EXECUTIVE ORDER

ESTABLISHING A COMMITTEE TO DIRECT THE WAR

BY ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Chair: Hamzah Daud
Co-Chair: Ngoc Vo
Crisis Director: Smiti Mittal
Directive Director: Katherine Crandell

Harry Truman Cabinet, 1945: Background Guide
LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings,

My name is Hamzah, and I’ll be serving as your chair for the 2019 Stanford Model United Nations Conference. I’m a first-year undergrad studying political science, with a particular interest in American constitutional law and foreign policy. Welcome to our crisis committee of President Harry S. Truman’s advisers near the close of the Second World War. Fun fact: the “S” in Harry S. Truman stands for nothing; his parents could not decide between two names so they just put the letter “S.” Anyway, I want this weekend to be intellectually rigorous and stimulating for all of you, though at the same time, I don’t want you to over-stress. Enjoy your time here on the Farm. This place is amazing, and you should take some time to explore outside of committee and meet new people from around the world. Yes, I am your chair, but I also want to be approachable and a friend. When I did high school MUN, I hated aloof and arrogant chairs, so please come and talk to me. I’m interested in learning about you!

With that said, let’s get to business. Allied forces have successfully secured the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany and the fighting in the European theater has largely ended. Though the issues of post-War Europe are of great concern to us, war in the Pacific theater continues to claim hundreds—sometimes even thousands—of American casualties every day. I have assembled you all to advise me on our course of action in these crucial next weeks and months.

We begin at the Potsdam Conference, when the United States had not yet successfully tested an atomic bomb. This committee will guide our negotiations with the British and Soviets, while also responding to domestic occurrences and managing the war effort. After the conference, this committee will continue to coordinate the war effort until the surrender of Japan,
or our own. Keep in mind that though American victory is expected, it is far from certain. The Japanese people are a very belligerent and a very devoted people. To expect their surrender without painful losses of our own would be severely misguided.

The course of history seems simple in hindsight, but I would caution you against framing it so. You never know what may happen. The slightest mistake by the most junior of officers could alter the course of history and our committee may not mirror what actually happened in 1945. Throughout our time together, I hope to teach you (and learn from you) about the history of the time, wartime decision making, and presidential leadership.

If you have any questions, please email me at hamzahdaud@stanford.edu. At the start of committee, I will give out my personal cell number for easier contact (I expect many, clever prank calls over the course of the weekend). See you all soon!

Cheers,
Hamzah Daud
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt

On April 12, 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the man who had led the United States out of the Great Depression and through the Second World War, suddenly passed away from a cerebral hemorrhage. Roosevelt’s vice president, the former senator from Missouri, Harry S. Truman was elevated to the presidency. Roosevelt had notoriously kept Truman out of the loop on most matters—he hadn’t even told Truman about the Manhattan Project. As a result, Truman relied heavily on the holdover Roosevelt aides to guide his decision making. However, keep in mind the relationships between your character and Truman before Roosevelt’s death. These will be important in determining your stature in this committee.

State and War Department Tug-of-War

President Roosevelt had a notorious disdain for the State Department. He routinely overruled their advice and instead opted for a more informal diplomatic structure. When Truman came into office, he tried to balance the diplomacy-military relationship, thereby elevating the State Department’s role in forming foreign policy decisions. The rivalry between the State and War Departments was dynamic, and even bitter at times, as they tried to sway President Truman toward their ideas for the post-War global order. Understanding Truman’s thinking regarding this matter, and how the military and State Department pursued their agendas, will be crucial to your success in this committee.
Pacific Theater

After the surrender of Nazi Germany on May 8, 1945, the American focus shifted to the Pacific theater. Fighting against the Japanese was very different from fighting against the Germans and Italians. Obviously, there was a racial element in the Pacific theater which was not as prominent in the European. Moreover, Japan was much more heinous in its treatment of American POWs. This created a viscerally callous response from the United States. Army Air Forces deliberately firebombed, at a time of high wind gusts, the city of Tokyo to effect maximum destruction. Keep in mind that to an American military planner, any mercy toward the Japanese meant the deaths of American soldiers.
COMMITTEE TOPICS

Topic One: Potsdam Conference

Our committee will begin at the Potsdam Conference. Here, as the American delegation, you will advice President Truman on his negotiations with the heads of the British and Soviet governments. Prior to the conference, the three nations agreed to discuss the establishment of the post-War international order, the division and administration of defeated Germany, and the ongoing war with Japan. Tensions between the U.K. and U.S. and the Soviet Union were fraying as Soviet troops occupied Central and Eastern Europe and erecting puppet Communist governments. President Roosevelt and Stalin had enjoyed generally warm personal relations and also had a good working relationship. However, Truman is much more suspicious of the Communists and their intentions in Eastern Europe. Also, important to consider is the upcoming general election in the U.K. which could change the government and Prime Minister. As a delegate, you will have to navigate crises at home and on the warfront in the Pacific, all while managing the delicacies of international diplomacy.

Topic Two: War Effort

After Potsdam, the committee will return to Washington to continue guiding the war effort. Victory over Japan is of the essence and we will need to direct our full national effort to ending this terrible world war. This second topic will be a lot more dynamic and will require rapid response from the committee to the fast-paced action occurring on the battlefield. Keep in mind your character’s office, his or her responsibilities, and the essentiality of wartime coordination. You will know very little of the situation on the ground up until we arrive at this topic. Remember, these are challenging and uncertain times for our nation.
PERSONALITY LIST

Note: For the purposes of simplicity, the assigned members shall remain in their assigned offices for the duration of this committee. We will disregard any resignations and firings during this period.

 Secretary of State Edward Stettinius
The Secretary of State is responsible for American foreign policy. During the war, Stettinius is responsible for managing our alliances, organizing diplomatic necessities, and ensuring political support abroad from American foreign policy objectives.

 Secretary of War Henry Stimson
The Secretary of War is responsible for the operation of the vast American military machine. During the war, Stimson was the conservative Republican counterbalance to Roosevelt and Truman’s liberal cabinets. He claimed direct control of the atomic bomb project, with Major General Leslie Groves directly reporting to Stimson.

 Attorney General Frances Biddle
The Attorney General is responsible for prosecution of crime in the United States as its chief law enforcement officer. During the war, Biddle led the prosecution and execution of Nazi agents in the U.S. and violations of the civil rights of African Americans. He was a strong voice for the prosecution of war crimes committed by the Axis powers.

 Postmaster General Robert Hannegan
The Postmaster General is responsible for the American postal system. During the war, Hannegan occupied not only this post, but also was the Chair of the Democratic Party. His position as Postmaster General was effectively a sinecure. Instead, he was a valuable political adviser to Truman who ensured he won the Democratic party’s vice presidential nomination in 1944 over incumbent Henry Wallace.

 Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal
The Secretary of the Navy is responsible for the operation of American naval forces. During the war, Forrestal was instrumental in coordinating the “island hopping” strategy adopted by the U.S. In 1945, he began advocating for an agreement with Japan for a faster surrender to keep the USSR out of the Pacific theater.

 Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes
The Secretary of Interior is responsible for the management of American federal land. Ickes implemented much of FDR’s New Deal programs and was also a prominent supporter of civil rights. During the war, he largely oversaw the erection of the American military machine, which included domestic production, resource allocation, and land management.
Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard
The Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for the production and safety of food. During the war, Wickard oversaw the increased farmer production and managed rationing. He is a crucial leader in the supply chain for Allied troops worldwide.

Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace
The Secretary of Commerce is responsible for American business and industry. During the war, Wallace served as FDR’s Vice President from 1941-45, then after being dropped from the ticket in favor of Truman, he became Secretary of Commerce in FDR’s cabinet and continued under Truman. Wallace had tensions with Truman, and ultimately was asked to resign because of a speech urging conciliatory relations with the USSR—the antithesis of Truman’s foreign policy. Nevertheless, Truman once said that the two most important members of his political team were Eleanor Roosevelt and Henry Wallace.

Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins
The Secretary of Labor is responsible for the management of American labor. During the war, Perkins was vital on the home front in managing worker-employer tensions, avoiding strikes, and transitioning skilled labor jobs previously occupied by men to women.

Director of Los Alamos Laboratory J. Robert Oppenheimer
J. Robert Oppenheimer was an influential physicist who was one of the chief architects of the Manhattan Project. During the war, he led the development of the atomic bomb and served as a member on the Interim Committee which advised the president on nuclear policies. Oppenheimer had strong Communist sympathies, but worse, was also professor at U.C. Berkeley.

Major General Leslie Groves
Major General Groves oversaw the Manhattan Project, the top-secret operation to develop the atomic bomb. He directed the development, construction, and testing of the A-bomb. He also had command of intelligence efforts to understand German nuclear research.

Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs William Clayton
The Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs is responsible for the promotion of American economic policies abroad. During the war, he worked in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, the Office of War Mobilization, and then became the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs. He was a member of the Interim Committee and a close economic advisor to Truman at the Potsdam Conference.
RESEARCH AND PREPARATION

Crisis delegates are expected to constructively employ innovative and historically accurate strategies to manage crisis updates and directives. The following three pillars of advice from the University of Toronto’s Model UN guide are instructive:

Research which actions are historically successful and unsuccessful

Since this is a historical crisis committee, we will be revisiting history. A good means to strengthen your crisis arc is to identify which historical decisions and actions were successful and which were not. Knowing these, you can plan strong operations and avoid weak, ineffective tactics.

Identify the tools, capital, and equipment your character has at his or her disposal

Knowing what actions are within your character’s abilities is essential in ensuring your directives come to fruition. Note what is outside your command, who may have those authorities, if they are valuable to your cause, and what you can offer them in return.

Understand the political, social, and interpersonal relationships of the time period

Being familiar with the underlying political, social, and interpersonal tensions of the 1940s will be an important factor that should both guide your crisis decision making, interactions with other delegates, and the directives you write.
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How should the U.S. interact with our allies? Should the Soviet Union be treated as a close ally?
2. What should the American response to growing Soviet influence in Eastern and Central Europe be?
3. What should the post-War international order look like?
4. How do we counteract Communist and Japanese espionage?
5. How do we hasten our path to victory in the Pacific theater?
6. What do we do to stop Japan from carrying out this war for years on end?
7. Should we use the atomic bomb if testing is successful?
RESOURCES

Note: This list is a suggested starting point for understanding President Truman and his decision making. Please research your character further through legitimate websites and articles. However, remember that books are usually more trustworthy resources.

1. J. Samuel Walker, *Prompt and Utter Destruction*
2. David McCullough, *Truman*
3. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*; Books 1 and 8
4. Errol Morris, *Fog of War* (the documentary)
7. https://www.nps.gov/articles/trumanatomicbomb.htm