

Palmpolitik v1.3

User Manual



Designed and programmed by Ronnie van 't Westeinde

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Disclaimer

© 2003, 2004 Ronnie van 't Westeinde.

Not a fancy disclaimer, the only thing I want to state is that I cannot be held responsible if you loose a game of Diplomacy because of this program or if you happen to loose data on your handheld or whatever bad things happen to you.

This program is free, but you must own a copy of the Diplomacy boardgame (Copyright © 1999 Hasbro/Avalon Hill) to use this.

Acknowledgements

This application took me a lot of time to write. Many thanks to Maartje for her patience. Also many thanks to Lucas Kruijswijk for his advice and excellent adjudication algorithm. Thanks also to Jim van Verth and the rest of the Realpolitik development team, for creating Realpolitik, which was the inspiration for Palmpolitik. Also thanks for making it open-source, which allowed me to connect Palmpolitik and Realpolitik.

I hope you will find a good use for this application. If you have remarks, suggestions or you find bugs, please mail me at: palmdip@westeindeweb.nl

Introduction

Palmpolitik is a Diplomacy viewer and adjudicator. It can be used as a standalone application or as an addition to Realpolitik.

The program is intended to be used for viewing the map, entering and adjudicating orders in a face to face game of Diplomacy and signalling the end of a negotiation round. At the end a negotiation round, orders can be sent to the desktop and after adjudicating, the new situation can be downloaded back to the handheld as starting point for the next negotiation round.

Palmpolitik is also an excellent program to play diplomacy by e-mail, and can help you continue your diplomacy game when travelling.

Views



Palmpolitik consists of four main views: the map view, the orders view, the status view and the timer view. Each of these views is represented by a button on the bottom left of the screen. Pressing such a button will switch to that view. If Palmpolitik is assigned to one of the buttons on your handheld, pressing that button repeatedly will also change views.



All views, except the timer view, view one season at a time. Changing the season to be viewed can be done by using the season indicator in the top right of the screen. In the menu, also options for going to the first and last season are available.

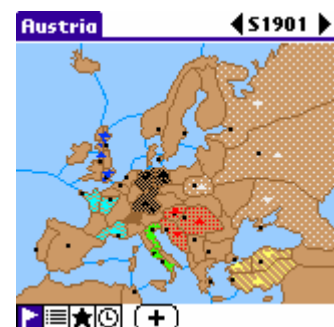
The Map View



The map view shows the Diplomacy map, optionally containing all units, ownership of supply centres and area names. The user can zoom in on the map using the zoom in button, which gives a map twice as large. Clicking and dragging allows the user to see different portions of the zoomed map.



If in zoom mode, the user can zoom out again by using the zoom out button, which replaces the zoom in button after zooming.



Because of screen size restrictions, area names are only visible in zoomed mode.

In map view, the up and down keys show the previous or next season.

The Order View



The order view allows the user to enter orders according to the standard Diplomacy syntax for orders. An order can be entered using graffiti or the virtual keyboard. For Palmpolitik to understand the order, it must be processed. Processing an order can be done by pressing the correct button (the check box) or changing the view. If an order cannot be processed because it does not match the syntax for Diplomacy orders, a hash is added before the line.



This allows the user to correct the order to match the correct syntax.

Area names in orders can be the standard three-letter abbreviations for that area, or the full area name.

To help entering orders easily, a number of buttons area available:

- The area popup button. This button shows a popup list, containing all of the areas. Clicking on one of these areas will insert it into the order. If the first part of the area name is already entered, the list will contain only those areas matching that first part. If context sensitive areas is activated through the preferences, the area list depends on the order. It will only show those areas that can be used on that place in the order. If only one area name is available, it will be directly inserted into the order. If no area names are available, the list will not be shown.
- The action type buttons will insert the chosen action. These buttons will depend on the season. Each normal season (spring and fall), the buttons will represent move, support and convoy actions. Each retreat phase, the buttons will show a retreat and disband actions. In the build phase (winter), the buttons show build army, build fleet and remove actions.



In the order view, adjudicating can be started by choosing resolve in the menu. All orders will be checked on whether they will succeed or fail. The result will be shows in the orders view, after which options will appear to commit or to undo this adjudication.

The Status View



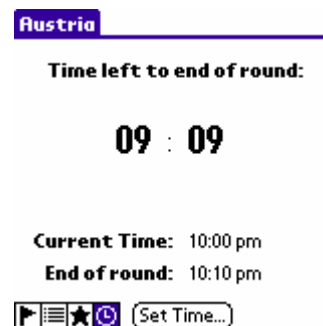
The status view contains the ownership of supply centres and the adjustments in textual form. This view is identical to the status view in Realpolitik. No input can be given in this view.

The Timer View

In the timer view, the user can see how much time is still remaining until the end of the negotiation round. The end of the negotiation round can be set by the Set Time button, which will pop up a dialog asking for the end time of the round.

Set Time...

Two alarms will ring: one before the end of the round, and one at the end of the round. When the first alarm rings, the user still has some time to finish the negotiations and get the orders in on time. The amount of time for this can be set in the preferences.



Also, the current time and the end of round time are constantly shown.

Play By E-Mail

With version 1.3, it is possible to use Palmpolitik to communicate with the online diplomacy judges. For this purpose, two new menu items are added: “import from judge...” and “export to judge...”.

Importing or exporting is done through other Palm applications or through an expansion card. Currently, the standard Memo Pad, standard Mail, VersaMail, Iambic Mail and SnapperMail are supported.

When selecting the expansion card option, the directory “/diplomacy/” is used on the expansion card for both importing and exporting files.

Import from judge

Importing supports the import of a “Game Started” or “Results” e-mail from the judge. It can also import the reply of the judge on a “list” command.

The judge can either be running nJudge or the DPJudge.

The game name as used by the judge will be used as name on the Palm as well. Importing a season for a certain game, will always import it in the game with that name, thereby excluding the possibility of accidentally importing a season in the wrong game.

Export to judge

Exporting composes an e-mail containing the orders, including the necessary signon and signoff commands. If an army moves by convoy, Palmpolitik will try to find the route. If more than one route is possible, several options exist:

- One of the routes is using your own fleets. This



route will be automatically be chosen.

- Neither of the routes is using your own fleets. You will get the option to select which route is the desired route.

If you'd like to preview the e-mail as it will be sent, select the "Run" option, which will launch the e-mail application and show the outgoing e-mail.

Synchronizing with the Desktop

Hotsyncing

Palmpolitik is most useful if it can be synchronized to the desktop, i.e. Realpolitik. Make absolutely sure you have the correct version of Realpolitik installed to make use of synchronization between Palmpolitik and Realpolitik. Realpolitik version 1.6.6.1 or higher supports synchronizing.

If Realpolitik is running, Palmpolitik will sent its orders to Realpolitik (if the seasons match), and it will retrieve the latest map and order status from Realpolitik. If Realpolitik is not running, nothing will be synchronized. This means the user always has to synchronize twice each round: First the orders are sent to Realpolitik, then Realpolitik will do the adjudication, and then the new situation has to be synchronized back to the handheld. This allows mixing of Diplomacy players not using a handheld, because their orders can be entered directly at the desktop.



To synchronize, it is advisable to use all the same cradle (e.g. the Palm universal connector), or even better, use infrared Hotsyncing. To allow easy hotsync in case of infrared, the Palmpolitik menu contains an entry that starts the Hotsync application.

The latest status is always sent with the complete history, which means a user can start using a handheld even in the middle of the game. (e.g. when someone owning a handheld is defeated).

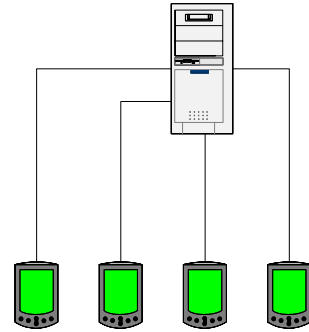
Note that it is not absolutely necessary to synchronize the latest status to the handheld. Instead you can choose to do the adjudication by Palmpolitik.

Computer Configurations

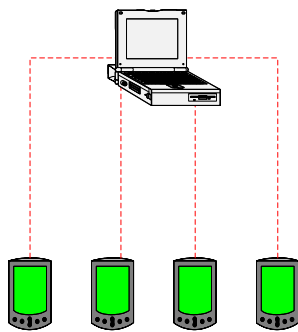
When you want to play a face to face game of Diplomacy using Realpolitik and Palmpolitik, there are a number of configurations you can use.

Standard Desktop

The recommended scenario is to use one Desktop computer which serves as a host and runs Realpolitik. Players can connect their handheld to this server and upload their orders and download the latest status. Players without handheld can enter their orders into Realpolitik (of course, after having written them down).



Standard Laptop

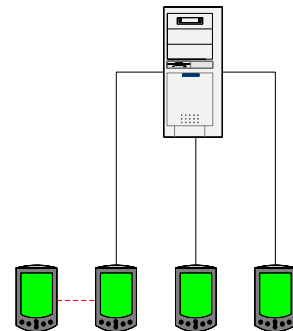


To avoid problems with different connection interfaces (i.e. different cradles), you can configure your laptop (or desktop with infrared port) in such a way that it uses the infrared port to hotsync. If you do this, there's no Hotsync button to press. For this purpose, a menu item which launches the Hotsync manager is available in the Palmpolitik menu structure. Your handhelds manual describes how to set up an infrared hotsync connection.

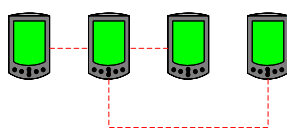
Indirect Desktop

If not all handhelds share the same connection interface, handhelds can send their orders to an other handheld, which will upload the orders to the Realpolitik server.

The sending of orders to another handheld can be done by the menu entry "Beam Orders".



Handheld only



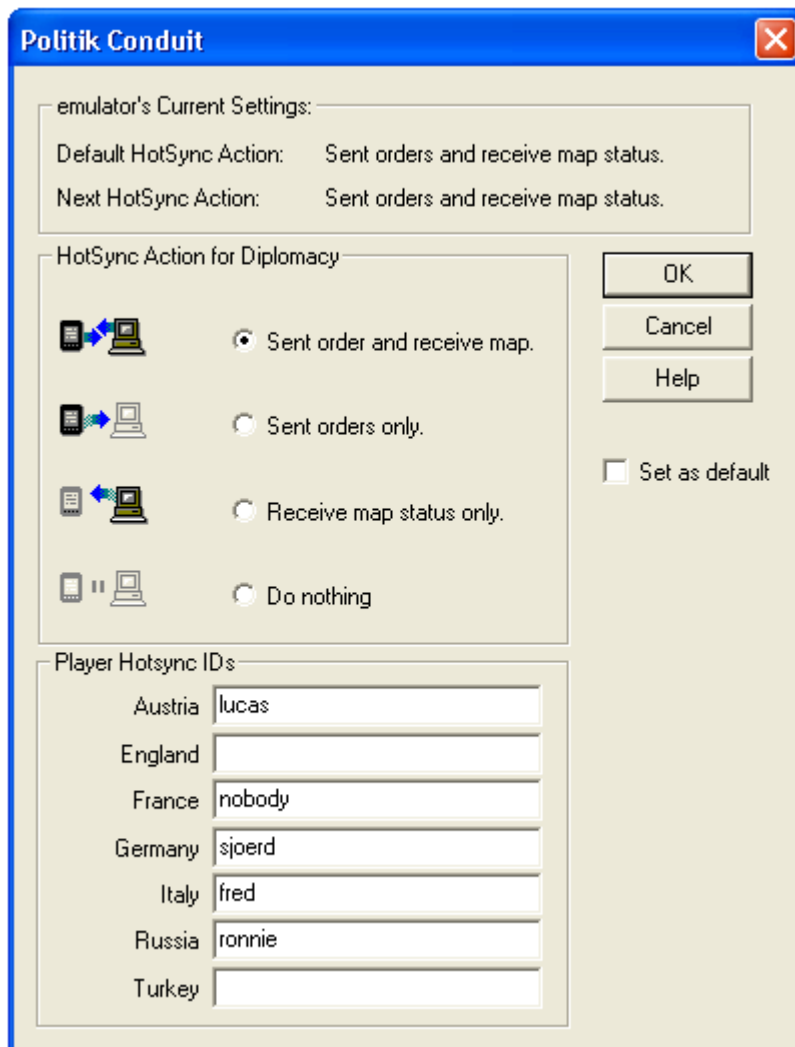
Another possible configuration is not to use the Desktop at all, and upload all orders to one handheld, which serves as the server. This has the advantage that no desktop or laptop computer is needed, but for players without handheld, it is not as convenient to enter orders as on a desktop

computer. (For this configuration it is important that you can trust the owner of the server handheld to not change the map history and units while negotiating). In the picture, any one of the handhelds can be the server.

Hotsync Configuration

Depending on the configuration you choose, you'll have to set up the synchronization with Realpolitik. This is needed to make sure no-one can enter orders on his/her handheld and pretend to be someone else. Make sure to configure this always, because Diplomacy is a game of cheating.

The configuration window can be opened by clicking on the Hotsync icon and choosing "custom...".



Fill in the hotsync ID's of the players connecting to the desktop. If player A sends its order indirectly via player B, then player B should be filled in at the countries played by both A and B. When A beams its orders to B, it will overwrite the orders B has filled in for the country played by A, so there's no danger of B filling in orders for A.

If you don't fill in a Hotsync ID for a country, any handheld can send orders for this country. To prevent handheld owners from entering orders for a player who will only enter his orders manually, fill in some non-existing hotsync ID, such as 'nobody', 'manual', the actual name of the player or whatever.

When beaming orders, the orders of the country which is played by the receiving handheld will never be overwritten by the received orders. If orders of a country are already present on the receiving handheld, the receiver gets the choice whether to accept these orders or to reject them and stick to the already existing orders.

Menu Options

Four menus are available when pressing the menu button: The Record, Map, Edit and Options menus.

Record Menu

The record menu contains options to beam orders or a game, resolve or branch, go to the first or last season or opening a new or existing game .

Map Menu

The Map menu only has effect on the map view. It allows the user to select whether the units, supply centres and names are visible.

Edit Menu

The Edit menu allows all of the standard editing operations and is only interesting in the Orders view. Since the orders view is a plain text field, copy and paste can be used to copy orders to and from other applications such as the Memo Pad or the Mail application.

Options Menu

The options menu contains the preferences, a short cut to the Hotsync application, the possibility to beam Palmpolitik to another handheld and the about window. The preferences window contains four options:

- The user can select whether the alarm has to ring at the end of the negotiation round, and the time between the alarm and the end of the negotiation round.



- Judge mode can be selected. In judge mode, the orders of all countries are editable. This allows looking at different possibilities.
- The country played can be set here. This is not important if you're in judge mode.
- The name length, which is used in the orders and status view, can be set. When set to short, the three-letter abbreviations are used. When set to long, the full names are used.

Technical Details

Palmpolitik uses a decision based algorithm for adjudication. The 4th edition Diplomacy rules of 1999/2000 are implemented (including the 'via convoy' rules). Paradoxes are resolved using the Szykman rule. The adjudicator has been tested using the DATC (Diplomacy Adjudicator Test Cases), and passes all of them.

Tips & Tricks

Here are some tips & tricks for using Palmpolitik or handhelds in general in a face to face game of Diplomacy.

- Program Palmpolitik to one of your hardware buttons. You won't be needing your datebook during a game of Diplomacy anyway. This allows faster switching to Palmpolitik after a hotsync and allows you to switch between views easily by pressing that button.
- Install a program like TimeCopy, which synchronizes the time on your handheld to the desktop time. This way, you know everyone's in sync for the time.
- Install a program like ClipHack to increase the clipboard size. All orders can then easily be copied to and from a memo pad, the mail application and so on. If you don't want ClipHack, you can decrease the size of the orders by choosing short names in the preferences.
- Try out different scenarios during the game by entering judge mode. This allows you to see what result the moves of an opponent will have.
- If you want, you can still enter faulty orders by changing the text of an order. This still allows for the "Oops, I must have misspelled that" reaction when the orders are revealed.
- Your final orders can reside on the clipboard, and you can show fake orders to an opponent. Just before turning in the orders, do a fast "Select All" followed by "Paste".
- If your handheld and your allies handheld both support Bluetooth, you can secretly share information without others seeing you do it.
- When synchronizing through infrared, make sure your handheld battery is fully charged when starting the game.