

JCC-Song

Topic: Mongols vs. Songs

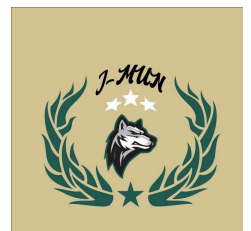


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Director's Letter

Dear comrades of Song,

Welcome to the Joint Crisis Committee Song Bloc at the very first iteration of Jackson Model United Nations 2024! My name is Nidhi Dodiya, and I am deeply honored to serve as your director for this thrilling and action-packed committee. Alongside me is your MUN-velous Chair, Eeshna Tumala, and the MUN-tastic dais of the Mongol Bloc, Vihaan Rawal (Director) and Olawumi Olaniyan (Chair). We are all so excited to make this JCC a Song-tacular experience that you will never forget! Welcome to the Song Dynasty, fellow comrade.

Crisis committees are very close to my heart, as they are exciting, fast-paced, and feel like an adventure. Crisis takes the diplomatic skills used in principal committees and implements them into a more hands-on approach. As a delegate in this crisis committee, you get to make decisions and take actions that directly impact you, your fellow comrades, and the other bloc. This is done through “directives” that you write and submit to the Dais. In a crisis committee, there is no voting bloc or resolution, but rather a personal goal and bloc goal that you want to take strategic action to advance towards. As you and other delegates make decisions, the “storyline” of the crisis will change based upon what actions you all decide to take. You can make a difference, for the better or for the worse, in the history of the great Song Dynasty.

Song soldiers and loyalists, we have carefully crafted a background guide for you to read, use, and prepare for the committee. This background guide contains everything you need to know: from a general overview to history and different blocs. I strongly encourage you all to thoroughly read this guide to fully understand and immerse yourself in this joint crisis committee.

Other than the background guide, there is also the Rules of Procedure which dictates how this committee will work. I highly recommend you all to review or learn the basics of the Crisis Specialized ROP, as well as our own modified JCC ROP. Don't forget to check out these two documents in the ROP section on the JMUN website.

Please make sure to prepare for this committee by reading the background guide and ROP, writing your position paper, and even making some notes for yourself. Preparation is key to be engaged in and enjoy the crisis experience. Moreover: beware many twists that are yet to come...

Whether this is your first crisis committee or you are a seasoned delegate, there is always something special for everyone. I know you all will bring your unique personalities and skills to this committee, and I look forward *very* much to seeing them shine through. I encourage each and every one of you to speak up, share your ideas, opinions, and perspectives. I hope you will enjoy your time at JMUN as you learn new things, meet new people, and most importantly of all: finish off committee inspired to participate in another MUN once again.

If you have any questions or concerns before the conference, please feel free to reach out to us at jmun.jccsong@gmail.com! We will try our best to get back to you within a few days.

Best of luck to you all, and long live the emperor!

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Topic Introduction

The Mongol Empire, having already conquered the majority of Asia and Europe, now turns its full might toward the Song Dynasty! This war was born from a series of conflicts, from allies to enemies. In the year 1211, the Mongols initially entered a war between the Song and Jin Dynasty, allying with the Song to defeat their mutual enemy. However, with the Jin Dynasty vanquished, the alliance quickly soured, and a brutal 44-year war between the Mongols and Song ensued, leading to an inevitable clash between two mighty forces.

The situation is now dire. The Mongols have begun their invasion throughout Song China, terrorizing small towns and instilling fear across the nation. As the Mongol forces advance, they bring with them their mighty military power. The Song Dynasty, though resilient, is now on the defensive, struggling to protect its lands and people from the approaching storm. The geography of the Song's territory, once a stronghold of natural barriers, now faces the threat of being overrun by the Mongol forces.

At stake is not just the sovereignty of the Song Dynasty, but the very culture, from inventions to historical roots. If the Song Dynasty falls, it will signal the end of an era and the beginning of Mongol domination over all of China. The outcome of this war will determine the fate of the Song's land, resources, and legacy.

But the Song Dynasty is not without hope. Now, more than ever, the Song people must rise to the occasion. Members of the Song bureaucracy and aristocracy have risen to the challenge to preserve their nation and centuries-old legacy. The urgency of the moment cannot be overstated—every battle, every strategy, every sacrifice matters. The Song must fight not only for survival, but also for the preservation of its culture and legacy.

The time to act is now!

Topic History

The Mongol conquest of the Song Dynasty was a massive invasion that took place over nearly half a century and was the pinnacle of the Mongol Empire. There were several factors leading up to the initial war, such as minor skirmishes and rising tensions. The main incident that triggered the war was the Mongol conquest of the Jin dynasty.

Around the early 1100s, there were three main kingdoms (dynasties) ruling modern-day China: the Jin Dynasty, the Western Xia (Xi xia) Dynasty, and the Song Dynasty. These three dynasties were completely separate, arising from various indigenous groups in China. They had complex interactions with each other, but the most notable ones were the Song-Xia wars and the Jin-Song wars. The Song-Xia war didn't change the overall political landscape of China too much, only a few cities were annexed by the Song Dynasty. However, the Jin-Song wars was a key conflict that acted as a precursor to the Mongol conquest of Jin and eventually Song.

The Jin-Song wars began as a series of clashes that were fueled by an amalgamation of factors. Primarily, both the Jin and Song dynasties were expansionist and wished to expand their territory so as to acquire resources to improve their economy and authority in China. The two dynasties also harbored much hostility for each other, in part due to past territorial disputes and ethno-cultural differences. From 1125 to 1206, the sole players in this war were the Jin and the Song. But, in 1211, a new group entered this conflict: the Mongols. Respectively, the Mongols and Song were doing decently well in battles with the Jin, although it would take much time and energy to defeat the Jin separately. As a consequence, in 1233, the Mongols and the Song Dynasty formed a strategic alliance, joining forces to defeat the Jin Dynasty. The two sides agreed to share territory south of the Yellow River upon their win. In just a year, the united Mongol-Song force brought the Jin Dynasty to its complete demise in 1234.

After their victory, the Song dynasty armies marched into key cities that they wished to reclaim as their own, such as Kaifeng and Luoyang. However, the Song armies were only able to claim cities as far as Kaifeng, at which they were met with Mongol resistance. The Mongols and Song had a dispute on who should have control of certain cities and capitals: both the Mongols and the Song wanted geo-politically advantageous cities and plenty more land. As a result of this tense disagreement, the Mongol conquest of the Song Dynasty began.

In this 44-year-long war, both the Mongols and the Song Dynasty utilized a plethora of military strategies and tactics in order to contend with each other for land.

The Song Dynasty often used guerrilla warfare, which included ambushes and sabotaging Mongol supply routes. They also selected their weapons and formation carefully, using long pikes and spears to defend. The strongest aspect of the Song armies which gave them the upper hand were their impressive technologically-advanced weapons, such as fire-lit arrows and lances, flamethrowers, triple-bow mounted crossbows, land and naval bombs, and gunpowder-based firearms resembling guns. Excluding these tactics, the Song moreover relocated people from border towns further inland and requested alliances from independent tribes and kingdoms to gain more manpower.

The Mongols had a remarkable military prowess that made them an undefeatable foe for many kingdoms across Asia. Their soldiers were of an extreme caliber, possessing impeccable discipline and skills as a result of their vigorous training. Their armies could easily adapt to new terrains, battle techniques, and often learned from their opponents' tactics and adopted them. They also had an impressive cavalry, with warhorses that were swift, agile, strong, and well-suited for the violence of battle. Siege warfare was one of the things the Mongol armies especially excelled at, with the tactics of catapults and battering rams having been drilled into every fighter. Apart from military power, the Mongols frequently used their diplomatic power to divide and conquer the vassal chiefdoms inside the Song territory. They encouraged chiefdoms to join them by allowing them to keep their sovereignty as vassals under Mongol rule, offering them territory, wealth, and protection, and sometimes threatening them if they resisted. Moreover, the Mongols spread rumors within the Song armies which created distrust and divisions between the soldiers and demoralized them. Many soldiers, even high-ranking generals, defected over to the Mongol army and betrayed their Song comrades.

In all, the Mongol invasion of the Song Dynasty was a complex war, with countless ups and downs for both sides. The intricate nuances of this war lie within diplomacy, negotiation, and tactic. This will be a fast-paced, action-packed, and high-stakes crisis that will test your skills of diplomacy and decision-making.

For the terms of this crisis, various assumptions will be made to simplify half a century of history and boil it down into a Model United Nations crisis. While many different khans were the Mongol rulers over the timespan of this war, we will assume that Kublai Khan is the one ruling from start to end. Moreover, while many different emperors were ruling the Song Dynasty over the timespan of the war, we will assume that Zhao Bing is the one ruling from start to end. Although Zhao Bing is a seven-year-old emperor, we will assume that he has the intellect of an adult, so that the delegate assigned to the position of Zhao Bing will be able to participate in the crisis fully.

Current Situation

The Mongol Empire, after conquering much of Asia and Europe, now turns its focus toward the Song Dynasty, one of the last remaining powers in East Asia. The conflict with the Mongols is the culmination of decades of shifting alliances and wars, notably beginning when the Song and the Mongols briefly allied to defeat the Jin Dynasty in the early 13th century. With the Jin defeated, the alliance collapsed, and a prolonged 44-year war between the Mongols and Song Dynasty began, ultimately leading to one of the most significant military campaigns in Chinese history.

Now, the situation for the Song Dynasty is grim. The Mongols, under the leadership of Kublai Khan, have launched a full-scale invasion of Song China, using their unmatched cavalry, advanced siege tactics, and psychological warfare. The Mongols are steadily advancing across key regions and the Song's historical strongholds, such as Xiangyang, have fallen after prolonged sieges where the Mongols employed innovative gunpowder technology and formidable siege engines.

Despite their technological advances, including the invention of gunpowder, movable type printing, and superior shipbuilding techniques, the Song struggled to repel the Mongol onslaught. The Song Navy, once formidable, now faces overwhelming pressure, as the Mongols learn and adapt to their enemies' strengths. Moreover, internal divisions among Song military leaders and officials weakened the dynasty's ability to coordinate a proper defense, all while the Song cities like Lin'an, the capital of the Southern Song face imminent danger as the Mongol forces continue to push southward.

At stake is more than just territory. Song China, known for its unprecedented cultural and intellectual achievements, is at risk of being erased. The dynasty oversaw the creation of technological innovations that shaped the world, including the compass, advancements in agricultural production, and a thriving commercial economy facilitated by a complex system of paper currency. The dynasty's cities, such as Quanzhou, became global trade hubs, connecting China to the wider world through the Silk Road and maritime routes. The fall of the Song Dynasty would not only signal the loss of this vibrant civilization but also the destruction of its contributions to literature, art, philosophy, and governance, which have influenced Chinese culture for centuries.

The Mongol invasion represents an existential threat to the Song Dynasty. Should the Mongols succeed, the Song will not only lose their sovereignty but also see the collapse of the intellectual and artistic age that defined their rule. Kublai Khan's ambitions go beyond conquest—he seeks to reshape China under Mongol rule, integrating the vast Chinese economy and culture into the Mongol Empire, and taking control of the spice trade.

If the Mongols are victorious, it will mark the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty, the first non-Han dynasty to rule all of China, which will profoundly change the landscape of Chinese governance, culture, and society.

Bloc Positions

Pro-Peace Bloc: Zhao Bing, Lu Xiufu, Zhang Shijie, Lu Wenhuan, Wang Dechen

This bloc's core principle is peace. The members of this bloc want to end conflict with the Mongols through non-aggressive strategy, such as peace negotiations, ceasefires, and intermarriage alliances. This bloc's members are most pro-peace because they are loyal to the emperor and his adviser, Lu Xiufu, who are both strong advocates for peaceful strategies. Generally, this bloc is a loyal group, but some may waver due to their selfish goals...

Pro-War Bloc: Zhang Rou, Li Tingzhi, Li Tan, Wan Yi, Meng Gong, Zhao Nanzong, Yang Wen, Acha, Pu Shougeng

This bloc's core principle is war strategy. The members of this bloc want to initiate war as they think it is the best strategy to win, or either keep the war going for advancing their own goals. Certain members in this group are usually more invested in their own goals rather than the success of Song China, as they have something to gain from a longer war, such as business, power, or land. Some of these people are less loyal than the other two blocs, and would switch blocs or even betray the emperor if it was in their favor.

Neutral Bloc: Wen Tianxiang, Xie Daoqing, Jia Sidao, Zuo Tai, Yu Jie, Zhang Hongfan,

This bloc's core principle is efficiency. They want the war to end as quickly and efficiently as possible, and they are completely fine with any strategy to win, whether that be attacking the Mongols or initiating peace negotiations with them. In general, the people in this bloc are critical thinkers who consider the situation more realistically than the pro-peace bloc, but are still loyal to the emperor, unlike the pro-war bloc. Most of the members in this bloc would not switch blocs or betray the emperor, but one or two might do so mainly because of disagreements with the higher superiority leaders of the dynasty.

Position Descriptions

Emperor Zhao Bing

Born the son of a concubine and the youngest in the imperial family, Zhao Bing didn't expect to take too much responsibility growing up. However, when his half-brother Emperor Duanzong unexpectedly died due to illness, the massive responsibility of Emperor was thrust onto Zhao. Despite his background, Zhao is adapting and commanding his nation as much as he can in these times of hardship. Currently, Emperor Zhao's biggest allies are Lu Xiufu, Wen Tianxiang, and Zhang Shijie. They give Zhao advice and guidance on the next steps for the empire, and are his biggest supporters. Secretly, some governors dislike his mellow character, and believe that he is not fit for emperor. However, Zhao Bing continues to endeavor, staying out of depression by constantly chugging his favorite "Patriotic Greens Soup". His goals for the empire are either to push the Mongols out or, preferably, make peace with them through negotiations. Zhao Bing's ultimate goal is to gain the trust and support of the nobles, soldiers, and commoners.

Xie Daoqing

Carrying herself with an air of elegance and power, even the Emperor bows his head to the Grand Empress Dowager Xie Daoqing. When Emperor Bing's grandfather, Emperor Lizong died, Xie Daoqing served as regent of the empire because her son was too young to rule. Having seen much history and war unfold in front of her eyes, all the other members of the royal court greatly value her experience and give her their utmost respect. Now, in the era of Emperor Zhao Bing, Daoqing serves as the Grand Empress Dowager, the second highest position in the court in which she advises the Emperor and others. Due to her many years of experience, the Grand Empress doesn't particularly favor or trust any one person too much - she has seen too much betrayal to fall into that trap. However, she is suspicious about Zhang Rou, Li Tan, Wan Yi, and Pu Shougeng, as she feels that they have ulterior motives that aren't in the best interests of both the empire and the Emperor. As the Mongols advance closer to her home, Daoqing knows that they are a relentless force with many strong armies. The Grand Empress Dowager plans to end any potential war by either making peace with the Mongols, negotiating land with them, or even calling upon allies from the kingdoms further East. Most importantly, Xie Daoqing simply wants the war to end quickly and efficiently, without much loss of territory and soldiers.

Lu Xiufu:

As the Imperial Adviser, Xiufu has much influence over the emperor and the nobles, and with much power comes much responsibility. Since he was a child, Xiufu has always had undying loyalty for the Empire. When he passed the civil service exam and joined the Imperial Ministry, Xiufu was able to begin living out his dream of serving the empire. Now, as the Imperial Advisor to Emperor Bing, Xiufu loyally teaches, advises, and protects the Emperor. Xiufu trusts close friends, such as Tianxiang and Shijie, because they are as loyal as he is. Xiufu is a bit unsure of Sidao, Rou, and the local chiefs. He only fully trusts those with clear loyalty to the emperor, and Xiufu is very good at telling when someone holds half-hearted loyalty in their soul. Xiufu is an idealist, and always strives for the more peaceful, benevolent, and loyal option. Xiufu wants the war to end completely peacefully, and has proposed the idea of an intermarriage between Emperor Bing and any one of the Mongol Khans' commanders' daughters.

Wen Tianxiang:

Amongst the upper imperial leaders, Wen Tianxiang is the one of the most levelheaded. Raised by a father who was a Song admiral, and a well-educated mother who gave him the best education at home, Tianxiang was set up for success. Naturally, Tianxiang got a job in the government quite easily, and climbed the ladder extremely faster than others, gaining his current job as the Imperial Commander-in-Chief. Tianxiang thinks quite critically and realistically, which is why he knows that Song China should try every strategy to win against the Mongols - whether that be through peace or through war - as the Mongols are a formidable and unpredictable foe to defeat. Tianxiang has no extremely "set-in-stone" allies - he will gladly betray even his closest friends for the safety and well-being of the emperor. However, Tianxiang does make sure to keep tabs on the generals and the local chiefs, as they have the most critical power in certain cases. Tianxiang is firm in his perspective that the Song leaders must think carefully and realistically before taking action, and that Song China should take *any* option available to them to end the war and end it *fast*.

Jia Sidao:

Born in Xiangyang to two intelligent mathematicians, like Tianxiang, Sidao was also homeschooled, his education focused more on math and government. Perfectly so, Sidao was in the right position to earn the highest degree in the imperial government exam at the astonishingly young age of 25. After that, Sidao easily secured a job in the imperial government. Xiufu saw his hard work, and promoted him to the role of the Imperial Chancellor of the Treasury. As the Imperial Treasurer, Sidao is skilled in accounting, analysis, debate, and budgeting. Sidao is extremely

concerned about the toll the Mongol invasion will take on the resources and economy of Song China, which is why he hopes that the war will be over soon so as not to deplete China's current wealth. Sidao is creating budget plans, and is only sending more resources to the towns he deems most critical and important to hold. This cut in allocation has admittedly earned Sidao some resentment, however allies like Shijie and Tianxiang defend him. Sidao wants the war over soon, but secretly, his doubts in the negotiation and strategization power of the Song leaders increase slowly as time goes on...

Zhang Shijie:

Known as a child prodigy in the art of swordsmanship, Zhang Shijie rose in popularity throughout China. Because of this, he was appointed General of the Imperial Cavalry quite early in his career. Due to his immense success, Shijie made many alliances with influential nobility, but he also attracted others who were jealous of him. Despite his rise to fame and power, Shijie doesn't let it all get to his head. As a leader, he is humble, he thinks and acts carefully, and most importantly: he is loyal. Regardless of his calm nature, Shijie faces inner conflict as he secretly wants nothing more than to kill the Mongol leader himself, to avenge two of his best friends who were killed by the Mongols. However, his loyalist goal is to ultimately lead Song China into victory through any way that the emperor wishes for, and to not let his loyalty to the emperor waver because of his selfish desires.

Zhang Rou:

Growing up as the son of an illustrious swordship teacher, Zhang Rou was handed all the tools he needed for becoming a sword master. As a child, Rou wasn't too interested in swordfighting - rather, he had his sights set on becoming a wealthy merchant, navigating through the ruthless seas. However, after seeing his father once teach and spar with the child prodigy, Zhang Shijie, Rou was inspired to get back into sword fighting and pursue a job in the government. Rou worked hard and got to the place where he is now: the Imperial General of the Navy. As the navy general, Rou works with both his soldiers and shipmakers, such as Zhao Nanzong, to discuss battleship designs. Regarding the upcoming Mongol invasion, Rou holds his ground on the stance that the only way the Mongols should be dealt with is violence. Rou dislikes people like Wenhuan and Jie, because of their pro-peace tactics, but wouldn't dare openly disagree with Xiufu or the Emperor. Rou strongly advocates for full force attacks at the Mongols, and is happy with others who agree with him, like Li Tan, Tsagan, and some other craftsmen and local chiefs. Getting overly frustrated with China's lack of action, Rou's loyalty may begin to fade...

Zhang Hongfan:

Spending his childhood climbing rock cliffs and trekking mountains for fun, Zhang Hongfan was a very outdoorsy child, much to the dismay of his wealthy parents who wanted him to be an accomplished scholar. However, Hongfan ultimately went on his own path, first joining the imperial army as a low-ranking soldier. Yet, his squadron commander saw much potential in Hongfan, as he displayed his commendable skills to traverse difficult terrain when the squadron was in the mountains for a mission. Back in the main city, Hongfan was promoted by the Commander-in-Chief, Wen Tiangxiang, to the first General of China's new Mountain Division. Now, Hongfan spends his time recruiting and training soldiers for this very specialized division. His team is able to traverse difficult tundra terrain, easily scale and climb some of the largest cliffs in China, and trek through mountainous areas - mainly doing reconnaissance work. However, as the threat of the Mongols looms over China, Tiangxiang has asked Hongfan to get many more recruits and ramp up the training, as the dangerous terrain between Mongolia and China will definitely call for the use of Hongfan's Mountain Division team. Zhang Hongfan believes that the war needs to end quickly, and that the Mongols need to be stopped in their tracks. Hongfan's goal is to stop the Mongols in the mountains, well before they reach mainland China and wreak havoc on the innocent civilians.

Wang Dechen:

One of the older Generals in the army at this time, all the other Generals look to Dechen for advice. Wang Dechen is a man of few words - he spends his time observing carefully rather than speaking and persuading. For this reason, not many know of his humble past as a farmer's son who worked his way to a powerful position in the army. As the General of the Imperial Infantry, Dechen recruits outstanding soldiers-in-training and refines them to become even greater, loyal soldiers. Drilling the value of loyalty into his infantry, Dechen himself is also loyal to the core. Being a quiet observer, Dechen can sniff out disloyalty well, and that is why he secretly despises Rou, Tingzhi, Tan, and Yi. Unfortunately, he still has to work with Yi, the inventor, to acquire advanced weaponry for his infantry. After seeing so much war and violence in his life, Dechen believes that peace is the best way out of this conflict. However, Dechen still keeps his armies trained on standby, as he knows well by now that war is unpredictable. Above all, Wang Dechen wants to end the war with peace in order to keep the Emperor and the people of China safe.

Zuo Tai:

Born into a family of archers who worked for a small chiefdom, Zuo Tai had never imagined that he would one day be a general in the Song government. As a child, Tai was extremely gifted in the art of archery. So much so, that the chiefdom he lived in was able to register Tai for archery competitions in the main city of Hangzhou. Through this exposure, Tai was able to capture the attention of the Song nobles and government. Rising through the ranks in government, Tai became the Imperial General of the Archery Division. As the General, Tai recruits and trains his archers to become what they are now: the most well-renowned archers in all of East Asia. Looking at the upcoming Mongol invasions, Tai is training his archers even more so that they can help finish off the war quickly, which is what he ultimately wants. Tai only allies with people who share the exact same goals as him - such as Yu Jie - but this is mostly why Tai doesn't have many allies. The only people Tai really hates are those with completely opposite ideas for the war effort, such as Wenhuan, the warlords and chiefs, and most of the inventors. In the end, Zuo Tai is a peaceful and loyal man who wishes for the war to end with the least amount of Chinese soldiers lost to violence.

Yu Jie:

Despite starting off on the wrong foot in diplomacy by falling face first onto the floor during his first debate speech, Yu Jie grew from a shy boy to a well-loved leader. As the Sichuan governor, Jie runs this critical border town with almost military precision and efficient organization. Since the Mongols seem to be inching closer day by day, Jie thinks that they will invade from the Sichuan plain into China. Jie is ramping up his town's defenses, but believes that the Sichuan needs more military support from China in order to hold the town. Jie detests Jia Sidao, because Jie feels like Sidao doesn't allocate enough money to fund the Sichuan province, but rather favors Xiangyang unfairly. Jie also isn't too fond of Wan Yi, Meng Gong, and Zhao Nanzong, as he suspects that they want to keep the war going in order to get richer. Yu Jie does have good relations with Zuo Tai and Zhang Shijie, but is still suspicious of everyone, especially those of higher rank. But in the end, Yu Jie only wishes that he is able to keep his town safe and that the war ends as soon as possible.

Li Tingzhi:

Growing up as the son of the previous governor of Xiangyang, Tingzhi admired his father and was thrilled to inherit his role as the governor of the powerful city. However, when Tingzhi was a teenager, the great city of Xiangyang was split into two cities - Fancheng, north of the Han River, and Xiangyang, south of the Han River. This split happened due to growing political tensions with the rival Lü family, who began gaining more territory closer and closer to Xiangyang. Unfortunately, the decision to

make the split was taken in order to avoid further conflict and to keep citizens happy. The Lüs got Xiangyang, while the Tingzhi family was left only with Fancheng, a smaller city forever in the shadow of great Xiangyang. For this, Li Tingzhi has always resented Lü Wenhuan, and refuses to talk to him unless he needs to. In terms of the Mongols, Tingzhi strongly believes that war is needed to defeat the Mongols so that they will never think about laying their eyes on China ever again. He is trying to convince the Emperor and his court that peace talks are useless, as he states that the Mongols are “brutal people” who will ignore peace deals and will definitely come back to attack China when they least expect it. Tingzhi agrees with the Grand Empress Dowager in the belief that China needs to make alliances and employ their existing allies to help them with the war effort, as the Mongols are a massively strong opponent. Ultimately, Li Tingzhi wants to do whatever it takes just to ensure that the Mongol threat will be eliminated forever, whether it takes one year or ten years to do so.

Lü Wenhuan:

Born into a rich family, Lü Wenhuan was a spoiled child at first. His parents forced him to study his entire teenage life for the civil service examination, and he passed. After getting a spot in the local government Wenhuan felt more ambitious and wanted to gain more power. Putting in the time and hard work, Wenhuan rose in the ranks rapidly and became the governor of Xiangyang, becoming a humble and charismatic figure in China. After rising up in government, Wenhuan quickly made allies... and enemies. Wenhuan has the support of the influential Xiufu and Shijie, as they often agree on pro-peace tactics. However, certain military generals like Zhang Rou and Zuo Tai dislike Wenhuan because of his lofty, often unrealistic expectations. Wenhuan has tried to be friendly towards Tingzhi, but seeing as it didn't work at all, Wenhuan also hates Tingzhi. Wenhuan thinks that people who don't care how the war ends are reckless because they don't think about the future, and that is why Wenhuan wants to end the war with peaceful negotiations.

Li Tan:

As the son of the Chief of Shandong, Li Tan knew he was always destined for greatness. However, growing up, he had developed a thirst for war and violence, quite different from the policies of his father's rule. When Tan became the Chief, he transformed Shandong from a calm cultural center to a raging nation bent on taking over land. He made strategic alliances with other chiefs, like Yang Wen and Acha. As Shandong grew in aggressiveness, nobility and governors began to hate him. As rumors of the looming Mongol invasion scatter throughout China, Tan sees this war as an opportunity to get even more land. Li Tan is not loyal, and his ultimate goal is to be with the side that wins the war, so he can accumulate more power and land.

Wan Yi:

From the beginning, Yi always knew he wanted to be a trailblazer. Growing up in a family of farmers, it was expected of him to continue in the family's work - but Yi wanted to become an inventor. After finding a mentor and becoming an apprentice, Yi became China's most innovative and renowned weapon inventor, eventually getting hired by the imperial army. Ever since word of the Mongols had spread, Yi had begun creating and testing more and more advanced weapons and artillery inventions to prepare for the upcoming war. His best allies are Meng Gong, who builds his inventions, and Zhao Nanzong, who is also a fellow inventor and creator. Yi quietly hates Wenhuan and Jie, for either wanting peace or for wanting the war to finish quickly. The current war preparations are generating a lot of profit for Yi, the majority of which he sends to his family. Yi secretly wishes for the war to go on, so he can keep supporting his family well, and tries his very best to keep cranking out better and better weapons.

Meng Gong:

Brought and raised in a strict family of weaponsmiths, Meng Gong felt in his element whenever he wielded his hammer and felt the sparks of the forge fire on his hands. He continued in his family's business, but brought it one step up by training for long hours to become the fastest, most precise, and most skilled blacksmith in China. Employed by the imperial military to become the Head Weaponsmith, Gong's team currently makes regular weapons while Gong himself makes Wan Yi's complicated creations come to life. Gong prefers to be alone, but enjoys the company of Yi, Nanzong, and Rou, who always compliments how good his weapons are. He doesn't have many enemies, but is in a grudge with Wenhuan, who got black soot all over his silk clothes after Gong told him not to touch anything. Like Yi and Nanzong, Gong is also earning so much money from the war, and does want the war to keep going. However, Meng Gong is loyal to the end and would never publicly oppose the emperor.

Zhao Nanzong:

Starting off as a sailor-merchant, Nanzong felt like the ships were not high-tech and adequate enough for use. He got to work and started building his own ships, and simply continued doing so, as he had found his passion in shipmaking. Soon, he put together his own team, and they built military-level ships for their local town. Now, his growing team gets more and more contracts from the imperial government to build massive warships with inbuilt weapons and artillery. Often collaborating with Wan Yi and Gong, the three became good friends through their shared love for innovation and science. Nanzong has no enemies, but he particularly resents Zhang Rou for his insane navy warship demands, which are unrealistic. But, Nanzong still

tries to make better warships each time, and desperately wants the war to keep going so he and his team can still keep earning a grand amount of money.

Yang Wen:

Ruling over the chiefdom of Bozhou, Yang Wen began his rule as a leader who prioritized improving the infrastructure of Bozhou. Through his long reign, he hasn't made many enemies but has befriended fellow chiefs such as Acha and even Li Tan. Over time his many projects began needing more labor and more land for agriculture. Bozhou plans to use the chaos of the Mongol invasion as a way to get more territory, either Mongolian territory or Chinese territory.

Acha:

Known as the ruthless chief of Shixi, it is well known that Acha runs an extremely organized and merciless chiefdom with people who trust completely in his ability to lead. As the chiefdom of Shixi is made up of the Nousou ethnic tribe, they are treated extremely poorly and unfairly by the Song government, which is ethnically Han. Due to this, Acha chooses to ally only with other local chiefs, and has decided that his enemies are the Song leaders who treat his chiefdom unfairly. Moreover, because of the unacceptable behavior towards his people, Acha's final goal is to grow his kingdom into a powerful empire, so he can give his loyal people better treatment. Acha aims to use the likely war against the Mongols and China as a chance to turn things in his favor, so that he can manipulate both sides in order to get more land and power.

Pu Shougeng:

Originally from lands further West, Pu Shougeng was a successful young Muslim merchant who traveled to China by sea for trading. However, once he saw China's many wonders, he settled down in the port city of Quanzhou. Being a wealthy merchant, Shougeng only amassed more wealth once he settled down, eventually becoming the wealthiest person in the city. Because of his wealth, connections, and knowledge of maritime operations and trade, Shougeng was appointed the role of Superintendent of the Quanzhou Harbors. Being a very charismatic person, Shougeng does well as the Superintendent, being able to convince many foreign merchants to invest their goods in the Harbor's trade. Shougeng has no enemies, nor any allies in particular. He simply befriends anyone who has something that he wants - a habit from his days as a merchant. Shougeng sees the Mongol invasion as a potential end to the booming trade in China's harbors, and so he may even help the Mongols if it means for him to be able to continue amassing wealth and power...

Guiding Questions

1. What strengths and weaknesses does your bloc have? Are they battle related or diplomacy related?
2. How much authority does your position have over the outcome of a war?
3. Who are your closest allies within your bloc?
4. What are the usual war tactics that your bloc uses? How does this differ from the opposing bloc?
5. What are some obstacles that could come with your proposal and how can you avoid them in committee?

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