strengthen your friends — that's all it takes. You may want to play around for a while and then read the Beginner Level section of this manual before attempting your first real game.


Beginner Level

Your First Real Game

You have played around with the game for a while and now you are ready to give it a go. Let's begin. Start up the game according to the loading instructions given earlier in the manual. In the option screens that appear before the game begins, choose Beginner level, one player, with you as the American President.

Goal

Your goal in this game is to increase your geopolitical prestige and weaken the geopolitical prestige of the Soviet Union. The concept of geopolitical prestige is not difficult to understand. It's much like popularity. You want to be popular with the other nations of the world. The twist is, you want to be popular with the countries that count the most. In the world of *Balance of Power* geopolitics, countries that count are the countries that are militarily powerful. Thus, your goal is to accumulate lots of powerful friends, and to insure that your enemies are few and weak.

Although prestige is akin to "geopolitical popularity," there is much more at stake here than a simple beauty contest. The nations of the world are sovereign states; they do whatever they choose to do. Your country's ability to influence the course of events is directly related to its prestige. Short of direct conquest or the exercise of raw military power, prestige is the closest a country can get to true international power.

Of course, you must avoid a nuclear war while pursuing prestige. If nuclear war breaks out, you lose, no matter how well you were doing before everything was reduced to ashes.

Overall Approach

How do you get a country to like you? There are two ways: you can do nice things for it in an effort to convince it to like you, or you can try to overthrow its current government. The strategy you pursue depends on your relationship with the country. If relations are relatively good, you should try to buy their sympathies; if the government seems unalterably opposed to you, you should (with great regret) seek to eliminate it.

Every nation of the world is blessed with its very own insurgency. From the African National Congress in South Africa to ZAPU in Zimbabwe, from the Canary Islands Liberation Front to the Sendero Luminoso ("Shining Path"), the wonderful world of insurgency spans the spectrum of political causes. It matters not what the cause is; the primary significance of a local insurgency is that it is an excellent vehicle for pursuing larger and more important superpower goals. By supporting a local insur-

gency, a superpower can destroy an unfriendly government and replace it with a grateful, friendly, (and presumably malleable) government. This is the primary strategy of the Beginner Level game.

Complicating this are the nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers. The fact that we can annihilate each other means that every action we take requires the tacit approval, or at least the acquiescence, of the USSR. If either side does something that angers the other, a crisis can start that can lead straight into nuclear war.

Offensive Strategy

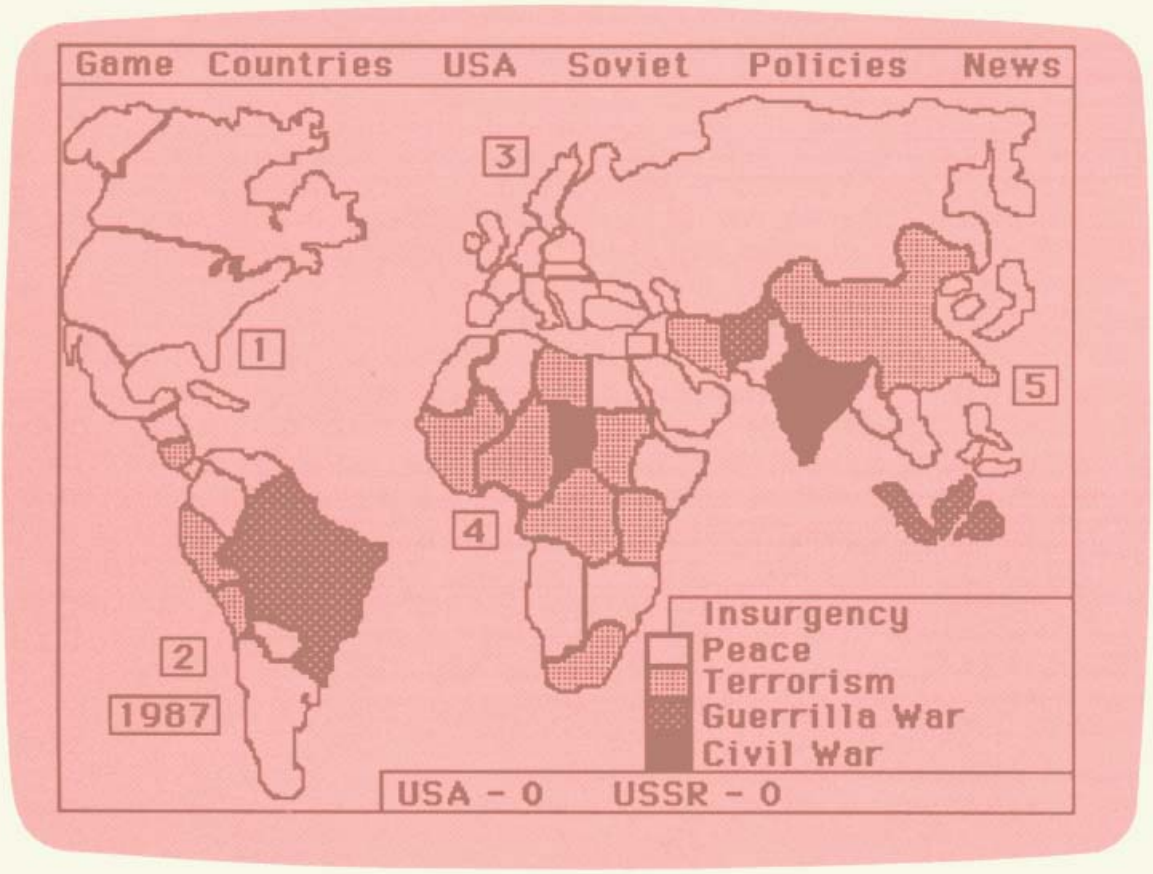
Your strategy in this game has two faces: offensive and defensive. On the offensive side, you must identify and topple those regimes unfriendly to your country. There are two constraints on your actions. First, some countries are much too strong to be overthrown by insurgents. China, for instance, is far too strong to be overthrown by insurgency; funding insurgency there is a waste of money. Second, you dare not attempt to topple regimes closely tied to the opposing superpower. For example, Poland may be vulnerable because of the problems between Solidarity and the government. Yet you dare not foment trouble in Poland, for Poland is member of the Warsaw Pact and a close ally of the Soviet Union. Any attempt to overthrow the government of Poland would undoubtedly generate an enraged response from the USSR.

Identifying Insurgencies

There are three types of insurgents: terrorists, guerrillas, and rebels. A powerful and stable government has none of these. Terrorists are the weakest form of insurgents. If terrorists are successful and grow in power, they become guerrillas and initiate a guerrilla war. If guerrillas grow in power, they start a civil war. Then they are called rebels.

These seemingly semantic issues are crucial to the game. A special map (**Insurgency** — the fourth entry on the **Countries** menu) presents the level of insurgency for each country of the world.

By consulting this map, you can identify those insurgencies that are in the crucial stage of civil war. These insurgencies are the ones most deserving of your attention. Guerrilla wars may also deserve some attention, especially if the country in question is strategically important.



Helping Insurgents

Once you have identified a likely candidate for subversion, you have two weapons: **Aid to Insurgents** and **Intervene for Rebels**. These can be found on the **Policies** menu. You can ship aid to insurgents only if there are insurgents to receive that aid: terrorists, guerrillas, or rebels. The amount of aid you can ship depends on the level of insurgency. Terrorists can't use much money — a few guns, a little dynamite is all they are in a position to use. Guerrillas need more elaborate accouterments — more guns, lots of ammunition, rockets, mines, and so forth. Rebels are the most advanced insurgents and demand the most expensive equipment — the same tanks, artillery, and other weapons that the superpowers use.

A second constraint is even more severe. A superpower can only ship weapons to a country through contiguous allies in which it has stationed troops. For example, you must have troops in Honduras or Panama to ship weapons to the Contras in Nicaragua. The quantity of weapons that can be shipped is dependent on the number of

troops so stationed. After all, why should a small country risk all the trouble associated with weapons shipments if it doesn't have guarantees of protection? However, a superpower can always leak a small amount of weaponry into any country in the world; borders aren't airtight.

The most sincere form of assistance is direct intervention. This means that you send part of your own army into that country to help the rebels overthrow the government. You are limited in much the same way as with military aid to insurgencies. A superpower must have troops in a contiguous country before it can send troops to intervene in a civil war; the number of troops that can intervene is always less than or equal to the number of troops stationed in the contiguous country. However, both the USA and the USSR have the equivalent of 5,000 marines that can be sent anywhere on the globe in violation of the contiguity requirement.

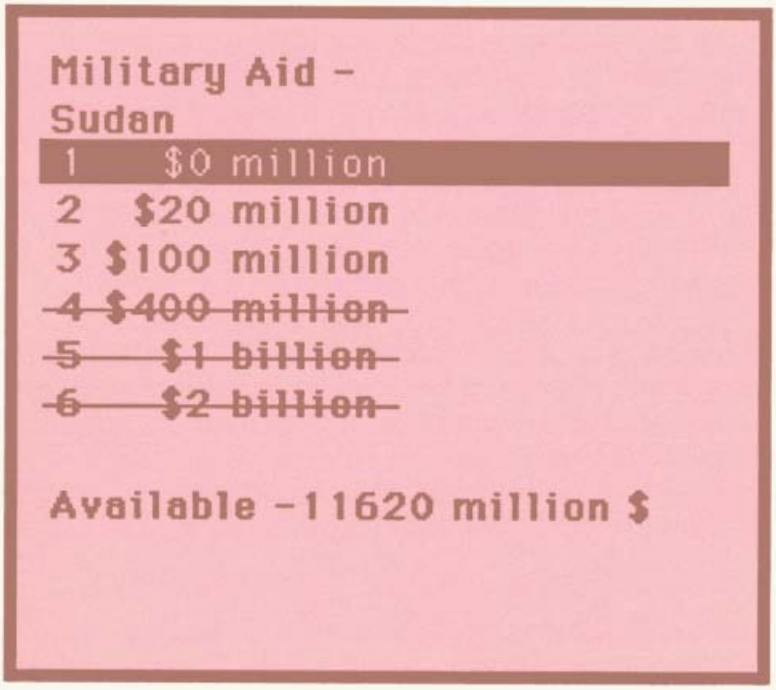
When you do send troops, you must realize that your American soldiers will end up fighting anybody else there. If there are Soviet troops fighting on the side of the government and American troops fighting on the side of the rebels, then you're going to get Americans shipped home with Russian bullets in them, and vice versa. Such a direct confrontation is not conducive to world peace. The world diplomatic climate will disintegrate very quickly if this happens, so be careful about where you send in the Marines.

Once you enter a policy, it remains in place until it is revoked. Thus, if you send troops somewhere, they will stay there until recalled or until ejected by their host. If you send military aid, it will be automatically renewed each year. Thus, if you choose to send $10 million in aid, an additional $10 million will be sent every year until you change the policy.

Defensive Strategy

The defensive side of your game requires you to protect your friends from insurgency. There are two direct ways to do this: **Aid to Government** and **Intervene for Government**. These directly correspond to the options available for insurgencies, except, of course, that the action is taken in favor of the government. The restrictions on this action are somewhat different. For example, insurgents are eager to take all the weaponry they can handle. Not so a government. Every government in the world knows that help from superpowers always seems to come with sticky strings attached. Most governments are understandably reluctant to accept an unseemly amount of aid from a superpower. This reluctance is directly related to the degree of enmity between the two nations. Thus, Colonel Khaddafy of Libya would not accept your generous offer of military assistance — he would undoubtedly suspect some fiendish subterfuge. On the other hand, West Germany has already cast its lot with the United States and would have no reservations about accepting

military aid from the USA. Nations are even more sensitive about allowing you to send troops onto their soil. This reluctance will express itself in the crossing out of the more ambitious policy options in the policy window. When an item is crossed out, you cannot select it.



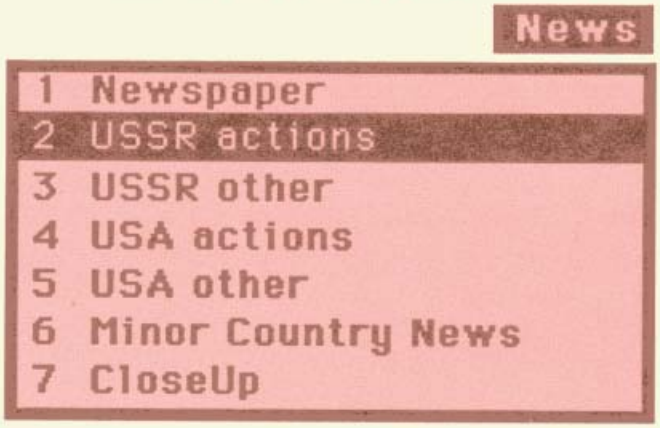
Therefore, although you may *want* to give 400 million dollars to the government, if the option is crossed out, you can't do it.

By the way, there is another restriction on your spending habits: lack of money. You do not have an infinite supply of troops or money to strew all over the world. As you start using up your resources, your options will progressively narrow. If you really want to send some troops to one country, you may be forced to pull some out of another. The total amount of money or troops remaining for your use is displayed at the bottom of the policy-making window.

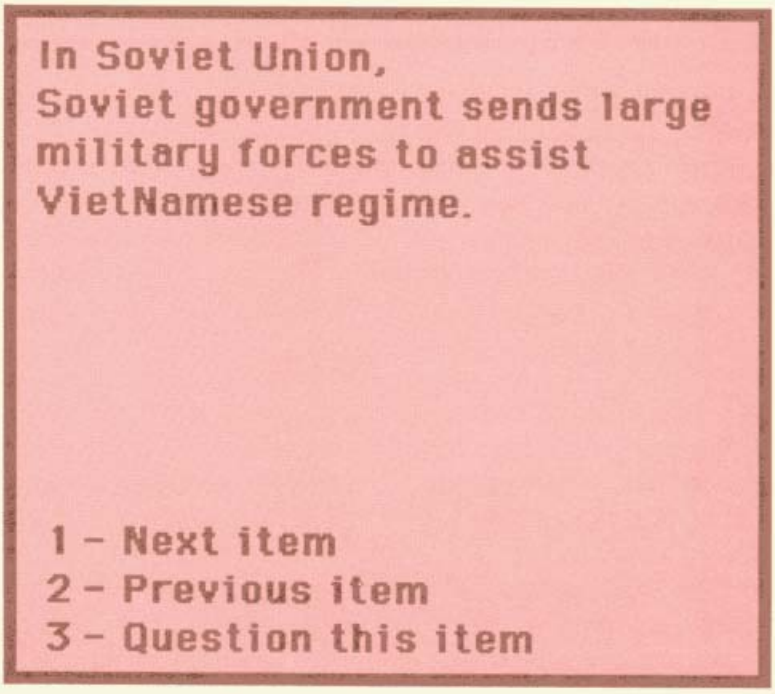
Defensive Crisis

Another defensive strategy that can be used is a crisis that you initiate. If, for example, the Soviet Union sends massive aid to support the Red Army terrorists in West Germany, you had better put a stop to it fast. You do this by starting a crisis and standing firm, demonstrating a willingness to escalate right up to (but not including!) DefCon 1—Nuclear war.

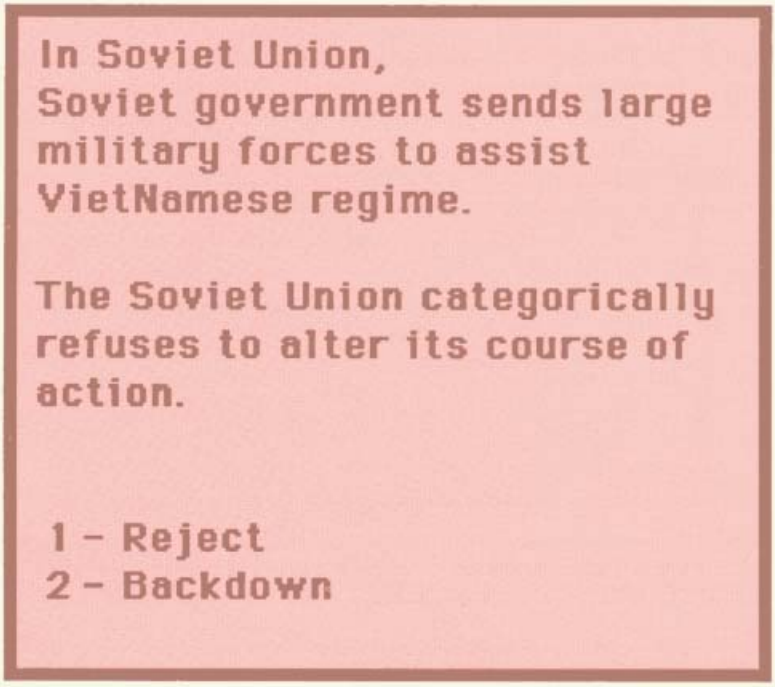
The mechanics of all this are simple enough. *The first thing you need to do at the beginning of each turn is consult the **USSR actions** item in the **News** menu.*



This will give you a quick summary of all your adversary's actions that demand your attention.



If you find any action unacceptable, simply press the **Question** (3) key, as indicated at the bottom of the window. This sends a polite diplomatic note to the Soviets, notifying them that you question the wisdom of their action. They will reconsider their action and respond, either by backing down or by challenging you.



You may either back down or escalate to the next stage. If you proceed to the next stage, then a diplomatic crisis is initiated; one side or the other will lose prestige by backing down. If neither side backs down, the crisis becomes a military crisis, with only two possible outcomes: **nuclear war at DefCon 1** or a major diplomatic defeat (with consequent loss of prestige) for one side. A military crisis can start an **accidental nuclear war**. Don't start a crisis unless you are determined to stop the Soviets. Remember, backing down in a crisis will cost you prestige, and escalating can start a war.

The Soviets are also free to start a crisis over any of <u>your</u> actions that particularly displease them. If this happens, you must reconsider your policy. If you wish to keep the policy in force, you must stand up to the Soviets and escalate, even if this means risking a war. If you back down, you will lose prestige and your policy will be rescinded. Of course, if the Soviets are angry enough about the matter, they will escalate right up to DefCon 1 and start a nuclear war, in which event you both lose. So choose your fights carefully.

You aren't completely on your own during a crisis. Advisories from the State Department (or its Soviet counterpart, The Institute of USA Studies) are displayed at the bottom of the Crisis Window once a crisis has been initiated. The experts will decide the level of importance of the issue in question and will advise you accordingly. If they decide that your legitimate interest in the question is greater than that of your opponent's, then it is likely that the other side will eventually back down. If they are

equal, then it's anybody's guess.

The catch is that the experts aren't always right. The estimates are close, but will always involve some uncertainty. The advice might be bad; sometimes you will want to overrule them. In fact, at the Expert and Nightmare levels of play, they are not much use at all. If you carefully study the world situation prior to entering a crisis, your estimate will probably be more accurate than theirs. Just how accurate are the experts? Well, in the Beginner Level game, they seldom make mistakes. In the Intermediate Level game, you should think carefully before following their lead. In the Expert Level game, they are very unreliable. In the Nightmare Level game, they are almost entirely useless. Of course, if you have absolutely no idea of what to do, you can use their advice as a basis for a decision. Remember, though, that history and the public have little sympathy for leaders who blame their mistakes on their advisors.

Other Menu Options

There are a great many menu items available to you that have not been discussed. These provide supplemental information, not central to the play of the game, but very handy for assessing your situation.

The **Countries** menu contains items that allow you to quickly determine trouble spots around the world.



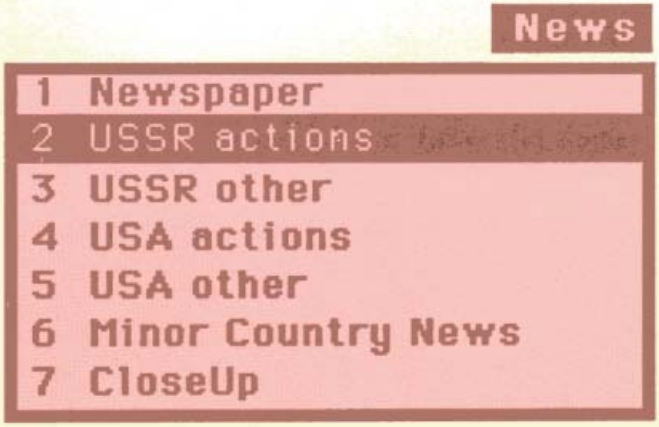
You can find where revolutions have taken place with the **Major Events** item, and the state of insurgency for every country in the world with the **Insurgency** item. The **Spheres of Influence** chart will give you a brief idea of how the world is divided between the two superpowers. As a general rule, don't mess with countries that are within the Soviet sphere of influence and don't let the Soviets mess with countries that are in your own sphere of influence.

The **USA** and **SOVIET** menus contain items that show the global policies of both superpowers.



Want to know where the Soviets are sending military aid? How about the status of Soviet interventions? It's all there.

The items in the **News** menu present an organized view of events around the world.



If you want to know what provocative actions the Soviets have taken, consult the **USSR Actions** item. Unprovocative items are presented in **USSR Other**. Events in minor countries are reported in the **Minor Country** news items.

The **Closeup** option gives a detailed rundown on a selected country. It shows your and your opponent's policy toward the country, and also provides other useful information. Especially useful is the assessment of the strength of the insurgency and how quickly it is gaining or losing strength.

End of Game

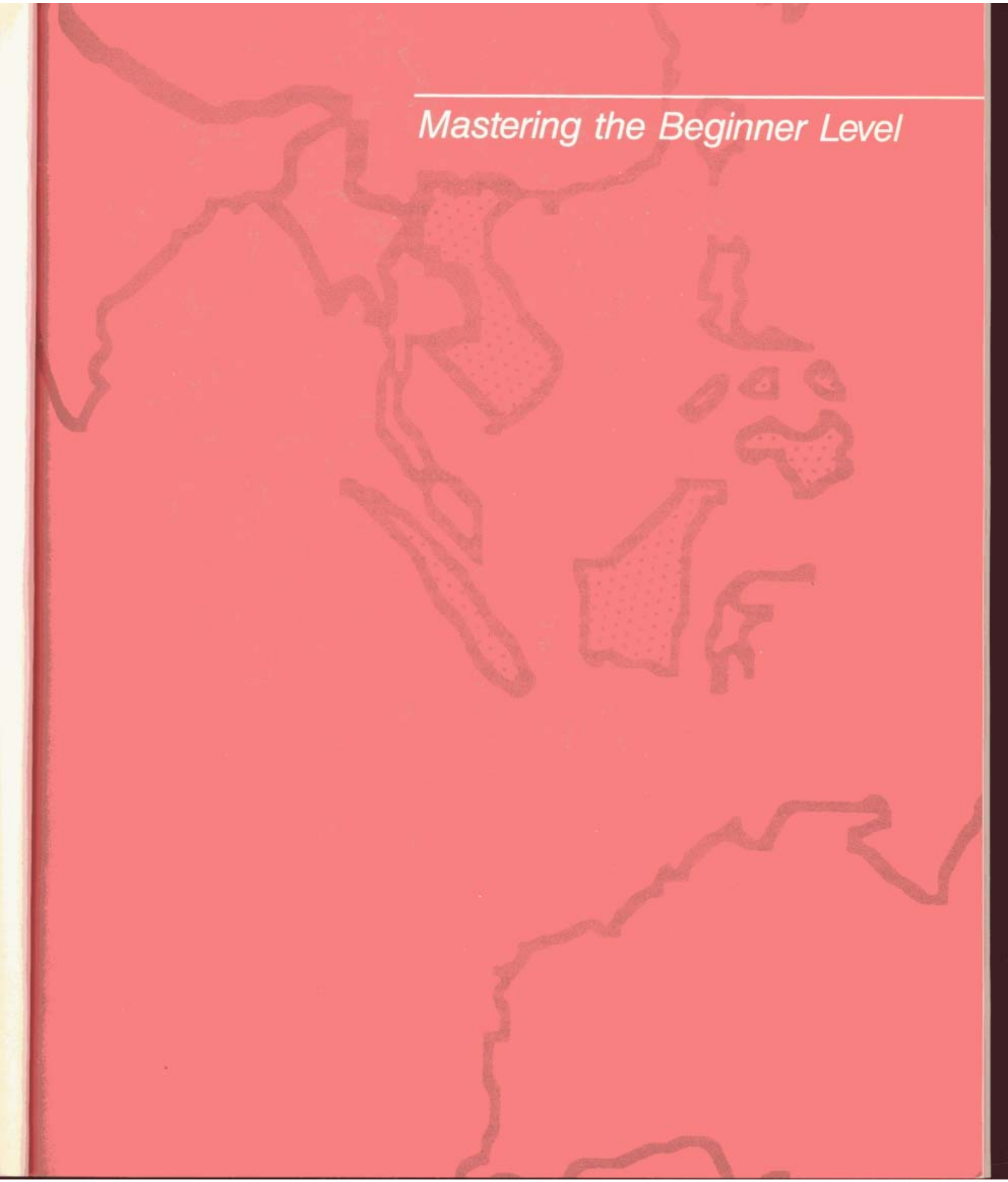
The game ends if either side goes to DefCon 1 in a crisis (thus initiating a nuclear exchange). It can also end in an accidental nuclear war during a military crisis. If you manage to avoid both fates, then the game ends in the year 1995. Your score is your increase in prestige. If your prestige has increased and that of your opponent has decreased, you have done very well; indeed, you have won the game.

Some Hints On Play

Although there is a great deal of information available in this game, most of it is unimportant in the Beginner Level game. You really do not need to consider the state of countries that are quiet. There are really only two crucial questions to ask each turn: "Who's having an internal war?" and "What are the Soviets up to?" You answer the first question by checking the Insurgency map from the **Countries** menu. A civil war should immediately attract your attention. A guerrilla war is less interesting but still laden with opportunity or vulnerability.

You answer the second question, "What are the Soviets up to?," by consulting the **USSR Actions** item on the **News** menu. This will list every policy action taken by the Soviet Union over which you may wish to start a crisis. This should be the first thing you do at the start of each turn.

That's all there is to playing the Beginner Level game. There are, of course, many fine points required to do well in the game. But for now, try playing your first game of *Balance of Power*. Then you will probably want to come back and read the next section, "Mastering the Beginner Level."



Mastering the Beginner Level

Presumably, you have played your first real game of *Balance of Power*. You understand the mechanics of the game. Now you'd like to play the game *well*. This is mostly a matter of understanding what's going on in the game. Read on to learn more about the ideas behind the Beginner Level game and to find some hints on playing well.

Domino Theory

The central superpower strategy of the Beginner Level game is a variation on the old domino theory of international power politics. A superpower cannot support an insurgency in a country unless it has troops stationed in a neighboring country. Thus, a successful insurgency in one country can be used to further insurgencies in neighboring countries in a step-by-step process. It is therefore vitally important to prevent your opponent from stationing troops in new countries, and to place your own troops adjacent to unfriendly countries. You don't need to put garrisons all over the world; all you need are strategically-placed troops. You must also block Soviet efforts to place troops near vulnerable friendly nations.

Insurgencies don't just happen by accident, and they don't grow randomly. Insurgencies develop according to the conditions inside the country. An insurgency's strength is pitted against the strength of the government. Some governments are very strong, and some are weak. Many governments are so strong that no insurgency could ever hope for success. However, steady funding will keep the insurgency alive, even if only at the level of terrorism. This is the situation with West Germany right now. The government there is far too strong to ever be vulnerable to insurgency, yet it is not quite strong enough to eradicate the small band of terrorists who occasionally strike.

The really vulnerable nations are those with governments so weak that even a small insurgency could quickly mushroom into a major civil war. Such states are often small, poor, and have little history of democratic traditions. Your insurgency dollar will go farther in these countries — and so will the Soviets'!

Many beginning players have a problem identifying their friends. How does one know whom to support and whom to weaken? The best answer to this is to consult the Diplomatic Relations display. You want to support friendly nations and undermine unfriendly ones.

This game is bipolar in structure. The world is divided into left-wing groups and right-wing groups. In most nations, the government is of one wing and the insurgency is of the opposite wing. If the insurgents win, they become the government and the old government becomes the insurgency. In general, left-wing governments lean toward the Soviet Union while right-wing governments lean toward the United

States. Thus, if you find a left-wing government that is unfriendly to the USA, you would do well to support the insurgents against it; the right-wing insurgents will almost certainly be friendly if they win the revolution. On the other hand, a right-wing, unfriendly government poses some tricky problems; if the rebels win, their left-wing government will be grateful to you for supporting them, but they will probably be friendly to the USSR as well. You must carefully judge which is more important.

Crises

Handling crises properly is crucial to success in this game; most games are won or lost over crises. This is because the prestige at stake in a crisis is normally greater than the prestige gain that will be won by the policy in question. For example, suppose you get into a crisis over weapons shipments to the Mujahedin in Afghanistan. Even if you were completely successful in Afghanistan, replacing the Communist government there with an absolutely faithful ally, the total gain in prestige for you resulting from this would be perhaps 10 or 20 points. On the other hand, the weapons shipment crisis itself could easily generate 100 points of prestige loss. This is because the crisis is played out in front of the whole world, and the entire world reacts to your behavior in the crisis. Thus, crises are where the game is won or lost. You must know when to start a crisis and when to let something pass, when to escalate and when to back down.

Remember, a crisis is very much like a poker game. There is no absolute law that determines what the USA or the USSR can or cannot do. The only law is what you can bluff them into accepting. To work, a bluff has to be credible. Your opponent must believe that you really *will* push the button over the issue in contention. In deciding whether to back down, the Soviets will consider such factors as your treaty commitments to the nation in question, the state of diplomatic relations, your demonstrated record of integrity in supporting client states, and the resolve you have shown in previous crises. If you have laid the groundwork, you can stare them down. If you just bluster, you will start a war.

Read the Soviet crisis statements diligently. They are worded very carefully; if you learn to read the diplomatic language used in them, you will better be able to tell when they are bluffing and when they are serious. Much diplomacy hinges on delicately-phrased communications — be sensitive to their meanings!

Crises have many dangers. Don't ever enter a crisis with a cavalier attitude, expecting to see how far you can push the Soviets and thinking that you can always back down just short of war. If the crisis escalates to a Military Crisis, you could start an accidental nuclear war! Even if this doesn't happen, you face other risks. The higher you drive the crisis, the more prestige you lose when you back down. Usually, if you

back down on the first or second step of the crisis, no prestige will be lost. Once you move past these low levels, the issue has gone public. With the whole world watching, the side that backs down is guaranteed to lose prestige. Indeed, the loss of prestige associated with backing down can be more important to the outcome of the game than the issue being contested.

To help you with this decision, the amount of prestige at risk is presented just below the two options for escalation and backdown. The number presented is the amount of prestige that will be lost by the side that backs down. You can use this as a guide for your behavior in a crisis. For a variety of technical reasons, the number given is not a perfectly accurate predictor of the actual results, but it is a reliable guide.

Crises also tend to make the world less civilized. The more the superpowers rattle their sabers at each other, the more militaristic other nations become. The world operates under a diplomatic mood that greatly affects the behavior of nations; if you make that mood warlike, don't be surprised if the world situation deteriorates. The higher the tension between you and the USSR, the greater the chance of an accidental nuclear war starting during a Military Crisis.

Cause and Effect

It's very easy to become confused about the nature of cause and effect in this game. With all the activity, it's sometimes hard to know why things turn out the way they do. There is, of course, a great deal of information available to help you understand the situation. Between the events, the myriad map displays, and the closeups, there is no shortage of information. The problem is understanding how all these pieces fit together into a coherent whole.

The danger here is the temptation to succumb to simple-minded thinking, in particular, in trying to establish one-to-one relationships between causes and effects. Some people like to think that every single cause must have a single effect. The real world is far more complex than this, and *Balance of Power* reflects this complexity. Every action has many effects that ripple through the world, and every event has multiple causes. Everything is tied together. To cope with this, you have to use a skill seldom required in computer games: judgment. Consider how your actions will be affected by the actions of your adversary. Your policies and those of your opponent may often combine or conflict in unexpected ways. After all, you both live and act in the same world.

Options

The Beginner Level game can be played with two variations: side to play and number of players.

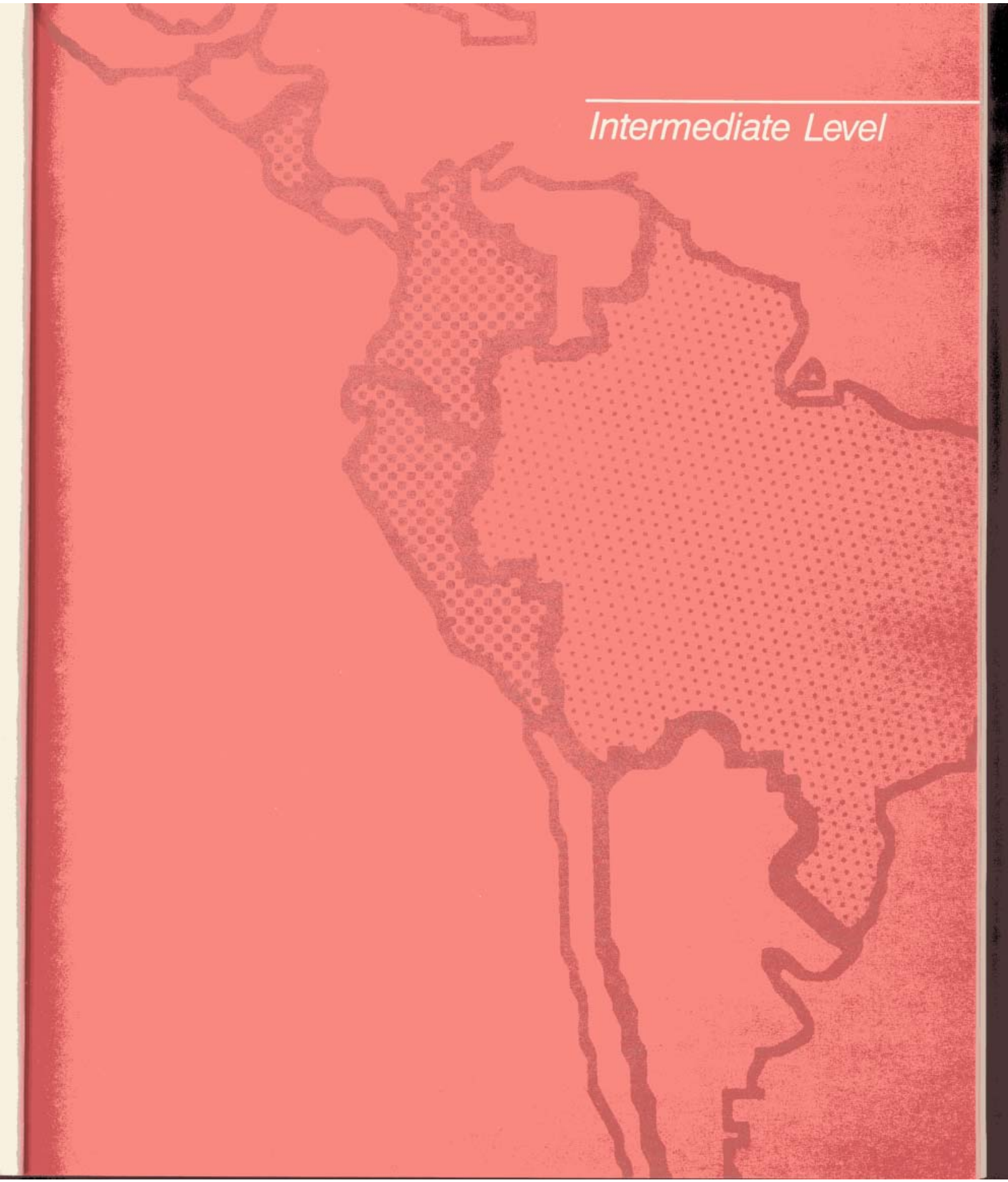
The side to play option allows you to play as the General Secretary of the Soviet Union instead of as the President of the United States. The game is in every way the same, except that you see the world from the point of view of the USSR. You may find the experience quite enlightening.

The number of players option allows you to play the game with a friend (or enemy!). When this option is chosen, one player represents the USA and the other represents the USSR. You both use the same input device (joystick, mouse, or keyboard) to enter your commands. The computer always declares who has control of the input device. In the lower left-hand corner of the screen, a message such as "USA is up" will appear. This means that the computer is expecting the USA player to control the input device and enter commands. The USSR player has to wait until the USA player relinquishes the input device by selecting the **Change Sides** option from the **Game** menu. Whenever you change sides, the computer will beep and display a message telling who is "up" (in control of the input device). During a crisis, the computer will automatically Change Sides for the players. Players must be careful that they don't "accidentally" make decisions for their opponents.

The tone of the two-player game is very different from that of the single-player game. It's hard for two friends sitting next to each other to agree to annihilate humanity. In the two-player game, a very important aspect of diplomacy is missing: the sense of uncertainty arising from poor communications between the superpowers. In the real world, the two leaders never know what the other is thinking; considerable energy is expended second-guessing the opposition. Such is seldom the case with the two-player game. However, the two-player game offers another possibility unavailable in the one-player game: detailed treaty-making. It is very often possible to resolve a crisis through negotiation. ("Look, you get your troops out of Nicaragua and I'll stop funding the Contras".)

Intermediate Level

The Beginner Level is not intended to stand alone as a complete game—it is only preparation for the next level. When you feel you have mastered the Beginner Level, you should read the next section of this manual and tackle the Intermediate Level. Be forewarned! The world is getting more complex!



Intermediate Level

The Intermediate Level game includes everything in the Beginner Level game and also introduces new concepts, greater realism, and a deeper challenge. You probably should not tackle the Intermediate Level game until you are comfortable with the Beginner Level game.

Overall Approach

The Intermediate Level game introduces a new channel of geopolitical interaction: the subversion and destabilization of foreign governments. In the Beginner Level game, one strives to overthrow an unfriendly government with local insurgents. In the Intermediate Level game, one can also replace the government with a more friendly one through the less violent avenue of the coup d'etat. This is a more subtle, less direct approach requiring a greater degree of finesse.

To support this greater degree of finesse, the game provides more information on the internal characteristics of each country. Several new menu options make it possible to obtain this information.

The game plays in much the same way as the Beginner Level game. The player seeks to topple unfriendly regimes while protecting friendly ones. One must also use crises to reverse the opponent's objectionable actions, and defend one's own policies in opponent-initiated crises.

The Nature of Coups D'Etat

The central new concept of the Intermediate Level game is the coup d'etat. This is a change of government intiated by political factors rather than military ones. Rebels must use military power to win a revolution, but a coup can overthrow a government only if the political climate is ripe for it. The most important element of the political climate is the performance of the economy. If the economy performs well, the political climate is favorable for the existing government. But if the economy performs poorly, discontent rises and the government is vulnerable to a coup. Modifying this is the political control exerted by the government. Some states, such as the Soviet Union or East Germany, exercise such thorough control over their citizens that there is little or no chance of a true coup d'etat. A changing of the guard, perhaps, but not a policy-changing coup. Totalitarian governments with sufficiently strong political control can survive with economic performance that would topple other governments.

NOTE: Although the game uses the term "coup d'etat," the process applies to *any* significant change of executive brought about by political processes. Even elections fall under the broad definition of "coup d'etat" used in this game.

Destabilization

If a government is shaky, you can topple it with the judicious use of Destabilization. You destabilize a government by sending in the CIA (or KGB) to encourage dissidents, fund the opposition, incite riots, and create other domestic political mayhem. If the government is already weak, this might be enough to push it over the edge. If the government is strong, your efforts will accomplish nothing.

Destabilization costs you nothing; it takes very little money to make trouble of this nature. It will, of course, anger your opponent, and thereby possibly trigger a crisis. It will also antagonize the government against which it is applied. If you are successful, this will not be a concern for long.

Preventing Coups — Economic Aid

You can protect a friendly regime from coups by assisting its economy. This is done with economic aid, a direct transfer of money from your economy to the recipient's. Your GNP (Gross National Product) will be reduced with the secondary effect of reducing the amount of money available for military expenditures. The recipent's economy will be boosted; this will increase public satisfaction with the regime. Thus, economic aid reduces a country's vulnerability to coups d'etat. Of course, the magnitude of the effect is dependent on the wealth of the recipient. If you dump 4 billion dollars on poverty-stricken Mali, that amounts to a near-doubling of its Gross National Product; the effect on the Malians will be electric. Basking in their immense wealth, their discontent with the government will completely vanish. However, a wealthier country like Britain is much harder to buy off. Four billion dollars is but a drop in the bucket for such a country. Thus, it is very difficult to save a wealthy nation with economic assistance.

Effects Of Coups D'Etat

When a coup d'etat occurs, the government reverses its domestic political philosophy. If the government was left-wing, then the right-wingers take over and the left-wingers head for the hills to take up their new role as the disloyal opposition, the insurgents. An exception to this general rule arises with some Communist countries (especially Eastern Bloc nations), for whom the notion of a right-wing government is simply absurd. In such countries, one left-wing government will be replaced by another left-wing government.

The new government will also adjust its diplomatic alignments, especially with respect to the superpowers. When a government shifts to the right, that **often** (but not always) means that relations with the USA will improve. Similarly, when a government shifts to the left, that normally implies a worsening of relations with the

USA. The exceptions occur when extremist governments take over. They tend to dislike everybody.

When a coup d'etat takes place, the event will show up in the news for that country.

New Menu Options

Countries Menu

The **Countries** menu includes a new entry: **Coup d'etat?**. This menu item makes it easy to identify countries in which coups are likely and so require your attention.

Economic Aid

The **Economic Aid** items on the **USA** and **Soviet** menus are now enabled. You can readily see how much economic aid is going out of the USSR or the USA.

Policies Menu

Two new items are enabled on this menu: **Economic Aid** and **Destabilization**. These two options allow you to implement the policies described above. The mechanics of these options are identical to the mechanics of the options you already know how to use with the exception that destabilization affects only the current year. It does not carry over into following turns like other policies. If you wish to continue to destabilize a country next turn, you will have to explicitly order it.

Hints On Play

Your approach in this game will be similar to your approach in the Beginner Level game. You must keep an eye on the opposition to make sure that they don't pull any fast ones. You must monitor the world for insurgencies. In addition, you must now be on the lookout for governments that are about to fall. When you find a shaky government, you must decide whether you want to save it or give it a push. As a general rule, save friendly governments, push unfriendly ones.

The Intermediate Level game introduces the new concept of *indirect actions*. In the Beginner Level game, every event is the direct result of specific actions. But coup phenomena operate at a more subtle level. There are, of course, the direct elements of economic aid and destabilization. But there are also more indirect ways of influencing events within a country.

Remember that a coup is created by poor economic conditions within a country. A major contributor to poor economic performance is the military spending of the

government. High military spending tends to weaken the economy. You can influence a government's military spending policies by making that government feel more or less militarily secure. Thus, stationing troops in a country and giving it military aid will have the secondary effect of reducing the likelihood of a coup. Conversely, funding insurgents or intervening in favor of the insurgency will reduce the government's political strength by forcing it to increase military spending to counter the threat.

Events Versus States

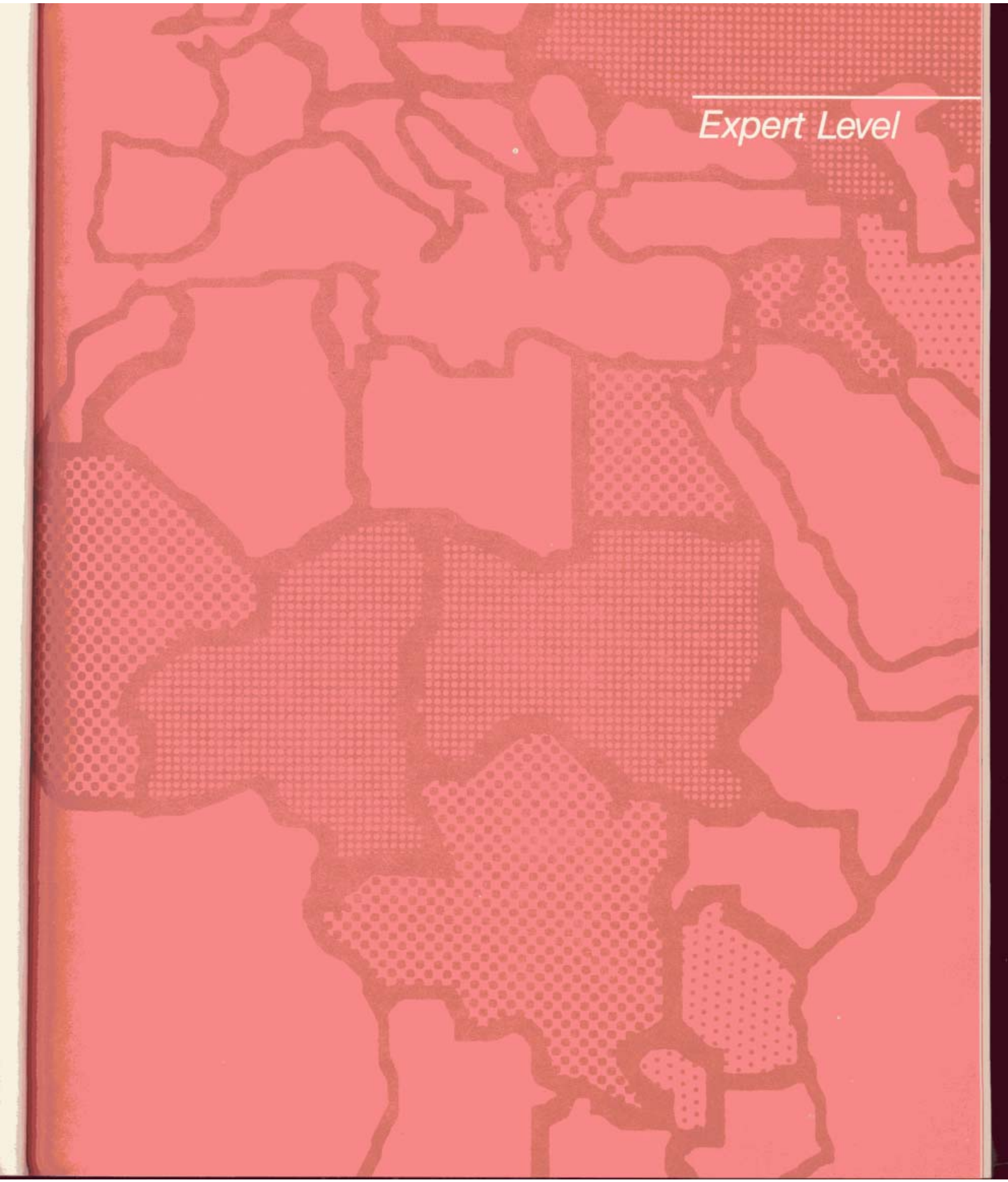
It is also useful to clearly understand the difference between *events* and *states*, and their significance to cause and effect in this game. A state is a condition that remains in force for some period of time, usually permanently. For example, economic aid, military aid, and interventions are all states; once you set them up they remain in force indefinitely.

An event is simply a transition between states. When you increase economic aid to Mexico, that is an event; you are changing the state of economic aid from a low state to a higher state. Events are transitory in nature; an event happens and goes away, leaving behind its effects on states.

The significance of all of this has to do with the nature of cause and effect in *Balance of Power*. Most effects are caused by states, not by events. For example, a coup d'etat in Honduras cannot be directly caused by the USA reducing economic aid to Honduras. A coup is triggered by poor economic performance, which in turn is affected by the **state** of American economic aid. To say that a reduction in aid caused the coup is indirect and misleading. It is more accurate to say that a low state of aid caused the coup.

Therefore, you should concentrate your attention on the states of your relationships with countries, not on the events. How you changed things last year is not nearly as important as how things ended up. The **state** is what really matters, not the **event**.

Be warned that the Intermediate Level game is not as easy to win as the Beginner Level game. In the Intermediate Level, you will find the Soviets to be less accommodating and more adventurous. Also, your expert advisors are less likely to be right in crisis situations. Moreover, the Beginner Level game is fairly predictable; nations have pretty much the same outlook and policies from game to game. Not so the Intermediate Level game; at that level, the diplomatic relationships that begin the game are a bit different every game, so you can't take other countries for granted.


Expert Level

The Expert Level game is the full, true version of *Balance of Power* ; the Beginner and Intermediate Level games are intended as training versions only. The Expert Level game includes everything in the Intermediate Level game and adds new elements that increase the realism and challenge of the game. You should not attempt the Expert Level game until you are comfortable with the first two game levels.

Overall Approach

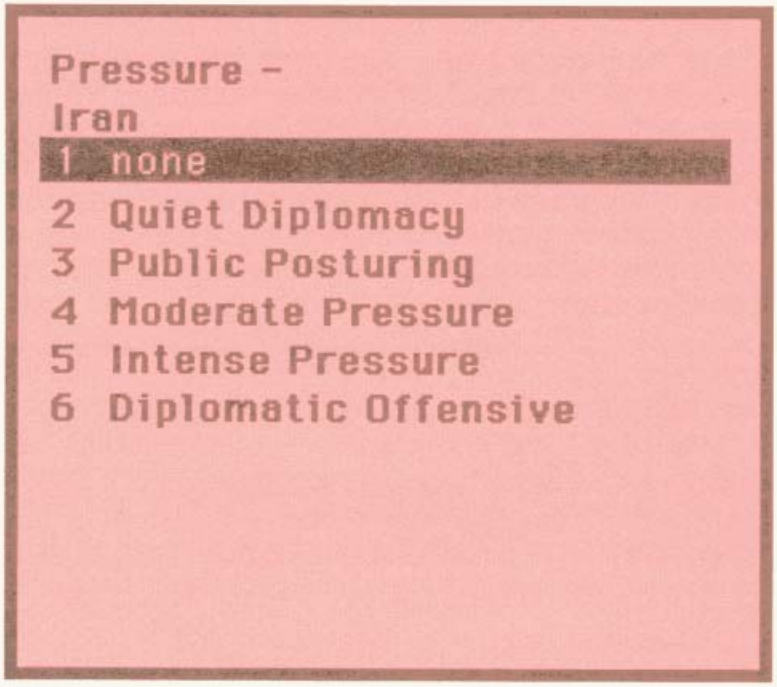
The Expert Level game introduces a third vehicle for governmental change: Finlandization. The term comes from the postwar experience of Finland. Finland had been an ally of Nazi Germany against the USSR; when the war ended, Finland was not invaded by the Soviets only because they were too busy with bigger fish. Yet, Finland did not get off scot-free. None of the Western powers was willing to stand up for a Nazi ally. Thus, Finland was "diplomatically isolated"; it had no friends and lived in the shadow of a powerful enemy. The Soviets did not need to invade. The Finns saw the writing on the wall and started behaving themselves in a manner calculated to endear themselves to their powerful neighbors. Thus, while Finland is nominally a neutral country, it is effectively under very strong Soviet influence.

Finlandization can occur to any nation that perceives itself to be in a hopeless diplomatic and military position. If a superpower is hostile and possesses the power to crush the victim, and external support is inadequate to protect the victim, that victim Finlandizes; it adjusts its diplomatic position to make itself less hostile and more friendly to the dangerous superpower. In the process, it partially assumes the diplomatic stance of its enemy. Thus, Finland's relations with the USA are poor not because of any disagreements between Finland and the USA but because the Soviets are unfriendly to the USA.

In the Expert Level game, you attempt to encourage or discourage Finlandization among the nations of the world. You have two weapons to help you: Pressure and Treaties.

Diplomatic Pressure

You can exert diplomatic pressure on a country from the **Policies** menu. The range of choices is presented in a similar fashion to all the other policy options.



Pressure is an attempt to intimidate a country with words and provocative actions. A simple diplomatic note expressing "grave concern" can be interpreted as a very weak form of pressure. At the opposite extreme, we have the full-scale diplomatic offensive, including an array of actions such as holding naval maneuvers off the coast of the victim, making speeches about the evil ways of the victim, or ostentatiously consulting with declared enemies of the victim. All of these actions serve to make a victim acutely aware of the disparity in strength between it and the superpower. If the victim feels sufficiently insecure, it will Finlandize to the superpower applying pressure. Obviously, the more pressure is applied, the greater the likelihood that the victim will indeed Finlandize.

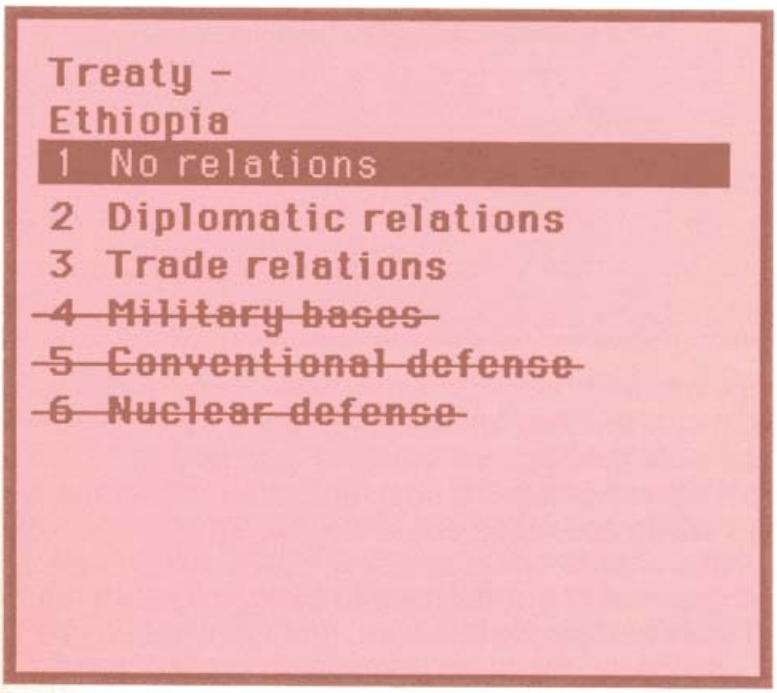
Indirect Pressure

It is also possible to indirectly pressure a country. If you project a ruthless image, countries will be more fearful of you and might Finlandize. This is especially likely after a big crisis. If you intimidate the Soviets in a big crisis and force them to back down, other countries may well Finlandize to you out of fear of those big bad Americans.

NOTE: When a country Finlandizes to another country, a news message will be created describing how the leader of the Finlandizing country praises the object of the policy. Although the word "Finlandize" does not appear, you should have no trouble interpreting the headline.

Treaties

The antidote for pressure is a treaty. If you fear that a client of yours may Finlandize to the Soviet Union, you can bolster that client's will to resist in several ways. You might send military aid to increase its military power, or you could station American troops in that country to help defend it. By increasing its defensive military strength, you would shore up its flagging confidence. Another way to achieve the same end would be to sign a treaty with the nation.



Treaties in this game are simpler than treaties in the real world. Their real value in this game is their symbolic value as a show of support for the country. A treaty implies a degree of commitment on your part for the regime with whom you sign. **You are, to a greater or lesser degree, guaranteeing the security of the country with whom you sign the treaty.** The degree of commitment is related to the type of treaty. A treaty establishing diplomatic relations between your two countries commits you to very little. In contrast, a nuclear defense treaty is an absolute commitment that you will take all measures possible, including the initiation of a nuclear holocaust, to protect the signatory.

Caution

Nations with whom you have treaty relationships place great stock in the value of

the American commitment. A solid treaty commitment is worth many divisions of troops in terms of providing military security. And it costs nothing whatever to sign a treaty! However, there are several catches you need to consider. First, you can never back out of a treaty. Once you sign a treaty, it stays until the other country decides to cancel it. You, however, are not allowed to cancel treaties. Second, the commitment you make must be honored. If a government is destroyed by an internal rebellion or a coup, and you had a treaty relationship with that government, then the credibility of all your treaties all over the world will be diminished in proportion to the degree of commitment you had made. Consider, for example, West Germany. The United States has a nuclear defense treaty with West Germany, the most solemn pledge of support possible. If the government of West Germany were to fall to insurgents or a coup, the credibility of all your other treaties would plummet. It does not matter how hard you tried to defend West Germany — if the government falls, you have failed to meet your treaty obligations. The other nations of the world will take note.

Military Power

Military power is an important concept in this game. Three factors affect military power: spending, personnel, and distance. Intrinsic military power is related to both military spending and military personnel. Thus, you need lots of soldiers and lots of weapons to make a powerful army. If you have lots of one and little of the other, your intrinsic military power, although still sizeable, will be noticeably less.

Intrinsic military power is the amount of military power you can bring to bear within your own borders. It is only significant in determining a country's ability to defend itself. An aggressor's ability to project military power against other countries depends on the distance between the aggressor and its intended victim. If the two countries are contiguous, the aggressor can project its full military power against the victim. If not, the aggressor's military power is diminished by the distance between the two.

In practice, this means that Finlandization is most common with countries close to or bordering a superpower. However, there is one special circumstance that can radically alter this equation. If a superpower places troops in a country, it will be able to project power into neighboring countries as if they were contiguous with the superpower itself. For example, if the Soviet Union places troops into Libya, the countries bordering on Libya (Chad, Algeria, Sudan, and Egypt) will have their security undermined by those Soviet troops and will be that much more vulnerable to Finlandization.

Strategy

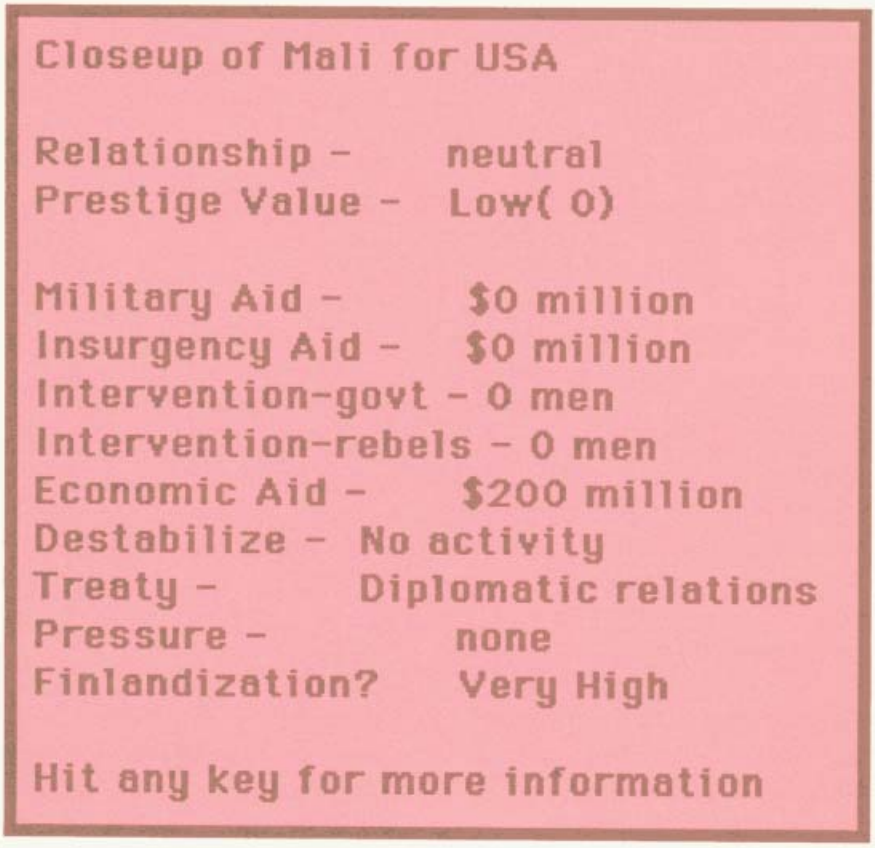
This suggests a strategy for the game. If you can establish good relations with a country in a remote area and eventually send troops into that country, the countries bordering on your client will suddenly be far more susceptible to Finlandization. A foothold gives you a point of leverage from which you can expand your influence dramatically. Of course, the Soviet Union can use the same strategy.

New Information Sources

Several new menu items extend your power to gather information and make policy. The **Countries** menu now includes two items that show you the likelihood that countries will Finlandize to you or to your adversary.

NOTE: This map can be misleading. It is based on information available at the beginning of each turn-year and does *not* take into account events that occur during the course of the year. Thus, any treaties you sign, troops you place, or pressure you apply, or any such actions taken by your adversary, will not affect these displays. They are useful as general guides but cannot give you the absolute certainty arising from instant feedback.

The remaining new menu items are straightforward. Two new items in the **Policies** menu allow you to make treaties and to apply pressure. Other menu items on the **USA** and **Soviet** menus allow you to monitor the state of treaties around the world. Finally, the **Closeup** display now includes information on the likelihood of Finlandization to each of the superpowers as well as the rate and direction of change in this likelihood.



Playing the Game

The Expert Level game is far more realistic and difficult than the preceding games. To win, you must take a more careful approach to your policies. In the Beginner Level and Intermediate Level, you can use simple "cowboy" strategies. Get the bad guys and help the good guys — that's about all there is to those levels. In the Expert Level, you must more carefully consider the consequences of your actions. Treaties are a powerful means of securing your friends, but they can cause you to lose the game if they are misused.

A Cautionary Example

Consider the following scenario: The Mujahedin win the civil war in Afghanistan. You rush military aid to their support and foolishly sign a conventional defense treaty to bolster their confidence so that they will not Finlandize to the USSR. The Soviets, smarting under the loss, pour huge quantities of weapons into the country to assist the ex-government, and intervene with even more troops than before. Not daring a

direct confrontation by sending American troops in, you wait and hope. The new Mujahedin government is defeated by the Soviet-backed government. Nations all over the world suddenly realize that a defense treaty with the USA is worthless. Those most threatened by Soviet power immediately Finlandize. Diplomatic momentum moves against you, and your prestige plummets. Had you written off Afghanistan without offering a treaty, you would have lost only Afghanistan.

Indirect Forces

Keep in mind the importance of indirect elements. The direct elements unique to the Expert Level game are treaties and pressure, but the indirect elements can exert a profound influence on the game. Indeed, the most important difference between the lower levels and the Expert Level is that the indirect elements play a much larger role. The first indirect element is the psychological effect of military power. Troops stationed in a country can bolster its sense of security, preventing Finlandization. Troops stationed in a country neighboring a hostile nation will greatly increase the sense of insecurity in the hostile nation, and may intimidate it into Finlandizing. Thus, military power can be used in the Expert Level game to produce results without ever a shot being fired.

There are other important indirect factors. One of these is integrity. The psychological value of your treaties is directly proportional to the integrity with which you back them. If you allow client states to fall to revolution or coups, your treaties lose their meaning.

Yet another indirect factor, and a very important one, is the image of ruthlessness you project. If you ship troops all over the world, embark on grand military adventures, and above all, if you show no hesitation to escalate crises to dangerous levels, you will foster an image of an aggressive, ruthless wielder of power. Minor countries of the world will fear you because they know you are willing to use your military power. Finlandization will be more common. However, such behavior on your part will probably encourage like behavior from your opponent.

Nightmare Level

The Nightmare level has exactly the same rules as the Expert level game, but is far more difficult to win. In a one-player game, the computer will be ruthless and unyielding.

In a two-player game, you can choose which side you wish to handicap. This can be useful for play between players of differing abilities. In a two-player game at Nightmare Level, the country you select (USA or USSR) in the option screens that appear after you load the program will start the game in a handicapped position with regard to resources and prevailing world opinion.

The single-player Nightmare Level game is provided only for those killer players who master the Expert Level and want a challenge. This level goes beyond challenge; it is a simple, brutal, unfair massacre. Enjoy.

OPTIONS

Reference to Commands and Game Play

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game without reading the manual

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Start Game

This section provides a reference to the commands and options available in *Balance of Power.* It should not be read as a substitute for the instruction manual since it provides no background information. It assumes the Expert Level throughout—no provision is made to describe features that are excluded from the Beginner or Intermediate Levels.

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Option Screens

These screens are only available when you boot the disk or when the game ends as a result of nuclear war. The option screens allow you to choose the type of game you will play. You have five choices to make: the type of input device you will use (joystick, mouse, or keyboard), whether you want to start a new game or load an old (saved) game, the number of players, the side to play, and the level of play.

INPUT DEVICE

You can use either a joystick, the keyboard, or a mouse.

NEW GAME/OLD GAME

Use this option to start either a new game of *Balance of Power* or to resume a game that you saved previously.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

This option allows you to choose between a one-player game and a two-player game. In a one-player game, you play against the computer. In a two-player game, you play against another person, taking turns to make your moves. The two games are very different in style and flavor. On the one hand, the computer opponent in the one-player game is not as complex or subtle an opponent as a human being; on the other hand, the two-player game fails to capture the sense of limited communications that lies behind so much of our diplomacy. It's hard to misread the intentions of the person sitting next to you.

The logistics of the two-player game are up to you, but we have found two methods which seem to work well.

In one method, the players take turns with the input device, alternately issuing policies and challenges. A possible scenario might be: Player one sends 5000 troups into Nicaragua and then passes control of the input device to the other player by selecting **Change Sides** from the **Game** menu. Player two can now challenge or proceed with a policy of his or her own. This proceeds until both players are satisfied with their actions. **Next Turn** is selected from the **Game** menu and play proceeds. The one difficulty with this method is that players tend to play out the entire game in the first turn: players tend to divide the world neatly by spheres of influence. Deals are struck such as "you leave Iran alone, and I'll let you have Afghanistan." This tends to destroy the delicate tightrope-walk feel of the one-player game, so proceed carefully.

Another method which seems to work well is to have one player make all of his or her policy decisions while the other player waits without commenting. **Change Sides** is selected from the **Game** menu, control of the input device is passed to the second player, and player two now examines the policy actions of player one. Player two can now challenge any of these policies. If a challenge is made, the two players work through the crisis (hopefully surviving the process). After the challenges, player two enacts all of his or her policy choices, **Change Sides** is selected from the **Game** menu, and control of the input device is passed to player one, who now has the option of challenging. After all challenges have been played through, the **Next Turn** item is selected from the **Game** menu, and the process is repeated for the next year.

SIDE TO PLAY

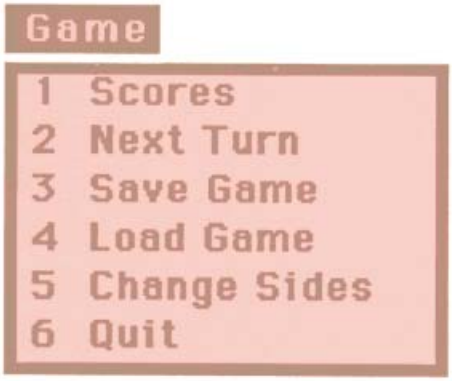
This option allows you to play as either the President of the United States or the General Secretary of the Soviet Union. If you choose to play the USSR, the computer will play the USA.

If you are playing a two-player game at the Nightmare Level, this option allows you to choose which side to handicap. The country selected will play the game at a severe disadvantage.

LEVEL OF PLAY

This option allows you to determine the level at which you will play. The Beginner Level is intended for players who are just learning to play. The Intermediate Level is just that — an intermediate step between Beginner Level and Expert Level. It provides more complexity and greater realism. The Expert Level presents the full no-holds-barred game; its complexity is too great for inexperienced players. The Nightmare Level is for those who no longer feel challenged by the Expert Level. It is a desperate fight for survival.

Game Menu



This menu handles options related to the administration of the game. It has six items: score, next turn, save game, load game, change sides, and quit game.

Score

This option displays the score window, which includes the score at the end of each turn-year played.

Next Turn

This item notifies the computer that the player has completed his or her moves for the current year. There is no limit on the number of actions a player may take in one turn. Once **Next Turn** is selected, the computer then begins a long series of computations. It first determines the reactions of its superpower to the actions you have taken. It then has the option of triggering a crisis over any of these actions. If the computer takes this option, you will enter the Crisis window.

After news is analyzed, the computer determines the internal developments in each country. These include economic computations, such as the changes in GNP and population; adjustments in spending in response to changes in the world situation; the progress of any local insurgency; possible coups d'etat; and Finlandization.

Lastly, the computer figures the move of the computer player. These things done, the computer advances the calendar by one year and returns control to the player.

The **Next Turn** item is crossed out on two-player games until the first time the **Change Sides** option is used.

Save Game

With this action, you can save the current game in progress, including all of the statistics, policies, scores, and other game details, to the program disk. When you

select **Save Game**, a dialog window opens to ask you if you're sure you want to save the game. Press **1** to save the game, or press **2** if you change you mind. The program disk only holds one saved game at a time, so when you choose **Save Game**, the current game you are saving automatically replaces a previously saved game. Use the **Load Game** option, described next, to retrieve a saved game.

Load Game

Select this option from the **Game** menu to retrieve a saved game from the program disk. When you select **Load Game**, a dialog window opens to ask you if you're sure you want to load the game. Press **1** to load the game, or press **2** if you change you mind. You also can load a saved game by choosing **Load Old Game** from the second option screen that appears at the beginning of the program.

Change Sides

This option allows you to change sides in a two-player game. It informs the computer that the input device (joystick, mouse, or keyboard) is now controlled by the other player. The computer will interpret input device actions accordingly. This is very important; you don't want your decisions to benefit your opponent! Two additional features insure that there are no misunderstandings. First, in all two-player games, the computer lists the active player at the bottom of the screen. The USA player should be the only one to handle the input device as long as the screen says, "USA is up." Second, to make absolutely sure that players know what's going on, the computer will beep whenever the **Change Sides** option is chosen.

Quit Game

Select this option to exit the current game. When you select **Quit Game**, a dialog window opens to ask you if you're sure you want to quit. Press **1** to quit, or press **2** if you change you mind. Be sure to save the game before you quit if you intend to resume the current game later on. Otherwise, the current game will be unretrievable after you quit.

Countries



This menu allows you to examine factors related to the non-superpowers.

Spheres of Influence

This menu item displays the spheres of influence of the two superpowers. These are the countries that are regarded as a superpower's "private turf." For example, Eastern Europe is in the Soviet sphere of influence, while much of Latin America is in the American sphere of influence. Each side knows better than to mess with the countries in the other's sphere of influence. However, many countries of the world do not clearly lie within either superpower's sphere of influence; these are shaded to indicate a "weak" sphere of influence. **Be warned: a weak sphere of influence could be almost meaningless.**

Spheres of influence change during the course of the game. A crisis is a tug of war over a country. Whichever superpower wins the crisis establishes a stronger claim to placing that country within its sphere of influence.

Major Events

This menu item displays any major events that took place in the previous year. A major event is a transition associated with the three avenues of governmental change in the game (insurgency, coups, and Finlandization). Thus, the three major events are revolutions, coups, and acts of Finlandization. If any of these occurs in a country, it will be shaded accordingly. Since a country can hold only one shade, if several major events occur in one country, the lesser one(s) will not be displayed. A revolution takes priority over a coup, and a coup takes priority over an act of Finlandization. Note also that an act of Finlandization is recorded without reference to the object of that Finlandization.

This display comes up automatically at the beginning of each turn; it is the most important display of the game.

Prestige Value

This item displays the prestige value of each country; that is, the value of that country toward your score.

Insurgency

This menu item presents the state of insurgency within each country.

Coup D'Etat?

This item presents the likelihood that a government will fall to a change of government or coup d'etat.

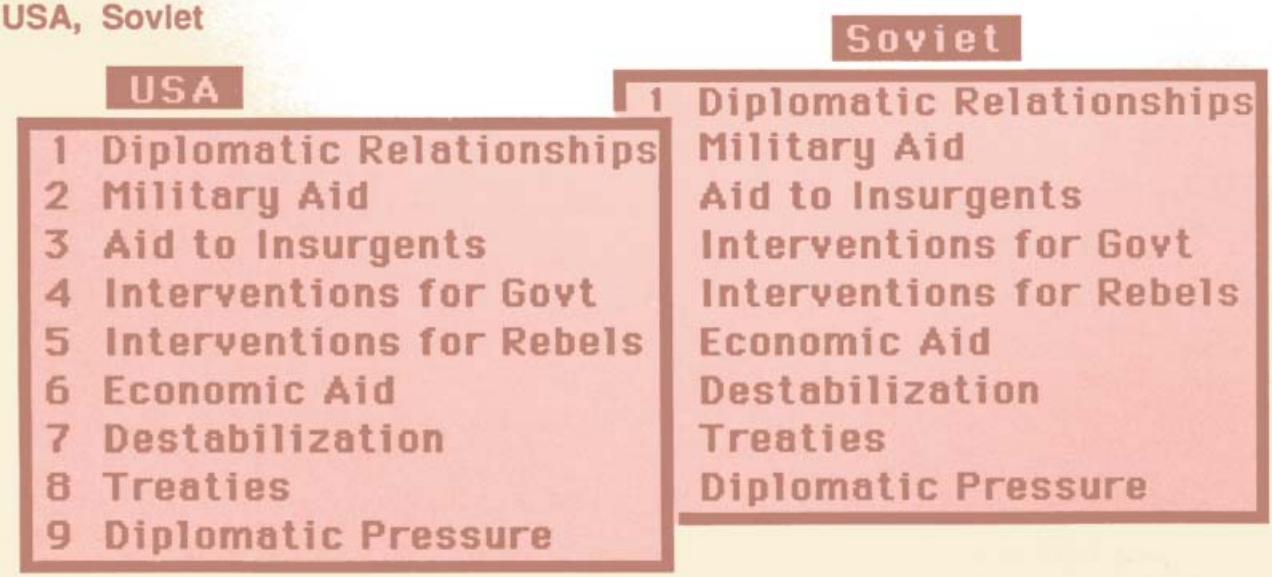
Finland—USA?

This item presents the likelihood that a government will Finlandize to the United States. Note that the information used to draw this map is updated only at the beginning of each turn-year, and does not take into account actions taken by you or your adversary in the current year.

Finland—USSR?

This item presents the likelihood that a government will Finlandize to the Soviet Union. The same reservations cited above apply here.

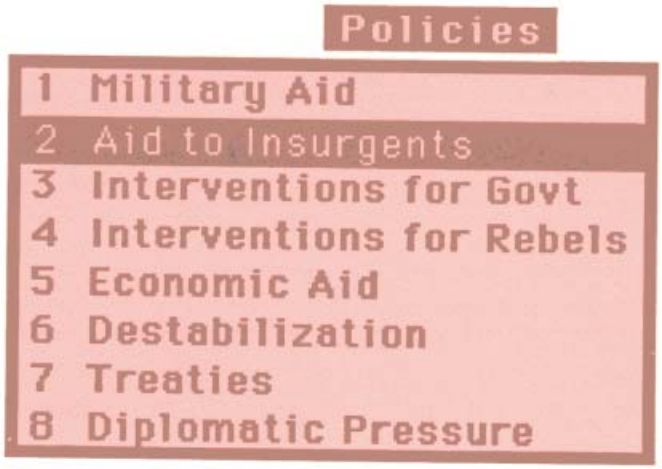
USA, Soviet



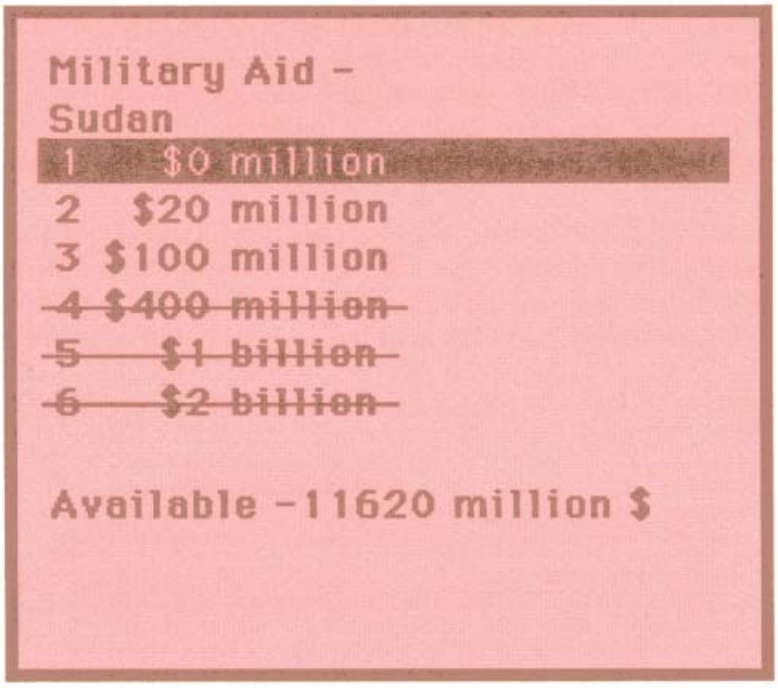
These menus present information on the policies and relationships of the two superpowers. Each of the policies is presented as an item for each of the two superpowers. By selecting that item, you can see the total policy activity of that type undertaken by the superpower. For example, to see all Soviet troop interventions for governments, select the item **Interventions for Govt** from the **Soviet** menu.

The **Diplomatic Relationships** menu item allows you to find out the state of diplomatic relations between the superpower and all other countries. When it is selected, countries are shaded according to their diplomatic relationship with that superpower, with dark shading representing hostility and light shading representing friendship.

Policies



This is the menu that allows you to implement your decisions; it is the menu through which you actually win or lose the game. All of the other menus provide you with options for gathering information; this one lets you take action. All of the options work in the same fashion. Once you choose a policy direction, the computer will present a dialog window for your consideration.



The current state of your policy toward the selected country will be marked. You can change it by selecting any other option. If you don't know how to make a selection from the dialog window with your particular input device, see the section of the manual entitled "The Mechanics of Making Selections." When you make a selection, the window will close and you can proceed with the game.

When you raise a policy window, some of the options might be crossed out and therefore inaccessible. Policy options can be crossed out for three reasons: diplomatic, budgetary, and physical. The first restriction reflects the unwillingness of nations to accept generosity from nations they regard as unfriendly. For example, you are not allowed to give lots of military aid to Vietnam. The Vietnamese would suspect some devious plot, and besides, even if they would accept the money, Congress would never stand for it. Thus, it can be difficult to do nice things for unfriendly nations.

The second restriction is budgetary. You are not allowed to give away too much of your military budget to other nations. As you give away more and more money, more and more of the options will be crossed out, forcing you to give smaller and smaller amounts of money. The total still available is presented at the bottom of the window.

The third restriction is physical. A billion dollars' worth of weapons is a lot of hardware; moving that or, say, 100,000 troops into a country is a big logistical challenge.

If the country is friendly, you can use its shipping facilities, but when you are sending aid to the insurgency, the local government will not be so accommodating. Accordingly, you need staging areas in a neighboring country. For the purposes of this game, your ability to build such staging areas is measured by the number of troops you have stationed in the neighboring country. You may always ship the "step level" of weapons ($20 million worth) to any country. The limit on sending troops to support insurgents is the highest level of troops supporting the government in a contiguous country.

Policy options are presented in annualized figures, but they remain in force until repealed. For example, if you choose the foreign aid option $1 billion, you are offering one billion dollars *per year* to the recipient nation. Another billion dollars will be paid out every year until you repeal the policy or until the recipient government rejects it.

Military Aid

This option allows you to provide weapons (but not soldiers) to a friendly government. It will boost the military power of the government, making it better able to withstand internal insurgencies and external military pressure. If the country is in serious military trouble, the aid will be greatly appreciated; if things are pretty quiet, the country will be less appreciative. This means that you can give aid to a country in trouble, earning a great deal of friendship, and then take it away when the situation improves without angering the recipient. So long as you continue to give aid to that government, relations between your two countries will improve in proportion to the amount of aid and the degree of need.

Aid to Insurgents

This option is only allowed if there is an active insurgency in a country. For example, the Soviet Union is free from the curse of terrorism. Thus, you cannot ship weapons to the "Russian underground" — there's nobody there to receive them!

Aid to insurgents produces more bang for the buck than aid to the government. That's because insurgents tend to use their weapons more sparingly and more effectively than government soldiers. Moreover, insurgents tend to buy their victories with a greater blood/bullet ratio than government troops use. In other words, your investment of bullets is more than matched by their investment of blood. For this reason, many governments indulge in this economical form of aggression. The only inhibition is that insurgencies are dirty affairs, and your prestige may suffer if you get your hands too dirty.

Aid to insurgents is constrained by the physical and budgetary factors already

discussed. You need to have a strong local insurgency to give lots of aid, and you will need troops stationed in a contiguous country. You just can't subvert countries by remote control — you've got to have your own troops next door.

This policy is quite provocative. It will certainly infuriate the government against which it is directed. This is not a good way to win friends with the government.

Intervene for Government

This is a much more serious form of assistance. With this option, you send your troops to the country in question; there, they stand alongside the native government troops. If an insurgency is in progress, they will fight the insurgents. The dangerous aspect of intervention is the prospect of American and Soviet troops squaring off in some remote corner of the world. Such action will not directly precipitate a war, but it will harden attitudes on both sides in such a way as to make a war very difficult to avoid. It also increases the likelihood of a military crisis precipitating an accidental nuclear war. When emotions run high, troops on alert tend to get jumpy; when their fingers are on nuclear triggers, it's hard to maintain full control of events.

It is possible to use intervention in a peaceful and constructive manner. For example, the American troops currently stationed in West Germany help stabilize an otherwise dangerous situation. Without them, the Soviets might be tempted to invade West Germany. Even more important than the deterrent effect on an aggressor is the sense of security provided the client. Troops stationed inside a country are a palpable demonstration of support that bolsters a country's willingness to stand up to an intimidating enemy. Moreover, the psychological effect of such intervention is greater than the number of troops actually committed. All parties know that for every soldier actually based in the country, there are several more in the home country who could be deployed in an emergency. Thus, intervention is an excellent way to support beleaguered governments, so long as they are not actually caught up in fighting. Once the shooting starts, the situation becomes very delicate.

Be forewarned: Intervention can be very provocative to all interested parties.

Intervene for Rebels

This option allows you to send your troops into a country to support the "heroic freedom fighters" (known to the government as "bloodthirsty terrorists"). This is the modern way to invade a country. In the old days, the troops would pour across the border, blasting, bombing, and slaughtering, in the name of invasion. The modern superpowers seldom engage in actual invasions. Instead, you pour troops across the border, blasting, bombing, and slaughtering, part of a noble effort to liberate the

suffering people from the ravages of their tyrannical government. You are not starting a war; you are only intervening in support of the legitimate insurgency. And when the heroic freedom fighters win the civil war, they will of course be grateful for your altruistic assistance and reward it with friendly relations. Maybe.

Aside from the logistical restrictions on being able to intervene (you must have troops in a neighboring country), the act of intervention is similar to the act of intervention for the government. It is just as risky and even more infuriating to the other superpower. Use this one with caution.

Economic Aid

This option allows you to provide economic assistance to another nation. The economic assistance is a direct transfer of money from your Gross National Product to the recipient's; it does not directly affect anybody's military potential. However, it does have an effect on both countries. Your GNP growth is deleteriously affected, while the recipient's GNP growth is boosted. This is a good way to bolster the popular support of a friendly government. Of course, it will also improve diplomatic relations between your two countries in proportion to the degree of need (a.k.a. the likelihood of a coup). You should give generously to friendly countries whose governments are in danger of a coup, then remove the aid once the crisis is averted or resolved; their resentment at losing all those free billions of dollars will be less when their economic situation is under control. Moreover, economic aid is generally viewed as a benign action. It is unlikely that your opponent will start a crisis over this option, and it would not be wise for you to start a crisis over such action — except in countries that are firmly in your sphere of influence.

Destabilize

This option allows you to "send in the spooks." If you are playing as the American, you send in the CIA; if you are playing as the Soviet, you send in the KGB. In either case, their orders are the same: to spread unrest and dissension within the country in the hope of triggering a coup d'etat. The greater the intensity of destabilization you opt for, the greater the probability of achieving a successful coup. Destabilization is a one-shot affair; it is not automatically renewed each year as are the other policies. If you wish to engage in long-running destabilization against a country, you must explicitly re-authorize the destabilization each year.

Treaty

The treaty option allows you to certify your level of support for another government. The treaties range from mere diplomatic relations to nuclear mutual defense. The real significance of treaties is that they commit you to supporting the government in

greater or lesser degrees. Thus, if you sign a nuclear defense treaty with a foreign government, you are guaranteeing the security of that government against all threats. You should take whatever steps are necessary to protect that government. If, for *any* reason, that government falls to rebels or a coup, your international credibility, and the value of the treaties you sign, will fall in proportion to the strength of the commitment you made.

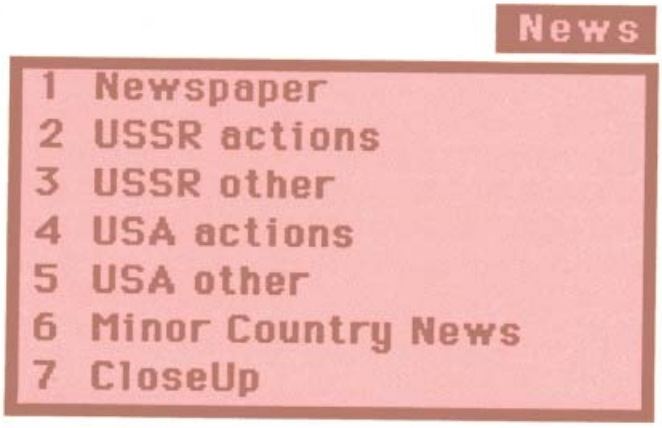
Treaties are a very economical way to boost a nation's will to resist aggression. They cost nothing by themselves, and will always generate good will with the recipient. The only danger with a treaty is that you must be prepared to live up to your treaty commitments. In dealing with the Soviet Union, you must also consider the Soviet treaty commitments. Those nations with which the Soviets have strong treaty commitments should be treated with great deference to Soviet wishes. Like you, the Soviets cannot afford to have their closest clients destabilized.

Once signed, you cannot repudiate a treaty; the other country can repudiate it if it undergoes a coup d'etat or if rebels win a civil war. There is one way that you can be forced out of a treaty you have signed: if the opposing player starts a crisis over a treaty, and the signing player backs down, the treaty is null and void. Otherwise, it is permanent.

Diplomatic Pressure

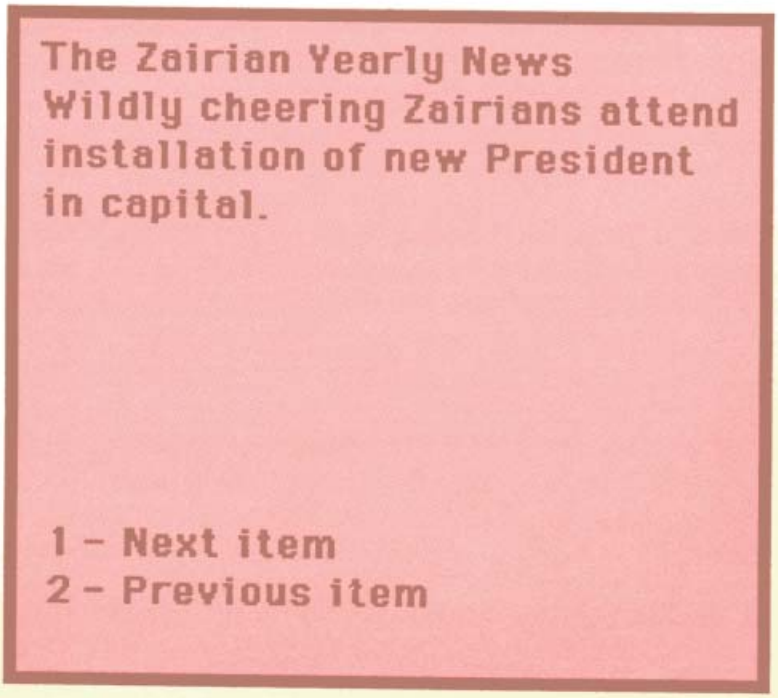
This option allows you to "lean on" any foreign country. This is always a negative action taken against unfriendly nations. Its purpose is to intimidate that nation, making it feel a greater sense of insecurity, in the hope that it will Finlandize. Moreover, pressure can induce the victim to increase its military spending as a form of self-defense. This in turn forces the government to cut into consumer spending, an act that will increase public dissatisfaction with the regime and that could lead to a coup d'etat or change of government. Thus, pressure can sometimes cause a coup d'etat. Unlike most other options, pressure is not an ongoing process; it is a one-time action that automatically terminates after one year.

News



This menu gives information on events. Events are presented in the form of headlines. They are grouped into folders to make it easier for you to peruse them. Each folder is represented by one menu item.

Newspaper



This option applies only to the selected nation, and is crossed out when no nation is selected. When chosen, it presents a newspaper for the selected country, presenting information on events that concern the country. Every headline tells you something about the country, and sometimes a careful reading will give you valuable details. For example, where are the rebels fighting? In remote villages or in the

capital? If they are fighting in the capital, then surely they are doing very well against the government.

A newspaper can have many pages; you can flip through the pages with the **Next** and **Previous** options. If a newspaper headline concerns a provocative act by the Soviet Union, you may be able to Question that act, in which case the Question option at the bottom of the newspaper will activate. For more details on this option, see the section on Crises.

USSR Actions

This folder presents all provocative actions taken by the Soviets that you may wish to challenge through a crisis. This is a very good folder to check at the beginning of each turn; it gives you an idea of what those tricky Soviets have been up to.

USSR Other

This folder contains Soviet actions that you probably won't wish to challenge. Most of it is pretty boring stuff, troop pullouts and the like. Although it's not the stuff of Armageddon, it is sometimes useful to know where they are pulling out; you never know when a golden opportunity might present itself.

USA Actions

This folder corresponds to the **USSR Actions** folder, except it holds American actions. This is of interest if you are playing as the Soviet leader, or if you are the American and can't remember what you have already done this turn.

USA Other

This folder corresponds to the **USSR Other** folder except that it holds boring American actions.

Minor Country News

This folder contains all international actions taken by non-superpowers. In this case, it is news that is internal to the country, such as revolutions, coups, and acts of Finlandization.

Closeup

This item opens up a series of three large windows that display a great deal of information about any country you select. You get a complete summary of your policies toward that country, as well as the policies of your adversary. An arrow next to a policy value indicates whether the value was recently increased or decreased. The third window contains information on the domestic state of the country. Note that for the state of insurgency, likelihood of a coup, and likelihood of Finlandization, the value is presented as well as the rate of change in the value.

Entering A Crisis

This is not a menu option, but it can be generated either by your actions or by Soviet reactions to your policies. A crisis is generated whenever one superpower objects to a policy action by the other. You can generate a crisis by selecting the Question option in the USSR Actions folder or the newspaper. The Soviets can generate a crisis during their turn by questioning one of your actions. Thus, every crisis has a plaintiff (the side that started the crisis) and a respondent.

The following sequence of events takes place when you are the plaintiff: you observe a Soviet action that you do not like; let's say the Soviets are sending weapons to support the Communist Tudeh insurgency in Iran, an act you find unacceptable. You select the Question option. This communicates to the USSR your displeasure over the action.

The Soviets now have two options: they can stick to their guns, or they can back down. In choosing between the options, they will consider the importance of the policy to their own plans, as well as their assessment of its importance to you. The case of Iran is useful: the Soviets know that the destabilization of the Iranian government is not crucial to their security, yet they also know that American relations with Iran are poor and that the Americans will probably not go out on a limb for the Iranian government. Let us say that they decide they can win this crisis; they therefore refuse to back down, and respond by protesting. A message from the Soviet Union conveying this response will appear in the lower half of the window.

Now the ball is back in your court. You have the same options the Soviets had. You can continue to press your case, or you can back down. If you back down at this early stage, the matter is resolved quietly and neither side suffers any loss. If you do not wish to back down, you must raise the stakes. The **Question** option has been replaced by **Reject** and **Backdown** options. If you select **Reject**, you are taking the crisis public and raising it another notch, indicating your resolve. Now that the crisis has gone public, the whole world will be watching. Whichever side backs down will lose considerable prestige. The amount of prestige at stake is displayed at the very

bottom of the window. The number presented represents the amount of prestige that you will lose if you decide to back down at this point. The Soviets will lose a similar amount of prestige if they back down. Note that as the crisis escalates, these numbers rise. It is unwise to push a crisis too far without good reason, for the loss you suffer can become considerable. Indeed, the amount of prestige you can lose in a crisis can well be greater than the amount you would lose if the country became an outright Soviet ally.

Also at the bottom of the window are the opinions of the State Department (or the Institute of USA Studies) regarding the relative importance of the country and policy in question. If the experts estimate that your legitimate interest in the issue is greater than your opponent's, you might well consider pressing your case. On the other hand, if the experts indicate that your opponent has a vested interest, it could be risky to push too hard. The one caveat is that the advisors are far from infallible. If you carefully study the world situation, you will probably be in a better position than they to decide the importance of such matters. Be *very* careful about surrendering your decision-making responsibilities to the experts.

If, based on your own opinion and that of your advisors, you choose to escalate, you press the **Reject** key. Now the ball is back in the Soviets' court. If they refuse to back down, it comes back to you, with considerably more at stake. If you back down, the crisis is over, and you have lost considerable face. The world will make note of the fact that the Americans talk big, but fold when their bluff is called. Countries that had been rooting for you will be disgusted and angry at your lack of backbone; countries that had opposed you will hold you in contempt. The Soviet Union will be especially encouraged by your backing down, and will enact increasingly more aggressive policies, knowing that you don't have the backbone to stand up to them.

But if you chose to escalate and not back down, the Soviets again must choose between escalation and retreat. This time, though, the diplomatic options have been exhausted. The only escalatory option available to the USSR is to raise its forces to **DefCon 4**. DefCon is short for Defense Condition, a term used to describe the state of readiness of a superpower's military forces. It uses the following table:

DefCon 5: Peace, minimum readiness
DefCon 4: Low level of readiness
DefCon 3: Alert, forces ready for combat on short notice
DefCon 2: Maximum alert, all forces ready at a moment's notice
DefCon 1: War

The Soviet Union, if it chooses to escalate to **DefCon 4**, will do so as a means of demonstrating its determination to prevail in this dispute. Going to **DefCon 4** sends the message, "We are preparing to fight you over this issue, if need be."

Going to **DefCon 4** also changes the nature of the crisis dramatically. Earlier it was merely a diplomatic crisis, and only prestige was at stake. Now it has become a military crisis, and the risk of accidental nuclear war exists. The better your relations with the Soviets, the lower the chance of accidental nuclear war. The worse those relations, the greater the chance of accidental Armageddon.

With the ball back in your court, you must again face the ugly choice between a retreat that could damage your diplomatic position and an escalation that could lead to war. If you wish to escalate, you must move to **DefCon 3**: increasing the chance of an accidental war.

The Soviets may be intimidated by your demonstration of resolve. If so, they will back down. If not, they will go to **DefCon 2**, a state just short of war. The bombers are in the air, the fingers are poised over fatal buttons. You have the same two options: back down or escalate. Only this time, **to escalate is to start World War III**. If this happens, you both lose the game. You have painted yourself into a corner and must back down, suffering the consequent loss of prestige.

If the Soviets initiate the crisis, then your last choice in this escalatory sequence will be to go to **DefCon 2**. If you take this option, the fate of the world is in Soviet hands. They may launch or they may back down. You just have to trust them.

Note that the amount of prestige lost by the loser of a crisis is proportional to the level of the crisis. If you back down at **DefCon 2**, you will pay a much higher price than if you back down earlier. It is therefore unwise to push a crisis further than absolutely necessary.

End of the Game

The game ends when a nuclear war starts. Only crises can start nuclear war. You always lose if a nuclear war starts; no points are awarded for any progress you had made. **A nuclear war is always a total loss for both sides.**

If you avoid a nuclear war during your eight-year term in office, the game ends when you reach the year 1995. In this event, a final score window is presented; you win if your score exceeds your opponent's score. To leave the final score window and return to the option screens at the beginning of the program, press any key.

Appendix One: How Realistic is the Game?

Balance of Power provides an instructive simulation of global power politics. Players may want to know just how realistic this game is. The answer is somewhat tricky.

Most people think of realism as a desirable trait that is approximated to a greater or lesser degree by any game or simulation. They judge a simulation the same way one might judge the quality of a photograph — on its fidelity, crispness, and accuracy. The truth is much more complex than that. Any game deliberately simplifies reality to emphasize some aspect of the world. In this sense, a game is more like a painting than a photograph. The painter does not slavishly copy an image but instead emphasizes those things that are important about that image while eliminating its unimportant aspects. So too does the game designer eliminate some things from a game and emphasize others. This game is no exception. In designing it, many important elements of international relations were thrown out in order to focus the player's attention on the most important elements. Thus, trade was stripped out completely, even though it plays a significant role in modern geopolitics. On the other hand, the nature of insurgencies was given great attention by the game, because insurgencies are one of the vehicles of competition between the superpowers. Does the lack of trade make the game less realistic? Does the detailed handling of insurgency make the game more realistic?

These things said, there are still some issues related to the broad subject of realism that need clarification. For example, you might wonder about the accuracy of some of the numbers used in the game. This game does use a great many numbers that are objectively verifiable; are these numbers reliable? The numbers used in this game were researched wherever possible. For example, GNP data is quite easy to obtain, and military spending figures are commonly available, although there are many disagreements between the various sources.

Some important information was unavailable and so was created. We readily admit fabricating information that was not available. A text author can simply leave out information that is not available, but a game designer is not so fortunate. A game is an engine with moving parts; if one of the parts cannot be taken off the shelf, it must be fabricated by hand or the game simply won't work. So data was invented in several key areas. For example, the data for political philosophy, the degree to which a government leans to the right wing or to the left wing, was created of whole

cloth (although hopefully, with a modicum of common sense). Other factors that were fabricated were the resistance of a government to insurgency, the strength of democratic traditions within the country, and a variety of minor factors.

Another factor to remember is the fact that only 54 of the more than 150 nations of the world are represented in the game. One might think that eliminating nearly two-thirds of all the countries of the world would make the game hopelessly simplistic, but indeed most of those rejected countries are truly insignificant in the global arena. How many people have even heard of the Seychelles, Lesotho, Andorra, or Sierra Leone? Of course, there were a number of sizeable countries that were lost in the shuffle, countries whose loss might seem surprising: El Salvador, Cambodia, Lebanon, and Bangladesh. These countries were rejected for a variety of reasons. In many cases, a country was simply so small that it could not be made visible on the map. In a few cases, it appeared that a country could easily be represented by other countries. For example, many African countries are quite large but also quite similar. Since there is no game-play need for 23 countries that are spitting images of each other in both domestic politics and foreign relations, many of the African nations were amalgamated. In eliminating nations, the hope was to retain the central conflicts that drive international relationships. Thus, Israel is confronted by Arab states that are radical and moderate, left-wing and right-wing. The essence of the Middle Eastern power mix is preserved even if Lebanon, Jordan, and Kuwait are not.

The most significant sacrifice in realism was made to make the game more playable and interesting. Early versions of this game were far more honest and realistic in their portrayal of international relations than this version. Unfortunately, they were also much more difficult to understand. Playtesters were baffled by the intricate interrelationships and myriad complications of the game. To make the game more easily understandable, *multipolarity* was eliminated in favor of *bipolarity*. The two terms require some explanation.

How is power distributed in the world? The simple view has it that the world is divided into two camps, labeled **US** and **THEM**, with the United States leading one camp and the Soviet Union leading the other camp. This is the bipolar view of the world. A more sophisticated view recognizes that there are quite a few countries (China leaps to mind) that don't fit into this scheme. In this multipolar view of the world, the two superpowers are still the most important countries in the world, but other power centers must be considered. Minor countries may have considerations that supersede their allegiance to one superpower or the other.

Unfortunately, this multipolar view of the world is just too cerebral for most game players. It has something to do with our expectations of games; a mature, otherwise sophisticated adult will sit down with this game and ask, "How do I nuke the Commies?" Games, like stories, must have conflict, but people have been so

inundated with the brutal, violent conflict standard in computer games that they are unable to grasp the subtle, indirect conflict arising from a multipolar world. This was a very painful discovery, and it forced a shift in the game from a multipolar view toward a more bipolar view. Minor countries had been able to pursue their own foreign policies; now they are passive pawns. Neutralist policies were entirely feasible; now minor countries choose up sides along left-wing/right-wing lines. The result is less realistic but more suited to the needs of the game-playing audience. Perhaps someday a more sophisticated game will be possible.

The most important realism issue, though, is probably the one that will generate the fewest questions: it concerns the dynamics of the simulation. How does a nation's GNP change from year to year? There is a formula for that; is it a realistic formula? What about the equations that govern the progress of an insurgency, or the fall of a government, or the determination of foreign policy? Even more important, what about the equations that determine how the Soviets will behave in a crisis? Understanding Soviet behavior is vitally important to the very survival of this country, and many brilliant scholars devote much energy to understanding their behavior, and here it has been reduced to a few simple equations. How do we know that any of the equations are any good at all?

The answer to all of these questions is, we don't know. There is no way to reconcile the soft pastels and subtle shifting shades of reality with the simple hard numbers of a computer program. A painting does not capture reality in its entirety, and neither does a program. The significant question is, does this game capture the feel of reality? Does it seem right to you? Ultimately, the value of the game is measured against your own understanding of international relations. So long as you must ask somebody else whether the game is realistic, then the game has something to teach you. It is hoped that this game will challenge you, make you think about the dynamics of the world, encourage you to learn more about this deadly competition at which the superpowers play. If you rise to this challenge, then the day will come when you can judge for yourself the realism of the game. Later still, the day may come when you can clearly see the many, many flaws in this game. When that day comes, the game will have achieved the goal set for it.

Appendix Two: Models Used in the Game

This game uses a large and intricate set of models to determine the behavior of the actors. As complex as all the cosmetic elements may seem, the invisible internals are even more complex. They take up more code and consume more memory by far than the visible portions of the program. This appendix attempts to sketch the outlines of the models used. We won't give away any of the dirty details, but we will try to explain it well enough so you can understand what factors are and aren't included.

Military Power

Military power springs from two factors: military spending and military personnel. Some armies are money-heavy and soldier-poor; the American army is the most extreme example of this, but all the Western armies tend to follow this pattern. Poor nations tend to have armies that are money-poor and manpower-heavy. Military power is based on both of these; the more money and more manpower the government throws at its army, the more powerful it will be.

The amount of manpower available to a government is based on the population and on the "draft fraction," the percentage of the population that the government has typically drafted in times past.

Military power is augmented by the contributions of superpowers. Military aid is added directly to the military budget of the country; this is most effective with poor countries. Superpower troops that intervene in favor of the government are not integrated into the host army; they bring a proportional amount of the superpower's military power with them. This additional military power is directly added to the country's military power.

Casualties from fighting the insurgency reduce the military power of the government. Over a period of time, these casualties can produce a steady degradation of the government's military power.

Insurgency

The local insurgency also has its own military power. It is derived from an entirely different source. The source of manpower is based on three factors: the total population of the country, the cultural proclivity of the people towards violent solutions to political problems, and the past record of success of the insurgency. In other words,

some countries, such as West Germany or Canada, are not inclined towards insurgency. Other countries, mostly those without a long tradition of stable governmental institutions, are more likely to have a large portion of their populations run off to join the guerrillas. The other factor is the record of success of the insurgency. As they start to win, everybody wants to get in on the bandwagon. Thus, it is crucial that an insurgency be nipped in the bud. Once it gets rolling, it takes an inordinate amount of power to stop.

The manpower of an insurgency is normally much greater than the amount of weaponry it can assemble. Typically, insurgencies fight with military power that is very manpower-heavy and weapon-poor. This is why small amounts of insurgency aid can have a large effect on the success of the insurgency. Again, a direct intervention results in the intervening superpower's military power being directly injected into the insurgency.

Each year, the insurgency and the government shoot each other up. Each side suffers losses. If the insurgency ever comes out of the battle more powerful than the government, it is declared the winner of the revolution. Otherwise, it bides its time and waits.

Economics Processing

Each country has a Gross National Product (GNP). This GNP is divided among three areas: military spending, investment spending, and consumer spending. Military spending goes for weapons. Investment spending goes for roads, schools, factories, and other things that will make the economy grow. The amount of investment spending determines the rate of growth of the GNP. Consumer spending goes for food, clothing, housing, and all the things that consumers like.

The government of each country allocates its GNP among these three areas according to an algorithm that cleanly takes into account the pressures on that country. Military pressure in the form of a powerful insurgency or a threatening superpower is translated into pressure to increase the military portion of the budget. However, consumers expect the consumer portion of the GNP to increase by at least 2% per year; if the government fails to meet this objective, its popularity falls. If the government's popularity falls below zero, it's time for a coup d'etat. Thus, the government's popularity acts as a pressure to increase consumer spending. Then there is always some pressure to maintain at least a small amount of investment spending to allow the GNP to grow. These three pressures are translated into a division of the GNP between the competing needs, and the spending figures are decided.

Crisis Artificial Intelligence

How does the computer decide whether to escalate or to back down? This is a vitally important question, the answer to which may surprise you. Some playtesters have been quite confused by the computer's behavior. In some cases, they simply could not believe that the computer would take a crisis so far over such a trivial issue. Here's the logic:

The central idea to understand is the concept of *import*. In this game, import is the degree to which a superpower becomes upset over a particular action. Import is in turn based on two factors: hurt and care. Hurt is a measure of just how much a particular action hurts (or helps) its object. Thus, if you destabilize a country, that constitutes a hurt. The amount of hurt for any given action is calculated by the program and used to calculate import. The second factor involved, though, is care. Care is the extent to which the superpower cares about the country in question. If it doesn't care very much, then the import is small even if the hurt is large. Care is based on three factors: the superpower's diplomatic affinity for the object country, their treaty relationship, and the degree to which the object country is within the superpower's sphere of influence.

Import is thus calculated for both superpowers. The computer player then compares its import with the import calculated for the human player. If its own import is much higher, it will stand firm and refuse to back down. If its own import is much lower, it will back down. Finally, if the two imports are close to each other, it will "flip a weighted coin" to determine the outcome.

This system produces some behaviors that may surprise you. For example, suppose that you as the American player gave economic aid to Nigeria. The Soviets take objection to this and start a crisis. You escalate, they escalate, and a nuclear war starts. The question on your lips is, why would those idiots annihilate the world over economic aid to Nigeria? The answer is, because *you* were willing to annihilate the world over Nigeria. Remember, it takes two to make a crisis. The computer figured that this just wasn't an important issue for you, and that, while trivial, it was still a more important issue for itself. It therefore stuck to its guns.

The surprising element here is anticipation. The computer attempts to anticipate your priorities. It assesses a variety of factors, such as your diplomatic affinity toward Nigeria, your treaty relationships with Nigeria, your demonstrated record of integrity in defending your treaty clients, and your sphere of influence. It concludes from past history that economic aid to Nigeria was simply not very important to you.

This raises a very important point about geopolitics. You could protest loudly, "But I *do* care about Nigeria! The computer can't assume what I'm really thinking!" You

are absolutely right. Real-world diplomats don't know what is truly going on in the minds of their interlocutors. They know perfectly well that today's words are only an expression of today's exigencies. The only thing they can rely on are the substantial events of the past. If you have built up a record of close relations with Nigeria, your behavior in a crisis will have to be taken seriously. If your record is of weak relations, then your behavior will not be taken seriously. The computer treats it that way. If you want to convince people that you're serious, you've got to lay the groundwork.

Finlandization

The decision to Finlandize is based on a simple calculation that attempts to answer the question, "Does either superpower have the strength to overwhelm me, and would that superpower use it?" Thus, if Canada has good relations with the USA, Canada would never Finlandize, because the USA would never attack a friend. On the other hand, if relations soured, Canada might come to fear an American attack, and would forestall such a possibility by Finlandizing first.

Another side to this question of whether a superpower would attack is the superpower's "adventurousness." This is the degree to which a superpower demonstrates a willingness to engage in dangerous or provocative behavior to further its own interests. Every time you ship troops around the world, give weapons to insurgents, or escalate in a crisis, you magnify your image as an adventurous superpower. This in turn makes minor countries more fearful of you. It also, of course, goads your opponent into like behavior. In other words, act tough and everyone will Finlandize to you — but the Soviets will get tougher, too.

The other aspect of Finlandization is projected military power. The amount of military power that you can project into a country is the primary determinant of its likelihood of Finlandization. Contiguity plays a large role in this determination. You can be sure Mexico and Canada will always be your friends. If you place American troops in a country, that country acts as a base from which you project power to all its neighbors; the amount of power that you project is proportional to the number of troops you place.

Coups D'Etat

As discussed earlier, coups are caused by failure to meet consumer expectations for increasing consumer spending. However, this is modified somewhat by the nature of the country. Countries with extremist governments tend to be more repressive, and can maintain themselves against consumer unrest more readily than more centrist governments can. Thus, Western democracies will tend to change governments more readily than, say, Eastern bloc countries or Latin American dictatorships, but when they do change, the political swings are not as violent.

Diplomatic Affinity

This is the quantity that you attempt to change in your attempt to garner points. Prestige is the product of diplomatic affinity and military power. You cannot do much to influence military power, but you can do a great deal to change a country's diplomatic affinity toward you and your opponent. There are four ways that diplomatic affinity will change: insurgency, coup d'etat, finlandization, and reactions to policies.

When a revolution occurs, the country undergoes a major change in its diplomatic relationships. If you were assisting the government in any way, the new government will treat you coldly. If you were assisting the insurgents, the new government will be grateful and will initiate a warm relationship. Moreover, there is an intrinsic bias based on the political stance of the new government. Left-wing governments tend toward good relations with the Soviet Union, while right-wing governments lean toward the United States. These are only leanings, however, not ironclad laws.

A government's behavior after a coup is similar to its behavior after a revolution, but not as extreme in nature. The new government's diplomatic affinities will shift based on its political leanings, but it will not shun a superpower for having given aid to the old government. If the superpower had assisted the coup with some destabilization, the new government will reward the assistance with somewhat better relations.

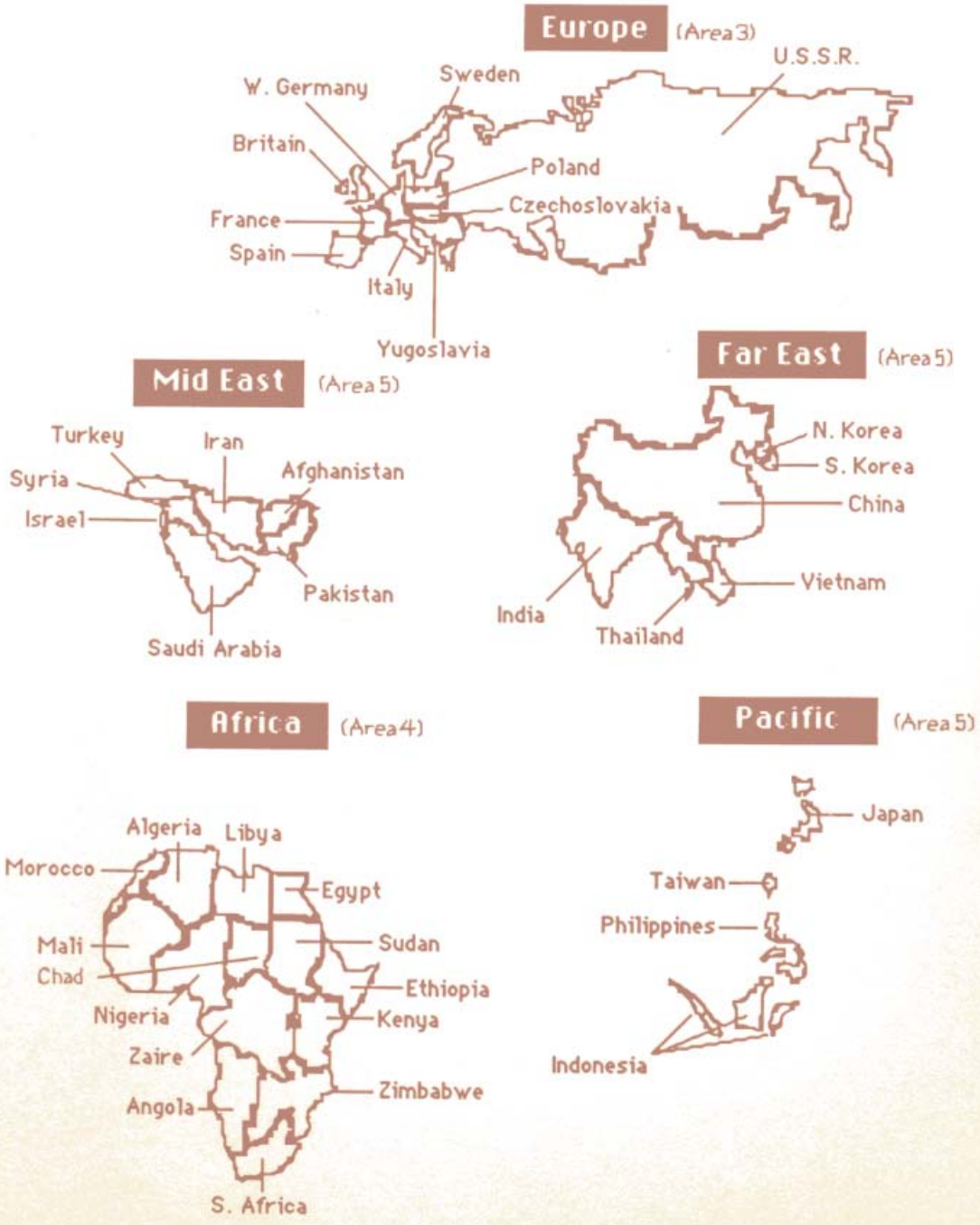
Finlandization has already been explained elsewhere. The Finlandizing government adjusts its diplomatic affinities to be closer to the feared superpower and further away from its opponent.

Reactions to policies are based on the amount of hurt or help done by the superpower, and their effects are restricted to the object of the policy. Thus, if you do something nice for somebody, they will like you for it; if you do something nasty, they will resent you. Other minor countries will not care about your policy; each minor country cares only for itself. (This was a painful concession to playability.) The response of a minor country to a policy action is proportional to the value of that policy. For example, economic aid to a poor country desperately in need of aid will be greatly appreciated, while the same amount of aid to a country that is doing well will not have so large an effect. Similarly, military aid to a country is appreciated in proportion to the country's perceived need for military aid. This does not work with negative actions, though. No matter what the situation is, aid to insurgents will infuriate the government. They will not shrug it off with the observation that the insurgents are too weak to do much harm anyway.

Appendix Three:
Balance of Power World Map






Europe
(Area 3)
U.S.S.R.
Sweden
W. Germany
Britain
Poland
Czechoslovakia
France
Spain
Italy
Yugoslavia
Mid East
(Area 5)
Turkey
Iran
Syria
Afghanistan
Israel
Pakistan
Saudi Arabia
Far East
(Area 5)
N. Korea
S. Korea
China
Vietnam
India
Thailand
Africa
(Area 4)
Algeria
Libya
Morocco
Egypt
Mali
Sudan
Chad
Ethiopia
Nigeria
Kenya
Zaire
Zimbabwe
Angola
S. Africa
Pacific
(Area 5)
Japan
Taiwan
Philippines
Indonesia

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I conceived, designed, programmed, developed, and tested this game. Yet, no such project is truly single-handed; every designer owes a debt of gratitude to a large number of people who lent him their advice, their assistance, and their sympathy.

As so many authors do, I must give a great deal of credit to my wife Kathy. I never made a big decision without consulting her first. She gave me valuable advice on almost every aspect of the program. Most important of all, she hung in there and supported me in the hard times when we faced the possibility of bankruptcy and loss of our home over this stupid game.

Dave Menconi also deserves to be singled out for special recognition. He playtested the game repeatedly, exposing numerous bugs and flaws. In at least two cases he found in less than thirty minutes serious bugs in what I thought was flawless code. I don't know how many patient hours he expended trying to help polish the game, but his contribution to the testing effort was far and away the greatest of any of my playtesters.

There are numerous other people who made their own contributions. In no particular order, these are Dale Yocum, Eric Goldberg, Gregg Williams, Steve Axelrod, Jim Warren, Steve Jasik, Scott Knaster, Joe Miller, and Tom Maremaa. Each of these people made a contribution that was in some way crucial to the progress of the game. Had any one of these people failed to offer his assistance so generously, *Balance of Power* might not have seen the light of day.

Chris Crawford

Bibliography

A great deal of research went into this game. Players who want to follow up on some of the facts and ideas presented in the game are encouraged to consult some of the books that were studied as part of the research effort:

White House Years and *Years of Upheaval*, by Henry Kissinger, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1979 and 1982. Whether or not you agree with Dr. Kissinger's policies, you will find these two books immensely informative on the workings of superpower diplomacy. Fascinating reading, highly recommended.

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