

United States

Word Count: 5498

1940 Presidential Election

James Farley (D) v. Robert A. Taft (R)

Incumbent president Franklin Roosevelt decides not to run for an unprecedented third term. Farley is a very savvy politician and is responsible for the organization of the powerful New Deal coalition. Opposing him is Robert A. Taft, a conservative, isolationist Republican and organizer of the equally powerful Conservative Coalition. In a down to the wire election, Taft comes out on top but loses the popular vote to Farley.

Additionally, Republicans and Conservative Dems keep their majority in both houses of Congress, allowing Taft to push through his conservative and isolationist agenda.

Taft was successful at rolling back much of the New Deal in his first two years, as well as empowering private enterprise. However, despite the insistence of Conservative Democrats, mostly from the South, Taft never rolled back many of the social provisions of the New Deal, many of which aided African Americans in voting in elections. Despite scoring some points politically, it angered Southern Democrats, who felt betrayed. As a result, KKK activities increased significantly.

In the South, conditions continued to deteriorate as Taft continued to pursue his anti-New Deal agenda. Sensing that they were not going to gain traction with either the

Democrats or the Republicans, Conservative Southern Democrats began floating the idea that forming their own party would be the best path forward.

In 1942, Democrats managed to gain some of their seats in the House back, enough to flip it. However, the Senate remained in Republican hands. This change put a halt to Taft's small government reforms, but did little to reverse them either.

The Depression Continues

Despite some free market reforms by President Taft, the depression has persisted on the whole, especially in the rural South, where the depression hit extra hard in the 1930s. Without a massive military buildup, arms sales to foreign countries, or devastated foreign markets, American manufacturers begin to turn to alternative markets to sell their products. Only a few industries managed to come out of the 9 Month War stronger than they were before. Among them are oil, ship builders, and the financial industry, which is allowed to operate more freely now that many of the New Deal regulations were repealed. With the loss of the House to the Democrats in 1942, the agenda of the conservatives has been stopped. Even with Southern Democrats, liberals outnumber conservatives there by a margin of only 7 seats, but enough to put the dagger in Taft's side. For the remainder of his first term, Taft is forced to rule by executive order. His policies affect little in national policy.

Unrest Grows across the Deep South

While the Depression persists in the South especially, racial tensions begin to grow. Southern Democrats, frustrated with Taft's lack of reinforcement on conservative

values, have stepped up KKK activities there, and are venting their anger more and more on local unemployed black men, who are blamed for the "decline in the economic and moral stature of the Old South."

Despite this increase in violence, the Federal Government does little to address the situation. Having been neutered by budget cuts starting in 1940, the FBI is wholly unable to combat the unrest, and local offenders are routinely tried and acquitted in local or state courts, where white judges and juries are notoriously sympathetic to Klansmen on trial.

1944 Presidential Election

Cordell Hull (D) v. Robert A. Taft (R) v. Harry F. Byrd (D)

Incumbent president Robert A. Taft, despite modest economic growth, is able to win a second term on massive margins. With the Democratic Ticket split between Secretary Cordell Hull, former secretary of state under President Roosevelt, and Senator Harry F. Byrd, the leader of the "conservative coalition" of the Democrats. Feeling increasingly unrepresented by Taft's business-only approach, the conservative Democrat Senator Byrd opts to continue his campaign despite failing to secure the Democratic Nomination at the 1944 Democratic National Convention. While Senator Byrd is able to win a few states in the Deep South, he is most successful in splitting the Democratic ticket against the powerful incumbent and unified Republican ticket. When the last ballot is counted, President Taft easily secures a second term despite slumping approval ratings.

Klan Rallies in the Deep South Following the re-election of President Taft, Southern Democrats under Harry Byrd began protesting in Southern cities almost immediately against alleged "betrayal of the white man" in the context of integration and civil rights. Additionally, the FBI records a substantial uptick in crimes motivated by racism as well as in antisemitism, although no explicit legal procedure exists at this time regarding federal hate crimes, Taft expresses some interest in curbing these violent and destructive acts, particularly those of the KKK. Taft often sparred with the Ohio KKK during his time as a state representative, and with his re-election, Taft would continue to take an anti-KKK stance. However, Taft's libertarian tendencies ultimately win out, and no meaningful action is taken. In particular, Klan activity has seen a large uptick. In particular, antisemitic crimes see the largest uptick as the wealth divide widens following an uneven recovery from the Great Depression. Despite Taft's re-election, local and state politicians across the South see their largest percentage of Klan membership since the 1920s. In accordance with this shift, even harsher Jim Crow state laws are passed, and sympathetic judges and juries routinely acquit white race criminals while convicting and over-punishing black offenders for small or no crimes. While this unfolds, Taft debates federalizing the national guard to secure the restless regions. However, no action is ultimately taken.

Disparate Economic Recovery From the Depression

As President Taft's free market reforms continue to take effect, the effect of the recovery takes different forms throughout the country. Across the Steel Belt, the recovery has been relatively strong, as well as in the capital markets of the Northeast. Additionally, oil and petroleum producing areas like Texas and California have seen a swift recovery

following continued sales to the warring Japanese and Chinese states, as well as to the countries warring in Europe. Finally, housing and construction services have rebounded following significant federal aid, which was signed into law in 1941 by President Taft as the only piece of the New Deal he supported. However, agricultural states, especially the sharecropper deep South, see a much slower relative to the rest of the country.

Especially in most Southern states like Alabama and Mississippi, global cotton and tobacco prices have tanked since 1942, when colonial growing areas in the British and French empires see an uptick in investment from the home country, as well as from New York financiers because the colonial plantations often have marginally cheaper production costs than those in the American South. Southern leaders try dozens of attempts to attract investment, mostly in the form of decreasing the labor rights of African Americans to generate production cost parity with the colonies. All of this to no avail. States in the upper South, often labelled as the "New South" after the Reconstruction period, manage to see marginal economic gains that allow them to escape the majority of the sluggish recovery due to their modest industrial bases, and by extension race relations in those states are comparably much better off than across the Deep South, where the awful economic recovery generates newfound animosities. All of these economic factors contribute to the worsening of national unity between the Deep South and the rest of the country, and lead to the further separation of that region from the overall national social, political, and economic fabric.

1948 Presidential Election

Thomas E. Dewey (R) v. Harry S. Truman (D)

In a pitched electoral contest, Democrat Harry S. Truman, known popularly as the "Senator from Pendergast" defeats Republican Party Bigwig Thomas E. Dewey in the contest for the 1948 Presidential Election. The election result was due in large part to two main factors, one being a split in the GOP between archrivals Thomas E. Dewey and incumbent president Robert A. Taft (who ended up not endorsing either candidate), and the other being Truman's unifying message in a divided Democratic Party. Conveniently, Truman kept his platform on Civil Rights secret until his victory speech the day after the election, letting Dewey spout progressive social plans left and right, causing Southern Democrats to rally around Truman in a big gamble.

Labor Disputes & Agricultural Booming

With Taft's recovery well underway in Republican strongholds, Truman seeks to bring more economic parity between the differing regions of the Union and bring together his rapidly fracturing party. While Truman struggles to negotiate effectively with union bosses (who made up a large chunk of his coalition in the Midwest), his agricultural policies see better effect in the South. Coming from Missouri and representing them in the Senate for over two decades, Truman was acutely familiar with agricultural policy and was able to create policies that helped the South get back on its feet after nearly a full decade of crippling economic depression. While this significantly helped reduce income inequality in the South between whites and blacks, as well as boosted the overall economy in the region, the policies continued to fan the flames of racial divide, which would be a second key issue during the 1948 election and all throughout Truman's presidency. Renewed Political Fracturing Truman's inauguration in January of 1949 proves to be one of the most poorly attended in history. Seeking to repair the divides

within his own party, Truman apportions 50% of the tickets to Southern Democrat politicians, hoping to buy some political capital with which to work on his legislative agenda in the first 100 days. Instead, in a shocking-to-no-one move, the Southern Democrats snubbed Truman on election day, leaving their seats empty and making Truman out to be "the most unpopular president in our nation's history". Led in large part by South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond and 1944 presidential candidate Harry Byrd, Southern Democrats in 1949 planned an exodus of the Democratic Party and formed their own, "Dixiecrat Party" to represent the "Old South" in the "failing Democratic Party". In Congress, the tension between the Democrats and their former allies, the Dixiecrats is palpable. When a bipartisan civil rights bill limiting segregation comes to the floor in 1951, Dixiecrat senators filibuster continuously for 67 hours, yielding the floor to political allies whenever the speaker seemed about to collapse. Bypassing their opposition, the bill passed, and in 1952, buses on federal highways were required to be integrated. What was a small victory for civil rights advocates proved to be the beginning of a "slippery slope" in the minds of Dixiecrats. Over the next few years, their fears become realized. Klan activities in the Deep South see a marked increase, with much of the activity targeting the newly prosperous black farmers. The FBI is soon overwhelmed.

In the 1950 midterms, the Democrats lose terribly to Dixiecrats in the South, and split tickets in the Midwest. The Republicans gain supermajorities in both houses of Congress, and they're able to pass through even more civil rights legislation while the sizable Republican isolationist faction continues to dominate both the House and Senate Foreign Relations Committees, blocking Truman's attempts to continue dismantling

Taft's policy of "Splendid Isolation." For Truman, the news is dire. His efforts to rebuild and reunify the Democratic Party have resulted in factionalism and party division the likes of which the Democratic Party hadn't seen for decades. As the Dixiecrat party continues to swell in membership, traditional Democratic elites begin to panic. "Is Truman really the best candidate for 1952?" many of them wonder in a primary process largely determined by party insiders rather than popular choice. Soon, Truman's political future begins to look bleaker by the day.

A Brief Statement on the US Military, 1940-1950

The United States Military shrank considerably after the Great War, and only increased in size marginally as the 9 Month War heated up in Europe. By mid 1941, the US Army numbered 300k strong, and it showed signs of adopting more modern tactics and reforming its dismally outdated training practices. However, the hopes and dreams of the military establishment were dashed after the 1942 midterms saw a slashed budget resulting from Depression-era austerity and an end to the war in Europe. At the end of the year, the force had again returned to a measly 100k men. With the return of peace to Europe, the matters of the military largely left the minds of the American public, and as such the maintenance or advancement in the quality of the US Military became immediately a taboo for both parties. During this period, the composition of the army also changed dramatically. Black and white recruits from across the South began to compose an increasingly larger portion of the US Military in all branches, as a lack of opportunity at home coupled with a militaristic culture prompted many young Southerners to see military service as a prerequisite and opportunity path toward greater prosperity. As such, the military began to develop a more entrenched attitude

towards segregation than what was palatable for the nation at large. In 1946, an incident regarding an accused black corporal on base in North Carolina and a local white woman prompted an uptick in local Klan activity as well as backlash and racial tension within the army. Seeking to postpone dealing with the problem more substantively, War Department planners opted to reinforce segregation as a feature of the armed forces in hopes of avoiding a potentially destructive clash between Southern white soldiers and their black comrades. (1/2)

By the late 1940s, with increasing civil rights legislation appearing in Congress, Dixiecrats latched on to the military establishment as a means of extolling the "virtues of segregation," proving in the words of Senator Strom Thurmond, "segregation can work and segregation is working our armed forces. Let us use this as a model for our own civil policy." Despite this uneasy alliance, many in the military establishment preferred to promote greater racial equality, but simply lacked the resources or ambition to contradict the fragile legacy of segregation in the armed forces. They viewed their Dixiecrat allies as uneducated and old-fashioned, owing to their slow economic recovery and antiquated racial ideas. In contrast, the Dixiecrats continuously promoted their military allies as "Defenders of the Cause" and "chivalrous gentlemen." Secretly, Dixiecrats hoped for a similar relationship to the military elite that Southern planters enjoyed in the late 1850s. In reality, the relationship was almost entirely one-sided. The uneasy alliance was most prominent in the Army, where the Southern soldiers represented a bulk of the forces. In the US Navy and Army Air Corps, the force was comprised of a much more balanced selection of the country, owing mostly to the little

fluctuation in force size during the period which would have prompted little chance for masses of unemployed Southern men to flood the ranks. (2/2).

1952 Presidential Election

Harry S. Truman (D) v. Harold Stassen (R) v. Strom Thurmond (SD).

As a sign of increased political fracturing, the Democrats ran two candidates, one of them the sitting president. Harry Truman, incumbent Democrat, had alienated his Southern Democrat allies, who by this point were defecting en masse to the "States Rights Democrat Party" or "Dixiecrats" for short. As one might expect, the split voter base turned out terribly for the Democrats, who lost to the wildly popular and largely bipartisan Minnesota governor Harold Stassen. Stassen, a moderate Republican who campaigns on building on the Civil Rights successes of Truman and the business policies of Taft, proves to be the socially liberal but fiscally conservative candidate to win the election.

The Stassen Presidency

Although winning handily in the presidential election, few Republicans are able to ride Stassen's coat-tails to victory in Congress. Especially in the Midwest, where Stassen's more liberal social policies are less popular, mainstream Democrats clean up all over the region and in the Southwest as well, although they struggle mightily against Dixiecrats in the South. The primary goal of Stassen's 1st 100 days is to attack segregation and rebuild American foreign policy, which to that point had been pointedly isolationist since the end of the Great War. Stassen met considerable pushback in Congress, where support for desegregation was high, but the three representative parties couldn't agree

on how it should be done properly and how far it should go. Should it be limited to only government buildings? Should the military be mandated to desegregate by law (previously Truman had only attempted to mandate this by Executive Order, which was heavily resisted by the military establishment)? Should private businesses be forced to desegregate? Is forced desegregation constitutional? Some New England Republicans even began to ask "Should Southern Democrats finally pay reparations? All of these questions swirled on the floors of both houses of Congress, and heated debates with divisive answers to all of these questions emanated from dozens of Senators and hundreds of Congressmen. The can of worms had been opened, and until it was closed, little else could move through the pipes of the Legislature. In terms of foreign policy, Stassen is marginally more successful. With the support of liberal Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, Stassen finally brings the United States into the League of Nations in 1953, albeit with a modified intervention clause negotiated by the British and French. This landmark piece of legislation paves the way for further American intervention in the dozens of ongoing issues around the world.

Desegregation: A Closer Look

As the issue of segregation and racism permeates and polarizes Congress, it also becomes a major topic of contention across the United States and in the halls of the Supreme Court. In the Northeast, protests rock Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia after an unarmed black man is killed during a traffic stop in rural Massachusetts. Protestors hold up signs that say "Massachusetts is not the South," and the mood shifts radically more in favor of enforcing desegregation as photos and stories pour in from the

South about routine police brutality and killings. In the Midwest, black and white workers strike together for equal working conditions in the South in a move that frightens business owners and industrialists. However, in the Deep South, the mood is quite to the contrary. In Birmingham, a 1954 protest for bus desegregation turns violent and is put down by state troopers, resulting in the deaths of 15 black protesters. In Atlanta, striking railroad workers are beaten and lynched by white scabs assisted by local white police officers. Across the rural South, hate crimes surge. As both sides of the country begin to see what is going on in the other, division only deepens. Northerners and West-Coasters are disgusted by the racial conditions of the South, while many white Southerners despise the racial unity on display across the rest of the country. Increasingly, white Southerners feel threatened, and unsubstantiated rumors of a violent resistance against segregation led by white students from New England universities permeates the Deep South. .

The heavily politicized issue comes to a head in 1955 with the historic *Jones v. Alabama* case, in which segregation was ruled by the Conservative majority to be neither constitutional, nor unconstitutional, and therefore it could not be ruled upon by the Supreme Court or by Congress, it had to be left to the states. Instead of easing tensions, each side blamed the other for the unsatisfactory result, and divisions only worsened. Calls even emerged on the Liberal Republicans side to look into packing the Supreme Court in order to "overturn the most egregious legal injustice of the century" while Dixiecrats wanted to push further for a Constitutional Amendment that enabled segregation (and by extension overturned the 14th Amendment). Neither side made any considerable headway, and the status quo remained.

1956 Presidential Election

Harold Stassen (R) v. Adlai Stevenson (D)

Against all odds, the Democrats manage to run a unified ticket in 1956. **GOVERNOR ADLAI STEVENSON**, a moderate on racial issues, proved to be a big unifier in the increasingly fractured Democratic party. As a result of his policy of "slowing" desegregation, Southern Democrats feel comfortable enough giving Stevenson their support. At the same time, **PRESIDENT HAROLD STASSEN'S** waning popularity on racial issues and general ineffectiveness in Congress almost costs him the race. However, most Americans approve of his entry into the League of Nations, and Stassen will use this second term to continue to bring America back onto the world stage. The election proves to be a nail-biter, with Stassen narrowly avoiding defeat with 270 electoral votes, the absolute bare minimum needed to win the presidency. Thanks to reports of voter fraud in Ohio, thousands of ballots there are discounted, giving Stassen the state and enough votes to push him over the line. However, Stassen is much less successful in the popular vote, scoring 47.9% to Stevenson's 50.4%. Additionally, the Republicans are massacred down ballot, and Congress is once again in the hands of a divided Democratic Party. Recognizing the growing divide in the country, Stassen talks in his second inaugural address about bringing the country together and "finally addressing the issue of race once and for all." As he continues to speak, many of his Republican Congressional allies groan, knowing that every mention of race by Stassen equates to a two week PR cleanup tour by other Republicans, who have to "distance" themselves from the president's radicality in order to avoid catastrophe at their next re-election. Once the inauguration is over, Stassen's second half begins.

With the Democrats in control of Congress, Stassen's "deliberate desegregation" plan gets butchered and dismembered, with cheeky Democrat leadership learning that it's easier to simply do nothing about the problem than blow one way or the other, letting Northeast Republicans and Southern Dixiecrats duke it out on the floor. By 1957, Congressional cohesion is at an all time low, and even non-partisan uniting activities like the Congressional softball teams are scrapped. (Rumors circulate that some Dixiecrats are upset that they have to compete against black Republicans from the Northeast). As a result, none of Stassen's campaign items make it through Congress alive. His popularity shrinks, and many in Stassen's cabinet begin contemplating jumping ship to avoid ending their career with "Socialist Stassen" as he came to be labelled by **SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE SAM RAYBURN**. In 1958, in need of a new message for the midterm elections, Stassen shifts his message to promoting an early form of universal basic income for unemployed mothers of two or more children. Although some Dixiecrats support this policy (with a few racial strings attached to promote only the white birthrate), Stassen's Republican allies and mainstream Democrats balk at the idea, and Republicans only make up marginal gains, not enough to overturn the Democrats' majority in both houses. As 1960 draws near, the nation remains immensely divided on the issue of race, the Stassen presidency remains unable to accomplish anything without the support of a hopeless Congress, and the nation continues to plunge deeper into the oblivion.

The Divide Worsens

With the coverage of the Montgomery Bus Massacre fresh in the minds of Northerners, and the Jones v. Alabama decision emboldening Southerners, both sides prepare to launch a final push to enshrine their viewpoint on segregation and racial politics in the early 1960s. White Southerners increasingly fear for their political dominance, as limits on the amount of voting restrictions they can enact slowly become enacted by federal law. Adherence to democratic norms becomes lessened as the situation grows more dire more quickly than ever. At the same time, Liberal Northerners fear that Black Southerners are going to be forever oppressed, and if evidenced by the Montgomery Bus Massacre, may even be in serious danger for bodily harm. The necessity to protect all citizens, regardless of race, emboldens the centralist cause, with some radical elements even calling for the military to be deployed in a "New Reconstruction" to enforce the 14th and 15th Amendments. Meanwhile, the military grows ever more entrenched in the racial hierarchy that has defined it since the late 1860s after the Civil War. An officer corps increasingly dominated by White Southerners, as well as a professional soldier class made up almost 60% by White Southerners, only enhances their entrenchment on the Southern side of increasingly bitter and divisive racial politics. In fact, for the first time in the nation's history, Harold Stassen's 1958 State of the Union Address is attended not by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of the Army, but by only Navy Admirals (who typically come from the more egalitarian Northeast or West Coast). This brazen break with established civil-military tradition strikes fear into the hearts of many, who are not radical on one side or the other of contemporary racial politics, but who deeply wish for the maintenance of democratic and civil norms which are, at this time, eroding very quickly.

A Brief Statement on the US Military, 1950-1960 The United States Military has grown by a small margin as the United States begins to take a slightly more active role in world affairs and the economy improves, allowing for greater spending. However, this has come with increased manpower specifically from the Segregation South, as by this point being a part of the military has become a largely Southern cultural phenomenon. After great insistence from the military establishment, crucial investments were made in modernizing the despairingly outdated equipment and vehicles, some of which were from the 1920s still. The Air Force specifically (still a part of the US Army) receives some of the latest in aviation technology from the Boeing company, with a new close air support model based on the effectiveness of German models during the early blitz, but also investing in the fighter technology that nullified their advantage during the 9 Month War. The Navy also saw some upgrades, with the struggle continuing between aircraft carrier development and continued battleship development. Battleships remained the vessel of choice, at least among the American Naval Establishment, and so their continued development and procurement continued. With the constraints of the Washington Naval Treaty having been thrown off by the Second London Naval Treaty, which itself was nullified in 1939 with the start of the war, the construction of larger ships begun. Additionally, the army experienced significant upgrades, becoming an almost entirely motorized force in 1954 and then completely in 1957. Despite these advances, the development of tanks had seen serious setbacks after their disastrous misuse in the 9 Month War. Their abilities, it seemed, were outweighed by the significant risk of encirclement and destruction by traditional infantry and air power.

Overall, the trends of the 1940s continue, along with several modernization and expansion efforts.

1960 Presidential Election

Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. (D) v. Nelson Rockefeller (R)

By 1960, politics in the United States had reached a tipping point, and racial issues solidified themselves as the dominant issues in the election. **SENATOR JOSEPH P. KENNEDY**, eldest in the Kennedy political dynasty, faces off against **GOVERNOR NELSON ROCKEFELLER**, the patron of the liberal Republicans. Kennedy, on the other hand, is a moderately conservative Democrat, and although he is an Irish Catholic from Massachusetts, the Southerners determine that they must support his tolerable (to them) policies to avoid the "disastrous" desegregation efforts of Rockefeller. While less of a nail-biter than 1956, the election further goes to show the extent of social, political, and economic divisions in the United States. The Solid South votes Democratic, and Kennedy wins his home state and some of the neighboring New England states. With the help of his running mate, **GOVERNOR ADLAI STEVENSON**, Kennedy carries Illinois, giving him the popular and electoral victory. Democrats and Dixiecrats alike ride Kennedy's coattails to Congress, creating another formidable roadblock to desegregation.

The Early Kennedy Administration

With Congress on Kennedy's side, he is able to pass several critical pieces of legislation, such as a balanced budget, low interest rates, and economic aid to rural and poor families in the United States, especially in the South. Although Kennedy commits

(behind closed doors) not to touch desegregation, his welfare plan is color-blind, and so poor black families across the South finally get a much-needed and much-deserved helping hand. Southern Democrats support this proposal, cynically viewing it as a way to keep black people in the South satisfied with the status quo. Unfortunately, it proves to be a miscalculation, and the racial divide soon becomes more fearsome in the South as the wealth gap between whites and blacks begins to shrink quite rapidly, allowing racist agitators to convince the white middle class that black citizens will soon replace them at work and in school. Beyond the motivations of various parts of Congress, Kennedy's plans help a great deal of Americans of all races and backgrounds emerge from poverty, and although the program is small and helps a meager amount of Americans, it is the first serious and successful welfare program since the New Deal. From this, Kennedy enjoys widespread popularity, although his inaction on desegregation continues to be a turnoff for many liberal Republicans, who begin to view Kennedy as a Roman Emperor giving bread and circuses to the people for support rather than a public servant who truly cares about his people. Based on this perception, many top Republicans begin meeting in secret as part of a plot to unseat Kennedy by 1964. In 1962, Republicans launch a PR campaign to smear Kennedy as a cynical autocrat, intent on buying the support of the public with its own funds. With taxes being raised to pay for the Kennedy welfare plan, the campaign finds significant traction in the middle class, and Kennedy's popularity reaches its all-time peak in early 1962.

The Late Kennedy Period

As his popularity shrinks thanks to a successful PR campaign by the Republicans, Kennedy is unable to rally Democrats for the 1962 midterms, and so the Republicans

enjoy a "red wave" at the polls. When the new Congress is sworn in in January of 1963, it seems Kennedy's legislative agenda, while initially successful, could be knocking on death's door. The Republican Congress immediately begins debating its options to codify and enforce desegregation on the South, to the serious chagrin of Kennedy's Dixiecrat allies. The 1963 Equal Rights Act passes the House and Senate with flying colors, only to land on Kennedy's desk in September where it sits for 2 months while Kennedy makes his decision. Under immense pressure from Dixiecrats in his own party, Kennedy is urged to veto the bill, while his own progressive tendencies tell him to pass the bill and end Jim Crow once and for all. While Kennedy wrestles with his political and internal demons, many black people in the South grow tired of waiting for deliverance from Washington and begin to take matters into their own hands to rectify the wealth gap. In early December, as Christmas shoppers begin to browse for gifts in the historic Atlantic Station, black activists storm the segregated and wealthy shopping district to demand equal access. When one of the store clerks perceives the strike to be a robbery, he pulls a gun and begins firing on the activists, who in turn fire back, causing a massacre between police, activists, and innocent Christmas shoppers caught in the middle. Following the 1963 Christmas Massacre, white nationalist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and White Knights of the South see large upticks in membership, and gun ownership among Southern households of both races surges. Political commentators often joked that 1963 was "the year Santa gave every Southerner a rifle," but the true implications for this event are far more reaching and dividing than anything yet.

Kennedy and the Military

During the beginning of his term, Kennedy continued many of Stassen's efforts to modernize the US military. However, Kennedy began rejecting the advice of the military establishment, instead choosing equipment contracts for political reasons. This, combined with a 1962 scandal in which Kennedy is reported to have said derogatory things about Southern men serving in the military, creates a vast rift between Kennedy and his military command structure. Now increasingly alienated by the Democratic Party, the Southern military elite have nowhere else to turn for political refuge except for the Dixiecrat Party, which in recent years has wielded less and less influence relative to the actual Democratic Party. Important generals are heard to have remarked that they'd support impeaching the president in favor of **VICE PRESIDENT ADLAI STEVENSON**, and some even go so far as to support a military coup. Finally, the Dixiecrats are able to achieve the desired two-way relationship they longed for with the military elite, as the military finds unexpected solace and support in the ranks of the Dixiecrat delegations. As the rift between the standing United States government and its military grows, it seems democracy may truly be on the ropes in the Land of the Free.

United Kingdom

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The 9 Month War

On May 10th, the same day as the German Fall Gelb was initiated, Winston Churchill was elected as the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. As the BEF rushed into

position in France and Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg collapsed. Finally, the BEF and French Army held the line in Belgium. Then, the German Panzers broke through at the Ardennes, and British forces in Belgium became cut off. Fortunately, MI6 intercepted the entire plan for Fall Gelb, and the BEF and French forces were ready for a rapid counter attack from the North and South to cut off Guderian's salient to Abbeville. Poor weather made the roads hellish for the advancing German infantry, who were mostly on horseback. However, the BEF's enhanced mobility and speed as a result of years of motorization efforts allowed them to move quickly to reconnect and secure the line. By late June, the Germans grew desperate to rescue Guderian and all the tanks and trucks he had with him. When they attempted to resupply him by sea, the RAF cut their convoys to pieces in the channel. With the last hope of escape now at the bottom of the sea, Guderian and his soldiers surrendered on June 23rd. Shortly after, the recently reunited BEF launched Operation Chess Piece, with aims to reverse German advances from May into the Low Countries. However, the offensive failed to achieve its objectives, and was called off several days later. Soon, the lines had stabilized and both sides dug in for a tense winter ahead. As the winter set in, it became evident that the Germans were running low on critical supplies. Having been unable to pillage what they needed as they had done in Poland, Denmark, and the Netherlands, the soldiers began to grow hungry and the German home front began to deteriorate. MI6 informants in Berlin reported that the price of bread doubled between December '39 and December '40. While the war was ongoing, the Italians and Hungarians became closer and launched an invasion of Yugoslavia. Despite formal diplomatic protests, it was simply a bridge too far for the War Cabinet, and so the decision was made not to intervene. Finally, in February, the Churchill and the War Cabinet agreed on Operation Jupiter, which saw the rapid

liberation of Luxembourg and the beginnings of a push into the rest of Belgium. However, even before Jupiter could be completed, the German High Command assassinated Hitler and his regime, replacing it with a temporary military junta. When they reached out to London and Paris to negotiate an immediate armistice, to which the Allies agreed. By mid 1941, negotiations were underway in Paris for a new treaty, one that would better ensure Peace in Our Time.

A Victorious Britain

Returning from the Treaty of Paris, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden and Lord Privy Seal Clement Attlee arrived to the largest crowd gathered ironically since the 1938 Munich Conference. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland supported by its dominions and partners across the world had once again been successful in defending the integrity of its allies. Two days after arriving in London, Churchill motioned followed by Attlee as Lord Privy Seal to hold a general election on the 20th of November two months and two days after the signing of the Treaty of Paris - this was agreed to by all parties in the national government the Liberals, Conservatives and Labour and so Clement Attlee withdrew Labour from the coalition to begin their general election campaign. Churchill resigned as Prime Minister but the King asked him to form a new government, known as the Churchill caretaker ministry, until the election was held in November. Churchill agreed and his new ministry, essentially a Conservative one, held office for the next two months as a caretaker government until the election. Although far more tight than previously thought the general election of 1941 allowed for a Conservative victory keeping 327 seats and allowing for another 4 years of leadership by Winston Churchill who used his first

year in elected power (1942) as mainly formalising the already shattered League of Nations into not just an international organisation but a mutual defensive pact between the Republic of France, Kingdom of Belgium, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Duchy of Luxembourg and the Kingdom of Norway. Although this new alliance wasn't actually formally agreed on during 1943; Churchill, Eden and Lord Beaverbrook attended the Brussels Conference where diplomats and heads of states from the previous list secretly agreed to a defensive alliance to primarily defend themselves from any subsequent German aggression. On the domestic front the caretaker ministry and then the Conservatives throughout 1942 and 43 were fairly indecisive with some of their key imposed policies of the year being free milk for all children under-five, and a pledged "housing for all scheme" which took awfully long to properly get off the ground. Across the seas in south east Asia, due to gentle, yet somewhat concerning unrest within the British Raj several Indian racial groups were annihilated in a series of covert operations by Colonial police throughout late 1941 all the way to reportedly late 1943. Considering their support for the Nationalists during the Second Sino-Japanese war, Churchill authorised a task force lead by the Battle cruiser HMS Hood and a large British fleet (supported by French and Dutch naval units) to the South China Sea as a show of force to the Japanese Empire. Moreover, for a more long term presence the China Naval Station (centred on Hong Kong and Singapore), would see its number more than double as Britain's focus pivoted east.

British Reconstruction 1944-1948 Although the Churchill ministry is still held in the highest regards due to its war time performance; the attitude in Britain is no longer one of excited victory. Instead, the country is covered in a swathe of apathy and distaste of Churchill's cabinet and their policies both domestic and abroad. Central to this discouragement is the economist William Beveridge: who in

November of 1944 releases a now infamous paper titled the "Beveridge Report" where he proposes possible solutions for the "five giants on the road of reconstruction: Want... Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness." Overwhelmingly popular with the public, it has formed the basic necessities of a "welfare state" such as an expansion of National Insurance and the creation of a National Health Service. Generally, the report was knocked away by the government but with many of its points being adopted into the Labour Party manifesto the Conservatives decided to quickly try to meet some ample reform targets. The Trades Disputes Act 1927 was repealed, and a Dock Labour Scheme was introduced in 1945 to put an end to the casual system of hiring labour in the docks. This scheme gave registered dockers the legal right to minimum work and decent conditions. Furthermore the Fire Services Act 1945 introduced a new pension system for firefighters (although this was criticised for not including their spouses). In the following years, these small but impactful changes continued under the Tories arguably just to subdue to the outcry caused by the Beveridge Reports findings. The Churchill ministry's time in office is mostly mired in post war austerity measures such as dramatic cuts to both the Royal Air Force and the Army, although the Royal Navy remained somewhat untouched by the cuts. (Which some people hypothesise was influenced by Churchill's time as First Sea Lord) Nevertheless, the post-war years of 42-46 under Churchill were ones of rebuilding and reconstruction.

A New Beginning (1946 General Elections)

With the bombshell of the Beveridge Report being dropped only two years prior, the 1946 elections were ones destined to be etched in history, either a new beginning under Atlee's Labour or a retreat back into the pre war minimal government mindset of

Churchill's Conservatives. The people made their choice rather obtusely, with Clement Atlee winning 293 seats in the Houses of Commons giving the Labour party a working majority of 46 seats and also making Clement Atlee the first Prime Minister from the Labour party in history. When Attlee went to see King George VI at Buckingham Palace to be appointed Prime Minister, the notoriously laconic Attlee and the famously tongue-tied King stood in silence; Attlee finally volunteered the remark, "I've won the election". The King replied "I know. I heard it on the Six O'Clock News". For the next 2 years PM Atlee and his Health Minister Aneurin Bevan fought hard to formulate a proper way to create the almost poetic idea of a NHS system, by November 1948, the pair had finally managed to create the National Health Service with the service being mostly funded by the new flat tax of National Insurance created that year. National Insurance was masterminded by famed author of the 'Beveridge Report' - Economist William Beveridge. Somewhat surprisingly the majority of Conservative and Liberal MPs also voted for the creation of the NHS which is the starting of what many historians call the post-war consensus where all major parties agreed roughly on the heading of the country. Coal mining was nationalised in 1947 which helped to diminish the fairly brutal and widespread post war strikes held across much of the north. The National Coal Board offered sick pay and holiday pay to its miners and generally was to the advantage of the previously angered coal workers.

The Imperial Crisis: 1948-1952

As domestic reforms continued under PM Atlee and the "Post-War Consensus", as it came to be known, the Empire continued. In 1949, the UK finished paying off all of its war debts, as spending had only seen a marginal increase during the 9 Month War. Now,

it reaped the rewards of other countries repaying their debts, and Britain enjoyed a period of exemplary economic and political stability. By the 1951 General Elections, the Labour government was in a strong position, and Atlee was re-elected, albeit by a slightly smaller margin. After this domestic reaffirmation, Atlee undertook and expansion of the NHS system, securing sufficient funding for the next three decades. Life in Britain improved considerably. Throughout the broader Empire, however, unrest was beginning to grow. British soldiers had to be deployed to Sudan and India to quell protests against British Imperial rule, which was increasingly seen as inconsistent with the priorities of the Labour government and British political culture. In Delhi alone in 1951, 500 people were killed in protests, either by police or by other protesters. In Cairo, the figures were slightly less, but the danger of independence remained. Facing a growing Imperial Crisis, Atlee called for another General Election in 1952 just over 20 months after winning by the slimmest of margins in 1951. In the campaign, the largest agenda item was, of course, the fate of the Empire. Seen largely as a referendum on the continuation of the Empire, the Conservative Party snagged a few seats, but lost the popular vote by a considerable margin. With Churchill back at the helm, the Empire appeared very suddenly secure. Throughout 1952, PM Churchill focused on shoring up colonial defenses and colonial police with hopes of avoiding the unrest of 1951. Facing considerable opposition at home with a divided public, his options proved limited. Nevertheless, the Empire was secured until the next general election.

And so the Sun sets in the East

In 1957, as per the 1956 agreement, **PRIME MINISTER ANTONY EDEN** grants India its formal dominion status, under the "Union of India". Although this is a

temporary victory for the Indian National Congress, internal divisions--considered by some to be irreconcilable--threaten to rip the new country into pieces. Particularly, violence between Hindus and Muslims occurs throughout the country, and worry of a civil war begins to plague the countryside. For the British, these worries translate to joint military exercises with the newly established Indian National Army in order to better train them and prepare them in case more organized violence were to break out. This show of force quells much of the immediate violence, but the troubling sentiments remain. On the home front, most British citizens are bittersweet to see the Jewel in the Crown graduate to Dominion status. On the one hand, India was the single largest point of prestige for the British Empire. On the other hand, maintaining a colonial presence there is wildly expensive and the burden largely falls on the British people. After all, they're only a dominion--they won't be too far from the mother country anyway. The immediate financial alleviations from the withdrawal of most British forces from the Union of India means that the deficit can be lowered and taxes on British subjects can be lessened. However, the new Union's government quickly reverses or waters down many of the colonial era trade restrictions, causing economic distress for the once prosperous Liverpool and Manchester cotton manufacturers. Over the next three years, the situation for the British at home and abroad resulting from the transfer of the Raj into the Union of Britain has a complex and likely long-lasting effect that will continue to play out for hundreds of millions of people for the foreseeable future.

And the Sun rises in the West

While the British Raj is slowly decoupling from its tight imperial status into a fully-fledged Dominion, other parts of the British Empire persist along. For most people

in the colonies, the case for independence is weak to nil. Most British possessions are small in land size and population, and the favorable economic conditions and relative political stability would likely be called into question in the event of true self-governance. Without the aid of a strong international backer, the most vocal nationalists have trouble drumming up widespread support in British Caribbean holdings, and in British western African holdings like Nigeria or Sierra Leone. In these regions, albeit regions with little geopolitical or economic importance, the strength of the Empire remains unshaken by local independence movements or global economic whims. "The night is dark and full of terrors" many in the colonies say "so it is best to stay where the sun never sets." The relatively cheap cost of continued basing and administration in these regions is but an afterthought in the grand scheme of the Imperial budget, and so the British people support maintaining their continued presence across the Western British Empire. The marriage of popular and local support creates a strong foundation for an Imperial domain that will last well into the foreseeable future.

And the Sun Beats Down in the Center

In the Kingdom of Egypt, Sudan, and much of Eastern and Southern Africa, the desire to be independent of British rule is a mixed proposition. Debates about dominion status, full independence, or maintaining the status quo swirl around local elites and in Parliament. The most pressing of course is the fate of the Kingdom of Egypt, which in recently has been granted its independence but owes the British military to base in the Kingdom per the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. Relations between the kingdoms sour over the status of Sudan in the late 1950s, and the fate of the Suez garrison hangs in the balance.

From Uganda to South Africa, debates about autonomy and independence are being held by local elites. Throughout this integral North-South axis, small tribal insurgencies pose little threat to British dominance, but they do prove to be annoying distractions for a British public with gradually shifting opinions on the role of the government in everyday life, in the future of the Empire, and what is in store in the second half of the 20th century. For now, these insurgencies prove to be little more than sparks to the bonfire of Indian dominion status.

A Britain in Confusion

With the gradual British military and economic withdrawal from the now Dominion of India, **PRIME MINISTER EDEN** has reallocated considerable funding into welfare programs started by his predecessors in the Labour government such as the National Health Service and removing taxation from maternity and sick benefits for workers. Additionally, the Conservatives fully embraced the "Post War Consensus" and the Beveridge style governmental model, funnelling funding into national housing projects, specifically the largely popular "council houses". Furthermore, government statistics have proven that life expectancy and child welfare have been increased considerably by the NHS and the other social democratic policies of the past few cabinets. Across the seas, the vast colonial empire of Great Britain is slowly withering, with greater calls for autonomy from the INC in the Union of India; specifically on the contention of the Islamic and Hindu populations having to reside within the same union. From both sides of the divide there are growing protests for separation and the creation of a solely ethnic Muslim nation either within the Empire or more likely: outside of it. Faisalabad and Multan in the north west of India see harsh and brutal religious clashes between Hindus

and Muslims resulting in hundreds of deaths from rioters and dozens of police officers being severely injured. Dissatisfaction with the local autonomy given by the British government has grown considerably over the years and with the subcontinent entering yet another decade under the leadership of the British Crown, patience for a peaceful resolution is running thin. The aftermath of the Mau Mau uprising has left a stain upon the British possessions in Eastern Africa and with international pressure (specifically coming from the new Kennedy administration) to begin decolonisation efforts, Eden reluctantly agrees to an extent; helping to pass through an act of Parliament which recognises the "failures of British forces and administrators in the region".

A Half Hearted Revival

Moderates from both sides of the house continue to support the maintenance of the Empire. But to the keen observer, it is clear that this is only skin deep. Were the cost to maintain colonies to become too high, or minor retreats become routs, most would quickly abandon this belief. There are also those who call for reform. - The creation of native administrators, followed by improved schools and infrastructure. But the tax revenue, especially from African colonies, is simply too low to fund such projects. (My my, I wonder why so many African states are corrupt cesspits.)

(A skilled player would have to attempt to convince the treasury to either borrow the money or increase taxes to pay for ambitious colonial projects). Some efforts are already underway, with several British universities having established overseas colleges in Caribbean and African colonies, which have for the first time made higher education available to natives without moving to Britain or a Dominion for the duration of their education. There are also movements to move away from cash crops, and allow for the

greater diversification of colonial economies, coupled with various movements for labour representation amongst the native agricultural classes. Britain might be the invincible empire on which the sun never sets, but arguably it is prestige that will carry empire forward. Natives have ambitions to be more "British", (even to this day Anglo-African political classes often sound like they're from London), native children are encouraged to talk properly, and native consumer markets (where they exist) shadow Anglo-American trends. Maintain the illusion of invincibility, and the myth of British exceptionalism and prestige, and maybe it may just last for a thousand years. Also the term Empire is falling out of use, most people now refer to the British Empire as the British Commonwealth, often shortened to simply "The Commonwealth". (This largely aims to explain the domestic situation/ feelings in many colonies).

Republic of France

Word Count: 5750

La Guerre en Allemagne

With the narrow avoidance of not only a successful German encirclement of the Elite forces of the French Army at Dunkirk, but also a repeat of the stalemate of 1914, French forces immediately launched a counterattack against the Germans in the ill-fated Operation Chess Piece. The operation resulted in failure and as a result, the Low Countries remained under German occupation throughout 1940.

In 1941, after stabilising their lines against the German invader and recovering from the initial failure of Operation Chess Piece, a joint Franco-British force launched an attack

against the German lines, known as Operation Jupiter, starting with a decisive victory in Luxemburg, routing the, while zealous, poorly trained SS units despite heavy support from Hermann Göring's Luftwaffe and liberating the tiny nation from Nazi occupation. The success of Operation Jupiter continued into late February 1941, with Franco-British forces capturing Trier and Bitburg, with plans to march to the Rhine, exploiting this new gaping wound in the German frontlines, which was receiving peculiarly few reinforcements from Non-SS regiments of the German Armed Forces.

Fortunately for the many soldiers who would likely die in such a bold offensive, barely after the preparations for the Rheinland offensive had begun, the new Nazi-Free German Military Junta reached out to France and Britain, requesting an immediate ceasefire and peace negotiations, delighted by what could absolutely be called a yet another French Victory over the German invaders, Prime Minister Paul Reynaud accepted the request for an end to hostilities, alongside Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill, as both parties set off to Paris, just as their predecessors had 20 years ago, to make sure Germany would never, ever attempt to best the French Republic ever again.

Gloire et Victoire: Mais à Quel Prix?

In 1941, peace at last was restored to Europe. France, and her ally Britain, emerged once again triumphant and victorious from a major war with Germany. However, once the parades, the parties, and the celebrations end in the weeks following the armistice, French politicians turn themselves back to the difficult task of running France. French

Prime Minister, Paul Reynaud, says in his famous 1941 victory speech: "Gagner était facile. Gouverner est plus difficile." (*Winning was easy. Governing is harder.*)

During the heat of war, Prime Minister Reynaud and the Democratic Republic Alliance were re-elected in the 1940 elections. Following the victory only a year later, the instability of a rapidly changing Prime Ministership ended and slowly the tradition of having a more staying Prime Minister emerges in French political society.

Thanks to a massive uptick in military spending during the war, the French economy is able to pull itself out of the Great Depression. However, much of the spending is done with the help of government bonds, which themselves are often bought by British and American investors. At the peak of the foreign investment, the British investors owned an estimated 11% of the French economy, and the Americans an estimated 7%.

Although initially the support of the DRA erodes as a result of the massive increase in foreign investors, popularity slowly gains between 1942 and 1944 as the French economy improves. The base of the DRA, urban and more industrialized areas in particular, sees a surge in support for the DRA. The added legitimacy and support of the party and its promises help bring badly needed political stability to a country so recently mired in extreme partisanship.

By 1944, Reynaud is the first Prime Minister in the history of the Third Republic to last the entire Legislative Term. However, it's uncertain if the DRA can maintain its coalition. Reynaud's hawkish stances are growing unpopular, and despite the relative

resurgence of the French economy, French citizens grow worried that Reynaud will drag France into another war.

In a close election, the DRA wins by a slim margin of only 2%, edging out the increasingly fractured and cannibalistic Popular Front in a few key locales. However, Prime Minister Reynaud is formally given the boot by the more pacifist and more internally popular Pierre-Étienne Flandin. With the election of Monsieur Flandin as the Prime Minister, France appears poised to pivot to a more internally focused stance, likely continuing Reynaud's economic improvements and continuing the policy of imperial assimilation.

L'empire

During this period, Prime Minister Reynaud undertakes various schemes designed to increase Paris's control over the vast French Empire and continue the decades long policy of assimilation of colonial peoples. It is met with varying degrees of success, interestingly dependent on the region's physical distance from Paris.

In nearby North Africa, the popularity of the empire is strongly reinforced by the Treaty of Paris in 1941. Especially among Pieds Noirs, the continued mission of the empire, as well as the seeming invincibility of the French Army, is reinforced. Imperial advocates gain years of talking points. Imperial critics gain something to fear.

In slightly more distant Sub-Saharan Africa, the stability of the empire is also reinforced. Although most of the peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa tire of being treated as

second class citizens and having their local customs extinguished, they know that any attempt to subvert Paris's control would result in a brutal military deployment. For most, the status quo is simply the best bad option.

However, in far off Indochina, local peoples agitate once more for independence. Inspired by Chinese resistance to Japanese aggression, many of the most fervent patriots secretly import weapons from the USSR and head to Luang Namtha in the far northwest of Laos and begin a slow-burning and relatively unpopular war for independence. Although it's completely unsuccessful at gaining territory and inspiring the people of Indochina towards independence, it is a constant worry for the French administration there, resulting in a troop surge of the French Foreign Legion.

Across the board, the French Empire is reinforced by the victory of 1941 and the overall success of the French Army. Most independence movements are set back, even more so than in 1918, as French imperial soldiers were largely unused in the 9 Month War. It is a French Victory alone, and the French use it to their advantage fully.

Flandin : Une Nouvelle Voie Pour la France du XXe Siècle?

In the 1944 elections, Reynaud is out and Flandin is in. Flandin is much more pacifist than Reynaud, and despite his ability to navigate the post 1944 French political landscape better than Reynaud, his handling of critical foreign policy issues is somewhat less what the French government had hoped.

Flandin's experience as the Minister of Commerce helped his credibility among party elite, who were increasingly worried about France's economy and international credit rating and less so about France's position in Indochina and other agitating places.

But Flandin's biggest test during this period is not economic in nature, but colonial (as to be expected). The Indochinese Revolution is heating up, and Flandin is pressured (against his best wishes) to deploy more soldiers and hold onto the Far East colony by force.

Between 1944-1946, French soldiers increased from just over 2,000 to over 40,000. The troop surge, combined with newer and more precise weapons developed by the French Arsenal, help contain Ho Chi Minh and his radical supporters to the North, especially the Northwest, where the terrain is much more difficult for traditional military deployments.

Day and night, the French Air Force flies sorties over the region, dropping fire bombs on local villages and jungle hideouts suspected of harboring Revolutionary Soldiers. The tactics are effective, but morally bankrupt.

In June of 1947, a journalist in Indochina brings photos of a burned village, specifically a burned school, back to France, creating weeks of anti-war movements and weakening Flandin, who despite being pacifist is seen as weak in front of his own cabinet, which is still filled with Reynaud-era hawks.

End of an ARD Era

This colonial failure, combined with an already down-trending popularity, leads to the ARD (Reynaud and Flandin's party, which had ruled France since 1938) to lose in the 1948 elections to the now-reconciling Popular Front. Instead of the aging and weak Flandin, the energetic François Mitterrand, representing the RGR party (the post-Popular Front leftist coalition).

With Mitterrand at the helm, France is poised to take a turn to the left, and her colonial policy will be equally interesting.

L'ère Mitterrand

With François Mitterrand and the RGR coalition at the helm, France sees many much needed social reforms, including the expansion of the French welfare state. Although its size only increases marginally, a simultaneous economic uptick combines to elevate the quality of life for most French citizens, which is largely credited to Mitterrand.

The uptick in social spending upsets a deficit-wary financial sector, which only months prior had finished repaying American and British loans. Interest rates in France skyrocket, and a tense standoff ensued between the Governor of the Banque de France and Parliament. Ultimately, the government is faced with a decision: cancel the welfare programs or downsize the military. Neither option is popular, and cutting back on either risks upsetting massively very influential factions in the French political landscape.

Choosing to distance themselves from the war in Indochina and maintain their "Métropole d'abord" stance, Mitterand opts to slash military spending and bring 30,000 troops home from Vietnam, leaving just 10,000 remaining. In response, the Mitterand Foreign Office reaches out to Britain for military aid in Indochina, and they accept.

While the situation on paper has stabilized, both in the war and at home, the French populace can't help but feel like Britain always has to come in and "save" France from military defeat. The British were there in 1914 when the Germans marched on Paris. They were there in 1940 to cut off Guderian's salient. Now, they're in Indochina in 1951 helping the French prevent a military disaster in the rapidly deteriorating Indochinese War of Independence.

La Guerre d'Indochine

In January 1949, the French Foreign Legion (FFL) launches a massive offensive into Northern Vietnam, where most of the rebels are holed up. The advance annihilates crack Viet Minh vanguards in the first few days, but struggles once it reaches more rugged terrain and where Viet Minh guerillas launch sporadic ambushes on French camps and on the French supply lines.

By late April, the rainy season begins and already weak supply lines disintegrate as the unpaved mountain roads turn to mud. By June, food, medicine, ammunition, and basic living amenities like tents and spare clothes are all in short supply, and morale among the French soldiers plummets. Additionally, the French Air Force is unable to launch

large scale strikes during the rainy season because of the poor visibility, giving the Viet Minh vital time to rebuild their forces and prepare a grand final assault on the remaining French supply lines, seeking to strand the 20,000+ FFL troops in their Son La camp.

When the rainy season is only weeks away from ending, the Viet Minh launch their offensive, cutting the two remaining roads from Hanoi to Son La and savaging all the French river boats. However, by some miracle, the rainy season ends earlier than expected, allowing the French Air Force to perform a relentless campaign against the Viet Minh, who are now out in force and away from their hideaways. The September Campaign, as it comes to be known, proves to be the deadliest single military action for the Viet Minh at this point in the war. Ho Chi Minh himself is badly wounded in an air strike on his headquarters, and takes until March of 1950 to fully recover.

Once the Viet Minh are cleared and the roads somewhat solidified, the FFL begins withdrawing from the hellish Son La camp and back to their pre-offensive line. Casualties among the FFL have been high all summer, but the season has been equally bloody for their Viet Minh opponents.

In early 1950, the FFL completely returns to their pre-offensive lines, and the French Air Force continues their bombing campaign from the previous fall and winter. The Viet Minh have by this point spent time rebuilding their forces, aided by limited materiel from the Soviet Union (although most of the weapons are diverted to the Iranian proxy war, judged by planners in Moscow to be a much safer investment of weapons and aid).

Nevertheless, the Viet Minh gain strength all through the spring of 1950, and at the same time, the FFL begins to withdraw back to permanent bases throughout the French Empire.

The war begins to grow increasingly unpopular at home, and finally the RGR government is ready to make good on their promise to scale down the troop surge. By the rainy summer of 1950, the FFL in Indochina number only 20,000, with the rest of the 15,000 or so remaining FFL returning to bases throughout the vast but increasingly agitative Empire.

The troops that remain in Indochina face a different Viet Minh (VM) than they did in 1949. The new and improved VM, while still not a modern fighting force, has learned its advantages and disadvantages, and unit commanders are ready to tap into those advantages and disadvantages to devastate the FFL as much as possible. For example, the VM launch raiding parties into French supply depots behind the lines, often slipping through at known weak points or through tunnels constructed throughout the previous dry season.

The chaos created by these frequent but low-intensity incursions lowers FFL morale and makes life increasingly difficult for the soldiers. Throughout 1950, these guerilla attacks begin to whittle down the FFL's fighting ability, and by the end of the 1950 rainy season, the FFL is unable to launch another massive offensive, relying again solely on their air power for another devastating but imprecise bombing campaign across the North.

In 1951, another round of military cuts means 10,000 FFL have to return to other parts of the Empire in order to save on combat theater pay. Additionally, air strikes are scaled down to save on increasingly expensive aviation fuel and munitions. The VM seize on this withdrawal, and harass the FFL as every other soldier trickles away from the defensive line.

However, seeking to avoid a total military disgrace in Indochina, the RGR government reaches out to their British counterparts for military aid. The British, seeking to avoid a bad showing for their own increasingly agitative colonies and willing to aid their French allies, contribute air power and special forces incursions into the VM, which prove to be devastating to a VM force that is used to having a monopoly on guerilla tactics.

Suddenly, the VM is caught on the back foot and has to send large amounts of men to garrison their own increasingly fragile supply lines.

With this, the War in Indochina becomes both stable and cheaper, and despite a minor humiliation in resorting to the British, everything is going well in the war for France. The lull in action on the defensive line allows the public to take a break from constant media coverage on the war, giving the government a much needed reprise from the incredibly frequent anti-war demonstrations in Paris and other French cities. As 1951 slips into 1952, it is uncertain whether the VM will be able to mount a considerable offensive, or remain bogged down putting out metaphorical and literal fires set by British commandos.

L'ère Des Bons Sentiments: 1948-1955

As the RGR and Mitterand enjoy re-election in 1952, the Third Republic approaches its most prosperous era yet. With spending down and social welfare programs rolled out, the French economy grows steadily, and the quality of life in France steadily improves. Especially in previously underserved rural areas, basic power, water, and reliable police and fire services are established. The quality of French healthcare is improved, allowing workers to be more productive. French education sees remarkable improvement at the highest and lowest ends of the education journey.

However, while the quality of French life and prospects of the future looked rosy for France, trouble is brewing at the economic level. In late May of 1952, as the electoral victory becomes apparent, the government nationalizes Compagnie Générale d'Électricité, a large electric and telecommunications company in France. In July, several regional banks are nationalized and unified under the Société Générale, one of the banks recently nationalized in the measure. In February of 1953, Gaz de France (gas and oil) is nationalized as a "public utility". All told, 42 banks, two financial houses, and the outstanding portions of several "utility" companies are nationalized within the span of two years. Leaders in the business community are enraged.

As the size of the French state expands exponentially to manage all these new holdings, corruption and stagnation also set in. Due to generous pro-labor subsidies, the number of patents filed by Compagnie Générale d'Électricité hits an all time low, and French companies soon find themselves unable to compete with British, American, and Japanese companies without life-saving aid from the government. All the while, most

labor advocates and government officials are blind to the widespread economic rot setting in.

Le Premier Domino: Gaz de France

In November of 1955, as sales continue to slip after years of mismanagement and inefficient business practices, Gaz de France formally files for bankruptcy and requests immediate government assistance in order to remain functional. A month later, Compagnie Générale d'Électricité also files for bankruptcy, having taken on considerable amounts of bad debt from the similarly state-owned Société Générale in a vain attempt to reverse intellectual flight from the company's R&D division. In one stroke, the financial prosperity of the Mitterand Era is wiped clean, and the government is forced to enact a massive bailout to avoid causing millions of French citizens and depositors in SocGen to lose their deposits.

At the 1956 government bonds auction, the French government is forced to raise bond interest rates from average ~1.5% interest to a whopping ~4.8% interest (average). Then, the bailout is completed and the French nationalized companies resume normal operations. French national debt skyrockets, the economy slows down as a result of drastically increased interest rates, and the "L'ère Des Bons Sentiments" comes to a crashing end.

However, France isn't out of the woods yet, as 1956 is also an election year, and the sudden economic devastation has left many in France upset with how poorly the many large and critical national companies were managed. The RGR government launches

several investigations, uncovering millions of Francs siphoned from companies to regional or national controllers, as well as several members of the National Assembly. Scandal wracks the RGR, and Mitterand's own Deputy Prime Minister, Pierre Mauroy, is forced to resign. As election day approaches in France, it appears the Mitterand Era, a truly glorious era, had come to a bitter end.

Opération Rassembler

As the French economic condition at home continues to improve throughout the early 1950s, the Mitterand government approves expanding the role and funding of French Foreign Legion special forces, having also witnessed the great effect with which the British special forces in Indochina are able to dispatch rebel support.

In 1952, as the election win nears, Mitterand launches Opération Rassembler to destroy several key command and communication centers for the Viet Minh, followed by a large scale air campaign and subsequent ground assault to finally finish the war once and for all.

The special forces wreak devastating hits across the Viet Minh headquarters in coordinated, tactical strikes. However, the mission to assassinate Ho Chi Minh's headquarters, along with several top generals, is thwarted after the VM traitor is exposed, and the headquarters is hastily moved before the strike team arrives. With Ho Chi Minh still at the helm, the overall damage is somewhat limited, and the VM is quickly able to regain its defensive posture.

With word that Ho Chi Minh survived reaching Mitterrand and the War Council, the second and third phases of Opération Rassembleur are called off, and Mitterrand is forced to be satisfied with the tactical damage done by the commandos elsewhere throughout rebel territory.

As 1952 draws to a close, the VM plans of a grand offensive are entirely scrapped, and the war continues into a two year stalemate during which thousands of FFL regular soldiers are employed improving the infrastructure across Indochina to aid the supply situation, which has the added effect of spurring Indochina's economy and eroding rebel support in non-occupied regions. However, despite these successes, the war continues and victory remains elusive throughout 1955, as the worsening situation at home dictates another scale-down in French involvement.

The Second Reynaud Era: Retour du Roi

With the election only months away, the ARD and its political allies scramble to find the perfect candidate to capitalize on the destruction of the RGR. In this quest, they come to the surprising choice of **FORMER PRIME MINISTER PAUL REYNAUD**, who had been biding his time as a member of the National Assembly since his ouster from ministerial prominence in 1948. A staunch critic of many of Mitterrand's now crumbling economic proposals, his recent political record is perfect for the task of dismantling the RGR legacy and solving France's present economic crisis.

Upon the electoral victory in 1956, Reynaud brings in **MINISTER OF POSTS, TELEGRAPHS, AND TELEPHONES ROGER DUCHET** to work with Compagnie Générale d'Électricité to resolve their financial issues and eventually lead them down the road of privatization. Once his work there is completed, he conducts similar projects with Société Générale and finally the economic hot potato of Gaz de France. By 1958, all of them are fully privatized and the government's balance book has been almost completely righted.

However, the rapid privatization coupled with a massive economic downturn leads many among the French working classes to resent the changes and go on strike, which the Reynaud government has difficulty dealing with. In particular, they have trouble connecting with striking coal miners in the Rhineland, who threaten to hold France's energy sector almost completely hostage. In this area, the Reynaud government employs tactical use of National Police to breakup strikers by force and send them back to work in their critical industries. For the non-essential, consumer goods industries, Reynaud simply declares "Let them strike their heart's content."

With the economy mostly in hand, Reynaud prepares to deal with the trifecta of international crises brewing for them in the late 1950s: The war in Indochina, a land dispute with Germany, and a surprise attack in Algeria.

La Première Crise: The War in Indochina

MARSHAL PHILIPPE LECLERC DE HAUTECLOCQUE is placed in charge of the reorganized "Mission to Recover French Indochina" in 1956, following the ARD electoral victory and the escalation of the war there to crush the rebellion.

Immediately, he is tasked with delivering the decisive blow to the Viet Minh, who have been weakened but are steadily rebuilding following Operation Rassembler.

His first action is to resist against a brutal Viet Minh offensive in the North, which forces him and his British allies to retreat South to a shorter front. However, in doing so, he abandons the northern capital of Hanoi, giving the Viet Minh an excellent location to base their new government out of. The speed and suddenness of Ho Chi Minh's offensive shocks the recently arrived Leclerc, which is why he is forced to retreat despite years of success at holding the line.

Then, following a massive air assault and special forces guerilla campaign, he launches a striking blow to the unprepared Viet Minh fighters, who by this point are far out of their league and have no superior knowledge of the terrain than their French and British opponents. Their communication and supply lines are cut, and they prove to be no match in open battle for the modern equipment and training of the French Foreign Legion.

By 1959, their gains had been almost entirely reversed, and Hanoi is threatened by French artillery daily. However, the time for Northerners spent under Viet Minh rule had enlightened them to the ways of Indochinese nationalism, and the political oxygen

gained from the brief occupation breathed new life into the Viet Minh for their 1960s operations.

La Deuxième Crise: The Status of the Rhineland

The next crisis was in the hands of **FOREIGN MINISTER MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE** to handle, which was negotiating for the status of the annexed Rhineland territories. The lands, which had been seized from Germany after the 9 Month War, had long been a point of contention between the Republic of France and the North Germany Republic, as well as among the German-speaking inhabitants of the region.

In the early 1950s, the North German Government attempted to negotiate with great vigor for the return of the region, but to no avail. The region supplies a significant portion of French industrial products for export, as well as critical coal and steel to French. Despite the vast cultural and linguistic differences between the Rhineland and the Metropole, it has become an integral piece of the French economy, and one they will not let go lightly.

However, due to its economic importance and cultural ties, the issue of the return of the Rhineland has blown up as a major issue in North German politics. Although the Hamburg Conference is over, back dealing for the region has continued since then. However, the Reynaud government takes the same course of action as the previous Mitterrand regime: no budging on the return of the Rhineland. Not only is it an economically vital region, but it is also a major point of pride for many Frenchmen,

especially those more nationalistically inclined who make up a significant portion of the ARD's base.

As the years drag on, de Murville and his negotiators continue to sandbag the talks to keep the Germans from escalating their efforts to reclaim the region to more extreme and agitative measures. However, with years going by and no substantial progress being made by the Germans, patience begins to run thin. By 1960, the future of diplomatic talks on the region only looks as promising as a skilled diplomat can deliver.

La Troisième Crise: Insurgency in Algeria

Since the 1830s, Algeria has been an integral piece of France. However, as other parts of the French Empire begin to question their allegiances to Paris, so too do the Algerians.

In 1957, a major protest for independence in Algiers turns violent when **GENERAL MAURICE CHALLE**, commander of French forces in Algeria, orders his soldiers protecting the magistrate's office to fire on the crowd. The "Algiers Massacre" causes substantial uproar, particularly in the less-French regions of Algeria in the more rural areas. Soon, the crisis appears to be moving in the direction of a full scale independence war, one of which France is already fighting in the East. Such wars have proven to be wildly expensive and victory often remains elusive for decades, so French leaders are reluctant to provoke the Algerians into another colonial insurgency.

However, General Challe is eager to rout the quickly forming National Liberation Army of Algeria, and so he launches several innovative air strikes on their targets that put

their preparations in disarray, although it also inflames tensions. A series of small scale air strikes continues on for many months before full scale rebellion breaks out in the colony, and during this time, the Algerian Army looks for help from the Italians, who they know will oblige them with generous material aid. However, once the first shipments of materiel arrive, the Algerians realize they will be useless against much more modern and better French equipment, and so that course of action is embraced with less enthusiasm.

As the Algerians desperately search for a more capable benefactor, their ability to organize effectively throughout the late 1950s is hampered immensely by Challe's early counter-insurgency efforts, which are not just limited to air strikes, but also embedded spies and special forces made to inform on the Algerian's every move.

The Return of Reynaud Continued: Le Gouvernement a Testé

As the effects of privatization continue, the quality of life for most workers deteriorates. Bloated union contracts and generous benefits are slashed by the new management in efforts to save the companies from bankruptcy, leading to widespread strikes and shortages of basic telecoms and energy utilities. Although this hurts the reputation of the government of **PRIME MINISTER PAUL REYNAUD**, which only barely wins re-election in 1960, the general improvement of the economy and the stabilization of French credit enables a critical mass of supporters to rally behind the Reynaud government and propel it to victory in the election.

With a second term in his second win, Reynaud utilizes his improved economy and balanced budget to begin refunding many of the cut social services programs, and by the end of 1963, the internal state of France had returned to its usual low boil (acceptable for French governments). However, economic quality of life is only one measure of success when so much is on the line for the French government. How the Reynaud government fares in the realm of the several large foreign policy challenges is an equal metric to measure the regime's success in this term.

The Situation in Indochina: La Guerre s'Echauffe

MARSHAL PHILIPPE LECLERC DE HAUTECLOCQUE begins his second tour in Indochina in 1960. While the war against the Viet Minh is going well, the spread of the insurgency is quite worrying. Their brief occupation of Hanoi and the North proves to be exactly what the Viet Minh need to legitimize their revolution in the eyes of the people.

REVOLUTIONARY HO CHI MINH, leader of the Viet Minh, begins developing a vast, nigh undetectable guerilla network capable of supplying small arms to a large number of people all across Vietnam, and in neighboring Cambodia and Laos. He dreams of igniting a much larger and difficult to contain insurgency that will finally push the French out of the region and allow for Vietnam to once again be independent.

For the French, fear is the main governing tactic. So long as they can win battles, the people of Indochina will not challenge them. The myth of European invincibility, long used by the French as the prime tool for governance in the colony, has yet to be

shattered. Ho Chi Minh believes it can and must be destroyed first so that the war can be won. If not, the insurgency may be lost.

By 1963, the dissemination of arms and information into French territories on the limited victories of the revolution in the North find the most willing ears in indigenous students and rural farmers. Even as far south as Saigon, French rule and invincibility is slowly undermined by covert Viet Minh propaganda. The French effort to counter this is little to none in most areas, as almost their entire strategy is focused on tactical victories against the Viet Minh in the field of battle (which they have so far been quite successful with).

However, as the French keep the flame contained in the North, the Viet Minh douse the whole colony in gasoline... **By the start of 1964, the entire region is ready to explode.**

The Situation in the Rhineland: Blocage Diplomatique Continu

Throughout the early 1960s, the task of **FOREIGN MINISTER MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE** remains to stall the North Germans from honestly pursuing. However, the German diplomats grow increasingly impatient with various French negotiating tactics, which include spontaneous "work holidays," frequent and lengthy unnecessary meetings about minute aspects of the Rhineland, and de Murville's personal favorite, "returning to Paris to seek new instructions" (this alone usually takes 6-8 business weeks, except in the month of August which must be entirely discounted).

By 1962, the German delegation has had absolutely enough of the French sandbagging, and, seeing right through de Murville's rather obvious efforts to achieve the status quo and a placated Germany, pulls out of all negotiations, both public and private.

Recognizing that it would be difficult for the French to match such a feat due to their simultaneous wars in Algeria and Indochina, **NORTH GERMAN CHANCELLOR EUGEN GERSTENMAIER** orders the North German military deployed to posts all along the North German-French border in a show of strength, but stopping short of any directly provocative measures or sending any ultimatums.

The French are immediately inflamed by this obvious escalation in tensions, and so they begin constructing a strategy for the defense of the Rhineland from a North German attack. The strategies include constructing a modern fort chain, reinforcing supply logistics and regional air bases, and preparing all strategic locations like bridges and tunnels to secretly be demolished should the need arise. The French army begins exercising war games for such an eventuality, and by 1964, they seem ready to oppose any North German aggressions--**but secretly, the Reynaud government knows it will be very difficult for France, as strong as it is, to fight three expensive wars all at once.**

The Situation in Algeria: Explosion

GENERAL MAURICE CHALLE continued his tactical air campaign and special forces counterinsurgency techniques to great effect in 1961 and 1962. However, Challe soon discovers something unique about insurgencies that later comes to be known as "Challe's Rule:" Unlike regular, conventional warfare, every combatant killed is not one combatant off the field, but instead every combatant killed leads to the creation of two

or more combatants. Every civilian or insurgent killed has brothers, fathers, sons, friends. The cause of independence is political, but the cause of revenge and survival is boundless.

Even with the near constant tactical victories, total destruction of the enemy and a return to stability remains completely elusive in nearly all regions of Algeria except for the major coastal cities where Pieds Noirs are already substantial in number and control is easily maintained by French colonial authorities.

Month after month, the French rain down fire upon the desert, and month after month the war of Algerian independence drags on. In a total war of attrition, the question is posed: "what will drain first, Algerian blood, or the French treasury?" By 1964, the question seems answerless, but what is known is that both are draining quickly. As both sides see their enemy routinely weakened, the war continues with the same intensity and ferocity as ever before. However, without substantial materiel aid (and materiel of a decent quality), true hope for an Algerian victory without total French ruin at home is a pipe dream for the more pragmatic in the rebel leadership. Nevertheless, the war appears to be without an end in sight.

North German Republic

Word Count: 3771

Fall Gelb

With the fall of Poland and several months of actionless stalemate on the Western front, Germany was now prepared to take decisive action against France and the low countries. OKW put Erich von Manstein in charge of the plan, and he devised a strategy of taking the Netherlands, then Belgium and Luxembourg with rapid, armored assaults combined with tactical air strikes, just as they did in Poland in the year prior. Then, they would penetrate France at the wooded and rural Ardennes forest, where French defenses were weakest, and spearhead to Dunkirk to cut off the BEF and most of the French Army as they came in to assist the Belgians.

However, during preparations for the Fall Gelb, complete operational plans were lost over Belgium when the plane carrying them went down near the border. As a result, the details of the plan are shifted slightly and OKW hopes that the Allies believe they are merely a decoy.

When Fall Gelb begins in May, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg tumble into Hitler's hands with stunning speed. Then, Guderian makes his push through the Ardennes and on towards Dunkirk, bypassing most of the Anglo-French forces, who have now become bogged down on roads inundated by Dutch and Belgian refugees on their way to France. Within a few days, Guderian is in Abbeville and the encirclement is complete.

However, OKW and Guderian alike are shocked when an Allied counter attack from the North and South pincer Guderian's unprotected supply lines. Additionally, infantry support along the crucial salient has been held up for critical days as a result of heavy rains in the area washing out some of the rural roads and creating mudslides. Supply wagons and the horses pulling them must completely stop until the roads are passable. Meanwhile, the Allies close in on Guderian, who sits in Dunkirk helpless and praying that his supply line can be reconnected. Even with pilfered gasoline and food, his tanks are out of fuel and his soldiers are growing hungry.

Within a few days, the encirclement of Guderian tightens like a noose. German infantry remained unable to break out from the line against prepared, better equipped, and better trained British and French soldiers. Without substantial and coordinated armored and motorized support on the ground, the Ju 87s are somewhat ineffective at hindering Allied advances.

Fall Seeweg aims to relieve the tanks by sea so they can attempt a blitz out and link up with the German lines, but they are thwarted by RAF bombers, and the Germans for the first time know what it's like to be on the receiving end of coordinated and effective CAS.

Finally, on June 23rd 1940, Heinz Guderian and his advance force of tanks and trucks surrendered to the Allies. The next day, Allied troops stationed at Dunkirk moved to the front in preparation for Operation Chess Piece, which would launch a spear head along the Rhine to cut off German forces in the low countries' land supply routes. However,

the operation resulted in a failure as Allied armor was poorly coordinated. Just as it was 20 years prior, the Western Front was now all quiet.

February Coup

After months of hard winter and no military progress, public support for the war is wavering and OKW's faith in the Fuhrer is as well. Specifically, some officers like Hans Oster, Wilhelm Canaris, Field Marshal Erwin Witzelben, Ludwig Beck, Freidrich Olbricht, Army Chief of Staff Franz Halder, and General Gerd von Rundstedt, who was thrown under the bus after the failure of Fall Gelb, began discussing options for removing Hitler from Power. In February, the officers agreed upon a plan to kill Hitler and Goring both at once by shooting them all when they came to the War Ministry to discuss operations at the front. The assassination would then be blamed on Himmler as an attempted coup, and he would be arrested on the orders of Chancellor Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, who was to be interim leader until elections could be held and a peace could be negotiated.

The plan went into action on February 19th, two days after an Allied offensive into Luxembourg prompted an emergency meeting of Hitler and Goring with OKW and OKH. Although Hitler initially requested to meet in his Berlin residence, Halder maintained that he was constantly needed at the War Ministry and couldn't be away even for a moment. Reluctantly, the location was set and the plan was on.

On the morning of the 20th, Hitler, his staff, and Goring met with Halder and Olbricht, and after a few minutes of "strategy talk," Halder pressed a button under the table, and

two men with guns entered the room, shot Hitler's SS guards in the head, then proceeded to shoot Goring and Hitler twice in the chest and once in the head. Then, the men changed into SS uniforms and ran into the streets firing their guns in the air before jumping into a manhole and disappearing into the sewers.

From there, Halder issued the order to mobilize units of the reserve army to "prevent a coup attempt" and "save Hitler's Germany." Himmler was arrested shortly thereafter, along with other top Nazi and SS officials, and Berlin quickly fell into Allied hands. Thanks to clever maneuvering by Halder, most SS units were tied up at the front fighting the Allied offensive, and so more Wehrmacht units were free to ensure control of the other German cities and consolidate the new authority.

The next day, Goerdeler was sworn in as emergency Chancellor and he contacted the Allies via the Swiss embassy, to negotiate an immediate ceasefire and the beginning of peace negotiations. The British and French governments agreed, and negotiations in Paris once again began to settle the question of peace in Europe.

Die Militärräte

In the years following the Treaty of Paris, the North German government engaged in a series of stabilization and deNazification efforts. In March of 1942, members of the Military Junta, dubbed the "February Junta," began working on a new constitution for North Germany. Drawing from elements of the old Prussian and Second Reich constitutions, the cadre develop an authoritarian democracy where the military is

subservient to the state--but not necessarily the civilian government. Immediately, a state of emergency is declared, and elections are postponed until the emergency is lifted.

Although most prominent ex-Nazis fled to the newly established South German Union, there remained relatively widespread support among the populace. Immediately, Nazi iconography across the state is taken down and anti-Nazi "confessionals" are set up to encourage people to learn about the horrors of the regime and to confess their non-allegiance to Hitler.

At the same time, many prominent ex-Nazi military officials are either discharged or flee to the SGU. Because the existing government is made up of the old military establishment, there is no noticeable change to the quality of the Wehrmacht following these minor "purges."

Schools and children become one of the main battlegrounds between Nazi holdouts and the new anti-Nazi government. Ex-Hitler Youths often clash with state police, and vehemently protest the destruction of Nazi iconography across the NGR. In some cities and in the countryside, book burnings and minor scale Nazi rallies, as well as anti-semitic acts, are carried out by former party members.

However, the most prevalent mood across the NGR is relief. Food aid from Britain, France, and the US pours into German cities, and the general "Nationale Belagerung" (National Siege) slowly comes to an end. The overall state of the German economy is quite dire though, as many of the most prosperous and industrialized regions are once

more in a foreign country, or destroyed from Allied bombing. It is evident to the people and the new government that there is a long road to recovery ahead.

Militärische Konsolidierung und Wiederaufbau

By 1944, the situation in the NGR had somewhat improved. Throughout '44 and '45, the February Junta consolidated its power and enacted stricter deNazification policies.

Under the cause of deNazification, a broader crackdown on lawlessness and civil liberties is put into effect. As part of these efforts, minor support for Nazi policies are strictly prohibited, and many of the rowdier Hitler Youths are tried as adults and sent to prison for long sentences.

As a result, the prisons soon become flooded with ex-Nazis, many still sympathetic to the cause. They liken their time in prison to Hitler's brief period in Bavarian prison, where he famously wrote "Mein Kampf." Clashes erupt in the prison between Nazis and prison guards, resulting in a bloody period known as "Der Gefängnisterror" (The Prison Terror).

Despite the violence in the prisons, the NGR's political situation continues to stabilize during this period. A broad, social market economy was established in 1945, and a targeted industrial policy was enacted to speed up the recovery of German industry devastated during the war. Particularly, with the loss of the Rhineland region to France, the establishment of new industrial zones on the foundation of historical zones is necessitated. Silesia, once an early industrial heartland in the 19th century, once again

roars to life. Additionally, the German economy continues to be fueled by coal from the eastern Rhineland, which is still under German control.

In fact, the Rhineland coal deposit, which snakes along the region west to east, becomes a hotly disputed topic between the NGR and French leadership, with the French claiming 100% of the coal deposit, even the parts that lay underneath the German side of the border. The resulting "Kohlekrise" prevents any amelioration in the Franco-German relationship, and lasts from 1945-1948 when a deal is reached that allows limited French mining on the German side, so long as the mine entrances are on the French side.

Another point of contention between the Germans and French is the annexation of the Rhineland by France. Unlike Alsace-Lorraine, the Rhineland is mostly inhabited by Germans, who are extremely dissatisfied with their unfriendly French "overlords." Many emigrate to other parts of the NGR, but the majority of Germans living in the Rhineland choose to stay and agitate for a future return to Germany.

Das Wirtschaftswunder

As denazification efforts drew to a close in the late 1940s, the NGR government begins to shift its focus to making the economy globally competitive again and improving the military. However, these objectives prove harder to accomplish given the steep obstacles to overcome.

Economically, the NGR is in a tricky spot. Many of the top German conglomerates are now located in the SGU, where relations with the February coup government are growing increasingly icy with the SGU, which has been increasingly governed by ex-Nazis.

For the few companies that remain, many of them defense contractors, business is **not** booming. By 1951, Junkers and Focke-Wulf both required a bailout as their military aviation divisions received 0 revenues post Treaty of Paris.

However, the beginnings of an economic miracle start to trickle in via an unexpected industry: shipbuilding. In an economy with proportionally more coastline than pre-war Germany, the percentage of GDP composed of commercial shipbuilding steadily expands between 1945 and 1955, with MeyerWerft shipbuilding taking the lead on cutting edge container ship and oil tanker designs.

The government, for its part, subsidized quality enhancement and R&D for many of its domestic companies, in hopes that they would come to be prominent global suppliers and lead the German economic recovery.

German steel, led by Krupp, joins shipbuilding as a spearheading industry in the miracle. German factories across the North require large amounts of steel to rebuild their destroyed capital stock, and the steel industry's own shortage of capital stock leads Krupp to install capital that is more modern and up to date than anywhere else in the world at this time.

German steel and German ships, once thought to be two war-time essentials, are now leading a peacetime economic miracle in the North German Republic.

The North German Military, still known as the Wehrmacht, is heavily constricted by the 1941 Treaty of Paris. Air Forces are completely outlawed and the navy and army are heavily restricted on their size. In 1950, the government attempts to subvert the treaty and begin building aircraft *components* that if necessary, could be rapidly assembled into an air force but technically are not immediately available war planes.

The British and French, wary of the previous German military rearmament, quickly step in and force the German government to discontinue this policy. However, the Germans find a way to improve the military within the confines of the Treaty of Paris: Improving quality.

Considerable resources are then invested in increasing the quality of the soldiers in the North German Wehrmacht, and pay and benefits are increased, the quality of housing is increased, and lucrative contracts go out for high quality small arms and vehicles. Opel, the only German automobile manufacturer left in Northern Germany after the Treaty of Paris, sees a rapid expansion in its R&D department as a result of government contracts for military and police vehicles.

As a result of much higher percentages of the expanded military budget now aiding the R&D of various North German companies, the quality of the military steadily improves,

and German companies lead the world in innovation. As such, the Economic Miracle and Military Improvements go hand in hand.

Der Wechsel Zu Einer Neuen Verfassung

In 1952, a 68 year old **CHANCELLOR CARL FRIEDRICH GOERDELER** announces he is not seeking re-election in 1954 and is retiring from politics. The ruling Prussian Democratic Party (PDP) is suddenly left without an heir. With the North German Liberal Union (NLU) quickly catching them in the polls, Chancellor Goerdeler must find a way to secure his legacy. To do so, certain parts must be thrown to the wind, and reforms must take place.

The immediate choice for PDP leadership is **EUGEN GERSTENMAIER**, a strong Protestant conservative with a good Prussian background. However, he faces an intense electoral battle against **KONRAD ADENAUER**, a savvy political rival of the NLU. The election soon turns to constitutional reform, the role of the military, economic growth, and the future of Germany.

In the first radio debates to be broadcast all over the NGR, it soon becomes clear that Gerstenmaier wishes to prompt a radical shift in his policy stance: restore the military to its apolitical role and agitate for reunification with the Rhineland. Adenauer, who prepared mostly to talk about state intervention in the economy, is wholly unprepared to deal with Gerstenmaier's political hot potato.

The issue becomes immediately popular, and Adenauer, a native of Cologne (now French), takes up the issue as well, and it soon dominates the election discussion. At the same time, many in the military elite grow worried that a victory by either party will cause them to lose their political hand, which has ensured the maximum amount of funding to the military since the Treaty of Paris, as well as the instilment of pro-military education and propaganda throughout the country.

Throughout 1953, the election drags on and the debate over the future of German government and land continues. However, PDP military officers and members Reichstag (since they can be both) begin to formulate a plan to undermine Gerstenmaier...

Enter **GENERAL HENNING VON TRESCKOW**, one of the most outspoken proponents of continued military involvement in the Reichstag. A member from Lower Saxony, von Tresckow pursued a career of law during the interwar and acts as the premier liaison between the actual High Command and the Reichstag. Von Tresckow soared into the national spotlight following his direct involvement in the 1941 February Coup. Many conservative elements in the PDP believe von Tresckow to be a safer political investment for the maintenance of a military role in government.

In March of 1954, with the election only weeks away, the conservative elements prepare to launch their plan. At the annual Remembrance Day parade in Berlin, von Tresckow is shoved into the fore by the military, where he makes a rousing speech outlining his own

vision for German conservatism. This is seen by many in attendance as an informal launch to von Tresckow's bid for the Chancellorship.

PDP party elites, including Goerdeler, are furious. Internal strife wracks the party just as elections near. As to be expected, the PDP slumps in the polls, and is only able to secure a plurality of the seats on election day in April. Soon, the political crisis spreads to the government. However, seeking to bring immediate stability to the scene, Adenauer and Gerstenmaier agree to place Gerstenmaier as Chancellor and Adenauer as Vice Chancellor in a PDP-NLU coalition. With von Tresckow now relatively out of the picture, the new government is free to begin their reforms.

In December, a new constitution is unveiled, one which mandates total separation between the members of the military and civil politics. Additionally, a new German bill of rights is introduced, per Adenauer's insistence, which enhance the civil liberties of North German citizens to a level not seen since 1919. After 13 years, the joint military-civilian government in the North German Republic had come to an end.

Foreign Policy & The Rhineland Crisis, 1956

With **CHANCELLOR EUGEN GERSTENMAIER'S** new PDP-NLU coalition government taking full power in early 1955, the number one foreign policy initiative in Gerstenmaier's cabinet is to reacquire the Rhineland region from France, who had annexed it after the Treaty of Paris. As such, Gerstenmaier appoints ****ADAM VON TROTT ZU SOLZ**** of the NLU as his Foreign Minister. Von Trott's reputation as a

fierce negotiator enticed Gerstenmaier, who recognizes that it would be difficult to return the Rhineland without significant difficulty.

Immediately, von Trott attempted to bring the French to the table, who promptly declined given the nature of the meeting. Then, in a fiery speech in October, von Trott urges German coal miners in the Rhineland to stop working. Faced with coal shortages and with winter fast approaching, the already unpopular French government finally agrees to come to the table.

The subsequent **HAMBURG CONFERENCE** accomplishes nothing aside from worsening relations between the French and the North Germans, as the French increasingly view the Germans as revanchist and the Germans view the French as dishonest (the French had no intention of releasing the Rhineland under any circumstances). However, the French had secured an end to the coal strike as a precondition for the meeting, and so their immediate concerns had been abated.

Shortly after the conference ends, the French economy collapses under the weight of several bloated state monopolies. The shock is felt across the Rhineland, and charitable aid flows from North German churches to their German unemployed brethren. Through this act, von Trott is able to regain some of his reputation following the Hamburg Conference embarrassment. If one thing is accomplished by it on the German side, it is that the reclamation of the Rhineland is now an extremely popular position throughout German politics.

North German Republic: Die Hitze Aufdrehen

As 1956 slides into 1957, the priority of most German politicians is the reclamation of the Rhineland region. In 1956, bilateral negotiations at Hamburg failed. The time has come now for German leadership to pursue alternate courses of action to recover the region.

In April, **CHANCELLOR EUGEN GERSTENMAIER** instructs **FOREIGN MINISTER ADAM VON TROTT ZU SOLZ** to reach out to the Dutch, Belgian, and Luxembourgish foreign ministries to see about building a better working relationship and preparing them to pressure France to come back to the table. The Dutch are particularly amenable, as they had enjoyed decent relations with North Germany after the war and have difficulty making the same trade deals with the new French owners.

Seeing this move, **FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE** immediately travels to Brussels, where the scars of a war from almost 20 years prior are still apparent, to build a counter case. Brussels is very quickly convinced of the necessity of French ownership, with the joint danger of a German invasion very keenly in Belgian minds. "Is this something we have to deal with every 18 years?" many in the Belgian government ask their people. Safety in the French camp seems much more appealing.

Meanwhile, Gerstenmaier initiates a program to repair Germany's military and equip it with more modern weapons and vehicles. While the Treaty of Paris restricts the size and type of the army, it does not restrict how much funding can go to the military. The

French government immediately becomes alarmed at this escalation, but at the moment, its hands are mostly full in Indochina and now Algeria as well.

North German companies love the chance to have their R&D fully funded, and so they happily contribute to Gerstenmaier's army rebuilding campaign. However, many in the government see this as an olive branch to the recently disenfranchised military elite, and so skeptics remain unsatisfied.

Der letzte Scheideweg für Deutschland

As the 1960s begin, the North German Republic has managed to position itself into a quite envious position in the middle of Europe.

Unlike its neighbors in Britain, it does not have a vast and increasingly expensive and unprofitable empire to defend from agitating locals. Unlike its neighbors in France, the economy is incredibly stable and continued growth seems certain. Unlike its neighbors in the South German Union, politics aren't dominated by the radical left and right wing, but instead by a cadre of reconciled conservative and liberal statesmen. Unlike its neighbors in the Soviet Union, it is not constantly paranoid about foreign invasion. Unlike its Scandinavian neighbors to the North, it is a unified political entity with a world-renowned export economy. And unlike its neighbors everywhere in between, it has the population size to affect great change on its region and the world.

What it has natural and established advantages, it lacks in real power. The Treaty of Paris limits its military size and ability significantly. The territorial cessions from the

Treaty seriously limit the North German Republic's ability to exert soft power on Europe, at least compared to what it could were it completely unified. These remain the areas of substantial concern and opportunity for the statesmen at the helm of arguably Europe's most stable great power.

CHANCELLOR EUGEN GERSTENMAIER remains a controversial figure in North German politics. He has been Germany's Reichskanzler for the past 10 years, and he has risen to power on very hot-button issues, such as the reunification of the Rhineland. In this quest, he has failed at building an international coalition of support, instead taking North Germany head on with the French. Whether he can deliver on this bold and unilateral promise will determine how the PDP performs in this coming 1964 election.

South German Union

Word Count: 2368

Demokratie Herrscht?

The South German Union is a new state, created by mandate in the Treaty of Paris in 1941. Officially, the South German Union is a Weimar-style democracy, with its capital established in the Austrian city of Salzburg. However, establishing a thriving democracy in a relatively untouched and very Nazi region proves to be a very difficult task for the new government.

For Julius Raab, the newly elected chancellor of the SGU, the task almost seems insurmountable. The election of 1942, in which he is elected, brings out a depressingly

low turnout, with millions boycotting the election as a sign of solidarity with several prominent ex-Nazis, who are all barred from running.

Like their northern neighbors, the Raab government undertakes some de-Nazification efforts of its own, but to a more limited effect. Its military is completely gutted in the 1943 purges, and the many local governments elect "independent" candidates who once were high level Nazis themselves. However, without a competent military leadership, cracking down on these newly illegal activities proves to be beyond the capabilities of the SGU.

As a result, Nazi rallies and local Hitler Youth activities still go on well into 1944 and show no sign of stopping any time soon. However, with no support from the national government, pro-democracy and pro-communism counter rallies soon pop up to meet them, and despite being smaller in number, are equally as ferocious. In 1944 alone, over a hundred people are sent to the hospital with minor to severe injuries resulting from protest or counter-protest related street demonstrations.

Met with failure after failure in the domestic stabilization effort, Raab and his government begin to shift some of their focus to building up the SGU's economy and integrating the ex-German states of Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg, and Franken with Austria. His progress in building new highways, railways, and tunnels across the Alps is often lauded as one of Raab's greatest successes, but his immediate post-war effort will forever be marred by his inability to control the political environment of the South German Union.

The Odessa File

After Hitler was assassinated in February and the anti-Nazis seized power in Germany, the clock started ticking for Hitlerites still in government and still in Germany. The options looked grim: either flee the country, go into hiding, or be arrested as part of the coup. Most go into hiding, with a few of the highest ranking Nazis fleeing to the USSR. Only a handful are arrested by the new Military Junta, most of them being low level Nazis with non-essential functions.

Among the most prominent to flee are Joachim von Ribbentrop, Walther Funk, Fritz Todt, Albert Speer, Hans Heinrich Lammers, General Wilhelm Keitel, and Martin Bormann to name a few. With parts of the core of Hitler's cabinet escaping in the one week of chaos following Hitler's assassination, a cabinet in exile is formed in Odessa, Ukraine, with the Soviet Union hosting.

Then in March, 1942, the Treaty of Paris was signed and Germany was eviscerated. Split into two new countries, neither of them particularly open to Nazis, the Odessa group begged Stalin to let them stay until they knew what to do, but in April of 1943, an encoded message from Munich arrived to the Odessa mailbox:

Underground established in Munich. Eagle is wounded, but not skewered. Return home when possible. HH

Within days, members of the Odessa file trickled back to the SGU incognito, often being aided by ex-Nazis in various regions. When they finally were able to regroup in Munich, Walther Funk invited them to his townhouse to reveal a shocking surprise: *Gold*

During the chaos, while most Nazis fled the country, Funk and his staff busied themselves with evacuating the stolen gold reserves of the Reich to a vault in the Alps. Overnight, the Nazis went from a gang of fugitives to a well-funded secret society, with tentacles reaching into many local governments across the SGU.

As the Raab government struggles to bring the country under control, the Odessa group seizes the chance to establish safehouses, informants, and influence, setting themselves up to exert a large amount of influence on the weak political situation in the South German Union.

Fortgesetzte Frakturierung

In the late 1940s, the South German Union continues to experience increased political fragmentation. Its many uncontrollable democratic, communist, and ex-Nazi elements continue to agitate for a political situation favorable to them, resulting in yet more violence and yet more division. By 1947, there are several regions around Munich and elsewhere in South Germany where SGU Bundespolizei declare "No-Go-Bereiche" (No-go areas).

Facing immense pressure and a tough re-election, the Raab government uses the last of its political capital to defeat a controversial law that would allow the formation of Nazi

parties in the SGU. This proves to be the last death throes of an increasingly ineffective regime, and in 1948, Raab and the CDU are voted out in favor of one "independent" (read: ex-Nazi) candidates, Kurt Georg Kiesinger. The Kiesinger government immediately reverses many of the de-Nazification efforts, but their tenuous hold on the Bundestag prevents them from pardoning many of the most prominent ex-Nazis, who continue to remain at large.

Economically, the SGU becomes more unified in its industry and infrastructure. Many large German manufacturing companies, like Volkswagen, Daimler, and BNW, are now located within the SGU and prepare to dominate the national economic agenda. Hopeful to resume their lucrative pre-war contracts with the SGU, the companies switch their allegiance from Raab to Kiesinger, one of the critical elements of the 1948 "Independent Coalition," which is made up of ex-Nazis, corporatists, and South German workers. Fearing potentially destructive international consequences, the corporate influences in the government pressure Kiesinger to use moderation in his deNazification efforts.

Update from the Odessa File

With decreased deNazification efforts starting in 1948, members of the Odessa file are suddenly able to act more openly regarding their pasts. While still barred from seeking political office, they can do a great deal more in influencing new political candidates and promoting support for Nazi policies.

Die Kiesinger Jahre

In the years following his 1948 electoral victory, Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger continues to expand his political authority, while carefully maintaining the support of his broad "Independent Coalition." Most notably, Kiesinger decriminalizes (but doesn't pardon outright or legalize) Nazi ideology, paving the way for continued Nazi involvement in the government.

In 1950 however, Kiesinger is forced to make a tough decision and choose between his Nazi allies and his corporate allies. Facing a difficult export market in the context of boycotts against SGU goods in the United States, leaders from Daimler, Mercedes-Benz, and BMW issue Kiesinger an ultimatum: Ditch the Nazis, or lose their financial backing at the next election.

Personally, Kiesinger despises the Nazis. But his powerful political partners in the Nazi camp have wielded increasing amounts of influence in his cabinet over the last two years. At this point, there is little choice for Kiesinger, his political career is over regardless. With his fate sealed, Kiesinger opts to expel the Nazis from his cabinet, causing weeks of riots and protests in Munich and the surrounding area.

With the big companies on side, Kiesinger moves to announce his new legislative agenda in front of Parliament. On November 8th, 1950, Kiesinger is shot at the Parliament building following his speech. The assassination, carried out by former SS, signals a new level of political violence not yet seen in the divided South German Union. Vice

Chancellor Ludwig Erhard succeeds Kiesinger in a closed-door swearing-in ceremony at the Kanzlerschloss in Salzburg.

Over the next two years, Erhard's government adopts a markedly pro-business policy, balancing free trade and low regulation with consistent government aid and intervention. Despite constant agitation from Nazis and Communists throughout his term, Erhard remained popular, being seen by many as responsible for the SGU's economic miracle.

The Pendulum Swings

In the 1952, the Erhard government sees its first popularity trial in his first elections since assuming the chancellorship after **KURT KIESINGIER'S** assassination.

CHANCELLOR LUDWIG ERHARD, viewed often as a moderate by both the right and the left as well as the man responsible for the South German economic miracle, is able to overcome the absence of the Nazi endorsement, riding to electoral victory solely on his own political power and institutional merit.

For the first time since the establishment of the South German Union, a government exists and is legitimately formed without the support of the ex-Nazis in and around Bavaria, specifically Munich. As an added insult to the Nazis, Erhard designates Adolf Hitler's childhood home near the former Austro-German border as a "historic cite," relegating many ex-Nazis into the dustbin of history. While the political victories continue to roll in for Erhard, the Nazis grow ever more worried about their status as political kingmakers.

MARTIN BORMANN, one of the more prominent and politically active ex-Nazis, formally creates a new political party, the "Independent Germany Party," (UDP) while **GENERAL WILHELM KEITEL** forms an armed wing of the UDP and a youth wing, seeking to recreate many of the policies that propelled Hitler to power in Germany in 1933. With the olive branch in one hand and the sword in the other, the Odessa Group is prepared to move once again towards power.

After the results of the elections are formally announced, the armed wing of the UDP swarms the streets of Munich and violent, anti-democratic riots ensue. The validity of the election is called into question, and Erhard is labelled "a traitor to the German people." In response, soldiers are dispatched from Salzburg to regain control of Munich. 117 people are killed in the riots, including 28 soldiers.

While the Nazis continue to agitate in the North, Erhard and his government set to work about continuing to improve the South German economy. Against the advice of corporate leaders, Erhard establishes the **SÜDDEUTSCHE ZENTRALBANK** to keep interest rates steady and inflation low. Fearing a run on capital, the business owners are initially skittish about the plan. However, when in 1955 it begins to bear fruit, the economy of the South German Union enters an era of unprecedented growth, right around the same time that the economy of France begins to fall apart.

Seeing the agitation on the far right, many socialists in the South German Union also begin to agitate, although their campaigns largely fall on deaf ears as the economy

continues to thrive and workers enjoy a middle class life. Bundestag member **OTTO MASCHL** riles up Austrian workers in and around Vienna to stage a counter-protest to the Munich riots. Although it remains peaceful, it sent a message--the Left in the South German Union was here to stay.

With opposition now appearing more violent on both sides, the Erhard government can only sit and wait for the 1956 elections, hoping that the economic miracle and relative political stability can convince voters to keep their faith in a post "Independence Coalition" government.

Rückkehr der Nazis

From 1956-1958, the South German Union continues along with its economic miracle, created by the unprecedented stabilization of the nation's currency, the Südmärk.

During this period, the Nazis and the Communists have trouble finding support, as the average quality of life for everyday South German citizens improves, almost annually.

However, in November of 1958, some South German hikers are shot by Italian border police by accident after unintentionally crossing the Italo-German border. Despite extensive efforts to repair relations between the South German and Italian governments, the Nazis have a field day in the polls.

CHANCELLOR LUDWIG ERHARD struggles to maintain popularity, as thousands of angry German nationalists take to the streets to protest the "unpunished humiliation" perpetrated by the Italians. Despite diplomatic successes, the Tyrol Incident, as it comes

to be known, deals a serious blow to the gradually rebuilding political stability of the South German Union.

By 1959, the Nazis are preparing to surge in the upcoming 1960 Bundestag Elections, and Erhard does everything he can to rebuild the stability of the party, but many within his own ranks have to distance themselves from his administration in order to stave off hungry Nazi candidates in their districts.

With the Tyrol Incident soon dominating the political landscape of the South German Union, even more so than the swiftly rebuilt economy, or the newly established political stability, it seems the fate of South German democracy soon hangs in the balance.

Eine Unruhige Neue Regierung

Even as the economy sees new successes with each passing year, **CHANCELLOR LUDWIG ERHARD** cannot maintain the popularity needed to secure another term as Chancellor of the South German Union. After catastrophe for the Center-right South German People's Party in the 1960 election, bumbling **SDP PARTY LEADER BRUNO PITTERMANN** secures the chancellorship, under the chief proposal to quell the political violence on the far left and right.

However, the election of an openly socialist candidate inflames the Nazis, who did well in the 1960 election but were shut out of all coalition negotiations by a secret agreement among the other, less violent political parties. Immediately, anti government protests in the streets of Munich descend into violence, and clashes between demonstrators and

local police leave 50+ people dead, with hundreds more injured. Pittermann struggles to bring the country to heel.

Meanwhile, his more socialist and leftist allies in Austria begin demanding that he "share some of Erhard's treasure" and enact more welfare programs funded by Ludwig Erhard's carefully assembled spending regime. Despite already generous tax credits for various things, Pittermann seeks to expand the national healthcare safety net to cover a greater percentage of medical expenses, as well as enhance the rights of unions to demonstrate in industrial workplaces for better working conditions. In Vienna, the nexus of most socialist support in the SGU, Pittermann's name rings out and he is declared a hero of the people.

But in Munich, the reforms are decried as "Neo-Bolshevik" and Pittermann's likenesses are burned in the streets. The Nazis in the Bundestag prepare to oppose every inch of Pittermann's agenda. With their status in question, they begin lashing out more frequently and more ferociously than ever before. Surely if the South German Union is ever to be a stable country, it must reconcile these differences.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Word Count: 3249

The Great Purge

While the Fascist and Capitalist powers duked it out in the West, Stalin continued his internal security campaigns. Characterized by brutal repression of the populace and

mass arrests of suspected enemies of the state, the Great Purge culminated in one of the most devastating periods militarily, economically, and diplomatically in Russian history. This gruesome fact never deterred Joseph Stalin, the Man of Steel, who's never ending drive for total political security pushed him to see through years of such purges.

As a result, the Red Army was decimated. 80% of its officers fell victim to the purges, and in their place came the infamous political commissars, who were more interested in ideological purity than field competence. The Red Navy and Red Air Force were likewise brutalized by the Soviet regime, with many experienced sailors, officers, and pilots disappearing in the night or brutally arrested by NKVD security forces. With no reason to stop the purges, and with Stalin's incessant desire to purify Russia of its intellectual diversity, the Great Purge dragged on from 1940, to 1941, and then even on into 1942. With each passing year, the NKVD and it's head, Lavrenti Beria, became more powerful.

The Red Army Marches West

Despite these setbacks for the USSR's military competence, the Red Army remained a powerful force in Eastern Europe, and by extension, Moscow remained a powerful broker. In June of 1940, Stalin sent an ultimatum to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The Baltic states were compelled to make new governments with Soviet approval, or face invasion. All three opt for the former. By August, Red Army soldiers are in Tallinn, Riga, and Kanuas, and new "elections" are underway to determine the fate of Baltic sovereignty--will these new states remain independent, or will they be reabsorbed back into their former Russian masters? Unsurprisingly, all three new governments vote overwhelmingly to join the USSR, ending their 20 year period as independent states.

In the Southwest, Moscow sends a different ultimatum to Romania in late June. The Romanian government is faced with a slightly more palatable choice--cede the Bessarabia region or face war. Unwilling to face the ire of the Red Army alone, Romania folds, and the USSR annexes Bessarabia.

With the Soviet border now pushed further west, Stalin was able to rest slightly easier at night knowing there are many more miles between him in Moscow and the vicious fascist and capitalist powers in the West.

Economic and Military Rehabilitation

Following years of brutal political and military purges, the Soviet Union is now tasked with rebuilding its military establishment essentially from the ground up. With upwards of 4/5 of the officer corps taken out, the task is truly as massive as the Soviet Union is large. While this rebuilding goes on, the USSR will likely be unable to conduct coherent military operations, as evidenced by the poor showing in the Winter War against tiny Finland just two years prior. Since then, some field experience has been gained, but those improvements are largely overshadowed by the continued purges that last until 1942.

Despite the dismal state of the military, the economy continues to grow at a relatively rapid pace. Stalin's 5 Year Plans continued, and in 1943, the Soviet Economy is finally prepared to shift its focus to the manufacture of more consumer goods. The Fourth Five Year Plan is the most ambitious yet, with the goal of overtaking "The Wounded Eagle"

that is total German manufacturing by 1950. With their sights set on a lofty goal with even loftier production quotas in various consumer goods areas, the Soviet Union finally appeared to be on the precipice of universal and eternal bliss and equality.

Meanwhile, forces within the Soviet government began consolidating power for themselves. Lavrentiy Beria, head of the NKVD security forces, finally receives approval from Stalin in 1943 to formally establish the NKVD foreign office, the NKID. By 1944, the NKID was preparing operations in Poland, North and South Germany, the CPC (although influence there was limited by lack of accessible routes to and from the USSR to there, and Persia. The ever-paranoid Stalin is eclectic to see his concerns of state security at the border are "shared" by his de facto deputy, Beria.

Pressure on the Shah

Reza Shah Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran since 1925, has attempted to take a neutral stance to foreign influence from the British and the Soviets. His desire to limit the influence of foreign powers has been a focal point of his agenda since he took power, and as a result, Iranian trade with Germany. When Germany is defeated in 1941, the economy of Iran is shaken massively, and the British and Soviets seize on the opportunity to exercise yet more influence. Then, in 1944, the Soviets take the next step when the NKID sets up an office two blocks down from the Imperial Palace.

Within a week of the establishment of the Tehran office, the NKID had gained several sources within the palace to inform on the Shah's policies. The poorly paid and badly

treated staff are easily swayed by the NKID's promises of "eternal and universal bliss" promised by communism.

Within a month, the NKID has made contacts with various oppressed ethnic groups in the hinterlands of Iran. Reza Shah Pahlavi's ethno nationalist policies have alienated them, and they are ready for reform. *The NKID is happy to oblige.*

With Soviet propaganda and promises now flowing to the northern and distant corners of Iran, and the Shah somewhat blunted by the informants in his own household, Soviet influence expands rapidly throughout 1944. By the end of the year, it seems a guerrilla war is ready to break out across the Northern Border, supplied and advised by the Red Army of course. Whether or not the Iranian army will be able to resist this incursion is a matter yet to be determined.

The Odessa Meeting

Another piece of Soviet foreign policy during this period is the allowance of the Odessa Group to meet and stay in Odessa, Ukraine for a time until they get back on their feet. The collapse of the Nazi regime in 1941 proved to be quite a shock for Stalin and the Politburo, as now a more Western-aligned regime was once again right on the Soviets doorstep (and actually shared a border with them now as well). Eager to do whatever it takes to at best inspire regime change to anything but the established post-war government of North and South Germany and at worst, blunt them with internal stability issues. The USSR is happy to accept when dozens of fleeing ex-Nazis request a safe house to regroup and prepare their next move.

Fourth Five Year Plan: Industrial Success, Agricultural Failure

In 1943, Stalin launched the Fourth Five Year Plan, aimed to shift the Soviet economy back towards heavy industry in order to compete more with a resurgent West. Chugging along smoothly, the Soviet economy continues to grow on pace (relatively) with the goals of the plan, although any goal involving heavy industry usually struggles to meet the ambitious quotas set by the Party.

However, in 1946, the driest year on record yet, the USSR sees an awful harvest, leading to food shortages across the Union and sparking general unrest. Here, Lavrentiy Beria sees his greatest test yet. Whether he ascends to heir-apparent status of the Politburo depends on how he performs during this domestic security crisis.

In October, the food crisis first begins with protests in Ukraine and Southern Russia, where the farmers and economies are hit the hardest. NKVD Security Forces are called in to quell the unrest. In Kiev, where the unrest is particularly bad, 18 people are shot during an out-of-control riot, in which NKVD forces had to use deadly force to respond. This inflames the situation.

However, Beria has a solution to all these problems: Regional cauterization. In what was perhaps an overstep of his authority, Beria unilaterally cancels all passenger trains throughout the USSR, preventing unrest from spreading. Then, he engages in an effective mass media campaign, called "Хлеб идет!" (Bread is Coming!), citing various delays and things of that nature for the shortages facing Soviet cities. With hope of food coming in the near future, Soviet citizens are largely abated--for now.

With the domestic security crisis having fizzled out, heavy industry can continue to grow in the USSR. By 1947, when the Fourth Five Year Plan is completed, Soviet Industry is indeed on track to surpass total German manufacturing.

The USSR sees some success during this period, but Beria is perhaps the biggest winner...

NKID in Iran

In mid 1947, the NKID is finally ready to launch Operation Gulistan, where the Shah is assassinated and a communist coup ensues. What actually happened was a brutal civil war and an international proxy that followed the death of the Shah, whose results would not be known for many years to come.

Additionally, the Anglo-Soviet relations reach an all-time low as the two great powers come into direct competition for the first time since the 1917 revolution. Overall, the period 1944-48 is a fantastic period for Lavrentiy Beria, both at home and abroad. His political prowess continues to unfold in new and unexpected ways.

Fifth Five Year Plan: Goods for the People, Arms for the Military

In 1948, after the completion of the Fourth Five Year Plan, the USSR began its Fifth Five Year Plan. The goal of this plan was to increase the availability of consumer goods to the people. While this was the de jure goal of the plan, the more pressing secret goal was to upgrade the Soviet armed forces to be ready for the looming Iranian Civil War, in which

the Soviets planned to test their proxy-war capabilities having determined that supporting the Chinese communists was a lost cause given that at this time, the main routes to support the CPC are still in Japanese hands.

During this period, 2 new consumer appliance factories are constructed, but 14 new tank plants are constructed and 3 new military R&D labs are built. As the insistence of Lavrentiy Beria, both the factories and labs are guarded around the clock by NKVD security forces, preventing Western spies from gaining access to the facilities and observing their development.

This internal security helps Soviet tanks catch the British-backed Iranian government forces off guard in 1951, when Soviet armor pours into Northern Iran to turn the tide of the war and put the government on the back foot.

Stalin is pleased with this surprise victory, and Lavrentiy Beria, overseer of the operation from start to finish, grows in favor within the Politburo, much to the chagrin of political rivals like Chairman of the Ukrainian SSR Nikita Khrushchev, and Red Army Chief of Staff Georgy Zhukov, who won the famous victory over Japan at Khalkhin Gol.

Internal politics begin to divide in the USSR, despite this era of relative prosperity. Life in the Politburo becomes tense, and members begin to factionalize and prepare for a post-Stalin power struggle. By 1952, Soviet Leadership is more a powderkeg than the Balkans.

Tempered Political Explosion and the Death of Stalin

As 1952 drags into 1953, the Fifth Five Year plan begins to draw to a close and Soviet politics continues to devolve. On March 2nd, 1953, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin dies of a cerebral hemorrhage in his Dacha. A power struggle, as to be expected, immediately ensues between Head of the NKVD Lavrentiy Beria, Red Army Chief of Staff Georgy Zhukov, and Chairman of the Ukrainian SSR Nikita Khrushchev. Stalin, ever suspicious of the military, wrote in his final will that the military was not to be present at his funeral. Whether or not this instruction originated from Stalin himself or from Beria in the hours when he alone knew of Stalin's death is unknown, but as word spreads across the Union of Stalin's funeral wish, the Zhukov's hands become tied.

Without support from a counter to the NKVD's Moscow power, Khrushchev soon also becomes sidelined. By June, Beria's grip on power has solidified, and Nikita Khrushchev is arrested and exiled to Siberia for "crimes against the state." Zhukov, still a popular figure however, remains untouchable. By September, Beria has secured loyalists across the Soviet bureaucracy, and in a private ceremony, Lavrentiy Beria is inaugurated as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Beria Era had begun.

The Sixth Five Year Plan

With Beria now at the helm, the Soviet Union prepared to initiate its Sixth Five Year plan starting in 1953. With the successes of previous Five Year plans in mind, Beria decided to turn the USSR into a premier cite of scientific development.

The goals of the plan are to enhance the technical ability of Soviet universities, while also promoting the development of rocket technology and the relatively nascent nuclear theories. The plan also calls for the expansion of the chemical industry, especially with Iranian oil now added to the Soviet oil palette.

While Beria is disappointed with the results of the nuclear development, his rocketry program bears more fruit. In 1955, the USSR tests the world's first short range ballistic missile, the R-1. Although its payload was small and its accuracy questionable, the R-1 proved to be simple to manufacture and an important first step towards more advanced weaponry.

The driver of this quite rapid advance was the secret purchasing of theoretical rocket designs from the German scientist Wernher von Braun, who's work was stolen from a private lab in 1953 by Nazi sympathizers on a mission from the Odessa group. In 1954, the NKID purchased the designs in exchange for the pledge of continued covert financial support to the group in the South German Union, enabling them to wield more political authority and persist as a thorn in the side of the SGU's path to a fuller democracy.

The other aims of the Sixth Five Year plan in the realm of chemical engineering see mixed results, but generally fall short due to overly optimistic targets. However, the rocketry advances alone are enough to delight Beria, and the reprisals are light for the minor failures in other fields.

Continued International Meddling

In 1953 under the new leadership of Beria, overseas efforts to promote communism soon increased several fold. In fact, new NKID offices were established in the following countries/regions to promote pro-Soviet ideology and fervor, and to undermine the USSR's enemies.

- Northern Indochina (limited materiel to undermine France and Republic of China)
- Inner Mongolia (limited materiel and voluntary repatriation of some CPC leaders in exile to undermine China)
- Poland (funding of pro-USSR candidates in local eastern elections)
- Turkey (funding of pro-USSR candidates, as well as formal diplomatic overtures to improve relations)
- Romania (funding of pro-USSR candidates in local elections, as well as formal diplomatic overtures to improve relations)
- Finland (funding of pro-USSR candidates in local elections, very limited cross-border guerilla campaigns)
- Afghanistan (diplomatic overtures, NKID agents)
- Republic of Korea (NKID agents, funding of pro-USSR forces in local Northern elections)

All of these plans were met with varying degrees of success, often depending on the distance from Moscow or other viable Soviet centers of power. The main driver of Soviet foreign policy during this time is the desire to push the border westward to remove any anxiety of attack from the European continent, while also building up the Chinese

border as Sino-Soviet relations bottom out in 1956 after a border dispute in Manchuria, one in fact shared by the Japanese and the Soviets during the Japanese occupation.

End of the Sixth Plan, Start of the Seventh

By 1957, the Sixth Five Year Plan was about to finish its allotted time. **GENERAL SECRETARY LAVRENTIY BERIA** is displeased that efforts in the nuclear program have almost completely stalled, and targets for the chemical advancements have also come short of their initial goals. Facing this economic reality, Beria is forced to assign more feasible targets for the upcoming 1958 Seventh Five Year Plan.

This time, the focus will be on catching up to Britain by 1970 and the United States by 1980. British industry is known the world over as the premier industry, while the United States has been the undisputed industrial giant since around the turn of the 20th century. Therefore, the focus will be on heavy industry and construction, so better to catch up to American and British industry.

Additionally, Beria sets his design on bringing more immediate glory and prestige to the Soviet Union, via showcasing the technical achievements of the USSR for all the world to see. The path to such a tremendous goal: the creation of a **Kosmicheskaya programma** (Soviet Space Program). Therefore, Beria sets his sight on sending a man to space to coincide with the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan in 1963.

Using the previously developed R-1 Rocket as a basis, the KPCCCP (the abbreviation for the Soviet Space Program) develops the R-2 in 1957 and the much larger R-3 in 1959.

The R-3 catches the particular interest of the Red Air Force, as it is able to carry a payload large enough to make it militarily viable for tactical rocket strikes. However, the cost of constructing the rocket for a single use conventional attack means that the R-3 is abandoned by the Red Air Force in 1960.

By 1960, the growth of Soviet steel and construction, in addition to the creation and consolidation of the KPCCCP, means that General Secretary Beria has ensured his hold over the Politburo is strong, and the USSR enters a new period of steady leadership.

The Eighth Five Year Plan

In 1962, the Seventh Five Year Plan draws to a close and discussions among the Politburo for an Eighth Five Year Plan begin. With the focus on building up heavy industry to catch the British and Americans by 1970 and 1980 respectively, such a lofty goal requires a continuation of industrial expansion, and so the leaders of the General Secretariat, at the urging of **GENERAL SECRETARY LAVRENTIY BERIA**, agree to make the Eighth Five Year Plan an almost identical copy of the Seventh.

And by 1963, the goal of sending a man to space is within reach of the KPCCCP.

COSMONAUT ANATOLY KARTASHOV is blasted into space on April 12, 1963, but an unexpectedly high amount of G-Force on orbit causes Kartashov to experience an internal hemorrhage, and he dies before his orbit is complete. Star City is distraught at the disaster, and General Secretary Beria is furious that his glorious space achievement is put off by a medical error.

Following this embarrassment, State Media covers up the disaster, and many of the responsible parties for the accident are rounded up and either sent to a gulag or executed immediately. These scrubblings within the KPCCCP prove to be a viable motivator, and by the following year, **COSMONAUT YURII GAGARIN** is being prepped to send to space as the "first man" in orbit.

During the early 1960s, General Secretary Beria also oversees the continued expansion of the NKVD and its overseas counterpart, the NKID. After successful operations in Iran, he is turning his sights to other Soviet neighbors in an effort to expand the distance between Moscow and the closest entrepot for his enemies. In this "socialism in one country" paranoia, Beria is eerily similar to his predecessor Joseph Stalin. The Politburo is in agreement with this strategy, and so it is the course of action taken starting in 1962.

Empire of Japan

Word Count: 4293

The Second Sino-Japanese War

For three years, the war in China has dragged on. Progress is slow, and supplying the troops remains a nightmare for Japanese high command. Chinese guerrillas ambush railways and local industry under Japanese occupation, meaning extracting the necessary materials and funding from the occupied zones is difficult if not impossible.

In August, the Chinese launch a massive offensive against the Imperial Japanese Army in the North, known as the Hundred Regiments Offensive. The offensive is successful in ravaging the already stretched thin Japanese logistics, and leads to the adoption of the "Three Alls: kill all, loot all, burn all." The policy resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of Chinese civilians and the destruction of lots of Chinese lands.

Following the Hundred Regiments Offensive, the IJA launches its own offensive in attempt to reverse the gains made by the CPC. The offensive is moderately successful at gaining territory, but the newly occupied lands continue to be plagued by CPC partisan activities. All the while, Japanese units get farther and farther from critical supply bases near the Eastern regions of China.

With France bogged down in a war against the Germans, some in the Imperial High Command float the idea of invading French Indochina in order to cut the KMT off from critical fuel and arms imports. However, the Imperial Japanese Navy is not yet ready to test the strength of the Royal Navy or get into a war with Britain, which is sure to happen if they invade Indochina. Ultimately, the decision is made to table the option to invade Indochina and other southern Western possessions like Malaya, Borneo, and the Dutch East Indies.

As a result, the KMT are able to continue building up their reserves in the western interior. However, the main concern of the IJA is the Communists in the North, who continue to plague Japanese logistics and ambush Imperial soldiers. By late 1942, plans are drawn up for a "Strike North" operation to seize as much land in the North,

potentially even striking at the Communists' base in Yan'an, and further limit the flow of Soviet aid to China.

The Problem of Resources

The natural lack of resources such as oil, iron, tungsten, and aluminum has long plagued Japanese military economists, and it constitutes a major strategic vulnerability for Japan. The war in China was meant was a quick grab of the necessary resources to protect Japan, among other goals, but it has developed into more of a resource drag than gain. As a result, the question of resources once again rears its head for Japanese economists, diplomats, business leaders, and military planners.

In the military, Army and Navy officers debate about where to invade to rapidly seize the resources necessary for victory. Army planners propose to invade the Soviet Union to seize Siberia's vast mineral wealth in a sparsely populated region. The Navy reminds them of their humiliation at the hands of the Red Army in the Khalkhin Gol border clash. The Navy, in turn, proposes to invade the Western colonies in the south to seize their vast mineral wealth in relatively undefended regions. The Army reminds them that they are unprepared to wage a long war against the British and French fleets, which are still larger than the IJN each on their own despite several years of covert buildup by the Japanese. Military planners are at a loss.

Meanwhile, diplomats and business leaders propose an alternative solution to the question of resources: **Trade**. Instead of invading a powerful neighbor or neighbors, why not just buy the necessary materials from abroad? Financially, it makes more sense

because Japan would never be able to sell enough of the surplus abroad to make up the cost of the invasion and occupation. Diplomatically, it avoids angering powerful neighbors and diverting valuable military assets away from the already tenuous war in China. As long as Japan can maintain amicable business relationships with the United States and other Western Powers, it should be able to import all it needs from abroad.

Despite protests from Prime Minister Tojo, the Imperial cabinet agrees to allow Japanese Zaibatsu businesses to bring in materials from abroad to fill in the major gaps in domestic production. Although the international logistics are fragile and always subject to diplomatic whims, for the time being, Japan is able to acquire what it needs to continue the war in China.

Strike North: 北進論

By the end of 1942, the war in China is at a complete stalemate. Materiel aid flows in to the CPC and the KMT from the Soviets via northern roads and the British and French via southern ships, respectively. Despite diplomatic efforts on both fronts to stem the aid, it continues to pour in.

In March of 1943, as the dirt roads of Northern China begin to thaw, the Japanese launch a massive offensive in Shanxi, Shaanxi, and Suiyuan. Although it is initially successful, the Japanese have trouble, as ever, maintaining control over the newly occupied lands. In these areas especially, CPC resistance is very high.

Nevertheless, the aid flowing from the Soviets is stemmed quite a bit. A CPC counterattack in May tries and fails to restore the old links, which by now are heavily policed by Japanese soldiers. This results in a weakening of the effectiveness of the CPC, who begin to run out of Soviet-made ammunition, Mosin-Nagants, 122mm Motovilikha Howitzers, and trucks.

In the South, the news is less positive for the Japanese. Negotiations with the British and French on aid go nowhere, and even Kempeitai agents in Hong Kong are unable to accurately track the shipments so that Japanese bombers from carriers can strike them. Enfields, Brodies, 5.5 inch medium guns, and Char B1 heavy tanks. Additionally, British and French advisors arrive via India and Indochina respectively, and once at Chiang Kai-shek's command headquarters, begin aiding in top-down military reforms and the latest and most up to date uses of the weapons given.

As a result, Japanese forces are able to find much more success in the North than in the South, although total victory continues to elude Tokyo for the next two years of relatively continued stalemate. However, the internal situation is changed irreparably and unbeknownst to the Japanese high command, who routinely view the Chinese as one, united enemy.

Turning Point: 轉機

In mid 1944, the Japanese army is dangerously overstretched in China . Despite gains made by the Strike North Plan, the Japanese salient is much too far from the original supply points in Manchuria or the ports of Beijing and Shandong. Additionally, a salient

deep into KMT territory aimed at taking Chongqing is equally stretched thin. Across the front, Japanese troops dig in for a fierce winter of fighting as 1945 approaches.

Meanwhile, their Chinese adversaries, particularly the KMT, prepare for a major Spring Offensive in 1945, which Kempetai codebreakers get word of in November. Despite this intelligence coup, the IJA in the Chongqing salient can do little more than dig in and hope for the best.

In the North, the CPC reels as the Japanese exert tighter and tighter control over the occupied territories. Without critical supply flow from the Soviets, and little aid from the Nationalists either, the CPC can conduct little beyond pro-communist propaganda campaigns designed to sow discontent. Kempetai agents do what they can to stem this, but they are only so many against millions of angry Chinese.

Before the Chinese can launch their 1945 Spring Offensive, the Japanese send in crack marine divisions to cut off the Hong Kong supply flow and cauterize the British possession from the rest of China. Despite initial successes from the element of surprise and crucial air support from the Kido Butai, the Japanese marines are unsuccessful at dislodging well-trained and well-supplied Chinese divisions on the outskirts of Hong Kong, and eventually, the marines have to withdraw entirely in order to prevent being cut off. General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, leader of the operation, commits Sepuku in February once all the marine divisions have successfully withdrawn.

In the Southern front at large, the increasingly desperate Japanese begin employing truck bombs to destroy the otherwise impregnable French-made Char B-1 tanks, now in use sporadically throughout the KMT army. This marks the first use of suicide tactics as an actual military strategy, and it sees some success.

Finally, the Spring of 1945 arrives and the KMT launches its massive offensive against the IJA. Thanks to combined reconnaissance and intelligence sourcing, the IJA is able to predict with relative accuracy the actual start date of the operation, leading to successful counterattacks in the first week that completely throw off the Chinese timetable. Nevertheless, fighting throughout the region is intensely ferocious, and tens of thousands of losses on both sides occur in the first weeks.

However, after the first few weeks of fighting, the insecurity and insufficiency of Japanese supply lines becomes brutally apparent to war planners in Tokyo, and Japanese troops are forced to withdraw closer to the coastline where the supply lines are more secure and reliable. In particular, the Chongqing salient is forced to completely collapse back to the coastal provinces.

By June, the Japanese forces are relatively confined to the coastal provinces, except for in the North where the salient continues to hold against severely weakened CPC attacks. Around this time, the Japanese complete development on the Type 4 88mm anti-tank gun, based on a design smuggled out of the South German Union by agents sympathetic to Japan. The Type 4 is capable of penetrating the Char B-1's armor, as well as the armor of any other tank in the Chinese or Allied arsenals. However, due to its size and level of

technicality, it is difficult to produce in large numbers, and so its overall combat effectiveness is mixed.

In July of 1945, the Chinese and Japanese settle in for another gruesome year of stalemate, with neither side able to inflict a truly decisive blow on the other.

By 1946, Chinese KMT soldiers launch an offensive into the Japanese-controlled region of western and central Guangzhou in an effort to remove Japanese forces in that area once and for all, and to secure the international supply lines more effectively. As the Japanese supply situation in that area worsens due to a lack of solid infrastructure and vicious partisan sabotage, the Japanese forces are unable to put up a significant fight, and by mid 1946, the Japanese are forced to abandon the entire area.

Meanwhile, the slow trickle of Soviet supplies into the CPC from Sinkiang allow the CPC to mount a piecemeal offensive against the fickle Japanese salient in the North. Despite hasty preparations and a comparative lack of combat experience, the CPC is able to force back the Japanese almost to the Japanese client state of Mengukuo.

By the end of 1946, the Japanese are entirely on the defensive, and even at the coast, the Japanese continue to have trouble supplying the millions of soldiers and civilian aides. It appears that at any moment, the Japanese economy and supply status could collapse, and take all hopes of seizing China with it.

In 1947, the war again descends into a stalemate. The Japanese economy sees a slight recovery from the previous year following a diplomatic development with the Allies. A dispute between Chiang Kai-shek and Allied high command results in an easing of the sanctions on Japan, which allows Japan to resume limited imports from the European Asian colonies. At the same time, foreign supplies to China hit an all-time low for since 1941. These things combined to create the ideal conditions for a total stagnation along the front.

However, while the opening of the sanctions allowed for immediate relief for Japan, the systemic economic flaws only became more prolific throughout the country. The steady outflow of capital from Japan to the pockets of European commodity merchants could only last so long.

By the end of 1947, the Japanese economy was again on the verge of precipice. Where once international law prohibited the Japanese import of critical goods, now it was the dire state of the Japanese capital market. By February of 1948, the supply situation for Japanese soldiers in China had returned to 1946 levels. Seeing a noticeable shift in the demeanor of Japanese soldiers, the Chinese pounce on this opportunity, starting at Beijing and Canton. In June, Japanese forces had fallen back to a ring around Shanghai and a defensive line in the southwest of Manchuria.

Now, in late 1948, as the winter once more sets in, the Japanese forces prepare for a do-or-die defense of these two defensive lines. Whether or not 1949 will bring the final

Chinese victory, or see the 12th year of war bleed into the 13th, is yet to be known to Chinese and Japanese high commands, as well as the rest of the world.

End of the War: 最終敗北

In 1949, the state of the Japanese war effort is dire. Supply is low and morale is nonexistent. The Shanghai line is the first to fail.

In February, the KMT launches a final attack against the weakened Japanese defenders, who put up a valiant fight but are woefully unprepared for a long-term operation. By April, the artillery can be heard from Shanghai harbor, and by the end of that month, there is heavy street to street fighting in Shanghai as the Japanese struggle to evacuate their hundreds of thousands of soldiers, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of civilian aides that had helped the Japanese throughout their 12 year campaign.

For a week, Japanese rear guards engage in all forms of combat, even suicide attacks, to prevent the Chinese vanguards from reaching the docks. Casualties are immense on both sides, and the city is almost completely destroyed in the fighting.

In the North, the Japanese resistance is much stiffer. Supply lines often don't necessarily have to come across the sea, as many Manchurian factories have been put to work making Japanese war materiel. However, the supplies can only do so much to prevent the hordes of Chinese from storming the Japanese lines day after day, in assault after assault. The Chinese casualties are the heaviest in the war, but they're fighting for the final victory and morale remains high.

By September, the Japanese are forced to fall back to a line along the Yalu River, on the Manchurian-Korean border. But by the time the Japanese forces reach the line and prepare to dig in, the Chinese cavalry vanguard is already on their tail and no prepared defenses are made. Sporadic Japanese air support buys only mere days, and by October, the Japanese forces are in full retreat to Korean ports. However, unable to face the prospect of returning home in defeat, many Japanese launch suicide attacks to kill as many Chinese soldiers before taking their own lives.

In November 1949, there are no Japanese forces left on mainland Asia. Korea, Shanghai, and Manchuria have all fallen to the advancing KMT forces. However, the Japanese Navy still far outperforms any Chinese floating vessel, and a failed Chinese invasion of Taiwan in early 1950 further reinforces this reality for Chiang Kai-Shek and his generals. By this point, CPC commanders are completely cut out of strategic decision making, even though the Japanese have withdrawn from their territory. Without a unified pressing threat, the unity between the two Chinese factions begins to break down.

Despite their disunity, the IJA is in no position to make another attempt at the Chinese mainland, and instead just facilitates the evacuation of the Japanese diaspora from Korea and Manchuria to the Home Islands, as well as the evacuation of Chinese aides from the mainland to Taiwan. In May, the war officially comes to an end in the Treaty of Beijing, with both sides recognizing each others' territorial statuses at the end of the war. **At the cost of millions of Japanese men, billions in supplies, and the**

mainland Japanese Empire, the Second Sino-Japanese War has come to a close after 13 bloody years.

Life in Post-War Japan: 経済と国家の誇りの再構築

As the war ends, most Japanese soldiers who survive have already returned to the Home Islands. With the loss of Korea and Manchuria to the Chinese, Japanese pride is completely shattered. After the signing of the Treaty of Beijing, many in the Japanese Army High Command commit ritual suicide (Seppuku) for their failure to achieve victory.

With the economy in shambles, life in post war Japan is difficult for most. In 1951, the Japanese government defaults on its short term war bonds, sending shockwaves across Asian financial markets. Later that same year, the government sets the value of a Yen at a fixed exchange rate to the USD to curb rapidly out of control inflation.

The government also sees political division wrack Japan, with the Army, Navy, and Civilian Government each blaming each other for starting the war and losing the war. Intergovernmental trust is at an all time low, and it is only when the Emperor steps in in 1952 to force several liberalizing reforms that the political landscape in Japan returns to a state of relative stability. Then, the government is able to get to work improving the Japanese economy and the dismal state of national pride.

A Future For Japan: 軍の帰還, 1952-1956

Despite the liberalizing reforms of the Emperor, the economy fails to improve and the nation is still humiliated. By this point, **PRIME MINISTER FUMINARO KONOE** is deeply unpopular with the people and the military, and in early 1952, a plot is underway to reverse the reforms of the Emperor, take back control, and blame the entire war on Konoe.

FOREIGN MINISTER TEIJIRO TOYODA, AMBASSADOR SHIGENORI TOGO, and **MINISTER OF THE NAVY ZENGO YOSHIDA** all believe that Japan needed a restoration of bureaucratic rule, and that the pride of the military also needed saving. However, they were wary of more radical army elements who wanted to return to mainland Asia and reconquer Japan's former colonies in Korea and Manchuria "in one, swift, strike."

Toyoda, the leader of the trio, is also politically savvy, and so a plan is soon in motion to utilize the liberal reforms to throw Konoe under the bus and then immediately seize power. In March 1952, Yoshida leaks information to the newly liberalized Japanese press implicating Konoe, **ARMY MINISTER TOJO HIDEKI**, and several other Army members of the Konoe cabinet in a vast conspiracy to undermine the emperor and empower the army in the war with China. While the evidence on this is shoddy at best, the hit-piece catches Konoe completely off guard, while also eroding the public's trust in his governance.

Yoshida, an advocate for naval primacy in the region, takes the political chaos as an opportunity to cause the ***Battle of Jeju Island*** (off the Southern coast of Korea).

While Jeju Island technically belongs to Korea per the Treaty of Beijing, Japanese soldiers failed to withdraw following the war, and the island has been a major point of contention ever since. With the foreign ministry on side, Yoshida coordinates the controlled flow of selected information to the Korean government, indicating that the island would be surrendered after a "fair fight."

However, when Korean soldiers are dispatched to take the island, the Japanese navy sinks them via surprise air attacks once they enter the territorial waters of Jeju Island, humiliating the Koreans and the Army while making the Navy out to be the savior of Japan. The Japanese press have a field day with the story, dealing another critical blow to Konoe's prospects of staying on as prime minister.

Hoping to save face amid rapidly sinking popularity, Konoe makes an inflammatory statement regarding Korea and China, threatening to escalate the Battle of Jeju Island into a full blown war. Sensing this danger, in January of 1953, after days of negotiations with Toyoda and Togo, **LORD KEEPER OF THE PRIVY SEAL KOICHI KIDO** (one of the Emperor's most trusted advisors and confidantes) recommends to **EMPEROR HIROHITO** that Konoe be asked to resign "so that cooler heads may prevail and war may be averted." Hirohito accepts, and by the end of January, Konoe is forced to resign.

At the same time, Toyoda and Togo maneuver themselves so that they can easily succeed the collapsing Konoe government. In a series of well-placed hit pieces, Togo snipes Tojo's Army Chief of Staff, removing the last credible opposition in the Liaison

Conference, where the affairs of state are still largely decided (though with increased civilian oversight following the 1951 Imperial Reforms). The last piece of the puzzle is **FINANCE MINISTER OKINORI KAYA**, who throughout the political bloodbath opted to remain neutral. His banality ends up preserving his political career, and after a tense negotiation, he agrees to support Toyoda's ascendancy to become the Prime Minister.

With Toyoda now at the helm, the Empire undergoes a series of anti-democratic reforms, especially pertaining to the relationship between the recently empowered Diet and the Liaison Conference. The two positions are semi-combined, and the Army and Navy Ministers (and their chiefs of staff) are replaced on the Liaison Conference by an "Armed Forces Minister," naturally filled by Yoshida. In the place of the two other members, the House of Peers and the House of Representatives are allowed to send one delegate each (though the Prime Minister technically represents the House of Representatives, he also occupies a position derived directly from the Emperor).

Additionally, funding for the Imperial Navy is increased, as Yoshida notes "it is all that stands between us and invasion." On the insistence of the newly appointed **NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF ISOROKU YAMAMOTO**, most of the funding increases go towards improving naval aviation capabilities. Already pleased to have facilitated the navy's political victory over the army, Yoshida happily agrees to this request.

While the representatives from the Diet protest many of the actions of the new Liaison Conference, they are largely powerless to stop an increasingly popular Toyoda, who uses

his popular support to continue consolidating power to the point where by the next election, he won't have to worry about what the Diet says because elections will be so tightly controlled, the will of the people will become largely a secondary concern. Instead, "what is best for the Empire" takes precedence throughout this era.

Empowering the Zaibatsus and the Ascendancy of the Navy: 過去への一步

With the spirit of "what is best for the Empire" guiding the continued Toyoda government, a drive for economic prowess soon becomes the mandate of the day. To achieve the lofty goals of industrial preeminence, an alliance is created between the Liaison Conference, the Bureau of Industry and Trade, and the leading Zaibatsu clans in the country.

These Zaibatsus, conglomerates of banks, industry, trade, insurance, and more. Several wealthy families controlled these integral levers of the economy, and so rather than cast them out to exert greater leverage on the economy, the Toyoda government instead brought them in to best utilize their vast experience in the pursuit of economic growth.

The plan is a massive success. The economy, particularly industry, sees remarkable gains. Shipbuilding is the driving factor, and not only naval ships, but also a vast fleet of civilian ships for an increasingly dominant trade in the Pacific. By 1960, Japanese civilian ships are starting to replace outdated and more expensive British-made ships, although due to their storied reputation, the British made ships are still the preferred choice for most non-Japanese merchants in the Pacific.

The advances made in civilian shipbuilding quality are of course immediately applicable to the Imperial Navy, who sees continues funding and upgrades throughout the late 1950s. More effective aircraft, with foldable wings, are created to allow for more capacity on carriers, and four new carriers are laid down in 1956. These carriers are also radar-radio enabled, allowing for a coordinated launch of planes with ample warning time from the carrier decks. The greater efficiency of the Japanese air crews combines with these technical advances to create a truly formidable naval force in the East.

A Tale of Two Ships: 空母と商船

In the year 1964, the Empire of Japan is known the world over for two ships: the Merchant Ship, which Japan has developed and improved in quality over the last decade, and the Aircraft Carrier, which Japanese naval leadership has uniquely embraced.

The Japanese economy, despite losing significant assets in the collapse of the overseas empire, has made a truly remarkable recovery by reorganizing and empowering the Zaibatsus and making them more internationally competitive. Heavy industry has improved considerably in Japan, and now Japanese companies are beginning to become powerful in former colonies like Korea and other smaller, vulnerable Asian economies. China, however, remains steadfast in their refusal to admit Japanese companies that are heavily tied in with the Japanese State after the Second Sino-Japanese War ended in 1950.

Because of this, the politics of the Empire of Japan (barring high level political instability in the mid 1950s) are quite stable, and the quality of life in Japan is steadily on the rise thanks to good governance and a growing economy. Despite the general satisfaction of the population, the stability of the Japanese government is largely determined by the satisfaction of many high ranking ministers and military officials following the 1955-1956 governmental reorganizations by **PRIME MINISTER TEIJIRO TOYODA**.

And the strength of the Japanese Navy was also world-renowned by 1964. Having been relatively untouched during the Second Sino-Japanese War, and then funded generously after 1955, the Imperial Navy is of an equally impressive size and quality. While hundreds of ships are out of date, SSJW-era models, many of the larger capital ships are truly cutting edge, and allow Japan to project considerable military power across the Pacific.

Republic of China

Word Count: 5113

The Second Sino-Japanese War

China has been fighting the Japanese invasion for 3 years now, and has lost lots of land and millions of people to the invaders. Despite fierce resistance and a tense national union between communists and nationalists, the Japanese army is better equipped and supplied. It is truly a fight to the end.

The only advantages for China, the vast size and massive population, have been neutered by the vicious civil war that has plagued the country for nearly 20 years. Although there are various minor warlords, the main struggle exists between the communist CPC and the nationalist KMT.

At the start of 1940, both sides remain distinct. Beyond nominal cohesion, units are led by their own commanders and take orders from their own separate party leaderships. Additionally, both sides have different benefactors. The Soviet Union sends thousands of tons of supplies every year to the CPC, while the KMT receives vital fuel and weapons shipments via French Indochina.

With France holding strong against the Germans, it's unlikely the Japanese Imperial High Command would try to cut off that supply line and risk a war with the French and British. Anything short of a direct invasion of the Yunnan and Guangzhou regions, therefore, would be ineffective in stopping that aid.

Similarly, with waning security threats in the west, the USSR is free to continue supplying the CPC with whatever it may need or want. The greatest disadvantage in the Northern supply route is its distance, numbering thousands of miles away from the nearest Soviet rail heads. However, this is also the greatest advantage, because it makes finding and stopping the flow near impossible for the Japanese.

Thanks to the dual inflow of supplies from the North and South, the Chinese United Front remains a thorn in Japan's side throughout 1940 and on into 1941. Despite some territorial losses to the Japanese in the North following their Hundred Regiments Offensive counter attack, CPC guerillas and other Chinese partisans wreak havoc on Japanese supply lines in the east of China. With all of these factors at play, it's unlikely that either side will be able to break the stalemate in the near future.

The Chinese Civil War

The Japanese invasion came during a period in Chinese history of immense division. The Maoist Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) vie for power in the most populous country on Earth.

In 1936, one year before the Japanese invasion began, the KMT and CPC agreed to ally temporarily in the face of imminent Japanese invasion. The alliance has been fragile at best, and at worst, there has been no interruption in the civil war. On several occasions, KMT and CPC forces have fought each other instead of the Japanese as each side distrusts the other while seeking to undermine the influence of their opponents.

In early 1941, these skirmishes would finally come to a head and finally the KMT and CPC would order actual attacks on the other. On January 7th, KMT forces under the command of Han Deqin attack the CPC's New Fourth Army, resulting in a bloody battle that claims the lives of thousands of Chinese soldiers on both sides. Each faction blames the other for provoking the altercation, and finally the KMT-CPC split is formalized.

Since each side is supported by foreign powers, the divide only grows. With the KMT advocating for more direct action in the field to combat the Japanese and the CPC advocating for a more subtle guerrilla campaign, soon each side is preparing not only for operations against the Japanese, but also for operations against their domestic opponents.

At the end of 1942, China remains mired in a devastating civil and foreign war. With no end in sight in either conflict, it's almost guaranteed that both the KMT and CPC will continue to duke it out in the years to come.

The War Drags on: 永遠的戰爭

In the third phase of the Second Sino-Japanese war, both the CPC and KMT maintain a strategy of flexible defensive lines so as best to frustrate Japanese planners, who are always in search of a decisive victory. When the Japanese strike in the North, targeting the CPC, the Red Army follows doctrine precisely and withdraws most of its units to avoid annihilation. The Japanese claim total victory.

Despite the preservation of much of the CPC's army, most of its routes to the USSR, valuable routes where thousands of tons of war materiel travel from the Soviet Union to the CPC war effort, are cauterized by the Japanese Army. After several months of being cut off, the supply situation begins to impact the combat readiness and ability of the Red Army.

Meanwhile, the KMT grows stronger by the day. Thousands of tons of British and French materiel, much of it surplus from the now finished 9 Month War, flows in through Indochina, Burma, and Hong Kong. Chiang Kai-shek himself is aided by a cadre of British and French advisors, who enact quality control reforms and lead more modern war games for Chiang's generals to play out.

But these relative successes don't distract Chiang or Mao from the gravity of the situation at hand: the Japanese conquered and occupied the most populous and prosperous regions of China, and they are poised to strike again and take yet more land. Time may be on Chiang's side, but the window of vulnerability for both the KMT and the CPC continues to persist.

As supplies continue to flow into the KMT, Chiang begins planning a counter attack in the South to relieve pressure around Guangzhou, a critical entrepot for international aid. The attack is scheduled for the winter of 1945, when the Japanese will least expect an attack. If successful, the attack could turn the tide of the war in China.

While Chiang prepares his offensive, Mao and the tattered remains of the Red Army finally withdraw from northern Shaanxi and embark on the Second Long March, with the destination set to Qinghai, further to the west. Whether Mao and the Red Army are able to make it out alive from this march is anyone's guess as Fall of 1944 turns to winter.

Success at the Front: 勝利臨近

Despite the crippling blow the Japanese strike against the CPC in the North, the armies of the KMT continue to see piecemeal success throughout 1944. As the Japanese continually retreat closer and closer to their supply lines, however, their resistance becomes fiercer and they become harder to dislodge. By 1945, a full stalemate sinks in and neither side is able to break the lines of the other. The situation resembles that of 1917 Europe on the Western Front.

By 1947, a series of major offensives have liberated substantial areas, particularly in the South, from Japanese occupation. Just as the Japanese situation appears to be untenable, the Chiang Kai-Shek creates a diplomatic incident with his Allied benefactors, who cut their flow of support and simultaneously ease sanctions on Japan. The results in a year relatively wasted, as the KMT is now unable to prepare for any substantial breakthrough offensives without the strategic, tactical, and technological support of the Allies.

At the end of 1948, Chiang's diplomatic fiascos appear to have no end in sight, and although the position of the Japanese continually becomes weaker, Chiang's ability to organize an offensive remains minimal at best. Mao, aided by marginally increased support from the Soviets, is able to launch an offensive in 1948 that gains some land, but overall it is inconsequential.

Political Disaster: 腐敗與異議

As the war situation sees all shades of success, failure, and stalemate, the internal political situation of the KMT deteriorates throughout the late 1940s. Chiang's government becomes increasingly plagued by corruption, and his generals become less and less inclined to obey his orders by the day. The sudden withdrawal of Allied tactical advisors because of a personal dispute between Chiang and several Allied diplomats further undermines military confidence in Chiang's ability to win the war with the Japanese and then finish off the CPC, who appear to be in an extremely vulnerable state after the North Strike offensive.

Specifically, in February of 1946, a heated strategic disagreement between Chiang and the Allied Liaison Office in Hong Kong results in a massive falling out between Chiang and the Allies. The disagreement becomes highly sensationalized by British media in Hong Kong, and so the British and French governments demand an apology from Chiang, which he refuses to give.

Additionally, Chiang adopts an increasingly pro-landlord, pro-merchant policy stance, which alienates vast swaths of the mostly peasant population. However, when many landlords and merchants side with their British and French counterparts in the Hong Kong Incident, Chiang punishes them with limited policy reversals that secure vital support from peasants in the South and East of the country.

End of the War: 最终胜利者

In 1949, the initiative is squarely in the Chinese (read: KMT) camp. With the Japanese supply situation worsening by the day, the KMT headquarters plans a major offensive for February to finally retake Shanghai. The Japanese put up a fierce resistance, even employing vicious suicide tactics to buy more time for their retreating units and civilian aides.

However, throughout the slog, the National Revolution Army continues to approach closer to the city, and by April, they're within sight of the harbor where a 24/7 evacuation effort by the Japanese appears to be underway. A month later, the city has fallen, albeit a hollow and devastated shell of its former glory. Hundreds of thousands of innocent Chinese civilians have died in the battle, and the economic magic that Shanghai possessed for hundreds of years seems largely evaporated.

Nevertheless, the vitally strategic port of Shanghai is once more in Chinese hands for the first time in 11 years. For many local Chinese children, they have never known life without their oppressive Japanese occupiers. The feeling of liberation remains mixed. Uncertainty is the only constant.

In the North, a secondary offensive is launched, largely to push the Japanese back into Manchuria and relieve the severely weakened CPC forces. Here, the Japanese supply situation is much better than at Shanghai, and the CPC and KMT forces both take their worst losses of the war. Despite this, by September, the Army of the North has pushed the Japanese back to the Yalu River, and the push towards Korea begins.

Braving sporadic Japanese air strikes, the Army of the North manages to push so relentlessly that the Japanese defenders collapse into either full running retreat to Korean ports for evacuation, or suicide attacks designed to take as many Chinese casualties as possible. The devastation on human lives is as extensive as ever, even in the war's final days. By November, all of Japan's mainland Asia colonies have fallen into KMT or CPC hands (mostly into KMT hands).

In January of the next year, the National Revolution Army attempts a cross-strait invasion of Taiwan, a Chinese territory still held by the Japanese. However, the invasion meets terrifying aerial attacks and repeated torpedoes, marking the operation a failure before the force has even left Chinese territorial waters. Any hope of recapturing Taiwan in the near future is dashed on the waves of the Taiwan strait with this operation.

Recognizing the reality of the situation at hand, KMT generals on the National War Council vote to propose peace terms with Japan, and a few weeks later, they meet their Japanese counterparts in Beijing to hammer out a formal treaty and end the war. In May, the Treaty of Beijing is signed, and the territorial state in January 1950 is recognized as the legal post war order. **After 13 brutal years, tens of millions of Chinese lives, and countless billions in economic losses, the Second Sino-Japanese War has ended with a Chinese victory.**

Final Chapter of the Chinese Civil War: 角狐的垂死挣扎

Even as the war begins to draw to a close, the alliance between the CPC and the KMT shows signs of collapse. The National War Council, supposedly a sign of unity between the two, becomes completely dominated by the KMT, and the CPC begins to act more independently of the NWC in its offensive actions in Northern China, especially during the final assault on Manchuria and Korea. It seems the wartime unity is set to devolve into a full scale resumption of the Chinese Civil War.

In one corner, Chairman Mao Zedong commands a newly rejuvenated fighting force after years of guerilla warfare against the Japanese. In the North, his support is mostly consolidated, and in Manchuria and Korea, his soldiers comprise a majority of the Chinese force. However large his army may be, the KMT wields an equally massive and much better equipped force.

In the other corner, General Chiang Kai-Shek commands a veteran and well-equipped army after years of open warfare against the Japanese Imperial Army. In the South and Central China, his support is secure, and across the South of mainland China, the famed National Revolution Army dominates the Chinese force. However well equipped and experienced his army may be, the CPC wields a force far more experienced for the protracted and brutal fighting that will likely occur in the civil war.

In June 1950, only a month after the ink has dried on the Treaty of Beijing, Mao denounces Chiang's surrender of Taiwan as a cause for restarting the civil war, and the National War Council is formally dissolved by the KMT the very next day. Blows begin

to fall only a week later, with the National Revolution Army facing off against the People's Liberation Army just north of Beijing. The NRA achieves a fantastic victory, a product largely of wildly underestimated modern air support imported from Britain and France.

With the Nationalist victory at Tianjin, the CPC is split into two, with the Northern homelands of Shaanxi on one side and with Manchuria and Korea on the other. In July, Mao's second in command Kang Sheng attempts to cross the lines and reconnect with the Manchurian PLA, only to have his travel itinerary intercepted by KMT codebreakers based out of Nanjing. NRA Air Forces are dispatched, and Keng's plane is shot down over Mongolia. Despite the diplomatic feathers that are ruffled by the violation of the Mongolian air space, a devastating blow is struck to the CPC leadership.

Shaken by the loss of his personal friend so unexpectedly, Mao begins making decisions more erratically. In September, he orders his Shaanxi army to make a massive offensive against the NRA to reconnect with the Manchurians against the advice of his general staff, who instead campaign for a protracted guerilla war where the CPC can increase its grassroots support among Chinese peasants.

At the same time, the KMT forms a second army, the Army of the Sichuan, to begin an assault on Shaanxi and unseat the Maoists there in one swift blow. By December, the Army of the Sichuan is ready, and the assault begins. Expecting a blow to come from the NRA in the East, Mao's PLA planners are caught completely off guard, and only a small

intelligence campaign by local peasants informs the PLA of the relative movements and strength of the Sichuan Army.

Another decisive battle is fought at Lanzhou, and the Sichuan Army then turns East to link up with the NRA and encircle Mao's Xi'an headquarters, sealing off the so-called "Cornered Fox" once and for all. As the two armies march towards each other, Mao's orders are disregarded and Lin Biao orders newly imported Soviet supplies to be put to use in a protracted, ingrained guerilla campaign. This slows the NRA and Sichuan advance, but does not stop it.

In Xi'an, panic soon sets in. As the KMT forces are at the closest 50 miles away, the evacuation of the government begins and Mao's cabinet and war council prepare to flee to Manchuria via Mongolia. The Soviets again supply trucks and other critical materiel to aid in the evacuation, though most of their military equipment is by this point inferior to the British and French made equipment in use by the KMT.

While Mao prepares to evacuate his headquarters, Chiang conducts a nationwide tour to survey the war damage, rally Chinese civilians to the Nationalist cause, and inspire his people. The sign of strength plays easily into the hands of the KMT-led media, and urban Chinese especially become firmly in the KMT camp. Rural voters are not as swayed, but as life is tolerable and the CPC appears on the verge of collapse, there is general calm in the countryside.

In October of 1950, a pitched battle for Xi'an is fought between the crack units of Mao's Army of Shaanxi and the combined NRA-Army of the Sichuan. During the chaos of the battle, Mao escapes via a premade tunnel to a nearby sidecar motorcycle, which he rides North into Mongolia before transferring into a more substantial car and completing his trip to Mukden, the headquarters of his Manchurian Army. Xi'an falls only a week later, and the Army of the Sichuan is put to work mopping up sporadic rural CPC guerillas.

As the NRA prepares to move East again to meet the Army of Manchuria for seemingly the final battle, Mao and Lin Biao prepare the army for a grand spring offensive to take Beijing and split the Army of the Sichuan and NRA in two. In December of 1950, his preparations are cancelled because suddenly, the NRA is only 200 miles from Mukden, camped out just northeast of Tianjin.

For the final battle, Chiang is flown in to lead the NRA against the Army of Manchuria.

At Shenyang, the two armies clash, and the Army of Manchuria, led personally by Lin Biao, puts up a much stiffer resistance than expected. The battle results in a stalemate, and both armies are forced to withdraw to more defensible locations. Massive losses on both sides are incurred.

However, the Army of Manchuria must also endure near constant air assaults while retreating, further weakening morale and inflicting serious losses on the army and its supplies. Furious at Lin for yet another "disastrous loss," Mao replaces him in March of

1951 with Zhu De, a proponent of a combined guerilla and open combat approach. Lin is instead sent to lead a newly recruited and Soviet supplied Army of Korea.

By this point, the writing is on the wall for many CPC leaders. Some opt to flee to KMT controlled areas in hopes of securing a generous deal with the enemy. Others flee to the USSR. Most opt to remain with Mao until the bitter end. In May, the NRA moves to attack the Army of Manchuria again at Mukden, and a bloody urban brawl ensues. Only when NRA forces withdraw from the city and it is shelled and bombed can the KMT move in at all. By the time the ground forces return, the city is largely abandoned by the CPC, and the Army of Manchuria disperses into the countryside to rally the people for a coordinated guerilla war. Mao and other leadership flee to Korea to rendezvous with Lin's last intact army.

Zhu, in command of the dispersed Army of Manchuria, begins building up his force in preparation from the order from Pyongyang, the new headquarters of the CPC. June passes. July passes. August passes. Finally in September, Zhu receives the order to launch his offensive, and the NRA is suddenly harassed from all sides. Unable to face this new, asymmetric threat, the NRA pulls back closer to friendlier territory.

However, in launching his offensive, Zhu reveals the location of his dispersed units, and the NRA soon begins sending larger detachments to find and destroy the various pieces of the dispersed Army of Manchuria. By late October, Zhu has lost contact with 3/4 of his forces, with their fates being unknown to Zhu's Harbin command post.

Mao, unable to believe that the NRA could have inflicted such losses on the Army of Manchuria, orders Zhu to make another offensive while the Army of Korea completes its final preparations for an invasion into Manchuria. He begins ordering around detachments that haven't reported in for weeks, and Mao's mental state with regards to the war effort starts to detach from reality. Sat in his Pyongyang bunker to be safe from marauding KMT bombers, Mao's mental and physical health begin to deteriorate more rapidly than before, and suddenly the Cornered Fox looks more like a Roadkill Raccoon. The CPC leadership defections increase, and in February of 1952, Zhu himself surrenders his Harbin command to Chiang and the NRA. Mao is furious at this betrayal, and his mental health continues to slip.

Lin, the last completely sane and competent commander left in the CPC, takes full control of the Army of Korea and prepares a final assault on the NRA while it is still divided and dealing with the remnants of the Army of Manchuria. However, falsely believing that a "Soviet Miracle" is imminent and that the Army of Korea must be preserved until then, Mao orders Lin to stop his march North and return to Pyongyang while he awaits the miracle. This event, known as the "Conspiracy of the Soviet Miracle" is largely attributed to faulty intelligence planted by MI6 designed to cause division in the CPC command.

Conflicted, Lin hesitates before resuming his march North, allowing the NRA to finish regrouping and prepare for the final battle at Yula Crossing. Here, the fate of China will be decided.

At the battle of Yula Crossing, Lin's force is absolutely devastated. The NRA have learned all of the CPC's tricks at this point, and Chiang effectively leads his men into battle. A ferocious air assault deals the final blow to Lin's army, and the Army of Korea collapses. The most loyal rear guards escort Lin back to Pyongyang, where the mood has turned from fear to outright panic. In April 1952, the NRA marches on Pyongyang, and this time, there is nowhere for the Cornered Fox to slip away to. Mao hides away in his bunker with his generals and elite guards and awaits the final assault.

The NRA move into the city in mid April, fighting street by street and suffering heavy losses from the entrenched CPC People's Vanguard units. Unfortunately for the NRA, continuous cloud cover prevents their increasingly relied upon air support from flying, making the battle entirely a ground affair.

However, the inevitable occurs, and by April 29th, Pyongyang has fallen. The final stronghold of the CPC, now in KMT hands, signals the final end of the Chinese Civil War. Mao, Lin Biao, and a few other top generals flee to the Soviet Union, slipping through NRA lines dressed as peasant women caught in the fighting. Across the North, the NRA and Army of the Sichuan occupy themselves by putting down various CPC-affiliated guerilla groups. Despite this lingering resistance, the end of organized fighting has finally come to a devastated China.

After 25 long, brutal years of internal and external war, tens of millions of Chinese lives, and billions of dollars in economic damages, the deadly

Chinese Civil War has finally come to a close, with a resounding Nationalist Victory.

Political Stabilization: 重建時代

With the Communist and Japanese threats abated, the question now turns to addressing the economic devastation from two back-to-back wars and the wracking political instability. **PRESIDENT CHIANG KAI-SHEK** has his work cut out for him.

Chiang's goals during this period are to consolidate his regime, rebuild the country, and reverse the "Century of Humiliation." To achieve these goals, Chiang had to first build up a capable state apparatus. In 1953, a new Constitution was passed, and in 1954, the first elections were held. The organization of this new state was predicated on "Five Yuan," including the Executive Yuan, Legislative Yuan, Judicial Yuan, Examination Yuan, and Control Yuan, with the Examination and Control Yuans serving as a qualifying body for civil servants and an oversight body respectively. With the foundations of a uniquely Chinese democratic government established, true political stabilization could now occur.

In the 1954 elections, to no one's surprise, the Kuomintang wins an incredible victory in the Legislative Yuan, formally elevating Chiang to the first presidency and **VICE PRESIDENT LI ZONGREN** as the first vice president. This is truly an interesting combination as Li and Chiang were known to butt heads at times during the end of the

civil war. With a seemingly politically stable outcome now enacted, Chiang and his government set out to rebuild the country from total devastation.

But before Chiang's reconstruction plan can even be dreamt up, questions about the authority of the various branches of government become immediately pressing. What is the true legislature of China? The Legislative Yuan? The National Assembly? The Control Yuan? All of these bodies have parliamentary functions. What is the relationship between the Legislative Yuan and the Executive Yuan? With these questions and more becoming increasingly apparent by the day, it seems the work of political stabilization is just beginning.

Now that all of the shortcomings of the new Constitution are becoming readily apparent to Chiang and his government, he enacts a temporary fix proven to solve immediate constitutional crises in any country: **The 1955 Military Coup.**

On April 16th, 1955, just days before victory celebrations throughout the country over the victory in the civil war, Chiang meets with **MINISTER OF THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION AND STATISTICS DAI LI**, one of Chiang's most trusted military deputies and head of the Chinese intelligence world. Also in attendance is **MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE HE YINGQIN**, another trusted military ally of Chiangs.

The three meet again on April 21st, this time at a more open venue with more of Chiang's lower level KMT allies and military leaders. Importantly, Vice President Li is

not in attendance, as Chiang wants to use this opportunity to cast him out and complete his political consolidation. As the group meets on the 22nd, 23rd, and 25th, more details come together regarding the plan.

On April 29th, 1955, the anniversary of the fall of Pyongyang and the death of Mao Zedong, army soldiers flood the streets of Nanjing during a series of parades, but at the same time, special forces in regular uniforms begin seizing key government buildings while most of the ministers and staffers are attending celebrations during the national holiday. Vice President Li, along with many of his trusted allies, are arrested at a ceremony commemorating the fallen soldiers on both sides. Meanwhile, Chiang, Dai, and He all attend a military parade while their underlings clean up the dirty work. By the end of the day, the coup is complete, and many in the lower echelons of government have no idea until the next day.

On April 30th, Chiang makes a national address announcing his temporary suspension of the Constitution until the country is rebuilt and a better, clearer Constitution is enacted.

The Legacy of the Wars and the First Move of Wei Qi

With the Chiang and the military back in control, a more deliberate policy for both the Chinese nation and Chinese foreign policy is enacted. Firstly, the new Constitution has to be delayed as much as possible to enable **PRESIDENT CHIANG KAI-SHEK** more time to be the legitimate temporary ruler of China. With the political worries out of

mind, at least for the time being, attention can be shifted to the Reconstruction campaign and playing a global game of Wei Qi.

CPC guerillas, supplied by NKID contacts in the North, continue to harass and undermine the KMT regime. Chiang dispatches **MINISTER OF THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION AND STATISTICS DAI LI** to set up headquarters in Shaanxi and wage a counter insurgency and bring the unruly region to heel. The lack of land reform continues to be a rallying call for the guerillas, but despite Dai's insistence, Chiang refuses to abandon the landlords. Thus, the insurgency continues.

Meanwhile, **MINISTER OF FINANCE T. V. SOONG** is tasked with continuing the physical reconstruction efforts across China, rebuilding the devastated infrastructure and economy from over two decades of warring. After several years, much progress has been made, but there is still a long way to go before even basic utilities are fully restored across the more destroyed North.

Finally, **FOREIGN MINISTER GEORGE KUNG-CHAO YEH** begins meetings with the Koreans to strengthen the alliance against Japan amid the defeat at the battle of Jeju Island. Together, they present a demand for the return of Jeju Island to the Japanese in 1959, but this is largely an afterthought for the Japanese, who fail to send a formal reply. Thus, the situation on Jeju Island remains a stalemate, but the alliance between China and Korea continues to bear fruit, and China soon has its first ally that it can truly trust.

Middling Reconstruction in the Middle Kingdom

MINISTER OF FINANCE T. V. SOONG continues his reconstruction efforts during the early 1960s, and China's economy is able to expand and grow somewhat.

Understanding China's relative backwardness to the western powers, Soong urges

PRESIDENT CHIANG KAI-SHEK to bring in foreign experts to advise on the expansion and development of heavy industry, such as steel and chemical processing.

Facing delays from the British and French experts, Chiang finally convinces the United States to send some experts and advise on the expansion of Chinese steel along the coastal cities. When the experts arrive in 1962 and witness the dismal state of Chinese steel production, work immediately begins on bringing standards into the mid 20th century.

The guerilla war in the North also quiets down thanks to **MINISTER OF THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION AND STATISTICS DAI LI**, who has been stationed in Shaanxi since the late 1950s and has brutalized guerillas, deterring many from enlisting in what is increasingly believed to be a lost cause. Although the fire hasn't been extinguished yet, an apt descriptor would be "contained."

Despite the relative domestic successes, the low-hanging fruits of the diplomatic successes are all apparently taken by the early 1960s. **FOREIGN MINISTER GEORGE KUNG-CHAO YEH** struggles to dislodge Japanese, Soviet, American, British, and French protectorates or alliances in East Asian and Pacific areas aside from Korea, where Japanese corporate influence even begins to grow back. The "failure at Wei Qi" as it is known within the Chinese High Command, is quickly becoming one of

the top fears, and even Dai Li recognizes that China must begin looking outwards for diplomatic opportunities as soon as possible in order to avoid total encirclement. By 1964, avoiding this "catastrophe" has become a major preoccupation for Chiang, and a major goal of the Chinese government.

Kingdom of Italy

Word Count: 2994

The Pax Italica & The Dalmatian Question

The swift fall of Poland, Denmark, Norway, and the Low Countries incensed Mussolini, proving his dexterous alliance with Berlin to be a wild success. However, fascist *gerarchi* like Balbo, and the King Vittorio Emanuele himself advised Mussolini not to jump the gun and declare war on France and Britain. Soon enough, their patience and foresight bore fruit, and when the German army became bogged down along a line even further east than in 1914, any hope of an Italian rescue of the Germans evaporated for those in Berlin.

As the year dragged on, Mussolini and the Fascist Grand Council were forced to re-evaluate their foreign policy choices. Balbo and the King, who had always pushed for a detente with the British, gained considerable influence over Il Duce as time and again, their schemes to enhance Italy's position proved effective. By August, Italian overtures in London had become routine, and although any hope of an alliance with the British

was unfeasible with Churchill in power, Rome could nevertheless count on London to turn a blind eye on Italian affairs, at least until Germany had been definitively dealt with.

By early September, war planners had determined that the time to strike Yugoslavia and seize Italian claimed lands was now. On September 5th, Mussolini sent an ultimatum to Belgrade demanding the territories of Dalmatia and Slovenia be handed to Italy or there would be war. Before the 24 hours had elapsed, 20 Italian divisions from Istria, Zara, and Albania crossed the border and encircled the poorly equipped and coordinated Yugoslav defenders. Although at individual engagements they fought ferociously, the Yugoslav soldiers were quickly routed by experienced Italian *Alpini*, coordinated by radio from Rome.

Despite early victories, Italian soldiers soon became bogged down. Yugoslav divisions were redeployed from the Hungarian, Bulgarian, Romanian, and German borders to combat the Italian invasion. Soon, Yugoslavs outnumbered Italians on the front by a factor of 3 to 2. Despite being outnumbered, the Italians were better coordinated and had more modern equipment. As a result, the front stabilized for the winter and neither side felt confident enough to initiate any large scale offensives. Additionally, the Italian government began promising the Croats in occupied Dalmatia and elsewhere in Yugoslavia independence if they aided in the Italian conquest. For many, it was viewed as a liberation as opposed to an occupation.

Then February came, and Hitler's Germany collapsed almost overnight. Despite recent decoupling between Berlin and Rome, this sudden change in policy startled Mussolini and the Fascist Grand Council immensely, and the mood shifted quickly from pursuing the war to suing for peace.

Italian diplomats leapt for joy when the British, despite French protests, invited Mussolini to Paris to discuss "The Dalmatian Question," and after five months of negotiations, Mussolini and his government agreed to the "Versailles Compromise" whereby the Italians took Dalmatia but gave up all future claims on Slovenia and other Yugoslav territory. Naturally, Mussolini agreed.

Within days, Croatian leaders were rounded up and shot, and hopes for Croatian independence, which the Italians had promised, disappeared in the night just like the once future leaders of Croatia. In their place came thousands of Italian settlers from across the peninsula, eager to find economic prosperity and local dominance in a country that had struggled all throughout the Great Depression. By late 1941, Italian dominance of the Adriatic had been cemented firmly in place, and Mussolini's popularity soared.

Irredenta finalmente!

In the years following the Treaty of Paris, the Mussolini government soars in popularity. The successful campaign in Yugoslavia enforces Mussolini's agenda on the restoration of Roman glory to Italy. However, the Treaty of Paris is equally empowering and limiting to Italy.

On the one hand, Italy is able to formally gain the lands of Northern Dalmatia as well as formally assert full control over Istria and Albania, all of these actions aggressive. The fact that the Allies agreed to recognize such territorial expansions for Italy was sure to come with a hefty price tag: and come it did.

In order to formally gain the land it occupied in the war, the Italian government was forced to pay an expensive indemnity to Yugoslavia to pay for the damages. After several months of stagnation in the war, the indemnity proved to be yet another massive expense for the somewhat meager Italian treasury to bear. In addition, the signing of the Treaty marks one of the last somewhat friendly diplomatic actions between Britain and France and the Italians, most notably with the reduction of trade to Italy in 1943.

As a result, Mussolini is forced to pass a number of austerity measures to stave off bankruptcy for the Italian government. Additionally, the Italian army, navy, and air force are all forced to compete for who will bear the brunt of budget cuts. After months of throwing each other under the bus and ruining any hopes of cross-branch cooperation, the air force gets the budget cuts.

Additionally, the Imperial Administration is forced to make a series of budget cuts as well. French-style assimilation efforts, such as the instruction of the Italian language in Libyan and Abyssinian schools, are cancelled, and overall, a feeling of malaise sets in for the Italian Overseas Presence. Italian authority and diplomatic presence anywhere beyond the Mediterranean is seriously undermined.

Despite these post-war setbacks, Mussolini's government remains relatively popular throughout the 1942-44 era. Although the economy suffers slightly, Mussolini routinely carries through on all of his key party positions and promises. The Italian border has steadily expanded in several directions since he took office in 1922, and the trains still run on time. If Mussolini can survive the current economic crisis, then surely Italy will be able to weather anything!

Rome, 1942

Just as soon as Mussolini excuses British and French diplomats and trade representatives from Rome, he welcomes in Hungarian and Spanish diplomats. As the only remaining fascist powers in Europe after the shocking collapse of the German regime, the incentives are ripe for the powers to work together to ensure their collective survival in an increasingly hostile world.

The Hungarian delegation proposes a full military and economic alliance. With a new Germany breathing down their neck in the west, and an increasingly imperialistic Soviet Union in the east, Horthy and his government are nervous and paranoid to say the least.

However, Franco and his Portuguese attaches are somewhat skeptical of the Hungarian proposals. Trade is amenable to them, but they are opposed to any entangling alliances, especially with the Italians and Hungarians, whose leaders will likely immediately resume talks of territorial expansion the moment they return home. Franco refuses to agree to anything more than a vague and ill-defined mutual defense treaty, in the event

of course that either Italy or Hungary are attacked. Of course, even that is a stretch for Franco's foreign policy, and Italian and Hungarian diplomats alike wonder if Franco would really come to their aid if blows fell.

Mussolini, for his part, is intent on uniting all the disparate factions of the fascist world. Seeing himself as the father of fascism, he brings his own agenda of mutual internal strengthening, especially to the slightly less totalitarian Hungary, Spain, and Portugal.

When diplomats leave in December of 1942, it seems all that has been agreed to is a vague reiteration of various fascist points, a loose free trade zone, and an unreliable-at-best mutual defense pact. Whether or not the bonds between Italy, Spain, Hungary, and Portugal are strengthened, or are tempered, is yet to be seen.

Stagnazione Economica, Unificazione Culturale

In the late 1940s, the Italian economy began to suffer from international isolation. Although it had achieved free trade agreements with its Pact of Rome partners, the collective economies had difficulty growing due to a relative lack of trade with outside nations. This being said, the Italian north continued to thrive on car manufacturing and high-end luxury goods, which were still very much in demand by the rest of the world and only produced in Italy.

In economic terms, Italy led its allies, with its GDP and GDP per capita growth followed by Spain, Portugal, and then Hungary. As such, Italy began to wield increasing power

over its allies, able to dictate more freely to them now that their economies are tied to the Italian economy.

At the same time as this relative economic stagnation, Mussolini ramps up Italianization efforts in the conquered Balkan territories of Northern Croatia, as well as increased effort in Albania. Italian immigrants pour in, and the local citizens are increasingly relegated to a second-class-citizen status. Although agitation and animosity grows, the locals are slowly driven from power, making it difficult to whip up fervent popular support against the Italians.

By 1948, the economy of Northern Italy has continued to grow and thrive, while Southern and Central Italy, largely agricultural, has declined. Additionally, Italian settlers move via **Progetto Patria** (Project Homeland) into the conquered territories to make new lives for themselves, and most often they come from the Southern regions of Italy where economic opportunities are scarcer.

Il Duce parla!

By 1948, the Italian military reaches an important turning point in its composition: A majority of active duty servicemen have never known life without Mussolini. At his 65th birthday celebration in 1947, a parade of the Il Duce Division marks this change with all the fanfare it deserves.

Increasingly as well, graduates from the Moderna Military Academy are equally versed in Mussolini's political doctrine as they are in field tactics. This creates an incredibly

loyal corps, but at the expense of tactical innovativeness and technical understanding. The Italian general staff are in a similar situation, although lessons learned in Croatia quickly matriculate into curriculum reform at Moderna.

With all of these changes, it can be easy to miss easily the most important shift in Italian policy during this time: At the 1946 meeting of the Fascist Grand Council, Mussolini outlines his general shift in foreign policy in his now infamous *****"Tre Mali"***** (Three Evils) speech. In it he, denounces "International Bolshevism, International Capitalism, and Deceitful Empires," which vaguely equate to a foreign policy in opposition to the USSR, the USA, and the UK and France. Il Duce then goes on to describe how the world has moved to the shadows, and Italy must therefore operate in the shadows if it wishes to succeed. Shortly following this line, he requests more funding for the SIM (his intelligence service). However, it is also important to note that this speech occurs behind closed doors, and so the diplomatic blowbacks are completely minimized.

Within a year, Mussolini's armed forces are poised to begin checking these "Three Evils" wherever possible. By late 1947, the **Servizio Informazioni Militare**, now equipped with an operational arm, has networks in Egypt and Algeria, preparing to undermine local colonial forces and destabilize those two possessions in hopes that Italy can soon replace its overlords...

La Grande Migrazione Italiana

In 1948, Mussolini's attention is again returned to domestic affairs. A massive flow of economic migrants from the South to the North places immense strain on Italian

infrastructure and the social fabric of the established Northern economy. The burden then falls on the Mussolini government to address this crisis before unrest threatens to destabilize the regime.

As such, Mussolini passes a sweeping land reform package for the South, aimed at making economic activity more enticing and "stopping the bleeding" before Northern cities become overwhelmed. The land reforms anger many established planters, but economic life for peasants drastically improved. Their taxes are lowered, and interest rates for new farm equipment are also lowered, making it easier for farmers to invest their earnings back into the farms. This comes at the expense of Northern bankers, who begin to dislike Mussolini's populist policies. However, the booming economy in the North largely abates their displeasure.

At the same time, many Southerners continue to migrate to the newly conquered territories, helping wages rise naturally in the overpopulated farmer South. This also helps bring the Dalmatian coast more into the fold, securing it for Italy.

The SIM also continues to destabilize Algeria and Egypt until 1950, when Il Duce decides against continuing the operation. Instead, SIM time is increasingly spent putting out small fires with political opponents in mainland Italy. During this time, the French and Egyptian police forces largely undo most of the SIM's work, but the experience gained will prove invaluable in the future.

Modernization At Last: Equilibrare il Bilancio

By 1952, the state of the Italian economy is quite dire. Decades of failed "Battles for Wheat" and "Battles for Land" and expensive conquests in Yugoslavia and Ethiopia, have seriously depleted Italy's finances. As a result, in 1952, **DUCE BENITO MUSSOLINI** fires **MINISTER OF FINANCE PAOLO IGNAZIO MARIA THAON DI REVEL** and replaces him with former **MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTS GIACOMO ACERBO**, who is head of the Economics faculty at the University of Rome for the previous 20 years or so.

With Acerbo now in charge of the nation's finances and Mussolini giving him a relative free hand to deal with the disaster, Acerbo set about balancing Italy's budget and ending years of runaway inflation by Mussolini and Ignazio. The currency stabilization creates a ruinous recession in Italy from 1952 until 1956. However, Acerbo is successful at convincing Mussolini that such a stabilizing course of action is **only** capable in a totalitarian state because it requires temporary suffering, something the "decadent Western democracies" could never match due to matters of political expediency.

Between 1952-1956, Italy continues to suffer from a currency-induced recession. Mussolini employs vast usage of his propaganda apparatus, but nothing can hide from the people that their quality of life is decreasing year after year. By 1956, it seems Mussolini is hanging on to power by a thread, as protests are ruthlessly put down in Florence, Milan, and Venice by SIM agents and other blackshirts.

However, due to the recession, Mussolini's grand designs on military expansion and the modernization of his government had to take a backseat. Soon, the fabled Pontine Marshes have once again flooded, and a common anti-government saying in the South is "the battle is lost" (referring to the battles for wheat and land). When he's not on a propaganda tour, Mussolini spends most of his time out of Rome to avoid the ire of his people.

Growth and Crisis: Gli Anni Acerbo

Despite some tremendous economic reforms towards bringing the Lira under control by **MINISTER OF FINANCE GIACOMO ACERBO**, the economy continues to puddle along. However, the biggest achievement comes in the fact that the currency-induced recession begins to come to an end in 1956, and by 1957, the quality of life for most Italians begins to slowly improve.

Additionally, the state's treasury sees much needed revenues begin to increase, and the monies are almost immediately dispatched in the effort to modernize Italy's very old armed forces. The army is in the biggest need of reform, and its vehicles and weapons are upgraded markedly between 1956 and 1960. During this period, **DUCE BENITO MUSSOLINI** secures the loyalty of a much more competent general staff than he had during the 1940s, where they were only able to secure him a lengthy victory in Ethiopia and a stagnated war in Yugoslavia.

Emboldened by this success and the improving Italian economy, Mussolini begins posturing again for greater Italian irredentism, this time directed at Greek islands in the

Mediterranean. However, his posturing is very quickly thrown off course when Italian border police accidentally shoot and kill several South German hikers who mistakenly cross the border into Italy. Thinking they were smugglers, the hikers are shot in cold blood, causing a massive rift between South Germany and Italy.

Mussolini, divided between doubling down on the hikers and repairing critical trade relations with the South German Union, is coaxed into the latter course by Acerbo, who is adamant that the economic gains must not be jeopardized by a row with one of Italy's most important trading partners and the source of many of its latest worldly technical advances. While this course of action requires a significant cleanup job on the propaganda department, the Italian economy is spared another catastrophe, and Mussolini continues to grow Italy's real strength.

Internal Stabilization & The Second Conference of Rome

The recent row with the South German Union is reinforced with the election of **CHANCELLOR BRUNO PITTERMANN**, a member of the South German SDP. He immediately introduces reforms that make important South German manufacturers like Daimler and Mercedes-Benz less competitive globally, especially against North Italian manufacturers like Fiat and Alfa-Romeo, not even mentioning the super high end brands like Ferrari and Lamborghini. International buyers flock to the more appealing prices, although the German brands do see an increase in quality following the workers reforms there.

Also called into jeopardy is the trade link between Hungary and the rest of the Pact of Rome, which previously was completed via the South German Union. Now, however, alternative routes must be looked for if Hungary is to remain in the Pact of Rome Alliance. To achieve that, **MINISTER OF FINANCE GIACOMO ACERBO** and **FOREIGN MINISTER GALEAZZO CIANO** urge **DUCE BENITO MUSSOLINI** to host a second Rome Conference to shore up Italy's alliances and find a new route to access Hungarian markets and resources.

Attending the conference is the usual members of Italy, Hungary, Spain, and Portugal, but also Bulgaria and Romania. They are ruled by similar government types, but Hungary and Romania have significant territorial disputes that threaten to make their membership mutually exclusive. Ironically, both of them in the alliance would solve the trade problems, but it also seems both countries are adamant that the other stay out. The situation remains tenuous.

Otherwise, the internal demographic migrations begin to settle down as Italians flow into conquered Dalmatia, Istria, and into the broader empire like Libya and Abyssinia. By 1964, large Italian diasporas exist in Africa, and the imperial situation appears firm.

A Brief Word...

Siam

During the 9-Month-War, Siam adopted a stance of neutrality (although it hoped for a French defeat so that it could avenge humiliating border alterations forced upon them around the turn of the 20th century by the French in Indochina).

Once the war had settled into a stalemate and ultimately completed, the domination of the Siamese military over domestic politics became more overt and entrenched. General Phibun, an admirer of Benito Mussolini, increasingly exercised more power, and relegated Prime Minister Pridi to a secondary role.

General Phibun built up a propaganda apparatus similar to that of Italy or pre-war Germany. A cultural revolution ensued in Thailand, the name of the country after General Phibun changed it from Siam.

The Thai economy continued to develop with the continued flow of American oil, and Phibun continued his campaign of economic modernization. By 1948, Thailand had developed into an entrenched military dictatorship and a rising Asian economy.

Belgium

During the War & Occupation

As part of Fall Gelb, neutral Belgium was invaded in May 1940 along with the rest of the Benelux. Unlike in 1914, however, portions of the country were spared from occupation after the Plan Z counter attack by the BEF and French Army.

Brussels was partially occupied by the Germans, and as the front stabilized, the city became divided into the free section, the occupied section, and the impassable no-mans-land. As a result, the government fled to Gent, where it would operate for the duration of the war.

Belgian forces would continue to mount small-scale raids against the Germans throughout the 9 Month War to little effect, although this did help boost the legitimacy of the unpopular government, which was viewed more positively since it was "doing something in the fight for liberation."

Once Operation Jupiter commenced in the late winter of 1941, German forces withdrew from their half of Brussels, and the government moved back in as soon as the Army Engineers cleared the buildings of any booby traps left behind by the retreating Germans. Finally, in March 1941, German forces withdrew from Belgium altogether on the eve of the armistice, as a show of good faith to the Allies. After almost a year, Belgium finally became whole again.

After the War

Belgium bore the brunt of the conflict during the war, and much of the strategic maneuvering on both sides took place in Belgium in the early stages. In many ways, the

war was fought and won in Belgium's fields, forests, and cities. This destruction would have a lasting impact on Belgium's economy and the Belgian way of life.

Most of Belgium's heavy industry was either stolen by the Germans or destroyed by either side during the heavy fighting of the early and late stages of the war. Despite being divided during the war, the Belgian economy on both sides was almost totally shut down.

It wasn't until 1945 that the downward trend for Belgium's economy and quality of life stopped, as the Reconstruction began there as well. Aided substantially by Britain and the United States through loans, the Belgian economy recorded its first full year of post war positive growth in 1946, and by 1947, basic utilities and housing had been re-established for >95% of the country, a marvelous feat for a country completely devastated only a few years prior.

In the Congo, Belgian dominance continued. In a similar fashion to the Dutch emigration to the colonies following the devastation, many Belgian citizens and farmers moved to the Congo in search of a better life and more economic opportunity. While this resulted in a relative stabilization of the colony, it also hindered Belgium's economic recovery from the war as many talented farmers and builders fled the country.

So by 1948, Belgium still had a long way to go before reaching pre-war economic activity, and it's pre-war population as well. Although it was on the upward trajectory, the path was steep and rocky. Additionally, much of its financial independence had been

sacrificed to the British and Americans on the altar of a speedy recovery. The consequences of these decisions by the Belgian government will last long into the coming years.

Hungary

During the War

Despite years of good will with Germany, after the failure of Fall Gelb to secure Paris, the Horthy Government in Budapest shifted to a decidedly anti-German posture. When German diplomats begged Hungary to join the war to turn the tide in late 1940, Horthy refused, and thus kept Hungary out of the war.

To fill Germany's place in Hungary's foreign policy designs, the government reached out to Italy, who had also recently shifted away from Germany. In August 1940, Budapest proposed a renewal of the Pact of Rome, and despite Austria's inability to commit due to its annexation by Germany in 1938, Rome accepted.

When Italy then invaded Yugoslavia, Rome began pressuring Hungary to join the war to assist in the rapid conquest of the country. Within several days, the Hungarian army launched their own invasion into Yugoslavia, seizing on the opportunity to reverse some of the cessions of 1919. By the end of 1940, the Hungarians had made it to Vojvodina, where they became bogged down until the weather improved for a renewed Spring Offensive. However, with the 9 Month War drawing to a close in February, plans for a renewed offensive were scrapped and Hungary instead joined the Italian delegation on the way to Paris.

Throughout the war, the shambling Hungarian economy suffered. The shift in focus from Berlin to Rome was accompanied by a general trade and economic shift as well, and when Italy declared war on Yugoslavia, the major route to Italy was suddenly cut off. Some detours were made via Germany, but the general coldness that existed between Germany and Hungary and Germany and Italy made large scale trade impossible.

Hungary, 1942-1952

With the addition of a sliver of territory in the Vojvodina from Yugoslavia, there was still large amounts of territory that Hungary wished to reclaim after the Treaty of Trianon shrunk the size of Hungary by several times. Nevertheless, the addition of a core region to the Kingdom of Hungary proved to be a critical boon to the struggling economy.

As the years go by, the Horthy government accomplishes a large political victory when the Germans are defeated, discrediting many of Horthy's opponents on the far right. However, Germany had also been Hungary's largest trading partner in the leadup to the war, meaning that the Hungarian economy had been dealt a temporary blow.

With a new German state on Hungary's border, Hungary is able to dictate trading terms on a much more comparable footing, albeit with a reduced partner. Throughout the mid and late 1940s, infrastructure projects between Hungary, the South German Union, and Italy, were carried out to increase the ability of all three nations to conduct trade. This

also proved to be Hungary's chief access to the sea, as a bitter Yugoslavia refused to allow trade through the country.

By 1952, the Hungarian economy had grown at an acceptable rate, and life for most Hungarians had improved, especially the now empowered minority in the Vojvodina region. The state of the Hungarian military is still mediocre after the stalemate in the war, however, and if any substantial threats were to pop in Central Europe soon, Hungary would not be prepared to face them alone.

Sweden

During the War

Sweden in the War, 1940-1942 Although declaring itself neutral at the outbreak of war in September of 1939, Sweden had long been preparing for the seemingly inevitable war in Europe, quadrupling its military budget in 1940 to \$425,000,000 same with creating the Swedish Home Guard and various local youth groups. Before the disastrous Fall Gelb was initiated, German forces marched through Denmark and Norway securing their northern flank quickly and effectively. This made Sweden almost entirely dependent on German goodwill to continue with their lucrative foreign trade; having to negotiate with German officials whenever they wanted to travel through the Baltic or North Seas.

Interestingly, the goodwill of the Swedes extended also towards the Allied forces, donating around half of their merchant fleet to the Royal Navy during the German

invasion of Belgium. Moreover, when the German Battleship Bismark embarked from her Baltic port to lead Operation Fall Seeweg, Swedish Military Intelligence informed the British of her departure which many credit to being vital in creating the favoured Allied outcome in the Battle of the English Channel. The German encoding machine labelled the Geheimschreiber device was broken by Swedish Mathematicians in early June and the details of its functions were passed on to British intelligence by the Swedes which was also deemed crucial in helping the Allies win the war. After the stalemate on the Western Front, relations with the seemingly delusional German government soured considerably, especially after the German ambassador to Sweden, Arvid Richert, mentioned in passing the possibility of German soldiers being in transported across Sweden to aid in any future operations against the Soviet Union. With the Western Front being in such a bad shape the Swedish Government was frankly horrified by the hinting of opening a second front with Russia and prepared to "organise" its forces which was a pretence to full mobilisation in case of a German invasion.

During 1941, with the start of Operation Jupiter making significant headway against German forces in Luxembourg and with increasing unrest in the German Reich, Sweden opened up official communications with both Britain and France in potentially aiding them with the liberation of Norway and Denmark. Both of which had military forces in exile in Sweden who were being trained by the Swedish Army potentially in an invasion of the German occupied Nordic states. Although these talks are rumoured to have been moderately successful the February 20th Coup by the Wehrmacht and later armistice with the Allies destroyed any such plans becoming a reality. During the Paris negotiations various neutral Swedish diplomats were sent to observe proceedings, although

throughout the engagement they protested for a return to the status quo through the League of Nations, which was not to happen.

In 1942, post the division of Germany and the liberation of Poland, Norway, Denmark and the Low Countries. Swedish foreign trade boomed once again, with their Iron ore helping to rebuild Europe following the destructive 2 years of fighting. Furthermore, the Swedish Ministry of Defence ordered 300 combat aircraft from the United States primarily Seversky P-35s and P-66 Vanguards to see them safely through the still turbulent decade.

Sweden, 1942-1948

Sweden emerged from the war unscathed, and its economy soon flourished with foreign trade and iron ore exports to a rebuilding Europe. However, due to the perceived snubbing of Sweden by the British and French at the Paris Peace Conference (in which Sweden was only an observer status), Swedish politicians opted to maintain the longstanding policy of neutrality, which continued all throughout the immediate post-war period.

Sweden became increasingly urbanized and highly technically skilled. In 1943, the SDP party won parliamentary elections, and they ushered in significant economic and social prosperity. By 1948, the SDP's control on Swedish politics had solidified.

Sweden became a hub for technical innovation, especially in the fields of telephonics, energy management, chemicals, and agricultural growth.

Netherlands

During the War

Having been liberated by the Treaty of Paris, the Netherlands government in exile returned to a populace still in utter shock at the swift collapse of the Dutch Army.

Having not experienced the full horrors of a drawn out war, as the Belgians had in the Great War, the Dutch citizenry emerged from the war with relatively few lasting scars.

Although the nation's pride had been shattered, its economy remained almost completely intact (most of the merchant ships had fled to England during the Blitz, but much of the heavy industry was "exported" to the Rhine. Although some of this could be returned, much of it had passed hands too many times in the late war that it was virtually untraceable, or completely stolen by late war thieves.

So from 1944-1948, the Dutch government underwent a national reconstruction campaign. Collaborators were tried and punished according to their level of collaboration, but the relatively mild occupation resulted in light punishments all around.

On the whole, the Netherlands was able to bounce back relatively quickly from the war, although the reconstruction of Rotterdam, which had been leveled and burned in the Blitz, was still a pressing problem for years to come, causing large amounts of homelessness until late 1947, when Reconstruction had largely been completed.

Abroad, the Netherlands remained completely intact. Many Dutchmen immigrated to the East Indies following the war, especially those from Rotterdam, resulting in a sizable increase in the Dutch diaspora in and around Jakarta and other neighboring regions. The Indonesian population continued to languish under Dutch colonial rule, which by 1948 shows no signs of stopping.

Denmark, 1942-1948

Denmark emerged from the war relatively unscathed, having been conquered in only 6 hours in 1940. Due to the little amount of combat seen by Danish soldiers, as well as the embarrassingly swift collapse of the Danish Armed Forces, post-war Danish governments spearheaded a campaign of building up Denmark's own military capabilities, as well as its alliance structure, namely an alliance with Norway and a friendship treaty with Sweden in 1945 and 1947, respectively.

Additionally, the Danish government in 1944 formally abandoned all claims to South Schleswig, which had been in contention after the Treaty of Paris. In exchange for the renunciation of claims, the North German State agreed to protect the rights of Danish minorities in the region.

The Danish economy also boomed during the post war. Life in post war Denmark improved dramatically from its pre-war standards, spurred in part due to the military buildup. Denmark required little reconstruction from the occupation, and its economy therefore had an immediate strong foundation for which to build years of growth.

Norway, 1942-1948

Norway emerged from the war relatively unscathed, having been occupied very swiftly in 1940. However, a significant resistance presence in Norway resulted in minor damage to lots of infrastructure, especially outside of Oslo.

During the chaos of the February Coup in Germany, Vidkun Quisling (The German-installed Prime Minister of Norway) attempted to flee Oslo, but was arrested by a combined police and resistance force before he could leave the city. His trial in 1943 saw the renewed use of capital punishment, along with 4 other prominent collaborators. Most other collaborators were jailed for varying periods of time.

Norway and Denmark became very close after the war, having been invaded and liberated around roughly the same time. Norway also signed a friendship treaty with Sweden in 1947, shortly after Denmark signed its own bilateral friendship treaty earlier that same year.

The Norwegian economy struggled to bounce back compared to its Danish and Swedish counterparts, and despite seeing some post war growth, it failed to match the levels seen in the neighboring countries. A big hurdle to Norwegian growth was the immense task of clearing sea mines off the coast, which had been laid by the British in efforts to limit German naval traffic on the Norwegian coast. Overall, Norway had a lighter recovery

compared to some occupied countries, but it also took time to heal the nation from almost a year of German military occupation.

Finland, 1942-1948

Finland, despite remaining removed from the 9 Month War, remained bitter about the result of the 1940 Winter War and the subsequent Soviet annexation of Karelia.

However, there was little Finland could do to address this, as it proved to be in no offensive state relative to the USSR during this period.

However, the threat of Soviet aggression remained a constant force in the minds of the Finnish people, who routinely elected conservative and right-wing governments for fear that any politicians left of center could harbor Soviet sympathies and/or be a Soviet spy. Despite a stunning lack of evidence, the Finnish White Terror in 1945 (resulting from a particularly virulent rumor on the loyalties of a Helsinki journalist) caused large scale riots, and was the height of the larger Red Scare period in post war Finland.

Finland's economy struggled after the war, bearing the burden of Soviet war reparations and also the task of managing 300,000+ refugees from the lands ceded to the USSR.

Ireland, 1940-1952

Ireland remained neutral from the outset of the 9 Month War, with Prime Minister Éamon de Valera fearing division between pro-UK elements in Ireland and the

vehemently anti-UK elements of the IRA. Because of this, relations are soured with the UK, and the prospect of the reunification of Ireland seems farther out of reach. At the same time, the Irish government improves relations with the Taft Administration, both finding common ground being neutral and isolationist.

After the war, the Irish economy continued to puddle along. A brief period of rationing during the war and the continued threat of tuberculosis among Irish women and children posed to be a major threat to the nation's meager healthcare system, and this became a major political issue along with reunification.

Additionally, in 1948, the Republic of Ireland Act was passed, formally establishing the President of Ireland as the Head of State and removing the British monarch from that role. This act formally separated British and Irish governance, creating a further rift between the two Anglophone neighbors. In response, the British Parliament passed the Ireland Act in 1949, guaranteeing partition unless Northern Ireland voted to reunify, further damaging already weakened Anglo-Irish relations.

From 1948 on, Éamon de Valera and the ruling Fianna Fáil party were relegated to the Opposition, until 1951 when the left coalition suffered a devastating scandal regarding the Mother and Child national healthcare scheme, which was heavily criticized by both the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches in Ireland, as well as conservative elements across the country.

Spain, 1940-1952

Following the Spanish Civil War, Spain entered a period of neutrality, and they maintained this period throughout the 9 Month War. Although Spain briefly considered sending aid to Germany, the threat of British and French sanctions coupled with the stalling of the German offensive in 1940 dissipated this idea in the Spanish government.

Throughout the 1940s, the Francoist government led a policy of agricultural colonization to modernize the country's agriculture through the expansion of irrigation. The policy was slow to implement, and so was economic growth during this time.

Colder relations with the United Kingdom following a 1945 dispute on the status of Gibraltar led to Spain being almost entirely reliant on trade within and between the members of the Pact of Rome, which included Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Hungary.

Overall, Spain remained incredibly stable and the Franco regime was popular and consolidated. It conducted joint exercises in the air, sea, and on land with its Pact of Rome allies throughout the 1940s, improving command coordination in the event of a war, in which they would all be called to defend each other.

Portugal, 1940-1952

From 1940-1952, the Estado Novo led by Salazar continued without incident, and Portugal expanded its diplomatic circle to include member states of the Pact of Rome, of which Portugal became a formal member in 1941. However, in doing so Portugal

damaged relations with the United Kingdom, its longtime ally, by aligning itself closer with a more Italian-dominated Mediterranean.

Much like Spain, Portugal's economy became increasingly dependent on trade within the Pact of Rome, with the exception of tungsten exports to the rest of the world.

However, the global demand for Tungsten declined in the years following the 9 Month War as countries shrunk their massive war time armies and shifted away from needing anti-tank, armor, and conventional artillery pieces with tungsten parts.

Portugal successfully retained its colonies throughout this period, much like its other Pact of Rome countries. Despite Portugal's relatively stagnant economy, the country was stable and its colonies an integral piece of the Portuguese Empire.

Canada

Post 9-Month War Canada was a booming place to be. The Canadian economy recovered remarkably well from the Depression, and soldiers returning home were well-integrated into society. Women were carefully shunted out of the workplace to make room for the returning soldiers, and a new child tax credit system was installed to promote the regrowth of families.

In 1947, new oil was discovered in Alberta, which prompted a second boom centered around that region. Additionally, Newfoundland remained a crown colony after the war, and its economy struggled to recover without significant outside investment.

During this period, Canada continued to be led by Mackenzie King, who retired in 1948 and was replaced by Louis St. Laurent, continuing Liberal governance and the careful expansion of the Canadian welfare state.

Mexico, 1940-1952

Mexico and the United States enjoyed closer relations until 1940, when President Taft put the "Good Neighbor Policy" on the back burner to instead focus on internal issues. As a result, Mexico's economy continued to grow, albeit very slowly.

However, the Mexican political situation improved markedly after 1940, with the inauguration of President Manuel Avila Camacho, an excellent stabilizer who shifted Mexico from the "revolutionary" era to the "evolutionary" era. The much needed political stability from 1940-1946 under Camacho's reign helped build the foundation for the "Mexican Miracle," which was still to come.

In 1946, President Camacho died of natural causes, and his brother and ambitious political operative had also died very recently, removing the possibility of a devastating presidential succession crisis. Camacho was succeeded by the young Miguel Alemán Valdés, who turned out to be especially adept at building up Mexico's industrial base via Import Substitution. Valdés also developed closer relations with the United States starting in 1949 with the inauguration of President Truman in January of that year. As American isolationism started to thaw, freer trade ensued and the Mexican economic miracle really took off. He remained close with business leaders throughout his term, which ended in 1952 per the constitutional term limits.

In 1952, Valdés' successor Adolfo Ruiz Cortines was elected as president. Cortines initiated several austerity measures, and sought to reduce corruption in the government, which had been a major problem during the Valdés administration. Cortines also continued to improve relations with the United States under the Stassen Administration, as well as create closer ties with Canada and with other Latin American states.

Kingdom of Greece, 1942-1952

By Vaggelis, edited by Dr_Kookoo for continuity and clarity

Metaxa's Success

In the war, Metaxas follows a policy of neutrality, given Greece's traditionally strong ties to Britain, reinforced by King George II's personal Anglophilia. After Elli, one of the most famous Greek protected cruisers, was sunk by the Italian navy in 1940, Metaxas with the full support of the Palace decided to cut every political and economic ties with both Germany and Italy. Following the invasion of Albania and later Yugoslavia, Metaxas orders the Metaxas line to be ready as soon as possible, so by summer 1941 the line is finished and frequently strengthened. Given that Britain, France and USA are counting for the vast majority of Greece's foreign economic partners, the result of the war is met with happiness and hope for the future.

The rapid rise of the economy which started in 1936 doesn't seem to stop, the corporatist economic system which already by 1939 was met with initial success, with a marked rise in per capita income, decline in unemployment and stabilization of the

drachma is working pretty well. All the way through the 40s Greek economy is rising but of course at a slower rate as the years go by. The regime through the 1940s focused on creating factories and generally making Greece dependent as little as possible on foreign trade. The Greek state has a significant debt to a Belgian bank, and following the war and liberation of Belgium, the bank is completely destroyed and the degree of the debt is only known by the Greek state which obviously destroys any records.

The regime's main goal is to create the 3rd Hellenic civilization (1st ancient Greece , 2nd Byzantine empire) combining the best of the two so it creates the EON , the National Youth Organization whose member are the majority of the Greek youth since it provides free schooling and gymnastics. The main focus is to create a well-educated and patriotic populace. Propaganda is minimized and communism never mentioned. Following the trend of the rest of the West, literacy is rising fast. Metaxas, since the start of the regimes, has repealed all discrimination roles imposed by the former Venizelist and monarchist governments, and the regime tolerates all ethnic and religious minorities as long as they try to assimilate in the Greek populace.

Seeing Mussolini's Italy as a threat, Metaxas and the King focus on creating a strong army, military factories are build and start producing a lot of material. Conscription time is increased, and major Greek military personnel are called to train the Greek army. The well trained and well equipped Greek army helps in keeping and improving Greece as a regional power.

The major economic and military improvement of Greece although are mostly thanks to Metaxas laws it would never had reached as high levels as now without the help of Britain and France. After the Treaty of Paris and the rise of the Pact of Rome, Greece allies with Britain, France, and the USA, but still tries to remain uninvolved with foreign issues and is generally pacifist.

The anti-imperialistic nature of the regime keeps it away from getting involved in foreign wars or claiming any land from its neighbors, excluding Italy. Thus the Turkish-Greece relations are as good as they have ever been and the two nations see a bright future of cooperation and toleration of each other's minorities. The regime had already banned unions and protests. Suppressed freedom of the press and bribed many journalists. Despite that the regime's social policies such as Unemployment insurance, maternity leave, five-day, 40-hour workweek, guaranteed two-week vacations with pay , 1st of May being a public holiday commemorating the Greek worker and stricter work safety standards seem to have pleased the working class thus also lowering the support of communism.

The regime sees communism as a threat to the Nation and the three principles that characterize Greek society (Motherland , Religion , Family) thus not only keeps the anti-communist laws of the Venizelist governments but reinforces them. All communist party members are given the choice of denouncing communism or being exiled. Some high ranking members were sentenced to death but Metaxas is against any major executions of communists. The government created a new communist party in 1939 in order to control the few communists that remained. These policies together with major

improvements in the rights and needs of the working class , the rise in the economy and Metaxas avoiding talking about communism even in a negative way in public, results in communism being almost eradicated by 1950.

South America

By Snakeshooter

The Reform

All across South and Latin America, economies were vastly controlled by agricultural exports. Sending wheat, corn, sugar, and various other food products towards Europe. Capitalizing specifically on wars in Europe which naturally increased food consumption. As such, governing practices revolved around strife and war in Europe; it should then come as no surprise that when Germany began its assault nations such as Brazil, Columbia, Argentina, and Venezuela became very interested and prepared for the new growth that would then springboard their economies from this period of stagnation after the Great War. However, to the liking of Europe, and to the dislike of the South American businessman, the war came to a quick and bloodless end. As such the people of South America suffered through a depression. With the exports they relied upon not being needed, for the most part, thousands felt the bitter bite of hunger and turned their hatred towards their own governing bodies. Only compounded by the fact that these nations relied upon war to bring immigration, immigration that was supplemented in part by America, but not enough to make up for the projected totals.

As such these economies were forced to change, no longer able to be reliant on agriculture to provide for its GDP. But before the economies change the government must also change. Therefore the dictators in Argentina and Brazil were met bitterly and ultimately displaced, violently in Brazil, by 1941. With Peronismo, and Vargas being defeated, new ideals were given to South America. The catholic traditions of much of South America naturally combated a purely capitalistic mindset, but due to the defeat of collectivism with the death of Peron a new wave of small business and entrepreneurial spirit took over Buenos Aires and Cordoba. With Argentina focusing on manufacturing and industry, having easy access to navigable waterways in Entre Rios, and flat land through the Pampas. In San Paulo the same can somewhat be said, with Brazil also switching to manufacturing, however not to the same capitalistic tune of Argentina. Brazil became a moderate nation in South America, balancing both capitalism and some aspects of socialism. However, Brazil struggled with its past, having a faction of Guerillas spring up to right the wrongs of slavery that plagued Brazil. Specifically due to the continuation of racism in America, race relations in Brazil suffered substantially.

Apart from Brazil and Argentina, Chile also changed substantially, with the Confederación de Trabajadores de Chile, taking power in 1940. Chile became a widely socialist nation, relying on its wealth of mountains, combined national pride, and resources to back up its hefty government spending. For these reasons a certain sense of animosity arose between both Argentina and Chile, a disagreement along borders and along ideological boundaries. For nations of Paraguay, and Peru, they were respectively caught in the spheres of influence of Argentina and of Brazil. With Paraguay taking on the capitalistic motive, and Peru taking a moderate approach, with radicals in the south

secretly supported by the Chilean government. Venezuela and Columbia however began a long war from 1940-1945 between both Venezuela and Columbia, with Venezuela being staunchly capitalistic, stemming from its deep reserve of natural resources. However in the jungles of Venezuela guerillas fought to keep their socialist dream alive, supporting them was the Columbian army. Argentina sent aid in terms of weapons, cars, planes, and munitions to Venezuela trying to fend off the rapid approach of socialism. Chile then responded with volunteers being sent to help the Colombian ideological crusade. Brazil remained largely neutral, but mercenaries were commonly seen sneaking to help Venezuela, along with these mercenaries were European mercs looking to fight the reds, these men were also accompanied by Americans who, unlike their neutral government, wanted to put an end to socialism as a whole. As such, an astronomical number of people died in the Venezuelan jungle, with the men coming back from the war obviously changed. No matter what they did they could never forget what they saw in the jungles, the barbarity, the cruelty, the death. However in the end, only 15 miles of jungle were ceded. Hundreds of thousands died for 15 miles. However, the hostility still exists, cemented deep in the minds of both sides.

Bolivia however enjoyed tension that was mostly along political lines, with socialists and capitalists vying for control of the small jungle nation. Overall the area is engulfed in tense ideological struggle but also has seen rapid and unprecedented growth in some areas. Specifically in manufacturing of advanced products such as cars, planes, and munitions.

In the years following the war between Colombia and Venezuela the major powers continued to consolidate power. Brazil began its continued shift towards democracy and consolidating its wretched past. Argentina continued to see economic growth, but also saw a range of strikes and riots from 1947-1948 protesting better labor laws and a shorter work week. As a response to this the Argentine government put the blame solely on Chile's shoulders, claiming that they were sending agents to undermine Argentina, this escalated until a variety of skirmishes broke out in the mountains between both nations. The result of which was largely indeterminate. However of important note is the movement made by Chile to begin taking advantage of its mines in the north and moving towards manufacturing as well. Thus beginning to bridge the gap Argentina had made in tech and industrialization.

After the skirmishes and the "movimiento de la industria" started by Chile, the Chilean government began secretly funding the socialist guerillas in Peru and in Brazil. As such Argentina began pushing along with Paraguay against Peru and Chile. This culminated in the year 1950 where war broke out in Peru, with the unpopular Peruvian government being backed by Paraguay and Argentina, whilst the popular socialist fighters pushed north backed by Chile. As a result of this war economic activity across SA along with the general quality of life decreased. With the world having its eyes glued on the events in Peru. Both Chile and Argentina sent a tremendously large amount of soldier 'volunteers' to fight each other. This conflict continued through 1952, although anti war sentiment was growing rapidly across all nations involved. The non involved nations, who were not ideologically possessed or leaning one way or another created a joint defense pact with

brazil, called the "League of Peace" to protect the peace across the continent. The project has seen large amounts of initial success.

Cuidad Porteno de Mi Unico Querer

The 60s saw a huge swing in South American geopolitics. With it starting with the invasion of Uruguay by 'el republico nacional argentino' this stunning destruction of the fragile agreements made between Argentina and Uruguay was the marking of the new direction taken by the right wing Argentine government. A government recently elected out of fear that the cold war with Chile would become hot. Javier Milei, the new leader promised a continuation of the base capitalistic style of government, but with a small increase in taxes in exchange with an overhaul of the military and its structure. As such whenever the Uruguayan government started to change from its base state of neutrality to begin holding talks with Chile and its socialist leaders it was easy to convince the chiefs of staff to begin the writing of battle plans to secure the Uruguayan republic. As the troops began moving to the border and tensions increased Milei began hinting at the possibility of a diplomatic solution; however this was a ruse, and as the troops piled it became evident to some the Argentines had no intention of leaving. Such was seen whenever after once more meeting with Chilean president Gabriel Boric, Milei gave the order to strike. On July 9th the attacking began, on the anniversary of Argentina's independence. After a brief amount of intense fighting around Montevideo the country was seized in a frighteningly fast military action. The action lasting 3 months was almost too fast for a proper reaction from Chile. The doctrine employed by the Argentines, while brutal, was effective. Effectively relying on aerial superiority they bombed city blocks and took the nation by storm. Such then, three months later on october 18th the

war ended. Javier Milei stood victorious from 'la casa rosa' giving his victory address. Ending it with a small note about the effectiveness of their great nation, the Argentine spirit, finished with 'y aguante el cuervo'. A small nod to his beginnings as a fan of FC San Lorenzo. This created a rise of a new sort of nationalism in Argentina, a small chink in the armor it once showed, with part of the nation starting to favor its new militaristic tendencies, with others preferring to produce and sell what it produces. With this stirring the pot in Argentina in the edge lies the ever distant memories of las islas malvinas, stolen by the British crown, and wanted deeply known by the Argentine government as a possible way to solidify power and its trust.

Meu Amigo Lindo

In Brazil the rapid capture of Uruguay by Argentina sent shockwaves through the political system. With a response now believed deserved by the Brazilians, hoping to end the rapid growth in their military power. However, on the contrary, it would jeopardize their now strong league of peace which includes Bolivia, and Ecuador. It has proven remarkably well at stopping future wars between Colombia and Venezuela which have made a surprising comeback in terms of their manufacturing power and money made. However Colombia has become notably strong militarily and the Venezuelan government now is playing catchup, trying to adopt Argentina's policy. It has further stopped further wars between the 'Confederacion de Trabajadores del Sur de Peru' and 'El Republico de Peru' nations arising from the split of Peru after the guerilla war took its toll. Importantly, this break up gave a large amount of natural resources and a united end to the socialist block. Which has now seen considerable pushes towards further radicalism in Chile, whilst Colombia has wished for moderation. However, Brazil

continues to fight its troubled past, with a small guerilla faction living in the Amazon, fighting for the liberation of blacks, and for the realization of a communist society. It is this faction that is the new target of foreign funding by the socialist block. Which in recent years has not had the Argentine funding to counteract it since Argentina has focused more on internal growth.