



# EmpireMUNC X

*Joint Crisis: Republic of Pirates*

## **The Imperials**

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**JOINT CRISIS  
DIRECTOR**

Sydney Tiesi

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# The Imperials

## *Committee Background Guide*

Joint Crisis Committee  
Empire Model United Nations Conference X  
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## Welcome Letters

### *Meet Your Joint Crisis Director*

Delegates, I can't wait to work with you all throughout this conference. My name is Sydney Tiesi and I am the joint crisis director for the Republic of Pirates joint crisis committee. I am a junior studying Hospitality and Tourism Management at the School of Professional Studies with a minor in Chinese Language. For the past year I have been staffing conferences and have had an amazing experience. I will work to ensure this joint crisis committee stays consistent and fluid through both committees. I am sure all your ideas and performances will amaze me and I hope to foster a welcoming and fun committee for all of you!



***Sydney Tiesi, Joint Crisis Director***

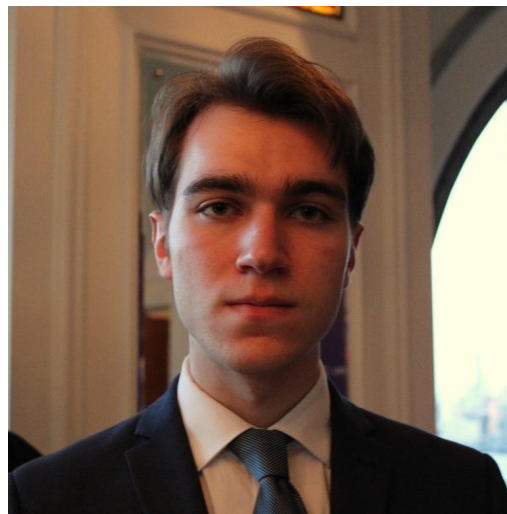
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### *Meet Your Crisis Director*

Ahoy Delegates,

I am Seamas Porter and it's a pleasure to welcome you all aboard the tenth voyage of EMPIRE MUN & the JCC Pirates Committee. I am a senior at NYU's College of Arts and Sciences double majoring in Politics and Public Policy with a minor in French. I grew up a landlubber in Colorado, where I too participated in HS Model UN, but now I call Stamford, Connecticut my home port. I joined NYU's MUN Travel Team last year and worked as a CA for our collegiate conference, but this will be my maiden voyage as a CD, and I tell ye, there be no finer topic to delve into than the Golden Age of Piracy!

When I was younger, I was a big fan of the Pirates of the Caribbean, Peter Pan, and Spongebob's Patchy the Pirate. With the thrill of their rugged heroism and the hilarity of their antiquated vulgarity, I always imagined the pirate's life for me. Alas, NYU does not offer introductory plundering courses and the demand in the





swashbuckling industry has sunk to Davy Jones' Locker. But fear not! Our committee will offer you all the opportunity to engage with a very intriguing part of human history, while also providing a new perspective of the era as the nobles and moguls who steered the course. The state-building of European naval superpowers and the development of multinational corporations as a product of interactions between the authority and anti-authority of this period will hopefully encourage you to research the policies and attitudes of the period more closely than ever before.

While you may encounter information regarding the development of democratic systems abroad pirate ships in amongst stockholder organizations, you will also come across the more tragic aspects of this period, most notably the Triangular Slave Trade and violent waves of colonialism. I wish to underline our commitment to diversity and inclusion as we work to collectively build a positive environment where sensitive issues are handled appropriately. Should any questions arise prior to the conference, please feel free to reach out. I look forward to battenning down the hatches to provide a conference ye all will treasure for years to come!

Fair winds and smooth sailing,  
***Seamas Porter, Crisis Director***  
[sjp9436@nyu.edu](mailto:sjp9436@nyu.edu)

## ***Meet Your Chair***

Ahoy Mateys!

My name is Christopher Gilmartin, and I am thrilled to welcome you to the JCC Pirates committee. I am a freshman at the NYU College of Arts and Sciences, double majoring in psychology and neuroscience, and I am a new member of our NYUMUN travel team. I grew up in the Chicago Suburbs and attended Saint Ignatius College Prep, where I was a SIMUN delegate for four years. Throughout those four years, I participated in over ten travel conferences and was on the secretariat of the conference we hosted senior year.

With that being said, I am super excited to be your chair for The Imperials side of this JCC. I have participated in a few pirate committees but have never had the privilege of chairing one. Although I have participated in over 30 committees, I know everything will be fine with a good committee in the golden age of piracy.

Throughout your EMPIREMUNC experience, you will compete in 4 days of rigorous debate on the pirate-infested oceans. Please come ready with your parrot atop your shoulder to engage, participate, and debate. But most importantly, please come prepared to have fun, but not too much fun, or you will walk the plank!

Safe travels, delegates,  
***Christopher Gilmartin, Chair***  
[cmg10120@nyu.edu](mailto:cmg10120@nyu.edu)

## Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

Whilst EmpireMUNC is committed to maintaining an educationally and historically accurate experience, we recognize that any debate around historical events will incorporate sensitive issues. Delegates are expected to discuss these issues maturely and appropriately. EmpireMUNC is committed to promoting a culture of diversity and inclusion in line with NYU's values; in the spirit of this commitment, EmpireMUNC will not tolerate any bigoted symbols, statements, or attitudes. Remember that by attending our conference you agree to our Terms and Conditions of Conference Attendance, which we suggest you read over. It is posted on our website and is in your Delegation Guide.

During the Golden Age of Piracy, slavery was intertwined with pirate activities in various ways. While the intrinsic connection between the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and the Golden Age of Piracy should not be glossed over, it is also not open for debate within this committee. The suffering of enslaved persons during this time is not something to be made light of and is undeniably immoral. In acknowledgement of these facts and in order to respect the continued impacts of these atrocities, delegates are not to use or debate the Trans-Atlantic slave trade during this conference. The characters created for the purpose of the committee DID NOT PARTICIPATE in the trans-atlantic slave trade within the universe we have created. No delegate will be asked to represent or argue in support of slavery. We would also like to impress upon delegates the importance of acknowledging the history of imperialism and the lasting impact it has on many people. This issue should be treated with caution and respect. We will not be tolerating backroom arcs that involve engaging in colonialism.

If you have specific questions that you are not sure about in regard to appropriate topics, please don't hesitate to email or ask.

## Introduction

Wealth, war, and Westphalia – the economic, technological, and political conditions of Europe in the 17th century were the perfect storm for the emergence of the empires that would soon expand their spheres of influence across the globe. Braving the waves of this chaotic period were mighty pirate crews, who navigated their sloops against the tides of tyranny to compromise the dominance of the imperial powers. They set sail in the transatlantic trade routes of North America, the Caribbean Islands, the West African Coast, and across the Indian Ocean, forcing the hand of the European powers who established these routes. Wherever value was being transferred, exchanged, or stored, the interests of pirates and imperials intersected.

The impact that pirates had on the course of Europe's evolution was well documented, even as it took place. Before the golden age, the Europeans had begun establishing their presence all over the globe. In 1492, Christopher Columbus, sponsored by Spain, made his historic voyage across the Atlantic, finding the inhabited Americas and establishing Europe's exploration of the New World. Inspired by Columbus's success, other European powers, including Portugal, England, France, and the Netherlands, embarked on their own voyages of discovery. They ventured into uncharted territories, mapped coastlines, established trade links, and claimed new territories for their respective nations. In a stand against the authority of these powers, the pirates pillaged their way to notoriety.

Pirates, often depicted as daring adventurers of the high seas, have captured the collective imagination and become romanticized folk heroes in popular culture. The Golden Age of Piracy is frequently portrayed as a time of swashbuckling rebellion against oppressive imperial powers, and pirates themselves are depicted as charismatic rebels, defending their freedom and autonomy. This romanticized portrayal has elevated them to legendary status, immortalizing figures like Blackbeard, Captain Kidd, and Anne Bonny.

However, beneath the veil of romanticism lies the contrasting reality of the era: the Golden Age of Piracy was not just a period of rogue lawlessness but one of immense structure, strategy, and state-building for both European empires. Like the parrot that perches itself upon the shoulder of a pirate, piracy stood on the shoulders of imperial design. The Golden Age of Piracy was a product of the emergence of powerful mercantilist empires seeking to exploit overseas territories and secure their economic dominance, a development that would ultimately play a significant role in shaping the strategies and institutions of these empires.

Many sailors and privateers were skilled seafarers who had honed their navigational and combat abilities while serving under their respective flags. However, as imperial

ambitions waned and the need for privateers decreased, some sailors faced unemployment and wage hardship, pushing them towards piracy as an alternative means of survival and rebellion against their former employers. In the British Empire, an infamous example is Captain Henry Morgan. Originally a privateer sanctioned by the British government to raid Spanish colonies, Morgan's success and charisma earned him a reputation as a cunning buccaneer. However, after a falling out with British authorities, he turned to piracy, leading devastating raids on Spanish territories and amassing considerable wealth. Similarly, in the French Empire, François l'Olonnais began his maritime career as a sailor for the French. He later became a privateer, sanctioned to attack Spanish ships. However, his brutal treatment by the Spanish after being shipwrecked fueled his hatred, and he sought vengeance by becoming one of the most ruthless and feared pirates of his time, terrorizing the Spanish colonies and capturing countless riches.

Although it's true that the powers unwittingly created the conditions that brought upon piracy by training a pool of skilled sailors and abandoning them until their discontentment boiled over, the circumstances that drove the mismanagement and exploitation are all part of a major evolutionary divergence for the European empires at the start of the 18th century. In the year 1715, against the backdrop of the fading Golden Age of Pirates, an unprecedented gathering of imperial leaders and influential actors in the global trading sphere converges in the picturesque Swiss Confederation city of Fribourg. The relentless scourge of piracy, which has for decades plagued the seas, jeopardizing the security of trade and the prosperity of nations, has finally started to wane. As some pirates choose to settle down and the naval power of colonial empires regains its strength, a convergence of factors propels this grand Imperial Summit.

The conference brings together powerful figures from the world's great colonial powers: Great Britain, France, Spain, the Netherlands, and the Holy Roman Empire, each seeking to chart a course towards securing their overseas interests. Alongside these dignitaries are skilled privateers who have sailed the treacherous seas, naval commanders with unparalleled expertise in maritime warfare, and colonial appointments with direct experience in the distant realms. Their shared goal: to address the persistent menace of pirate presence, ensure the safe passage of vital trade routes, and protect the wealth of their nations. Recognizing the paramount importance of economic stakeholders, finance ministers and entrepreneurial visionaries also grace the assembly with their presence. Their resources and expertise are indispensable in the effort to reclaim the colossal losses incurred during the lawless era of piracy. Furthermore, statesmen from Europe's Eastern Hemisphere partners make their way to Fribourg, underscoring the global reach of this pivotal gathering. Together, these diverse voices aim to forge a collective path towards



ending piracy and fostering an era of peaceful and profitable colonial activity that will benefit not only the great empires but the entire world.

Beneath the surface of seemingly shared interests in bringing the age of piracy to an end, the Imperial Summit is also a stage for major power struggles. Countries vie for dominance, companies seek to protect their lucrative ventures, and even personal relationships cast a shadow over the proceedings. In this grand assembly, striking a balance between advancing personal agendas and finding common solutions becomes an intricate dance.

New relationships will forge amidst the diplomatic parleys, while old friends may find themselves at odds. As tensions rise and fall like the ocean's tide, there is a sense that, in the quest for control of the high seas, some may even be forced to walk the plank. As representatives at this summit of the seas, you will be working with powerful business men, military leaders, former privateers, and political leaders to discuss how best to address your one common goal: stopping organized piracies. After the recent hurricane crashed the plate fleet — a Spanish treasure fleet of eleven ships — the Republic of Pirates has specifically been the focus of the fight to rid the seas of pesky pirates. The Republic of Pirates, located in the Bahamas, has become a legitimate political entity with its own economy. Not only is it a safe haven for pirates that creates a significant threat along major trade routes, it is also a business threat to many companies as a port for trading illegal goods. At this first meeting, you will decide how best to proceed with the issue of piracy in International waters while navigating your personal interests and allegiances. Can you form a coalition to effectively destroy the Republic of Pirates? Or will in-fighting on this cause another naval war amongst the great imperial powers of the day?

## Committee Mechanics

While you will be representing a character set within this slightly altered historical context over the course of this weekend, you will still be expected to act as a delegate within a Model UN committee. Thus, rules on engagements of debate, speeches, and caucuses will still apply as they would in any Model UN committee. This committee will be run in the style of a CRISIS committee and NOT a General Assembly.

In regards to characters and affiliations the key distinction between pirates and privateers must be recognized. During this time, privateers were commissioned by a governmental or sovereign to legally exert their right to pillage and trade. Similarly, buccaneers, the English crown, would also license buccaneers with letters of marque, which legalized their operations in return for a share of their profits. However, pirates can be distinguished because they were lawless individuals who attacked ships and coasts without being legally commissioned to do so.

In terms of character for this committee, it is also important to note that each of these characters is a fictionalized representation of a real historical figure. Delegates have the freedom to research the figure their character is based on and incorporate further information into their portrayal, however, please understand that what is written in the character bios will be considered canon and supersedes other information provided. We wanted to ensure that each delegate would feel comfortable representing the characters they were assigned and felt that this was the best way to ensure this outcome.

This committee takes place on November 9th, 1715. This group of unlikely allies will convene at the critical juncture between pirate and imperial control of the Trade routes across the Atlantic. All historical actions after this date are considered null and void for the sake of this committee. Delegates are welcome to use historical events for the basis of their arc, but are not required to do so. Please understand that historical events taking place after 1715 may be used in updates and their timeline may be accelerated as well. We encourage delegates to be familiar with historical events from the entire Golden Age of Piracy which took place from 1650 to 1726.

This current meeting is the first in a series of meetings called to bring affected parties to put an end to the Golden Age of Piracy. This first meeting takes place in the Swiss Confederation city of Fribourg. The locations for the rest of these meetings have yet to be decided; each committee session can meet in the same place or in different locations. This is something that you should decide during the course of the conference as it will greatly impact the outcome of the committee and individual character arcs.

# Historical Context

## War

### *Military Standards:*

The wars in Europe during the 15th, 16th, and early 17th centuries played a significant role in driving the increase in military standardization. These conflicts, which included the Hundred Years' War, Eighty Years' War, and the Thirty Years' War, among others, prompted European powers to reassess their military capabilities and adopt more organized and professional approaches to warfare. The reliance on mercenaries and feudal levies proved inconsistent in effectiveness and loyalty. To address this, European powers began to recruit and train professional soldiers who were better disciplined, loyal to their commanders, and proficient in modern military tactics. Stronger monarchies, such as those in France, England, and Spain, sought to establish control over their standing armies and reduce the influence of nobility in military affairs. Prominent military leaders and statesmen, such as Maurice of Nassau in the Dutch Republic, implemented military reforms that emphasized training, discipline, and standardized tactics. These reforms aimed to create more effective and versatile fighting forces. The development of military manuals and educational institutions helped disseminate military knowledge and establish common procedures and doctrines. Military academies and manuals laid the groundwork for the modern utility of militaries and the conduct of warfare.

### *Technology:*

Much of these changes in the standardization of the military focused on proper use of new equipment and methods to attack and defend against enemy armies. Mostly settled on the plains and around in-land fortresses, European military conflict quickly earned its sea legs as naval technology improved. Spain had long maintained its “Great and Most Fortunate Navy,” as it was especially important to escorting shipping and missionary boats to the Western Hemisphere. In 1588, the Duke of Medina Sidonia ordered the armada to travel from Lisbon to the English Channel in order to reinstate Catholicism in England and deal a heavy blow to Dutch privateers who were eating away at Spanish profits. To their surprise, the British and Dutch had developed nimble river boats that were capable of outmaneuvering the Spanish galleons. Attacking at night with strategic fire ships and line-to-line cannon fire, the British successfully dispersed the fleet. The winds were changing, both literally and figuratively, as unexpected weather conditions nearly drew the Spanish upstream to the Dutch coast, so the Spanish decided to retreat after the Battle of Gravelines. This devastating defeat revealed that the

invincible strategy of Spain's maritime warfare was a sinking ship. In the counter-armada, although it failed, the British were able to test out the valuable lessons they had learned about the importance of fleet coordination, ship design, and naval tactics. This influenced subsequent developments in shipbuilding technology, like square rigging that allowed ships to sail more efficiently against the wind, enabling improved maneuverability and longer voyages. Full-rigged ships equipped with both square and lateen sails gained a competitive advantage, as the lateen sails improved sailing performance with the wind behind them, making ships more versatile in different weather conditions. There were also economic reasons for the advancement of ship technology. The transition from round ships to galleons and carracks allowed for larger cargo capacity and improved stability, enabling ships to carry more cannons and withstand rough seas better. These ships were better suited for long-distance voyages, which were essential for overseas exploration and trade. They could hold a large amount of valuable goods, as well as support a large pirate crew. Among the goods a European ship could bring back, high-tensile woods like teak and North American copper were recycled into the ship making industry. Shipbuilders started using seasoned timber and copper sheathing to enhance hull durability and reduce damage caused by shipworms and fouling. This increased the lifespan of ships and made them more resilient during extended voyages.

The 1623 *Instructions For Musters and Armes* issued by the Privy Council of England sought to perfect the transformative advancement that was the adoption and refinement of gunpowder-based weapons. European casting technology and modifications to the forcefulness of gunpowder all shaped the state of war during this time period. The arrangement of cannons along the sides of the ship, known as the broadside battery, revolutionized naval warfare. This allowed ships to unleash concentrated firepower during a naval battle, increasing their effectiveness in combat. The use of swivel cannons for long range attacks and light-weight but fatal flintlock pistols enabled the imperial armies, as well as the pirates, to take down enemy boats and capture captains. The standardization of cannon calibers made it easier to equip and resupply ships with suitable ammunition, leading to better coordination in naval engagements. Many artisans shifted their production to prioritize war materials, particularly cannons. As naval warfare became increasingly significant, demand for cannons soared, prompting specialized foundries and workshops to focus primarily on manufacturing these weapons. The emphasis on military production led to the development of some of the most ornate and well-designed cannons in history, crafted with intricate detailing and artistic elements to showcase the wealth and power of their patrons. However, this shift also set a dangerous precedent for the relationship between industrialized production and defense contracting. As governments heavily relied on private contractors for the production of military equipment, there was a growing risk of overreliance on a small number of influential

entities. This raised concerns over potential conflicts of interest and corruption, as defense contractors sought to maximize profits and influence policy decisions.

Engaging on the battlefield was one thing, but finding it was a whole other challenge. Improved cartography and navigational instruments, like the astrolabe, compass, and quadrant, enhanced the accuracy of maps and enabled safer, more precise sea voyages. Some of these technologies and the resources necessary to construct them at such a large scale were the result of significant engagement with other civilizations. The compass, for example, was not originally an invention of Europe; its use had been known in China since ancient times. During the Middle Ages and the Age of Exploration, European traders and explorers came into contact with compass technology through their interactions with Asian and Arab traders. As maritime exploration and trade expanded, European navigators and sailors relied heavily on compasses to navigate the open ocean and discover new routes to distant lands. European sailors and Arab craftsmen traded for knowledge about the inner-workings of the technology, which led to the refinement of the compass. The invention of the telescope by Dutch spectacle makers in the late 16th century, the tool that helped captains identify landmarks and potential enemy ships, represents one of many advancements in these exchanges. Although the period is largely characterized by its transfer of luxury goods and labor, there was also a great variety of traveling craftsmen. They could provide valuable services and produce goods that local craftsmen might not have the training or tools to create. These artisans introduced materials, designs, and decorative elements from their home regions to the places they visited, enriching local artistic traditions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge.

### ***State Loyalty:***

The wars of this period are best characterized by their protracted and brutal nature, leaving a lasting impact on the loyal citizens of the major European empires and their colonies. The prolonged conflicts not only strained resources but also led to devastating consequences for civilians caught in the midst of the fighting. Constant warfare meant that civilians faced the horrors of violence, destruction, and displacement, causing immense hardship and trauma. Soldiers and sailors, who bore the brunt of these long and violent conflicts, often endured deplorable conditions and low wages. The harsh realities of military service, coupled with the lack of adequate compensation, pushed some soldiers and sailors towards discontent and disillusionment. In some cases, when the wars ended, many of these veterans found themselves unemployed, facing economic hardship and resentment towards the very empires they had once served. These conditions among sailors and soldiers played a role in the development of piracy during the Age of Pirates. Unemployed and embittered former military personnel sought alternative means of survival and profit. Turning to piracy allowed them to seize wealth,

challenge the empires they once served, and embrace a life of autonomy and adventure on the high seas. The persistent issues of poor sanitation, diseases, malnutrition, and lack of education further compounded the challenges faced by both European empires and their colonies during this period. In crowded and unsanitary living conditions, diseases like plague, typhus, scurvy, and dysentery spread rapidly, leading to significant loss of life among soldiers, sailors, and civilians alike. The lack of proper nutrition and healthcare contributed to weakened populations and impaired military readiness. Limited access to education hindered social mobility and perpetuated socio-economic disparities within the empires. Furthermore, prolonged wars and military campaigns often led to military defeats, territorial losses, and a perception of incompetence among some rulers. Citizens questioned the ability of monarchs to effectively govern and protect their territories. The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 was a significant blow to the reputation of Spanish King Philip II, undermining his image as a powerful and infallible ruler. Meanwhile, Louis XIV had to fight off uprisings in France as nobles, parliaments, and urban bourgeoisie protested against centralization of power, high taxation, and lack of political representation regarding the decisions to contract soldiers and privateers. Still, when confronted with the challenges of foreign privateers and pirates, these skilled individuals were often unable to be victorious. Tales of the pirates' gruesomeness, which were often exaggerations from authorities and merchants to turn public perception against pirates and procure support to protect shipping lines, rendered many soldiers afraid to encounter them at all. Ultimately, reeling from the few centuries of conflict and recent revolts, imperial powers began to recognize that costly attacks to enemies on the European continent with a formalized standing army needed to be considered more carefully.

## **Wealth**

### ***Royal Wealth:***

The Age of Exploration was of course profitable to royal powers because of the exploitation of their colonies, but the extraction of value did not cease to exist on the European continent. Domestic activities within European empires played a pivotal role in fostering immense economic growth. Several government policies and the growth of specific industries encouraged economic activity within Europe, leading to increased trade and prosperity among European powers. Many European empires adopted mercantilist economic policies that aimed to maximize exports and minimize imports. Governments provided support to domestic industries through subsidies, tariffs, and trade monopolies, encouraging the growth of key industries and boosting national economies. France under the reign of Louis XIV employed Colbert's mercantilist policies, which focused on fostering domestic industries like textiles, glassmaking, and luxury goods to



reduce dependence on imports. The emergence of thriving urban centers and commercial hubs in major European cities provided fertile ground for economic activities. These cities became centers of trade, finance, and manufacturing, contributing to economic prosperity. Amsterdam in the Dutch Republic became a prominent financial center, handling international trade and attracting merchants and investors from across Europe. Paris, like many European cities, received major urban redesigns aimed to stimulate cultural and economic activity, while ensuring that defensive architecture and public works projects secured and glorified royal leadership. European empires witnessed advancements in early manufacturing and industrial processes, contributing to economic growth. The development of textile industries, ironworks, and other manufacturing sectors fueled economic expansion. The growth of banks and financial institutions facilitated capital accumulation and investment in commercial ventures, further boosting economic activity. The establishment of the Bank of England in 1694 provided financial stability and support for England's expanding trade and colonial ventures.

Royal families in many European empires did levy heavy taxes to fund their extensive military campaigns, maintain courtly extravagance, and support the expansion of their colonial endeavors. Taxation was a critical source of revenue for the monarchs, and it played a significant role in financing the various activities of the state. However, the extent of taxation and its impact on the populace varied across different countries and regions. The Spanish Habsburg monarchy, under rulers like Philip II, relied heavily on taxation to finance their military campaigns, particularly during the costly wars in Europe and overseas territories. France experienced periods of financial strain due to the expensive court life during the reign of Louis XIV, which required considerable financial resources. The French monarchy relied on taxation, particularly the *taille* (land tax) and other indirect taxes, to fund its military expansion and cultural projects. The tax burden, combined with a rigid social structure, led to social unrest and dissent, culminating in events like the *Fronde*. The English monarchy, especially during the Tudor and Stuart periods, also relied on taxation to support its activities. Taxes, such as customs duties, subsidies, and the ship money tax, were imposed to finance wars, the maintenance of a standing army, and the royal court. The imposition of certain taxes without the approval of Parliament led to tensions and conflicts between the Crown and Parliament, which played a role in the English Civil War. In the Dutch Republic, taxation was levied at both the national and local levels to finance the defense of the country and to support the Dutch East India Company's colonial ventures. The Dutch model of limited government, with provincial and local autonomy, allowed for more efficient tax collection and relatively lower tax burdens compared to some other European states. Although constantly competing for dominance in the global sphere, the domestic interests for

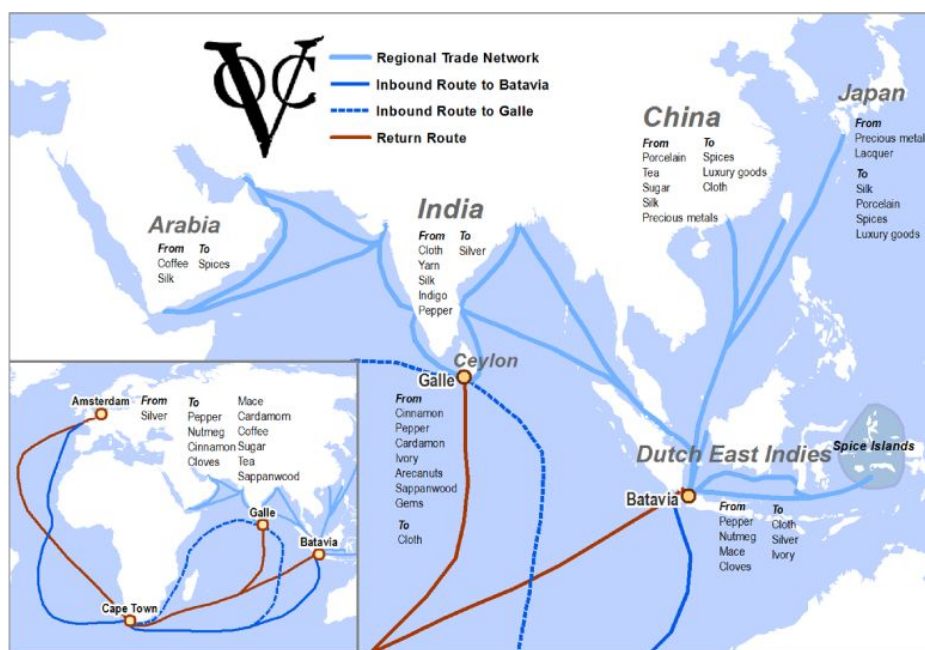
royals and wealthy aristocrats included luxury goods from other European countries, all of which facilitated the trade of items like French wines, Italian silk, and Dutch clocks.

### ***Colonial Wealth:***

On the European continent, the economic benefits from exploration were immediately evident. European monarchs reaped immense benefits from colonial exploration. The influx of wealth from the Americas, such as silver and gold, enriched their treasuries, funded military campaigns, and enabled them to project power on the European continent. The vast overseas territories further solidified their empires' dominance and elevated their prestige as global powers. Business owners and merchants involved in colonial trade and exploration profited immensely as well. Whether it was by finding new markets to which they could export goods, or lowering the cost of producing goods through materials extracted from abroad, domestic activity grew tremendously. However, the opportunities for wealth beyond the European continent that arose for Europeans can not be understated. Many nobles received land grants from the crown in newly discovered territories. These grants provided them with vast estates and control over local populations, turning them into powerful landowners in the colonies. The ability to extract resources and impose taxes on the colonists enhanced their economic standing. Owning colonial estates and participating in overseas ventures enhanced the social prestige of noble families. In colonial societies, nobles often held positions of authority and influence, playing key roles in local governance and administration. Successful ventures in the colonies allowed aristocrats to increase their wealth and consolidate their fortunes. The profits from trade and landownership in the colonies contributed to the expansion and perpetuation of their own nobility, often elevating them to a status of power that they could not have achieved in their home country. Figures like Sir Nicholas Trott and Louis de Buade de Frontenac, the former being the governor of New Providence Island and the latter being Governor General of New France (Canada), were colonial administrators elevated to major leadership positions. Trott was responsible for naming the capital, Nassau, and eventually worked closely with pirates in exchange for exotic goods. Meanwhile, Frontenac was notoriously temperamental and was recalled from his governorship as he frequently disobeyed orders, only to return because his capabilities were proven to have helped defend Québec from the Iroquois and the British. Even non-royal or aristocratic individuals capitalized on colonialism, like the Dutch merchant explorer Peter Minuit, who purchased the island of Manhattan from the Lenape.

### ***Trading Companies:***

During the early 17th century, the transition from feudalism to capitalism was well underway. Trade and commerce flourished as European nations established global networks of colonies and trade routes. One of the most significant developments during this period was the emergence of large trading companies, which played a pivotal role in facilitating international commerce and accumulating immense fortunes for their respective nations. European powers, such as Spain, Portugal, the Dutch Republic, and England, established these trading companies to exploit the riches of newly discovered lands and to monopolize trade routes with the East and the Americas. These companies operated under the charters granted by their respective monarchs, which provided them with monopolies or exclusive trading rights in specific regions. This granted them a monopoly over the trade in particular goods, such as spices, textiles, and other valuable



commodities. This also established comparative advantages in the production of goods on the European continent, a development that supported intracontinental trade but also hurt domestic businesses. Trading companies were powerful and skilled at moving resources, establishing trading posts and forts in strategic locations around the world, particularly in Asia and the East Indies. These trading posts served as hubs for conducting trade, storing goods, and facilitating exchanges with local merchants and rulers, however they also became hotspots for pirate activity because of the volume and value of the goods passing through them. Forced to maintain their naval forces and well-armed merchant ships to protect their trade routes and secure their colonies, they were authorized to defend themselves against rival companies and pirates. The trading companies were also historic

for their diplomatic impact and economic structure. They spread, often through the use of force, language and cultural norms. Considering they were often the largest official representative body of their country occupying land and influence in a foreign territory, the relations they established with local leaders impacted the diplomatic ties that would be more formally established as states started to professionalize diplomacy. They also had a unique organizational structure, with shareholders who invested in the company. The profits earned from trade were distributed among the shareholders as dividends, making these companies some of the earliest examples of joint-stock companies.

Spanish exploration and colonization of the Americas brought forth a vast influx of precious metals, particularly silver and gold, from regions like present-day Mexico and Peru. This influx of bullion significantly boosted Spain's wealth and financed its imperial ventures, reinforcing its position as a dominant economic power in Europe. The Spanish Crown's exclusive control over its colonies and trade routes contributed to the establishment of the House of Trade (Casa de Contratación) and the Casa de Indias, which centralized trade and revenue collection. Meanwhile, Portugal's maritime explorations and its control of trade routes to India and the Far East via the Cape of Good Hope allowed it to accumulate wealth through the spice trade. The establishment of the Portuguese East India Company (Companhia das Índias Orientais) in 1628 further solidified Portugal's hold on these lucrative trade routes. In the Dutch Republic, the formation of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in 1602 was a landmark event in the history of trade and finance. The VOC was granted a monopoly on Dutch trade in Asia, and it soon became the largest and most powerful trading company of its time. The VOC's operations in the spice trade, textiles, and luxury goods enriched the Netherlands and contributed significantly to the rise of Amsterdam as a prominent financial center in Europe. England also capitalized on the expanding global trade and exploration, with the formation of the English East India Company (EIC) in 1600. The EIC secured a monopoly on English trade with the East Indies, and it rapidly expanded its operations to include diverse commodities like textiles, spices, tea, and opium. The EIC's activities paved the way for the British Empire's vast economic expansion and dominance in the following centuries. France's overseas exploration efforts were primarily focused on North America and the Caribbean. The establishment of New France and French colonies in the Caribbean, such as Guadeloupe and Martinique, provided access to valuable resources like furs, sugar, and tobacco, which became lucrative commodities in European markets. The establishment of the French East India Company (Compagnie française des Indes orientales) in 1664 allowed France to participate in the highly profitable trade with the East Indies, contributing to the growth of its wealth.

Although this system often generated positive interactions between the royal family and the burgeoning private sector, like in the case of Prince Maurice of Orange's role as a

shareholder in the VOC, tension still existed between maximizing the interests of the state and the profits of the company. King James II of England, for example, had to balance his vision for European stability with the need to support the shipping company of his home country as it lagged behind in Asian-bound shipping tonnage. He perceived his political survival to be threatened, and decided to grant the VOC with special privileges without levying the same duties on them to which the EIC was subject. By granting privileges to the Dutch, James II aimed to improve trade relations between England and the Dutch Republic, hoping to gain access to Dutch markets and foster economic cooperation. This was especially important to him because James II was seeking alliances against France, which was a major European rival. The Dutch were also wary of French expansion, and there was mutual interest in countering French influence. By granting privileges and displaying goodwill, James II aimed to form an anti-French alliance with the Dutch Republic to maintain the delicate geopolitical stability he had enjoyed throughout his reign. Furthermore, James II's wife, Mary of Modena, was very popular and connected with Louis XIV's court. Having instituted changes to promote Catholicism in England alongside his wife, including appointing Catholics to key positions of the treasury, Protestant merchants became more opposed to the couple. In an attempt to win back the religious majority, James II attempted to strengthen his ties with the Dutch Protestants, publically allowing the Lord of Zuylestein to felicitate the birth of the Prince. It would later become apparent that the Lord of Zuylestein was sent by William III of Orange to spy on James II and the conciliatory policies he was drafting. In 1688, a group of English nobles and political figures invited William of Orange to invade England and take the throne in what would later be called the Glorious Revolution. William of Orange was seen as a Protestant champion and a leader capable of countering French influence in Europe, which aligned with the interests of English merchants and the EIC. James II fled to France, and William and Mary were offered the English throne jointly. The English Parliament played a significant role in the transition of power, as they affirmed the new monarchs' rule and established constitutional changes to limit royal authority. Grateful for the support that the English merchants had provided in William's accession, his reign was set to reward them generously. The EIC secured a new charter in 1698, providing it with renewed trading privileges, leading to the consolidation of British interests in India, with the EIC playing a crucial role in establishing British control in various lucrative Indian territories. The greater assurance of religious and economic freedoms laid the foundation for the development of a constitutional monarchy that facilitated economic stability and growth in the years to come, but the confidence in the market was still under siege from intense piracy.

## Westphalia

### *The Treaty:*

The Treaty of Westphalia, a set of two treaties signed in 1648, marked the end of the Thirty Years' War and the Eighty Years' War. The treaty's negotiations took place in the Westphalian cities of Münster and Osnabrück, inviting delegations from all the belligerent countries and some mediators, with France, Spain, the Dutch Republic, and England as principal stakeholders. The wars before it were responsible for the death of around 8 million people, and the scale of the tragedy from external sieges was deeply ingrained in the tenets of the discussion. France, led by Cardinal Richelieu and later King Louis XIV, sought to limit the power of the Habsburg dynasty, particularly that of the Holy Roman Emperor and Spain, as they posed significant threats to French dominance in Europe. The Spanish were facing internal decline, while the Dutch Republic sought recognition of its independence from Spain. England, under Oliver Cromwell's leadership, participated in the conflict on Protestant principles and in pursuit of commercial interests. The powers of Europe wanted to be left peacefully alone, but ironically they needed to work together collectively to achieve that sovereignty. Many historians argue that the development of Westphalian Sovereignty had far-reaching implications for the development of modern state-building and international relations. These developments would have their maiden voyage during the Golden Age of Piracy.

### *Land:*

The treaty made significant territorial changes, with France gaining control of several territories, including parts of Alsace and Lorraine, while Spain recognized the independence of various states within the Holy Roman Empire, including the independence of the Dutch Republic. Ultimately, a trend was emerging: defined land and guaranteed sovereignty ought to be inextricably linked. The treaty played a significant role in solidifying the concept of state sovereignty, emphasizing that states had the exclusive authority to govern within their territories and make decisions on religious matters. It contributed to the development of the balance-of-power system, in which European states sought to maintain equilibrium and prevent any single power from becoming too dominant. Opposing courts worked together to foster positive relationships through diplomatic retreats, joint archeological studies, and even marriages. In the Age of Exploration, this cultural engagement fostered a more unified identity for the European world in juxtaposition to Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas. In the business world, luxury firms and wealthy aristocrats reaped the benefits of international trade,



although they still competed for leverage greatly, and both by design and natural evolution, they arrived at national identity as a measure of distinction.

As the concept of state sovereignty and territorial borders became more defined, people began to identify more closely with their respective nations. This sense of national identity strengthened over time, leading to the emergence of modern nation-states with shared languages, cultures, and histories. These cultural ambitions were limited by the physical boundaries that were essentially exhausted on the “power-balanced” European continent. The pursuit of overseas territories and colonies came to be seen as not just a quest for wealth and resources but also a means of enhancing national prestige and sovereignty. For shipping companies, expanding overseas holdings became synonymous with expanding the influence and power of their respective nations. As these companies ventured into uncharted waters and established trade routes to distant lands, they not only sought economic prosperity but also sought to extend the sphere of their nation's influence. More territories under their control meant a broader reach of their nation's customs, culture, and authority, reinforcing the notion that more land equaled more sovereignty. European aristocrats, on the other hand, viewed overseas conquest as a means of advancing their nation's interests and augmenting their own status and wealth. Controlling overseas territories brought them closer to the centers of political power and expanded their dominion over vast domains, elevating their positions in the hierarchy of the nobility. Owning significant overseas holdings allowed these aristocrats to project an image of power and authority, reinforcing the link between landownership and sovereignty. Territories were often named with references to the places and names of the Europeans who were establishing them, like New Amsterdam and Nassau. The pirates were a critical threat to this new sovereignty. By the 1700s, pirates had made themselves comfortable as sea robbers, but the occasional landlubbing was necessary for storing treasure, restocking, and establishing a community of their own. Nassau was a notorious pirate haven during the Golden Age of Piracy. Pirates like Blackbeard and Charles Vane used Nassau as a base of operations and even established a form of self-governance for a time. Port Royal was another well-known pirate stronghold and a hotbed of piracy during the 17th century. The town attracted pirates due to its location and became known as the “Wickedest City on Earth.” The lawlessness of the pirates in places like Tortuga were often exacerbated by tall tales of their lust, greed, and general incivility, whereas the nobility did not receive equal coverage in this regard.

# Current Issues

## Hornswoggling

### *Declining Confidence:*

In the late 17th century, Edward Lloyd established Lloyd's Coffee House in London as a meeting place for merchants, shipowners, and sailors to gather and exchange maritime information. This increase in information was incredibly important to the psyche of the British sailors, traders, and nobles, leading to the development of complex insurance policies and risk assessments. The presence of pirates during the Golden Age of Piracy has had a profound impact on the confidence in international trade and contract procurement, and with each new development, it seems like getting attacked while en route is a certainty. Aristocrats and citizens view pirates as ruthless outlaws who humiliate royal families and challenge the authority of European imperial powers. The brazen attacks on merchant ships and coastal towns not only cause economic losses but also strike at the pride and prestige of the ruling elites, as pirates prove their ability to disrupt and defy the established order. Investors in shipping companies are particularly affected by the threat of pirates, and they have been particularly vocal about their discontent. The risk of ships being taken over by pirates is increasing insurance costs and forcing investors to reconsider the profitability of their ventures. As pirate attacks become more frequent, investors now face the daunting reality of declining profits and the potential loss of valuable cargo. The bottom line of shipping companies is significantly impacted, and some investors grow hesitant to invest in maritime ventures, leading to a lack of funds for fleet expansion or trade expansion to new regions.

In France, pirate activity in the Caribbean and along Atlantic trade routes leads to significant disruptions in trade and causes concern among investors in French shipping companies. In the streets of Paris, where the French fashion industry has flourished, aristocrats and wealthy merchants from near and far gather to wear it best. However, an ominous specter loomed over the city's couturiers and textile merchants, threatening to disrupt the glamorous world of haute couture – pirates. Bands of pirates steal Chinese silks from a boat off the coast of Le Havre as it prepares to traverse the Seine, replacing them with polyester. When the shipment arrives, the tailors are furious, publicly calling upon the French navy to do something to protect their ships. A local fisherman consoles his wife about the news she has received regarding the increase in price for her wedding dress as a result of the silk shortage, vowing to earn enough money through privateer work to pay for the dress. He is just one of many Parisians advertising his services at Les Halles.

Spanish galleons transporting valuable cargo from the Americas face constant threats from pirates in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. As a missionary boat was passing by a small island deep in the Atlantic Ocean when all of a sudden, a pirate boat began to chase. In a valiant effort to escape, the missionaries threw nearly 100 chests of wine and bread and 30 chests of tea and crackers into the ocean. Losing the additional weight was successful, as the boat speedily hid in a cove near the coast of the island. A nearby Spanish Navy vessel witnessed the events, but like most of the European boats, was too scared of the pirates to intervene. They returned to Madrid and informed the King that the boat had only escaped because the pirates had turned around to pick up the tea and crackers. He is furious as he suspects that this was not the act of pirates, but rather British privateers. The British King denies any involvement with the attack. The flaws that the pirates are exposing in the European militaries are pinning the powerful against each other, setting the stage for another lengthy war.

In the low country, the Netherlands is overflowing with boats. Expropriation risk has caused a lack of funding, so shipments are being sent out less frequently. The problems this is posing to imports is less severe than in the rest of Europe as the shipments that are being made are well-protected, but congestion in the canals of its major port cities is causing some internal disputes. Traffic is annoying local aristocrats, and a recent rebrand of the Dutch flag is causing some confusion as multiple instances of friendly-fire have taken place.

### ***Interlopers:***

Interlopers, also known as private traders, were individuals or groups who operated outside the established monopolies and sought to gain unauthorized access to lucrative trading markets. Forced loans, new taxes, bribes, and threats were common tactics used by interlopers to undermine the trading companies and gain market access. These events were particularly prevalent from the mid-seventeenth century to the early eighteenth century, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability for trading companies.

One key strategy employed by interlopers was to leverage changes in executive power to their advantage. During times of political upheaval or the transition of monarchs, interlopers seized opportunities to offer bribes or financial inducements to gain market access and influence. For instance, forced loans occurred around major changes in executive power, such as the loan to Charles I just before the Civil War in 1641 and the loan to Charles II in 1662, two years after the Restoration of the Monarchy. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 further exemplified the link between changes in the monarchy and interloper threats. English elites hostile to James II's rule supported William, and several

interlopers became influential in parliament. They lobbied King William to enter the East Indian trade and even challenged the EIC's monopoly. The EIC, recognizing the serious threat, resorted to making significant bribes to the monarch and government ministers to maintain its monopoly until 1695.

The interlopers' ambitions were not without repercussions for the trading companies. In their pursuit of market access, they often resorted to offering higher interest rates on loans or proposing more significant financial incentives to the monarchy, thereby disadvantaging the established trading companies like the EIC. These practices not only posed financial challenges for the companies but also weakened their monopoly positions and eroded their profitability. The EIC faced tough competition as interlopers sought to gain access to the lucrative East Indian trade and potentially dissolve the company. Their efforts were sustained, as seen by the re-emergence of interloper challenges in 1697, when King William needed a war-time loan. The interloper syndicate offered a substantial loan with higher interest rates and the expectation of obtaining the EIC's monopoly.

The activities of interlopers continue to create a sense of uncertainty in the financial system, impacting the confidence of established trading companies and the general public alike. Interlopers, seeking unauthorized access to lucrative markets, challenge the monopolies of established businesses and disrupt the established order. As these interlopers use bribes, financial incentives, and lobbying efforts to gain market access, some segments of British citizens feel represented by them. Many aspire to own businesses and property, just like the interlopers, viewing their actions as a means to challenge the traditional power structures and pursue economic opportunities independently. However, this duality of perception results in a complex and ever-changing landscape, where the financial system must grapple with the disruptive influence of interlopers while addressing the aspirations and interests of the citizenry. Many shipowners in India have already cut their permanent ties with the VOC and the EIC to work with these parties, and exclusive trade access enforcement seems to be lacking.

### ***Disease:***

Well educated doctors were a rare and valued commodity in colonies and on ships of all kinds. Doctors were often kidnapped and forced into service on pirate ships and on merchant vessels. This volatility and danger surrounding medicine and healthcare could not have come at a worse time. Settlers in imperial territories were left vulnerable to new diseases and maladies that were almost impossible to treat even with a medical professional in the vicinity.

**Trading Route Insecurity:**

During the Golden Age of Piracy, trade route insecurity had a significant impact on the Republic of Pirates in the Caribbean. The vulnerability of merchant ships along insecure trade routes led to an increase in pirate activity, with pirates seizing valuable cargoes from unprotected vessels. Exploiting the lack of effective naval protection, pirates established bases and pirate havens in secluded locations like Nassau and Port Royal, where they could rest, resupply, and divide their plunder. This disruption of maritime trade created economic instability, impacted colonial economies, and led to diplomatic tensions between European powers. As the risk of piracy rose, maritime insurance rates increased, further affecting the costs and profitability of legitimate trade. The insecurity of trade routes provided a favorable environment for piracy to thrive and contributed to the decline of legitimate trade in the region during the Republic of Pirates.

**What Shall We Do with these Drunken Sailors?*****Relocation:***

In the vast expanse of the ocean, a stray pirate once known as Brownbeard, finds a single strand of gray hair in his tricorn hat. Once feared and notorious, he now finds himself adrift, seeking a place to call home. Disconnected from his infamous past, some of this pirate contemplates a new path, yearning for stability and acceptance. He turns to colonial authorities, seeking pardons that promise amnesty and the opportunity to start anew. By embracing these pardons, he hopes to transition into becoming a law-abiding private landowner. Utilizing his accumulated wealth, he resorts to bribing officials in a bid to gain acceptance within colonial societies. As he navigates this unfamiliar territory, he aspires to find a place where his past transgressions can be pardoned and where he can rebuild his lives, forging a new identity far from his days as a menacing pirate of the open seas. He now spends his time playing shuffleboard and knitting.

As the legal system grapples with trying the reformed pirate, careful considerations must be made to ensure a fair and just trial. While the individual seeks redemption for their past actions, it is essential to acknowledge the gravity of their former crimes. The court must weigh their efforts towards rehabilitation and integration into society against the need for accountability for their past deeds. Expert testimonies and evidence should be presented to shed light on the individual's transformation, illustrating the sincerity of their desire to abandon piracy and embrace a lawful life. Collaborating with colonial authorities, the legal system should explore options for granting clemency or reduced charges if the pirate demonstrates genuine remorse and actively contributes to society's

betterment. Balancing the scales of justice, the trial, if it is to take place, should focus on both the restitution owed to victims and society as well as the opportunity for a second chance for the repentant pirate to rebuild their life and contribute positively to the community.

Efforts to reintegrate pirates into society are multifaceted and require a delicate balance between justice and rehabilitation, and Europe may need to fight a culture war. As pirates seek to assimilate into the civil societies of Europe and colonial nations, there are concerns that must be addressed for a smooth integration. One aspect that requires attention is hygiene, as the rough and seafaring lifestyle of pirates may clash with the standards of cleanliness upheld in settled societies. Similarly, their penchant for heavy drinking may pose challenges in maintaining law and order within the communities they now inhabit. Additionally, the unique language and mannerisms, such as the tendency to add "yarr" at the end of sentences, may create barriers to effective communication and integration. To refocus the support of average citizens on royal families and national pride, efforts should be made to highlight the virtues of stability, lawfulness, and loyalty to the crown. Emphasizing the benefits of a strong and unified nation under the guidance of the royal families can redirect the admiration away from the rebellious heroes of the past who have returned to land. Public education campaigns, media representation, and cultural events can all play pivotal roles in fostering a renewed sense of loyalty and pride in the royal institutions and national identity, ensuring a harmonious coexistence with the assimilated pirate culture.



## Questions to Consider

1. How can European shipping companies and Imperial Powers navigate the delicate balance of power among competing nations and colonial interests during the Golden Age of Piracy, while safeguarding their economic interests and territorial claims?
2. How should this committee differentiate between acts of piracy and privateering? How will the distinctions between the two be considered in shaping policies and responses?
3. How did political instability, social inequality, and lack of opportunities influence individuals to turn to piracy? How can European Imperial Powers address the root causes of piracy and consider social reforms or economic initiatives as potential solutions without compromising their own authority?
4. How should this committee deal with the Republic of Pirates? Is it a great enough threat to attack outright?
5. How should this committee proceed? What authority do these current parties have to enact policies on the sea? Where will these committee sessions be taking place?

# Character Lists

## England

1. Henry Smith
2. Nick Tooner
3. Samuel Ludlow
4. Dodge Cameron
5. John Lee Roders

## France

6. Jacques Bernard
7. Orion Giroud
8. Colson Law
9. Laurent Delacroix
10. Jean-Claude Vaudreuil

## Spain

11. Francisco Alton de Maca
12. Augustin de Léon
13. Alvaro Rodrieguez
14. Mateo Saborido Alasino
15. Rafeal Borgas-Pelusso

## Netherlands

16. Marcus van Bouwer III
17. Victor Richards
18. Pieter van Bilt
19. Willem van Eikenhorst
20. Lars de Vries

## Independent Actors

21. Charles Gines Garcia II
22. Hans Gerritsen
23. Julius van der Veen
24. Andries Hendriks
25. George Link
26. Ephraim Bradford

27. Edward Peets
28. Reginald Blackwood
29. Robinson Crusoe
30. Sultan Pepshekhar
31. Parker Coates