

Agenda Item:First Coalition War

TABLE OF CONTEST

1-Letter From The Secretary-General

2-Letter From Crisis Team

3- What Is Crisis

4- The Situation In Europe Before The War

5-France's Economic And military Situation Before The War

6-The Pillnitz Declaration And French-Austrian War

7-The King's Execution And The Formation Of The Coalition

8-Battle Of Fleurus

9-Rise Of Napoleon

10-Matrix

11-Biblography

LETTER FROM CRISIS TEAM

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the crisis committee.

Throughout this committee, you will face unexpected events, limited time, and high-pressure decision-making. The crisis team will continuously introduce new developments that may change the course of debate, alliances, and power structures within the committee.

Your responsibility is not only to respond, but to think strategically, act in character, and understand that every decision you make will have consequences. No action is without risk, and no inaction is without cost.

Crisis notes will be your primary tool to influence events directly. Clear, logical, and realistic actions will be more effective than dramatic but unsupported ideas. Remember that cooperation, timing, and adaptability are just as important as ambition.

The crisis team does not aim to punish or reward arbitrarily. Outcomes will be determined by realism, consistency, and strategic thinking. Stay alert, think ahead, and be prepared to adapt quickly.

Good luck. The course of events is now in your hands.

Sincerely,
The Crisis Team

WHAT IS CRISIS?

Crisis in Model United Nations is a sudden and unexpected event that changes the normal flow of the committee. It represents emergency situations such as war, coups, rebellions, assassinations, economic collapse, or major political scandals.

During a crisis, delegates are not only debating. They are required to act quickly, make strategic decisions, and deal with the consequences of those decisions.

A crisis usually begins when the chair or crisis staff announces an unexpected event. The committee's agenda changes immediately, and delegates must respond without long preparation. The decisions taken during this period directly affect how the situation develops.

Unlike regular MUN sessions, which focus mainly on speeches and resolutions, crisis committees focus on action and decision-making.

During a crisis, delegates may write crisis notes, propose political, military, or economic actions, form or break alliances, and choose between risky or cautious strategies.

Success in a crisis is not about giving the best speech. It is about making logical, fast, and role-appropriate decisions under pressure

THE SITUATION IN EUROPE BEFORE THE WAR

Pre-war Europe was ruled by absolute monarchies and strict rules. At that time, the sources of legitimacy were divine right, nobility, and tradition. Before the French Revolution, France was in a state of collapse due to wars. On top of that, the nobility and the church did not pay taxes, placing the entire burden on the people. Furthermore, the French people, considered the 'third estate', established their own assembly. The monarchy in France was overthrown with the 'Storming of the Bastille' in 1789. The 1791 constitution limited all of the king's powers. Europe, which had initially been a spectator, was drawn into the war by the capture of the king, the emigration of the aristocrats, and the Girondins' desire to spread the revolution through war.

Other European countries had more important matters than rescuing the king. Austria was at war with the Ottoman Empire. Prussia had its sights set on Poland. England's attention was focused more on trade and its navy than on a major land war. Europe had neither the power to form a coalition nor the economic means to do so. The coalitions that were attempted fell apart due to arguments over who would reap the benefits.

In summary, France was in economic crisis and lacked a regular army, while Europe viewed these events as merely temporary and acted in its own interests. With France's declaration of war on Austria, the conflict was now at the doorstep.

FRANCE'S ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SITUATION BEFORE THE WAR

It cannot be said that what remained in France after the revolution was very encouraging. The main reasons for this were the state of bankruptcy, the church's nationalization of everything, poor agricultural harvests, and skyrocketing inflation due to excessive money printing. However, France's excessively large population at the time and its excessive agricultural potential accelerated economic development.

Militarily, France was strong on paper, but the departure of aristocratic officers left it weak on the battlefield. Those who remained lived in terrible conditions, were undisciplined, and, although numerous, were poorly trained, making the new state's task difficult.

The navy had been virtually wiped out after the American War, and the ports were falling into disrepair. It was impossible to resist a great power like England.

However, the absence of a rigid regime and the fact that everyone acted out of a sense of nationalism helped France to complete its deficient army. In particular, the Levée en masse decree issued in 1793 changed everything. The previous structure of a small, targeted, professional army was replaced by an army of unprecedented size in European history, consisting of young and old, men and women. Since the entire economy of the country was devoted to the army, the places of the lost units could be filled immediately.

THE PILLNITZ DECLARATION AND THE FRENCH-AUSTRIAN WAR

The Pillnitz Declaration was a statement issued by Prussia and Austria. This declaration was written solely to support the monarchy and threaten the French people.

In April 1792, under pressure from the Girondins, a campaign was launched against Austria. The aim was to protect the revolution and make its name known throughout Europe, but the French army was not very strong at the time and began to retreat after the initial desertion of officers.

The proclamation by the Prussian commander Brunswick, stating that an attack on Paris would destroy the capital and the country itself, dealt the final blow to the monarchy. The French army decided to return with the desire to win the war decisively and with greater strength.

The massacre of the royal guards and the killing of counter-revolutionaries in prisons turned this war into a war for the republic and freedom.

The Battle of Valmy, which took place in September 1792 and changed the entire psychological structure of Europe, established France's stability. In this battle, the Prussians, shocked by the French army, which did not retreat from the front and fought to the death in the artillery duel between the French army defending Valmy, the last obstacle before Paris, and Prussia, withdrew from the battle without taking any risks.

Although this battle ended in a stalemate, all of Europe understood that they could not restore the monarchy and recognized the power of the French nation.

THE KING'S EXECUTION AND THE FORMATION OF THE COALITION

1793 was a year of life and death for France. It was fighting on numerous fronts abroad and suppressing rebellions at home. On January 21, 1793, one of the turning points in history took place. King Louis XVI was executed by guillotine. From this moment on, the war was no longer between nations, but between two ideologies: the republic and the monarchy.

After the execution of the king, the 'Coalition' began to take shape in its full sense. This coalition, consisting of England, Spain, Holland, Austria, Prussia, and Sardinia, would drag France into a war on multiple fronts and collapse its economy.

As France withdrew from many fronts, pro-monarchy uprisings in the West forced France to take radical decisions. First, it used its extraordinary powers to establish the 'Committee of Public Safety'. With this committee, executive power was concentrated in a single hand. Subsequently, the Girondins were purged, constitutions were abolished, and a general mobilization was declared. The principle guiding these actions was that "freedom can be suspended when the nation is in danger."

THE BATTLE OF FLEURUS

Having mobilized a massive army and suppressed internal rebellions through terror, France was now shifting from defense to offense. In June 1794, the French and Austrian armies clashed at Fleurus, located within modern-day Belgium. Although France had superior numbers, the Austrian army was more professional.

In this battle, France made history by using balloons to monitor enemy movements. Austria was overwhelmed by France, which continuously created reserve units and unleashed them like machines on the enemy at the right place, and withdrew at the end of the day with heavy losses.

At the end of this battle, the borders of Holland were opened to the French, and terror became completely official for France. The republic established in Valmy was strengthened by the Battle of Fleurus and became a matter of power. From then on, Europe's goal was not to bring monarchy to France but to ensure that the republic spread less.

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RISE OF NAPOLEON

Napoleon Bonaparte's rise was inseparably linked to the political chaos and military transformation unleashed by the French Revolution and the War of the First Coalition. Unlike the generals of the ancien régime, Napoleon did not emerge from noble lineage or court patronage but from a revolutionary system that dismantled traditional hierarchies and rewarded talent, loyalty, and effectiveness. The collapse of the old officer corps, combined with the Republic's urgent need for capable commanders, created an environment in which rapid advancement became possible. Napoleon's ascent was therefore not an anomaly but a direct consequence of revolutionary warfare.

His first decisive breakthrough occurred in 1793 during the siege of Toulon, a critical naval port that had fallen to royalist forces supported by the British. Napoleon, then a young artillery officer, demonstrated exceptional technical skill and strategic insight by reorganizing artillery deployments and identifying key positions that controlled the harbor. The recapture of Toulon not only expelled British forces but also preserved the Republic's Mediterranean fleet. This success elevated Napoleon's reputation and secured his promotion to brigadier general, marking his entry into the highest levels of revolutionary military leadership.

Napoleon's political reliability proved as important as his military competence. In October 1795, the revolutionary government faced a serious royalist uprising in Paris that threatened to overturn the Republic. Napoleon was entrusted with the defense of the Convention and suppressed the insurrection through decisive and uncompromising use of force. This event established him as a protector of revolutionary order and aligned him with the ruling Directory. More importantly, it revealed a crucial aspect of Napoleon's character: his willingness to employ violence not merely as a battlefield tool, but as a means of political stabilization.

MATRIX

MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE

Maximilien Robespierre was the central political figure of the French Revolution during its most radical phase. As a leading member of the Committee of Public Safety, he did not function as a military commander but as the ideological and moral authority of the revolutionary state. Robespierre believed that the Republic could survive only if virtue and terror were combined: virtue to justify the revolution's goals, and terror to eliminate those who threatened them. He saw war not simply as a conflict between states but as a moral struggle between republican virtue and corruption. This worldview justified extraordinary measures such as mass conscription, political repression, and executions. Robespierre's power came from his ability to define who was a "friend of the Revolution" and who was an enemy. Without his ideological framing, the extreme mobilization of society during the war years would not have been politically acceptable.

LOUIS ANTOINE DE SAINT-JUST

Louis Antoine de Saint-Just was Robespierre's closest ally and the most feared representative of revolutionary authority. Young, rigid, and uncompromising, Saint-Just acted as the Committee's enforcer, especially within the army. He was sent to the front lines as a representative on mission, where he exercised near-absolute power over generals and soldiers. Saint-Just believed that failure in war was evidence of treason or moral weakness. He enforced discipline through executions and removals, ensuring that commanders either succeeded or died. His role was crucial in transforming the chaotic revolutionary armies into disciplined forces capable of sustained warfare. Saint-Just embodied the idea that the Republic demanded total obedience and absolute sacrifice.

LAZARE CARNOT

Lazare Carnot was the administrative and strategic genius behind France's military revival. Often called the "Organizer of Victory," he was responsible for coordinating recruitment, logistics, troop movements, and strategic planning. Unlike Robespierre and Saint-Just, Carnot was not driven primarily by ideology but by efficiency and rational organization. He understood that mass conscription alone was useless without coordination and supply. Carnot effectively created the foundations of a modern general staff system, allocating manpower across multiple fronts and ensuring that France could fight simultaneous wars against several enemies. Without Carnot, the levée en masse would have produced disorder rather than victory.

GEORGES DANTON

Georges Danton represented a different revolutionary temperament. Charismatic, pragmatic, and deeply connected to the popular classes, Danton initially supported harsh measures to save the Republic but later argued for moderation. He believed that once the external threat had been contained, terror should be reduced to stabilize society. This position put him in direct conflict with Robespierre and the radicals, who saw any call for moderation as dangerous weakness. Danton's execution symbolized the Revolution's shift from pragmatic

survival to ideological absolutism. His fall demonstrated that even the revolution's architects were not safe once the logic of total war and internal purification took hold.

BERTRAND BARÈRE

Bertrand Barère served as the primary voice of the Committee of Public Safety. As its most prominent spokesman, he translated decisions into persuasive rhetoric for the National Convention and the public. Barère played a key role in shaping how the war was understood by ordinary citizens, framing military successes as proof of republican virtue and defeats as the result of treason. His speeches helped maintain morale during crises and justified extreme policies as necessary for national survival. Barère's importance lay not in decision-making but in communication, turning war into a shared national narrative.

JACQUES-NICOLAS BILLAUD-VARENNE

Jacques-Nicolas Billaud-Varenne was one of the most radical members of the Committee and a driving force behind internal repression. He believed that the Revolution was surrounded by enemies and that mercy was indistinguishable from betrayal. Billaud-Varenne focused on surveillance, denunciation, and the expansion of revolutionary justice. His influence ensured that political dissent, even within revolutionary circles, was treated as a security threat. He helped create the atmosphere of constant suspicion that characterized the Terror, making total mobilization possible by suppressing resistance and fear of dissent.

COLLOT D'HERBOIS

Collot d'Herbois was primarily responsible for crushing resistance in the provinces. Sent to suppress uprisings such as the rebellion in Lyon, he oversaw mass executions and collective punishments. Collot believed that regional revolts threatened the unity of the Republic and therefore justified extreme violence. His actions demonstrated that the revolutionary government was willing to use terror not only in Paris but throughout France. This ensured centralized control and prevented the war effort from being undermined by internal fragmentation.

ANTOINE QUENTIN FOUQUIER-TINVILLE

Antoine Quentin Fouquier-Tinville was the public prosecutor of the Revolutionary Tribunal and one of the most feared figures of the Terror. He was responsible for bringing thousands of accused enemies of the Revolution to trial, often with minimal evidence and almost no possibility of acquittal. Fouquier-Tinville did not shape policy but enforced it relentlessly, turning revolutionary justice into an instrument of speed and intimidation. His work ensured that political repression kept pace with the demands of total war, eliminating perceived threats quickly and publicly.

JACQUES HÉBERT

Jacques Hébert was the voice of the radical urban masses, particularly the sans-culottes of Paris. Through his newspaper and agitation, he pushed the Revolution toward extreme positions, including aggressive dechristianization and harsher economic controls. Hébert represented pressure from below, constantly demanding stronger action against enemies and

hoarders. Although initially useful to the Committee, he eventually became a liability, as his radicalism threatened to destabilize the state. His execution showed that even radical populism would be sacrificed to maintain centralized control.

NAPOLEÓN BONAPARTE

Napoléon Bonaparte emerged during this period as a product of the new merit-based military system. As a young artillery officer, he benefited from the removal of aristocratic barriers and the demand for capable commanders. His early successes demonstrated the effectiveness of revolutionary warfare when combined with technical skill and bold tactics. Although not yet politically dominant, Napoleon's rise showed how the war created opportunities for talented individuals and foreshadowed the militarization of political power that would follow.

JEAN-BAPTISTE JOURDAN

Jean-Baptiste Jourdan was one of the generals who successfully commanded mass armies created by the levée en masse. As commander of the Army of the North, he played a key role in defeating coalition forces and securing France's borders. Jourdan represented the new type of general who could manage large citizen armies rather than small professional forces. His career illustrated how revolutionary warfare required different leadership skills focused on coordination, morale, and endurance.

FRANÇOIS CHRISTOPHE DE KELLERMANN

François Christophe de Kellermann was a veteran officer whose victory at Valmy became a symbolic turning point. Valmy was not a decisive tactical victory, but it proved that a revolutionary army could stand against Europe's professional forces. Kellermann's role was crucial in boosting morale and legitimizing the Republic's claim that it could defend itself. He bridged the old professional army and the new revolutionary forces.

JEAN VICTOR MARIE MOREAU

Jean Victor Marie Moreau was one of the most talented generals produced by the revolutionary wars. Calm, methodical, and highly competent, he achieved significant successes against coalition forces. Unlike Napoleon, Moreau avoided political intrigue and ambition, which ultimately limited his influence. His career demonstrates that military talent alone was not enough to dominate post-revolutionary France; political maneuvering became equally important.

HUGUES-BERNARD MARET

Hugues-Bernard Maret worked behind the scenes in diplomacy and administration. He managed foreign correspondence and secret negotiations, helping the revolutionary government buy time, exploit divisions among its enemies, and avoid unified opposition. His work shows that even during total war, diplomacy remained a crucial tool of survival.

PIERRE-JOSEPH CAMBON

Pierre-Joseph Cambon was responsible for managing the financial side of the war effort. He oversaw taxation, requisitions, and the allocation of resources necessary to sustain massive armies. Cambon's work made it possible for France to continue fighting despite economic collapse and inflation. He demonstrated that total war required financial discipline and centralized economic control.

PAUL BARRAS


Paul Barras was a political survivor who navigated the violent shifts of revolutionary politics. Although not central during the height of the Terror, he played a key role in its aftermath and in the power struggles that followed. Barras later supported Napoleon's rise, helping transform military success into political authority.


FRANÇOIS HANRIOT

François Hanriot commanded the Paris National Guard and controlled armed force within the capital. His loyalty to Robespierre made him a crucial pillar of the Committee's power. Hanriot's control of the streets ensured that political decisions could be enforced through force if necessary. When Robespierre fell, Hanriot's failure to act decisively marked the collapse of the radical regime.

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