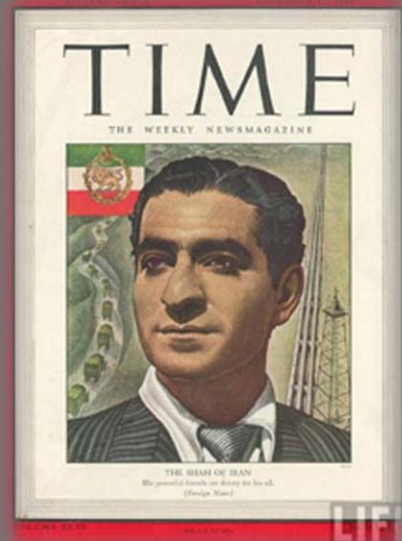
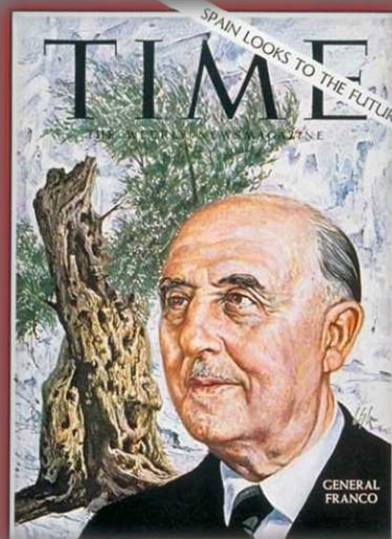


2013

# HISTORICAL CRISIS 2013 BACKGROUND GUIDE

MIT MODEL UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE V



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Dear Delegates of the History Security Council,

We wish you a warm welcome to the Historical Security Council of the 5th annual Massachusetts Institute of Technology Model United Nations Conference (MITMUNC)! My name is Bahar Shah and I will be chairing the Historical Security Council along with my co-chair Mahmoud Ghulman, and crisis director, Eyas Alsharaiha. We have planned an exciting committee for all of you, and we hope you enjoy.

The date is April 4, 1946, the first year the Security Council has been in operation. It is a special time for this committee, as it is the year when the basic principles that will guide the SC through the years were established. It will be your job to examine the SC's role in resolving conflict, at the same time setting precedents for the SCs of years to come. The possibilities for collaboration and progress are endless!

We ask you to address issues that arose in the aftermath of World War II in Spain and Iran. Keep in mind that the nature of this committee is such that only events that occurred prior to April 4, 1946 may be used in the discussion. Nevertheless, you are not obligated to imitate the actions that your nation took after this date.

While it is necessary to examine both your nation's history with the topics and its past decisions, we encourage you to find unique solutions to promote international peace and security.

We have composed a background guide below to steer your ideas and to provide an overview of the issues. We ask, however, that you pursue these topics

beyond this packet, utilizing libraries, the internet, newspapers, and videos, particularly sources published through 1946. Your preparation will help to make the debate in February as lively and substantive as possible.

We are confident that through your debate and imagination, you will have the opportunity to change history! We are looking forward to meeting all of you in February and experiencing your ingenuity and intelligence. If you have any questions about the committee, the topics, Model UN in general or just want to say hi, we'd love for you to contact us anytime.

See you soon!

*Bahar Shah*

*Mahmoud Ghulman*

*Eyas Alsharaiha*

Historical Security Council Chairs and  
Crisis Director,  
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## HISTORICAL SECURITY COUNCIL

*Note: The date is April 4, 1946 which is the first year the Security Council has been in operation. Keep in mind that the nature of this committee is such that only events that occurred prior to April 4, 1946 may be used in the discussion. Nevertheless, you are not obligated to imitate the actions that your nation took after this date. While it is necessary to examine both your nation's history with the topics and its past decisions, we encourage you to find unique solutions to promote international peace and security.*

**Topic 1:**

# THE SITUATION IN SPAIN: FRANCISCO FRANCO'S DICTATORIAL REGIME AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STABILITY

## Statement of the Problem

The Spanish Civil War, the trial run for WWII troops, left Spain in a hidden turmoil masked by the subsequent international conflict. The defeat of those loyal to the monarchy left the authoritarian general Francisco Franco in ultimate control of the nation. Although he kept Spain neutral during WWII, his internal reforms have been violent and unpopular. With the establishment of the UN, the validity and safety of fascist governments such as Franco's have come into question.

Is their presence threatening international security? What precedent should the Security Council set in dealing with such precarious systems? And most importantly, what effects will the SC's actions have on the already aggravated situation? The rumors of another revolution are important signs that this topic cannot be ignored. We trust you will do your best to come up with the answers.

## Early Conflict between Nationalists and Republicans Leading Up to the Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War, the climax of a long history of political instability and discontent in Spain, marked the final struggle between democracy and fascism. Between 1887 and 1924, the monarchy of King Alfonso XIII ruled over Spain without controversy. When the king informally relinquished his power to military dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera (rn.1923 – 1930), the desire for a republican government began to strengthen. Socialists, liberals, anarchists, workers' organizations, and those who opposed the monarchy coalesced into the Popular Front (Frente Popular) and forced King Alfonso XIII to permit free elections in April 1931.

After a stunning victory in the elections and the declaration of the Second Spanish Republic, President Francisco Largo Caballero began a series of controversial reforms that threatened the monopoly of the upper classes and the Roman Catholic Church. He gave women the right to vote, excluded the church from having a role in education, and legalized divorce. Catalonia and the Basque regions were given more political autonomy, and land reform measures divided large southern estates among local peasants.

The Spanish Nationalist Falange party was founded in 1933 by Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, the son of Miguel Primo de Rivera. José Antonio inherited his father's right-wing authoritarian views and was devoted to halting the spread of Communism. He created a nationalistic, militaristic, and internationally aggressive party, the Falange Española, modeled after other European fascist parties, such as Mussolini's in Italy and Hitler's in Germany. Using quasi-religious imagery,

its leaders preached that the nation was “an organic unity that subsumes all divisions (classes, individuals, groups) and conflict in society and produces social harmony and peace...Subordination to the fascist state’s laws and leader was the way that individuals fulfill their destiny.”[1] A restriction of personal liberties and severe punishments for disobedience ensued. Government propaganda increased. The government maintained economic control over all industries, while encouraging private enterprise. Government-regulated “corporations,” composed of both workers and management, replaced unions and outlawed strikes.

This “Nationalist Front” survived a short-lived power struggle in the 1933 election, but the Popular Front defeated the Nationalists in February 1936 and appointed a novice yet appealing politician, Manuel Azaña, as President. In response, a general named Francisco Paulino Hermenegildo Teodile Franco-Bahamonde gathered his forces to resist the republican social reforms.

### **Francisco Franco: A Leader for the Nationalists**

Born December 4, 1892 in El Ferrol del Caudillo, Spain, the young Franco was destined for a military career. His father was a naval officer who enrolled his son in the Toledo Academia de Infanteria and his mother was a conservative upper middle-class Roman Catholic. After graduating as a second lieutenant in 1910, Franco volunteered in Spanish Morocco, fighting the Rif tribespeople. He earned a reputation for “efficiency, dedication and concern for his troops’ well-being,” as well

as that of “a severe disciplinarian prepared to have men shot for minor infractions of regulations.”[2] Following a rapid series of promotions and the 1926 Rif War victory to his credit, he became Spain’s youngest brigadier general.

Under the military dictator Primo de Rivera, Franco assumed direction of the Academia General Militar at Saragossa. This post was dissolved when the Popular Front seized power and exiled King Alfonso XIII in 1931. Franco was transferred to the Balearic Islands due to his “monarchist sympathies” and was thus incapable of acting against the new republic. When he was summoned back to Spain in order to quell a miners’ revolt in 1934, he impressed the now rising National Front and was named chief of general staff. His luck ran out, as the political turbulence in Spain turned against him once more, this time resulting in his exile to the Canary Islands. There, he joined the Nationalist rebellion, which turned violent on July 18, 1936 and instigated the Spanish Civil War.

### **The Spanish Civil War: 1936-1939**

Franco flew to Morocco and commandeered its Spanish Foreign Legion in order to stage revolts at army garrisons at Melilla, Cadiz, Seville, Nourgos, Saragossa, and Huesca. At the end of July, Franco declared that he was prepared “to shoot half of Spain.”<sup>2</sup> He made good on his word. The ruthless general convinced German and Italian forces to help him airlift the Foreign Legion into Spain in order to join insurgent Nationalists and assume control of the southern and western mainland. Once he had established a capital in Seville, he shifted



his focus to Madrid. The city was heavily protected by government forces, resulting in the repeated defeat of the Nationalists.

On September 29, 1936, the character of the war shifted from that of insurgency against a government to a full-scale conflict between two legitimately recognized administrations.

The Nationalists formed their own government under Generalissimo (commander in chief) Franco as jefe de estado (head of state), with support from the Catholic Church, the Falange Party, and monarchists. Once again, Franco quickly rallied the support of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, who promptly recognized the new entity and sent over personnel, aircraft, tanks, and artillery as backup only for Franco's forces. The German Nazis contributed about 20,000 troops, 10,000 of which were in the Condor Legion, a specially designated unit of the air force for Franco, and the Italian Fascists provided another 50,000 men to fight.[3]

The United States, with their Lincoln Brigade (American volunteers to the International Brigade), and the Soviet Union, which sent 50,000 volunteers, rested their support with the Loyalists protecting the existing government against Franco. While Communist organizations from around the world enlisted recruits for "International Brigades," Mexico agreed to sell the Loyalists rifles, ammunition, and food supplies. On the other hand, Western powers such as the United States, Britain, and France, as well as the League of Nations, were reluctant to give full support due to a non-interventionist policy. Nevertheless, it was the International Brigades that held

Franco at bay during the 28-month siege of Madrid.

By New Year's Day 1937, Franco had imposed a centralized, autocratic rule on his portion of Spain, now more than half of the country, and had convinced both Germany and Italy to amplify their assistance.

Specifically, the Italian Legionary Air Force was boosted to include 5,000 men.[4] The German aerial bombings caused the most destruction, decimating major Spanish cities such as Malaga, Guernica, and Durango. While Nationalist forces basked in their military victories, expanding the influence of the Falange party and gaining political recognition from the Vatican, the Loyalists struggled with sectarian strife in their own ranks as communist and anarchist factions battled over ideological differences and for control of strategic locations. Faced with imminent defeat and decreasing Soviet aid, the Loyalists could not survive the low morale.

1938 was a year of military decline for the Loyalists. Bilbao, Teruel, Valencia, and finally Barcelona, the seat of the Loyalist government, all fell into the hands of Franco's forces. Stalin withdrew Soviet aid from the drowning Republican government, and even neutral Britain and France recognized Franco's government in February. Madrid yielded on March 28, 1939. As British Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm, Cambridge graduate and Communist, later explained:

"unlike the Nationalists, who enjoyed a single military and political direction, the Republicans remained politically divided,

and—in spite of the communists' contribution—did not acquire a single military will and strategic command, or not until it was too late. The best they could do was from time to time throw back potentially fatal offensives by the other side, thus prolonging a war which might have been effectively ended in November 1936 by the capture of Madrid.”[5]

Instead of a drawn out struggle, the war ended on April 1, 1939, the Falangists finally having seized power and Francisco Franco having been made the de facto dictator of Spain. Finally having achieved his goals of power and fame, Franco still had to face certain domestic issues that resulted from the war. Franco had to establish “(1) how the civil war was to be liquidated; and (2) how Spain was to be reconstructed.”[6] The answer to the first item ensured the success of the second, for if the Government relied on repression to terminate the war, citizens would be less cooperative when it came to reconstruction.

Generalissimo Franco and his Falange party instituted a “white terror” within the nation, claiming “justice” for their war losses and the 250,000 Nationalist deaths. “Despite pleas from the Western democracies, principally Britain and France, a vengeful Falange set up fascist tribunals that summarily tried, convicted, and executed scores of Loyalists.”[7]

The Catholic Church openly supported these arrests as revenge for the murders of 7,937 religious personnel during the war. The Church helped compile a list of over two million “reds” that should be punished for their crimes.[8] According to

Franco, “The war is over, but the enemy is not dead.”[9]

On June 5, civil courts joined the movement, trying over 500,000 people for violation of the Law of Political Responsibilities. The general public was also encouraged to denounce suspects, resulting in numerous accusations for the satisfaction of personal vengeance. Such accused “Criminals” went to work in concentration camps on reconstruction projects, or were sentenced to death by firing squad or torture.

Censorship categorized governmental criticism as treason, political parties were outlawed, universal suffrage was eliminated, civil marriage was banned, divorce and abortion were made illegal, Catholicism was restored as the official religion of Spain, and the Church once more became the authority in the educational system.

Under the Nuevo Estado (New State) system, the National Movement was made the only legal political organization, strikes and trade unions having been banned. Without strong opposition, Franco had embarked on a gruesome and inhumane mission to eliminate all future political and military opponents.

The material and human losses that the bloody Spanish Civil War caused, along with the disruption of processes and institutions within the nation, posed great hurdles for the new regime. Property damages alone exceeded \$500,000,000, and great numbers of intellectuals and citizens had fled to France. To finance the reforms, Franco thought it appropriate to have the Loyalists pay for his war. Their

property was confiscated, they were assessed heavy fines, and prisoners were sent to perform hard labor. On July 30, Franco decreed that all men from eighteen to fifty years of age must work fifteen days each year for the state without pay. Moreover, Spain decided to shun foreign credits and adopt a policy of national self-containment, restricting imports and encouraging exports.

Yet Franco saw no improvement. Six months after the war had ended, transportation and communications in Spain were still disorganized, domestic and foreign trade had plummeted, food shortages persisted, and the cost of living soared. Demobilization of troops had also been unsuccessful, leaving Spain under martial law and a large proportion of the military still active.

Despite the unity of the Nationalist forces, leading to a victory in the Civil War, sectional strife still threatened to tear apart the nascent regime. Monarchists, composed of Carlists (those who wish to restore the Bourbon family line), traditionalists, landowners, and many army and Church leaders, wished to restore the traditional monarchy. Falangists, however, desired a corporate state and supported land redistribution, nationalization of banks and public utilities, syndicated organization of labor, and restriction of the activities of the Church.

Although Franco sought a balance between the two groups, his reforms became significantly more Falangist and prominent Monarchists soon found themselves in jail.

## Spain's Involvement in World War II

Although Franco may have seemed wise to concentrate on internal problems rather than involving Spain in the newest European conflagration, Spanish neutrality in World War II set the stage for international tensions. Many historians see the Spanish Civil War as the "First Battle of the Second World War," a training ground for soldiers and strategies. Spain's neutrality was merely theoretical, as its allegiance with the Axis powers was quite clear. Franco not only sent workers to Germany, but created a volunteer Blue Division to fight for the Germans on the Russian front. Publicly, Spain rejected association with Germany, as it had signed an agreement with the Communist USSR.

It was only once the tide had turned against his allies that Franco enforced more genuine neutrality.[10]

"By the end of 1944, Spain had entered into a period of 'benevolent neutrality' towards the Allies. It had allowed Allied aircraft to land inside its borders and permitted Allied intelligence agents to operate in Madrid." [11] In spite of this opportunistic policy shift, after the war, Spain was politically and economically isolated; it had become the last remaining European fascist state – a global pariah. Franco's attempts to implement a policy of economic self-sufficiency, as well as his harboring of Nazi criminals, further pushed Spain away from diplomacy.

Furthermore, Stalin was still bitter about his losses during the Spanish Civil War. At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, he



advocated Allied intervention against Franco.

## Bloc Positions

### *United States*

Spain itself and even member nations have accused the United States of dictating policy more out of fear of revolution rather than out of a desire for change. The Spanish radio to Latin America “declared categorically that the policy of the Western Powers towards Spain was based on fear of a revolution that would give Russia control in the Western Mediterranean.”[12] While Franco has offered British Prime Minister Churchill Spanish support in a bloc against Russia, the US President has flatly refused Franco’s offers. In addition, the US has recalled their Ambassador in Spain without issuing a replacement.

### *Soviet Union, Poland, Mexico*

Although the Soviet Union is on the verge of conflict with the United States, its opposition to the Franco regime surpasses that of the Western Powers. As a nation that has embraced communism, it ardently combats the nationalism installed in Spain and is still bitter about its losses in the Spanish Civil War. Mexico too sent materials and troops to aid the Republicans, whom Franco defeated in 1939. The Soviet Union and Poland both believe that strong and immediate action must be taken in Spain. Furthermore, the USSR believes that this case will help the Security Council examine its structure and mandate, particularly with regard to veto power.[13]

### *United Kingdom[14]*

British official statements indicate a “detestation of the whole structure of the regime in Spain, which aided and abetted our enemies.” The British are eager to see the Spanish people enact democratic changes that are in accordance with the principles for which the UN fought for and with “the spirit of the present time.”

Minister of State, Mr. Noel Baker, and Mr. Ernest Bevin have clarified in February of this year that “the British Government is not merely interested in seeing Franco go because he is an international inconvenience, but that the aim of British policy is a Government freely elected by democratic methods.” Alternatively, Britain realizes that acting too quickly may plunge Spain into a civil war.

The French have also highlighted the prospect that Great Britain “is only half-hearted in her opposition and that verbal statements are only made under Russian, French, or ‘communist’ pressure.” They regard it as suspicious that Mr. Bevin announced in August 1945 that Britain should not interfere in Spain. A Parisian paper stated in February 1946 that “the impression deeply rooted in all sections of French opinion is that General Franco’s only reliable support among the Powers [P5] is Great Britain.” Ulterior motives aside, Britain has stated that “change and a real change it must be, not a mere change of façade.”

### *France*

The nation of France is home to many Spanish monarchists in exile, and is thus a

proponent of the idea that “monarchy represents the best chance for a bloodless regime change.”[15] Furthermore, France believes that those who are currently neutral in Spain would tolerate a monarch rather than the Falange. In the past, France has been the only country to take any positive action beyond protesting. Thus, they are believed to be the “only Western Power who is really anxious to take positive steps against Franco,” perhaps because they are less embroiled in the power struggle between the US, the UK, and the USSR.

#### *Australia*[16]

The delegation of Australia advises the Security Council to tread with caution when dealing with the Spanish issue. Such an unstable situation may easily lead to civil war and bloodshed. Thus, Australia suggests a fact-finding investigation to determine whether Franco’s regime truly threatens international security. If it is found to do so, Australia would support continuous observation. The delegation strictly opposes a direct breach of diplomatic relations, which it argues is not justified by facts as established.

Specifically, Australia contends that the Soviets’ desire for forceful and immediate action, opting instead to support the Brits’ more cautious position.

#### *Brazil*

During the Second World War, Brazil united itself with the antifascist Allies, despite the fact that it nurtured a fascist-like government at home, El Estado Novo. During the Spanish Civil War, however, Brazil was one of the few

nations that sent volunteers to Franco’s Nationalists. Since it’s in such a precarious position, Brazil has not expressed any radical opinions on Franco’s regime, but remains aware of the UN’s mission to protect international peace and security.

#### *Netherlands*

Despite its declaration of neutrality during the Second World War, the Netherlands were invaded by Germany in 1940. After their liberation by the Allies, the Netherlands have remained very grateful and respectful of this gesture. In addition, the Netherlands is fully committed to supporting the United Nations in its decisions.

#### *Egypt*

Egypt declared neutrality during WWII in order to distance itself from “a European conflict it did not want any part in.” Nevertheless, Britain invaded in order to maintain a control zone. After the war, Egyptians harbored much resentment towards England, turning instead to the Islamic reformist Muslim Brotherhood and to Arabic concerns. It helped form the Arab League in 1933-1934, which opposes the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. As a nation with much internal conflicts at the moment, Egypt is still not willing to fully engage itself in “European matters.”

### **Questions a Resolution Should Address**

What are the implications and likelihood of an early change of regime in Spain?

What forces both in Spain and from the international community can contribute to achieving the desired result?

What is, in your country's opinion, this desired result for Spain?

If a monarchy is the desired result, what are the chances that Spanish factions will agree among themselves on the kind of monarchy to be introduced or that they will win popular support?

What is the best way to facilitate a speedy change?

Should an interim government replacing Franco provide support and economic assistance in the meantime?

Remembering that your decisions determine UN precedent for later Security Councils, what should be the UN's role in situations like this?

Should you as a delegate consider the possibility of making Spain a trusteeship territory of the UN? If you don't know your country's position on this or even what the Trusteeship council is, you can look it up on <http://www.un.org>.

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**Topic 2:****THE SOVIET  
OCCUPATION OF IRAN****Statement of the Problem**

When Iran elected to remain neutral during WWII, it expected its neutrality to be respected; however, Anglo-Soviet troops entered the nation, confiscated supply lines, and replaced the ruler. The new Shah, Mohammad Pahlavi, was a supporter of Iranian nationalism and quickly signed the Tripartite Treaty to evacuate foreign troops from his nation.

Yet again, he found that Iran was being disrespected by world powers. In addition to interfering greatly in Iranian economy and society, the Soviets have ignored the polite reminders to leave and have incited turmoil near Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.

It is up to this committee to decide whether or not the Soviet presence endangers international stability and if the UN has the power to act in this situation.

The secondary effects of any decision must be considered and accounted for, thus necessitating both a short term and a long term solution. As nations are coming out of WWII, alliances are fragile and the Security Council is still a new body. We hope that the spirits of compromise and consideration will guide you through this delicate debate.

**Iran's Strategic Importance  
During WWII**

The conflicts of World War II, existing primarily between larger nations, also extended into Africa and the Middle East. A significant cause of this spread was the opening of an Eastern Front between Germany and the Soviet Union after the 1939 Non-Aggression Pact deteriorated. When Hitler violated the boundaries established in the Pact and invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Stalin immediately turned to the Western Allies for support.

Meanwhile, Persia, an officially neutral nation, seemed to be increasing its support of the Nazis. Taking advantage of anti-British sentiment in the Middle East, the Germans encouraged nationalistic sentiments among the Iranians through radio broadcasts in Arabic or Persian.

They had sent their engineers and archeologists to Iran years before the war to gain the Middle East's trust and to build up Iranian infrastructure. These new allegiances were likely an attempt by the current Pahlavi dynasty to prove its legitimacy in the country's long monarchical history.[17]

The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, a British-based corporation that ruled over Iran's oil trade, began to fear that their Abadan Oil Refinery in Iran, which produced eight million tons of oil a year, would fall into Nazi hands. They also suspected that Stalin was eyeing the TransIranian Railway as an efficient route for the transport of supplies from the Persian Gulf to the Soviet Union. Despite the efforts of the American Lend-Lease Act of 1941 to supply the Allied Nations with wartime necessities, the geography of the Soviet Union prevented it from



receiving many supplies that could not be shipped over the coastal ice caps. In accordance with a common conception that "the political survival of most of the governments [in Iran] depended particularly on the goodwill of the Russians or the British," the two larger nations felt it was Iran's duty to repay them. [18]

While the USSR eyed the Railway passage, Britain wanted total security for its oil possessions. Iran's leader, Reza Shah, felt differently. He wished to "balance the influence of Russia and Britain by seeking out assistance and technology from European powers traditionally not involved in Iranian affairs." Therefore, when the two Allied nations applied pressure on the Iranian government to expel its German nationals and relinquish control of its railways, the Shah refused.

Instead, he allowed tensions to escalate and pro-German rallies in the capital of Tehran to continue.

By May, Britain had occupied Iraq and planned to use this foothold in the region to coerce Iran into submission:

"in view of the unsatisfactory attitude of the Iranian Government ... His Majesty's Government had approved of the proposals for the application of Anglo-Soviet diplomatic pressure backed to a show of force on the Iranian Government in order to secure the expulsion of Axis nationals from their country; should diplomatic pressure fail, force was to be used." [19]

Force was selected as the more viable option. At dawn on August 25, 1941, Iran

was simultaneously invaded by Britain from the west and south and the Soviet Union from the north.

### **The British-Soviet Invasion of Iran**

British newspapers reported that the "operation went according to plan," with the ground troops, naval units, and air force all mobilized.[20] The British Iraq Command, or Paiforce, under Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Pellew Quinan approached from the south. The British sloop HMS Shoreham initiated the first attack on the harbor at Abadan, destroying the entire Iranian fleet present, including the famous sloop Palang.

As the resistance had not received warning of an attack, the oil installations were quickly seized as well. Major General William Slim charged from the west, rapidly moving from Khanaqin to the oil fields at Naft-i-Shah and Qasr-i-Shirin.

Troops proceeded from Basra to Qasr Sheikh and had reached Ahwaz by the time Reza Shah called for negotiations. Troops also were stationed in the Pai Tak Pass waiting to attack Kermanshah and Hamadan when they received the notice to halt until discussions had terminated.

Soviet General Kozlov governed the invasion from the north, filling the skies over Maku and Tabriz with black airplanes boasting red stars. Soviet forces also landed at Bandar-e-Pahlavi on the Caspian coast. The Soviets were aided by advance guards and infiltrators who identified key targets and eliminated them before any significant resistance could be organized.

The short and one-sided skirmishes ended after the Iranians retreated to Tehran.

British and Soviet forces met at Senna on August 30 and then at Kazvin on the 31st. Before proceeding, they delivered Iran an ultimatum: Tehran would be overrun unless the Iranians expelled the German Minister and his staff, closed the Axis delegations, and handed over all remaining German nationals. On September 17, 1941, British and Soviet troops entered Tehran and forced Reza Shah to abdicate in favor of his young crown prince, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The old Shah and his family were exiled to Johannesburg, South Africa, and were kept under house arrest by the British until his death in July 1944. Once the German agents were expelled, British forces withdrew from Tehran on October 17.

As a result of the rapid and forceful invasion, Britain and Russia occupied Iran, dividing it between them. Russia secured its supply line. Britain seized the existing petroleum infrastructure. Together, they replaced Iran's ruler. The Persian Corridor, a supply route through Iran into Soviet Azerbaijan by which British aid and American Lend-Lease supplies were transferred to the Soviet Union during World War II. Was finally unlocked.

### **Iran Seeks Independence**

With the objectives of the invasion of Iran accomplished, Iran, Britain, and the Soviet Union signed the Tripartite Treaty on January 29, 1942 to end the invasion. Their agreement contained the following key terms of withdrawal:

- A guarantee that the Allies "respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Iran." [21]
- A mandate that "The forces of the Allied powers shall be withdrawn from Iranian territory not later than six months after all hostilities between the Allied powers and Germany and her associates have been suspended." [22]
- A limitation on the impact of foreign armed forces on Iran's economy and internal politics.
- Removal of the requirement that all Iranian personnel be used in the war effort.
- Permission for Britain and the Soviet Union to use Iranian railroad.

The new Shah was so eager to prove his loyalty to the Allies and to insure Iran's post-war position that he offered Iranian volunteers to aid in the fight in Europe.

This action precipitated a major reorganization of the Iranian armed forces as the Allies commandeered the Iranian military. Towards the end of World War II, in May 1945, the Iranian Government requested that Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States withdraw their troops. The United States had started to pull out, but neither Britain nor the Soviets wished to withdraw. In fact, the USSR simply ignored the request. After the Potsdam discussions, Britain agreed to terminate its activities in Iran and the

USSR removed those troops stationed in Tehran only. The Soviets had stationed a far greater number of troops than those of the US and UK combined.

### **The Soviets Have Other Plans**

Difficulties ensued, as Soviet forces continued to interfere in Iran's administration, its economic life, and the application of its laws and regulations. Iran faced a food shortage as grain was directed towards the war efforts. Severe inflation isolated the lower and middle classes from the elite. Western nations warned Iran of the Soviet Union's desire for domination of the Middle East, a reality that seemed all too likely given the political and economic instability of the region.

The USSR worked closely with local Iranian organizations, such as the Tudeh (Masses) Party and the "Democratic" parties of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. The Soviets eventually allowed them to govern Soviet-controlled zones. These local organizations preached independence and autonomy for their respective regions and created the Autonomous Government of Azerbaijan and the independent Republic of Kurdistan.

On July 6, 1945, the Central Committee of the Communist Party ordered the Soviet commander in northern Iran to "Begin preparatory work to form a national autonomous Azerbaijan district with broad powers within the Iranian state and simultaneously to develop separatist movements in the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, Gorgan, and Khorasan." [23] When a separatist revolt broke out near the Azeri-Iranian border on November 14,

1945, Soviet troops forbade Iranian forces from intervening. They also arrested an Iranian gendarmerie commander and disarmed his troops.

It was the Soviets who had in fact supplied the military equipment and training for such uprisings. They also demanded an end to Iranian governmental restrictions on the Tudeh and stopped the transportation of agricultural goods out of Azerbaijan to southern Iran. Soviet public humiliation and verbal attacks on the Iranian government were rampant. When the international community protested Moscow's actions, Stalin justified the Soviet presence in Iran on the basis of the Russo-Persian Treaty of Friendship of February 26, 1921. He also invoked the terms of the bilateral agreements between British and Iranian oil companies, as well as those of the US and Iran.

The USSR had not succeeded in its quest for a mixed Soviet-Iranian oil company in southern Azerbaijan. Analysts at the time speculated that the Soviet occupation resulted from an ambition to unite the Northern Azeri Soviet Republic and Southern Iranian Azerbaijan, which had a majority Azeri population. Famed American foreign policy advisor George Kennan considered Iran an example of Soviet expansionism, warning that its "actual policies... [are] at disposal of the USSR." [24] Privately, President Truman even threatened to unleash the Atomic Bomb against the USSR if Stalin would not order his troops out of Iranian Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. [25] Stalin, on the other hand, begged to differ. He told Iranian Prime Minister Ahmad Qavam that Soviet "honor" was involved in the autonomy of the northern regions, further

demanding bilateral negotiations and oil concessions.

## Bloc Positions

### *United States, Mexico, Brazil*

On August 25, 1941, Reza Pahlavi appealed to President Roosevelt under the Atlantic Charter, requesting “humanitarian steps to put an end to these acts of aggression [that] bring into war a neutral and pacific country which has had no other care than the safeguarding of tranquility and the reform of the country.”[26] The US President simply replied, “Those countries which desire to maintain their independence must engage in a great common effort if they are not to be engulfed [by Germany].” This statement prompted Britain and the Soviet Union to proclaim, “The greatest care was to be taken not to infringe the neutrality of Iran” and “that they have no designs on the independence or territorial integrity of Iran.”[27]

There is evidence, however, that Roosevelt secretly approved the plans against Iran, only to publicly deny knowledge of the operation later. Churchill knew that Roosevelt’s tacit acceptance was necessary to proceed in the invasion of Iran and persuaded him to stand by passively instead of invoking US moral authority and economic power to avert the invasion.[28]

After the signing of the Tripartite Treaty, the US took steps to “prevent the development of a situation in which an open threat to Iranian integrity might be presented.”[29] When Secretary of State Cordell Hull noticed Soviet support of

separatist movements in northern Iran, he included the Middle Eastern nation in America’s Lend-Lease program on May 2, 1942. In addition, the US began sending advisory teams and missions, as well as the Persian Gulf Command, in order to facilitate supply delivery. The willingness to assist Iran was reaffirmed by the US, Britain, and the USSR at the Tehran Conference in November 1943.

Following the Soviet’s refusal to withdraw from the country, the United States took the lead in advocating for Iran. “Iranians might recall that it was the United States that kept Iran from being divided as the Soviets attempted to set up “democratic” republics in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.”[30] In fact, some trace the launching pad for the Cold War to the diplomatic struggle between Moscow and Washington DC regarding the removal of Soviet troops from Iran in 1946.[31]

### *Soviet Union, Poland*

Even when Iran was known as Persia, the Russian Empire had posed a threat to the politically unstable nation to the South. Before Pahlavi came to power, Russia’s Tsarist armies occupied numerous regions in Central Asia, depriving Persia of its traditional foothold in the region. It was, as Morgan Shuster put it, “The Strangling of Persia.”

Despite huge public outcry and resentment within Iran, the Persian Socialist Soviet Republic was temporarily established in 1920, followed by the equally short-lived Republic of Mahabad.

Although these were the USSR’s last efforts to establish a communist republic

in Iran, the Soviets had not given up hope on controlling the surrounding provinces of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.

Some argue that the Soviet Union's allegiance with Britain to invade Iran in 1941 was more a continuation of this expansionary desire and less a necessary attempt to gain American supplies and combat Axis powers. Despite such international pressure, the USSR denies any violation of the Tripartite Treaty. On the other hand, the Soviets have hinted that bilateral Iranian-Soviet negotiations were an option, as well as significant oil concessions.

#### *United Kingdom*

Britain was the European nation most influential in Iranian affairs in 1946. Although their relationship between Britain and Iran was marred by justifiable suspicion on the Iranian side, there is also a certain friendship and respect. The British embassy in Iran is evidence of such feelings, as it is the most magnificent building "embroidered with thanks." [32] It was constructed after the UK helped the constitutionalists win the revolution of 1906 and establish a democratic process. Nevertheless, the feeling that Iranians were being manipulated could not be shaken. "This was understandable, but it went much too far.

Iranians underestimated their own capacities and vastly overrated those of outside powers, particularly Britain." [33] When Iran took a stand and requested a British troop withdrawal in 1945, the British stalled to continue safeguarding oil fields until the war with Japan ended.

After negotiations, the British pulled out fully and distanced themselves from the nation. They feel it is unfair, however, to have the Soviet Union still remain within Iran and retain power over it.

#### *China* [34]

Post-WWII China is itself a recovering nation plagued by internal turmoil and a complicated history. A civil war is raging between the Stalin's Communists and Chiang's Kuomintang regime, with the proletariat demanding increased rights and respect, as well as an end to this economic crisis. Many see this conflict as a microcosm of the larger competition between the USSR's collectivized and mercantilist policies and the USA's free enterprise system. Although a temporary peace agreement was reached in early 1946, both the Communists and the Kuomintang have established a dual power in the interior. Nevertheless, it is the Kuomintang who represents the Republic of China in the United Nations and is devoted to stopping the spread of Communism.

#### *France*

The delegation of France is worried that "Soviet domination, unlike that of the capitalist powers, means not only the imposition (openly or in disguise) of foreign rule but also the forcible introduction of totalitarian administrative and police methods and communist economics which affect intimately the lives of every man and woman in the territories concerned, and, especially in the case of Iran, the vital interests of other countries as well" (i.e. Azerbaijan and Kurdistan). [35] Additionally, France is



skeptical of the USSR's willingness to "wholeheartedly collaborate" with the United Nations.[36] Many of these suspicions, however, are simply fueled by the tense post-war-time negotiations and decisions among the victors.

### *Australia*

The nation of Australia was drawn into World War II through its ties to Britain, assembling a volunteer force to aid in both the war against Germany and that against Japan. All alliances aside, Australia is not a radical nation and believes that "there can be no expression of merits until there has been a fact-finding enquiry [in Iran]."[37] Additionally, Australia is committed to an independent and impartial consideration of this complaint. Although Australia has not always agreed with the Soviet Union in the past, this issue should be dealt with on a basis of principle, giving both sides an equal opportunity to debate. Australia is confident that this case should serve as a precedent for future situations as well.

### **Questions a Resolution Should Address**

On January 19, 1946, "Iran requested that the matter of the interference of the Soviet Union, through the medium of their officials and armed forces, in the internal affairs of Iran be brought before the Security Council on the grounds that a situation had arisen which may lead to international friction."

To what extent is the Soviet refusal to withdraw from Iran a threat to international stability?

Are the Soviets violating the Tripartite Treaty?

If so, how should their violation be addressed?

What actions should be taken both immediately and in the long term?

How else might Iran resist the economic and political pressure that the Soviets have placed upon them?

Should the UN address the separatist groups of Iran? (While the UN of today has a policy of not dealing with non-state actors, this issue was very much undefined in 1946.)

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