

# THE LANSRAAD MANEUVER

## A DUNE Variant

By Kenneth Burke



The Lansraad, in Herbert's classic, wielded great power in the universe of Dune. A collection of representatives from the noble houses of the Imperium, its influence was such that even the Emperor feared it. It was his fear of Duke Leto's authority in the Lansraad that led the Emperor to seek Leto's death to begin with; when the plot was eventually culminated, bribes were paid in order to keep the Lansraad unaware of the Imperial involvement.

I now wish to alter the story, though. Let us suppose the following: The Lansraad is worried. The Harkonnen tale of losing control of the vital planet Dune just doesn't impress these powerful men. No one accidentally loses control of the most important planet in the Imperium. And why were the Atreides chosen to govern it? It is a known fact that the Emperor is growing more and more concerned with Leto Atreides' popularity; if anything, he would be the last chosen to hold Dune for the Imperium. The Lansraad Mentats thus suspect something is amiss—a surprise attack by the Emperor (and possibly the Harkonnens) against Duke Leto? On Dune! The one planet where such ruthless moves can be felt throughout the Imperium!

The great men of the Lansraad do not like this development. They can foresee the spice flow being interrupted, the great starships coming to a standstill, noble house after noble house collapsing in isolated revolts, and the Imperium itself shattered beyond redemption. Rather than risk this course, the Lansraad has decided to make its considerable influence felt on Dune directly. The houses of the Lansraad have more than enough troops at their disposal to deal with any problems that may arise; added to that is the collective wealth and experience of its members and one has a combined political and military maneuver that could, if the need arose, bring all Dune under the direct control of the Lansraad. The command has been given; the attempt begins.

### The LANSRAAD

**AT START**—20 tokens in reserves (off-planet). Start with 30 spice.

**FREE REVIVAL**—3 tokens.

**ADVANTAGE**—You have Influence over almost all major powers (except the Fremmen) on Dune.

1. During a turn, you may use your power of Influence during the revival/movement or the battle round.

a. In the revival/movement round, you may order any player to "hold in place". That player will not be able to reclaim tokens from the tanks, ship tokens onto or off Dune, or move his tokens on the mapboard during the round.

b. In the battle round, you may order any player to "hold in place". That player will not be able to attack anyone during that round, but may defend if attacked by another party.

**ALLIANCE**—You may not ally with the Fremmen (although a third player may be allied to both). Allies may make use of the Lansraad "Optional Advantage" of restricting territories; the same conditions as to who may be affected is imposed.

**Leaders and Values:** Baron Moat—6  
Earl Viaconte—5  
Administrator—3  
Commissioner—2  
Representative—1

### Disadvantages:

1. You cannot make use of your power of Influence in both the revival/movement and combat rounds of the same turn (unless able to play a Karma card, to be described later).
2. You have no power of Influence over the Fremmen player, nor may you ever ally with the Fremmen player.

**Optional Advantage:** At the start of any turn, before the Storm marker position is determined, you may declare any non-sietch territory on the mapboard (except for the Polar Sink) "restricted". All tokens that do not belong to the Lansraad player, a Lansraad-allied player, the Fremmen player, or are co-existing Bene Gesserit tokens must be moved out of this territory during the upcoming revival/movement turns. Failure to do so results in the tokens being sent to the tanks. With the exception of the above-mentioned token types, tokens may not be moved into the territory during the entire turn. The Lansraad player may not declare the same territory "restricted" for two consecutive turns.

### Karma Powers:

1. When played against the Lansraad player, this prevents him from using his power of Influence or optional "restriction" once. The card would be played right after the Lansraad ordered a player to hold in place or declared a territory restricted.
2. If the optional special Karma Power rules are used, the Lansraad player may use a Karma card once during the game to use his power of Influence during the revival/movement and combat rounds of the same game turn. The card would be played at the start of the battle round.

**Strategy:** Plentiful spice, a high revival rate, decent leaders, and a very effective special power are the Lansraad's good points; its starting with all its tokens off planet and commencing play with a natural enemy (the Fremmen) are its bad ones. If you decide to start a seven-player game with a sietch invasion, I advise against invading any Fremmen sietch. Any victory you gain against the desert dwellers will be short-lived. As time passes, the wise Lansraad player will join in an alliance, preferably of an anti-Fremmen nature. His power of "restriction" can allow his allies to cordon off spice territories for their own use. But, you must be careful who you pick as your friends and what they get out of the deal, for someday they may be your enemies.

I think experienced players will find including the Lansraad into their games of DUNE spices things up. Not that the standard game is boring—far from it. But the Lansraad will force all to rethink old strategies; and I always found it hard to envision that such a powerful body as Herbert presents would not have become involved in the affairs of Dune after such a period. One last note: If future factions to play in DUNE are created, the Lansraad may or may not have Influence over them. A power like the Gholas (The GENERAL, Vol. 18, No. 5) or the Ixians (HEROES, Vol. 1, No. 1)—something from outside the Imperium—would hardly be much influenced by the august body, or honor their "restricted" notices. On the other hand, anything that is created to reflect some group from within the Imperium will.

