



## WORDS FROM THE WOOD

Well, once again it's time for us to bid you hello to another issue of Whispers of the Wood. "But wait!" you say after looking at the opening credits (as, I'm sure, you all do). "Who's this new guy at the keyboard, rambling on and on? Where's the old guy?" The old guy, Dennis, is, sad to say, gone. He moved on and that leaves me, the new guy, in charge. Just who is this new guy? My name is Stuart and I was, in fact, the very first editor of the hot little mag you now hold in your hands. Now I'm back in the driver's seat once again and I hope to make it a pleasurable trip.

The first point of note I'd like to address is that of the Free Peoples issue. Originally, this was scheduled for the June '93 issue. Unfortunately, lack of material and Dennis' departure has forced this idea back a couple of months. We are still very much interested in running a Free Peoples issue, but we need your help--namely, articles and strategy tips concerning the Free Peoples positions. I'd like to run it in September or October but we need submissions to be able to run it. So let's get to it, good guys--whatta ya got ta say?

On a related point, if you do send in stories, it will be easier on everyone involved if you can submit your stories, poems and articles on disc. It doesn't matter if it's a Mac or IBM system--we can convert it either way. The discs will be returned to you, naturally, and this will save you the hassle of printing and/or writing your submissions and it will save us time when your submission is used.

For those of you interested in grudge games, we currently have one three week game and two two-week games that need teams of Free Peoples. We also have openings for several Free Peoples teams of three to five players each for our multiplayer team games. Lets face it--we just need Free Peoples!! So if you are thinking of joining a game and aren't sure of which side you'd like to play, your setup will come much faster if you request the Free Peoples.

Along the same lines, if, in the future, you do send in a request to join a new grudge or team game, the fastest way to get started is to be willing to play either side. This way we can put your team in the game that is closest to going out. Any groups which are currently pending can switch simply by letting us know.

Please note that many of you are listing your army and navy movement from top to bottom rather than left to right. To avoid confusion and possible errors, we ask that you list the movement from left to right, as stated on p. 108 of the Middle Earth rulebook. We will be inputting the movement from left to right so if you write the information in columns, there is a chance it will be input incorrectly.

**CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS!!** Here's the latest news on our Contest of Champions. First, the matter of the fee. We are handling this either of two ways: you can send in the normal \$12.50 setup fee and pay for the turns as they go; or, you can pay a one time set-up fee of \$175 with no further turn fees for the rest of the game. We will need a "resume" listing your qualifications, no matter which way you want to pay, so if you're interested, we'd like to hear from you. We may run more than one game, if there are enough requests, so don't hesitate to get those resumes in.

That's the news. Talk to you next month.

*Stuart*



## ALONG THE PATHWAYS

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## PERSONALS: BARBS & BRAGS

Every current GSI player is entitled to a free 40 word personal in this column each issue, for each game they're in. Submissions require a \$2.00 charge for each additional set of 40 words (41-80 is \$2.00 etc.). GSI reserves the right to edit or refuse material deemed unsuitable.

### GENERAL

I would like to pool my knowledge of M.E. with other players. Contact Me!

Raymond Campanale  
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Moravia, NY 13118

\*\*\*\*\*

As the "Shades of Madness" continue to wait for a Free Peoples Team to face us, I would like to remind all potential adversaries that competence and intelligence are as equally important as experience.

Naurmegil  
Mordor

P.S. - Surely someone out there feels like signing his own death warrant, and paying for his own execution.

\*\*\*\*\*

Wanted: Free People Team for an EXTREMELY challenging game. Dark Servant opponents have over forty (collective) games of experience stretching back to the early games, many of which they are winning or have won. The In-experienced need not apply. Contact GSI Today!  
Eldacar of Nurn

### STATE OF WAR

#### GAME 81

Hello Virginia,

Go west or go south, because if you come north you'll find out there ain't no Santa Claus. You're the problem and I'm the solution.

Governor of Massachusetts

#### GAME 82

The people of Maryland wish to announce that Governor Finessey has bestowed a medal of bravery upon General Batman. Rogue Element goes up, not down!

- Rogue Element

\*\*\*\*\*

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill can't be hidden.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Think it not that I am come to destroy! I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:14-17)

Ask yourself, are you in the house or out in the cold?

President Jebidiah Jones  
Nation of Utah

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

\*\*\*\*\*

General Grakious - Begin operation Northern Exposure.

General Smith - Continue operation Grand Tour.

General Hammer - Operation City on the Mount successful!

General Crazy Karl - Report.

General Crazy Karl - Please Report. Karl where are you?

Middle-earth™ PBM

#### GAME 3

##### News Item in the Weekly Web:

Sources close to the Flamelord report that despite cautious advice by treasurer, hundreds of new troops flock to Ren's cause every

week, and are accepted into the greatest armed force on the world. Current strength (as of turn 45): 6 armies, including 75 war machines, 7490 HC, 6895 HI, 327 LC, 1195 AR, and 12557 MR! As our forces sweep through the Gray Havens, we thank the tenacious Dwarves for providing us with the opportunity to allow our forces to reach sizes far beyond what they really need! This may be a nearly endless game compared to some - but it does illustrate the ability of even a single nation to survive, with stubborn - and skillful - leadership. Baaltrac, we salute you! - Ren the Unclean,

Flamelord

\*\*\*\*\*

Harad,

If you wish to see me out of this game, you'll have to do more than steal gold at Suthlad. Of the 21 characters I've lost to assassins, how many can you take credit for? Wipe me out if you can, but I will not give in to the gentle comfort of death.

Baaltrac

\*\*\*\*\*

OK Dwarves, Now I'm really mad! Not only did I have to buy another binder, I only received three agent character points for killing two of your characters last turn. Heads will roll.

Lord Marshall Haruth Ramam

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Bulletin from Mithlond-West:

Port facilities here have been activated after long disuse. Dependable sources say Flamelord's minions building large fleet of transports. Speculations on where Ren will go range from "Into the West" to "the Island of Wild Dreams"...

#### GAME 6

The forces of darkness have long been defeated. So, why does this senseless war drag on? Tests of simple stamina and/or stubbornness belong back in High School.

Make that Junior High School.

From the Court of  
The Crimson King

#### GAME 11

I hear them lying, see them cheat and steal, there's no denying, the endless bloodshed they try to conceal, and there's a feeling, hidden deep within, but be forgiven, so they can do it over again.

The Wandering Prophet

#### GAME 20

I know the great tactic being used by the "Former Neutral", let someone else do their fighting. I for one, am tired of making others look good at my expense.

#### GAME 21

With Haradwaith gone, the odds are even better, six on two. Let's see how fast we can finish this one up.

Baaltrac

#### GAME 22

Hi Hooooo! Hi Hooooo! It's off to work we go! I'm back. It's turn 36 and we haven't died yet. We may still surprise you nasties in the south. Have a good (or is that evil?) turn.

Da Dwarves

#### GAME 27

Dragon Lord,  
The flame starts in Northern Mirkwood and the wind is blowing

south. Only you can prevent forest fires...or can you?

Lord Lumahk

#### GAME 28

##### Dunlending Leaders at Council:

Leader 1: Gwargh!

Leader 2: Blowthleah Ghrulh....

Leader 1: Shlemph...KILL!!! har, har, har

Leader 2: Blah... \*Drool\*

Hey evils...These guys are beating you??77!!!

\*\*\*\*\*

Hey Subedel,

Shoot, you think you've got it rough in the South? One more 300 man Easterling Men-at-Arms army might just put me under (yeah right). Will this game ever end?

Naurmegil  
Northmen

#### GAME 29

As the summer rolls around, the summer heat moves north. Noldo - you can't hide forever.

Ashturg

#### GAME 31

Sir,

Both the Blind Sorcerer Curates have been eliminated, along with a Dog Lord Agent, Commander, Long Rider Mage and Emissary. More are soon to follow. Perhaps there is hope yet for GOOD to prevail. Morlammen's head will soon hang upon a pike.

#### GAME 34

Sauron's shadow has descended upon all the lands East and South of the Misty Mountains. Arnor, soon

shall you be consumed then all the land shall know of Sauron's power.

Adunaphel, Sauron's 7th

#### GAME 35

##### Next dunnish vacation spot:

Mordor

And then there were four: Dragon, Dog, Blindman, and Cloudman.

Harad: When are you going to make up your mind - Are we going to have to Force you or not?

Onward to Mordor!

\*\*\*\*\*

As General Marl Tarma struggled through the Misty Mountains, he wondered if any Dark Servants would still be alive in Mirkwood by the time he got there.

Baaltroc

#### GAME 36

Sob, sob,... It just brings tears to my eyes to know that Elrond has at last been reunited with his sweet little Elrohir. ...Ha, ha, haa, ha, ha, haa, Tee, hee, hee... Haa, haa. Ho, ho, hooo.

Ren

#### GAME 37

Cardolan:

Hallas, Imlach, Lanaigh, Earnil, Finduilas III and Pelendur are all dead. Aren't you glad you came to visit me.

Dendra Dwar

P.S. - By the time you read this I will have killed at least 5-10 more of your wimps.

\*\*\*\*\*

##### News Flash!

Headbanging invented 4000 years early! After the touring band Angawen (Sindas who think they are

Iron Maiden) played a concert at Calmirië, 2000 fans trashed a Dog Lord army! Witnesses say that hobbits sold the fans foreign substances from the Southfarthing. The fans (who were Cardolanian cavalry) then banged their heads against the fort shouting, "Die with your boots on!" Angawen members were seen picking through the carnage, animating choice dead for stage mascots.

#### GAME 40

It has begun. The first battle in the Northwest in 20 weeks is over. Larach-Duhnan might now be ruins but I predict that soon all the cities in the West will be likewise. The hand of Sauron has grown long indeed.

The Dark Prophet

#### GAME 41

South Gondor, supported by Fire King subsidies, holds the game hostage by threatening to drop as the last Free Player unless the other Dark Powers turn on each other - maybe it really does take only one side to have a war.

#### GAME 43

Do I detect a bit of defensiveness in Celdrahil the Oh-So-Mighty? While you send me empty threats and mindless drivel, the Quiet Avenger and I chew away at the Corsairs.

Poor Corsairs, they messed up, they trusted you to help them. As far as me helping the Quiet Avenger, she is my ally. That's A-L-L-Y, (look it up). Even as a Neutral I found more honor among the Evils than the so-called Free Peoples, that's why it was easy to make my decision on who to ally with. Even if something does come out of your three way alliance (now two way),

to see to my demise, I harbor no regrets. Better to die with friends at my back than to beg and gibber over scraps of help from the likes of you (Poor Corsairs).

All Praise, Sauron

Haruth Ramam

True Lord of the South

P.S. - If you must know, I live in an apartment at the same address as the restaurant I manage. The phone # just happens to be the easiest way to reach me. Now, stop the personal crap, and stick to the game, it isn't very professional after all. This is between our characters, in good fun, not us.

Russell

\*\*\*\*\*

Hear me, Children of the West, for your time grows short. The Servants of Evil are not Spirits alone. Now you shall know why you fear the night, as your fears take form. So it is written.

The Wandering Prophet

#### GAME 45

The tide turns in Mirkwood. The Free Peoples throw down their defences to combat the common evil. The rain that falls in the forest will shake the very foundations of Mordor. Free Peoples fear no more!

\*\*\*\*\*

Southern Gondor is a puppet nation but who is pulling the strings, 'Ey Cardolan?' Decide now which nation is most important to you, or others decide it for you. So it is written.

The Wandering Prophet

\*\*\*\*\*

##### The Wandering Prophet Asks:

Where are the Corsairs? They're not home and the Cloud Lord is knocking.

The thieves shall become thieved,  
The killers shall become killed  
The makers of cheese shall inherit  
the world.  
Blessed are the cheese makers.  
So speaks some idiot.

#### GAME 47

##### Overheard at a meeting of Nazgul:

"Listen! Did you hear that?"  
"Why, yes, it sounds like a fat lady  
singing."  
"Well, go shut her up! We're not  
done killing everyone off yet."  
The hunt continues...who get eludes  
the hounds?

#### GAME 49

I regret to announce that  
Tarondor has been slain. His killer,  
Oendra Dwar, has since been put to  
death. Under Tarondor's rulership we  
have destroyed three of the Nazgûl  
and have taken Durthang, Barad-dûr  
and Barad Ungol. Free Peoples  
rejoice for the White Tree is alive  
and well in Minas Anor.

Northern Gondor

#### GAME 51

##### Attention all world leaders:

The Dunlendings are playing  
both sides of the struggle. Anything  
he does is to his advantage. His  
tongue is that of a serpent, his eyes  
are that of a jackal. Promises are as  
hollow as his head.

#### GAME 53

Am I the only who thinks Ar-  
gular of the Cloud Lord looks like  
Captain Picard.

Mike Wilson

#### GAME 54

Once again, Murazor reports  
the death of another nation

arrogant enough to call itself  
"Free", the former nation of the  
Woodmen. When will your  
stubbornness end? All that he asks  
is that you acknowledge Sauron's  
rightful place as ruler of Middle-  
earth, Murazor's rightful place as  
Sauron's Regent. In return, he will  
see that peace returns to Middle-  
earth. What could be more  
reasonable?

So speaketh Angulion,  
Spokesman of Murazor  
The Witch-king

#### GAME 55

Here at Carn-dum, we sell only  
the best used equipment. Noldo  
artifacts, Woodmen tights, Cardolan  
swords (only been dropped once)  
and because of overruns, Arthedain  
command standards. As a special  
bonus, we'll give you an entire  
Southern Gondor town! Hey, we've  
got so much stuff, we give it away.

P.S. - Dragon next day mail at no  
extra cost.

#### GAME 56

Don't worry, the back door of  
Mordor is safe. Safely in our power  
that is. The might of KHAND is  
proving itself. No enemy armies  
beckon.

Ovatha II

#### GAME 57

Tips from Tros:

Looking for a tasteful yet  
inexpensive way to spruce up those  
drab war chariots? Try dwarfs. They  
make great hood ornaments. For  
added panache, hang their boots on  
your rear view mirror (preferably  
with their little feetsies still inside).  
Tres chic!

Speaking of Dwarves, how best  
to fight them? Our armies use  
mages with Wind Mastery spells.

This keeps the little buggers from  
ever getting upwind and exploiting  
their poor personal hygiene on the  
battlefield.

Tros

#### GAME 59

There is a polson in Mordor,  
and its name is Ji Indur...

The Black Sage

\*\*\*\*\*

Angamaite despises the Free,  
While insulting the Dark.  
Stretching from Lugalur to Bree,  
All hear his whimpering bark.  
He even attacks Neutrals,  
To reach the top.  
Our remedies consist of Trolls,  
And Cloud Lord chop-chop.

Dark Soul of Ji Indur

#### GAME 60

From the annals of the Ice  
King, we bring you "Why we are  
winning", a treatise of self delusion.  
"Hah, the Free Peoples only think  
that we let them have Angmar. It  
was all part of our master plan to  
let the Witch King go down in  
smoking defeat. We also planned to  
lure neutrals into the Free People  
alliance. Finally, we deliberately  
continue to waste agent resources  
far in the West. That way, we can  
trick the Free Peoples into believing  
we are fools. Then, we shall rise  
from the ashes of Mordor and ...,  
and ..., hey Khamul, what happens  
then?"

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Dark Servant's Master Plan (Third Time Takes The Cake)

1) Get mad at Northmen making fun  
of you.  
2) Send agents into Northmen  
capital.

3) After those agents are injured or  
captured, send in Ji Indur.

4) Assassinate worthless 30 point  
Mage and allow Northmen agents to  
steal Ring of Curufin from Ji Indur.

5) Leave Ji Indur in Northmen  
capital so that Northmen agents  
assassinate him.

6) Repeat (please!)

Naurmegil,  
Northmen II

\*\*\*\*\*

Hey Nasties! Your bud the Ice  
Man says you all think you're  
winning! Ha ha ha. Surely Durthang  
and the death of Murazor speak  
volumes. We will see to the clean up  
of Khamul shortly. Have a viciously  
bad summer!

Mendacil of Dol Amroth

#### GAME 61

"To run with the wolves, you must  
be a tiger."

Eothraim Proverb

\*\*\*\*\*

Dog Lord,  
Without you, this game would  
have been long over.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ren,  
What can I say but "Thanks for  
the memories?" Do you feel dumb  
or what?

\*\*\*\*\*

Hey Northmen!  
What goes on?! You're  
relinquishing prime real estate!  
Thanks, Ovatha

#### GAME 62

The wizened old man considered the  
words of the stranger:  
"And what of our allies?" asked  
Hellas.

The hooded figure paused and then responded:

"Hige sceal pe heardra, heorte pe cenre, mod sceal pe mare pe ure maegen lythao!"

\*\*\*\*\*

He who stands behind the throne shall soon be hanging from the Gibbet....Mordor comes for you, Hallas.

Angulion of Angmar

### GAME 63

Come Black Silver - Your churlish insults mean nothing. I crave to defeat you in battle. Your faint-hearted message betrayed a palsied mind. I fear you not.

So saith The Easterling King

\*\*\*\*\*

Infighting will only hurt our side. Those of you, who are committing such acts know who you are.

\*\*\*\*\*

Elrond paused on his way to lunch to watch the Dwarven, Cardolan and Noldo troops clean up the last signs of the morning's battle. He noticed that the citizens of Cameth Brin who had not fled during the attack were beginning to come out of their homes. Some were pointing at the crisp Dwarven banner flying from a pole in the town square, already adapting to a new order after a brief reign of terror by deluded leaders serving Sauron. Noticing the visiting Dunnish, Arthedain and Woodmen officers crowding toward the command area foot tent, he then realized he would have to hurry if he wanted anything to eat. Musing on the overall situation he thought, 'I suppose Rhudaur was right about

one thing, I guess we DID have enough allies."

\*\*\*\*\*

### A new song sweeps throughout Mirkwood:

You put the cash card in  
You pull the cash card out  
You take all the Sinda money  
Then you sing and shout  
Nothin' left for a rainy day,  
So who said, "crime doesn't pay".

A "Din-0, Lomlindë" Production

### GAME 64

Uh Sir... the presence of evil armies has vanished from sight. About time! Tell our Vassal, those horse-guy, to send out the real armies now.

Yes sir!... Where?  
Anywhere but our pop centers!!  
The slightly Miffed Northmen Nation

\*\*\*\*\*

Hey Northmen,  
Sure there are Evils left! There just aren't any Nazgul left (or their nations)!

Naurmegil, #9

P.S. - I ask again - Are we that good or are they that bad? (It's only turn #9).

### GAME 65

Oh boy!  
Not one but two dragons in that army. I'd better come challenge them : )

- Elrond

### GAME 66

World Update-  
Rhudaur leadership abdicates!  
Individual towns seek new allegiances!  
Corsairs launch full-scale

Corsairs launch full-scale

invasion of South Gondor but meet fierce resistance! Staggering losses reported!

Kingdoms of Angmar and Dol Guldor face imminent collapse!

Long-rider and Eothraim appear battle-weary. More to follow...

\*\*\*\*\*

Those Free People must think I'm pretty dangerous! First, a failed attempt to capture Goblins Gate left a combined force of 7700 Free People soldiers dead or scattered. All of the Commanders but one were killed: Osríc, Waulfa, Lanthir and Glorfindel - only Thranduil survived. I personally slew Thranduil about two weeks later.

In the second attempt to take Goblins Gate, Thelór II lost 1300 of his best troops. At least he managed to get his prize. However, he also was slain by my servant Wodurishak less than a fortnight later. Eoder of the Northmen lost 695 troops on the same day - and Beawyn was taken hostage.

Now Lord Veantur of Northern Gondor hopes to get Tir Limlight back. I have no doubt that he will succeed as he has quite a large army. Should know, however, that the agents he has sent to Dol Guldor - Thuloc, Alexi, etc., will not be helping him to capture my Keep! And weren't my allies in Mordor pleased to hear how far from that dark land his attentions have been drawn.

P.S. - Elrond, my condolences on your recent loss of Gildor and the prize he bore.

Khamûl, The Dragon Lord

### GAME 67

Isn't it interesting that the Evil team is complaining about the neutrals turning to the side of Aight. From the tone, they might believe

that external forces are at work, when it simply follows from their own methods. In fact, with their constant lies and threats, it would be a surprise if they did not drive all five neutrals to the side of the Fair Folk. At least they've got the big stick part of the quotation down pat. Honi soit qui mal y pense!

### GAME 68

Ready to depart on their whirlwind tour of Mordor, the Gondorian 'foot cavalry' quietly departed Barad Ungol. The troops were singing 'Marching through Mordor' as they went.

### GAME 69

In the depths of Lórien, many things lie hidden. Among them, stripped of Ring, Shield, Helm, and Sword, lies the body of Elatar, proud ruler of Caras Galadhon...for a day. Were four of Gondor's heirlooms - and Elatar's death - too much to pay for this woodland major town? Perhaps - but payment has just begun! Veantur should have followed his leader to the lands of the dead by now...and more will follow him!

Arglûk Zog, for the  
Dark Lieutenants

\*\*\*\*\*

Doing the end-around gained you little. Was it worth the loss of Dancu's cavalry? Dancu was lucky he escaped death! Thus all your attempts shall come when you dare to transgress in my realm.

Elrond

### GAME 70

Q: So how come there's no tower at Barad-dûr, i.e. "tower-dark"?

A: 'Cause Sauron hasn't gotten around to rebuilding it yet! Besides,

we wouldn't want to spoil the fun of all those Free People cavalry armies...

\*\*\*\*\*

Wow, neat Ring! I wonder who I should destroy first?

Santa's Helper

\*\*\*\*\*

My fellow Neutrals, the time to choose draws nigh. The Free People wax powerful, and many of us who hesitate to face their might should certainly flock to their dazzling banners.

I, however, choose not to enter this war as either lapdog or worse--carrion eater, content to slurp down the spoils of others' victories.

The Free People would find our assistance amusing, brothers and sisters. But, the Dark Servants need us. The choice, of course, is yours. My choice is made, and may Sauron guide my cavalries to glory.

Respectfully Yours,

Dvatha II

#### GAME 72

The things I have to do for a closer look!

Naurmegil, Cloud Lord  
Admirer (and now owner)  
of Herugrim and Uilya

#### GAME 73

Long Rider defeated, But Rhovanion lost?! With no allied help, The loss is a great cost.

Five Darkies on one, Selfish neighbors no help. Playing terrorist is fun, Proving Northmen are not whelps.

Dark Soul of the Northmen  
Sauron's Bane

#### GAME 74

Brother Nazgul,

Let our powers combine to rid ourselves of Northern & Southern Gondor!

Grimsay

\*\*\*\*\*

Celdrahil,

Arrive a little late? That's alright, my agents & emissaries will be paying you a visit soon! Noldo Elves, do you really want the little village at 1916, Cillien? I'm not sure the Dunlendings will get it to you. Elharian, beware elves bearing gifts.

Grimsay

#### GAME 75

"The Noldor thank the Witch-king for the gift of 12,627 food. Perhaps next time you should make sure you have captured a population center BEFORE you transfer to it!"

Elrond

\*\*\*\*\*

He stood among the trees on a low hill overlooking the fearful major town, idly showing on Eothraim Commander Aluiric's severed sword arm. His eyes narrowed, probing for defensive weaknesses. A subordinate approached, head bowed in fear.

"Master, your arm is fully prepared for battle. Shall I order the capture of Buhr Widu?"

"No. As before, we could not hold it. Burn the town to ashes, and leave none alive."

He took another bite. He loved the taste of cowards. The Warlord had come to Mirkwood.

#### GAME 76

I am disappointed that I see no notes in "Whispers of the Wood". What kind of grudge match is this?!

Arfanhil of Rhudaur

#### GAME 78

KGB summer agent convention books the Hilton at Minas Anor. Midnight Riders scale the cliffs of Mordor oblivious to a giant Thud in Buhr Walmart. On a sadder note, the Bureau of Land Management has commenced logging operations in Lothlorien.

#### GAME 79

In a vallant, early morning charge upon the ominous Witch-king strong hold at Kemperbad. Lord Argeleb II, King of Arthedain, was slain. Rest in peace - your sacrifice was not in vain!

#### GAME 80

"The NW rests on the Dunlending choice. By now they are Free or Dead by Free hands. First was their failure to defend Tharbad. Now are they redeemed or condemned? Does Metriath stand?"

Ensam Harskare (7)

\*\*\*\*\*

"The Long Rider drops a navy, than an army to Eothraim at a Dilgul. Two Quiet Avenger navies with commanders sink beneath Southern Gondor in the Bay of Belfalas. Will the REAL Dark servants show up?"

Ensam Harskare (7)

\*\*\*\*\*

Having difficulties? Call 1-900-Easterlings, the corporate giant now includes the majority stockholders of the Blind Sorcerer realm. Coming soon, the regional assimilation of the Cloud Lord. Their corporate takeover attempts failed; mine will not.

Dark Soul, the Neutral

First Eoder and his army run down like a possum. Then Frumgara and his army. Northmen capital falls. Jirfelin wasn't very challenging Dudanis dead (I do check under my bed before I go to sleep). Hey Vissini, having fun yet?

\*\*\*\*\*

Rhudaur has chosen most unwisely the hills and forest of Angmar will be Cleansed of filth.

So sayeth,  
Bain I

\*\*\*\*\*

Hear the cry of the gulls, an echo of slaughter  
The marks of the battle swept clean by the tide.  
But the sand is still red,  
The spring flowers trampled  
Eothraim witnessed two armies' last rides.

Two banners there were, aloft in the morning.  
Two thousand steel lances to shine in the sun.  
But one now lies still,  
It's lances all broken  
Eothraim finish'd what Long Riders begun.

Some saddles are empty, some children now orphans  
The price of our freedom is now paid in blood.  
But the dark ones now fear  
Their Power is uncertain.  
Eothraim calls rally, Light'll roll like a flood.

#### GAME 81

"Dawn nears, we must to arms.", said the old Veteran.

"Rye, still I had hoped all of Arnor would rise to challenge Angmar," added the Young Noble.

"The war is young, they come in their own good time."

- campfire conversation -

## GAME 82

A company of adventurers came to Lothlorien today claiming that the great evil was about once again. We awakened the leaders and magically searched Dol Guldur. There we found one of the Nine. And so it begins anew.

- Lothlorien Bards

\*\*\*\*\*

Wanted: Large, highly motivated army to attack Woodmen holdings and forces. Must be well trained and have own equipment. Contact Murazor at 1-800-1WE-LOST.

Khamul needs intimidating men for second attempt to threaten undefended Woodmen camp. Glory to the Nazgul!

\*\*\*\*\*

As the ground thunders beneath their hooves, the proud men of Ahovanion charged into the Evil hordes. Pounding, ripping, cleaving. After the dust fell only Brave men were left. Free men!

.58 cal.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Dragon Lord is caught snoozing, there he is loosing. Thew Witch-king has troubled times. Things are odd. Ren, you must perform better than that.

Neutral and Thinking  
FREE!

\*\*\*\*\*

Contrary to the culture of the Free Peoples, cowardise is not admired or practiced in Ahudaur.

Naurmegil  
Northmen

P.S. - Your hesitation has cost you an ally.

## GAME 83

There are over 20,000 troops in eight armies from six nations at Osgiliath this turn. I can't wait to see the results from this battle!

Baaltrac

\*\*\*\*\*

Boy! That's a predictable set of moves if I've ever seen one!...I love the smell of burnt flesh on the morning...It smells like victory!

Neutrals - Join evil now, while the "Two for One" and "Grow as you Go" plans are still available!

- The K-9 Prince

## GAME 84

"Allies! I have received more 3\*5 cards from the Dark Servants then from my allies! Come on, let's communicate or we will surely fall!

Ensam Harskare (7)"

## GAME 85

Be it known!

I, Ren the Unclean, Eighth of the Nazgul and the King of Fire, do hereby announce the appointment of Stimpny as Chief Emissary for my affairs. She speaks with my tongue and holds my wishes in her heart.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Easterling Intelligence Report:

Quiet Avenger can't spell.  
Eothraim are "horsriders" Ahem?  
Ren the Unclean thinks he's funny.  
Bain I is a flamer.  
Montreal Canadians beat L.A.  
It's a Canadian Stanley Cup.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Dark Servants:

Take note of the fate of the Puppy Lord troops. All intrusion into Ahovanion will be dealt with swiftly and mercilessly.

Lord Mahrcaed

### Hey Khamul - here's a lesson in economics:

Take 110 Orcs, 220 steel, 5000 gold and 1 Nazgul and what do you get? A Dwarven picnic. There are bumps in the roads that do more damage. Better Luck next time.

## GAME 86

the Lidless Eye's search,  
Is for one small ring.  
Dol Guldur is his perch,  
Listening to insipid Elves sing.

Ten powerful Servants walk,  
Seeking his highest prize.  
The Free People's talk,  
Becomes frightened whines and cries.

Dark Soul of Sauron

\*\*\*\*\*

Order is restored at Minas Ithil. Now all wimpy Gondorians labor to serve Shagrat their Orc task-master. Soon, Orc law and order will apply to Osgiliath and Minas Anor. May the Glory of Ren be exceeded only by Sauron's.

## GAME 88

The Lords of Dunland seek bids for our favors (talk is cheap). We are reasonable fellows, and can be bought for a price. Our arms are strong and our knowledge deep. Bids (by GSI mail) due by the third turn. NOTE: invasions provide bonus points to the opposition!

Enion of the Duns

## GAME 89

Free Peoples:

The watch on Mordor is gone. Arnor is a shattered realm. Even mighty Greenwood has succumbed to the shadow. Dragons stir from their age-old slumber. The Balrogs answer Sauron's call. The Lidless eye

glances over those who claim neutrality. Choose wisely or suffer Sauron's wrath.

\*\*\*\*\*

A darkness is creeping across Middle-earth distorting all. But the soldiers of light stand defiantly in its path, united and proud. The Free Peoples will stand victorious over this Dark perversion of nature and banish thee from this land.

\*\*\*\*\*

### To all evil Players:

I have the ONE RING!  
It's on my capital! Come and get it!  
- A Big, Bad Bear

P.S. - I'm really cocky, so put me in my place (or write me a letter, I'm bored)

## GAME 90

Come forth Bain!

I Duran, challenge you to single combat. Will you face me or continue to cower in your musty holes and cringe behind your wall of stunted half-men?

Duran the Devourer  
The Dragon Lord's Lieutenant

\*\*\*\*\*

A curious thing, The clouds, Traveling on the wind. You can always be found; And if thy loyalties be true, They'll leave your eyes a rainbow. But a wavering thought will leave only mud, and the stink of death's rot.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Curse of the Nazgul

The fell and fair lord of Gondor shall fall. His ending shall not be meet, but fell as the dark wings of unnamed beasts. His heirs shall be borne away to the Land of the Shadow, where souls wither and

flesh devoured. His white tree shall shrivel, for the black breath shall blow foul and chill from the heart of Mordor. In the Land where the Shadows lie.

--A spear of terror in the hand of Sauron, shadow of despair.

#### GAME 93

All hail Lord Sauron! The gathering storm clouds in the east are a signal of woe unto the Free Peoples! The Nine once again are loosened upon unsuspecting victims. Let agony, despair, destruction and death ride with them.

Nosferatu

#### GAME 94

All right, I don't want a clean fight; Below the belts, kicking,

biting, scratching are OK. Headbutts & Bodyslams are OK too. Now go to your corners. When you hear the bell come out fighting! OK?!

Ding, ding!

\*\*\*\*\*

Arise ye forces of Good; you virtuous warriors of stout heart, as we valiantly drive the spawn from Evil' from Middle-earth. It shall be glorious.

Demosthenes

#### GAME 96

How about it, Neutrals?

Shall we embrace you as brothers, or bury you with the rest of Sauron's sad crew? Either decision is fine. Only dithering shall be frowned upon.

The Winners (all too soon)

evidence seems to indicate that a commander by the name of Pochak may be responsible. Film at 11:00 pm.

#### Hourns and Ents

Glorfindel reported having a few words with a man wearing brown clothing and this individual left him with great knowledge. In examining the grounds immediately following a battle at 2418 the remains of a few Hourns and Ents were discovered, however it is unclear how or what actually took place at this location. We will continue to look into this situation.

#### Has anybody seen, Elrond?

Elrond appears to be extremely busy these days and has been reported as seen in several different places...Where can he truly be???

He was first spotted matching his strength against Hoarmurath in personal combat, where he was victorious. Then it was reported that he was slain by a Dragon which he tried to bribe and another report informed us that he killed a dragon. Can someone tell us really what Elrond is doing and where he is???

#### Sauron. Is neither here nor there?

He was first believed to be seen speaking with Warlord Argarast and then next he was believed to have dealings with Leardinoth. The most catastrophic report was that Sauron had slaughtered an army commanded by Thrár of the Dwarven empire. Now will someone shed some light on the whereabouts of Sauron???

## ☉☉☉ Middle-earth PBM Observer ☉☉☉

### Head Lines from the Front Lines

#### Dragons. Dragons. Dragons...

Rumor has it that the Free Peoples felt the wrath of Khuzadrepa, who assisted Angamaite, as he drew from the forces of nature, stunning all those who opposed them. It was also rumored that a character by the name of Ariel consulted with Khuzadrepa and he was pleased by her words. Cithis and Helzair were fortunate in their efforts in bribing Lomaw and Scatha and as a result Leardinoth will be blessed with their abilities.

In other regions of Middle-earth - Dragons such as Khuzadrepa, Urial and Itangast, found favor with the likes of characters such as Melkar, Menka and Raonull, respectively. This type of behavior is quite rare, but within the realm of possibility. Also, there have been several reports of Lamthanc being seen with Ren the Unclean and Throkmau was also believed to be involved with an elf from either the nation of Noldo or Sinda.

#### Northmen Overrun

Due to the amount of evidence uncovered in Rhovanian the forces of the Eothraim were believed to be overrun by forces of the Blind Sorcerer. The

NOTE - Opinions expressed in the following article are the author's alone. Game Systems neither agrees nor disagrees with the author's viewpoints.

#### Blood and Glory, Part III

Warfare in Middle-earth PBM

by Tom Walton

#### Hoarmurath takes Minas Anor!!!

The last in a series of introductory articles meant to give the new guys a fighting chance against their seasoned opponents, this one concerns what I once referred to as 'window-dressing': mages, agents, and emissaries.

Though there's nothing like hearing the enemy scream in rage as you burn his capitol to the ground, other diversions can prove almost as satisfying. Whether you enjoy blasting enemy troops with fell magic, slipping poisoned daggers between the ribs of foes, or preaching to the masses to sway them to your cause, this article will hopefully give you some ideas on how to satisfy your longing for mayhem.

#### Magic in the Air

Mages are a versatile group, with a number of nasty spells at their command. These spells can be used directly against characters or armies, or indirectly by

locating nifty artifacts or spying on the enemy. A few of the uses for your Gandalf-wannabe's are provided below.

**Artillery from Hell.** The most obvious use for mages is in the direct support role of the army. Able to cast spells which inflict damage upon the enemy or deflect the same from his own forces, the mage can give the army the edge it needs to win a battle. Several skilled mages together can wreak a terrible toll upon a foe, or make it virtually impossible for smaller forces to cause any casualties at all.

This can be especially important if you're expecting battle and short on troops. By having your best mages join the army, you can increase the strength of your force by several thousand points or more. This tactic can also be used into tricking an enemy into thinking your army is weaker than it is, then using magic to blast him into worm-meat when he sends out a force to intercept you. In combination with some powerful combat artifacts, you can spring a nasty surprise upon a foe by destroying a force several times the size of your own. No longer will he laugh at those 'small' armies.

**Search and Destroy.** Some nations start with the ability to learn spells from the Spirit Mastery list, while others can gain it by acquiring certain artifacts or surviving particular encounters. Learning the more powerful versions of these spells allows a company of mages to travel to strategic locations and use magic to strike down particularly reviled characters.

**Curses**, for example, can be cast at one hex away (meaning you won't have to brave a population center or army hex), and does half the mage's skill score in damage to the target's Health rank. Get together 200 skill points worth of mages, and you can kill a character every turn. If you station this company adjacent to a nation's capitol, you could either slay or drive off those pesky leaders left behind to do the 'capitol only' orders.

What makes this tactic especially inviting is that there's no defense; Elrond falls just as easily as Yezmin does. And if the nation has just one place to put a capitol, you could make one or two attacks and then move on to other targets; fear that you might still be hanging around could force your enemy to vacate the capitol for several turns.

The drawback to the 'curses' company is that all the mages concerned must learn the spell, and while they're out happily sending their enemies to their doom, they won't be able to increase their own skill ranks or research other spells. Still, if you can off Elrond, Argeleb, or a few other powerful figures, or perhaps disrupt an enemy capitol during a critical point in the war, it can be worth the lost skill increases.

**Big Brother is Watching.** The 'Scry' spells are great for finding out what the enemy's up to without actually risking a character in the attempt. Information is always vital to the war effort, and 'Scry' allows the mage to get this information relatively easily. In a similar vein, the 'Locate' spells can be used to track down artifacts or characters, which allows you to follow the movement of particularly dangerous items or persons. Knowing, for example, that Murazor is not in the army that's speeding to your capitol, or that Din Ohtar is busy killing your allies instead of you, can mean the difference between wasting orders to guard against their presence or using your characters more productively. Never underestimate the value of information.

'Scry' can also be used to sell information to your allies or to neutrals. Since many nations start with ineffective mages, an offer to scry or locate for these actions could mean gold in the coffers. This is particularly effective for those nations which can't expect to be able to 'Locate Artifact' for some time; by doing it for them early on, you can allow them to acquire a coveted artifact and charge a hefty fee in the process.

## "That's Bond, James Bond"

Agents occupy a special place in the hearts of most players. Their utter ruthlessness and complete lack of moral inhibitions allows them to commit the most sordid and treacherous acts possible, much like our U.S. Congress. While stealing gold and assassinating enemies are the most obvious uses, there are uses that are equally, if not more, effective.

**"Pass the Dynamite."** Agents have the ability to wreck the fortifications of enemy population centers. This under-utilized capability is often more effective at furthering your goals of conquest than outright assassination is. And, unlike building war machines, it costs nothing; even agents of moderate skill (40-50) have a fair chance of success against unguarded locations. This one order can save the necks of hundreds, perhaps thousands of troops, allowing you to extend the useful life of your army.

**Pass the Dynamite, Part 2.** Bridge-blasting is something most novices catch on to fairly quickly. Certain bridges over major rivers provide key points from which to launch an invasion, and their destruction can force the enemy to spend turns marching in search of an alternate route.

What many players don't take into account is that wrecking a bridge over a minor river can also annoy the enemy. In some cases, the presence of a bridge means that an army can extend its reach one additional hex from its current location; destroy the bridge while that army's on the move, and you can mess up their timing. This can result in allies not rendezvousing at a critical moment, an army missing its target and having to spend another turn on the march, or making the supply of reinforcements more difficult to move from one end of the nation to another. It's also good practice for your agents, since virtually no one actually sends an agent to protect a minor bridge.

**Burn the Warehouses.** An order virtually ignored in ME-PBM is 'Sabotage Stores'. If you know that the enemy is accumulating a particular product at a distinct location (e.g., bronze for troops, timber for war machines, mounts for cavalry), then sabotaging his stores can really put a bee in his bonnet. Use a high-level agent, or combine the talents of two average agents, and the amount of damage done can far exceed what the agents could inflict if they issue the 'Steal Gold' order. Better yet, the enemy will have to waste orders buying and/or transporting more of the product to the location if he wants to continue with his plans, and it may disrupt his timetable beyond repair. The more expensive or rare the items, the more valuable the order will be.

**Prisoners of War.** New players like to assassinate people; veterans like to kidnap them. A kidnapped character can escape, but for the time he remains imprisoned, he counts against the character limit of the nation he belongs to. Kidnap several characters from the same nation, and that nation will be severely restricted in the number of orders it can issue during the turn and will still have to pay maintenance on them.

Kidnapped characters can also be interrogated to provide information, and ransoms can be demanded for their release. Take someone with sentimental value, like Argeleb, Bain, Tarondor, or others, and you can gloat over the agony of your enemy as he strains to put aside his pride and fill your vault with gold.

**Artifact Hunts, the Easy Way.** Why bother going to all the trouble of locating lost artifacts, racing other players to find and pick up the good ones? With an agent, you can ignore the hustle and bustle of the competition and simply steal the ones you want. Stealing an artifact from an unguarded character is easier than it sounds; especially if the artifact-bearing character is mediocre in his skills; and, if

you're particularly unscrupulous, you can allow an ally to find the artifact for you, then rip it off once he locates. Naturally, the enemy will take the blame.

### The Art of Lying Gracefully

Emissaries are probably the most underutilized character types in the game. Many times relegated to creating camps, upgrading population centers, or influencing the loyalty at their own nation's towns, the offensive potential of the emissary is rarely realized. Yet with a little imagination, the emissary can be just as deadly as the agent.

**Outright Bribery.** Emissaries can bribe the characters of other nations, allowing them the opportunity to glean important information from recalcitrant allies. This information can give you a firm idea on what the nation is up to, what its strengths and weaknesses are, and how the player intends to operate. It can also provide warning against nations which plan to leave you out to hang when faced with the enemy, allowing you time to exact a suitable revenge.

Bribery also lets you recruit the characters of nations which have dropped the game. For a limited time following the loss of the player, those characters can, with sufficient gold, be added to your nation's own roster. Have the Noldo bugged out? Go grab Elrond and friends! Not only do you get a set of truly awesome characters, but all their flashy artifacts as well. By watching nations of your allegiance carefully for inactivity, you can predict who's dropped and who hasn't, getting the jump on your allies when it comes to recruiting the dropped nation's best characters.

**Mata Hari.** Another function of emissaries that's rarely used is the 'Double Agent' order. Double Agents provide you with the same report they give their own nation, which gives you the opportunity to track their whereabouts and actions. As this is primarily an information-gathering exercise, it's of critical importance when planning a war against the nation in question. For the cost of a single order, you can get more information than one of your own characters might be able to gather in a half-dozen turns.

Double agents have another function, in that they'll try not to act against your action. This means that they could, at a critical point, fail to execute orders which will damage your campaign against the enemy. An agent, for example, might refuse to assassinate your army commander; a commander might refuse to capture one of your towns. These unexpected events have the potential for changing the entire face of the war, if they occur at the right times. Taking several double agents in the target nation will not only improve your information-gathering, but will also increase the chance that one of the agents will refuse to act against you.

One specific trick of recruiting a double agent is to do so against an assassin. Since the 'Recruit Double Agent' order comes before the 'Assassinate Character' order, you can try to recruit an agent in the hex before he attempts to kill one of your characters, possibly averting the assassination altogether. If you've little hope of guarding expert agent activity, this is a good alternate option.

**Ghost Town.** Most players look at the 'Reduce Population Center' order and ask themselves "Why the heck should I do that?!" True, in most circumstances, this order is useless; but in some desperate situations it can be employed to good effect against the enemy.

If you're in a losing war and your foe is going to capture some of your population centers, this order can be used to destroy those population centers before the enemy takes them. While it does damage your own economy, the enemy gets no compensation for his actions. And, if the enemy is capable of threatening those centers into submission without taking any troop losses anyway, or will spend very few troops in an assault, you lose nothing by destroying them. This might also

be an option with those population centers which as a rule regularly fall to the opposition game after game. Why allow him to benefit from your loss?

Another way to use this order is to reduce the towns of the opposition that you've successfully influenced into joining your nation. If you can't hold on to the town and your foe will take it back in short order, reduce it as much as possible before he does. This is especially effective against camps and villages, which are easily influenced into joining your nation but just as easily threatened away by the original owner. Have those emissaries cause havoc!

### My Ally, My Brother

The preceding orders have been discussed in relation to using against the enemy. However you can also use them against your allies with (or without) their consent, the goal being to rapidly increase your skill ranks. For example, both you and an ally could exchange agents and steal each other's gold turn after turn; this will improve your agent ranks by 1-10 points per turn, whereas 'Guard' order will only increase your ranks by 1-5 points. Alternately, an agent could sabotage unneeded or unwanted ports, harbors, fortifications, and bridges, both increasing agent rank and saving the target the trouble of doing it himself.

Another example would be to have your emissaries take a number of double agents in an ally's nation. This will improve your skill rank and allow you to get the same information that he does from his character. If that character is dedicated to 'Scouting', then both nations will benefit from his actions.

This examples are just a small number of the options available. It may sound strange to use them against an ally, but it's a great way of training up your characters while reducing the risk of getting injured or killed. And, since your nations will have better relations with each other than you would with an enemy, the chances of success are much higher. New players, take note; this method is often used by veteran players and their allies!

### Man of Many Talents

In a number of situations it makes more sense to create a single-skill character than a multi-skill character. Putting all your points in a single talent allows the character to become immediately useful, which is especially true if you play a nation which provides for the creation of characters with a rank of 40 in a particular talent. Also, certain characters have no need or use for a secondary talent: primary army commanders (who spend their second order on moving the army) and capitol characters (who do the buys/sells, nation transports, and so forth) won't have the time to exercise their other abilities. In these instances, creating a multi-class character is simply a waste of gold.

Some multi-class options are extremely useful when the character isn't dedicated to the above activities. Versatility among your characters can allow them to switch roles and accomplish different missions as the need arises, or to exercise both of their skills on a regular basis. Creating such a character is also a viable option if you expect to be operating with a full character roster and don't want to short yourself in any one area. Duo-class combinations are discussed below:

**Commander combos:** commander-agents make excellent backup commanders for armies. While the primary commander trains the army and moves it, the backup commander can raise/train troops while using his agent talents to guard the general. Such a commander, if skilled enough, can also act as a built-in siege engine, sabotaging enemy fortifications or bridges.

Commander-emissaries are usually a waste of money. Many times the missions given to these characters are incompatible, and you end up using one skill at the expense of the other. Possible uses for a commander-emissary are to place camps while the army is on the move (when acting as a secondary commander), using command orders at the capitol while training in emissary rank, or as a fall-back leader if you start to run short of commanders (i.e., recall him from emissary duties and use him as a commander).

Commander mages are often a good buy - when the army isn't on the march. These commanders can raise/train troops while learning all sorts of horrific spells, then use these spells as soon as they enter combat. The drawback is that so long as they're on the move they can't improve their skill rank. It might be better to have a real mage join the army when battle becomes imminent.

**Agent combos:** agent-emissaries are some of my favorite characters. An agent-emissary with a 10/20 skill rank can go out and place camps, at the same time guarding these camps to improve his agent rank. Agent-emissaries can also be used defensively (guarding and influencing your population center at the same time) or offensively (e.g., stealing gold and influencing the enemy population center).

Agent-mages are less useful, for the same reason commander-mages are. Orders tend to conflict (unless the character is dedicated as a guard or an army recruitment center), and you'll probably end up focusing on a single skill. They can be useful in battle, as they can guard your leaders while using combat skills to damage the enemy.

**Emissary combos:** the only one left is the emissary-mage. Like the agent-emissary, this character can go out and create camps, while at the same time improving his skill rank (since 'Prentice Magery' comes after 'Create Camp'). They're also good for raising your population center loyalty when it drops dangerously low. Offensively, however, they run into the same problems that any mage-combo tends to experience.

Creating triple-class characters (10/10/10) is wasted effort, as these characters aren't at all effective and take a considerable amount of time to train up. The only way you can train in all three skills in one turn (assuming that one of these skills is 'Command') is to attach the character to an army, then have him train in the non-Command skills. If the army leader gives the 'Army Maneuver's Order, the character will gain 1-5 points in his command rank, along with any points he gets for training in the other skills. This assumes that you have the time and orders to waste in this endeavor (although the end result can be a truly powerful character). Usually only an option for a nation that can expect many turns of relative peace (Neutrals, Noldo, Sinda).

## The Hall Of Heroes

### *EARTHWOOD : ORIGINAL*

**GAME 224 -** On turn 55 it was quite obvious that the Human Warrior #23 and the Hill Dwarves #2 were the dominate factors remaining. Our hat's go off to them on a job well done. Congratulations to the Black Marauders.

**GAME 227 -** In 47 turns the alliance known as "THE BLACK LEGION" were victorious in their struggle. They were successful in conquering all who opposed them. Congrats to the victors, players #17, 18 and 21.

### *MIDDLE-EARTH PBM*

**GAME 30 -** The forces of Evil proved that they were the true rulers of Middle-earth. As the Haradwaith and the Corsairs used their might to show the Noldo whose nation was the most powerful. We congratulate the Dark Side on a job well done.

**GAME 40 -** The forces of Good made short work of this situation. In only 20 turns the Noldo, Haradwaith and Northern Gondor took advantage of any and all weaknesses of the opposition to take full control of Middle-earth. Cheers and Congrats to you.

**GAME 44 -** In this Grudge match the forces of Good used the abilities of the Haradwaith to overcome the forces of Darkness. The Harad had the support of the Sinda Elves and the Arthedain behind them to make this a quick victory. All hail the Free People!

### *STATE OF WAR*

**GAME 80 -** In 14 turns the Wings of Doom took full control of the country and totally dominated all those who opposed them. Player #1 was the leader of the New Federation with support coming from #2, #3 and #4. Thanks guys and all we ask for is NO NEW TAXES.