

Fort Sumter

THE SECESSION CRISIS ★★ ★ 1860-1861

Game Design: Mark Herman

PLAYBOOK

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Game Setup: This is how the map looks like when properly set up and ready for play to begin.

Set Up for Play

Place the board in the middle of the play area.

Place the yellow round marker on the first space of the Round Track. Place both scoring cylinders on the “0” space of the VP (Victory Point) Track with their “+10” side down.

There are two Crisis Tracks—one for the gray Secessionist, one for the blue Unionist—where each player will set up 16 of his wooden Political Capital tokens, one per space. Then each player places bonus tokens: two in his Escalation box, three in his Tension box, and four in the shared Final Crisis box.

Set the Peace Commissioner “meeple” off to the side near the board.

Shuffle the strategy deck and the objective deck separately and place them near the board.

The two long edges of the board (each facing one of the players) indicate off-board areas for players to place Final Crisis cards, Hidden Objectives and token pools. These spaces all start the game empty.

Illustrated Examples of Play

Round 1 Example

Lincoln has been elected and Round 1 begins.

Each round begins with the players being dealt *four* Strategy cards and *two* Objective cards. Of the two Objective cards, you pick one and put the card not chosen back into the Objective deck.

STRATEGY TIP: Each player will play three of their four strategy cards. It is a good idea to consider which of these cards will be saved for the final crisis. In your first game you will have no basis for making this decision, so I suggest that over the course of the three rounds you save cards with the same Final Crisis dimension location (e.g., three Armaments) or pick one of each type (e.g., Armaments, Secession, Public Opinion). Once you see how your first final crisis plays out you will be better informed on how to evolve your future choices.



Secretly selected by Unionist player and placed face-down along Unionist's board edge.

Returned to Objective card deck.



These four Event cards comprise the Unionist player's hand during the first Round.

*Unionist hand, top two cards are Objectives;
FORT PICKENS chosen as Objective.*

The above illustration shows the opening Unionist hand. The upper left-hand number on each Event card is that card's token value. The color of the value box denotes which side has the option to play the event instead of taking the card's token value. The upside down color band denotes that card's final crisis dimension location. You only use this color designation in the final crisis.

I chose the FORT PICKENS objective space because it aligned well with the GUSTAVUS FOX event. Because only three cards are played per round, they are individually very critical to how things evolve.



Secretly selected by Secessionist player and placed face-down along Secessionist's board edge.

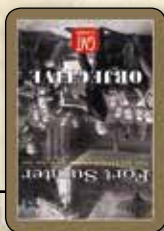
Returned to Objective card deck.



These four Event cards comprise the Secessionist player's hand during the first Round.

*Secessionist hand, top two cards are Objectives;
NEWSPAPERS chosen as Objective.*

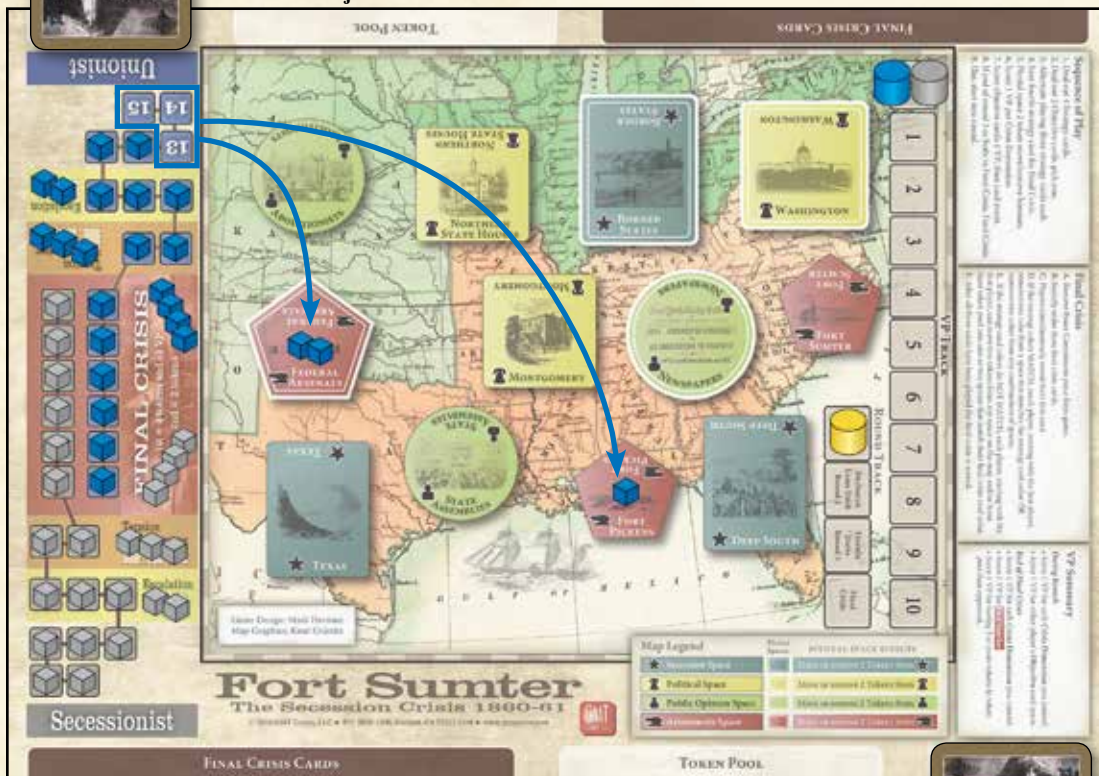
Because the Secessionist's objectives are both in the Public Opinion dimension, I chose NEWSPAPERS, as it is the pivotal space, and more important to initially control than the Abolitionists space.



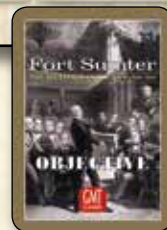
STRATEGY TIP: Gaining control of the Federal Arsenal pivotal space is more important than placing one token in each of the three Armaments spaces. If the Unionist ends the round in control of the Federal Arsenal's space he will be able to move up to two tokens later to gain control of all three Armaments spaces for the victory point.



◀ **Unionist Objective card: FORT PICKENS**



First Unionist Strategy card: The Unionist player plays the GUSTAVUS FOX Strategy card for its event (Unionist blue background color). Two Unionist tokens are moved to the Federal Arsenal's space, and one token is moved to the Fort Pickens space. Note that the Unionist token pool begins the game empty, so the tokens are removed from the Crisis Track's highest value boxes (15, 14, and 13). The tokens are then placed within the event restrictions that state that all three tokens must be played in Armaments spaces.



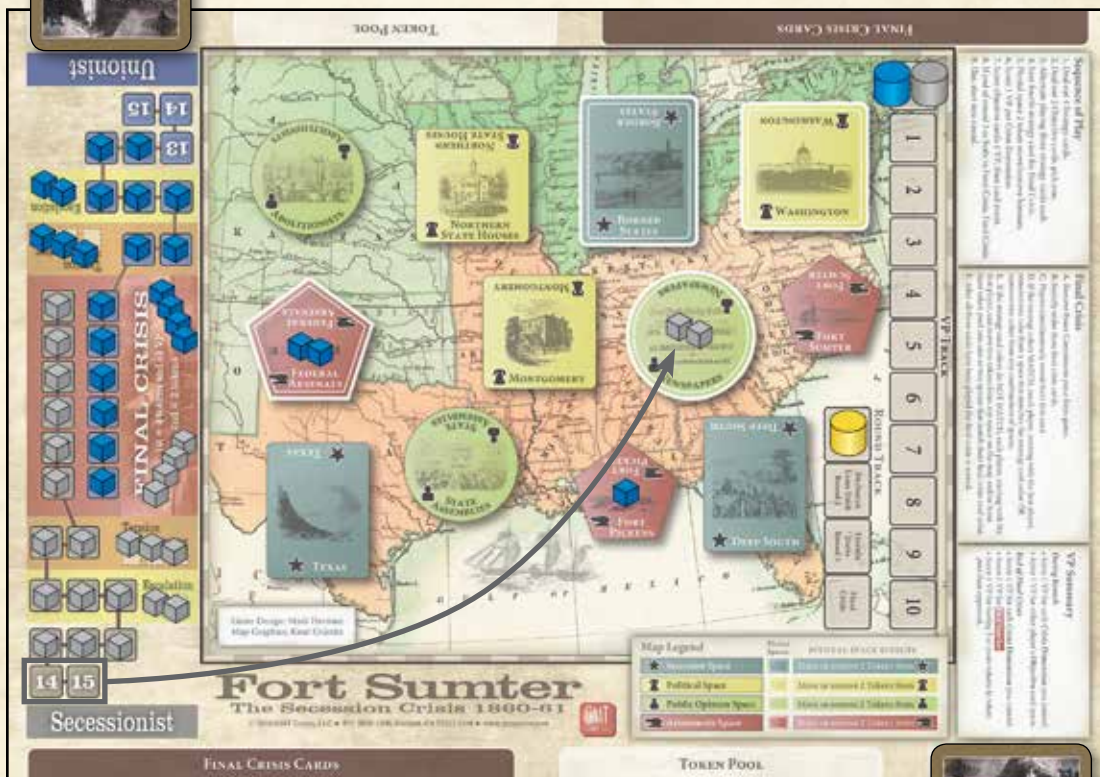
▲ **Secessionist Objective card: NEWSPAPERS**

The rule is you must empty your off-map token pool before you can remove tokens from the map's Crisis Tracks (at left of image above). At the beginning of every game, neither player has any tokens in his token pool, so each player's first tokens come from the Crisis Track, highest numbered space (15) to lowest (zero).

The Unionist player has a choice whether to use the Strategy card for its 2-value that allows the

placement of two tokens in any space(s) on the map or to play it for its Unionist event.

Because the Unionist player is playing the event (he chose the GUSTAVUS FOX event), he receives three tokens from the 15, 14, and 13 spaces of his Crisis Track and deploys them onto the map into the Federal Arsenal's space (two tokens) and the Fort Pickens space (one token).



First Secessionist Strategy card: As in the previous strategy card play, the Secessionist player's token pool begins the game empty, so the two tokens are removed from the Crisis Track's 15 and 14 boxes and placed on the map in the Newspapers space.

The Secessionist player now plays the Republican Party card 2-value to place tokens to the Newspapers space.

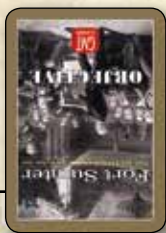
tokens to the Newspapers space.

The REPUBLICAN PARTY strategy card shows a Unionist event hence it is not available to the Secessionist player. The Secessionist player's only choice is to use the card for its two value.

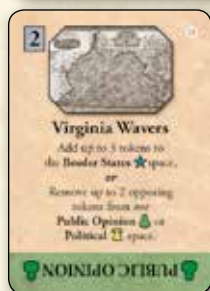
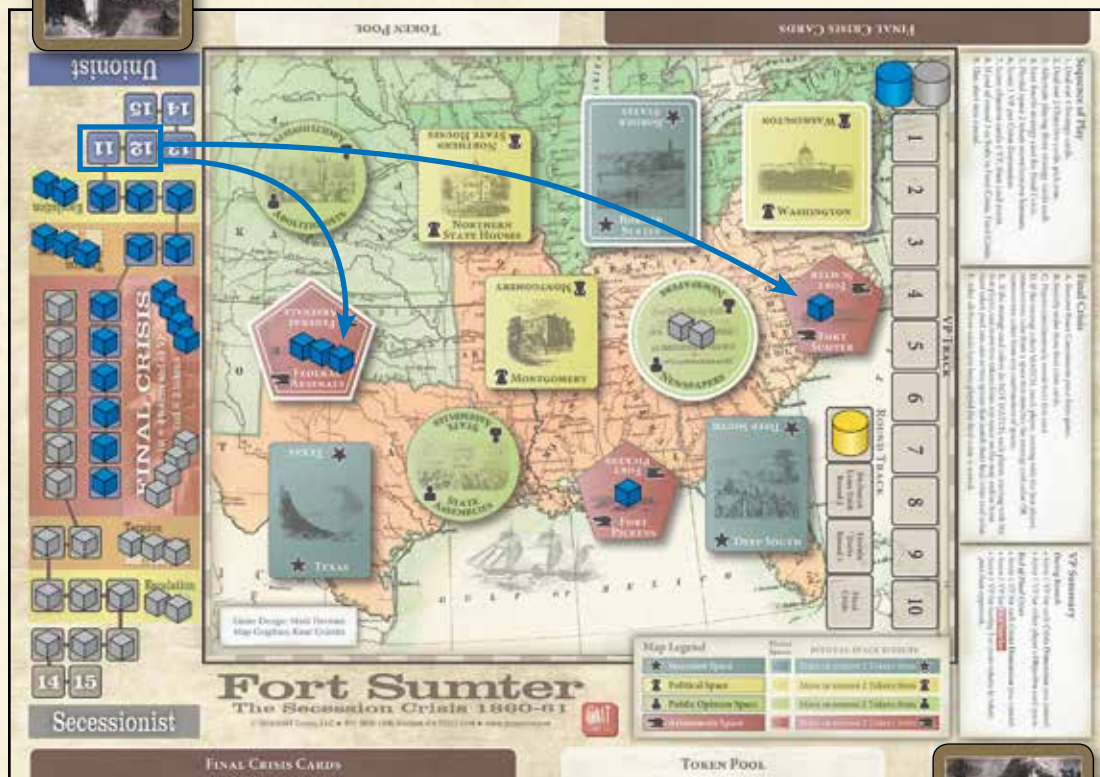
Remember you can always play a card for its upper left value to add tokens to the map, but you can only use the event if it is your color (i.e., blue Unionist, or gray Secessionist).

Although none have been seen yet, either player can use Event cards with the half-gray/half-blue value boxes.

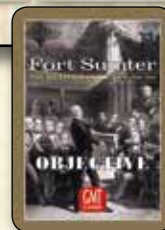
STRATEGY TIP: The Newspapers space is the Secessionist player's hidden objective card. This play quickly gains control of this critical location. The potential downside is it may indicate to your opponent that this is your objective space. As the Newspapers space is the Public Opinion dimension pivotal space, a strong buildup of Secessionist tokens could be leveraged into controlling this dimension and a victory point.



STRATEGY TIP: At this point the Unionist player has invested 5 tokens into the Armaments dimension. While it is not locked up, the Secessionist player would need to consider how to either gain control of another crisis dimension or block the Unionist efforts.



Second Unionist Strategy card: One Unionist token moved to Fort Sumter space, and one token moved to Federal Arsenal pivotal space. Control of pivotal spaces is important.

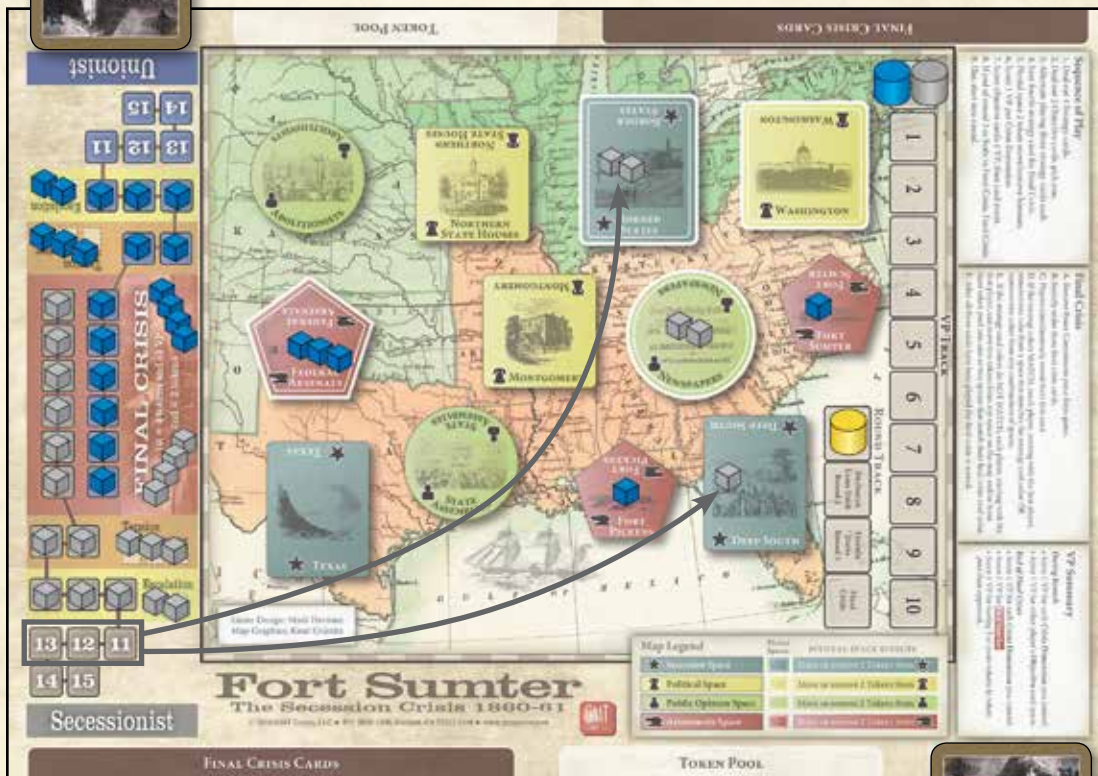


The Unionist player now plays the VIRGINIA WEVERS as his second strategy card play. As this is a Secessionist event, the Unionist player can place up to two tokens into any space(s) on the map. As the Unionist token pool is still empty, he removes two tokens from the Crisis Track 12 and 11 boxes, moves one token (three of four tokens maximum per side) into the Federal Arsenal space, and the other token into the Fort Sumter space.

Let's briefly talk about pivotal spaces. This is an important capability, as it is how I bring maneuver

into the game. Each of the four crisis dimensions has a pivotal space and two associated spaces. Each turn, after each player has made three Strategy card plays and Final Crisis card choice, each player controlling a pivotal space can move *or* remove up to two tokens across all spaces of that crisis dimension.

With this card play, the Unionist player is aiming for control of the Armaments dimension through control of the Federal Arsenals space.



Second Secessionist Strategy card: Two Secessionist tokens are moved to the Border States pivotal space, and one token is moved to the Deep South space.

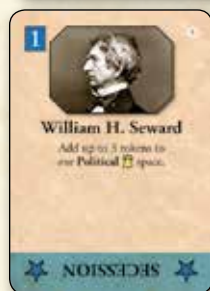


The Secessionist player decides to use the FLORIDA SECEDES event to begin gaining control over the Secession spaces. Two tokens are placed in the Border States (pivotal space), and one token is placed in the Deep South space (respectively removed from the 13, 12, and 11 boxes of the Secessionist Crisis Track).

STRATEGY TIP: The Secessionist player has decided to concede the Armaments dimension to the Unionist. The Secessionist player plans on using this event and his last strategy card play to score the Secession dimension victory point.



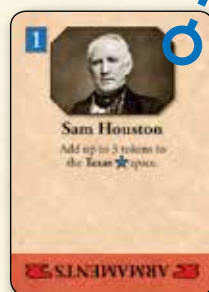
◀ First Unionist “Final Crisis” card (SAM HOUSTON)



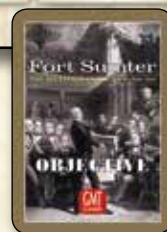
Third (and final) Unionist Strategy card: Three Unionist tokens are moved to Washington, which breaches the Escalation zone (by uncovering the 10 space); two bonus Unionist tokens are moved to the Unionist off-map token pool. The last Unionist Strategy card is secretly designated off-map as the first of three Final Crisis cards (Armaments).

The Unionist player chooses to play WILLIAM H. SEWARD

for his event. As specified in the event text, all three tokens must go into a single Political dimension space. The Unionist player stakes his claim on Washington (pivotal space) by placing three tokens into that location. These tokens come from the 10, 9, and 8 spaces on the Crisis Track. After these tokens are moved to Washington the Escalation zone has been breached. The Unionist player now takes the two bonus tokens and places them in the Unionist off-map token pool.



The fourth and only remaining Unionist strategy card (SAM HOUSTON) is placed face down as the first of three Unionist Final Crisis cards to be used in the Final Crisis.





The Crisis Track

...showing the situation after the Unionist player breaches the Escalation zone and the tokens have been sent to his token pool.



NOTE: After the three Unionist tokens are moved from the Crisis Track to the Washington space, the Escalation zone has been breached. After the card play is complete, the Escalation bonus tokens are moved to the Unionist token pool. These tokens must be used before any further tokens can be removed from the Unionist Crisis Track.

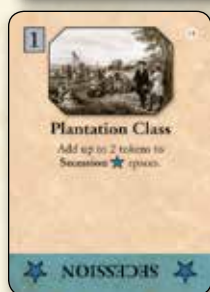
After the placement of these three tokens, the two Escalation zone bonus tokens (all of these values are on the map) are placed in the Unionist token pool. The Unionist player will not remove any additional tokens from the Crisis Track until the two tokens in the token pool have been moved to the map.

The Crisis Track begins a game with all of a side's tokens. As we have seen, playing Strategy card removes tokens from the Crisis Track and moves them to the map spaces. Each player has 16 tokens that begin each game on his side of the Crisis Track. In addition, the track has three colored zones. The first of the three zones is the Escalation zone (yellow) that gives two bonus tokens when breached. The other two zones are the Tension (3 bonus tokens, Peace Commissioner) and Final Crisis zones (see diagram above).

As you can see in the preceding illustration on page 8, the first time you uncover a space in a zone you have breached that zone. After you finish the strategy card play that caused these tokens to be removed from the track, the bonus tokens are placed in your token pool (indicated area just off the map). Please note that the timing of this is *after* the card is concluded, so the bonus tokens—and later on the Peace Commissioner (Tension zone)—never affect the action that brings them into play.

STRATEGY TIP: The Unionist player has placed his first of three Final Crisis cards focused on the Armaments dimension. The SAM HOUSTON event and all other values are no longer relevant, just the Armaments Final Crisis dimension location.

The early Unionist token placements have mostly focused on the Armaments dimension. By deploying an Armaments Final Crisis card the Unionist player is positioned to either augment or defend this dimension during the Final Crisis.



Third (and last) Secessionist Strategy card: This event allows two tokens to be placed in Secessionist spaces. One token is moved to Texas and the other to the Border State spaces. As this play breaches the Escalation zone, the two bonus tokens are placed in the Secessionist token pool. The Secessionist player's last strategy card (WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON) is placed just off map as the Final Crisis card (Armaments).



The Secessionist player is always going to go last in round 1. Thereafter, the player with the most points goes first; if points are tied, the Unionist player goes first. The Secessionist player plays the PLANTATION CLASS event to place 2 tokens in any Secession spaces and chooses to place one each in the Border States and Texas spaces.

In the above illustration, the Secessionist player decides to lock up the Secession dimension VP. The alternate play was to try to deny the Unionist

player his Armaments VP by one token into Fort Sumter with the 1 value. This would be a poor play since the Unionist controls the Federal Arsenals space and would maneuver a second token into Fort Sumter to reestablish control. Hopefully this illustrates the importance of pivotal spaces.

Unknown to the Unionist player, the Secessionists player has also saved an Armaments card for the final crisis, i.e., WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.



Pivotal Spaces: The Unionist controls Washington and Federal Arsenal. Secessionist control Border States. See map for token movements.

First Secessionist Final Crisis card is WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON (Armaments)

from the pivotal space to Fort Sumter.



Now that all of the strategy cards have been played, it is time for pivotal space actions. Since the score is still tied, the Unionist player makes his pivotal space moves. The Unionist controls the Washington pivotal space and chooses to shift one token to Montgomery and one token to Northern State Houses. He also controls the Federal Arsenal space and chooses to shift one token

The Secessionist player controls the Border States and Newspapers pivotal spaces. He chooses not to make any Public dimension moves as he is one short for control and wants to keep a strong Newspapers position. He also makes no moves in the Secession spaces because he already controls the Secession spaces and sees no advantage in changing the position of any of these tokens.

The Unionist player receives 2 VPs (controls all Political and Armaments dimension spaces) whereas the Secessionist player receives 1 VP (Secession dimension).



Situation at the end of round 1. The current VP score is Unionist 3, Secessionist 2.



After crisis dimensions are scored, the two secret Objective cards are revealed. The player who controls either objective space gains 1 VP. The objective VPs are awarded prior to any Objective card event implementation, so objective events will never impact who won a space or alter the score. That said, you can only implement the Objective event on your secret card—not your opponent's—if you gained the VP. The opponent can never use your event, even if he wins the VP. After the event is implemented, the round is concluded.



In this example the Unionist player reveals FORT PICKENS as his objective and since he controls the space (most tokens) gains 1 VP.

The Secessionist player reveals NEWSPAPERS (see next column) and—since he controls that space—also receives 1 VP.

After objective VPs have been awarded, Objective events—starting with the first player (Unionist lead with 3 VPs, so he goes first)—are implemented. Since the Unionist player scored his Objective card, he can play the event. The choices are: remove three tokens (yours or opponent's) from Armament spaces, *or* remove one token from any space. The Unionist chooses to remove one Secessionist token from Texas to the Secessionist token pool.

The Secessionist player then implements his Objective event that allows the removal of two tokens from any one space. He chooses to move two Unionist tokens from Fort Sumter to the Unionist token pool.

This ends round 1. Rounds 2 and 3 are played in the same manner.





The Peace Commissioner was placed by the Unionist player after the Secessionist player breached the Tension zone first. It spent the entire game in the Federal Arsenal's space, but was removed at the beginning of the Final Crisis.



Final Crisis Example

It is now time to change modes and enter the Final Crisis mechanic.

The rules for the Final Crisis are very simple. Each player secretly arranges his three-card Final Crisis deck in any order, then both players simultaneously reveal one card at a time. It is important to note that the only information on the card that is used is its Final Crisis Dimension location color. *The cards' value or event has no effect in the Final Crisis. For an illustration of Crisis cards played; see next page.*

Then the players flip over their cards, one at a time. If the Crisis dimension does *not* match (different colors), then each player—starting with the player with the higher score—can move up to two tokens from any map space and/or his token pool into any combination of their Final Crisis card's color.

If the Crisis dimension *does* match, then each player removes one token from one of those col-

The Secessionist player was the first player to breach the Final Crisis for which he received four bonus tokens and lost a VP. The Unionist player was the second side to breach the Final Crisis, so he only received two tokens, hence these two tokens never entered play.

Crisis Cards played:

*First card play is **no match**: Secessionist moves one token from Washington to Fort Sumter; Unionist no move.*

*Second card play is **no match**: Secessionist move one token from Northern State Houses to the Fort Pickens space. Union decides on no move.*

*Third card play is a **match**: Secessionist removes one token from Fort Pickens to his token pool. The Unionist removes two tokens from Washington to his token pool.*



Secessionist player's Final Crisis cards

Unionist player's Final Crisis cards

1st Card



NO MATCH: First card play is **NO MATCH**. Secessionist moves one token from Washington to Fort Sumter. Unionist decides on no move.

2nd Card



NO MATCH: Second card play is **NO MATCH**. Secessionist moves one token from Northern State Houses to the Fort Pickens space. Unionist decides on no move.

3rd Card



MATCH: Third card play is a **MATCH**. Secessionist removes one token from Fort Pickens to his token pool. Unionist removes two tokens from Washington to his token pool.

See map on page 13 for the token movements.

ored spaces *or* removes two tokens from any map space. All removed tokens go to their respective token pool. That's it. What you will find is if your strategy is better than your opponent's, you can see the score shift by one or sometimes two VPs.

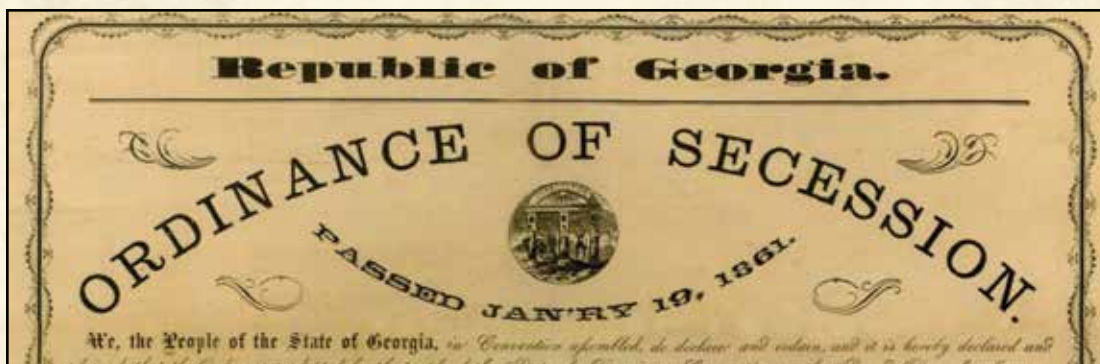
With all of that as preamble, the rest goes quickly. Each player flips over his top card. Since the Secessionist leads by 2 VPs, he is the first player. The Secessionist Armaments card is not a match for the Unionist Public Opinion. The Secessionist player moves one token from Washington to Fort Sumter (maximum allowed is 4 tokens in a space). The Unionist player makes no move.

The next cards are flipped and it's a replay of the first cards flipped. Again there is no match. The Secessionist player takes his single token from the Northern State Houses, where it is not going to change the score, and moves it to Fort Pickens. Again, the Unionist player sees no threat and foregoes moving.

The last two cards are flipped over and are a match, with two Armaments cards (think bombardment of Fort Sumter). The Secessionist player goes first and decides to remove one token from Fort Pickens to his token pool. Next, the Unionist player decides to remove two tokens from Washington to his token pool.

At the conclusion of the Final Crisis—besides scoring the crisis dimensions one last time—the Fort Sumter space is worth one VP. In addition, if one player has three more tokens than his opponent in his token pool, the player with more tokens gains one VP (summarized on map).

The Unionist scores a VP for the Public Opinion dimension while the Secessionist scores a VP for the Secession dimension and a VP for control of Fort Sumter. Final score is Secessionist 9 VP to Unionist 6 VP. The crisis has demoralized the Union, Lincoln starts at a disadvantage in this telling of the Secession Crisis.



A Very Short History of the Secession Crisis of 1860-61

It is difficult for a game to be thematic when you do not know anything about the historical theme. One of the advantages for Cold War games is many gamers experienced some portion of the *Twilight Struggle*, so games on this period have an advantage in being labeled thematic. As a kid I watched the Cuban Missile Crisis unfold, but I had to read a large number of books to understand the Secession crisis. What I hope to accomplish here is to acquaint you at a very high level with the general themes of this American tragedy.

There are many kinds of crises, but they often have what are euphemistically called ‘off ramps’ where the two sides can sometimes deescalate the situation. In 1832 President Jackson successfully neutralized South Carolina’s first attempt to oppose Federal authority known as the Nullification crisis. Without going into the details, this earlier attempt failed due to Jackson’s dynamic leadership and the perpetrator’s narrow base of support. Over the next few decades the secession movement evolved into a stronger foundation for what was to come.

Over the ensuing years, the country created new states from the Federal territories (Louisiana Purchase and Mexican War territorial annexations). The overriding issues of national discontent all revolved around Sectional interests and the national sin of Slavery. The situation remained stable as long as the Southern States could block anti-Slavery legislation in a balanced free versus slave state Senate. The Missouri Compromise of 1850 for a time quieted these troubled waters, but ultimately it all fell apart (Bloody Kansas) around whether Slavery could be extended into the Federal

territories as they became new States. If Slavery could not extend into the territories, the Senate balance would eventually tilt against the South removing their ability to safeguard their perverse culture. It was this scenario that brought on the Secession crisis.

During the 1860 election, the extreme Southern position was that Slavery could extend and grow into new States and conquests (Filibusters) as represented by their candidate Breckinridge. The Stephen Douglas (card 2) position of Home Rule stated that new States could decide for themselves whether to be free or slave. The Republican Party’s position stated slavery could continue but not extend from where it was already legal (Lincoln). The small Constitutional Unionist party’s platform (Bell) called for reinforcing slavery protections to preserve the Union, a nuanced version of the Breckinridge position.

Due to the Democratic Party’s split vote between Douglas and Breckinridge, Lincoln won the Electoral College and the Presidency. The unyielding political extremes of Southern ultras (card 18) versus Republican ultras (card 13) prevented any compromise during the ensuing secession crisis that set the nation on the path to Civil War.

The 1860 election was on November 6th and Lincoln was inaugurated as the 16th President of the United States on 4 March 1861. Between those two dates, President Buchanan (15th President) tried to hold the country together as the crisis spun out of control. The opening of the crisis began on December 20th when South Carolina formally seceded from the U.S. Constitution. Between



January 9 (Mississippi) and February 1 (Texas) 1861, the original seven states that became the Confederacy followed suit (cards 27, 28, 29, 30). These activities culminated with the inauguration (card 35) of Jefferson Davis (card 32) as the first and only President of the Confederacy on 18 February 1861. To put a finer point on this last fact, Jefferson Davis was inaugurated President of the Confederacy before Lincoln (card 15) became President of the United States. Essentially, by the time Lincoln came into power, secession was an accomplished fact and the only resolution of the crisis was for the Federal government to accept the situation or the use of force to preserve the Union. Lincoln decided to not accept the Southern terms for Federal surrender.

As the various states seceded from the Union, they seized Federal arsenals (card 39) and property. The two most notable exceptions were Fort Pickens and the game's title space, Fort Sumter. In fact it was Major Anderson's decision (card 14) to secretly shift the Federal garrison from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter that almost spun the crisis out of control after Christmas 1860. In retaliation, Governor Pickens of South Carolina (card 26) seized the remaining Federal harbor defenses and subsequently fired on a relief ship (*Star of the West*, card 11) that hardened the opposing views in the crisis. Another major Southern failure was the aborted assault on Fort Pickens (General Scott card 16).

As the crisis deepened, moderate voices (card 37) entered the discussion but failed to reach any consensus. Various so called Peace Commissioners (cards 34, 36, 40) travelled to Washington from South Carolina, Montgomery, and Virginia (card 25) to try to reach a peaceful conclusion to the situation. Many of these commissions interacted with Senator Seward of New York (card 5) who was slated to be the Secretary of State in the new administration. The unresolvable point was that all the proposals required the Federal government to swallow the bitter pill of the secession fait accompli.

While the negotiations remained active, both sides girded for war. In Charleston (card 22), the new commander General Beauregard (card 20) installed new gun batteries (card 21) against his old West Point instructor Major Anderson (card

14). Simultaneously, General Bragg concentrated Secessionist forces opposite Fort Pickens (card 23). Meanwhile across the South, militia companies drilled (card 19) while General Scott (card 16) called upon regular Army units (card 8) to defend Washington against the emerging threat.

After becoming President, Lincoln dealt with the situation on a daily basis with his cabinet, political allies (cards 2, 5, 7), and his military advisors (card 16), while the press (cards 3, 10, 38) reported the deepening sense of gloom. On April 1st, Lincoln ordered several Naval relief expeditions for the forts (card 11) as organized by his secret agent Gustavus Fox (card 12). The impending relief of the forts forced Jefferson Davis' hand and he ordered the attack on Fort Sumter to commence. On April 12th 1861 at about 4am (Final Crisis conclusion) the Charleston gun batteries opened fire on Fort Sumter. A little over a day later, the fort surrendered.

This overt act of aggression, although as noted not the first (*Star of the West*), forced President Lincoln to call on the States to raise 75,000 men to put down the rebellion. He wrote:

"Combinations too powerful to be suppressed" by ordinary law courts and marshals had taken charge of affairs in the seven secessionist states. He announced that states of the Union were called on to contribute 75,000 militia "...to suppress said combinations and to cause the laws to be duly executed." ... "And I hereby command the persons composing the combinations aforesaid to disperse, and retire peacefully to their respective abodes within twenty days from this date."

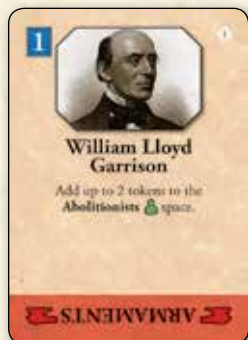
Lincoln's calling out the militia caused the Border States of Arkansas, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee to follow the Deep South into rebellion and the American Civil War had begun. If you did not know the story, hopefully this has whetted your appetite to learn more. If you already knew the details, I hope you enjoyed my précis version of events. As I said, theme is most evident when you know the details.



The Strategy Cards

William Lloyd Garrison

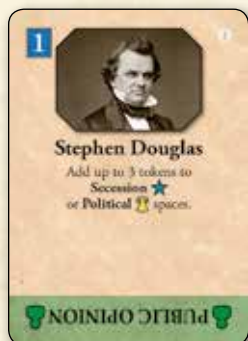
Unionist: 1



Historical Note: William Lloyd Garrison represents the broad category of anti-slavery ultra groups that preached for the immediate abolition of slavery.

Stephen Douglas

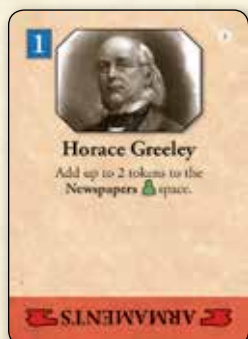
Unionist: 1



Historical Note: Senator from Illinois who defeated Lincoln in the Illinois Senate race, but lost to him in his final bid for the Presidency. Although a champion of the home rule doctrine, he was a staunch Unionist who supported Lincoln right up to his death soon after the war began.

Horace Greeley

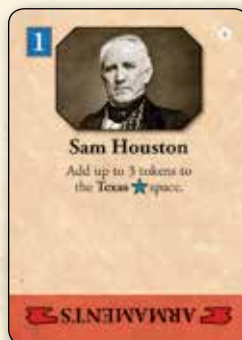
Unionist: 1



Historical Note: Owner and editor of the New York Tribune who represents the power of the New York City newspapers over national news.

Sam Houston

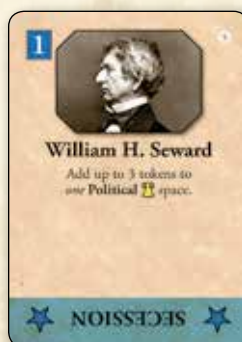
Unionist: 1



Historical Note: The Unionist governor of Texas whose determined stand delayed but failed to prevent Texas from leaving the Union.

William H. Seward

Unionist: 1

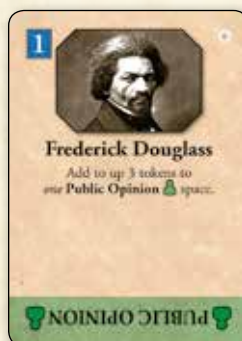


Historical Note: Former Governor of New York who was a Senator and then Secretary of State throughout this crisis. He was the favorite to be the Republican nominee for President but failed to secure the votes and lost to Lincoln in the third voting round. He was one of

the central figures working to slow the crisis before Lincoln's inauguration. Lincoln's first cabinet crisis was to override Seward's maneuvers to force the evacuation of Fort Sumter.

Frederick Douglass

Unionist: 1

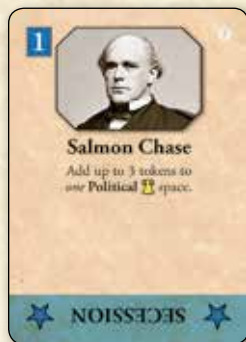


Historical Note: Leading advocate for the rights of freed slaves and the abolition of the institution. His powerful voice for human rights swayed many moderates' views for the imperative to end slavery.



Salmon Chase

Unionist: 1



Historical Note: Senator from Ohio who was another rival of Lincoln's who became his Secretary of the Treasury. He surprised many by his effectiveness in raising the funds that fueled the Union war effort. During a later cabinet crisis Lincoln successfully nominated Chase for the Supreme Court in 1864.

named Chase for the Supreme Court in 1864.

Regular Army

Unionist: 1

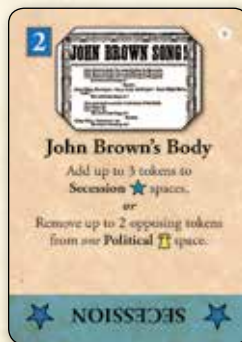


Historical Note: The US Army numbered just over 16,000 soldiers in 1860, most of whom were deployed in the West to suppress Native American resistance to oppression. While small they constituted the only professional soldiers in the nation with many southern

officers resigning to fight for the Confederacy. While the officer corps was split in its loyalties, the rank and file overall remained loyal to the Union and gave General Scott the ability to protect Washington and its military infrastructure during the crisis.

John Brown's Body

Unionist: 2



Historical Note: John Brown was a long time ardent abolitionists who used violence to further his abolitionist agenda. His failed attempt at precipitating a slave revolt led to his capture by Robert E. Lee and Virginia executed him in 1859. His martyrdom became a rallying

cry for the Republican and Abolitionist ultras.

New York Press

Unionist: 2



Historical Note: New York City was the newspaper and information center for the nation. The fledgling Associated Press and the three national newspapers effectively controlled national news during this crisis.

Naval Relief

Unionist: 2



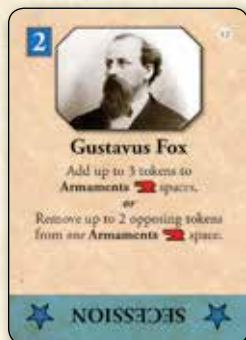
Historical Note: There were several proposed and implemented attempts to send supplies and reinforcements to the two Federal forts (Sumter and Pickens). The Star of the West was fired on as it approached Fort Sumter. One expedition did manage to reinforce Fort Pickens

with men and artillery near the end of the crisis, ensuring that it remained under Federal control throughout the war.



Gustavus Fox

Unionist: 2



Historical Note: Gustavus Fox was a former naval officer who offered several plans for relieving the forts during the final days of the Buchanan administration. In early April, Lincoln employed Fox as a secret agent to organize a relief effort to secure Fort Sumter. Fox arrived

at Charleston Harbor just as the bombardment began and his naval force evacuated the garrison after its surrender.

Republican Party

Unionist: 2

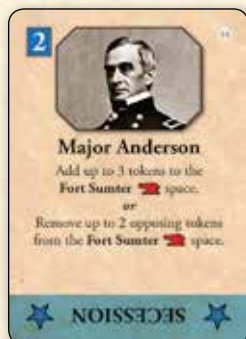


Historical Note: This event represents the Republican party ultras that were the backbone of resistance against any accommodation with the secessionists. The party blocked all efforts at compromise and, in conjunction with their Secessionist opponents, ensured that

the crisis could only lead to war.

Major Anderson

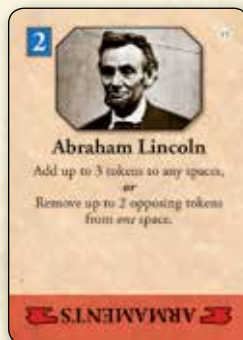
Unionist: 2



Historical Note: Fort Sumter garrison commander whose independent decision to transfer his command from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter finally forced the Buchanan administration to decide against evacuating the fort.

Abraham Lincoln

Unionist: 2



Historical Note: Throughout most of this crisis, Lincoln was the President Elect. He remained publicly silent until he began to travel to Washington, (via train) where his numerous short speeches began to lay out his views. Although many elements criticized him for not hav-

ing a policy for the Forts, he consistently reiterated that his inauguration speech was his policy. In early April, he acted on his policy by sending out naval relief expeditions that forced Jefferson Davis to shoot first.

General Scott

Unionist: 2

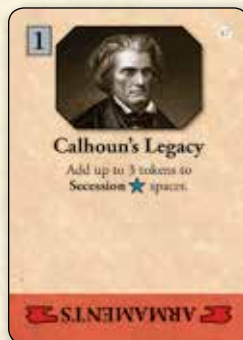


Historical Note: One of the most underrated military talents in American history. General Scott was well past his prime when this crisis began. His advice and views were inconsistent with those of Lincoln, but once ordered into action he professionally executed the mission.

It was his independent decisions that secured Washington during this crisis.

Calhoun's Legacy

Secessionist: 1

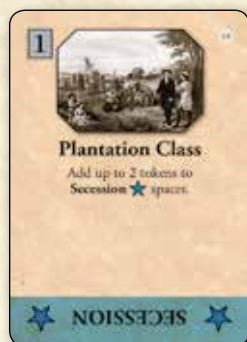


Historical Note: As Vice President under Andrew Jackson, he was one of the leaders of the failed 1832 nullification crisis. He was the Senator from South Carolina when he died in 1850. His doctrine and views cast a shadow over the Secession crisis.



Plantation Class

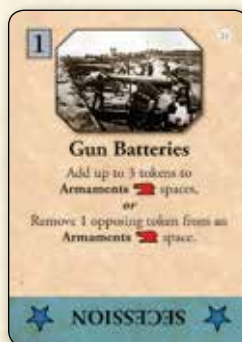
Secessionist: 1



Historical Note: The source of the crisis was the Plantation class with their large slave populations and their control of the State Legislators. This class of southerners was the counterpoint to the Republican ultras that would not compromise their views.

Gun Batteries

Secessionist: 1



Historical Note: As the Secessionists seized Federal Arsenal, they came into possession of large caliber guns that they deployed at strategic points around the South, particularly in Charleston Harbor.

Minute Men

Secessionist: 1



Historical Note: One of the themes during the crisis was that this was the Second American Revolution. Across the South, local companies of soldiers formed and trained under the Revolutionary War theme of rapid mobilization.

Charleston

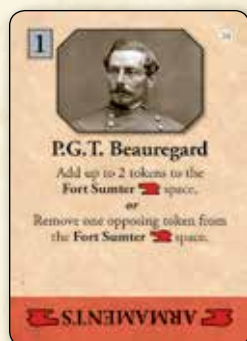
Secessionist: 1



Historical Note: The origin point of the Secessionist movement and the flashpoint that initiated the Civil War.

P.G.T. Beauregard

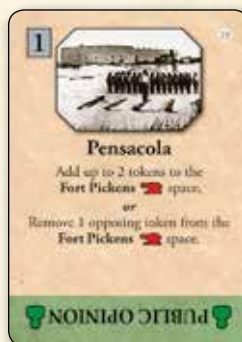
Secessionist: 1



Historical Note: Beauregard became the first Confederate brigadier general and was assigned to oversee the defense of Charleston and its environs. On Jefferson Davis' orders, Beauregard was the commander who initiated the bombardment of Fort Sumter.

Pensacola

Secessionist: 1

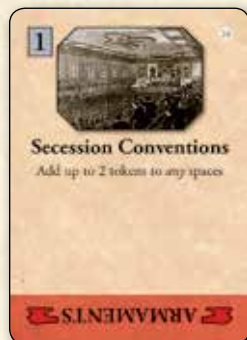


Historical Note: Fort Pickens is located in Pensacola, Florida. General Bragg oversaw the Secessionist failed efforts to seize Fort Pickens.



State Conventions

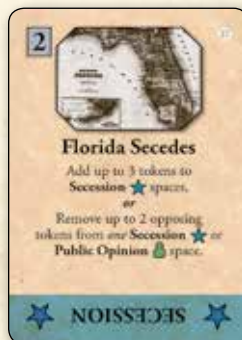
Secessionist: 1



Historical Note: This event acknowledges the various State Conventions that were convened to debate articles to leave the Union. This was the legal mechanism that enabled States to leave the Constitution.

Florida Secedes

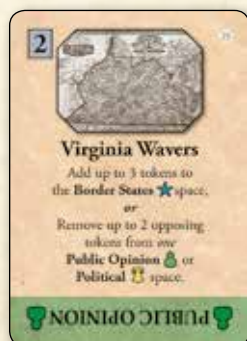
Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: Florida was one of the original seven Confederate States. State Secession events represent the unfolding crisis that occurred during the first half of January 1861 that created the core of the insurrection.

Virginia Wavers

Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: During the later stages of the crisis, Virginia convened a Secession convention. Unlike the Deep South there were strong elements of Unionist support, particularly in the Northwest portion of the state that later became West Virginia. After the bombardment of Fort Sumter it was Lincoln's call for volunteers that finally sent Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Arkansas out of the Union.

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Mississippi Secedes

Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: Mississippi was the second state to leave the Union.

Louisiana Secedes

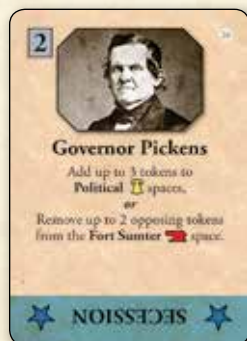
Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: Louisiana was one of the original seven Confederate States. State Secession events represent the unfolding crisis that occurred during the first half of January 1861 that created the core of the insurrection.

Governor Pickens

Secessionist: 2



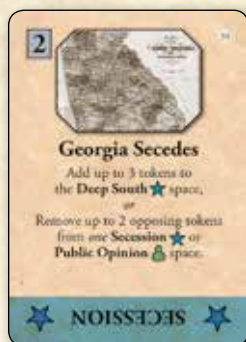
Historical Note: Immediately after South Carolina's ordinance of secession the Legislator appointed Pickens as governor. He was one of the major figures that negotiated a truce with the Buchanan administration and shifted the responsibility for attacking the fort to the fledgling Montgomery government.

fledgling Montgomery government.



Georgia Secedes

Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: Georgia was one of the original seven Confederate States. State Secession events represent the major muscle movements that occurred during the first half of January 1861 that created the core of the insurrection.

Southern Senators Resign

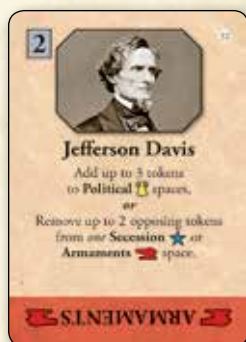
Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: As each of the original seven secession States left the Union, their Senators formally resigned resulting in several speeches that influenced the political environment.

Jefferson Davis

Secessionist: 2



Historical Note: Jefferson Davis was a former Secretary of War and the Senator from Mississippi who resigned when his state left the Union. The State representatives voted him as the first and only President of the Confederate States of America. He was outmaneuvered by

Lincoln to order the bombardment of Fort Sumter that galvanized the Union to fight to preserve the Union.

Fugitive Slave Law

Combined: 3



Historical Note: The Fugitive Slave act was passed into law in 1850. The law was a flashpoint that, for a time, assuaged the South that it could sustain its Slave culture while it enflamed Northern opinion against the institution. This transfer event allows a side to use

its political position in the Secession and Political dimensions to influence other elements of the crisis.

Peace Commissioners

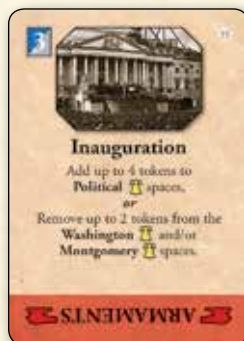
Combined: 3



Historical Note: After Major Anderson moved his command to Fort Sumter, it precipitated Governor Pickens to seize all other Federal property in Charleston. This escalation of the crisis created a minor backlash that led to an unofficial agreement between the Buchanan administration and South Carolina to freeze the situation while allowing the Federal troops to draw supplies from the city without interference.

Inauguration

Combined: 3

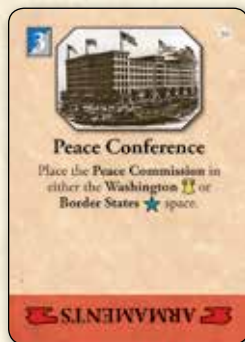


Historical Note: In February and March 1861 there were two sequential Presidential inaugurations. The speeches given set forth the conflicting policies that initiated the Civil War.



Peace Commission

Combined: 3

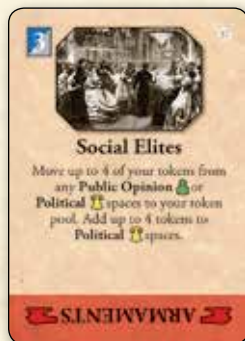


Historical Note: From the waning days of the Buchanan administration until the bombardment of Fort Sumter, there were a series of Legislative committees and a national convention to try to deescalate the situation. The moderate voices on both side of the crisis were

stymied by the ultras.

Social Elites

Combined: 3



Historical Note: The Northern and Southern Social elites represented powerful opinions whose influence often translated into independent political activities across an array of agendas.

Russell of the Times

Combined: 3



Historical Note: The London Times in 1860 was the global paper of record. One of its most famous foreign correspondents was William Howard Russell who journeyed to America to cover this unfolding international event. He travelled and spoke to most of the

major personages during the period covered in the game and was travelling through the South when Fort Sumter was attacked.

Seizing Federal Armories

Combined: 3

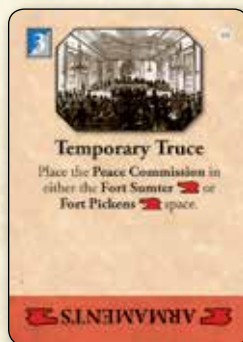


Historical Note: The US militia system relied on a Federal Armory infrastructure to arm the locals in case of war. It was the seizure of these facilities that enabled the South to arm its forces in the opening days of the war. Most of the heavy cannon used by the South in this period

came from these armories. This event allows a player to transfer military power into political capital.

Temporary Truce

Combined: 3



Historical Note: The South was initially unable to assault Forts Sumter or Pickens that led to truces between the local military forces.



Designer's Notes and Strategy Tips

The Centennial of the American Civil War occurred when I was six and I became fascinated with the bombardment of Fort Sumter. I scratched most of that itch when I published *For The People* back in 1999, but the precursor events and the dramatic bombardment were not part of that design.

Sometimes what is old is new again. Back in the late 1970s, I did a small derivative design titled, *Stonewall*, that featured a small counter mix and a two-hour playing time. Since leaving Victory Games in 1987, I did not revisit the idea of doing small games because my design time had become a scarce resource dramatically lowering my output (five-year intervals) and leading me to favor big games such as *For The People* and *Empire of the Sun*.

Fast-forward to my becoming a full-time game designer again. I was recently exposed to a small derivative card-driven game (hereafter CDG) based on *Twilight Struggle* that uses several *We The People* mechanics and I realized I should design a new line of small fast-playing CDGs. Coming full circle, the first thing that leapt into my mind was the first in the series had to be *Fort Sumter*. So the big challenge for me was how to distill a multi-level national crisis into a twenty-minute format, while being true to the historical theme.

Fort Sumter looks at the 1860-61 secession crisis as a political conflict where each side used their resources (political capital) to gain leverage and control over elements of the crisis. I call these elements “crisis dimensions”. Each of these dimensions had a pivot point as represented by

four critical map spaces. The side that can better deploy and position their political resources wins the crisis. Lincoln won the historical event allowing him to galvanize support for a war to save the Union. If he had failed Northern morale may have collapsed early in the war before their superior material resources could be brought to bear.



The centerpiece of the *Fort Sumter* design is the Crisis Track where the players’ political capital is mobilized into the confrontations that occur in the map spaces. The players use their cards to experience the situations and personages that impacted the events portrayed in this game. While every card mobilizes from one to three tokens, it is the focused events that generate additional political lift (more token mobilization) but within their historical impact. Tied to your political resources is an objective space that illuminates collective pressure from your political allies to accomplish some agenda item. Failure to control your objective results in a victory for your opponent, while success demoralizes the opposition (winning objective event).

The Crisis Track is broken into three zones: escalation, tension, and final crisis. While both sides had what were called Ultras (ideologically-driven extremists), the majority of the country was moderate to indifferent on the secession issue.



As you move along the Crisis Track you cross boundaries that begin to activate some moderates to your side (additional political capital), but also causes others to move in opposition to the more aggressive side. This is what is represented by the political bonuses and penalties that activate when a zone is breached.

Crossing the first boundary into the escalation zone yields additional assets as both sides race to ratchet up the pressure. At this point, you are picking up moderates that are close to your ultra's position (Unionist versus Secessionists). The second zone (tension) yields more resources, but the first player to breach this line causes some moderates to react against your side as they attempt to find common ground (Peace Commissioner). The last critical decision is whether to push prematurely into the final crisis that yields even greater political momentum, but causes a segment of moderates to permanently back away from your side (minus 1 VP) as you plunge the nation toward war.

The new final crisis mechanic sets both sides to conduct their final maneuvers and confrontations. During each of the initial three rounds of the game, you will have to decide which of three crisis dimensions (Secession, Public Opinion, and Armaments) you wish to attack or defend during the Final Crisis by your three strategy card choices during the three rounds of play. There is no Political activity in the final crisis as this dimension has failed. The players reveal their three-card deck (three successive card plays) that result in confrontation (tokens removed) or leverage (adding tokens) that determine the final crisis positions. Once this is concluded, the player with the greater support (higher VP score) wins an enduring advantage out of the crisis and victory.

Defining Concepts

I prefer to use thematic definitions for game actions to enhance the game narrative. The incongruity in *Fort Sumter* is that you compete for victory points. VPs were my last title choice but all of the other choices amongst the non-gamers who tested the design created cognitive dissonance (e.g., Strategic Will, my first choice). Once I went to VPs, everyone understood what they were competing for, so I apologize, but—in the end—less historical jargon seemed the way to

go. However, gaining and losing VPs represents your growing constituency and the players with the most adherents to your cause, strategic will, prevail in the crisis.

Elements of the Crisis

The map is the physical and metaphysical representation of the crisis. Most of the spaces are physical locations where the crisis percolated and resolved (e.g., Fort Sumter). Running alongside the locations were the attitudes of the electorate as represented by the Public Opinion spaces.

Once South Carolina seceded from the Constitution on December 20th (1860), it was quickly followed by six other states (Deep South and Texas). The pivot point was the border states, especially Virginia. Many decisions in the crisis revolved around which side had more political leverage over which side the Border States would support.

It should be no surprise that the key Unionist decisions around the crisis centered on Washington where a lame duck president (Buchanan) could not stabilize the situation or buy time for Abraham Lincoln to find a peaceful path out of the evolving national tragedy. The new political power center in Montgomery, the Confederate States capital, was the political counterpoint to Washington. The Northern State Houses vacillated between appeasements, such as evacuating Fort Sumter, and enforcing the Constitution. In his inaugural address, Lincoln laid out his policy to secure Federal property and collect custom duties—the main source of Federal income. His view was that his oath to protect the Constitution was his legal authority for all of his subsequent actions. It took a bloody Civil War to prove him right.

As the crisis deepened, the communication medium of the day—the Newspapers—both illuminated and obscured what was happening across the country. The national and local news informed the clergy (Abolitionists) and the various State Assemblies that were debating whether to stand with or leave the Union. This vital dimension of public opinion swayed between letting the South leave peacefully or to be resisted militarily. The center of the national news in this period was New York City, home of the three national newspapers and the newly created Associated Press (AP).



The last dimension, and the one that ultimately brought the divided house down, was the Federal Arsenal where the nation's weapons were stored. As southern states seceded they seized these weapons caches, giving them the ability to raise an army to deter and—if necessary—defeat Washington's policy to secure and hold all Federal property. It has always been true that weapons and the will to use them is the ultimate political capital.

The two Federal locations that resisted seizure were Fort Pickens and Fort Sumter. These two locations became the flashpoints of the secession crisis, and it was Lincoln's decision in early April to reinforce these locations that forced Jefferson Davis to order the bombardment of Fort Sumter that started the Civil War.

Replayability and Balance

Even though *Fort Sumter* is a short straightforward design, it remains important to me that the game be balanced, not based on luck of the draw, and with high replay value. In the design of *Fort Sumter* I used a "Monte Carlo" simulation that allowed me to play over 100k games with 600k hands of cards to ensure that math not luck drove the outcome. The cards work seamlessly with the Crisis Track, so even if you were to draw the weakest cards possible (about five instances over 6k hands) you will still equalize tokens in play (plus or minus one) by the final crisis.

Another replay feature is you will only use 24 of the 40 strategy cards each game, so no two games will tell the same story. As far as the objective cards go—while they are secret—by the third round you will have seen 50% of the objectives, so pay attention to what is knowable as you make your late game decisions.

Basic Strategy

The decks are asymmetrical with both sides equal on the Political and Armaments dimensions. Unsurprisingly the Secessionists have a built-in advantage in the Secession dimension. As New York City was the center of the Associated Press (AP) and the three major national newspapers, the Unionists have an advantage in the Public Opinion dimension.

All cards, due to their token value of one to three, are political mobilization cards. A side can access their colored events that mobilize additional

political capital, but in a more specific set of locations. This is where the deck asymmetries show themselves.

Events fall into four basic categories: mobilization (add tokens), debate (add or remove tokens), transfer (translate power from one dimension to another), and peace initiatives (ability to create temporary truces with the Peace Commissioner). Over the course of a game you will play nine cards. It will be a rare game where playing all of your cards for their full value will not breach the final crisis zone. Therefore you will be confronted with some hard choices on when to breach the Tension and Final Crisis zones.

The key decisions in the game revolve around how to grow support for your side as represented by victory points. This means that you need to focus on gaining support in one or more of the crisis dimensions. You also need to be conscious of keeping pace with your opponent. So, each turn you need to have a plan for how to play your three cards to gain support in crisis dimensions and achieve your objective (VPs). Gaining support is juxtaposed against using some resources to block your opponent's parallel efforts.

The most important spaces (pivotal spaces) enable a two-token maneuver capability prior to scoring the crisis dimensions each round. This means that if you have three tokens in a pivotal space and there are no opposing tokens in the other two associated spaces you could move one token to each of the other two spaces controlling the set of three for a VP. There are other combinations, such as move one and remove one opponent's token to gain control, but the major idea is pivotal spaces are critical to any successful strategy.

There are two basic ways to neutralize a pivotal space. First is to place four tokens in the space (maximum allowed). This tactic ensures that either you control it or neuter both side's ability to control the space. Second, by having a two-token advantage in either of a pivotal space's two associated spaces is usually sufficient to overwhelm the pivotal space capability. For example, the SAM HOUSTON event (card 4) allows the Unionists to place three political tokens in Texas that even control of the Border States pivot space is unlikely to overcome.



The objective spaces are a critical strategic element. Each turn you will have your four strategy cards and two objective space choices. It is always a good idea to evaluate your hand and the map situation when choosing your objective. It is also a good idea to try to use subtlety during play to avoid making it too obvious which location is your objective space. If your opponent seems set on disputing your objective space control, at a minimum get four tokens into the space to prevent them from gaining the VP. Failing to score your objective space each turn is usually the source of how a side falls behind in the game.

Another major advantage for winning your objective card is it enables the card's event. Objective events allow you to reinforce your crisis positions by removing some number of your opponent's tokens to his token pool. However, while you gain a next round advantage in map position you have given your opponent the ability to re-deploy his now freed-up political capital for new initiatives. No free lunch here.

Transfer events allow you to withdraw tokens from the map to your token pool and then immediately redeploy them into new locations. In the right circumstances, this is a very powerful capability, especially in the late game. Also remember that all text in the game says, "up to..." with zero as one of the choices. So, transfer events can take zero tokens from the map and still deploy tokens from your token pool into play. This is an antidote to having a previous round's objective event remove several of your tokens from the map.

The Peace Commissioner piece is a very powerful asset when it is strategically placed. Each game is likely to have one player breach the tension zone, enabling his opponent to rally moderates to try to tamp down the crisis. The best location for a Peace Commissioner is probably in a pivotal space that you control, or to lock down an objective space that you have control over. The antidote is there are three Peace events that can move this piece to another location, so peace negotiations often act as a strategic wildcard in many games.

The game is very tightly balanced. That is not to say that your opponent cannot blow you out in VPs, but skillful play makes this unlikely. If it does

occur, it's a very short game, so the pain is over quickly and you can play again.

One thing I extensively tested was how does one come from behind. The most important consideration is the lower score goes last, and I evaluated that going last is worth about a half a VP—depending on how skillfully your opponent blocks on his last card. In addition, the final crisis mechanic on average will yield a one VP differential, although the record is four VPs gained. This means that many games have one side win by two VPs, or the score is tied. In many games, victory is determined by tiebreakers—often making the Fort Sumter space the most important space in many victories. The historical outcome was a tie score with Fort Sumter determining the winner (Unionists). As compensation for the Unionist player having to go first when the score is tied, he wins the final tiebreaker, no draws. I have found no statistical benefit for either side, but if your experience differs, switch sides between games and the winner is the side with the largest combined score.

Final Crisis Tactics

One of the difficulties you will face in your first game of *Fort Sumter* is that you will be required to set cards aside for a dramatic finale that you have not experienced or yet understand. At first glance, it will appear that the final crisis is devoid of strategy and is a random walk to finish the game. Let me say that appearances are misleading.

The final crisis has both a clear set of decisions that are implemented in an intentionally chaotic crisis conclusion. By intent, it is very hard to control a disaster. At a minimum, there are several important considerations you have to make to avoid being damaged in the final crisis. While it may shift during the three rounds, you will need to decide which crisis dimensions you want to control at the end of the game.

The first thing to note is that the player who controls the Political dimension going into the final crisis will score this VP at the end of the game. So, as a first rule, if you cannot control the Political dimension make sure that your opponent cannot either. The easiest way to accomplish this is get four tokens into one of the Political spaces to lock this VP out.



The next consideration is which of the remaining three crisis dimensions to pick to contest with your final crisis cards. One tactic is to plan to defend at least one VP by choosing cards that align to those spaces at the end of Round 3. For example, if you want to control the Armaments dimension at the end of the game, a simple tactic is save three armaments cards (one per round). What this means is that if you control the Armaments dimension at the end of Round 3 and you have three armaments cards for the final crisis, neither side will be able to add any tokens to the Armaments dimension. If you are successful, you should garner two VPs for the final scoring of the Armaments dimension and control of Fort Sumter (first tiebreaker). You should also note that 50% of the final crisis choices are armaments cards and in many cases these are also the most powerful event cards, so some tough choices will need to be made during play.

An alternate strategy is to block the Armaments dimension by putting four tokens into Fort Sumter and choosing a combination of Secession and Public Opinion final crisis cards. In this scenario your opponent cannot win the Armaments dimension or the Fort Sumter VPs and you could gain one or two VPs from gaining control of the Public Opinion and Secession spaces. There are many other strategic combinations that are situation dependent, but hopefully this short description gives you some insight into how to think about preparing for the final crisis.

Game Credits

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Manuals and Cards: Charles Kibler and Mark Simonitch

Production Coordination: Tony Curtis

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Playtest Cards: Francisco Colmenares

Playtesters: J.R. Tracy, Rory Alyward and the entire Fun City Group, Jonathan Haber, David Dockter, Tom Stein, Grant and Jenieze Herman, Lara and Dan Schreiberstein, Gary Gonzalez, Amy and Scott Muldoon, Luke Billingsley, Rachel Billingsley, Gene Billingsley, Andy Lewis, as well as Nate, Dede, Aeneas, and Penelope Merchant—and a host of convention gamers who generously played and gave me their thoughts.

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