



2024

The Havana Conference



RMUN



Esteemed delegates:

My name is Gabriel Bolanos, and I'm so excited to be your crisis director for the Mafia committee. I'm currently a junior at Rice University majoring in neuroscience and minoring in history. This will be my seventh year in MUN (it's been a while!) and my second time directing a crisis committee.

For this crisis, I wanted you to be immersed in an environment that feeds off of conflict and drama. In the world of organized crime, family is everything—and the only thing more common than having your family's back is stabbing your family in the back. This crisis offers a keen insight into the dangers of corruption and consequences of short-sighted policy making, while capitalizing on the base desires of every crisis delegate (read: assassination). Welcome to the Mafia! Do your best to stay alive.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this committee or need help preparing for conference. As always, my email address is available below. I hope you enjoy this crisis, and I can't wait to see you at conference!

Sincerely,
Gabriel Bolanos
Crisis Director - the Mafia
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Setting of Crisis

Welcome to the Mafia!! In this committee, we will be conducting a simulation of the Havana Conference. The Havana Conference was a meeting of many of America's most influential mafia heads at a hotel in Cuba. We will lay out the factors leading to the conference as well as some useful context below!

Background of Issue

We will begin our history at the Castellammarese war. This was a conflict between an antiquated faction of the Sicilian mafia, "the Mustache Petes," and "the Young Turks," who were the more forward thinking younger generation of mafia criminals in the 1920s. The head of the Mustache Petes,

Giuseppe Masseria, was killed by his lieutenant Salvatore “lucky” Luciano, who switched sides to end the war. The head of the Young Turks, Joe Masseria, was then also killed by Luciano, who thought he was greedy and ineffective. Luciano had the opportunity to declare himself the boss of all bosses at this point, but he chose to establish a commission, known as the Five Families. These were five New York criminal families who would work together to organize mafia efforts. The commission also included a mob boss from Buffalo, and Al Capone from Chicago. Luciano was convicted on charges of pandering, and he was released after making a deal with the United States government to protect New York ports from Nazi infiltration through his criminal connections. He was, however, exiled to Italy after his deal ended. He planned to come back, and he worked with a lieutenant, Meyer Lansky, to plan a conference in Havana Cuba, which would reorganize the mafia.

The rise of the Chicago outfit came from the work of Johnny Torrio. He was the founder of the Chicago Outfit, which took down the Black Hand to become the primary criminal organization in the American Midwest. Young Alphonso Capone (“Al Capone”) traveled from New York to Chicago and joined the outfit, quickly becoming second hand to Torrio. During conflict with the ‘north side gang,’ a rival organization in Chicago, Torrio was injured. Torrio left Chicago to go to New York, where he helped Lucky Luciano form the commission. Charles “trigger happy” Fischetti, Capone’s cousin and bodyguard, attended the Havana conference on Capone’s behalf, along with two Outfit bosses.

The era of prohibition was a huge part of the booming success of the mafia in the early 20th century. Various gangs were able to benefit heavily from the illegal alcohol trade, and political changes which threatened prohibition put a huge stress on the finances of the mafia.

Current Situation

'Lucky' Luciano wants to come back to America and take control of the mafia. He believes that his choice to make a commission to head the mafia was poor, and he feels his role in the mafia is threatened by Giuseppe "Don" Vito. He traveled to Cuba while planning a way back into the US, and asked his trusted associate Meyer Lanzky to plan a conference at the Cuban Hotel Nacional with delegates from the commission. The larger portion of delegates were from the New York / New Jersey area, but there was representation from Chicago, Buffalo, and New Orleans. The conference was disguised as a trip where various mafia bosses were headed to see Frank Sinatra perform.

Some of the issues the conference addressed are below:

The chain of command

The idea of a decentralized chain of command for the mafia hadn't been working very well. There was much fighting among the New York and New Jersey mafias, and the idea of returning to a more centralized structure was enticing. The issue at hand was who would take over as the boss of bosses, or whether a type of 'corporation' would be formed and who would head it.

Police Intervention

The FBI was growing in power and were aware of the major players in the mafia. After the actual Havana conference, the United States pressured Cuba to arrest Luciano and deport him to Italy. Finding ways to minimize infighting is important, in part to protect the mafia from the eyes of the police.

Narcotics Trade

With profits from prohibition at risk, the mafia was looking to grow their holdings in the narcotics industry. Sourcing the narcotics, identifying which narcotics to sell, and coming up with effective strategies for distribution were all relevant to the conference.

The Flamingo Hotel

Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel was a member of the commission who had convinced the commission to invest in a hotel called “The Flamingo.” However, the construction had been stalled by corruption, with Siegel himself allegedly skimming profits. The conference sought out the truth of the matter and wanted to find a way to finish development of the hotel to preserve their investments.

Chicago issues

The Chicago Crime Commission was continuing to expand as Chicago’s criminal reputation increased. The “beer wars” conducted by Al Capone had brought national attention to the Chicago Outfit, and finding ways to discreetly cooperate with the mafia’s criminal empire was the goal of the Chicago delegation.

Here is a timeline of the mafia’s development leading up to the five families:

Timeline

1830’s: First gangs arise in Irish slums of New York City, based in the Five Points neighborhood

1850’s: New York City Democratic party organization Tammany Hall rises to power, helped immigrants (especially the Irish) gain political power

1860’s-1890’s: New waves of Jewish and Italian immigrants to New York City. Monk Eastman forms the Eastman gang (Jewish) and Paul Kelly forms the Five Points gang (Irish). First “Italian Mafia” established in Sicilian immigrant communities in New Orleans, many of whom were associated with the Sicilian Mafia. After murder of New Orleans police chief David Hennessey, the Mafia gains notoriety and anti-Italian sentiment is at an all time high in the US; many in the Mafia flee to various American cities, where they start their own Mafia branches. Black Hand extortionists (Italian) gain prominence in several American cities (NYC, Chicago, New Orleans).

1873: the Women's Crusade, an association dedicated to outlawing alcohol, is formed.

1900-1919: The Mafia network spreads throughout the US, particularly in Chicago and New York City.

1902-1924: Under leadership of Charles Murphy, Tammany Hall repositions itself as reform-minded (Progressivism) and dedicated to the working middle class. After Charles Murphy dies, Tammany Hall falls back into its old habits...

1919: the 18th amendment (Prohibition) is passed. Speakeasies serving illicit alcohol become incredibly common, and organized crime skyrockets in power as a result.

1925: Johnny Torrio hands control of the Chicago Outfit gang over to Al Capone and retires from the Mafia.

1930: The Castellammarese War begins.

1931: Maranzano dies, Lucky Luciano takes control of the Five Families and establishes the commission.

1946: Lucky Luciano has his pandering sentence commuted, gets deported to Italy. The same year, the Havana conference was held.

Committee Mandate

Delegates are allowed to message any of their associates with notes for the crisis backroom. To maintain a relatively sensible committee, here are some rules for notes:

Salvatore Luciano, Meyer Lanza, Frank Costello, Albery Anastasia, and Giuseppe Profaci may not work with the police. Leaking evidence to the police is allowed, but no productive arrangements or admissions of crime.

The security at the Hotel Nacional is tight. There will be no attacks on members of the conference on hotel grounds (no assassinations, also no maimings, no letters of threat etc.).

Delegates may choose to travel back to America and will remain constructively in the Havana conference. There is some dissonance here but delegates must be able to participate.

If a character in the committee is killed or removed, the delegate who represented them will be assigned a new character by the crisis room. If a criminal family or organization crumbles, the delegates present at the conference may choose to evict the representatives of that organization from the conference. Otherwise, it is not appropriate to evict members of the conference.

Delegates are allowed to target family and friends of committee members, but all depictions of violence should be sensitive.

Good luck i miei amici. Let's get up to no good. *tips felt hat*

Sources

<https://mafiahistory.us/maf-chr1.html> (timeline)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUne3fMzPKU> (history of the american mafia)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgdWKpPxPqs> (another history of american mafia, mr. beat)

Characters

Hosts

Salvatore “Lucky” Luciano

Meyer “The Little Man” Lanza

New York / New Jersey

Frank “The Prime Minister” Costello

Guarino “Willie Moore” Moretti

Vito “Don” Genovese

Giuseppe “Joe Adonis” Doto

Anthony “Little Pisano” Carfano

Michele “Big Mike” Miranda

Albert “Mad Hatter” Anastasia

Joseph “Bananas” Bonanno

Gaetano “Tommy Brown” Lucchese

Giuseppe “Old Man” Profaci

Giuseppe “Fat Joe” Magliocco

Chicago

Anthony “Joe Batters” Accardo

Charles “Trigger Happy” Fischetti

Sam Giancana

Buffalo

Stefano "The Undertaker" Magaddino

New Orleans

Carlos "Little Man" Marcello

Tampa

Santo "Louie" Trafficante Jr.

Jewish Syndicate

Abner "Longy" Zwillman

Morris "Moe" Dalitz

Joseph "Doc" Stacher

Phillip "Dandy Phil" Kastel

Entertainment

Frank Sinatra