

## History Never Repeats

The country<sup>1</sup> was at a crossroads. A period of strong economic growth and good times had been followed by more difficult economic conditions.<sup>2</sup>

The country looked for a new leader to take it forward. The party which came second in the last election<sup>3</sup> won the largest number of votes, though not a majority<sup>4</sup>, and its leader became the country's leader<sup>5</sup>. The party had succeeded partially through manipulating the voting system within the boundaries of the law<sup>6</sup>.

However, disaster loomed. A national icon in the country's pre-eminent city was attacked and destroyed<sup>7</sup>. A perpetrator was captured, and after being tortured, confessed to plotting to destroy the national icon<sup>8</sup>. Other suspects were rounded up, including members of an international movement with ambitions of destroying the country<sup>9</sup>. The new leadership was aghast, and after initial confusion, the Deputy Leader<sup>10</sup> declared that this was a plot of a revolutionary group<sup>11</sup>. (Some conspiracy theorists have suggested that the party organised the icon's destruction, but no firm evidence supports this theory).

The Leader, recognising the urgency of the situation, asked the elected assembly to provide it with far reaching powers<sup>12</sup> to enable the Leader to deal with the emergency, based on an emergency act prepared before the icon's destruction. The elected assembly quickly granted these special powers to empower the leader to deal with the emergency, as nobody wanted to be seen as not acting to protect the country. These new powers, combined with the Leader's constitutional position<sup>13</sup>, allowed the Leader to pursue the revolutionary group and imprison its leadership.

However, this was not enough. Still feeling insecure, the Deputy Leader reorganised the country's police forces to make them more effective at counteracting treason, espionage and sabotage – anything that would endanger the country's government. A new security agency<sup>14</sup> is formed to defend the country from subversives and to better coordinate other security agencies. Radical elements in society are detected by searching public information and intercepting communications, and are arrested for interrogation.

The government later reviewed its security arrangements. It recognises that an ongoing threat from within exists from a religious sect in society<sup>15</sup>. The general population becomes less accommodating to this sect, who they blame for plotting the downfall of the country<sup>16</sup>, and there are cases of individuals carrying out acts of reprisal against the sect. The Leader responds to the security situation by using the powers extended under the emergency act, making the security forces actions in protecting the country placed beyond judicial review<sup>17</sup>, so long as they carried out the intentions of the Leader who had the constitutional duty to defend the country against all threats.

The new security agency, in consort with other agencies, organises internment camps for the holding and interrogation of suspects<sup>18</sup>. These camps are placed beyond

judicial control. Prisoners are held in secret and family members do not know the fate of their loved ones.

Further, to ensure that sensitive information is not leaked to groups seeking the country's downfall and to maintain public support and morale during the ongoing crisis, the government carefully manages the release of information. The mass media are encouraged to not publish articles that might jeopardise the government's policies, while individual freedom of speech is reduced through the application of laws to reduce political discussion.

Meanwhile, another more serious threat is slowly emerging. A former Great Power<sup>19</sup> has been in turmoil due to the effects of a revolution and some disastrous ideologically-driven economic policies. The re-emergence of this Great Power, with a rapidly growing economy and modernising military, is a long-term threat. The Leader sends a special envoy<sup>20</sup> to negotiate a deal with the re-emerging Great Power, despite contradicting personal beliefs<sup>21</sup>. A deal is made<sup>22</sup>, whereby the country and the re-emerging Great Power agree to avoid confrontation and work together on the international stage.

Freed from this distraction, the Leader seeks to eliminate a threat from a smaller country<sup>23</sup>, which happens to have some resources that the Leader would like to access for his own country<sup>24</sup>. Furthermore, the religious sect<sup>25</sup> is well established in the smaller country and is thus an ongoing potential source of problems for the country – though the country's leadership<sup>26</sup> is secular and is currently controlling the religious sect's actions. The Leader elects a policy of pre-emptive war<sup>27</sup> to ensure the country's security and justifies the action to the public by noting the enemy's potential threat, provocative acts and unwillingness to cooperate. The Leader authorised the military to defeat the other country, which quickly falls to the country's more advanced forces<sup>28</sup>.

However, the Leader is condemned by many countries for this action<sup>29</sup>. The country sought allies<sup>30</sup> who will support its programme as it continues to ensure its security at the expense of others. Meanwhile, there is continuing guerrilla activity in the conquered country<sup>31</sup>, as members of its army and former civilians resist the occupying forces. The country responds by suppressing areas of activity and recruiting locals<sup>32</sup> who will work for the occupying forces and the occupation government<sup>33</sup> established by the country. The re-emerging Great Power's friendship becomes increasingly valuable, as trade provides valuable supplements to the country's local production.

A further threat from a former foe<sup>34</sup> emerges in response to conquering the defeated country and the Leader orders the armed forces to make preparations. At this time, public support is wavering<sup>35</sup>, as there is waning public enthusiasm for military adventures. The Leader is convinced of victory and carries out an international propaganda programme to isolate the new threat<sup>36</sup>, while offering a peaceful resolution to the crisis<sup>37</sup>. The armed forces are ready for carrying out the Leader's plans, though there is some concern over force levels, new equipment production and manpower recruitment.

The world waits to see what the Leader will do next? Are the appeals for a peaceful resolution realistic? Will the new threat listen to reason or will there be war?

The text is a comparison of the history of two countries. The events described are listed below, in the format:

## Germany / United States

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- <sup>1</sup> Germany / USA
- <sup>2</sup> Great Depression 1929-35 / US Recession October 2000
- <sup>3</sup> Nazi Party 1931 / Republican Party 1996
- <sup>4</sup> 43.9% / 47.9%
- <sup>5</sup> Adolf Hitler / George W. Bush.
- <sup>6</sup> Communist votes / Florida voting irregularities
- <sup>7</sup> Reichstag, Berlin / Twin Towers, New York
- <sup>8</sup> van der Lubbe / Zacarias Moussaoui
- <sup>9</sup> Comintern / al-Qaeda
- <sup>10</sup> Hermann Goering / Dick Cheney
- <sup>11</sup> Communists / al-Qaeda
- <sup>12</sup> Enabling Act 1933 / Congress 2001
- <sup>13</sup> Chancellor / President
- <sup>14</sup> SS absorbed the Gestapo and other police 1934 / Homeland Security 2002
- <sup>15</sup> Jews / Moslems
- <sup>16</sup> Defeat in 1918 / Attack on the Twin Towers
- <sup>17</sup> Nuremburg laws 1936 / Patriot Act 2001
- <sup>18</sup> SS concentration camps 1934-45 / CIA prisons and DoD in Cuba, Afghanistan
- <sup>19</sup> Soviet Union / China
- <sup>20</sup> Ribbentrop / Powell
- <sup>21</sup> anti-Bolshevism / human rights
- <sup>22</sup> Nazi-Soviet Pact 1939 / US-China agreements 2001
- <sup>23</sup> Poland / Iraq
- <sup>24</sup> land / oil
- <sup>25</sup> Jews / Moslems
- <sup>26</sup> Polish Junta / Baath Party
- <sup>27</sup> Case While: Invasion of Poland / Operation Iraq Freedom
- <sup>28</sup> Mechanised forces supported by overwhelming air power / Mechanised forces supported by overwhelming air power
- <sup>29</sup> Britain and France declare war / United Nations questions legality of Iraq war
- <sup>30</sup> Italy, Japan / Britain, Australia, Spain
- <sup>31</sup> Poland / Iraq
- <sup>32</sup> Waffen SS / Iraq army and police
- <sup>33</sup> General Government / Iraq interim government
- <sup>34</sup> Britain and France / Iran
- <sup>35</sup> Low morale in Germany / Low opinion polls, Senate refusing to renew Patriot Act
- <sup>36</sup> Diplomacy with Italy and Japan / Diplomacy with European Union and Russia to demand Iran abandon nuclear research
- <sup>37</sup> German peace proposals / US prepared to let Iran continue without nuclear capability