

Nukewar

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NUKEWAR

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KIM-1 / PAL-1 version by David Hassler 2022

INTRODUCTION

NUKEWAR is a semi-serious simulation of the choices facing the leaders of democratic nations as they attempt to provide strategic defenses for their countries in the nuclear age. The key assumption in this simulation is that strategic nuclear war will occur as the arms race causes continued stockpiling of nuclear weapons. This makes for a lively game, but let us hope that we can prevent nuclear war from happening in real life!

GAME DISPLAY

The basic game display is a symbolic map of 8 x 8 grid points representing the player's country, and a similar map of the computer's country. The map of the Computer's country is initially all unknown, to be filled in bit by bit during the Cold War phase of the game by spies in the enemy country. The computer has a similar display (with similar restrictions) in its memory.

On the display, 'C' is a city, 'M' is a missile base, 'B' is a fighter-bomber base, 'S' is a missile submarine base, 'A' is an ABM (anti-ballistic missile) base, and '•' is suburban-rural land or an unknown area.

Grid points are referenced as a pair of numbers: row column. For instance, A1 is the upper left corner and H8 is the lower right corner.

BEGINNING THE GAME

When the program begins, the computer will ask for the names of the two countries. Any string of up to 15 characters can be entered as a name.

Once the computer has the names of the countries, it will generate the city locations (8 cities) and two bases (one missile base and one fighter-bomber base) for each country. The game then enters the first Cold War turn, in a random year from 1956 to 1965.

COLD WAR TURNS

Each turn (Cold War or Hot War) begins with the display of the current maps. Remember that the enemy map does not contain complete information, but it does contain all that is known at the time.

The computer will ask for 'Cold War orders' after displaying the maps. Three orders are valid: S(py), W(ar), and normal. Only the first letter counts, and the answer is assumed to be 'normal' if not 'S' or 'W'. Spying means that a lot of information will be gained about the enemy country, but at the cost of one new base. War attempts to call a first-strike on the enemy, but could be disobeyed (You have a democracy, after all!), resulting in a lost turn. Normal strategy allows two new bases and a mediocre espionage effort.

BUILDING NEW BASES

Based on the Cold War orders, the computer will ask questions relevant to the building of zero, one, or two new bases. The first question is what base type. The answer should be 'M*', 'B', 'S', or 'A' depending on the desired base type. The other question is what is to be the location of the new base. The row and column of the desired location should be entered.

The location must be empty, i.e. show on the display as '•'. Additional restrictions are (1) 'S' bases cannot be built before 1965, (2) 'S' bases must be built on the map edge, and (3) 'A' bases cannot be built before 1970.

NUCLEAR WAR (HOT WAR)

Nuclear war will begin eventually when it is started by the computer or by the player. The party that starts the war will be able to activate his bases more successfully on the first turn of Hot War, and will have the chance to carry out a first-strike before the enemy has a chance to get his strategic weapons off the ground or out to sea. If both sides declare war at the same time, then both will have the same advantage. Note that a S(py) order during Cold War will prevent first-strike surprise in case the computer declares war that turn. The computer is more likely to declare war each turn that the game progresses.

ACTIVATING BASES DURING HOT WAR

Bases which have not been activated will appear on the display map during Hot War. As bases are activated, they are replaced by '•' grid markers. Known enemy bases are also displayed, but they are not removed when they are activated.

In order to activate a base when the computer asks, simply input the base location in the same format used when building bases. The base type is not needed. The computer will then take the appropriate action depending on the type of base activated. Bases will often activate themselves. When this happens, the computer will ask the necessary questions and the player should respond as he would if he had activated the base normally.

WHAT MISSILE BASES DO WHEN ACTIVATED

When a missile base is activated, the computer will display the number of missiles ready to launch and ask for a target for each one. The target location in the other country is input in the same format as the grid locations in the home country. Missiles can often drift off target, and so several may be needed to hit a specific location. A new display map will be given when a missile base activates itself so that targets can be easily selected. Also, line feed is suppressed during the input of targets so that the maps do not roll off the top of the screen.

WHAT FIGHTER-BOMBER BASES DO WHEN ACTIVATED

When a fighter-bomber base is activated, the number of jets ready to take off will be displayed. The number of jets to arm as fighters should then be input; the rest will be armed as bombers.

Bombers will arrive over the enemy country in an unknown number of Hot War turns. Defending fighters will shoot them down and the bombers will shoot back. Generally, fighters are about 20% tougher than bombers in this type of combat. If any bombers are left after the defending fighters are eliminated, the bombers will attack any targets of opportunity they can find, whether the targets are shown on the spy map or not. Thus, bombers are the most powerful strategic weapons if they can get through the enemy fighter defense.

WHAT MISSILE SUBMARINES DO WHEN ACTIVATED

An activated missile submarine goes to sea, where it is immune from attack. An unknown number of Hot War turns later, it will report itself as having reached its launch location. When that happens, the procedure is identical to self-activation of a missile base.

WHAT ABM BASES DO WHEN ACTIVATED

An activated ABM base adds its ABM's to the total of ABM's in 'active tracking mode'. Every incoming missile and every bomber that gets past the fighter screen will be allocated one ABM from the total in an attempt to bring it down before it gets to its target. This attempt is not always successful, especially against bombers. If a bomber is missed, there is time to fire another ABM, but there is no second chance against a missile.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A GRID LOCATION IS HIT

Grid locations that are hit by nuclear weapons are displayed as '•'. If an unactivated base is present, it is destroyed.

A nuclear accident sometimes occurs (rarely) during Cold War at a base. The result is a nuclear hit at the base grid zone and a second hit at a grid zone within one unit in a random direction (possibly the same one).

ENDING HOT WAR

Hot War ends either as the result of negotiation or after all offensive weapons have been expended. Negotiations occur when the Premier of the enemy country (the computer) calls on the Hot Line (the terminal) and the player agrees to negotiate. After sizing up the player's remaining threat (bombers on the way and missile submarines at sea are very good threats), the computer will either agree to a truce and stop the Hot War, or continue as before.

THE WINNER

The winner is generally the side with the greater population at the end. Cities have 11 million people each, while other non-bombed grid locations have 1 million each. If world opinion goes against the side that declared war, it is harder for that side to win. The winning country and the degree of victory are given after a final printing of the maps, this time with total and correct information for both sides. There is no winner if the population is reduced far enough.

EXAMPLES OF PLAY

This section gives some examples that will be useful for the computer game beginner. An important thing to keep in mind is that the computer expects the player to input his commands in a very precise format and terminate them by pressing the ENTER (or RETURN) key. The computer is very literal-minded and can't make guesses about what was REALLY meant!

The standard routine during cold war is to build bases. The following sequence is an example of this for one turn of cold war:

COLD WAR ORDERS? (Computer puts this on the screen.)

[ENTER] (Player presses ENTER for normal strategy.)

TYPE OF BASE TO BUILD? (Computer)

M [ENTER] (Player. Missile base.)

LOCATION TO BUILD BASE? (Computer.)

H1 [ENTER] (Player. Upper right corner.)

TYPE OF BASE TO BUILD? (Computer)

B [ENTER] (Player. Fighter-bomber base.)

LOCATION TO BUILD BASE? (Computer.)

A8 [ENTER] (Player. Lower left corner.)

(Computer now proceeds to its own strategy.)

During hot war, the normal activity is to activate bases. The following example is the activation of a fighter-bomber base:

BASE TO ACTIVATE? (Computer.)
H1 [ENTER] (Player. Base type is not needed.)
7 PLANES READY AT AIRBASE 1. (Computer.)
NUMBER TO ARM AS FIGHTERS? (Computer.)
3 [ENTER] (Player. 3 fighters, 7-3 =4 bombers.)
(Computer now proceeds to other hot war activities.)

While entering commands may seem difficult at first, a little experience will make entering them almost second nature. Note that the computer won't let you do anything against the rules, so don't worry about that!

QUESTIONS ON PLAY

The clarity of these rules has been verified by Software Testers of Universal Microcomputer Programmers (STUMP) and deemed "complete" in all facets of instruction. Please re-read them in areas that seem unclear at first reading. Questions on play can be answered by the factory only upon receipt of a self addressed envelope bearing first-class postage.