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The Paris Peace Conference of 1919

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INTRODUCTION

The date is 18th of January 1919. The world, ravaged by the Great War, is seeking its path to more peaceful and stable times. In this effort, the Paris Peace Conference is being convened. In the following months, a new world order will be drawn out and it is a responsibility that weighs heavy on the delegates' shoulders, to make it such that it will ensure lasting peace and prosperity, rather than aggravate tensions. The war saw 37.5 million casualties on both sides, and was in this way virtually unprecedented by the destruction it caused. Estimates of military deaths range from 9-11 million, and while civilian casualties are more difficult to estimate due to the lack of proper records, it is widely known, that the famine, bombing, genocides, and illness, had the nations pay an extremely high toll on human life.

In the last year of the war, another problem arose. The Influenza, commonly dubbed as the Spanish Flu, spread quickly throughout the world as a result of troop movements and trade routes. As much of the information regarding the deadly pandemic was subject to wartime censure, the wave was even harder to control. Food rationing, and medicine shortages due to the war have left a large part of the population severely weakened, and as such they represent a prime target for the aggressive disease. While the sickness is more dangerous to children and elders, not even those in their prime age are safe. It is not long since the latest and deadliest wave of the pandemic, and January 1919 sees a new one beginning to spread.

The Old World is also trembling with the fear of communism. As the October Revolution saw the fall of Imperial Russia and the rise of a Bolshevik communist regime, other European communist and socialist revolutionaries look with awe at the home of the revolution and wish to accomplish the same in their own countries. Upholders of the current regimes feel the threat looming over them and they will need to act quickly and efficiently if they wish to retain their positions and privileges. The conflict between the old system and the "Reds" is omnipresent, but was in the past months most notable in Russia, Finland, Germany, and Italy.

Additionally, with the new world map being charted, many nations are fighting over territorial claims. Many see this time as a chance for independence and many more thirst for expansion on account of their weakened neighbours. Notably,

the United States is bringing an ideal to the Paris Peace Conference, and by its measures they intend to build the new world order. This Wilsonian ideal, among other things, dictates that all peoples should have the right to self determination. It is noble, yet it appears to go against many of the other delegations' objectives at this conference. Compromise will have to be reached.

Paris has become the centre of worldly politics. In this whirlwind of different ideals, goals, wishes, and agendas, deciding a common future in benefit of all will prove most challenging. The delegates need to bear in mind that the whole world is watching. Not only the invitees to the conference, also members of growing social movements flock to France to follow the events closely and express their opinions. The world is exhausted by the war and restless with anticipation of what is to come. Destitution fosters radicalism and violence, which we can hardly afford.

The stakes are high and the pressure enormous. Whose ideas will prevail? What will be the new World Order?

CURRENT SITUATION OVERVIEW

CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC

In 1919, the Czechoslovak State is in a surprisingly good position, despite being one of the youngest nations in Europe, and having mainly fought on the side of the Central Powers as a part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Even though the official borders have yet to be set, the Czechoslovak government is in control of most Czechia and large parts of Slovakia. As a cherry on top, the former inherited more than 70% of the Austro-Hungarian industry. Their army, while limited, is composed of Czechoslovak Legion veterans that fought in France and Italy, and Czechoslovaks enlisted into the Austro-Hungarian Army. Safe to say, the republic is in a relatively stable and strong position.

However, the war has not left the country unscathed. More than 200 thousand Czech and Slovaks died in the duration of the conflict, and lack of food and medicine has left the country susceptible to epidemics, especially to the ongoing Spanish flu.

While the majority of Czechs and Slovaks endorse the new republic, many minorities are not so fond of the idea. Its German minority would account for nearly 23% of the total population, outnumbering even Slovaks which number at 16%. There would also be a significant Hungarian population in Slovakia, comprising nearly a fourth of the entire population. Destabilisation, caused by German and Hungarian minorities' separatism is expected.

There is also another unique factor to the state. Save for the British, they present the biggest contributor of Entente forces to the ongoing Russian civil war. The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia was formed in 1914 out of a sizable population of Czechs and Slovaks living in the lands of the Russian Empire. They fought valiantly on the eastern front up until the October Revolution in 1917. Their numbers were later bolstered by the inclusion of Czech and Slovak POWs. They were and still are at nearly 70 thousand men strong, led by the statesman and activist Tomáš Masaryk.

After negotiations with the Bolshevik government, they were promised safe passage on the Trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostok, in an attempt to evacuate the country embroiled

in revolution. However, as the Bolshevik authorities ordered their arrest and disarmament after an incident at the Chelyabinsk train station, the Czechoslovak legions shifted their allegiance to the White Russians. By June, they successfully captured the Trans-Siberian railway, the only link between Siberia and core Russia. Despite initial enthusiasm for fighting in Russia, spirits have dropped considerably till the end of the year. Delays of reinforcements and the declaration of Czechoslovak independence, proclaimed in Prague on October 28th, evoked a desire in troops to return home. Nevertheless, the continued involvement of Czechoslovak soldiers in the intervention, has brought prestige and accelerated recognition by the Entente to the new Czechoslovak Republic.

EMPIRE OF JAPAN

The Empire of Japan's reason for entering the Great War has many layers. First and foremost, they wished to expand the Imperial influence throughout Eastern Asia. They aimed to finally confirm the status of Japan as a Great Power, on par with its counterparts in Europe and America.

At the outbreak of war Japan was allied with the United Kingdom through the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, under which terms the nations had to come to each other's aid in event of its ally battling more than one enemy power. When the British found themselves at war with both Germany and Austria-Hungary, Japan was given a diplomatic reason for joining the war. The Japanese Empire declared war on Germany on August 23, little more than 3 weeks after the start of the catastrophic European conflict.

Japan quickly seized the initiative in the Asian theatre, and German Asian possessions, overwhelmed by the numerically superior Japanese forces, were all seized by the end of 1914. During later years of the conflict, their navy participated in anti-submarine operations against the Germans and Austrians in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, gathering considerable prestige at the expense of about one thousand casualties.

Japan, the only major power that had not declared a general mobilisation in the duration of the Great War, is experiencing a relative economic boom. With negligible casualties and no damage to its industrial base, Japan started lending significant amounts of money to its allies, accumulating more than 700 million USD in foreign assets by the end of the war.

They also tried to extend their influence over to China. They presented 21 demands to the Chinese President Yuan Shikai on 18. January 1915, which would have effectively turned the Republic into a Japanese puppet. While the harshest of these demands were dropped following diplomatic pressure from the United States and the United Kingdom, the demands which were accepted gave Japan a spheres of influence in Manchuria and Shandong. Additionally, they gave them resource rights and reaffirmed that territories seized from Germany will stay Japanese.

But with further Japanese territorial expansion into China being out of question for a long time, due to Allied pressure, the nation is looking towards alternative ways of growing the Empire.

As Japan is a major Asian Entente partner, it is currently participating in the Russian civil war, officially supporting the White Russians against the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, they are always eyeing possibilities of expansion, seeking to annex coastal cities and provinces of the war embroiled nation. The Japanese forces, counting more than 70 thousand troops, are currently occupying large regions of Siberia and are quickly moving towards lake Baikal and Buryatia. They are also in control of the major Russian port of Vladivostok, a city which they occupied in 1918. The Japanese policy of expansion is opposed by the United States, who wish to see a strong white regime emerge after the war. Negotiations and deals will have to be made to prevent souring of relations between the allies, and to determine the fate of the Far East.

FRENCH REPUBLIC

France in 1919 is in a state of disarray. Despite emerging victorious in the Great War, they were pushed to the brink of collapse. 1.3 million men were killed and 1.1 million wounded and the population was further weakened by civilian casualties and lives lost to the Spanish Flu. As most of the fighting on the Western front happened on the territories of France, the people are impoverished and the state nearly bankrupted, severely in debt to both the British and the Americans. Economic losses were estimated to be 55 billion 1913 francs. It is imperative for France to rebuild its own economy and it is a popular idea to do so through war reparations. France, who has been in opposition to the rise of Germany since the Franco-Prussian War of 1871, is the biggest proponent for severe punishment of Germany. The Western front stretched across some of the most industrious and iron rich areas of France, and left them in shambles. Even before the war, the German population exceeded that of France for 20 million people, and its industrial output was nearly twice as large as French. This gap was only widened by the war. The German threat looms over France, who is determined to destroy it for good. Anything less than this will bring the French people to the streets again, starting protests and riots from right-wing nationalist groups as well as from far-left syndicalist organisations.

France, out of all Entente powers, has the clearest objectives in the peace conference at hand. They seek to retake Alsace-Lorraine, a territory lost in the war of 1871, punish Germany with further stripping of colonial and core territories, and generally try to strengthen and secure its power in Europe and beyond.

However, even with most of its attention focusing on rebuilding the nation and punishing Germany, France decided to involve itself in the struggles of The Russian Civil War. In December 1918, mixed Entente forces under French command landed at Odessa and Sevastopol, with ambition to continue to Kyiv and later towards Moscow to defeat the Bolsheviks and help reestablish a friendly government, partly because of the new Russian regime's unwillingness to pay the debts of its predecessor, which included 3.5 bn Franks owed to France. However, these ambitions may be destined to fail, as the expeditionary force at this time is quite limited, with only 3000 soldiers participating in the operation. Political

quirks, hostility of the locals, and ever dwindling troop morale show that major effort will be required to achieve even the most elementary goals.

Now, in January 1919, Paris serves as the centre of worldly politics, with the Paris Peace Conference which brings 27 delegations to attend meetings at the Palace of Versailles, where the future of Europe will be on the table.

GERMAN REICH

Germany in the year 1919 is a country in shambles. After fighting in the Great War for more than 4 years, it emerged as a loser with devastating numbers of casualties. More than 2 million or 3.5% of the population dead and further 4 million wounded in combat.

The German Empire fell shortly after the conclusion of the Great War, as a result of the first stage of the Novemberrevolution. By late 1918 German citizens were exhausted by the war and major food shortages it brought along. The workers' and soldiers' uprising started with the Kiel Mutiny on 28th of October 1918, in which the sailors rebelled against the German admiralty.

The rebellion spread across north Germany, reaching Munich on the 7th of November. There, after forcing an abdication of the Bavarian king Ludwig III, Kurt Eisner of the USPD proclaimed the People's State of Bavaria.

The revolution reached Berlin on the 9th of November, and on the same day the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II was announced, which caused him to flee to the neutral Netherlands. In the following hours, both a social-democratic republic by Philipp Scheidmann and a free socialist republic by Karl Liebknecht were announced.

Even though in the first stage of the rebellion all major socialist parties cooperated well with each other, differences between the pro-government pro-war SPD and anti-war USPD soon began to mount. Radicalisation reached its peak with the formation of KPD.

After the overthrowing of the German imperial government the relationship between them quickly soured, and resulted in a full blown uprising by the KPD and the Spartacus front. The Spartacus rebellion was summarily crushed, and its ringleaders, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were extrajudicially executed by the Freikorps on the night of 15. January, 4 days before this conference start date.

Germany signed the armistice on 11.11.1918. Under its terms they had to retreat all forces behind the Rhine, release all Entente POWs, and surrender most of its warships, planes, and war material.

With the blockade of Germany still continuing even after the ratification of a formal ceasefire, the starving nation is under pressure to sign a formal peace deal as soon as possible. If they fail to do so, they risk further

deterioration of social circumstances and prolonged devastating famine.

The objectives of Germany in the aftermath of The Great War are quite clear: sign a peace deal as soon as feasible, and negotiate for lightest possible punishments. More specifically it aims to retain as many pre-war territories and colonies as possible, or at least receive sufficient compensation for them, limit war reparations in attempt to aid the ailing economy, lessen army restrictions and reintegrate into the international community. This is imperative to keep Germany safe from foreign threats, and retain some sense of order in the country.

HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

The Hungarian Republic, a successor state to the Kingdom of Hungary, is in a dreadful predicament. Once encompassing nearly half of Austria-Hungary's land area and 40% of the population, the nation is on the brink of collapse. They are being threatened by outside actors, rampant separatism of a number of minorities, and political radicalism exacerbated by the harsh living conditions and rationing following the war.

During the Great War, Hungary fought on the Central Powers' side as an integral part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Even though more than 3.8 million soldiers were conscripted, the Hungarian army underperformed through most of the war, due to issues with multiethnic units, equipment, and general underdevelopment. Nonetheless, the Hungarian forces would prove satisfactory in defensive roles on both the Eastern and the Isonzo Front. Throughout the war, more than 650 thousand Hungarian soldiers died. While direct fighting didn't happen on Hungarian soil until the end of the war, with the exception of the short lived Romanian Campaign, general shortages of necessities and diseases would take their toll on the civilian population.

Now, after the surrender of the Central Powers, Hungary is facing perhaps its greatest existential threat since the Turkish invasions. Following the Aster Revolution, the Kingdom of Hungary was replaced by the Hungarian Republic, led by the pacifist, liberal and pro-entente government of Mihály Károlyi. One of the first acts of the republic was to unilaterally demobilise the 1.4 million strong Hungarian army as to show the Hungarian dedication to peace. This act occurred on the 2nd of November. While still claiming pre-war borders, with the exception of Banat, the government promised to hold referendums in different parts of the state to respect people's self-determination. While this has certainly boosted relations with certain members of the Entente, especially the US, it also left the Hungarian lands largely undefended, and opportunist Entente victors will not let the opportunity pass. Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and especially Romania, have all started their separate campaigns to liberate their people from Hungarian control. Currently, Yugoslavia is in control of the border strip of land including Pécs, Czechoslovakia occupies the majority of Slovakia, and Romania is advancing in Transilvania. The de facto borders are now on the Mureş river in the south and in Cluj-Napoca in the north. Serious effort

and support from Major Powers will be needed to prevent complete partition of the nation.

Hungary is also facing internal struggles, as the so far ineffective Karoly cabinet resulted in increased radicalism in the country. Strong communist and monarchist groups are threatening to pull the nation apart, if pacifism does not bear optimistic results soon enough.

KINGDOM OF GREECE

The political situation of Greece in the year 1919 can be best described with one word: division. The country is torn in between the Venizelist faction led by Eleftherios Venizelos, and the Royalist faction of king Constantine I. Despite the crux of division, Greece was able to make the decision to join the forces of Entente. Implications, and other points of contempt regarding this, still sow the seeds of conflict between the factions. While the republican, liberal and expansionist Venizelist supported the participation of Greece in the war, the conservative leaning Royalists, especially their leader, Constantine I, looked favourably upon the Central Powers. They stopped short of joining them only because of Greek vulnerability to the British navy, instead opting for neutrality. However, the final decision to enter the Great War was reached only in the summer of 1917, after joint Venizelist and Entente pressure forced the resignation of king Constantine I.

The Venizelist arguments in favour of this decision were clear. Firstly, they sought to weaken their main rivals, Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria, who were both overcome by Greece in the First and the Second Balkan War and were, especially in Bulgaria's case, riding on the waves of revanchism. Secondly, they wished to alleviate pressure on Serbia, Greece's staunch ally, whose fall would severely upset the balance in the Balkans. And lastly, the Greek expansionist government saw the opportunity of expanding their borders into Bulgaria and the Ottomans, to achieve the Greek irredentist goals, the Megali idea.

In 1919, as Greece emerges victorious from the war, the Megali idea becomes a real possibility. The Greeks look forward to avenging the events of 1453, and protecting more than a million Greeks still living in Anatolia and Turkish Thrace, where their lives are in severe danger of mob riots and anti-Greek xenophobia from Ottoman citizens. The Ottoman government had previously funded and supported such movements, most infamously in the period from 1912 to 1914 which resulted in deaths of 250 thousand Greeks. However, as a defeated power, they are in no position to continue doing so. With growing Turkish nationalism advocating for a homogeneous Turkish nation, they have also been rendered helpless to prevent their population from organising such events themselves.

Along with other Balkan powers, the Greek economy is ailing. With Greek defence expenditure averaging 27% of its GDP in 1918, and its exhaustion from the previous wars, the army will have to be demobilised. Better sooner than later, unless Greece wishes to fall into a spiral of debt.

KINGDOM OF ITALY

Emerging victorious from the Great War, the Kingdom of Italy approaches the Paris Peace Conference with their eyes on their numerous territorial claims. At the offset of the Great War, Italy decided on neutrality, supposedly to avoid provoking a revolution. Meanwhile, the general population favoured joining the Entente against Austria-Hungary. The Italians believed annexing territory, stretching from the Trentino region eastward to Trieste, would count as liberation of their people from Austria-Hungary and the culmination of Risorgimento. Growing closer to France and the United Kingdom, Italy signed the secret Pact or Treaty of London on the 26th of April 1915. It promised them the Trentino, Cisalpine Tyrol, Trieste, Gorizia, Gradisca, Dalmatia, Valona, all of Istria, and numerous smaller islands, while also promising parts of the seized colonies and an Italian occupation zone in Turkey. In return they needed only to dedicate their "entire resources for the purpose of waging war jointly with France, United Kingdom, and Russia against all their enemies" (The Treaty of London, 1915). Yet, they failed to satisfy the Entente in the long run and France and the United Kingdom have found themselves regretting certain parts of this pact. They believe Italy severely underperformed in its contributions to the war effort and required too much British and French aid.

It should be noted, that the Kingdom of Italy is at this point in time a fairly young state, and even before the war the Minister of Foreign Affairs predicted that its economy couldn't withstand a lengthy period of war. The army consisted of only about 300,000 men back then, and while many more served in the following years, a large number fell. More than 600,000 Italians dead, 950,000 wounded, and 250,000 disabled for life. The economy took a hit as well. The country spent well over 12 billion 1918 USD on the war. It is estimated that government spendings of the past three years surpasses those of the previous half a century. The Lira was devalued and inflation was spiralling after the wartime government printed money to spend on weapons. As soldiers returned home and shipbuilding firms went bankrupt, unemployment rose to two million. In the concerning conditions, trade unions pressed harder for improvement of wages and working conditions, which led to regular strikes. Services like the railroad and telegraph services were also hindered from operation. In the south, some organised groups seized portions of land for

themselves. Many exhausted workers, soldiers and peasants are taking a liking to revolutionary ideas and thus a proletarian revolution seems imminent. Yet, the Catholics and other anti-socialists strongly oppose it and wish to avoid a continuation of the Red Week of 1914.

It should also be said that while wounded by the war, the Italian economy seems to have set on the path to recovery as deposits in Italian banks grow, and businesses spread to meet new demands. Will this economic growth continue, or will it be halted by political turmoil?

Just like other European nations, wounded by the devastating Great War, Italy is entering the Paris Peace conference with an agenda they think would best serve their recovery. However, its ambitious expansion goals stand out and Italy will have to fight hard to secure what she believes is hers.

KINGDOM OF ROMANIA

Romania, a victorious Entente nation, seems to be in an enviable geopolitical situation, without any real external threats. Formed in 1859 as a result of a union between the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, it expanded in the Second Balkan War by annexing the Bulgarian region of Southern Dobrudja. At the offset of the Great War, both Central Powers and the Entente competed for Romania's allyship.

Romania joined the Entente on the 27th of August 1916, with an aim to gain their territorial claims in Hungary, where the population is mostly Romanian. Romania started with a push into the Transylvanian mountains, only to be repelled and nearly overrun by the combined Central Powers counteroffensive under German leadership which struck from Bulgaria. Romania found itself on the backfoot until November 1917. After the start of the Russian Civil War, Romania was left without Russian support and forced to sue for peace on the 9th of December 1917. They signed the Armistice of Focșani and the followup Treaty of Bucharest which resulted in Romania losing territories, rights to oil in Romania and military demobilisation. The treaty, however, was never signed by the Romanian king and was as such disregarded after the war. Romania would rejoin the war on the 10th of November 1918, a day before the German capitulation, only to be seen as a victorious Entente nation by others.

In January 1918, Romania, with approval of the Allies, occupied the former Russian territory of Bessarabia, which was previously taken over by Bolshevik forces. While Romania is not actively fighting in the ongoing Russian Civil War, it still has troops stationed in Bessarabia, which was formally annexed in April 1918.

The economy had seriously started to falter in the first two years of the war due to isolation and the state raising taxes in preparation for war. It worsened even more as Romania entered the conflict. The Central Powers occupation of Wallachia resulted in even greater devastation, as natural resources, industry and agriculture were looted to help the Central Powers' war effort. In 1919, despite the annexation of Bessarabia, the economy cannot compare to its pre-war state. Inflation is an especially rampant problem, as the government took excessive loans from the National Bank in order to fund the war, and the Romanian Lev devalued significantly.

At this point in time, Romania is militarily engaged in Transilvania. It seeks to bring the region promised by the Entente under control. The border is currently stationed along the Mureş river in the south and Cluj-Napoca in the north, and the fighting is edging closer to the Hungarian heartlands. With resistance from the local Hungarian populace and clashes against detachments of the Hungarian militia, the pacification of the region will demand considerable time and effort. If the Hungarian threat is to be neutralised, Romania will have to work towards creating a stable and secure neighbourhood. That is, to secure its gains and prevent revanchism from tearing the region apart.

KINGDOM OF SERBS, CROATS AND SLOVENES

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia, officially known as the Kingdom of SHS, is one of the youngest nations in Europe, born in the wake of the Austro-Hungarian collapse. The nation comprises two parts, the former Kingdom of Serbia, encompassing Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Vojvodina, and the State of SHS, encompassing previously Austro-Hungarian lands of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia.

The nation has seen overwhelming fighting on its territories during the Great War. The Serbian, Isonzo and the Macedonian fronts have claimed more than 750 thousand casualties. The toll was especially high in Serbia, where nearly 10% of the total population, that is 400-500 thousand people, perished. The main causes were pestilence, starvation and military action.

Yugoslavia faces a major problem, established only in December 1918, it is not officially recognised by the Entente powers. The borders of the nations are largely undefined, with only the Greek border set in stone. Its border disputes with the former Central Power nations of Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria, as well as with its fellow Entente member Italy and neutral Albania, puts the nation into a precarious position. It seeks to unify the Southern Slavs into a single entity and expand its influence through the Western Balkans. The nation has many territorial aspirations, wishing to obtain the majority slavic parts of Austria and Hungary, and either make some minor border adjustments with Bulgaria, or, more radically, entirely unify with them. In Albania, Serbia's wish to dismantle the neutral country clashes with the ideals of Wilsonian America. Yugoslavia's current main threat isn't the revanchism of defeated nations. It is the victorious Kingdom of Italy, whose designs on Istria and Dalmatia threaten Yugoslav ambitions. While Istria is already largely occupied by the Italians under the terms of the Armistice of Villa Giusti, Dalmatia is currently under the joint occupation of the Entente, split into 4 zones between UK, USA, France and Italy. The joint Dalmatian occupation zone is currently preventing complete Italian domination in the region, meaning that this issue will have to be solved by approval of all great powers. It should be noted that any further escalation of tensions between Yugoslavia and Italy threatens an even greater destabilisation of the region.

In Hungary, Yugoslavia is currently occupying the city of Pécs and has already annexed the region of Međimurje only a few days prior. Despite having their eyes on the territory of Prekmurje, border clashes with Hungary are currently not a priority. That is mostly because of the greater threat of Italy. There is also the issue of the Austrian border, where the Yugoslav forces are currently occupying most of the disputed multiethnic Carinthia region, with forces being led by a charismatic general named Rudolf Maister. Will the control over the region be decided through military means or through the path of democracy?

In Yugoslavia, masses support the union, with Yugoslavism at an all time high. Yet, destabilisation of the region by foreign players, combined with internal strife between different minorities, could quickly bring the experiment to an end.

SUBLIME OTTOMAN STATE

The Ottoman Empire has been on the decline for the past 70 years, and therefrom it derives its nickname, the Sick Man of Europe. Having been forced out of Africa in 1912 and retaining only a sliver of their European possessions in 1913, the Ottomans saw entering the war as their only hope for long term survival. In the 1913 coup d'état, the largely pro-British government was overthrown by a number of Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) members. The new regime thus established a staunch pro-German position and in turn joined the Central Powers on 31. 10. 1914.

This decision would prove to be a disastrous one, as the Ottoman military was outdated and ill-equipped for a war of such proportions. This resulted in a series of disastrous Caucasian Campaigns and in Ottomans being pushed out of Arabia and Syria. Despite experiencing limited success in the Caucasus after the Russian surrender, Greece joining the Entente and the consequent opening of the new Balkan Front, would prove too much for the exhausted empire. After the Bulgarian surrender, Entente forces had a clear way to Konstantiniyye, which the Ottomans could not properly defend. As a result, the Young Turk leadership sued for peace on October 30, 1918, signing the Armistice of Mudros. Under its terms, the defeated empire had to demobilise their army, surrender all garrisons outside Anatolia, demilitarise the straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and allow Entente occupation of any Ottoman land they deem necessary.

After the disastrous Balkan War in 1913, the CUP leadership began to radicalise and spread the perception of different minorities in Anatolia as a threat to Turkish national interests. The idea was that only with their removal would a creation of a homogeneous Turkish state be possible. This policy would result in a genocide of over 1 million Armenians, 200 thousand Assyrians, and 250 thousand Greeks. It was carried out with massacres, death marches and deportations. While the genocides of Armenians and Assyrians have largely stopped in 1916 and 1918 respectively, in 1919, the systemic extermination of Greeks is experiencing an outburst. With Greece standing over the Ottomans as a victorious Entente nation, the situation could rapidly worsen and put more than a million Greeks still present in Asia Minor in danger.

The position of Turkey in the Paris Peace Conference is unique. The colonial powers of the Entente do not perceive the

Ottomans the same way as they do the rest of the Central Powers, but rather as an uncivilised nation. They hope to gain colonies by dividing its territories among themselves. With French and British designs on territories in Arabia, Syria and even Anatolia, and American intentions for dividing land along ethnic lines, the future is looking grim for the dying empire. In Anatolia, Turkish nationalists are disorganised and without clear ways to achieve their goal, while tensions seem to be growing stronger day by day, as they oppose the victorious Entente. Led by a charismatic officer named Mustafa Kemal, they still seek the creation of a Turkish state, restlessly working towards this goal.

REPUBLIC OF GERMAN-AUSTRIA

Austria, the newborn Alpine republic, is being swarmed by troubles. Seen as the main driving force in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, one of the instigators of the Great War, very little leniency can be expected from the victorious Entente. Austria, having lost nearly 200 thousand lives, is also in an economically unenviable position. As preservation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire seems highly unlikely, German-Austria has found itself stranded. Most of its agriculture has been lost with its partition from Hungary and most industry with the loss of Czechia. The most populous part of the empire is experiencing a serious shortage of resources to provide for its people. There is also the issue of Vienna, the imperial city, in which the size of the administration is decisively too big for the medium-size nation it has become. Thus, the main focus and goal of the country is, paradoxically, to cease to exist. Instead they wish to unify with Germany. This union, which is widely supported by most of the Austrian parliament, could bring the much needed stability, but it will be hard to attain the approval of the Entente nations which seek to weaken, not strengthen Germany. The nation, which seeks to unite all Germans in the Cislethanian parts of the Empire, has come to clash with many of its neighbouring countries. Italy, a victorious Entente power, has already moved to occupy the region of South Tyrol, promised to them by the Treaty of London. The Czechoslovak forces are in control of the territories inhabited by the Sudeten Germans. Dislodging any of them militarily would be near-impossible, as any Austrian mobilisations could provoke the wrath of the Entente. Meanwhile, Yugoslav forces control large parts of Austrian Carinthia, with the de facto borders now being on the river Drava. It seems like the frequent clashes have potential to escalate into a worse conflict. At another part of the border, in Translethana, Hungary, lives a significant number of Germans, especially in the German majority region of Burgenland. A settlement will have to be reached, as the borders in the disintegrating empire are being drawn.

The best chance the Austrians have in preserving their nation is ironically the one that made them lose their empire in the first place; people's self determination. With the majority of its claimed territory being inhabited by the Germans, Austria is looking hopefully towards the US and the 10th clause of

Wilson's Fourteen Points that establishes the right of people to self-determination.

RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

Russia became a member of the Triple Entente on the 13th of September 1907, after the Entente Cordiale and an agreement with the British Empire. They agreed to delimitate their mutual spheres of interest and form an alliance with each other and France, with whom Russia had already had a more than a decade old defensive pact. By entering the Great War, Russia was committing to honour their word. Many European powers envied the Russian fast growing economy and ardent patriotism of the bustling crowds that accompanied the soldiers to farewell. Nevertheless, they quickly found out how unprepared they were for a full-scale war. At Tannenberg and the First Battle of the Masurian Lakes Russia lost two armies numbering 200 thousand soldiers, a loss which dealt a devastating blow to the morale of the people. At least their unsuccessful offensive in East Prussia of 1914 ultimately enabled the French victory in Marne, as German troops were preoccupied with Russians. It was only in 1916 that things began to take a brighter turn for the Russians. General Aleksey Brusilov broke the Austrian lines and led Russian troops to capture Austro-Hungarian territories of East Galicia and Bukovina in the arguably most successful offensive of the war. Despite the vastness of the Russian Empire, average 5% economic growth in the past years, and more than 12 million mobilised men, their resources were insufficient and along with multiple failures on the war-fronts and over 9 million casualties, this began to manifest in economical struggles in cities. It did not matter that by 1917 the fighting had taken up the form of a war of attrition and that the Russian army was preparing for an ambitious offensive aimed to recapture the lost territories. The morale was at an all time low among the soldiers and civilians alike. The cost of war had jumped from 1,500 million rubles in 1914 to 14,500 million in 1916. In response, the tsarist government increased foreign borrowing and began to print more rubles, which resulted in a devastating inflation. The cost of living rose by 300% and just as the tsar mishandled the military affairs, the tsarina and infamous Rasputin failed to deal with home affairs. This led to numerous strikes and demonstrations. The soldiers, tasked with suppressing them, joined them instead. The demand for change gained movement and the Bolsheviks, with Vladimir Lenin steering the ship, took this opportunity to achieve their cause. After the revolution of 1905 and the February

Revolution, they were finally prepared to take the helm of the nation. The Bolsheviks seized power in October 1917.

Russia exited the Great War in 1918 with the signage of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which, while now annulled by the Armistice of November 11, still stripped Russia of large parts of their Western possessions.

The initial opposition to the new regime were the non-Bolshevik left and the rightist Whites. After losing control of the Trans-Siberian railway, the Bolsheviks decided to crack down on non-friendly socialists, clergy, aristocrats and various other counter-revolutionary groups, beginning the campaign of 'Red Terror'. On the night of 16th-17th of July, 1918, the tsar and his family were shot in their prison cell.

The Red Army recovered most of Eastern European Russia. Meanwhile, in Omsk, admiral Kolchak, with the assistance of the British and Americans, organised his own army, which found it hard to distinguish between Socialist Revolutionaries and Communists, simply declaring all Reds as the enemy. The British led North Russia Intervention is fighting communists in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk. The Japanese greatly reinforced their numbers in the Far Eastern territories of Russia. The Czechoslovak Legion continues to be a thorn in the Bolshevik side, occupying large parts of the vital Trans-Siberian railway. The Allies landed in Odessa and Sevastopol in December 1918, and only a few days ago, the Red Army invaded Ukraine. All the while, foreign support for the Whites increases.

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic is the world's first attempt at a communist state. As such it is deeply unpopular with most other worldly governments, who deem the communists' determination to spread the revolution a menace to the whole of Europe.

Lloyd George expressed his wish for Russia to attend the Paris Peace Conference at the end of the previous year and on the 16th of January he presented the three options regarding the 'Russian Question'. The first was to destroy Bolshevism by military intervention; second, Russia to be isolated; third, to invite the Russians, including the Bolsheviks, to the Peace Conference. Clemenceau decided that he prefers the third.

RUSSIAN STATE

Immediately after the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks gained opposition. The largest groups among them were the Mensheviks, the 'Green' anarchists, Socialist Revolutionaries, and 'White' rightists. The latter soon formed a resistance army, led by former imperial military officers. It is called the White Army. Their purpose is to overthrow the communists, yet they have no clear alternative to the Soviet government. Kolchak was proclaimed the Supreme Ruler in Siberia in November last year, however, his position is more that of a military commander than administrator, as Kolchak considers himself a fighting man, not a politician.

Additionally, the White Army is not ideologically homogeneous and members of different political beliefs unite under this anti-Bolshevik movement. What they have in common is a strong sense of nationalism and hatred for the Bolsheviks, seeking to extinguish the revolution here and now. The most notable leaders of the White Army are Kolchak, Yudenich, Denkin, Alekseyev, and Kornilov. The latter two have already passed.

The White Army has considerable foreign support, with Italy and France providing munitions and supplies. They also enjoy British and American support, however, these two powers are more interested in reconciling the warring parties. The French, British and Japanese armies have also involved themselves directly in the conflict, while the Czechoslovak legion, seeking to return to its homeland, has as a matter of convenience aligned with the Whites for the time being. As the heterogeneous confederation of anti-Bolsheviks is rocked by internal instability, further effort from its allies will be needed if it wishes to stand a chance of winning.

REPUBLIC OF POLAND

The Republic of Poland, the successor state to the German puppet Kingdom of Poland, is a nation with a destiny. They seek to unite Polish speakers into a single state and to create a strong buffer against the Bolsheviks. On their quest, Poland has come to odds with every single one of its neighbours. This has led to severe overstretching of the Polish regular forces, as the army, while quickly expanding, is at this time only 100 thousand men strong. This rapid expansion is being made possible by more than 2 million Poles that served on both sides and on all fronts of the war. Despite 450 thousand Polish war casualties, this still leaves Poland with an experienced army core, capable of training new recruits in close to no time.

In Germany, the Greater Poland uprising is in full swing, as Polish independence fighters continue to occupy the regions of Poznań, West Prussia and Upper Silesia. The insurgents continue to battle both the German militias and regular army forces, that are, while weakened by German internal strife, still proving to be a formidable opponent. While the regular army of Poland is not participating in the conflict, the insurgents are receiving significant diplomatic and military backing by the Republic.

In Ukraine, Polish goals of creating a strong buffer against the Soviets and Pan-Polonism clash. The Polish and Ukrainian republics are currently engaged in an armed conflict, with interests clashing over Eastern Galicia, Volhynia and Bucovina.

While these isolated conflicts have for sure taken a toll on the Polish State, there looms a single greater threat than all of the current belligerents combined; the Bolsheviks. The newborn communist regime is promising a revolutionary and Soviet led Eastern Europe, a reality in which Poland could hardly stay independent. Although the Russian SFSR's forces are currently overstretched because of the civil war and cannot hope to bring a feasible invasion force to the Polish border, sudden developments could quickly free much needed war material and enable an invasion. To counter this, Poland is looking towards the policy of Intermarium; a grand alliance of states against the Bolsheviks. This idea is spearheaded by the Polish Chief of State, Józef Piłsudski.

While no actions have been committed against Czechoslovakia and Lithuania, both of the nations still eye the newborn state

with distrust. This is because Polish expansionist ideas include territories of both countries, the Vilnius region in Lithuania, and disputed land on the Polish-Slovak border. Internally, the state is mostly united under the militaristic government of Piłsudski, as the opposition awaits until the end of conflict so as not to fracture and weaken the Republic in these hard times. Notably, there is some additional opposition from the Polish left, however, it is currently marginalised and left on the fringe of Polish society.

TSARDOM OF BULGARIA

Bulgaria, while a relatively young nation, has already had its fair share of troubles. Established in the year 1878 in the aftermath of the Russo-Turkish War, it encompassed only a small part of the territories inhabited by Bulgarian people. Consequently, irredentism quickly became the main focus in the nation's foreign policy.

The National Catastrophe in 1913 saw Bulgaria lose most of their territorial gains of the First Balkan War to their neighbours. Soon after, the revanchist Bulgaria under the leadership of Tsar Ferdinand and his Germanophile government would join the Central Powers. Their entry on the 14th of October 1915 would bring about the collapse of Serbia, which had up til then effectively resisted Austro-Hungarian attacks, but was unprepared for a two front war. Thereupon Bulgaria finally achieved its goal of annexing the region of Macedonia. The Macedonians are by many considered Bulgarians as their language closely resembles the Bulgarian.

When Romania joined the war on the side of the Entente in 1916, Bulgarian support once again proved to be a decisive factor in the Balkan front. An attack from Bulgarian territory effectively neutralised Romanian advances and resulted in occupation of Wallachia.

Even though Bulgaria was militarily successful for most of the war, 4 years of fighting would soon prove to be too much to bear. Civilian support for the war withered away with time due to harsh conditions of living and food shortages. After Greece joined the war in 1917 and the Vardar offensive of 1918, large parts of the army began to desert or surrender. Bulgaria, left with no other choice to prevent occupation of the country, signed an armistice with the Entente on the 30th of September 1918.

The state in which Bulgaria finds itself in 1919 is highly troublesome. The country has been in a state of war since 1912, with close to no breaks in between. 6 years of war have ruined the nation's economy, with foreign debt amounting to 3 billion gold francs. Agricultural sector suffered just as much. The primarily agricultural nation is thus experiencing severe food shortages and an alarming famine.

The nation had been strained to the breaking point by the Great War, in which nearly a fifth of its population served under arms. Demoralised soldiers are susceptible to socialist and agrarian propaganda, while supporters of the Bulgarian

National Program are still hard at work in hopes of creating a Greater Bulgaria. They are even going as far as funding terrorist organisations such as IMRO.

As its neighbours leer at the defeated nation's territories and hope to impose humiliating peace treaties, Bulgaria must enter the Paris Peace Conference talks and fight to retain the little they have.

UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

Ukraine declared its independence almost immediately after the October Revolution. They thought this might prevent the spread of the Revolution, but they were soon proved wrong by many local communist, impressed by the Bolshevik revolution.

Most of Ukraine had been a part of the Russian Empire since 1793, most useful for its mineral resources and farming. The communist revolutionist movement in Russia seemed sympathetic to its national movements at first, yet insisted on Ukraine remaining a part of the Russian Soviet state. They issued an ultimatum which demanded Ukrainian support for the Red Army. The demands were not met, as Ukrainian authorities thought they infringed on their independence a lot more than what could be tolerated. The Red Army invaded Ukraine in the beginning of 1918, establishing a new government, and quickly overtaking Kyiv with the help of local Bolsheviks. Their advances were only stopped by the Central Powers.

Ukraine's potential as the granary of Europe was also recognised by famine-stricken Germany and Austria who saw it as a way to deal with hunger of their own population. In return for food shipments, the Ukrainian People's Republic gained military support from the Central Powers. However, with this Brest-Litovsk Treaty, Ukraine was virtually annexed to the Central Powers, although it retained its theoretical independence. The Germans deemed the Rada government as too socialist and inept to lead an independent state, as they failed to meet the agreed amount of shipments. Germany in response thought it best to create a puppet state.

The Armistice of November 1918 saw the Central Powers' troops' withdrawal from Ukrainian territory. It is clear that what was decided in the Russian Brest-Litovsk treaty does not hold any value anymore. It was also already annulled by the new Bolshevik government in Russia.

The nationalist Directory established its own government, overthrowing the German puppet state, which rekindled instability in the region. Sensing weakness, the local Bolsheviks seized the opportunity to enter Ukraine once again. On the 2nd of January, mere 16 days ago, the Red Army declared Kharkiv the seat of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Ukraine. The nation aims towards liberating Ukrainians from shackles of capitalism and reigning nobility, while also consolidating Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

Meanwhile, the West Ukrainian People's Republic is fighting a war against the Poles, for mutually claimed territory. They are considering a unification with the UPR, to stand a chance against the better equipped and larger Polish army.

In the east, an anarchist movement, led by Nestor Makhno is gaining momentum. They are reorganising communist factory workers and peasants and gaining popularity, as well as enemies.

The now-unsure future of poverty-stricken and war-ravaged Ukraine will be decided at the Paris Peace Conference. With numerous governments, armies and movements all wishing to execute their own agendas, this will be no easy feat.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

The United Kingdom or the British Empire entered the Great War in 1914 as a sea power, declaring war on Germany on behalf of the whole British Empire. In the naval battle at Jutland it successfully sustained trade between the Entente powers, and became the arsenal and financier of the alliance. Yet, at the same time this large investment and great involvement in the war also meant that the United Kingdom suffered great losses. Military spendings between 1914 and 1919 amounted to more than three billion 1919 pounds, according to the Statistics of the military effort of the British Empire during the Great War. The country was in 900 million pound debt to the US, its once enviable worldwide investments were largely destroyed, similarly as its export markets, and 35.8% of the British Empire's mobilised forces became casualties.

In 1919 the British Empire is territorially vast and striking, with the underlying issue of inability to properly defend the empire as it did before 1914. One of the most pressing issues at this moment lies very close to home. The Irish nationalists have been demanding home rule since 1870, almost seeing it come into force in 1914, halted only by the outbreak of the Great War. In 1918, when conscription was attempted to be introduced to Ireland, through a new home rule act, Irish nationalists flooded the streets in mass demonstrations and the separatist party Sinn Féin only gained more support. The year 1918 also saw the first armed attacks on RIC men since the Easter Rising, and the Armistice Day on the 11th of November was in Dublin overshadowed by violent riots.

Riots, strikes, and mutinies are also very present in other parts of the United Kingdom. Soldiers are returning home to jobs with meagre wages and horrible working conditions, while still struggling with psychological and physical disabilities, the war spit them out with. There is no doubt that in the next few years, the British Isles are about to undergo a lot of social change. Already in 1918, the United Kingdom adopted universal adult male suffrage and limited votes for women. After long years of soldiers from all corners of the Empire fighting side by side, advocates for rights of non-caucasian races are becoming louder and demanding the end of racial discrimination. Long working days, hazardous conditions, lack of rights, and wages that were nothing more than a pittance, are seeing many workers join trade unions, which are steadily gaining more voice in the political sphere. Additionally, many

are starting to sympathise with communist ideas, which has the government afraid of the threat of a revolution, like that in Russia.

The British goals at the conference are quite flexible, keeping the balance of power in Europe, while expanding the Empire wherever possible.

In their effort against communism, the British are also taking part in the fight in Russia. They contribute the lion's share in allied missions in Siberia, and this is not the only place they are fighting the Reds at. As a very recent development, Winston Churchill was appointed Secretary of State of War, and he is determined to succeed against communism.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America, one of the only countries that emerged from the war stronger than before, is looking to be a major player in shaping world politics for the duration of the conference. After declaring neutrality at the start of the conflict, the United States would still unofficially support the Entente, lending them significant sums of money while also exerting diplomatic pressure on the Central Powers. After years of German unrestricted warfare and the diplomatic blunder that was the Zimmerman telegram, the United States would finally join the war on 4. April, 1917. Tens of thousands of fresh American soldiers would begin arriving at the European theatre every day, an act which broke both the German lines and their morale. After the decisive Hundred Days Offensive, the dispirited Germans would sue for peace on 11. November 1918, with more than 1.2 million Americans already being on the continent. After the war, the United States are on top of the world. While the general mobilisation was enacted, the economic base remained largely intact in the duration of the war. This has led to a major economic boom, as industry and production of goods is being expanded to provide supplies to the war torn European continent.

With the nation being the most significant money lender to the Entente, lending nearly 7 billion USD to the war exhausted nations, the United States are in a very strong negotiating position. The nation is in a unique position of being able to exert their leverage on the victorious nations of United Kingdom, France and Italy, seeking to curb some of their imperial, revanchist and expansionist policies, while also still keeping cordial relations with them.

The nation is following a newfound ideology, Wilsonianism, a specific set of goals best outlined in Wilson's Fourteen Points and in his speech to the parliament on 2. April 1917, in which he took a moral high ground, declaring that "The world must be made safe for democracy." and that Americans must fight "for the rights and liberties of small nations" and to "bring peace and safety to make the world itself at last free.". In short, the United States is seeking a liberal world order led by America, in which free trade, democracy and collective security would lead to world peace, stability and prosperity.

The United States are also involved in the Russian civil war, sending supplies to White Army forces and more than 15

thousand soldiers to the Arkhangelsk and the Siberian theatre. Notably, the forces have goals that differ from other Entente forces also present in the operation. They seek to rescue the Czechoslovak Legion forces while also protecting American property, but are not prepared to offensively engage the Bolsheviks, as the general populace in the US is reluctant to support what many see as the remnants of the old Tsarist regime. The US is also dedicated towards preventing expansion by outside actors such as Japan, seeking to stay on relatively good terms with the Soviets and to allow their later integration into the world's regime. This has led to the US command frequently clashing with British, French, and Japanese counterparts, which want the US to take a more active part in the action.

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

It is the 18th of January 1919. Six days ago the French, British, American, and Italian heads of government with their foreign ministers, conducted a preliminary meeting in which they, along with the Japanese representatives, formed the Supreme Council, or the Council of Ten. Their word will hold the most value in the upcoming negotiations.

For the sake of the committee, the chairs have made a decision to include more seats at the negotiation table, for the countries that were originally not invited to the conference.

After the White Army refused to attend peace talks with the Bolshevik government at Prinkipo, George Lloyd repeated his wish for Russia to join the Paris Peace Conference. Believing that the only way to resolve or at least deescalate the situation in Russia is to hold peace talks between both parties, the Entente now considers Paris to be the perfect ground for that. While the Soviet delegation is composed of two nations, the representatives of the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SSR, they are still at a significant numerical disadvantage considering the majority of the nations in the committee are hostile towards the Bolsheviks. This overwhelming presence of their allies makes it easier for the White Army delegation to accept the invitation, as they believe this to be their chance to gain some political advantage over the Bolsheviks. The latter, however, enter with the agenda, to spread the revolution and gain recognition. The Defeated Central Powers, who were originally planned to be invited only for the signing of the treaty, were after specially requesting permission to attend, allowed to send their delegations. Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire hope to achieve minimal punishments for their loss in the Great War, despite their very limited voting rights.

GOALS OF THE COMMITTEE

In this committee we plunge into the history that could have been. The delegates are to carefully examine the historical context of the issues at hand and make themselves familiar with the role of their countries in the Great War, as well as in international politics of the previous years. Of course, one must not forget the domestic situation of their allocated country either. Down below are the questions that we advise you to keep in mind while conducting your research.

- What role did your country play in the Great War?
- How did the war impact your country? What are the economic, social, political, and territorial consequences?
- What are the biggest social movements in your countries and what is their relationship with the current government?
- Are there any threats to the current government of your country? If yes, how is your country dealing with them?
- Does your country have any territorial claims outside its current recognised borders?
- What are the domestic issues that your country is currently prioritising?
- What is your country's main agenda going into the Paris Peace Conference?
- Who are your country's allies? Is it possible to request help from them or is your country supposed to aid them?
- What are your country's military capabilities?
- What systems does your country support or fear?
- What is the ideal future envisioned by your country?
- What ideologies does your government and people subscribe to?

Please note that this committee begins its sessions on the 18th of January 1919 and any document that was made or released, and any event that took place after that will be considered as a speculation, not a fact. However, we advise the delegates to look into the near future as well in their research, as the committee timeline will move through different months, as the sessions progress. This means that any piece of information from June 1919, will not be useful to

the delegate possessing it, until the chairs proclaim that we are in June 1919.

We advise all delegates to find whether their country changes governments in the duration of the Paris Peace Conference, or if there is any serious threat for that to happen. The reason behind is that any country might experience a change of government in the duration of the conference, all depending on the delegates' actions.

How the committee sessions progress and how the history is changed is completely dependent on the delegates. In the last session, the state of the world might resemble the one that we remember from our history lessons, or it might be completely unrecognisable, the borders moved a hundred times over, new ideologies spread, or even new wars being fought.

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