

OSUMUN 2025

**A WAR OF THIRST, BLOOD,
AND OIL: THE GHAGO WAR**



CRISIS

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“This will be the war of thirst and I will drink to victory.”

- José Félix Estigarribia

Letter from the Crisis Director

Greetings Delegates!

My name is Shreya Banerjee and I'll be your Crisis Director for this committee! I'm a current first-year student here at OSU majoring in microbiology and molecular genetics on the pre-med track. A little bit about me is that I enjoy basketball, video games, F1, drawing, and traveling. This is now my sixth year doing Model UN—my first in the collegiate sector. I did MUN throughout middle school and high school back where I'm from (the Cincinnati area) and have participated as a delegate at the last three OSUMUN conferences. I'm very excited to be switching sides and running a committee this year!

The Chaco War was a small event I stumbled upon that piqued my interest. It seemed strange that two nations would fight over what most people thought to be a useless desert/savannah, but as I researched more into it, I found that it had more complex motivations and context behind it. I hope that throughout your research, you explore the interesting perspectives of this war and expand upon them during committee. Many important aspects of history are overlooked where this committee is set in both classrooms and MUN as a whole. My hope is that you all explore something new and gain an appreciation for the diversity present in this committee.

With that being said, I'm excited to see how you delegates shape the course of this committee. Whatever crazy crisis arcs or directives you guys plan, I'm all for it. Committees never end the way I expect them to, and that is precisely what I enjoy about this club.

If you have any questions or require clarifications about the committee, please do not hesitate to email me at banerjee.241@buckeyemail.osu.edu. I look forward to seeing all of you in March!

Best of luck!
Shreya Banerjee

Letter from the Chair

Delegates,

My name is Kaasvi Anshu, and I have the privilege of serving as your chair for one of the most exciting and stimulating committees of OSUMUN 2025. I am a second year Neuroscience major and Non-Profit management minor on the pre-medical track at OSU, originally from Mason, Ohio.

After accidentally competing at a middle-school level MUN conference the summer after my senior year of high-school (no, I still didn't get best delegate), I propelled into joining collegiate MUN.

Deciding to simply show up to OSU's first MUN meeting of the 2023-24 school year has been the best decision of my undergrad career. Since then, I've had the opportunity to compete at three conferences on the collegiate circuit and chair a historical committee at OSUMUN 2024. I am also honored to be the USG of Crisis Committees on OSUMUN 2025 secretariat.

Beyond Model United Nations, I enjoy yoga, squash, journaling, meditation, reading, and watching YouTube videos that romanticize life.

Your crisis director has done an incredible job of crafting a committee rooted in rich historical detail yet infused with boundless potential outcomes. Take full advantage of it!

Throughout the committee, you will be pushed into not only adjusting and adapting your crisis arcs in the backroom, but also embracing your spontaneity as a public speaker in the front room.

Regardless of your prior experience as a delegate, navigating and balancing the two skills can be challenging, discomfoting even.

But if there was one piece of advice I could give you as chair, it would be to sit in this discomfort, because that is learning.

For now, start with a gentle smile (hopefully resulting from the pun-intended yet genuine advice in the previous sentence), scroll to the next set of pages, and begin your time travel back to the previous century.

Best Regards,
Kaasvi Anshu
(anshu.6@buckeyemail.osu.edu)

Introduction to Committee & Procedure

The Chaco War was a bloody conflict between the nations of Bolivia and Paraguay over the arid lowland region of the Chaco Boreal. The over 100,000 square mile region is characterized by its sandy soil, flat landscape, and vast savannah and woodlands. While the rest of the world looks on in confusion as to why two nations would be warring over what seems to be a desert, Bolivia and Paraguay see it as an entry into obtaining valuable resources: land, waterways, and potentially oil. Following the previous conflicts, the two countries had lost considerable amounts of land and had been reduced to two of the poorest and landlocked nations on the continent. The Chaco Boreal's proximity to the Pilcomayo River to the south and Paraguay River to the east offered much-needed access to the Atlantic Coast.

As the Bolivian military has begun staging occupations in the region, delegates—as members of the Paraguayan war cabinet—must protect their claim to the highly valuable Chaco Boreal. Despite their smaller size and more underfunded military, delegates will have to find creative solutions in navigating the challenges of the fast-approaching war.

This committee will be run as a traditional crisis with parliamentary procedure. Crisis updates will be given throughout the duration of committee as delegates provide solutions and tackle new challenges through collaboration showcased in directives. Updates can consist of anything from timed crisis events, results of directives, new information, and more. Following some amount of moderated debate, delegates will have the opportunity to enter unmoderated sessions to draft directives. Directives should be short, but detailed plans of action set to address content presented in crisis updates and other topics brought up in debate. Directives should be written keeping in mind that the committee is fast-paced and multiple will be passed both in the same voting periods and in the same session. Sponsor and signatory minimums and/or maximums will be determined by Chair's discretion. Voting procedures will follow traditional simple majority and supermajority rules. Crisis notes will also be passed through the two-pad system. Delegates will be expected to have two crisis arcs running simultaneously throughout the duration of committee. One crisis pad will track the progression of one crisis arc while the other pad tracks the other arc. These pads will be collected from and passed back to delegates in alternate fashion. That is to say, when one pad is being collected and responded to, delegates will be expected to write and progress their other arc on the pad still with them as committee carries on until the next collection cycle. Delegates are permitted to collaborate on joint personal directives (JPDs). In the case of writing a JPD, only one delegate will need to submit their crisis pad as long as all collaborators are listed.

Given that each delegate is representing an individual person, they should always refer to themselves in the first-person while speaking and writing. All committee work will be completed on paper, so delegates are expected to research and print any necessary items for committee. Any changes to procedure is up to the Chair's and Crisis Director's discretion.

Note that although this committee is based in a time period characterized by bloodshed and classism, any forms of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, or orientation will not be tolerated. Delegates are expected to assume their roles to the extent that they do not propagate harmful or discriminatory actions.

Background

Colonial Latin America

Since Christopher Columbus's landing in Hispaniola in 1492 and the fateful 1492 Treaty of Tordesillas, the Spanish empire had expanded to the deepest parts of Latin America. After their long history of *Reconquista*—the period of militarily reclaiming Muslim-claimed lands for Christianity—the Spanish crown was eager to expand the influence of Roman Catholicism throughout the world for glory^[20]. Along with the promising resources and rich new lands of the New World, Latin America proved to be the perfect place to secure Spanish prosperity. These became the basis for the brutal conquests and centuries-long rule of South America.

For nearly 3 centuries, the colonies of Latin America had developed into culturally rich societies with complex class structures under the Spanish crown. Their society was in some ways similar, but also largely distinct from the principles set by their rulers -- maintaining a strict social status quo, the Catholic Church, and benefiting the Spanish crown.

The social class structure of the Spanish colonies was highly favored towards Europeans.

Spain-born Spaniards, or better known as *peninsulares* in the colonies, were consistently at the top of

every society, often earning the most land from land grants from Spanish royalty^[19].

Their children born in the colonies, or *criollos*, were next in line to inherit their land and power. By the latter half of royal Spanish rule, *criollos* made up the large majority of people in power in the colonies^[19]. Below the *criollos* stood the class of mixed-race individuals. This label typically pertained to those individuals with a peninsularian or *criollo* father and a Native American mother. While they could inherit land from their peninsularian



or *criollo* lineage, this class was often discriminated against despite their large population^[19]. At the bottom of the social hierarchy were the Native American and African slave populations. In each level of these classes, they shared a large overarching patriarchal theme with women consistently at the bottom.

Another pillar of colonial society was the prominence of the Catholic Church. Through the centuries of conquests, Roman Catholicism had been brutally instilled into the Native populations. By replacing former religious monuments with more Catholic-friendly imagery and Syncretism, the Spanish had effectively dissolved a large majority of Native religions^[19]. The Church dictated much of what colonists deemed acceptable in society, their education, and general importance of religion in daily life.

Being heavy proponents of mercantilism, the Spanish were highly fixated on extracting as much precious material (i.e. gold, jewels, etc.) as possible from the colonies to enrich the crown.

Along with exploitative mining practices that involved the mass enslavement of Natives and forced transportation of African populations to the colonies, the crown also collected riches from high taxes on virtually all products in the colonies. These taxes often went as high as 20%, earning the name of the “Royal Fifth.”^[20]

For a sizable portion of its colonial history, South America saw its position under the Spanish crown as, in some ways, beneficial. They were provided with protection from other imperial powers and for the classes on top, they received riches and land^[20].

The first of these exploitative settlements in Paraguay appeared at the hands of Domingo Martínez de Irala. After failing to find more gold, settlements in the capital Asunción became jumping points for Jesuit missions to expand the word of God^[17]. Indigenous populations such as the Guaraní were steadily and forcibly integrated into the criollo populations, creating a new generation of mixed-race individuals^[17].

Following the independence movements throughout the early 1800s, both Bolivia and Paraguay earned their independence from the Spanish crown. Paraguay earned its independence significantly earlier in the year 1811 led by Pedro Juan Caballero and Fulgencio Yegros^[17]. Their refusal to integrate with the Argentine independence movement would soon define the borders that would lead to the Triple Alliance War. Bolivia, with the help of the great liberator Simón Bolívar (who would also become the namesake of the nation) and his protégé Antonio José de Sucre, declared its independence in 1825^[18]. While huge victories for the greater Latin America, later issues involving territorial claims from poorly organized Spanish records would define decades of bloodshed.

The War of the Triple Alliance

Known as the bloodiest conflict in Latin American history, the War of the Triple Alliance was fought between Paraguay and the combined forces of the Empire of Brazil, Argentina, and the Colorado Uruguayan government.

Initially, Paraguay served as a buffer zone between the Brazilian Empire and its adversary, Argentina. However, Paraguay’s ambitions sought further territory gain than what was already recognized^[21].

Paraguay and Brazil relations soared after Paraguay laid claim to the Apa and Branco River. This was because the new border heavily interfered with Brazil’s trade routes into the Rio de la Plata region^[22].

Paraguay’s allyship with the Blanco government operating in Uruguay also soured relations. After ousting the opposing Colorado party, the Blanco party closely allied itself with the newly-independent Paraguayan government. However, this allyship



would not last as in 1864, the Colorado party—now backed by Brazilian naval power—ousted Blanco leaders^[22]. Rather than cede the previous relationship, then-Paraguayan president Francisco Solano López encouraged the resistance and attack of Brazilian ships. As the Paraguayan military attacked the Brazilian naval vessel—the Marcos de Olinda—Brazil, along with the Colorado-run Uruguay, declared war on Paraguay on December 13th, 1864 for their acts of aggression^[22].

Despite Paraguay's population size being over 20 times smaller than Brazil's, their mobilized military was over double the size. President López's ambitions to supposedly free Uruguay from the dictatorial hands of the Colorado government led him to mobilize 70,000 soldiers to push into Brazil's southern province of Mato Grosso^[22]. Although the Paraguayan forces secured multiple early victories against a scrambling Brazilian Army, their soldiers were less than prepared nor conditioned for a war. Supplies and massive amounts of training were sacrificed to build one of Latin America's largest armies at the time. Additionally, supply routes to feed Paraguayan forces were largely blocked by Brazil's more than superior navy. With no viable water-based routes, President López was forced to seek passage through Argentina's northern provinces. He, however, was met with a strong



opposition from then-Argentinian president Bartolomé Mitre^[21].

Argentina and Paraguay had previously not established positive relations. Paraguay initially refused to integrate into the Argentinian independence movement, allied itself with Brazil early in its nationhood, and heavily mobilized a large army which seemed to upset the balance of power established in the region. With these factors in mind and López's utter disregard for President Mitre's denial of entry when he marched

troops through Argentina's provincial capital of Corrientes, capturing and occupying their harbor along the way, it makes sense as to why Argentina would team up with its former adversary of Brazil to declare war on Paraguay in May of 1865^[21].

By May of 1865, the Colorado party had fully taken the capital of Montevideo from the opposing Blancos. Now, the full force of Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina—the infamous “Triple Alliance”—could take down the ragged army of Paraguay.

In June of 1865, the Battle of Riachuelo would begin the cascade of disorganized Paraguayan losses. In an attempt to flank the Brazilian naval blockade of the Rio de la Plata, Paraguayan forces charged headfirst into an attack they would be greatly outnumbered in^[22]. The battle ended in mass casualties on the Paraguayan side with their leader, Admiral Pedro Ignacio Mesa, dying in battle, forcing retreat. Plans of invading Uruguay also failed as forces failed to cross the Uruguay River and suffered immense losses at the Battle of Yatay^[22].

The largest battle of the war, also the bloodiest in the continent's history, the Battle of Tuyuti would force the Paraguayans to attempt to broker peace with the Argentinians. After losing over 13,000 troops and more to disease and trench warfare, López's attempts at compromise were rejected in favor of total surrender^[21]. It would take until 1868 for the Alliance to take Paraguay's capital and best defensive positions, and until 1870 for the war to end^[22]. By March 1, 1870 at the Battle of Cerro Corá, President López would be shot after declaring his loyalty to his country to the end, bringing the war to a close^[22].

The aftermath of the war devastated both the political and economic landscape of the war. Almost 70% of Paraguay's population had been killed in the war while a Brazilian occupation lasting until 1870 forced them to cede over 150,000 square miles of land to the Alliance^{[22][24]}. The economic aftershocks are still being felt leading up to the war, which is what makes the acquisition of the Chaco Boreal so integral to the future of the nation^[24].

The Treaties of the 1870s

Following the Brazilian occupation, Paraguay began the process of rebuilding its borders with the nations it had just gone to war with. The first treaty to tackle border disputes was the Loizaga–Cotegipe Treaty signed between Paraguay and Brazil. The treaty granted Brazil territories north of the Apa River and all land claimed prior to The War of the Triple Alliance^[25]. With this treaty being signed in 1872, it greatly contributed to the degradation of Brazilian-Argentine relations as well as Paraguay's already suffering economy^[25].

The second treaty signed following the war was the Machaín-Irigoyen Treaty in 1876 between Paraguay and Argentina. In it, Argentina was granted all land south of the Pilcomayo River and Misiones Province^[26] Although previously allied with Brazil, Argentina met resistance in claiming more territory in the Chaco region. It would be US intervention by then-President Rutherford B. Hayes that Paraguay would receive its claim to the Chaco Boreal region^[17]. This decision, although largely beneficial to Paraguay, would stir tensions with Bolivia as they believed they retained a legitimate claim to the land dating back to colonial times^[26]. With their later losses in the upcoming War of the Pacific, Bolivia's belief in their claim to the Gran Chaco would only grow stronger.



The War of the Pacific

Known also as the Nitrate War, the War of the Pacific was fought between the combined forces of Perú and Bolivia against Chile. The substance that sparked one of Perú and Bolivia's largest

losses was sodium nitrate—a valuable mineral used in agriculture as a fertilizer component and in explosive manufacturing^[29]. Large deposits of this mineral were found in the Atacama Desert. While technically within Bolivian borders, a multitude of Chilean mining and export companies established in the region blurred ownership lines between the nations of the region^[28].

As Bolivia and Perú grew resentful over having to share its export taxes with Chilean mining companies, they allied over assuring one another's territory in the region while attempting to push Chile out. However, just as Chile ceded a share of its taxes, Bolivia attempted to raise them against one of the largest Chilean mining companies in the region^[27]. With the threat of complete removal from the region, the superior Chilean navy occupied the port city of Antofagasta, leading to an official declaration of war from the Bolivian-Peruvian alliance in 1879^[27].



Although Chile was up against the combined forces of two nations, its military was far more organized and conditioned for battles and occupations. This was especially evident in the Battle of Iquique Bay in which Peruvian naval forces were almost immediately forced to retreat from their positions along the Pacific coastline^[28]. This would facilitate a Chilean advantage throughout the war as they possessed control over

a large area of the Pacific coastline—useful in maintaining trade and supply routes. This would be a war defined by naval battles as land-based movement and attacks were next to futile due to terrain and distance issues. Further Chilean victories at major supply strongholds such as Tacna and Arica would also contribute to a deepened loss of morale amongst Bolivian and Peruvian citizens and leaders alike^[28]. Then-Bolivian president Hilarión Daza would end up fleeing the country while then-Peruvian President Mariano Ignacio Prado would similarly flee to Europe^[28].

By 1880, US mediation efforts were in full play trying to prevent further bloodshed. However, these peace talks quickly broke down as Chilean forces launched an invasion of Perú and began occupying their capital of Lima by 1881^[27]. The 3-year occupation of the capital was brutal. Looting, racial riots, and a gradual descent into chaos defined the total loss of order. As the Peruvians were crumbling under Chilean rule, Bolivians suffered further losses of land every passing month they didn't have the support of their ally.

By 1884, Bolivia and Chile came to a truce and officially ended the War of the Pacific. The Chileans were granted complete control of the once-Bolivian coastline, completely landlocking the nation. The only concession Bolivia received was assistance in constructing a railroad between its

capital—La Paz—and Chilean port cities so that they would retain limited trade routes through the Pacific^{[27][28]}.

Both Bolivia and Perú had suffered many casualties and experienced severe economic downturn following the events of the war. While Perú still retained a vast coastline, Bolivia's was completely taken away and their sea-based trade was forced to be mediated through Chilean channels. It would be this growing desperation to break out of its landlocked nature that drew Bolivia's attention to the Chaco Boreal—the key to Atlantic trade.

The Gran Chaco

The Gran Chaco, translated from its Quechua origin to “Hunting Land,” is a vast, semi-arid lowland region spanning parts of Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay^[30]. As the second-largest dry forest in the world, after the Sahara Desert, the Chaco is characterized by flat terrain, gently sloping towards the Paraguay River in the east. The region's climate is primarily tropical and semi-arid with scarce annual rainfall, leading to distinct dry and wet seasons, with some areas experiencing extended droughts^[31]. These dry conditions give the Chaco its typical thorny bushlands and sparse forests—a feature that proves difficult to take advantage of in warfare.



The region's geography varies, with seasonal flooding in the northern wetlands contrasting the dry southern savannahs. The Chaco Boreal, the northern part of the region, is more humid and features larger river systems such as the highly sought-after Pilcomayo and Bermejo Rivers, which flow through swamps and marshes^[30]. In all previous skirmishes, navigating the often flooded marshland seems to be a struggle for all troops involved. Troops often fall sick and supply transports get stuck easily. A major feature of the Chaco is its lack of natural ports, making it landlocked and relatively isolated. Its isolation is also exacerbated by the region's lack of potable water^[30].

Yet in spite of its harsh environment, the Chaco is home to a wide range of wildlife, including jaguars, capybaras, and armadillos, along with indigenous peoples who have adapted to its challenging landscape^[31]. While predators in the Chaco Boreal prove to be significant danger, collaboration with the local people has greatly aided previous efforts in navigating the swamps safely. Indigenous populations have inhabited the region for generations, surviving off the wide array of vegetation and freshwater streams available^[31]. The largest of these groups are the Guaraní people. Originally having migrated from Brazil and eastern

Paraguay, the Guaraní have lived as hunter-gatherers in the Chaco regions—although their numbers have greatly decreased since the advent of Jesuit colonialism. They possess complex trade routes as well as generational knowledge of the land^[31].

Beyond the gateway the Chaco Boreal provides to Atlantic trade, the region also shows great economic promise with the discovery of oil and natural gas deposits nearby. Foreign companies, such as the Royal Dutch Shell company and Standard Oil, have shown great interest in acquiring drilling lands to the region^[30]. They've gone so far as to back the two sides of the war in hopes of receiving concessions on the victor's side. The former company, Royal Dutch Shell, is currently backing the Paraguayan government while the latter, Standard Oil, is supporting the Bolivian cause^[30]. If able to gain control of the region, these oil deposits show great promise in reversing the economic spiral both nations have entered following their respective losses in war.

Current Situation

June 1932: Bolivian forces, after a long line of violent transgressions, have taken over Fort Boquerón. One of the Chaco region's most strategic holdings, the capture of this fort clears a potential path to fully annexing the remainder of the Chaco Boreal. Paraguayan President Eusebio Ayala has ordered this war cabinet to take back the holding by any means necessary and push Bolivians out of the region. While both sides have been arming themselves for over 4 years up to this point, the Paraguayans are still at a considerable disadvantage in comparison to Bolivian resources. The challenges this war cabinet will have to address are as follows:

- Pushing back against Bolivian forces trained by WWI veteran General Hans von Kundt
- Reclaiming forts and supply lines along the Pilcomayo River from the Bolivian military
- Navigating harsh terrain, climate conditions, and disease during battle
- Potentially collaborating with local indigenous populations and brokering peace
- Reestablishing economic security and morale in the nation
- Exploring the Chaco Boreal for potential resources and promises of oil, while managing foreign interest in the region

As it currently stands, Bolivian forces have razed strategic forts like Fort Carlos Antonio López at Pitiantutá Lake and captured others along the Corrales and Toledo outposts. In light of the massive losses sustained from the War of the Triple Alliance and slow recovery process, the Paraguayan military force has been slow to muster, but strong nationalist sentiments are speeding up the draft. The Bolivian side, however much larger, may begin to struggle with motivation amongst its troops and bear the harsh conditions of the Chaco Boreal.

It is up to the efforts of this war cabinet to restore some semblance of stability to the nation in this war. A long history of great ambition met by embarrassing defeat has long defined the small Paraguay. Whether through military conquest or diplomatic attempts, a victory secured against its more powerful aggressor may restore the country back to a position of good standing in Latin America.

Positions

<p><i>Raúl Casal Ribeiro</i></p>	<p>The current standing vice president of Paraguay in Ayala's cabinet, Ribeiro has served a decorated career as a teacher and minister. He received an education in law at the National College of the Paraguayan capital, Asunción—an education he utilized in his later career as Minister of War and Navy and Minister of Foreign Affairs^[4]. His earlier position as Chief of Police for Asunción also allowed him to create the powerful Mounted Police^[4]. Now as tensions rise between the two countries, Ribeiro's guidance will be integral to the nation's success.</p>
<p><i>Colonel José Félix Estigarribia</i></p>	<p>Born to a class of peasantry, Colonel Estigarribia has risen far above his humble beginnings as an agriculturalist. After joining the National Army in 1910, Estigarribia received military training in Chile and later France^[5]. For his efforts in the Paraguayan Civil War of 1922, he was promoted by President Ayala from the rank of Major to Colonel^[5]. Now, as commander of the First Infantry, Estigarribia's varied military experience will come in handy against the Bolivian military's German tactics.</p>
<p><i>Colonel Rafael Franco</i></p>	<p>As a decorated military officer, Rafael Franco has quickly become the cabinet's most impulsive leader. It was his unsanctioned attack and capture of Fort Vanguardia (previously held by the Bolivians) in the Gran Chaco that sparked declarations of war^[6]. After a brief demotion, Colonel Franco has returned to the war as the commander of the Third Corps^[7]. His experience as an infantry leader will make him invaluable in more unconventional operations.</p>
<p><i>Major Higinio Morínigo Martínez</i></p>	<p>Major Morínigo's military career prior to the outbreak of war was not one of significance. His refusal to participate in the Civil War of 1922 meant his battle experience was limited leading up to the events in the Chaco Boreal^[8]. It would be his background as a child of mixed heritage and subsequent understanding of the Guaraní language that would push him to his current standing in the war cabinet^[9].</p>
<p><i>Juan Valori</i></p>	<p>Juan Valori, known as the Paraguayan master spy, is the war cabinet's best chance of surveillance against the Bolivian military. Although much remains relatively unknown about the spy, his tactics prove quite valuable. One such tactic utilizes the involvement of the native Guaraní populations in the Chaco area to survey movements, territories, and general advantages to the land^[10].</p>
<p><i>Francisco Solano López</i></p>	<p>Sharing a name with his father, Francisco López comes from a lineage of Paraguayan presidents and war heroes. His grandfather, Carlos Antonio López, served as the nation's first president while his father succeeded him as the second president^[11]. Unfortunately, his father was killed in the disastrous War of the Triple Alliance, but not before bestowing a great sense of nationalism and care for foreign affairs upon his son^[11]. López, under his father's guidance,</p>

	has invaluable connections with foreign allies as well as a vengeance for regaining the land his father died for.
<i>Alfredo Stroessner</i>	The son of a German brewer, Stroessner is a young addition to the current war cabinet. Having just joined the army 3 years prior at age 17, he has shown some promise in tactical acumen ^[12] . A good soldier and an especially talented artillery handler, Stroessner will use this war as an opportunity to advance through the ranks ^[12] .
<i>Juan Francisco Decoud</i>	Sharing a name with his grandfather, Decoud follows his family's military and elite prestige. Although his family has a complicated history with rebellious involvements against previous governmental regimes following the Triple Alliance War, Ayala's cabinet has offered Decoud a second chance in the fight against the Bolivians ^[13] . Despite his upbringing in Argentina as an exile, his family's merchant connections in the Plata Basin means he holds a fierce claim to the Paraguay River located in the Chaco Boreal. This claim will ultimately motivate him and the men he leads to oust the Bolivians from the territory he is destined to claim ^[13] .
<i>Héctor Velázquez</i>	A decorated physician and minister, Dr. Velázquez served as the nation's first ophthalmologist and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in his youth ^[14] . Although much older now, Dr. Velázquez's insight as a dean of medicine and minister will be invaluable to the war effort ^[14] . Many look to him as the future of medical innovation and the instructor of future medical students—an especially important role in a region defined by its bloody wars and high death tolls.
<i>Felipe Benigno Molas López</i>	Previously a pioneer in the field of dentistry, Dr. López quickly rose to the highest positions of health in the war cabinet. Just recently named the Captain of Health, López is well versed in foreign treatment and implant options due to his Parisian-based education ^[15] . His experience makes him one of the best army medics on the field and will be important in preserving the safety of Paraguayan soldiers.
<i>Eduardo Schaerer Vera y Aragón</i>	With a long résumé as a businessman, writer, minister, and even former president, Senator Schaerer now serves his country in the halls of the legislature. He previously founded the nation-wide newspaper— <i>La Tribuna</i> —and served as the nation's 25th president with current President Ayala in his cabinet ^[16] . A strong leader through difficult times, Schaerer was one of the rare presidents with the ability to solve problems without the involvement of military juntas ^[16] . His skill as a diplomat will aid in stopping the war before bloodshed increases.
<i>Félix Paiva</i>	As the only member in Paraguayan history to hold positions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, Paiva possesses a large amount of experience handling all aspects of government ^[35] . His various positions included serving as the dean of the National University of Asunción, a member of the Senate, the

	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Culture and Public Instruction, and the Interior, the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, and the vice president during Manuel Gondra's presidency ^[35] . Paiva is well respected in the capital and is a strong advocate of diplomatic solutions with a strong sense of justice.
<i>Juan Manuel Frutos</i>	Dr. Frutos's youth had largely been defined by his involvement in political activism and strong career in civil law. His reputation as a man of strong moral compass and low tolerance for corruption catapulted him to higher positions in the judicial branch—the most prominent being the President of the Supreme Court of Justice ^[36] . While the acquisition of the Chaco Boreal is deeply important to the future of Paraguay, Dr. Frutos refuses to compromise on worsening the already-poor quality of life Paraguayan citizens are subjected to ^[36] .
<i>General Raimundo Rolón Villasanti</i>	With the promise of a decorated military career, General Rolón shows potential as a leader able to inspire perseverance amongst those under his command. By the beginnings of the war, General Rolón was being groomed to take on the position as Chief of Operations for the Paraguayan army ^[38] . His knowledge of the terrain within the swamplands of the Chaco Boreal will allow him to successfully navigate unique supply lines and move troops to wherever Colonel Estigarribia will need ^[38] .
<i>Josefina Plá</i>	Based in the capital city of Asunción, Josefina Plá is one of the nation's most treasured and influential poets. Her catalogue of over 60 poems and plays reflect strong ideals of equality and hope ^[39] . While many question his appointment into the war cabinet, President Ayala sees her influence as an important aspect in preserving morality amongst Paraguayan citizens. Causes she feels especially passionate about—ranging from feminism, cultural innovation, and equality—will shine through all of her works ^[39] .
<i>Carlos Casado</i>	A member of the immensely powerful Casado family, Carlos Casado serves as the war cabinet's attaché for Argentina. With his family's influence in the Argentinian oligarchy, Casado's power extends past his agricultural development background ^[41] . His family's claim to close to 100,000 acres in the western Gran Chaco means the issue of Bolivian occupation is very important to him ^[42] . This land, largely unused, shows great agrarian promise and may even offer other resources ^[43] .
<i>Sir Henri Deterding</i>	Born to an impoverished family in Amsterdam, Sir Henri Deterding dedicated his life to escaping the financial troubles that defined so much of his childhood. Showing a special talent for handling large accounts, Deterding was eventually recruited to join the Royal Dutch Shell Company ^[40] . He was shortly promoted to managing director following the passing of his mentor, J. Kessler ^[40] . Under his leadership, the Royal Dutch Shell Company grew to one of the largest oil drilling and export companies in the world ^[40] . The

	brewing war in Chaco Boreal has only increased the company's interest in the region. Deterding's decision to back the Paraguayan forces with vast amounts of wealth and resources is one many consider risky. This is because the competitor on the Bolivian side is John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil.
José Patricio Guggiari Corniglione	As President Ayala's direct predecessor, Guggiari has had extensive experience serving in various cabinets as well as running his own. Prior to his rise to political office, he was a well-educated prosecutor and would even serve as Attorney General of Asunción ^[41] . His background as an educator would also lead him to strengthen Paraguay's education systems and push for major military reform. It would be his reforms that would call for much needed Paraguayan navy-improvements amidst the heightened tension ^[41] .

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