

## Lebon Peace Fund Proposal

The Lebon Peace Fund and its founder Derfla Lebon believe that war is a terribly costly affair in both treasure and human life and because of this, it should be avoided at all costs. It is therefore necessary to use all available funds to actively manipulate and eliminate all possible causes of war in the modern era. To do this, we must first answer the question: What are possible causes of conflict, and what are the most effective ways to remove them? As international affairs currently stand, two countries, France and Britain, stand above the others in terms of military and colonial might. This bipolarity of power could lead to a significant conflict if left unchecked because of windows of opportunity and vulnerability, miscommunication, and the escalation of minor conflicts.

This multifaceted problem cannot be solved by one simple act, and therefore requires a combination of direct action and policy adjustment. To most effectively prevent war in the near future the borders between British and French colonies must be solidified, Britain and France must become economically and diplomatically interdependent, the British navy should not be given the opportunity to decimate French armed forces, and all diplomatic actors must be free of commercial ties.

## **Border Definition**

When the political climate gives rise to a bipolarity of great powers, these two nations often find themselves in direct competition. This competition tends to yield conflict that is often sparked by a simple disagreement that spirals out of proportion and leads to full-blown war. Athens and Sparta exemplify this concept during the Peloponnesian wars. During a Helot revolt, Sparta called upon military assistance, but when Athenian hoplites arrived, they were turned away by Sparta. This prompted Athens to renounce its alliance with Sparta. From this point on, the diplomatic situation continued to deteriorate and eventually led to war. A more specific cause of diplomatic deterioration is the dispute over territory. The Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage began over the island of Sicily. Especially for nations with expansionist goals, the issue of territory can become a key element in the cause of war.

In terms of the current era, France and Britain's mutual claim of the Ohio River Valley can lead to imminent conflict and must be settled. French explorer Robert de LaSalle led a series of expeditions throughout North America which lead him to the Ohio River. His primacy in exploration gave a France a legitimate claim to the area. The Ohio Country's proximity to Britain's colonies in North America would likely lead to a conflict in terms of future expansion. As the situation currently stands, British and French merchants will come into direct conflict into the Ohio River Valley, and begin to quarrel over rights to said territory. It is of the utmost importance that both France and Britain agree on a firm border of their respective colonies. In order to do so, the area must either be partitioned or completely ceded to one empire. Given France's predominance of the

area it would be reasonable to give French control to the edge of the Ohio River. This natural barrier would also help to maintain future borders and limit expansionist tension brought by ill-defined border. As a neutral party, the Lebon Peace Fund should aggressively lobby for the explicit definition of the French-British colonial border in the Ohio River Valley to promote future peace within the region.

### **Interdependence and Peace**

The economic and diplomatic interdependence of nations often causes them to be reluctant to go to war with each other. If two nations rely upon each other for essential trade goods, then a war with their trading partner would mean the abrupt and economically detrimental absence of that trade venue. However it is possible that this relationship could cause one nation to grow to view its dependence as a weakness and take military action to secure the supply of such a source, but this weakness can be mitigated if the dependence is both overtly mutual and between great military powers. If the trade is mutual, the neither power would have reason to assume a belligerent cessation of trade with the other, and if the parties are both militarily strong then conquest for resources would be infeasible. Furthermore the formation of defensive diplomatic relations with a third party would also lead to peace by creating a balance that will always swing towards the aggressor. This claim is evidenced by the scarcity of wars between nations with a mutual ally.

Britain should attempt to form an alliance with Spain while France acts similarly with Prussia. Britain and France both currently maintain separate networks of allies that,

if a conflict between them were to break out, could lead to a conflict of historically unmatched proportions. It is therefore tantamount that Britain and France interweave this alliance in a defensive manner that would prevent such a catastrophic war. France is currently allied with the Spanish Empire which also retains colonies on the American continent. If Britain were to form a defensive alliance with Spain, Spain could act as a balancer and prevention of British-French aggression both in the Americas and in Europe. Even though Spain's military strength does not match that of either France or Britain, its addition to either of the great powers would serve as a strong deterrence. This same theory of diplomatic interdependence applies to an alliance between France and Prussia. France and Prussia both have sizeable armies that would strongly deter any foreseeable British land invasion and therefore prevent a war in the European theater. However, if Prussia's proximity to France or other factors prohibit Prussia from agreeing to any such alliance, it is necessary for Britain to not pursue any diplomatic coalition with Prussia as this could be perceived by France as aggressive. It is within the goals of the Lebon Peace Fund to pursue the formation of a British-Spanish alliance, and a French-Prussian alliance in order to maintain the equal perception of the military status quo.

### **Elimination of Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability**

Windows of vulnerability occur when one nation becomes a target of another nation when the first nation appears to in a temporary compromised status and often lead to war. This window brings out the worst in potential aggressor states as they see an opportunity that could offer them a significant long term advantage if acted upon in a

timely manner. However these windows of vulnerability are often less significant than they appear, or the aggressor nation fails to act upon them effectively. This failure often leads the aggressor state into a much larger conflict than anticipated with the victim state.

Currently the specialization of the militaries of great powers makes them much more prone to the creation of these windows of vulnerability. Great powers of today tend to have a powerful navy but a weaker army, or vice versa. This polarization of armed forces puts these nations into a position in which they must be forced to specialize in which type of conflict they can excel at. Furthermore, when a competing imperial power recognizes a vulnerability caused by this configuration, he may be compelled to act on it. As a hypothetical example: France has powerful army, but a much weaker navy compared to the British Empire. If the French were to find it necessary to transport a large portion of their army to the colonies by using their navy, Britain could find it advantageous to attack such a convoy and cripple France's army providing Britain with an advantage for both future land and sea engagements. In reality however, this attack could fail, and the British act of aggression would launch France into a full scale war with Britain.

In terms of manipulating this cause of war, it would be difficult suggest the rapid build up of either Britain's army or France's navy, so the Lebon Fund should instead advocate for a change in military policy that would diminish the amount of large scale troop mobilizations during peacetime. This policy would be in the best interests of the nation applying it because it will decrease the chances of creating a window of vulnerability caused by large military movements.

## **Communications and the Exclusion of Commercial Interests**

Communication is crucial to the prevention of inadvertent wars and it is therefore imperative to maintain as much transparency and validity as possible in diplomatic relations. Misperception is common in international discourse and it takes many forms. States often make errors of attribution, assumption, and exaggeration. While there will always be some level of misperception present, it can be lessened by acquiring more data and submitting it to approval of consensus.

As is in most realms, misperception is likely common today between France and Britain, and must be reduced by more sophisticated and reliable methods of intelligence gathering. France and Britain both maintain colonies that are consistently expanding, so it is possible to perceive this competition as threatening. This threat can often be used as a justification for war so it is crucial to minimize it. Because of the nature of travel to the colonies, information from the region is often limited. While certain aspects of this are irreconcilable, such as message response time, the amount of information can be increased by creating teams of information gatherers whose only job is to report to his findings back to his respective Empire. As for the perception of other nations, it would be advantageous to implement the use of peace time spying so that the colonial powers will have a better measure of their competitor's willingness to go to war. By creating a consensus of information gathering this will increase the validity of a nation's perceptions and make better decisions to prevent war.

A war of misperception can also be caused much more maliciously by actors who deliberately use a nation's military for personal goals. When certain actors have the power to influence military policy, they can either accidentally or deliberately cause a war by using the military to take action against another nation that is a threat to his or her interests. This concept can apply to the French and British colonies, from which news is often sparse and slow. Colonial representatives are usually the empire's largest source of information and as such highly prone to the representative's interpretation. If this actor holds ties to a body with separate interests than the motherland, then he may manipulate the mainland in order to send troops. It is therefore necessary to have colonial intelligence gatherers whose sole alliance is the British or French Empire. This will cut down on the exaggeration and manipulation that can be brought about by a conflict of interests and consequently lessen the chance for starting a war based on misperception.

## **Conclusion**

In an attempt to make the world a better place, the Lebon Peace Fund has pledged all it can to prevent war. War is a horrible affair, and so preventing it will save countless lives and inordinate amounts resources. This memo serves as path to prevent war specifically in the near future. In order prevent war, one must manipulate and block its causes. This memo ascertained four major possible causes for war in the in a future dominated by two opposing imperial superpowers. They are as follows: the tension caused by ill-defined borders, the large opposing alliances, the window of vulnerability

caused by the rapid deployment of troops, and the conflict of interest brought about by government entities with external priorities.

Because a war can be set of in so many different ways under these conditions, there cannot be only one solution that will curb all future wars. Instead the Lebon Peace Fund must implement a comprehensive set of reforms that will target and prevent each of the previously mentioned causes of war. The Lebon Fund must strive to adequately define the borders of the Ohio River Valley, advocate more tempered mobilization of peacetime troops, form a relationship between Britain and France diplomatically, lobby for a separation of state and individual interests in the colonies, and push for the creation of British and French foreign clandestine intelligence services. Implementing these policies in concert will keep the peace for the eighteenth century.

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