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Introduction:

In 1523, the Spanish Empire established its first South American colony in Venezuela. The subsequent twenty-year period saw Spanish colonization efforts spread the empire south into present-day Argentina and Peru, and west into present-day Colombia and Ecuador (1). This period also saw the continued bolstering of imperial viceroyalties in Central America, present-day Mexico, and the islands of the Caribbean. Imperial authorities claimed a “right” to their newly-founded viceroyalties under Pope Alexander VI’s 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas. It was this accord, an agreement between the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, that resulted in a Spanish dominion over the majority of the Western Hemisphere. Tordesillas also provided the legal basis upon which Imperial authorities in Madrid ruled their territorial possessions for more than three hundred years. The centuries prior to Latin American independence movements benefitted a wealthy Catholic elite but, naturally, occurred at the expense of indigenous persons, African slaves, and the lowest levels of Spanish society. Originally, there existed two viceroyalties, each of which was ruled by an imperial viceroy. The first, the Viceroyalty of New Spain, comprised present-day Mexico, the present-day southwestern United States, Venezuela, and the Caribbean; the second, the Viceroyalty of New Peru, was comprised of the remainder of the Spanish Empire in South America. By the 18th century, two new viceroyalties, New Granada and Rio de la Plata, had formed. These divisions can be seen within the first figure provided (2). For three centuries, the Empire profited greatly.
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from and experienced few troubles as a result of her colonies. Imperial authorities were especially fond of the riches to be made from Latin American mining and agricultural operations.

The 19th century ushered in a period of great change. Revolutionary fervor from the American Revolution, coupled with the fall of the French monarchy, spilled into the imperial viceroyalties. Perhaps the most immediate impetus for Latin American independence movements can be attributed to the Haitian Revolution (1791-1803). What originally began as a slave rebellion soon compounded into an all-out revolt against French control of the island. Poorly trained and under-equipped, the revolutionaries overcome numerous attempts by superior French forces, albeit limited by the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, to regain control of the colony. The Napoleonic Wars (specifically the 1808-1811 Peninsular War) wreaked havoc in Madrid. The deposition of the King of Spain, followed by the appointment of Joseph, Napoleon’s brother, to the throne of the empire was met with strong resistance by the Royal Counsel of Spain and the Indies, the remainder of Spain’s nationalist government. While imperial authorities struggled to regain control of the empire, the first attempts at rebellion against the crown took place at the University of Chuquisaka (May 1809) and in Quito, where a bid for independence was made in October of 1809 (Source 1). Though neither of these attempts truly threatened imperial integrity, they sowed the seeds of rebellion within the minds of many across the viceroyalties.

Simon Bolivar (pictured in the second figure provided), born in 1783 in the Captaincy General of Venezuela, Viceroyalty of New Granada, was well-versed in the Enlightenment that had gripped Europe for more than a century. Educated in Spain, Bolivar was in attendance at the 1804 Papal coronation of Napoleon as Emperor of the French. The culmination of Napoleon’s rise to power, Bolivar was awed by
Napoleon’s attainment of the glory that Bolivar dreamt of. The Liberator returned to New Granada in 1807. His first step towards hallowed glory was taken on April 19, 1810. Bolivar was a leading member of a successful attempt to overthrow the governor of the Captaincy General of Venezuela, an act which soon spread revolutionary sentiments across the viceregalies. On July 20, 1810, the imperial administrators of New Granada, including the viceroy himself, were forced out of Santa Fé de Bogota. Another attempt, this time unsuccessful, attempted to unseat the viceroyalty in New Spain on September 16th of that same year. These first three attempts only sought independence only from the Napoleonic government occupying Madrid, however, with all three movements pledging allegiance to King Ferdinand VII. The first true attempt at independence came from Paraguay on May 14, 1811, and was followed by a Venezuelan attempt two months later.

While revolution spread throughout with Western Hemisphere, The Royal Council regained control of Spain with the conclusion of the Peninsular War. The Crown soon set its sights upon regaining control of its lost Venezuelan territories; they successfully did so by July of 1812. So began a common thread evident through many of Bolivar’s conquests: a cycle of successful military conquests often complemented by failures. This complex set of successes and failures mirrored closely Bolivar’s complex and often contradictory personality (Source 4). Following the recapture of Venezuela, Bolivar fled to Cartagena, where his forces were fighting to repel Spanish troops operating outside of Bogota. After a series of small victories, Simon Bolivar rose to command the entire rebel force operating within New Granada. Especially remarkable was his ability to nearly quadruple the size of his army from 650 to 2,500 men in only a few months. The liberator won his first major victory on July 31, 1813, at Taguanes, where he crushed a much larger and better equipped imperial army. Bolivar entered Caracas a conqueror; he was proclaimed dictator of Venezuela. Facing the threat of a force ten times the size of his, however, Bolivar was forced to flee Caracas, and the city fell shortly after in July of 1814. Instead of attempting to recapture the city, Bolívar set his sights on reinforcing his own army. Facing an influx of royalist veterans from the Napoleonic Wars, Bolivar purchased arms from the British. He spent his days circulating tales of made-up
Bolívar’s push for liberation was not the only widespread and coordinated rebellion against Spain. While the liberator fought for independence in the north, another viceroyalty was beginning to struggle with its own independence movements; southern Rio de la Plata (present-day Argentina) became another hotbed for revolt. On May 25, 1810, a push for autonomy began in support of the deposed King Ferdinand; by 1814, this same force was fighting to repel all Spanish authorities from the viceroyalty. The rebel army, though led by Manuel Belgrano, was commanded by Bolívar’s southern counterpart: José de San Martín. Argentinian independence was declared on July 9, 1816 (source 1). San Martín, with the help of General Bernardo O’Higgins, fought for and liberated the southern span of the Viceroyalty of Peru (present-day Chile). O’Higgins was made Supreme Director of Chile in 1818, while San Martín pushed northwest to capture the northern Viceroyalty of Peru. Rapidly building a naval force, San Martín placed his armada under the control of Scottish nobleman Thomas Cochrane. Under the protection of the armada, San Martín marched on Lima, capital of the viceroyalty, on July 9, 1821. He was declared Protector of Peru on July 28th.

On November 29, 1807, Maria I of Portugal fled Lisbon; Napoleon invaded the
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city just two days later. The Queen, the prince-regent John VI, the 15,000-strong royal court, and the entire House of Braganza fled to Rio de Janeiro. For the next decade-and-a-half, the Empire of Portugal’s seat of power lay in its most fruitful colony. In 1821, political crises forced John VI, now King of Portugal, to return to Europe. The Cortes, the Portuguese political faction that had forced the King to return to Portugal, soon demanded the removal of Brazil’s status as an equal nation to Portugal and the return of the crown prince to Portugal. The prince, Pedro I, refused to return on January 9, 1822. Independence was granted later that year.

While San Martín achieved numerous victories across the southern part of the continent, Bolívar continued to struggle in his strive to achieve Venezuela. He resorted to hiring British mercenaries remaining in the New World. Setting his sights away from Venezuela, Bolívar trudged through the flooded Orinoco river basin and several mountain ranges to surprise the Spanish Army at Boyacá. His victory on August 7, 1819, allowed Bolívar to enter Santa Fé de Bogotá and declare independence on December 17, 1819. The formation of the Republic of Colombia, more commonly called Gran Colombia, took almost three years, with Venezuela falling to Bolívar on June 24, 1821, and Quito falling to Antonio José de Sucre on May 24, 1822. Bogotá and declaring independence for Cundinamarca (present-day Colombia and Panama) on December 17. The formation of the Republic was completed with two conquests: Venezuela came thanks to Bolívar’s campaign on June 24, 1821, and Quito (present-day Ecuador) came thanks to trusted general Antonio José de Sucre on May 24, 1822. Bolívar soon set his sights on northern Peru. Welcome to the Supreme Council of the Republic of Colombia.
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Positions:

**Francisco José de Paula Santander y Omaña; Vice-President of the Republic of Colombia:**
Born in 1792 in the Viceroyalty of New Granada, Francisco de Paula Santander is the son of a royal governor. He joins one of the many junta armies that began to emerge in Cundinamarca in 1810. A colonel by 1812, Santander flees to the border with the Captaincy General of Venezuela; it here that he meets and begins to operate under the command of Simon Bolívar. In 1817, Santander is promoted to the rank of brigadier general; over the next four years, he becomes one of Simon Bolívar’s premier generals, playing instrumental roles at Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá. Santander becomes Vice-President of the Republic in 1821; thanks to Bolívar’s regular travels, and as mandated by the Constitution of the Republic, Santander is entrusted with the Presidency of the Republic and handles all executive functions of the Office of the President.

**Antonio José Francisco de Sucre y Alcalá; Grand Marshall of the Army of the Republic:**
Born in 1795 in the Captaincy General of Venezuela, Antonio José de Sucre is the son of a royal governor. He joins a junta army in 1812 as an engineer and is soon promoted to lieutenant; he comes under the command of Santiago Mariño, where he helps liberate various parts of the Captaincy and Cundinamarca. His military brilliance brings him under the purview of Simon Bolívar by 1818. He wins the admiration and loyalty of the general at Angostura, and he is entrusted with the task of the liberation of Quito (and its subsequent induction into the Republic) in 1821. Though entry into the Republic does not sit well with certain elements fighting the Crown in Quito, chiefly the leaders of the Free Province of Guayaquil, Sucre’s military genius results in the liberation of Quito and its incorporation into the Republic. The President of the Republic of Colombia has entrusted General Sucre, now Grand Marshall of the Army of the South, with the liberation of Peru, the final stronghold of imperial power on the continent.

**José Prudencio Padilla López; Admiral of the Fleet of the Republic:**
Born in 1784 in the Viceroyalty of New Granada, José Prudencio Padilla is the son of a ship-builder. He becomes a seaman at the age of 14, and is fighting for the Imperial Army at Trafalgar by 1805. In 1811, he answers his fellow patriots’ calls for revolution and begins to fight against the Imperial Navy. A natural mariner, he comes under the command of Simon Bolívar’s command by 1815. By 1820, Padilla is operating as an admiral, winning victories at Laguna Salada, Pueblo Viejo, Tenerife, Cienaga de Santa Marta, and San Juan. The President of the Republic of Colombia has entrusted Admiral Padilla, now Admiral of the Fleet of the Republic, with the destruction of the Imperial Navy.

José Antonio Pérez Herrera; Chief of Staff of the army of the Department of Venezuela:
Born in 1790 in the Captaincy General of Venezuela, José Antonio Páez is the son of an employee of the Captaincy’s authorities. In 1810, he joins a cavalry squadron with the purpose of fighting the Crown. A skilled horseman, he is given command of his own squadron by 1813. In 1818, by now a general, Páez meets with Simon Bolívar to coordinate their efforts in the liberation of Venezuela. He wins all of the major battles in which he leads troops, and he is responsible for leading half of the Army of the Republic during the decisive Battle of Carabobo. As a reward for his loyalty and bravery, the President of the Republic has entrusted General Páez with control of the Military District of Venezuela. Fiercely loyal, the general supports the union of the Department of Venezuela and the Republic of Colombia under the command of the Liberator. He holds great reservations about Vice-President Santander’s current control of the Office of the President of the Republic.

Joseph Pedro Antonio María del Carmen de Fábrega y de las Cuevas; Governor and Commanding General of the Department of the Isthmus of Panamá:
Born in 1774 in the Viceroyalty of New Granada, José de Fábrega is the son of a Royal Army commander. In 1797, Fábrega is promoted to the rank of lieutenant within the Royal Army; by 1812, he is a Royal Militia captain, by 1815, a lieutenant colonel, and by 1821, Colonel of the National Armies of the Kingdom of Spain and Governor of the Isthmus of Panamá. Later that year, Fábrega accepts the will of his fellow Panamanians and pledges allegiance to the Republic of Colombia. In
exchange for his allegiance, the President of the Republic has made Fábrega Governor and Commanding General and entrusted him with control of the Army of the North.

Juan José Flores y Aramburu; Governor of the Department of Quito:
Born in 1800 in the Captaincy General of Venezuela, Juan José Flores is the bastard son of a distinguished Spanish merchant. In 1815, Flores joins the Royal Army; by 1817, he ascends to the rank of sergeant and develops a reputation for bravery, discipline, and heroism. Captured later that year, Flores realizes the importance of liberating the homeland from control of the Crown. Simon Bolívar recognizes his promise, promoting him to Commanding General of Pasto after Carabobo. The President of the Republic has decided to bestow another honor upon General Flores, making him Governor of the Department of Quito. He bears great love for Quito, determined to protect it from any and all threats that may arise; his loyalty has earned him the trust, respect, and admiration of many of his fellow statesmen. Like General Páez, General Flores harbors concerns over the power of the Office of the President resting in the hands of Vice-President Santander.

José Joaquin de Olmedo y Maruri
Former President of the Free Province of Guayaquil
Born in 1780 in the Viceroyalty of New Granada, José Joaquin de Olmedo is son of a Royal Army commander. Central to the independence movement in Guayaquil, Olmedo proclaims independence for the province in 1820. He stands firmly against Simon Bolívar’s decision to unite the Republic of Colombia and Guayaquil. The President of the Republic, however, understands that Olmedo is very popular with his people and values his insights on how to best lead them.

Minister of Finance of the Republic of Colombia:
The Minister of Finance of the Republic of Colombia has been appointed by the President of the Republic to lead the nation through a time of great financial difficulty. Imports far exceed exports, and sustaining the Armies and Navies of the Republic only grow more expensive. A new economic system must be instituted, one that not only sustains the nation but also allows it to prosper. The Minister of Finance controls both the fiscal and monetary policy of the Republic. Though, ultimately, economic
decisions must be approved by the President of the Republic, both President Bolivar and Vice-President Santander wholeheartedly trust and will rarely question the economic decisions made by the Minister of Finance.

**Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Colombia to the United States of America:**

The Envoy to the United States of America is responsible for representing the interests of the Republic inside the United States of America. The Envoy reports directly to the President of the Republic or, in his absence, the Vice-President of the Republic. Thanks the great distances that divide Sante Fé de Bogota and Washington, D.C. the Envoy will have to infer the position of his government when responding to diplomatic tasks in the United States while enjoying a great amount of leeway in his decisions. Any and all agreements, requests, and declarations made with and of the United States of America must pass through the Envoy.

**Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Colombia to the Empire of Brazil:**

The Envoy to the Empire of Brazil is responsible for representing the interests of the Republic inside the Empire of Brazil. The Envoy reports directly to the President of the Republic or, in his absence, the Vice-President of the Republic. Thanks the great distances that divide Sante Fé de Bogota and Rio de Janeiro, the Envoy will have to infer the position of his government when responding to diplomatic tasks in the Empire while enjoying a great amount of leeway in his decisions. Any and all agreements, requests, and declarations made with and of the Empire of Brazil must pass through the Envoy.

**His Eminence, the Archbishop of Santa Fé de Bogotá, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church:**

His Eminence, the Archbishop, is responsible for representing the interests of the Lord and Savior within the Republic. The President of the Republic is indebted to and thankful for the Holy Roman Catholic Church’s assistance in the liberation of the Republic. In this time of great social, political, and economic change, the President of the Republic has entrusted his Eminence with guiding the people of the Republic down the path of God. Thanks to the integral role that the Faith plays in the
lives of the people, the Archbishop of Santa Fé de Bogota, as the chief official of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, plays a monumental role in shaping the societal fabric of the Republic.

Doña Manuela Sáenz Aizpuru:
Born in 1797 in the Viceroyalty of New Granada, Manuela Sáenz is the daughter of a Spanish nobleman. In 1817, she marries wealthy Englishman James Thorne. In early 1822, she becomes the companion, closest confidant, and paramour of Simon Bolívar. One of the Republic’s most famous socialites, she has great influence over the rumors and conversations that fill the saloons, ballrooms, and parlors of the Republic. Though they are not bound by marriage, Sáenz has unquestionable loyalty to the President of the Republic; she will act only in their best interests.
The Questions:

1. The Republic of Colombia finds itself surrounded by a great number of new nations; could any of the Republic’s neighbors be of use to the success of the cause of the Supreme Council?

2. Years of war, a poor economic model, and a massive trade deficit have severely weakened the economy of the Republic. How will you address an ever-worsening economic problem?

3. Though the President of the Republic has enjoyed great successes against the Armies of the Empire, imperial authorities continue to wield great power in Central America, the Caribbean, and Peru. How will you vanquish the forces of Crown from the face of the homeland?

4. The authority of the President of the Republic is undisputed, but he reports directly to the Congress of the Republic. As the Supreme Council of the Republic, will you place final control of the Republic in the hands of a body of elected men, or will you entrust supreme power to he who holds the Office of the President of the Republic?

5. As the Republic of Colombia approaches the areas liberated by General José de San Martín, this committee will question how to reconcile San Martín, his army, and the already liberated Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata into their vision for the Republic of Colombia. Can this Supreme Council trust San Martín, or must he surrender his army and commission to the President of the Republic?
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Works Cited: