

Changing Nationalities in CARRIERS AT WAR

Another Mini Tutorial

by Ian Trout

There will be times when you want to create scenarios using the forces of nations other than Japan or the United States. That means you'll need to change the nationality icon(s) in the Side Select/Alert screen, change the force and briefing buttons in the Force Select screen and change the large paintings in the Base/Carrier Info and End of Game screens.

The .lbm files which contain the nationality, force and briefing icons are the orders.lbm file and the

standard.lbm file, both of which are in the PICTS directory. The first data entry you make when creating a new

scenario is the File Names; see page 101 of the *Carriers at War Construction Kit* manual. The orders.lbm and standard.lbm files are the third and fourth files respectively.

The large base, carrier and final victory paintings are individual .pck files and all of them are located in the SCENARIO directory. Each nationality has four such .pck files, identified as basen000.pck (seaplane), basen001.pck (land), basen002.pck (carrier) and

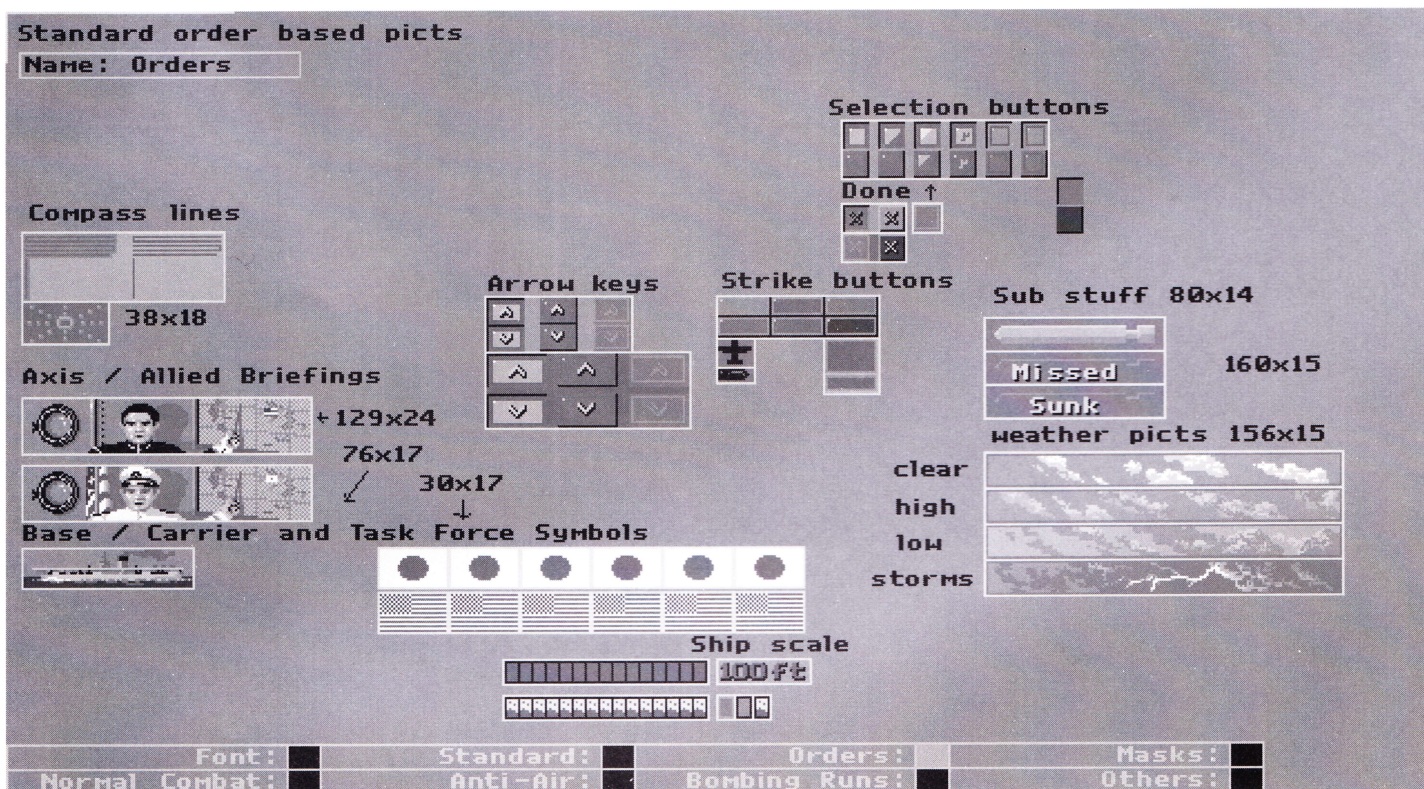


Fig 1. The Default Orders.lbm File

basen003.pck (victory) where n corresponds to the nationality values identified in the Scenario Names section on page 102 of the *Carriers at War Construction Kit* manual. For example, the Japanese carrier painting is the base7002.pck file and the British sea-plane painting is the base2000.pck file. If your scenario is going to use a nationality other than Japanese or American, you will need to build up new icons and paint new base illustrations.

The following example will take you through the process in detail. Here we will replace American icons/illustrations with British icons/illustrations; in fact, these are the British icons/illustrations which appear in *Carriers at War II* (formerly *Japan Sweeps South*).

Step 1. Making a New Orders.lbm File

Fig 1 shows the default orders.lbm file. Go to your painting program and load the orders.lbm file from the PICTS di-

rectory. Save this file (in the PICTS directory) as ordsbrjp.lbm; i.e. this is my code for an orders (ords) lbm file showing British (br) and Japanese (jp) icons.

The American briefing icon, as well as the strip of American force icons, must be replaced. Fig 2 shows my impressions of suitable icons with which to replace them. Note that there are two British force icons; the Union Jack is used for land bases and the White Ensign for task forces.

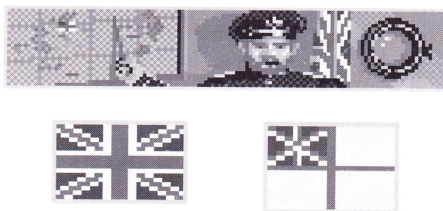


Fig 2. The British Briefing and Force Icons

You must make sure that the new icons exactly replace the old icons; if not, the icons will appear off-centre when you

run the game. If the colors are peculiar, you will need to restore the palette as explained in the last issue. Remember to save your work when finished.

Fig 3 shows my completed ordsbrjp.lbm file.

Step 2. Making a New Standard.lbm File

Fig 4 shows the default standard.lbm file.

From your painting program, load the standard.lbm file from the PICTS directory. Save this file (in the PICTS directory) as stanbrjp.lbm; i.e. again, this is my code for an standard (stan) lbm file showing British (br) and Japanese (jp) icons.

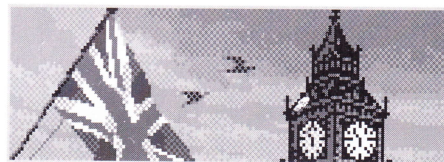


Fig 5. The British Nationality Icon

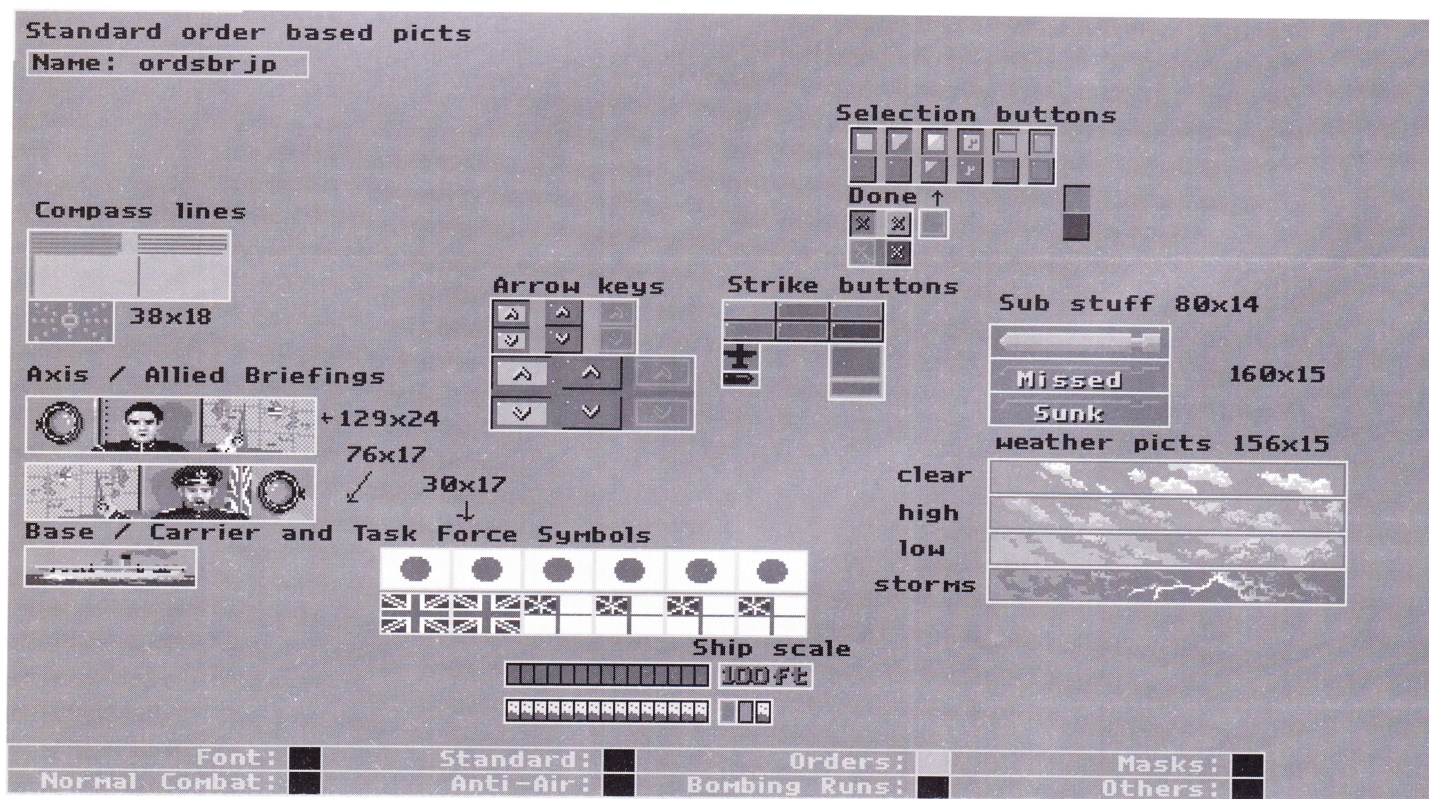


Fig 3. The New Ordsbrjp.lbm File

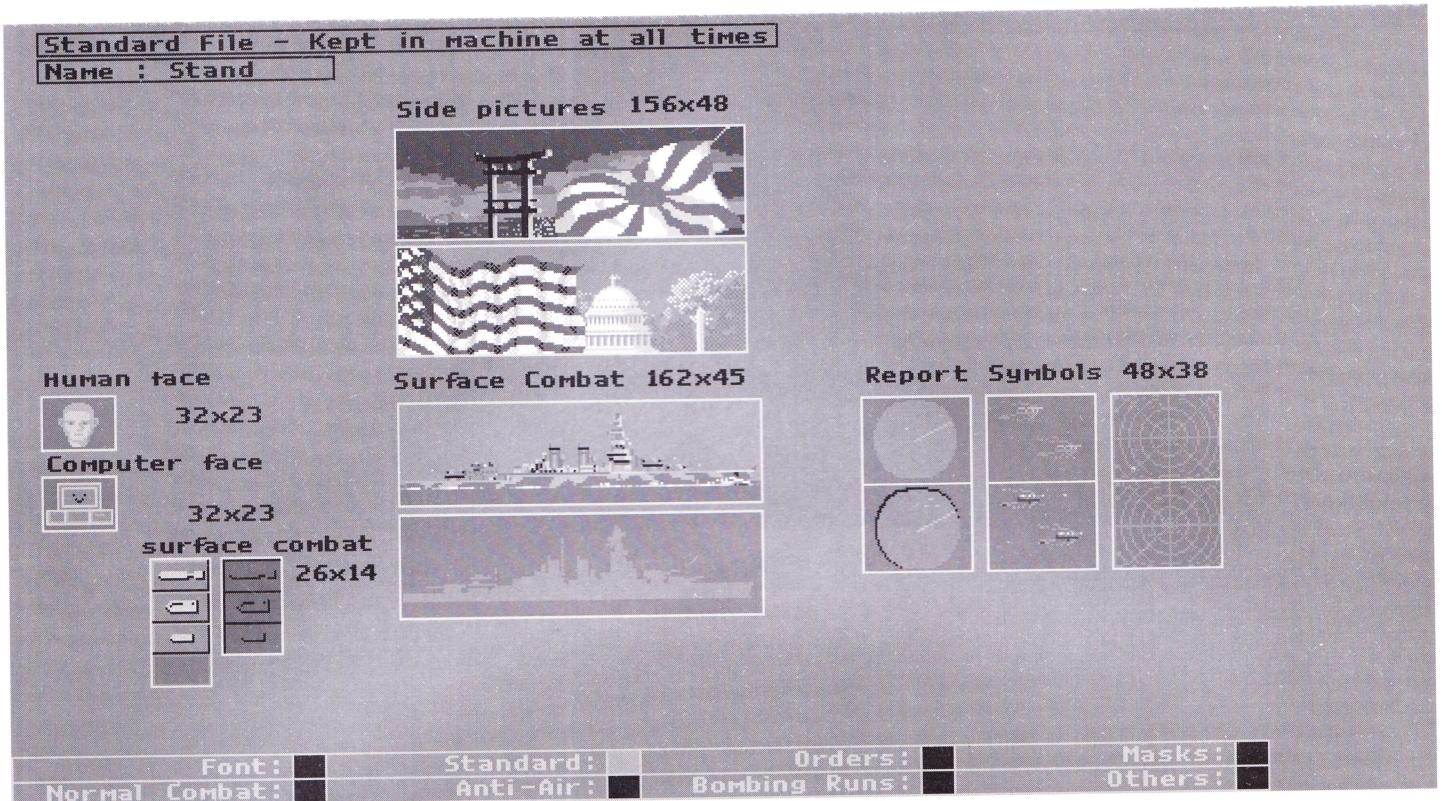


Fig 4. The Default Standard.lbm File

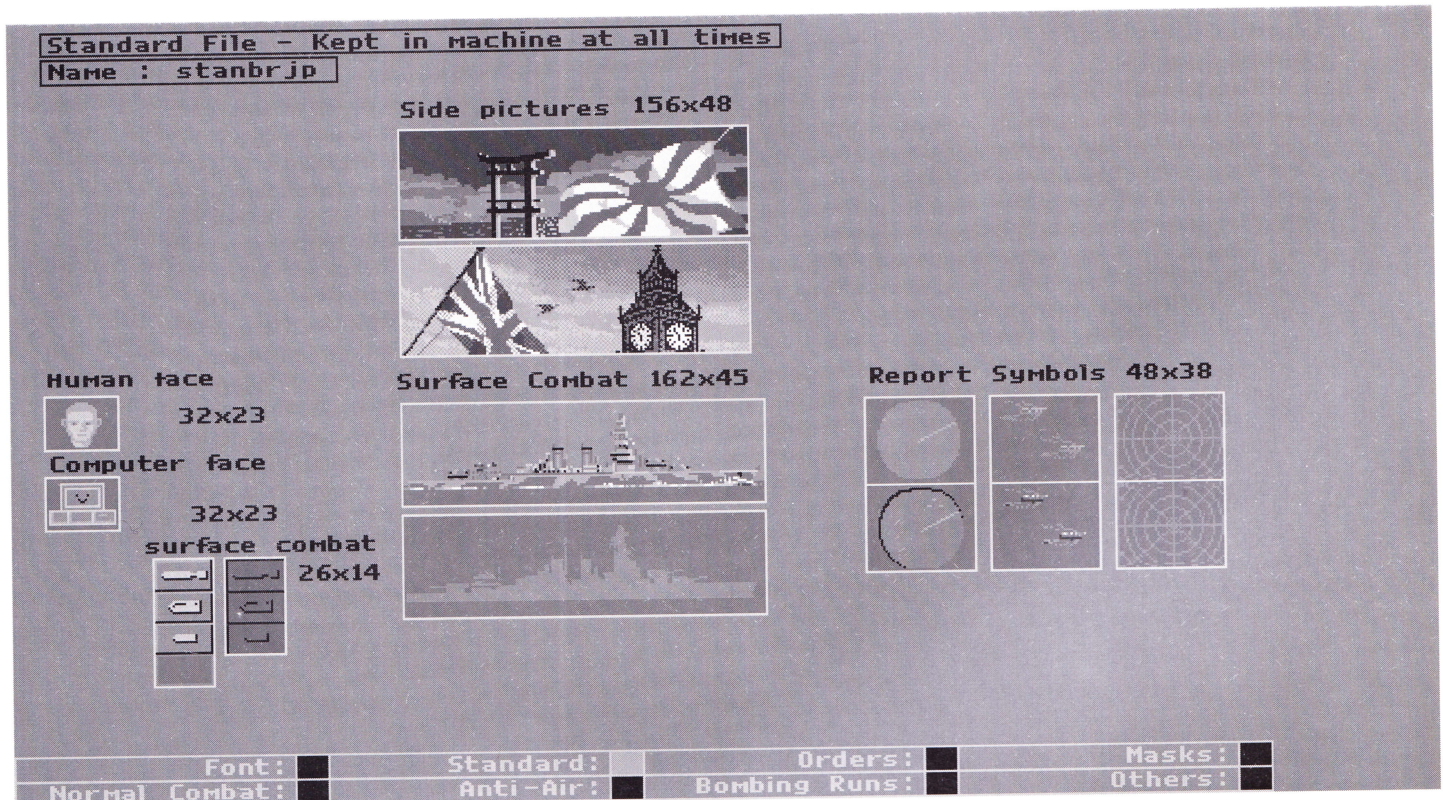


Fig 6. The New Stanbrjp.lbm File

The American nationality icon must be replaced. Fig 5 shows Nick Stathopoulos' vision of Big Ben.

You must make sure that the new icon exactly replaces the old icon; if not, the icon will appear off-centre when you

run the game. If the colors are peculiar, you will need to restore the palette as explained in the last issue.

Fig 6 shows my completed stanbrjp.lbm file.

Step 3. Packing the Ordsbrjp.lbm and Stanbrjp.lbm Files

Type `cp` from the CAW or CREATE directories. Select the Bits and Picts menu item from the Picts menu. Click on the `ordsbrjp` line (as shown in fig 7) and then on the Pack # button. The packed `ordsbrjp.pck` file is shown in fig 8.

Again, select the Bits and Picts menu item from the Picts menu. Click on the `stanbrjp` line and then on the Pack # button. The packed `stanbrjp.pck` file is shown in fig 9.

These two .pck files are now ready for use.

Step 4. Replacing the Base Illustrations

Unfortunately, very few of us have the artistic skills to paint a full-size illustration that looks any good. If you want to have a go, however, be our guest. Step 5 goes through the correct procedure. Otherwise, you can do one of two things.

(a). Use an existing set of base illustrations. Go to the SCENARIO directory and type

```
copy base100*.pck base200*.pck
<enter>
```

which will produce a set of British illustrations from the American set.

(b). Use someone else's illustrations. Copy the `basen00x.pck` files from the supplier to your SCENARIO directory. The IBM scenario disk which accompanies the disk subscription of this issue contains a full set of British base illustrations. To install them, go to the SCENARIO directory and type

```
copy a: base200*.pck <enter>
```

Note that a: refers to the drive containing the Issue 20 scenario disk. You may be using another drive.

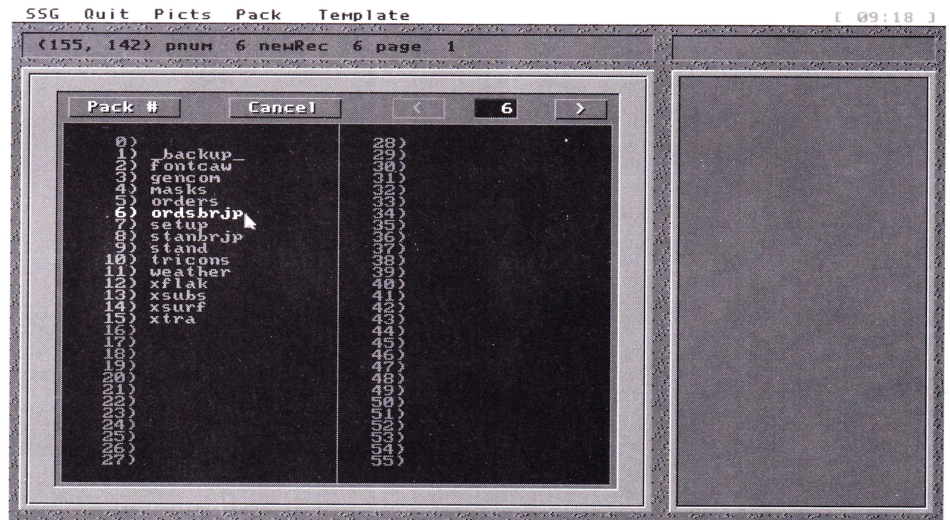


Fig 7. Packing the Ordsbrjp.lbm File

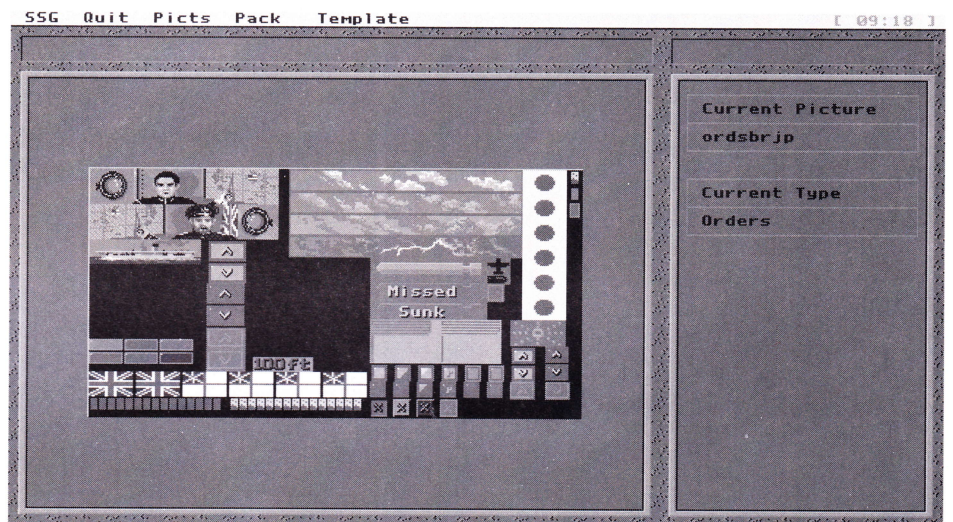


Fig 8. The Ordsbrjp.pck File

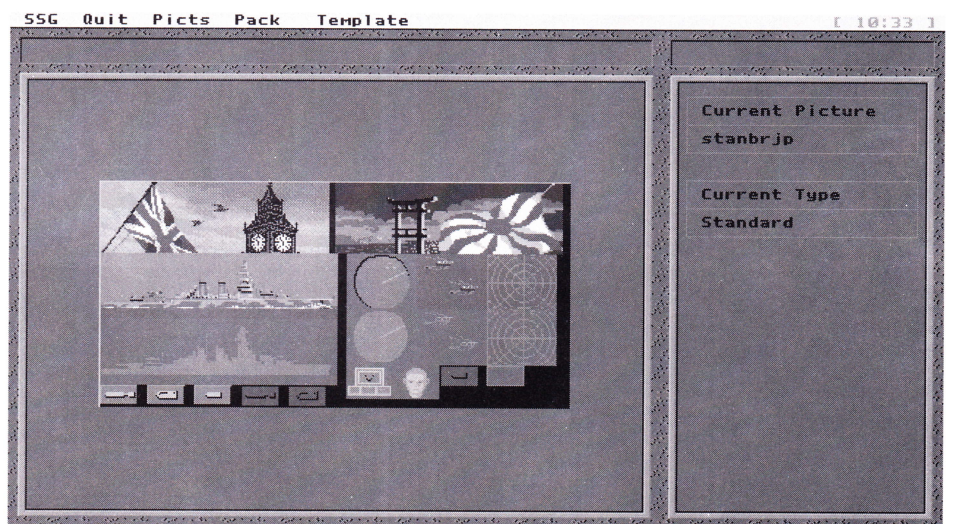


Fig 9. The Stanbrjp.pck File

(Step 5. Painting New Base Illustrations)

The .lhm files corresponding to the large base illustrations were not included with the game, essentially to save space. However the packing routines allow you to convert a basen00x.pck file to the corresponding basen00x.lhm file with just a couple of keystrokes. Note that this is the same procedure you used last issue when going through the ship painting tutorial.

Here's how to replace the American seaplane base illustration with a British seaplane base illustration.

Type cp from the CAW or CREATE directory and then select the Make Big Pict menu item from the Template menu. Click on the base1000 line and then on the Build # button. This creates an .lhm file from the .pck file. You won't see anything on the screen; you will need to enter your painting program to work on the new .lhm file.

Go to your painting program and load the base1000.lhm file from the SCE-

NARIO directory. If the colors are peculiar, you will need to restore the palette as explained in the last issue. Save this .lhm file under another name to make sure you don't inadvertently corrupt the original .pck file when you finally pack your new artwork. Something like basetest.lhm would be fine. Paint away! Just remember not to paint outside the guide lines!

When you've completed your stint at *Michaelangeloism*, save the final art as base2000.lhm. Type cp from the CAW or CREATE directory and then select the Big Pics menu item from the Picts menu. Click on the base2000 line and then on the Pack # button. The packed base2000.pck file is shown in *fig 10*.

Step 6. Editing the Data Base

In the final step, you must make a couple of entries in the data base of your new scenario to implement these newly created icons and illustrations. □

Select File Names from the Create menu. There are two entries to make. In the Orders (.pck) line, type

ordsbrjp <enter>

and in the Standard (.pck) line, type

stanbrjp <enter>

Select Scenario Names from the Create menu. In the Allied section of the screen, type

2 <enter>

for all the active British theatres and task forces.

Mission accomplished!

Note. For those of you who use painting programs that prefer to deal with .pcx files rather than .lhm files, please see the last issue. Again, you can fax me here in Australia (612-819-7737) if you need any further assistance.

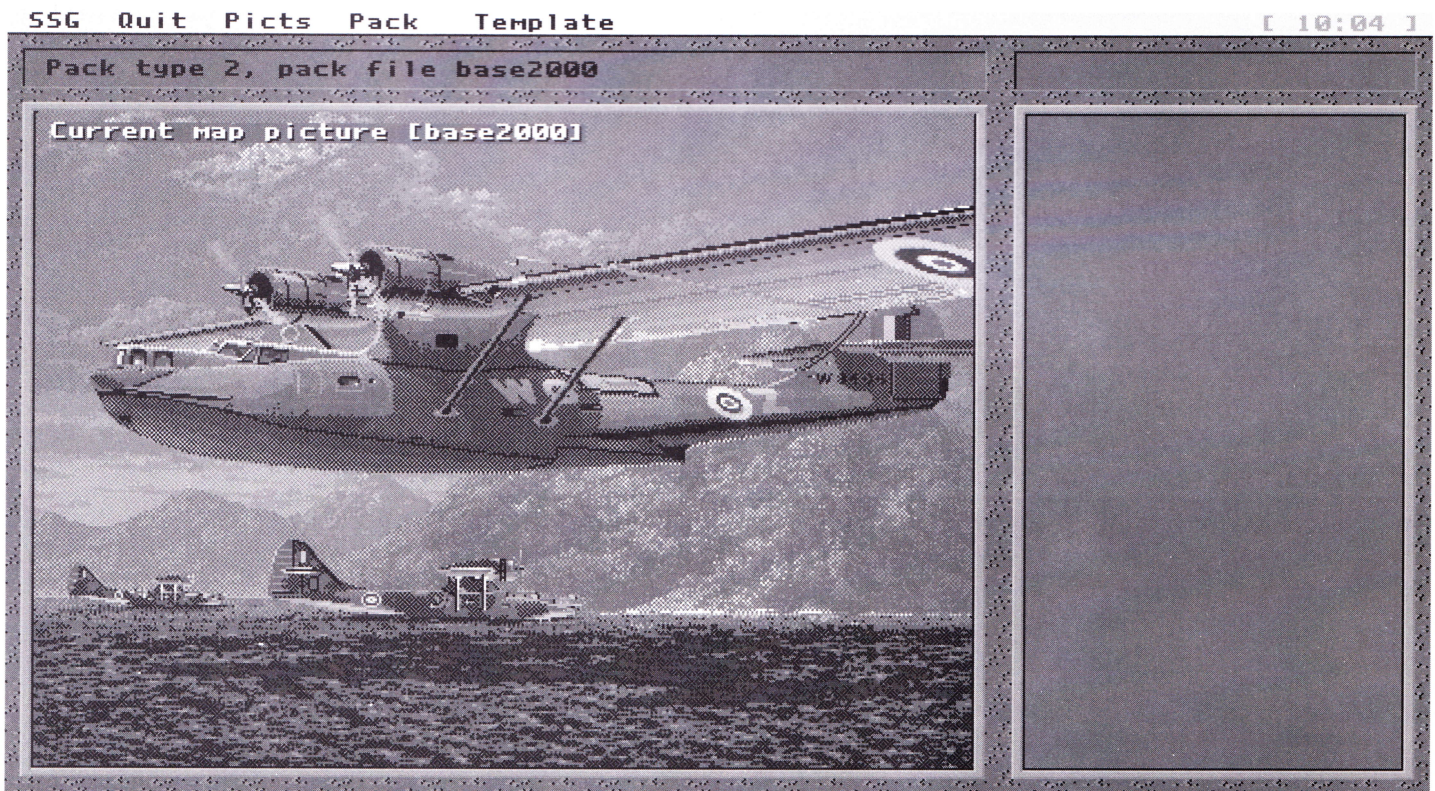


Fig 10. The Base2000.pck File