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1. Letter from the Secretariat

Dear Participants,

As the Secretary-General of MedTrain'26, I am deeply honored and delighted to invite you to the first edition of this conference.

MedTrain'26 is a conference driven by the motivation of diplomacy, politics, and academic development. Throughout our preparation process, our primary motivation has been to bring innovation to your past experiences within the MUN community, to allow you to fully experience an academic MUN conference in every aspect, and I am honored to present to you the academic rigor of a MUN conference in its entirety.

By combining the expertise of our academic team with the tireless energy of our organizing team, we are committed to delivering an unforgettable experience. Whether you are a first-time delegate or an experienced one, MedTrain'26 has been designed to offer you the opportunity to learn the dynamics of MUN through its committees, engage in constructive debates, and witness the finest examples of the art of diplomacy.

Thank you for joining us on this unique journey. I look forward to the unforgettable memories we will create together.

With warm regards,

Mustafa Aslan
Secretary General of MedTrain'26

2. Letter from the Under Secretary-General

Dear delegates,

It is with great delight that I, the Under Secretary-General of the Gold Rush Committee, welcome you all to MEDMUN'26. Making a committee like this was my dream since I was a first timer, so this is special to me, and I hope that after the conference, it can have the same effect on you as well.

The guide is succinct, and all you have to know before the committee is included, thanks to our amazing Academic Assistant, Nadin Rona. Read it thoroughly and do your own research regarding your role.

I would also like to thank the Executive Team, especially Mustafa, for making this possible for us.

If you do have any questions regarding the agenda, procedure, or MUN in general, feel free to contact me through the Email address or my phone number I have placed below.

See you soon!

*Sincerely,
Nehir Dođu*

**nhrdogu@gmail.com
0501 036 5809**

3. Letter from the Academic Assistant

Dearest Delegates,

My name is Nadin and I will be serving as your Academic Assistant in the upcoming Mediterranean Model United Nations Train Conference 2026. I hope that you have as much fun reading this guide as me and my lovely Under Secretary-General Nehir had while preparing it. I believe with this committee, you will immerse yourselves into the atmosphere of the Wild West, with the main focus being the ruthless experience that was the California Gold Rush fully. For the purpose of the committee reading this guide carries great importance and I encourage you to read it until the end and include your own research. Do not be afraid to contact me in your inquiries. You can reach me from nadinrona8@gmail.com. The sky is the limit, and I am sure that this committee will be unforgettable for everyone participating in it.

The whole world is yours and waiting to be conquered.

Highest regards,

Nadin RONA

4. Committee Procedure

a. Directives and How to Write Them

Points in Crisis Procedure

Due to the nature of the committee, directives will be the main focus of the committee's progression, and subsequently, some parts of the crisis procedure will also be implemented.

Roll Call

To state your presence during a roll call, when your allocation is called out you should say 'I' or 'Present'. The roll call is taken at the beginning of each session.

Tour de Table

Tour de Table is an introduction, similar to the opening speech in the General Assembly(GA) committees. You can talk about whatever you want; You can introduce yourself, talk about your

plans, or give out your opinions about the current situation. Tour de Table gets taken in the beginning of each session, after the roll call.

Unmoderated Caucus

Unlike GA committees, Unmoderated caucuses are the main caucus you will have. Since unmoderated caucuses are the only caucus where the delegates are not chaired, they have the ability to stand up, make plans and most importantly, write directives.

Directives

Personal Directives

Personal directives are directives that include only you and the actions you will be taking. So the actions that you take will be completed by only you and the people under your command. Now, there is a format for writing and sending directives. Firstly, you need to fill the 'From' and 'To' part. The 'From' part will include your name and the 'To' part will include the department you are sending the directives to, which is Related Authorities (RA) or the Related Department (RD). Then, you need to write the real time in real life and the date in the committee which will be regularly changing with time updates and changing events. Lastly, you need to write the type of the directive as a headline. After the format, the real directive begins. In order to fulfill the directive's potential to the maximum, you need to be answering all WH questions (Who, Where, Why, When and How) during the process. It is up to the writer to merge all categories but it is encouraged that you write them separately to make things easier for the crisis team to understand your directive fully.

Here is an example:

From: Mr. Greer

Date: 19/09/1962

To: RA

Time: 12.15

Personal Directive

What: a directive for to find out who organized this operation with using spy

When : As soon as possible

Who : who they will chose myself and they would be have skills what we need in that topic

Why: to find out who organise this operation

How:

Firstly with the power of the CIA I will research the terrorist groups who have power in the area because if there is an event in the world, the CIA able to get info about that operation CIA will use its own ways to research the terrorist groups. They will use spies who get education in the USA and work at least 15 years in the area for the CIA and have a good relationship with terrorist groups in those areas and have a phone signal jammer and they will look Asian . They will collect the information and in 1 april 2024 if they have they will use their secret bases and secret phones that can't be detected by phone radar. They will get in contact at 12.00 am .If they don't have secret bases the government of USA will design a sports match and the spy will bet this match and they will win that bet. Because the match will be fraudulent after they get Money they will design a secret safe house. And sent infos for us. After they got infos from the terrorist group IF they didn't do anything. We will start to research the government of China. The same people who get education in the USA and work at least 15 years in the area for the CIA and have a good relationship with the government of China have a phone radar jammer and they will look Asian. In addition, they can sacrifice themselves for our government. They will have a poison that can kill in a second if they are arrested or come out they will use them . after get informations from inside they will use the same ways to get communicate but the date will be 3 April 2024 after CIA get informations they will sent a report for me and Depending on the situation, I will have

journalists from all over the world make news that will criticize them in the press at the same time. An attitude will be taken against them in the whole world, especially in my own country.

Joint Directives

These directives are similar to personal directives and follow the same format, but they include more than one delegate. The only difference is that you need to add the delegate's name, who is included in the "from" part, and have their signatories at the end.

Crucial Points in Writing an Efficient Directive

Directives let you create a space for any action imaginable in the realm of this committee. It is also important to note that directives will be the anchor in shaping the flow of the committee, so here are some crucial points in ensuring the efficiency of a directive:

- For every action that is written in the directive, it has to answer all the WH questions. - The longer and more detailed, the better.
- Drawing a doctrine, charging plan, or strategy may significantly increase the directive's preciseness and effectiveness. The success rate of the directive will grow in proportion to how clear your action and directive are.
- Do not use abbreviations such as "etc."; instead, detail the directive explicitly. - WH questions are not necessarily broken into paragraphs (one can write the directive like a book), but if you are a beginner, doing so will dramatically improve the quality of your directive, hence, it is strongly recommended.
- Since you are in a Special committee, you need to implement your ideas to the other delegates, but do not be hesitant to ask for help from other merchants or your chair, you are all in this together.

- If you are positive that there is no imposter in the cabinet, directives should be written separately because it will be much faster. That way, eight people will be working on eight different tasks, and it will save quite a lot of time.
- Precise information, like kilograms of gold, or kilometer/mile distance between certain areas are critical; do not forget to write them down.
- If needed, fake names can be used for strategic persons in the directives too.

4.2) Occupational Rank System

claim holder > lawmen > outlaws > miners

In our committee, we will be using an occupational rank system that reflects the social and economic hierarchy in the region.

At the top are the ***claim holders***, who control land and gold-bearing areas, giving them significant power. With the miners under your control, they have the authority to create mining areas or look for fertile lands for their endeavors.

Right below them are the ***lawmen***, responsible for maintaining order and enforcing rules within the mining communities, playing an important role in the protection of the lands and the people. Among you will be the future mayors and senators, so it is essential that every order is in motion. You will be dealing with indigenous tribes and outlaws while stabilizing your future position with your higher-ups, in ethical or unethical ways.

Next are the ***outlaws***, who operate outside the law. They lack official power but can influence the committee in so many ways. They basically can do anything from being a miner to protecting people like an officer or collaborating with them for illicit acts. They may roam in the untouched or claimed lands, becoming the embodiment of chaos on horses. It's all up to you, but you will have to ensure the law makers are far out of your sight.

At the base are the ***miners***, forming the majority of the population; they are not exactly

powerful figures individually, but they collectively can shape the direction of the committee. Over time, they can possess more and more power if they make the right choices.

4.3 Honor System

The Honour System will be activated in correlation to the Occupational Rank System. The Honour System, as the name suggests, will grant delegates authority depending on their class or reputation among the general public or their social class group.

The miners, as aforementioned, are on the same level as basic townfolk, but with gaining the trust of the upperclassmen, they may be offered partnership or promotions. This reputation shift may let one climb up the social classes and become the commander instead of the one being commanded. If the miner gains reputation among other miners, this may let to the trust of the town's elders and the overworked, essentially opening the possibility of an uprising, though one would think twice before protesting, as it was themselves coming all the way for one goal: gold.

An outlaw has no ambition of reaching a higher status among the pesky capitalists, as one's reputation exceeds the criminal group and seeps through the gossips of the townfolk, they might just have enough power to mark an amount of land to themselves, managing that land in any way possible, unless caught by the law enforcements. This amount of land can grow with the amount of crimes committed and spread fame and fear.

Lawmen, as stated, have the chance to skip to a higher rank with the correct decisions and connections. They also can choose the cases submitted to them, giving the opportunity to defend either land owners or the townfolk/miners. The decisions they make will subsequently impact their fame and trustability, which may be the gateway to owning their lands themselves or becoming government officials.

Claim holders will be the current highest rank, but there's no such thing as 'too much money', right? With more land you claim, the more gold you will get. With more gold, you may get more miners, or one might even mess with the locals and enslave them. You may claim a land as yours before someone else has, even though it may cause some disputes. You may open your land to country-wide shipping and grow your ports, the sky is the limit, ignoring the budgetary limits.

What is essential to understand in the honour system is what grants delegates more power in their own realm of authority within realistic boundaries.

5. Historical Background

5.1 Regional economy Before the California Gold Rush

In 1845, California was a sparsely populated, remote, colonial outpost. Not counting the 100,000 unassimilated Indians who continued to live independently, California's population of 17,900 (10,000 assimilated Indians, 7,000 Spanish/Mexican descendants, 700 Americans, and 200 Europeans) was largely clustered along the coast from San Diego to Sonoma.^[1] Monterey and Los Angeles were its cultural centers, while San Francisco, then known as Yerba Buena, was only a small hamlet of a few hundred people.

On the eve of the Gold Rush, the missions had been secularized and decaying for more than a decade. Most economic activity was organized around the ranchos, large cattle ranches that produced hides and tallow, the two leading commodities that connected California with the outside world. Along with soap making, the processing of hides and tallow was the only activity that might be described as industrial. The hides, minimally dressed and processed, were sold to foreign merchants. Cattle brought from \$4 to \$6 per head, reflecting the value of their hides and fat. Ample supply and very limited demand made the meat almost worthless. The export of hides, tallow, and small quantities of wheat, soap, lumber, and gold financed imports. Imported products and local crafts provided

Californians with a simple but comfortable life.

California's pre-gold-rush economy was certainly rudimentary. Some historians have gone further, arguing that it was stagnant. In their pioneering economic history, Robert Cleland and Osgood Hardy described California from 1769 to 1848 as "sparsely populated by unambitious, pastoral people who were seemingly indifferent to all material progress and unmindful of the vast economic opportunities that surrounded them on every hand."

Although this stereotypical criticism is unwarranted, there is no doubt that the California economy was small and largely undeveloped.

The Gold Rush unleashed a torrent of change on this pastoral economy. Its first effect was to disrupt the economy. Workers, ranch hands, and shopkeepers rushed off to seek their fortunes in the gold fields.

6. Initial Discovery of Gold

Our line of events begins with Johann August Suter, or more commonly known as John Sutter, a Swiss pioneer settler, businessman, and colonizer. As he left Switzerland to pursue a new career in the New World, the United States of America. Upon arrival to America on July 14th, 1834, he traveled from New York to Missouri, Hawaii, and Alaska, as no ships were scheduled to set sail directly to his main target, California. Shortly after, he landed in Yerba Buena, today's San Francisco. John Sutter quickly became friends with the local governor, Juan Bautista Alvarado, and gained title to a parcel of land totaling 48,827 acres. He named his new settlement New Helvetia (New Switzerland), aiming to create an agricultural utopia. In 1843, he built a fort at present-day Sacramento.

Once he made peace with the local Nisenan and Miwok Indians, whom he employed as laborers and as his own personal military force, his compound, which he named Sutter's Fort, became the social, political, and commercial center for the entire inland region. Because the area was so isolated from the centers of Mexican power closer to the coast, Sutter became the de facto authority of the region. Sutter's Fort would become a home to many, and the place behind the biggest migration America has ever seen. became a desired destination for many weary travelers along the California Trail, including the Donner-Party, John Bidwell, Lansford Hastings, and William Hastings. The fort included high, thick, gun-guarded walls, supply shops, houses, mills & stocked warehouses, blacksmiths, millers,

bakers, carpenters & gunsmiths, meat, cattle & sheep. It had all the amenities westward expansion travelers could hope for and much more. In 1848, John Sutter was having a water-powered sawmill built alongside the American River in Coloma.

On January 24th, a carpenter working with Sutter, James Wilson Marshall, found flakes of gleaming yellow metal in a streambed. Marshall took the flakes to Sutter in the span of four days, and by the end of testing the mineral, it was confirmed to be gold. Sutter and Marshall agreed to become partners and tried to keep their find a secret. The workers at the mill were well acquainted with the workers at Sutter's Fort, so Sutter concluded that it was inevitable that word would escape. As soon as Samuel Brannan, a merchant at Sutter's Fort, learned of the discovery, Brannan bought up all of the mining supplies he could, took a trip to San Francisco, and did everything he could to spread the word of the gold strike. As a result, Brannan became the first millionaire in California, not through joining the rush to the gold fields, but by realizing that he was in the right place at the right time to profit from it, also spreading the word all around San Francisco, and later, the entirety of the world.

American Indian workers who were largely chased away from the gold fields, led the throngs that would come to California from all over the United States and the rest of the world to seek their fortunes. Many of the early miners were successful, as there was a significant portion of gold that could be found in much the same way that Marshall had. Placer gold—gold that is on the surface of the earth rather than underground—was still relatively abundant, and miners quickly descended on the region's streams hoping to follow Marshall's example. Governmental jurisdiction of the land was lax because of the gold fields' distance from the coast and because the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo did not go into effect until July 4, 1848, which was actually signed just nine days before the first discovery by Marshall. The absence of effective government restrictions meant that there were no rules and no taxes. Small impresarios like Sutter could no longer hold sway over their land grants, as the miners largely made up their own laws to govern themselves in the mining camps.

Because communications were slow, it took nearly a year for the news to spread to the East Coast. Once it became known, people began moving west. In 1849, thousands of prospectors headed for California, hoping to find gold, obtain land, or start a business supplying miners. Some also came to help fulfill America's Manifest Destiny" to become a continental nation. So many went west that the term "'49ers" was applied not only to those who arrived that year but also to those who followed. Between 1848 and 1855, more than 300,000 people moved to California in search of gold. Most were men, and the majority were white. But there were also some women, African Americans, and immigrants from many different countries. Europeans came in great numbers, and Chinese workers were later imported to work in the mines and on the railroads. The gold rush brought rapid population growth and a tremendous amount of diversity.

By 1850, California had more than enough people to apply for statehood and did so. This set off a firestorm about the territorial expansion of slavery, because part of the state was south of the 36°30' latitudinal line set by the 1820 Missouri Compromise as the dividing line between free and slave territory. Although the Missouri Compromise line applied only to land that was part of the United States at the time of its adoption, many presumed that slavery would be allowed south of the line as the nation expanded. The resulting Compromise of 1850 dampened the political controversy over slavery, but the gold rush continued.



1852 miners in California work their "long tom" to separate gold from gravel.

Courtesy California State Library



As much as Sutter saw opportunity in the region, with the summer. In the

by December, 1848, gold was being discovered

the new discovery of gold in California led to a massive migration to California

at significant amounts of gold were discovered in California, and a massive migration to California from many parts of the country as well as places as far as China, Chile and France. The first outsiders to seek their fortunes began to arrive during the summer of 1848. News had spread to the neighboring Oregon Territory, where many Americans had already migrated. The *Oregon Spectator* noted, "Almost the entire male population had gone gold digging in California." The early prospectors were called "forty-niners" for the year most of them arrived in California, and they were also known as Argonauts after Jason who set sail in the *Argo* to bring home the legendary Golden Fleece. By the end of the year, miners were appearing from Hawaii, Mexico, and South America, and the first settlers from the eastern United States were beginning to arrive. But those numbers would snowball during 1849, when tens of thousands flocked to the California territory. Most came on the overland route via the California Trail, although those with some means could purchase a ticket to come by ship and sail either around the cape at the southern tip of South America, Cape Horn, or by the Isthmus of Panama, as the Panama Canal wouldn't be built for another 65 years.

The arrival of so many 49ers ended the California dream of John Sutter, however. He failed to establish title to the land, and he ended up having to sell what was left of his colony to

pay his debts. James Marshall also lost everything because he could not find employees for his sawmill when everyone wanted to find gold instead. He later invested in an unsuccessful mine and died penniless.

Some 49ers moved to California in the hope of finding the mythical El Dorado, a term used by Spanish explorers who had searched for a golden kingdom they believed existed in the New World. Few found such incredible wealth. Prospectors engaged in placer mining, panning for gold in streambeds, and digging with picks and shovels. They then sifted through the ore in a sluice that carried water, allowing them to separate gold from dirt and rock. But to develop a mine required the methods of hard-rock mining, using technology and labor to tunnel deep into the ground. Companies hired employees who worked in shifts, engineering tunnels and shoring them up with timber, using steam-powered stamps to crush tons of ore, and then chemicals to separate out the minerals. Such expensive techniques took a toll on the environment as mining companies cut down forests and polluted streams. Some used hydraulic mining technology that used water to blast away the earth in strip mining. Hard-rock mining was dangerous and caused the death or injury of miners. That harsh reality clashed with the romantic image of the prospector with his burro, pick, and pan.

But for the 49ers and those who followed in the early 1850s, the romance of the gold rush made anything seem possible. Long wagon trains moved westward across the continent, and ships brought miners to California from around the world. In addition to wealth and the possibility of a better life, some simply sought adventure. Men vastly outnumbered women, an imbalance that continued in California and the West for decades to come. Some women were able to parley this to their advantage, getting their passage to California paid or promoting their business interests. Other women found harsh conditions, and some ended up working as prostitutes in the mining camps.

Other factors influenced the experience of individuals. White miners tended to do better than African Americans or Latinos, especially because the state of California levied a

mining tax on nonwhites. Exploited as a cheap labor force, Chinese 49ers faced racism and discrimination that would eventually lead to the prohibition of their immigration during the rising tide of anti-immigrant, nativist sentiment in the late nineteenth century. The American Indians of California lost their land and culture, and many died of diseases brought by the 49ers. Clearly, not everyone found the gold rush romantic.

The myth of the 49ers does not include storekeepers, but some men, like Sam Brannan, got rich by supplying the prospectors. Another who did so was Levi Strauss, a merchant who began selling the miners' denim overalls. As for the 49ers themselves, some lost their lives, while others went bankrupt and returned home "busted." A few struck it rich. Almost all found conditions in the gold fields to be much harsher than they expected. Still, most got what they wanted when they headed to California. They did not really expect to find El Dorado. Instead, they hoped to make enough to pay off debts, enlarge their business, or buy more land when they returned home. After deducting expenses, more than half of the 49ers managed to turn a profit and realize the dream they went west to fulfill. Although the reality was far different from the myth, the majority managed to make a little money from their grand adventure.

The California Gold Rush took place against the backdrop of the Industrial Revolution and served as an accelerant for U.S. economic development in the 19th Century. The influx of gold resulted in the expansion of manufacturing and the service industries, as many entrepreneurial newcomers took advantage of the demand for mining materials, lumber, clothing and transportation. Agriculture and retail also experienced exponential growth during the Gold Rush, and led to California becoming an economic powerhouse by the end of the century. Some of today's most recognizable brands, businesses, and icons got their start during the Gold Rush. Henry Wells and William Fargo saw an opportunity to provide financial services to gold seekers and started a bank, Wells Fargo & Co.; Levi Strauss, a German immigrant, identified miners' need for sturdy clothing and created canvas pants that would withstand the punishing hours involved in gold mining; and American humorist, Mark Twain, got his start in San Francisco, where he initially joined his brother is prospecting for gold but ended up finding greater success as a reporter for The San

Francisco Call. The immigration caused a boom in the Californian population and settlements, with 25,000 Anglo-Americans occupying the zone when just two years ago, in 1847, their number was limited to 700. The rapid development and urbanization of the area became the main factor of California becoming a state in 1850, when nearby occupied areas such as New Mexico and Arizona could reach statehood only by 1912.

The previously Mexican-occupied Yerba Buena (California) had other native citizens in the way of the gold miners: the American Indians. An estimated 150,000 Native Americans lived in California in 1848. These culturally diverse peoples from as many as 500 self-governing tribal societies spoke more than 100 different languages. By 1900, fewer than 20,000 Indigenous people had survived the massacres, rapes, starvation, disease, child enslavement, and displacement caused or carried out by California state officials, U.S. Army soldiers, and various death squad militias. The rapid gold mining continued, and the official recorded peak was made in the year 1852, where approximately 2 billion dollars worth of gold was found only in the state of California.

6.1 Socio-economic Transformation of California

After the California Gold Rush, the state's economy underwent significant transformation and diversification. The California Gold Rush turned the once-rural expanse of California into an area dotted with towns and cities.

The importance of San Francisco was validated when it was decided that the first transcontinental railroad, a train line that connected the East Coast and the West Coast of the United States, would have its end in the growing city.

The California Gold Rush triggered one of the most important economic changes in U.S. history. It attracted hundreds of thousands of people seeking wealth, which rapidly grew California's population and led to the establishment of new towns and businesses. The initial surge in mining activity led to the establishment of a robust mining industry, but as gold became less accessible, the economy shifted toward agriculture, manufacturing, and services. Agriculture flourished, with California emerging as a leading producer of crops like fruits, vegetables, and wine.

The influx of gold increased the money supply, causing inflation but also stimulating demand for goods and services across the region. New industries, like mining equipment, clothing, and food production, boomed to meet the needs of prospectors and settlers. The Gold Rush spurred entrepreneurship and lasting economic growth.

The early Gold Rush years brought explosive economic growth, but as surface gold became scarce by the mid-1850s, individual miners struggled.

At the same time, mining camps quickly grew into towns. These settlements were often makeshift, with tents and wooden shacks.

Over time, camps developed basic infrastructure like shops, saloons, and schools to serve a diverse population. Mining towns attracted people from many demographics, creating a mix of cultures but also challenges in social cohesion.

6.3 The Peak

In what was a typical pattern, the Gold Rush slackened as the most workable deposits were exhausted and organized capital and machinery replaced the efforts of individual miners with more efficient and businesslike operations. Likewise, the lawless and violent mining camps gave way to permanent settlements with organized government and law enforcement. Those settlements that lacked other viable economic activities soon became ghost towns after the gold was exhausted. After 1850, the surface gold in California largely disappeared, even as miners continued to arrive. Mining had always been difficult and dangerous labor, and striking it rich required good luck as much as skill and hard work. Moreover, the average daily take for an independent miner working with his pick and shovel had by then sharply decreased from what it had been in 1848.

As the gold became more and more difficult to reach, the growing industrialization of mining drove more miners from independence into wage labor. The new technique of hydraulic mining, developed in 1853, brought enormous profits but destroyed much of the regions landscape.

Though gold mining continued throughout the 1850s, it had reached its peak by 1852, and by the end of the decade, it was over. After that year, the total take declined gradually, leveling off to around \$45 million per year by 1857. Settlement in California continued; the state's population was 380,000.

6.2 Law, Order, and Governance in Gold Mining

Most national mining systems descend from the tradition that valuable minerals belong to the lord or ruler, who grants use rights as “concessions” in exchange for a share of the revenue. The U.S. government was by no means immune to the attractions of mineral

revenues. Continuing colonial- era practice, the Land Ordinance of 1785 reserved for the federal government “one third part of all gold, silver, lead, and copper mines, to be sold or otherwise disposed of, as Congress shall direct.” Although minerals were not mentioned in the land laws of 1796, 1800, and 1804, Congress did act in 1807 to reserve lead mines in the Indiana Territory. Between 1824 and 1846, the government maintained a leasing system in the Galena District of Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin: miners were given exclusive permits to work certain areas and, in return, were required to bring their ore to one of the officially licensed smelters, who were required to pay a 10 percent royalty. The plan worked reasonably well in the 1820s, when production and federal revenue both grew. It fell apart in the 1830s, however, when nonpayment and noncompliance became widespread. Authorities in Washington lacked enforcement power, even over their own agents, who abetted evasion by smelters and fraudulently sold valuable mineral lands at minimum farmland prices, almost surely with side payments for personal profit. The mining expansion of 1836 to 1840 generated no government revenues. By the eve of the California gold rush, the federal government had abolished all administrative apparatus and enforcement machinery pertaining to minerals in the public domain. Moreover, Mexican law was not in effect. On 12 February 1848, evidently still without knowledge of the gold strike, Colonel Richard B. Mason, commander of the American military forces, declared: “From and after this date, the Mexican laws and customs now prevailing in California, relative to the denouncement of mines, are hereby abolished”. Mason’s intention was to protect private property in land from preemption for minerals under Mexican law. The effect, however, was to thwart any attempt to develop private mineral titles using Mexican rules. Having neither authorization nor capacity, Mason put no new system in place and declined to evict trespassers from the public domain. Thus, thousands of fortune seekers raced one another westward in the belief that gold was free for the taking, subject neither to government control nor to private land ownership. Once the rush began in 1849, Congress considered many proposals to generate federal revenue from the gold fields, including mining licenses, auctions, leases, and the sale of small mining tracts at farmland prices. The prospects for effective enforcement, however, were even more daunting at a distance of three thousand miles than they had been in the Midwest. After several early measures failed to gain support, both executive and legislative branches acquiesced in a policy of nonintervention. Inaction was further supported by the arrival of political representatives from the new western states, who opposed any measures that might constrain the extension of the mining frontier and drain revenue from the region. As a result, no federal mining legislation was passed until 1866.

7. Aftermath of the Gold Rush

7.1 Effects on the Local and Indigenous Population

The Gold Rush had severe effects on Indigenous Americans and resulted in a precipitous decline in population from diseases brought from 49-ers, who arrived in all sorts of unethical methods and had little understanding of hygiene due to the working spaces the untouched, fertile lands California had to offer; from the committed genocide, and starvation. Over 150,000 Indigenous people lived in California prior to the Gold Rush with sustainable cultures and economies based primarily on hunting, gathering and fishing. By 1870, 60% of the indigenous population was wiped out only from the diseases introduced by the 49-ers. Tribes were also systematically chased off their lands, forcibly relocated to missions and reservations, enslaved and brutally massacred. In 1851, the California government offered 1 million dollars for scalping expeditions, with the goal of opening up as much unused land there was occupied by indigenous populations. \$5 was paid for a severed Indian head in Shasta in 1855 and twenty-five cents was paid for a scalp in Honey Lake in 1863.

Over 4000 Indigenous children were torn from their families and were sold with prices ranging from 60 dollars for a male and 200 dollars for a female child. Indigenous children were also forcibly removed to government and church-run boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak their languages. Many were forcibly placed in “work training programs” where they were used as slave labor in homes, farms, timber operations and other enterprises. The legacies of these genocidal practices, including loss of land, subsistence, cultural practices, language, identity and political sovereignty, persisted even until modern day, and racial discrimination is still persistent in the Californian and general American societies.

7.2 Effects on the Environment

During the California Gold Rush, miners dug up 12 billion tons of earth, excavating riverbeds and blasting hillsides in their fervor. They also used mercury to extract gold from the ore, releasing an estimated 7,600 tons of the toxic chemical into Northern California rivers and lakes. The amount of mercury required to violate federal health standards today would be equivalent to one gram in a small lake. Many of these problems were directly related to gold-mining technology. The process of hydraulic mining, which became popular in the 1850s, caused irreparable environmental destruction. Hillsides were washed away with water cannons, forests were cut down for timber, and rivers filled with silt. Mining chemicals polluted the water and harmed the land used for farming. These changes made it more challenging to farm and live in some areas.

Elemental mercury is a heavy metal that persists in the environment. It transforms into highly toxic methylmercury once it is released into waterways, which then bio-accumulates in the tissues of plants, animals, and humans. Methylmercury has numerous detrimental

health impacts. It is a known neurotoxin that can cause serious long-term impacts on the developing brains and nervous systems of unborn and newborn babies and young children.

8. Further Notes

This is a committee where you might find yourself making ambiguous decisions and collaborations. We expect you to use a strategy to succeed in this committee, so be prepared for the crises and solve them effectively. Please bear in mind our timeline is from 1848 to 1858, and you are expected to take the historical facts into account and act accordingly. All of your acts also have their consequences, as they may affect your status, power, and relations directly in a good way or a bad way. While this committee is different from the ones you are familiar with, it still has the same rules, as this is an official Model United Nations conference. Lastly and most importantly, you are expected to be respectful to other delegates, your chairboard, the academic and organizational team members throughout the conference.

9. Bibliography

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