## CONTENTS

Letter from the Chair ................................................................. 3  
Committee Description ............................................................ 4  

**Topic A:** .............................................................................. [#]  
  Introduction ........................................................................ [#]  
  History of the Topic ............................................................ [#]  
  Current Status ...................................................................... [#]  
  Country Policy ..................................................................... [#]  
  Keywords ............................................................................. [#]  
  Questions for Consideration ............................................... [#]  

**Topic B:** .............................................................................. [#]  
  Introduction ........................................................................ [#]  
  History of the Topic ............................................................ [#]  
  Current Status ...................................................................... [#]  
  Country Policy ..................................................................... [#]  
  Keywords ............................................................................. [#]  
  Questions for Consideration ............................................... [#]  

**Contents**
Hello delegates!

Welcome to the Boer Committee for PMUNC’s Joint Crisis Simulation on the First Boer War! My name is Andrea Delgado. I’m currently a junior pursuing a major in Public Policy and a minor in Statistics. This will be my third PMUNC, and I'm super excited to be chairing this year. When I’m not staffing conferences, I also compete with the Princeton Model UN team, volunteer as an ESL teacher, and run a graphic design business.

Since this committee is a crisis committee, you will be responsible for responding to challenges as they arise. Given the complex nature of this era, these challenges can range from social issues to military conflict to diplomatic crises. Thus, it is imperative to come prepared with talking points and ideas for directives in order to fully participate in our fast-paced simulations. I strongly urge you to conduct research beyond the background guide. If it is hard to find information about your character, infer what your official might think based upon historical events and policies. Come to committee with crisis arcs for your character. Brainstorm a few objectives to motivate your character throughout the committee (money, a private army, etc.) and think of steps to accomplish that.

Again, I look forward to meeting you all in November! Prepare well, and be ready for serious discussion and lots of fun! If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at acrd@princeton.edu.

All the best,

Andrea Delgado
Blahh Blahh Blahhblahh
Southern Africa in 1878 was a complex, highly diverse region that served as the stage for tumultuous turns of events, countless conflicts and wars, and continually shifting borders and allegiances. Dissatisfied with life under British rule, the Boers established new republics in an attempt to better their situation.

However, the Boers have to overcome several obstacles that stand in the way of their security and independence. They must resist British efforts at expanding control in the region and limiting their autonomy. At the same time, they continue to struggle against the indigenous groups that reside along their borders, such as the Zulu. Internally, it is in their best interest to maintain social cohesion, strengthen their economic position, and improve infrastructure. The problems facing the Boers are complex and multifaceted, and their future remains highly uncertain. It is extremely imperative that the Boers take decisive action before they succumb to the forces that threaten them.
History of the topic

Dutch Settlement

In 1651, the Dutch East Company chartered a small settlement on the Cape of Good Hope. The post would resupply Dutch ships heading to the East Indies. Over time, the Dutch expanded into surrounding land taken from tribes and the outpost began to resemble a town. But the Company did not move to establish a permanent settlement on the Cape until the 1670s, when the British and French schemed to infiltrate trade in the Indian Ocean.¹

British Annexation and Administration of Cape Colony

After the French occupation of the Netherlands in 1795, the British occupied the Dutch Cape Colony. After transferring control several times, the British finally took full control of the colony in 1814 at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars. British control led to the migration of many Dutch farmers to other areas in Southern Africa (discussed below), but in the meantime the British began their administration of the colony.² British settlers founded Port Elizabeth in 1820, and British immigration continued from there on out. By 1853, the Cape Colony became a crown colony giving it its own government. The parliament was elected on the basis of “Cape Qualified

Franchise,” which was multi-racial and only based on a minimum level of property ownership. However, executive power still rested in the British appointed Governor.³

The Great Trek and the Establishment of Boer Republics

The Boers were the early Dutch-speaking settlers of Cape Colony.⁴ A lack of economic opportunities under British rule led many Boers to turn to the self-sufficient life of the trekboeren (wandering farmer). The Boers were an independent people, engaging in frequent range wars against neighboring African kingdoms and rebelling against their government. Disapproval of new British policies caused about 13,000 Boers to emigrate from Cape Colony to the interior of what would become modern South Africa. These groups all crossed the Orange River, but ultimately settled in different areas. As a result, the trekkers established independent Boer Republics such as the Transvaal (also known as the South African Republic) and the Orange Free State.⁵

Tensions over land and property created conflict between the Boers and the Zulu and other African kingdoms. The Boers were able to overpower the Zulus in 1838 and establish the Natalia Republic. The British soon grew worried about the aggressive actions taken by the government in Natalia and valued the small port of Durban. By 1843, an anarchical situation prevailed in Natalia and the British annexed the area; many Boers left after this annexation towards the interior lands of what would become the Transvaal and Orange Free State.

Griqualand

At the same time that the Boers began their treks out of the Cape Colony, the mixed-race people of the colony sought to establish their own state as well. These groups left the Cape Colony and went north to areas on the western end of the habitable lengths of the Orange River, led by a former slave Adam Kok I. These mixed-race people were known as Griqua and spoke Afrikaans. By 1834, the Cape Colony recognized the territory of the Griqua people in Griqualand West under Andries Waterboer.6

The Zulu

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Zulu tribe, located near the White Mfolozi River, was one of the smaller Nguni clans in South Africa. When Shaka became king in 1816, he organized the chieftaincy into an efficient military force that conquered all of present-day Natal by 1823.7 Shaka established amakhanda, which were enormous city-like settlements, all over the kingdom to assert royal power.8 Meanwhile, he reorganized the army into specialized regiments that used standard tactics and deadly assegais weapons.9 By the 1870s, the army also incorporated obsolete firearms that it acquired from European traders.

Shaka was assassinated and succeeded by one his half-brothers, Dingane, in 1828.10 Under Dingane, Boers leaving Capetown during the Great Trek infiltrated the Zulu Empire.11 This led to a

---

6 Martin Meredith, Diamonds, Gold, and War (New York: Public Affairs, 2007); 22.
10 Ibid.
serious destabilization of the kingdom as Dingane’s brother, Mpande, allied with the Boers in order to seize power. He succeeded in ousting Dingane during the resulting Zulu civil war, and reigned until his son, Cetshwayo, effectively wrested power from him in the 1860s.12

Meanwhile, the physical borders of the Zulu Empire were fluctuating. In 1840, the Boers controlled historically Zulu territory south of the Black Mfolozi river, splitting the kingdom in two. But they were then ousted when Britain annexed Natal in 1843.13 During the annexation the British returned some territory to the Zulu, giving the Zulu control of all land between the Pongolo/a and the Tugela rivers until 1879.14

Annexation of Basutoland

After a series of disastrous wars with the Boer Orange Free State, the King of Basutoland sought British protection and offered the country to be annexed by the British in 1866. Annexed to Natal in 1868, it was transferred to Cape administration in 1871, but was mainly under the control of the Basuto tribal organization.15

Annexation of Griqualand

In 1866 the first diamonds were found near the banks of the Orange River in Griqualand West territory.16 The Boers of Transvaal and the Orange Free State laid claim to the region as well as the Griqualand West government. After a mediation awarded the land to Griqualand West, the state

13 The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Zululand."
14 Ibid.
petitioned the British to annex the land in 1871. In 1873 the government refused to directly annex it due to its ongoing disputes with the Orange Free State. The territory became a separate crown colony until 1877 when the resolution of disputes led to the incorporation of the territory.

Current Situation: Fall 1878

The Responsible Government of Cape Colony

In 1872, John Molteno gained the right to self-government for the Cape Colony and became its first Prime Minister. The Responsible Government, as the system of self-governance was known, He pursued policies to counter factionalism, fixed shortfalls in budgets, and invested heavily in infrastructure.

Boer political structures and military strategies

The Orange Free State was governed by a directly elected president, executive council, and a unicameral legislative assembly. The Transvaal's government is similar, comprising of a Volskraad (“People’s Council”) and a president. These systems were inspired by traditional Boer institutions and the Dutch and American constitutions. Despite their organized systems of government, the Boer republics faced challenges such as economic stagnancy and border struggles that adversely impacted their stability.

17 Ralph, Julia (1900). Towards Pretoria: a record of the war between Briton and Boer, to the relief of Kimberley. Frederick A. Stokes company.
The Boer style of fighting was primarily based on unconventional guerilla tactics. Boer forces were highly mobile and skilled marksmen.\(^{21}\)

**Confederation Plan and Annexation of Transvaal**

In his second term as Colonial Secretary in 1874, Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert sought to federalize and grant dominion status to Southern Africa.\(^{22}\) He sent Sir Bartle Frere as governor and high commissioner to South Africa to accomplish this in 1877.\(^{23}\) But his first proxy in Southern Africa was the Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone. The Transvaal had gone through an expensive war against the Pedi under Sekhukhune in the north, as well as a border war with the Zulu in 1876 (see more below), and the government was struggling with social and economic issues under President T. F. Burgers. In January 1877, Shepstone went as a special commissioner to the Transvaal and by April the republic had been annexed.\(^{24}\) This was done in a non-violent but duplicitous manner, and Boers began to agitate against the British by launching formal complaints. In May 1877, the Transvaal sent a delegation to Britain in order to convey their disapproval of the annexation. Later, they also presented a petition expressing Boer opposition to British rule. However, these attempts were unsuccessful at changing the policies of the British.\(^{25}\)

---

\(^{21}\) Ibid.


Last Xhosa War

Since the conclusion of the last war and the cattle killings of 1857-1858, the Cape Colony government had strived hard to maintain low-cost peace on its eastern borders. Indigenous groups adapted to the era of peace differently, with some groups choosing to join Cape society and others maintaining their independence. However, tensions intensified in late 1877 between Gcalekas and Fengus. After a series of protracted conflicts, the Gcaleka were defeated by March 1878, and the last of the independent Xhosa territories had been integrated into the British empire.

Boer-Bapedi tensions

The Bapedi were an indigenous group that historically inhabited lands that were claimed by the Transvaal. Bapedi resistance over the Transvaal’s claims started a series of conflicts in the middle of the 19th century. Their current leader, Sekhukhune, has continued to resist the Boers’ attempts to expel his people from the territory and has successfully prevented President Burger’s plans to construct a railway connecting the Transvaal to Delagoa Bay.

The Bapedi lands were included as a part of the British annexation of the Transvaal. Sekhukhune opposed this decision and has mobilized his forces against the British.

---

30 Ibid.
Boer-Zulu tensions

There had been tense border fights between the Boers of the Transvaal and the Zulus in 1876, and it had long been perceived by the Zulu that they needed to rely on British support to counter the Boers. This meant that the Boers could not resist the British annexation of 1877 without fear of the intervention of the Zulu; accordingly, the Boers took what actions they could to increase tensions. Thus, they helped to scuttle negotiations between Shepstone, now administrator of the Transvaal and the Zulu in 1877, after which the view of colonial administrators on the Zulu began to turn increasingly sour. Meanwhile, of course, the British administration under Carnavron and Frere intended to move forward with their eventual goal of a confederation. Frere’s petition for the dissolution of the Cape government came through by February 1878.

Powers abroad

Although there are no significant resources currently known in the lands beyond the Limpopo and Orange Rivers, exploration is needed to determine what trade, settlement, and development might be possible.

The Portuguese have established a harbor and base on Delagoa Bay, in the settlement of Lourenço Marques. The bay is one of the best in all of Southern Africa, but there is little infrastructure. Further north, the Portuguese have strong trading connections along the coast all the way up to Zanzibar and inland along the Zambezi. A powerful native power, the Gaza Empire of the Tsonga people, has emerged along this territory. The empire is ruled by members who are related to the leaders of the Zulu and Swazi royals. 31 Across the sea, the French and British have

---

been competing for influence in Madagascar, and over the Mascarene Islands of Reunion and Mauritius.\textsuperscript{32}

Inland of the Gaza empire, the Shona people are gathered under the diminished power of the Matapa Kingdom, but the major power is the Kingdom of Matabeland, founded by Zulu ethnics and composed of a diverse group of Ndebele, Shona, and Kalanga peoples. The king of Matabeland, Lobengula, has signed treaties with Transvaal, recognizing each other’s territorial claims and trading rights. Further up the Zambezi, the Barotse Kingdom rules the Lozi people under an aristocracy of Basotho and Tswana ethnic people.\textsuperscript{33}

To their south, bordering the Orange Free State along the Orange River, live the Tswana people, in the Bechuanaland Kingdom. The King, Khama III, is closely aligned with the British having converted to Christianity and taken over the kingdom with missionary support.\textsuperscript{34}

In the arid plains north of the mouth of the Orange River, several groups of mixed blood groups have settled in Namaqualand. These people, descendants of Boers and Khoisan peoples, have set up settlements in the region, but various unorganized tribes live throughout the region. German missionaries and traders have set up extensive networks along the coast of this region. Beyond, the Portuguese control settlements near the mouth of the Congo in Angola.\textsuperscript{35}

It is pertinent to remember that the Germans and French are powerful, wealthy, and looking to counter British power wherever possible. Other international players such as the Americans, Low Countries, and other Europeans may also be interested in significant investments.

The Boers’ dilemma

The Boers must deal with a plethora of both internal and external issues. With the threat of border confrontations constantly looming, the Boers must find a strategy to effectively manage the Zulu, the Bapedi, and other neighboring tribes. At the same time, the increasing British expansion in the region and the annexation of the Transvaal have left the Boers in an uneasy state. The Boers must act quickly in order to prevent these issues from escalating. Within their own borders, the Boers must work to resolve financial problems, improve infrastructure, and revive an economy that has been mostly stagnant in the past. Simmering tensions regarding labor, land, and race continue in the republic as well. Addressing all of these threats at once will be extremely difficult, so it will be in the best interest of the Boers to prioritize and allocate their resources wisely.
Keywords

Bapedi: Also known as the Pedi, they are a group people speaking various dialects of the Sotho language who inhabit the northern areas of Southern Africa. They have a history of struggling against the Boers over land and labor.

Cape Colony: A British colony in Southern Africa established in 1806, it became self governing under its first Prime Minister John Molteno. In 1877, the state expanded by annexing Griqualand West and Griqualand East.

Confederation: The British plan to expand their influence in Southern Africa by consolidating government among the various states, modeled on their prior experience with the Canadian colonies.

The Great Trek: A movement of Dutch-speaking colonists up into the interior of southern Africa, which led to the establishment of the Boer republics such as the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

Orange Free State: A sovereign republic established by Boer trekkers, it extends between the Orange and Vaal rivers. Britain officially recognized its independence in 1854.

Transvaal: Also known as the South African Republic, it was founded in 1852 as an independent republic in 1852 that occupied the northeastern part of the region. It was annexed by the British in 1877.

Zulu: An indigenous group currently inhabiting Zululand, it is one of the last remaining autonomous territories in southern Africa. The Zulu have struggled against the Boers and the British to preserve their independence.

Questions

Which issues are most important to the Boer republics? Which problems should be prioritized and which ones can be dealt with in the future?

Should the Boers negotiate with the British or pursue a more aggressive course of action? What strategies would be best?

What should be done about Zulu tensions? What strategies would be best?
How can the Boers strengthen their territory’s internal stability? What measures should be taken to improve the economy, social cohesion, and infrastructure?

How will you work for the welfare of all Boers, not just of Transvaal but of the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony as well? Do the British plans have a role to play in enhancing the prosperity and unity of the Boers?

What do you want your character to accomplish by the end of the simulation?

Given your character’s position, what are some reasonable “portfolio powers” they might have? (ie. What actions do they have the authority or skills to take on their own, without committee approval? A general, for instance, could independently mobilize troops.)

Who are some potential allies you as a delegate may have in the different committees of the JCC?
Positions

- Marthinus Wessel Pretorius: served two terms as president of the Transvaal and one term as president of the Orange Free State; currently one of the leaders of Boer resistance against the British.

- Johannes Henricus Brand: now serving his third term as the State President of the Orange Free State; maintained a policy of neutrality towards Britain.

- Paul Kruger: appointed as Vice President of the Transvaal in March 1877; a member of the delegation to the British that attempted to undo annexation; former Commandant-General.

- Piet Joubert: a member of the delegation to the British that attempted to undo annexation; former member of the People’s Council and Attorney-General of the Transvaal;

- Thomas François Burgers: President of the Transvaal until its annexation; struggled to keep the republic afloat during a time of border conflicts and insolvency.

- Francis William Reitz: Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Orange Free State; codified and reviewed laws and revised the constitution.

- Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr: editor of the newspaper Die Zuid-Afrikaan; President of the South African Farmers’ Protection Association in the Cape Colony.

- Nicolaas Smit: Lieutenant General of the Eastern Transvaal Commando; led the battle against Sekhukhune’s Bapedi forces.

- Pieter Arnoldus Cronjé: Lieutenant General of the Western Transvaal Commando.

- Reverend Stephanus Jacobus du Toit: editor of Die Afrikaanse Patriot; President of the Society of True Afrikaaners in the Cape Colony.

- Ambassador to the Swazi: manages the Boers’ affairs with the Swazi, a possible ally.

- Ambassador to the Portuguese (at Delgoa Bay & Lourenço Marques), Gaza Empire under Mzila, and Matabeleland under Lobengula: manages the Boers’ affairs with several possible allies.

- Gerrit Jacobus van Niekerk: leader of Boer settlers in Bechuanaland.

- Eduard Johan Pieter Jorissen: served Attorney-General of the Transvaal under T.F. Burgers.