CHICAGO

CHICAGO is very similar to the more familiar wargame in that it involves conflict. It is unlike a wargame in that it does not simulate death. But then there are the "what if...?" situations. If nothing else it might broaden your understanding of what went on at the Democratic Convention in 1968.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Probably the most significant "battle" fought by Americans in 1968 took place in the streets of Chicago between 25 and 28 August. This was conflict, politics waged with more than verbal violence as Clauswitz would put it. No one was killed, but the outcome of the battle, primarily the 'Police Riot' of 28 August (televised nationwide that same night), had a profound affect on subsequent American, and world, history. The endeavor of the Democratic party probably cost them an otherwise tight election. The effect of the subsequent Republican administration on the "state of the nation" were obviously different than if a Democratic administration had continued. The "What if?" are manifold, but one fact stands out. The "Battle of Chicago" was a very significant event, ranking with the more "conventional" battles of Midway, the 'Bulge' and Stalingrad as turning points in history. Ignore this fact and you'll have no one to blame but yourself when you wonder; "What the hell's going on in this country?"

Putting such a situation into game format is extremely difficult. Eight months were spent on developing this game, longer than the time spent on such games as 1914 or JUTLAND. This was primarily because a new game system had to be developed. Not simply because this was not your usual "pitched battle" type conflict but more because one side was organized and the other wasn't. Despite the governments accusations of "conspiracy" the demonstrators were anything but "organized". All they had in common was a desire to make their views as visible as possible. The police, of course, were highly organized and had as their chief goal the suppression of the 'demonstrations'. Of course, the police, it must be remembered, were not accustomed to operating as "riot police" (a European invention) but rather in small groups or individually. Practically all they had were their orders and weapons, plus an understandable confusion as to just what was going on. The reasons behind all this were quite simple. The mayor of Chicago, Richard Daley, was a staunch Democrat and felt it his duty to prevent the Democratic National Convention from being "embarrassed" while they met to nominate a presidential candidate. There were two main factions in the party at that point. One supported a candidate who would, essentially, "continue" the Indo-China war. The other faction, which contained (in spirit anyway) the bulk of the demonstrators, supported any candidate who would put an end to the war. The war itself probably contained more pointless "battles" than any conflict since World War I.

The game is based on the premise that neither side wished to avoid a confrontation. If either side had, there would have been no 'Battle of Chicago'. As it was, the demonstrators were determined to make their point and the police were determined to stop them. Thus the game becomes one of strategy, how best each side can achieve its goals. The Exposure Index reflects the accumulated 'good press' each side builds up. In the 'original campaign' the demonstrators built up a lead only late in the game. What really put them in the lead was the police riot on the night of the 28th. One important point to keep in mind is that the demonstrator player is not actually 'commanding' his 'forces' in the same manner as the police player. Because there was no real organization and leadership for the demonstrators the demonstrator player is actually deciding which 'What if?' situations he would like to see played out. 'What if?' the demonstrators had done this or that? As it was, the 'demonstrator strategy' was quite simple; they should gather their strength in a remote and fairly 'safe' area (Lincoln park is the best for this) and then move downtown to a more 'exposed' (although less hospitable) area for the nitty-gritty 'confrontation'. There are, of course, many possible variations to this basic strategy. And they are what makes the game.

The 'Battle of Chicago' could not have happened had not both sides been what they were. Had the Chicago police been more restrained and the Chicago city government less intent on 'law and order' the 'victory' of the demonstrators would have been far less decisive than it was. Like Hannibal at Cannae and Hindenberg at Tannenberg, the losers contributed greatly to their own defeat. But even within the parameters of the game situation given it is possible for the police to minimize the demonstrators' advantages. Granted, the situation given in the game is heavily loaded in favor of the demonstrators. But this is Richard Daley's doing, not mine.

Many of the world's most decisive 'conflicts' have been 'fought' without weapons. Just because the 'shoot 'em up' type battles are more visible does not mean that they are more important. On the contrary, far more 'formal' battles are almost always the result of the 'informal' political battles. Quite often, the outcome of the political battles has already decided the outcome of the armed slaughter. In both World Wars the outcome was pretty well known before the shooting started. In both cases Germany felt that she could take on the world. Germany probably came closer to winning the First World War than the Second. And this was due to a political upheaval in Russia, a 'non-war' that no one really anticipated or understood. But it was a 'conflict' that had decisive consequences. And the same may be said for the present Indo-China war. One side wins all the military battles, the other side wins the political ones. Guess who will probably win the war? If we can obtain a greater understanding of the less obvious conflicts which shape our lives we may be able to avoid the more violent ones.

...And just to get into a game-playing mood, some inflammatory rhetoric:

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Declaration of Independence, 1776

God forbid we should ever be twenty years without...a rebellion.

Thomas Jefferson, 1787

Whatever the apparent cause of any riots may be, the real one is almost always want of happiness. It shows that something is wrong in the system of government that injures the felicity by which the society is to be preserved.

Tom Paine, 1792

Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable and sacred right—a right we hope and believe is to liberate the world.

Abraham Lincoln, 1848

There are times when order must be maintained, because order must be maintained.

Grayson Kirk, President of Columbia University, 1968

The policeman isn't there to create disorder. He's there to preserve disorder.

Richard J. Daley
Mayor of Chicago, 1968

--now cool off and read the non-inflamatory rules to be found on the highly flammable playing surface.