

# A Day that Will Forever Live in Infamy: Pearl Harbor

International History Olympiad:  
Historical Simulation



**International History  
OLYMPIAD**

Run by the staff of the International History Olympiad

Contact information:

Shravan Balaji: [shravan@historybowl.com](mailto:shravan@historybowl.com)

## Dear Olympians,

Welcome to the simulation of the post-Pearl Harbor Private War Council of President Roosevelt! My name is Shravan Balaji, and I am a former history bowl player and Model United Nations participant from East Brunswick High School in New Jersey, USA, and I currently attend the University of Pennsylvania. I served as captain of my high school's Academic Team and Secretary General of our Model United Nations program, and continue to be involved with MUN at Penn while working for NHBB. Both activities have meant a lot to me, and I see no better place to combine them than at the International History Olympiad's Historical Simulation. Together, you and your fellow history-loving peers will engage in an enthralling simulation of an ad-hoc war council featuring the very land you are currently sitting in.

At the Olympiad you will have a chance to take part in a historical simulation of a post Pearl Harbor war council, which will deal with responding to the devastating Pearl Harbor attacks of December 7, 1941. For those of you familiar with Model United Nations conferences, this simulation will operate similar to Model United Nations committees, using very basic parliamentary procedure with a "chair" to moderate debate. However, these simulations will include "crisis" elements, giving substantive updates in committee to delegates that will alter the flow of debate and require participants to use their critical thinking abilities to embrace and delineate complex solutions. We will provide separate documentation to specify procedural elements; we assure you they will be accessible and straightforward. I speak for both myself and all the Olympiad staff in saying that we hope you greatly enjoy this simulation.

Regarding the substantive content of this brief, you will have attached a basic topic background piece, descriptions of all of your positions, and important questions you should consider before you enter committee. I will also add as many helpful links as possible that you may be able to use for your benefit in external research outside this brief, which is strongly encouraged! Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [shravan@historybowl.com](mailto:shravan@historybowl.com). I'll be happy to help throughout the preparation process so we have the best possible time in committee.

Sincerely,  
Shravan Balaji

## **Topic : Response to Attack on Pearl Harbor**

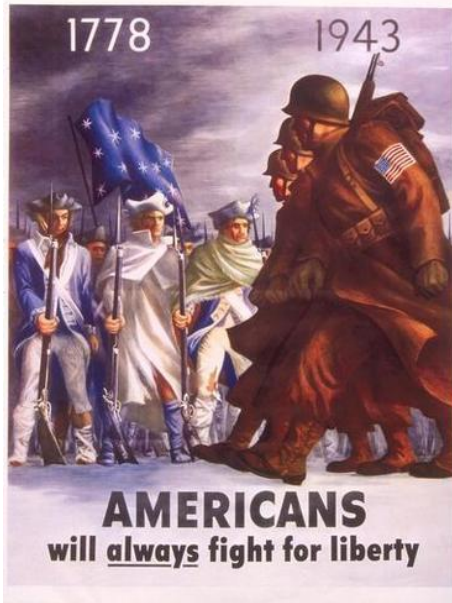
The First World War, starting in 1914, was a conflict unlike anything human civilization has ever witnessed. With modern advances in military technology and approaching the peak of seemingly unstoppable European empires, WWI would change the landscape of war and of foreign policy forever. At the Paris Peace Conference, concessions were made to preserve peace at all costs and promote the avoidance of international conflict as a result of the post-war depression in the “lost generation,” a morbid regret many had felt in the wake of such great devastation.

With the Paris Peace Conference came the establishment of the League of Nations, the first international organization with the primary objective of maintaining peace. This, unfortunately was short lived and hamstrung by the withdrawal of US participation once it became practical, as public support for such a realist, multilateral obligation seemed very contradictory to the popular isolationism and nationalism of the time. Though President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points to maintain peace were the cornerstone of the LN, it was the Senate that denied involvement in such an organization and ended diplomatic ties with the world once again.

After WWI, things returned back to normal for the US, as a confidence in the economy grew, stocks soared and the roaring twenties introduced a new period of prosperity and of leisure in response to the troubling wartime experiences that depressed many Americans. Meanwhile, as the US economy later slumped during the Great Depression in the thirties, fascism was on the rise in Europe, most notably, such figures as Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, and Joseph Stalin rose to power in the soon to be lineup for World War II. The League of Nations was first put to test after Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party had gained control of Germany and annexed Czechoslovakia without their consent in the first act of aggression leading to war. Though Nazi Germany had previously neglected LN mandates aimed at disarmament and enforcing peace through preventative measures, it was the appeasement at Munich that proved to be a defining moment in foreign policy up until this point.

At the a conference in Munich, European powers of the LN met to reach an agreement on the soon to be “Sudetenland,” the land granted at Munich to Germany in order to appease Hitler in hopes that he would be satisfied and restore peace. Many more failed passes at peace through the League of Nations would come to fruition in the acceptance of concessions given to Axis Powers to appease them. With this inaction finally came a boiling point when Germany had at last reached and invaded Poland in





1939 in coordination with a Non-Aggression Pact made previously with the Soviet Union.

The Japanese Empire in Asia, also looking to expand its empire, found itself in accord with the fascist aims of Germany, aligning itself with Hitler in 1936 with the Anti-Comintern Pact, anti-communist legislation that sought to protect member states from the spread of Soviet ideals. Soon Italy too had joined the Axis, with an equally ambitious and oppressive fascist government headed by Benito Mussolini, now forming a coalition that would challenge the peace established by the LN.

The USA had been uninvolved with this emerging conflict, though increasingly vexing advances made by the Axis began to inspire panic in America and in Western Europe, some Americans abandoning their isolationism in fear of Nazi victory. The USA served as an ally to the Allied forces, providing them with weapons and other supplies, earning the nickname, “the greatest weapon in the arsenal of democracy.” Continued support of Allied forces in Europe and a strong naval presence in the Pacific lead to an attack by Japan on US naval base Pearl Harbor. Military casualties totaled 3,649 with 2,402 dead and 1,247 wounded, in addition to the 188 aircraft destroyed and 6 ships sunk. With non-interventionist opposition to war almost completely wiped out and most of America in agreement on war with Japan, the need has now arisen for new ideas on an appropriate reaction to this crisis.

Questions to Consider:

- Should the United States declare war on all Axis Powers or just Japan?
- What lessons can be learned from previous peacemaking attempts during and after World War I?
- Is America capable of a far-reaching military intervention or involvement in World War II? Will the weak economy have an effect on the strength of the military?
- On what level should efforts to mobilize the US for war be taken? What are the objectives of the US going into this war and how will they be achieved? What role will government serve in this time of emergency?

## Topic 2: Aid to Allied Forces in Europe

Since the conception of the United States of America, there has always been debate over the role the USA should observe in a global society. Often this argument is divided into two camps, the realists and the idealists. Thomas Jefferson was the first major proponent for idealism among the founding fathers and led the push for a policy of isolationism and non-entanglement. Such policies came about in the wake of religious and economic turmoil that were widespread in Europe, causing many wars and complicated alliances that contradicted the fundamental principles of nations in their alignment with other nations. Our founding fathers sought to escape this and create a self-sufficient democracy without foreign dependence on anything, obviously with some economic exceptions in trade, but politically isolating ourselves.



Isolationist policy ruled America into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, obviously seeing the dawn of a globalist world and America at the start of World War II, ushering in a period of forced realism. Realism was a policy directly opposite to idealism, allowing for US intervention in foreign affairs only for the direct economic, political, or social gain from any meddling in foreign affairs. After the US emerged from the Civil War and entered into a period of great reconstruction, seeing the beginnings of America the economic superpower, a new role that challenged existing opinions formed from the idea of a smaller America. Realist policies were pursued before the turn of the century in the

1890's, where the Mexican War became one of the first conflicts not fought under the guise of self defense or the promotion of democracy.



Later imperialistic policies under President Theodore Roosevelt further expanded on the role of the US as an international force for good and one that would not stand in isolation while the world became more integrated. This, however, was a phase that came and went, as World War I proved to be

the exception, not the rule, to further US intervention; and public disapproval of the war and of the LN were indicative of the more popular isolationism. Once again, when world war erupted in Europe in 1939, having come out of World War I the premier economic, political, and military superpower in the world, the US was torn between moral obligation and isolationism. Consider possible methods for the US to support the Allied cause in Europe such as existing supplies shipments as well as new economic aid programs.

Questions to consider:

- What are the political consequences of aligning the US with the Allies?
- Is it permissible to export goods to Europe when the US is facing an economic crisis at home?
- What is America's role, if any, in the world with its new superpower status in protecting liberty and democracy?
- How do we plan on implementing a wartime economy in a timely manner to increase effectiveness and do so in spite of depression?
- Are there any existing programs that meet this end? Can they be strengthened or redesigned in this heightened state of war?

**Positions:** Your positions will be below with a substantial description that will give you your role and an idea of what your portfolio powers are, which will be explained in an attached document. These positions will simply explain your character, offer a blurb about them, and mention briefly what areas of control they have.

**President (Chair): Franklin Delano Roosevelt**

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt is the incumbent President and is currently in the middle of his third term in office as Commander-in-Chief of the United States. As the chair and leader of this committee, he will rely on his strategy of delegating tasks and policies to his trusted subordinates instead of purely making all decisions on his own. He is well known for his sunny disposition and strong leadership, and he will continue to rely on his cabinet to make proper decisions.

**First Lady: Eleanor Roosevelt**

One of the most respected people in the world, Eleanor Roosevelt is the current first lady and wife of President Roosevelt. She is known for her championing of various causes, including women's rights and racial equality. She has a well established bully pulpit, as marginalized groups across the United States and even the globe look up to her and respect her.

**Vice President: Henry A. Wallace**

Henry Wallace, with the background of a Midwestern Farm Boy, is the Vice-President of the United States and has close ties with the American left and some of its fringes. A champion of equality and increased government welfare, Wallace has a history of fighting for progressive politics, especially for the agrarian people of the Midwest. He also believes in closer ties with the Soviet Union, a policy which has often been met with criticism.

**Secretary of State: Cordell Hull**

Cordell Hull, a proud southerner with a strong background in international affairs, is the Secretary of State for the Roosevelt Administration at this time. He is considered a disciple of Wilsonian foreign policy and has strong connections with other European nations. His strength lies in his ability to connect with other diplomats and utilize his international presence.

**Secretary of War: Henry L Stimson**

Henry Stimson, a conservative Republican, is a surprising pick for the cabinet of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, yet a pragmatic one as well. With a long and substantial service in foreign policy, he has developed strong relationships with military leaders as a policy wonk and as someone who almost everyone in the White House and Washington D.C. trusts and respect. He has jurisdiction over the War Department.

### **Secretary of Navy: Frank Knox**

Frank Knox is a former GOP Republican VP candidate and the Secretary of the Navy. Another Northeasterner, Knox is known for his moderate strain of politics and his loyalty to his department and troops. His department suffered the most losses come Pearl Harbor, and he hopes to avenge the losses he and his fellow naval officers had suffered.

### **Ambassador to the UK: John Gilbert Winant**

John Gilbert Winant is the current ambassador to the UK. Another believer in increased intervention, he replaced the pro appeasement Joe Kennedy Sr. for the purpose of greater representing FDR's wish to stay present in the complicated and influential politics of Europe. He has strong connections with the UK, PM Churchill and other European leaders.

### **Director of the FBI: J. Edgar Hoover**

J. Edgar Hoover is one of the most notable people in Washington circles. An irreverent, inconsiderate, ruthless leader, he is simultaneously respected, feared and disdained. He is noted for his anti-communism and opposition to anything he believes threatens the basis of American values. He has control over the jurisdiction of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

### **Advisor to the President: Harry Hopkins**

Harry Hopkins, a longtime friend and close advisor to the President, is another man highly respected in Washington circles with a penchant for truth-telling and insight for the future. He has great influence in Congress and the Senate, while also having the President's ear with the ability to influence policy through his trustworthy nature.

### **General: George Patton**

George Patton is the current General of the Second Armored Division. A tough man with little tolerance for mediocrity and failure, he is considered not only an excellent tactician, but a respectable individual as well. He currently will be among the generals leading forces in Europe as well as influencing military policy back home.

### **Admiral of the Pacific Fleet: Chester Nimitz**

Chester Nimitz is one of the most notable and respectable members of the armed forces, with decades of service in the Navy. A cautious yet assertive man, he is known for his proponent of the use of submarines and other methods of more covert warfare. His jurisdiction of control includes the entirety of the Pacific Theater, where other notable individuals like Bull Halsey will serve under him.