

JOINT CRISIS COMMITTEE: ROARIN' CHICAGO



"AFTER ALL, IF YOU DON'T LIKE ACTION AND EXCITEMENT, YOU DON'T GO INTO POLICE WORK.

AND, WHAT THE HELL, I FIGURED, NOBODY LIVES FOREVER!"

- ELIOT NESS

DECEMBER 2ND, 2023

LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTORS:

Hello, Delegates!

We are Dylan Navarrete and Jonas Pfefferman, and we are super hyped to be running this Roaring Twenties hop (that's slang for party). We want this crisis to be fun and exciting, and we cannot wait to see what you do with this rich period of American history. There is glamor, power, riches, and of course, a little bit of backhanded murder.

Chicago during Prohibition is a fascinating study of the origins of organized crime. Gone were the families running small-scale robbery operations, replaced by large, intricate gangs shooting each other in the streets all for just a couple blocks of territory.

This committee will be determined by how well you can prepare for your position, but also how well you can improvise and adapt on the fly. Don't worry; we have plenty of curveballs to throw at you. Consolidate power, make your own play for the throne, or throw some gangsters in the clink... it's all up to you.

We'd of course like to thank our Crisis Staff, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Pages who helped put this committee together. Special thank you to Nason Li, our Junior Crisis Director, for helping us facilitate everything and being a great deputy.

And a special thanks to all of you for doing this committee. We wish you the best of luck, and we hope you have a great time. If you have any questions please contact us at dylan.navarrete.24@bishops.com and jonas.pfefferman.24@bishops.com, and Godspeed delegates.

I. CRISIS GUIDE

Welcome to the Historical Joint Crisis Committee: Roarin' Chicago. Compared to the formality of the General Assembly, these committees are faster-paced, and the sense of urgency that usually accompanies an unmoderated caucus will pervade the atmosphere throughout the day. Similarly to a General Assembly, most of the conference will be spent in moderated or unmoderated caucuses following short introductory speeches. A crisis committee is quick, free-flowing, and dynamic, reflecting the diverse group of large personalities that will be in the room. Each committee will receive a crisis update approximately every twenty minutes, but the frequency will vary depending on the flow of the committee.

There will be two main forms of action that can be taken in committee: committee directives and crisis notes. Committee directives force the entire committee to take unified action, and they require a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority to pass as they are the most powerful form of action. Crisis notes can be used to ask the crisis staff for information, arrange private meetings with other delegates, or take unilateral action. Requests will only be fulfilled in accordance with the given delegate's portfolio powers (e.g. a general may take individual action regarding the units under their control) and will be sent to crisis staff without committee debate. You should specify in a crisis note whether the action is public or private. Public actions may be read aloud in crisis updates, whereas private actions will not unless uncovered in some way. If a group of individuals would like to take joint action without committee approval, they may submit a single note with the signatures of all participants.

To communicate with others, delegates have two main options: communiqués and notes. Communiqués can be issued by an individual or group of delegates and will be read aloud during

crisis updates in both committees. For private communications, like in General Assembly Committees, if you want to send a note, simply write your name and the name of your recipient, and the dais will ensure that the note reaches its destination. Your tools may vary from small amounts of resources to large numbers of troops, but it's all about finding the right way to use them!

I. TOPIC BACKGROUND

On January 17th, 1920, the United States federal government banned the sale, production, importation, and transportation of alcoholic beverages. The government enacted these efforts by



passing the 18th Amendment and Volstead Acts, which banned the consumption of any beverage with an alcohol content of over 0.5%.¹ Overnight, the alcohol industry, a major part of the United States' economy disappeared, and criminal enterprises saw an opportunity to make money; they moved from

basic burglary and robbery to distributing now-illegal liquor.² Criminal groups became more organized in order to employ more sophisticated methods of acquiring alcohol. What began as

¹ "The Senate Overrides the President's Veto of the Volstead Act," *United States Senate*.

² Robert M. Lombardo, *Organized Crime in Chicago: Beyond the Mafia*, U of Illinois P Urbana, 2013, ProQuest Ebook Central, 80.

simply smuggling alcohol in by meeting foreign vessels at points just out of the U.S. Coast Guard jurisdiction became more complex. Soon, criminal organizations were committing fraud to acquire “medical” whiskey, “washing” alcohol that had been mixed with noxious chemicals, and even brewing their own liquor in the form of moonshine.³ With organized crime becoming more commonplace and interconnected, violence and chaos began to fill city streets, and police departments across America were overwhelmed with reports. In Chicago, this problem was particularly egregious, as Al Capone’s criminal underworld remained nigh-invulnerable to the Chicago Police Department. Capone himself became a hero to the common people given that he provided a very sought-after good. People would go out of their way to shake his hand in public, all the while he was surrounded by his eighteen bodyguards.⁴

As crime ran rampant throughout Chicago, citizens began to take notice of the increased violence. In Chicago’s 1923 mayoral election, William Dever, a firm believer in the rule of law, took office and sent the police out to shut down speakeasies across the city. The Chicago Outfit had to move just outside of the city to the suburb of Cicero. But when Cicero was threatened by a Democratic anti-corruption mayoral candidate, the gangs worked to support the Republican candidate in the 1924 election on the condition that law



³ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Prohibition," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 29 Sept. 2023.

⁴ Charles Lindbergh, *We*, Grosset and Dunlap, 1927, 224-227.

enforcement was to leave gangs to their own devices.⁵ On election day, armed gang members showed up at polling stations to ensure people voted “the right way,” and it worked.⁶

The U.S. Bureau of Prohibition had set its eyes on Chicago in trying to combat bootlegging and the illegal consumption of alcohol. They tasked Eliot Ness, an investigator and U.S. treasury member, to head up Chicago’s Prohibition Bureau.⁷ Despite numerous attempts at bribing Prohibition Bureau officers and even threatening their families, most members of Eliot Ness’s group of investigators and policemen remained steadfast in their convictions, continuing to do dangerous police work.⁸ As the years went on, Ness and his agents began to be known as “The Untouchables,” as continued threats and bribes did little to sway their members from their official duty.⁹

II. POSITION OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT



The officers of the Chicago Police Department are to uphold the rule of law throughout the city. Most importantly, their jobs have revolved around countering bootlegging and the violent crime that comes with it. However, not all members of the Chicago Police Department are as

⁵ "Al Capone - Scarface, Alcatraz & Death," *History*, A&E Television Networks, 26 Apr. 2021.

⁶ Robert M. Lombardo, *Organized Crime in Chicago: Beyond the Mafia*, 81.

⁷ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Eliot Ness," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13 Oct. 2023.

⁸ Max Allen Collins, A. Brad Schwartz, "Scarface and the Untouchable: Al Capone, Eliot Ness, and the Battle for Chicago," United States: HarperCollins, 2018.

⁹ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Eliot Ness."

“untouchable” as the city would hope. Because many police officers come from the same communities that were now illegally producing alcohol, many are hesitant to arrest or charge the people of Chicago. Additionally, many police officers are willing to sell their protection to any gangs willing to pay.¹⁰ Even beyond the officers, the Department may find its hands tied behind its back by another city official who has been... influenced to see a different perspective. Is it really worth it to die in the line of duty, or would the extra money for a nice house in the suburbs be a little more productive use of the job? The question remains: just how untouchable are you?

III. POSITION OF THE BOOTLEGGERS

Money, and lots of it—what more could one want in life? Bootlegging promises riches to all involved, and hey, you’re just doing a much-needed service, right? Whether you’re just the guy on the street or the Boss himself, you wanna make more money for your... “social club.”

This may mean taking territory from other rival gangs, paying off police officers and city officials, or *dealing with* anyone who’s getting a little too nosy. No matter what, you always



gotta remember to look out for number one, ‘cause you don’t know what anyone else is plotting to do. Who knows, with enough moxy, you may be able to stand next to the Boss one day, or

¹⁰ Richard C. Lindberg, *To Serve and Collect: Chicago Politics and Police Corruption from the Lager Beer Riot to the Summerdale Scandal : 1855-1960*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois UP, 2008, *ProQuest Ebook Central*, 162.

even *be* the Boss (just don't let him know you're thinking that). So go out into the world, send your glorious, black-market gift out to all, and rake in the dough. But always remember, who do you need to betray to become greater, and who wants to betray you?

IV. THE CRISIS

In January 1925, an ambush on Capone left him reeling, shaken by the realization that he was vulnerable. However, twelve days after that, boss Johnny Torrio was shot after going shopping. Facing a long recovery, Torrio resigned from his position as boss, leaving Capone in charge of the crime syndicate.

Since then, it's been a year. Al Capone has made strides in revitalizing the syndicate, especially for bootlegging. He has begun imposing tariffs and fines on establishments that he sold alcohol to, and illegally smuggling alcohol into the United States from Canadian breweries, where Prohibition has no effect. Much to the chagrin of more traditional mobsters, he has enlisted the help of Chicago's African-American community for his operations. He has also expanded his political and law-enforcement protections for himself and his mob.

However, there is growing dissent among the ranks about Capone's financial management. He spends exuberant amounts of money on fine food, drink, custom suits, cigars, and female escorts. While he claims that he is doing what is expected of him, some doubt the young boss and his ability to lead.

Meanwhile, a young hotshot by the name of Eliot Ness has entered the police force, hellbent on eradicating the mob. Even though he is a low-level cop now, rumors have it that he is on the rise, as one of the few officers who has not—or will not—be bought by the mob. However, he does face opposition from within the department, as he does not know who to trust,

or who is truly on the side of the law. Some officers dislike his stoic attitude, and some may try to get rid of him for their own personal gain, or that of Capone's.

Good Luck delegates, the Fate of Chicago lies with you.

V. POSITION PAPER REQUIREMENTS

The position papers for this crisis committee will differ slightly from a traditional Model UN position paper. Only three sections are required: **history of the conflict,** **delegate position,** and **delegate solutions.**

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In the history of the conflict section, provide a brief background summary of the conflict. Try to relate it back to your side and your delegate. This section should only be a five-to-six sentence paragraph.

In the delegate position section, give a short background of your character's role within their side as well as the conflict as a whole. Furthermore, define your spheres of power. For example, are you a military general with troops, an economist, a diplomat with close relations to foreign powers, or a different type of appointee? This should only be a short paragraph.

The solution section will embody the rest of your paper. Focus only on what has happened up to the present time (until January of 1926) as this is when the committee will begin. You should not allow your decision-making to be clouded by the events of the future. During the conference, it is likely that history will unfold in a very different way than it actually did. Remember to be creative while still accurately personifying your designated official. Overall,

formulate a comprehensive strategy to benefit yourself, your clique, and your side of the conflict.

Don't be afraid to think outside the box!

Please refer to the “format” section on this link to our website for details on how to title your paper: <http://www.knightsmun.com/position-papers.html>.

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