

HMUN 2020

Haarlem Model United Nations

Student Officer:

Aaron Bird

Issue:

Discussing the failings of the League of Nations

Forum:

Historical Security Council (HSC)





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Name:	Aaron Bird
Position:	Deputy Chair

Introduction

The League of Nations was the first-ever intergovernmental organisation founded in 1920 with the task and aim of maintaining world peace. This organisation was created to hold a forum to discuss and resolve issues surrounding warfare and the maintenance of peace, after the First World War (1914-1918) and the "Paris peace conference" (1919). The founding of the League Of Nations (LON) consisted of 42 founding members, the four main members were France, England, Japan, and Italy. The LON was successful throughout the 1920s stopping wars between countries such as Germany and Poland, and returning home and approximate 400,000 war prisoners. These successes were also met with losses when "powerful" countries such as France, and Turkey were not stopped when performing unpeaceful actions such as "The invasion on the Ruhr in 1923". The LON failed miserably to achieve its goal with the start of WW2, leading to the ceasing of operations in 1946 directly after WW2 had ended.

The Treaty of Versailles was created and discussed in the "Paris Peace Conference" and was the spark which led to the creation of the LON and also led to the harsh often referred to as unfair treatment on Germany. This led to both the US and Germany disliking the LON, the US therefore never joined the LON as they "wished to stay out of European affairs", and "the LON would infringe on the sovereignty of the US" as said by a group of US senators. Despite the way in which Germany first disliked the LON and the Treaty of Versailles, in 1926 Germany became the fifth permanent member of the LON, and was given a seat at the League of Nations Council.

Definition of Key Terms

Intergovernmental organisation;

IGOs are created as a result of an established treaty that acts as a charter for starting the group. An IGO is an organisation which includes multiple sovereign states as "member states".

Plebiscite;

A direct vote from all the members of the electorate on a big decision, such as a change in the constitution or a similar important decision.

Allied Forces;

The Allied Forces was an alliance that fought for peace and attempted to stop Germany and the Axis forces during WW2. The Allied Forces consisted of; the UK, Russia, USA, France, Belgium, Sweden, Poland, etc.

Axis Forces;

The Axis Forces was an alliance that fought for world dominance and fought with Germany against the Allied Forces, the Axis Forces consisted of; Germany, Austria, Japan, Italy, etc.

General Overview

Problems regarding the League Of Nations

The LON was finally dismembered in 1946 after WW2 a visible and demonstrative sign that the LON had failed and did not work. Germany was the reason for the start of WW2 and also the fifth permanent member of the LON which showed a lack of strive and support within the LON rendering itself useless. The LON was rendered useless and possibly failed for the following reasons/weaknesses which were necessary for the LON to integrate all nations and ensure that there were no more wars;

- The LON did not include all nations and therefore did not have the support of many powerful nations, one being the US which was a large economic and military power, which could have helped with all aspects of implementing what the LON saw fit. The LON also had members join for a three year time period which meant that countries were only a part of the LON for a short time unless reinvited. Another large power such as the Soviet Union (USSR) only joined on to the LON for a time period between 1934 and 1939.
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- The League's requirements to join conflicted with multiple member countries international relations to ensure collective security, which led to conflict within the LON and further pushed the first flaw of the LON (The paragraph above).
- The League attempted to negotiate and enforce peace on multiple countries yet failed to have its own military force. This meant that the League

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depended on its member states which had already suffered great losses due to WW1 and wished not to be part of another war meaning the LON failed to have its own force to "threaten/negotiate" with.

- As the League had no military force and relied on its member states to support it when there were internal disagreements such as when France invaded the Ruhr, the LON could do nothing, and therefore was useless in stopping large forces from fighting one another or taking what they wanted.

These problems and weaknesses all lead to the failure of the LON and would need to be looked at and taken into consideration if another organisation such as the LON was to be constructed within the foreseeable future. These problems were great threats to the LON, but the achievements of the LON and the advantages that the LON used for itself must also be taken into consideration if another body such as the prior was to be created.

League Of Nations successes and advantages

The LON was responsible for solving many problems, such as when the LON stopped border disputes from turning into wars when in Silesia the LON held a plebiscite and suggested a partition which also assisted in stopping a war between Germany and Poland from happening. Land in disputes between countries such as Sweden and Finland was investigated and solved

These are just a few of the many successes which came from the LON showing that if done correctly, an organisation of many countries could lead to the creation of a great force leading to many peaceful actions. Some aspects of the LON which were important and vital for these multiple successes were;

- The LON was able to make quick decisions and had the backing of multiple countries, which is why many of its successes went smoothly. These decisions were mainly accepted by the stakeholding countries and due to this specifically, they were complete successes.
- The LON was a peace initiative which meant it completely abided by all Human Rights and was supposed to be unbiased, meaning it did not favour a country allowing the League to make the best choices possible.
- The LON took into consideration what the people wanted. This helped put a stop to riots and allowed countries to come to quick and easy agreements helping citizens achieve their aims and be happy.

After WW2 (current status of countries economically and military wise)

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WW2 affected 27 countries in the form that they were attacked, occupied, or switched sides throughout the war, and many more countries participated in some form by either sending troops into war against one side or supporting one of the two sides economically. The two sides were both great forces being the Allied forces (UK, US, USSR, and many more), and the other being the Axis forces consisting of Germany, Italy, and Japan and their allies. With these countries all being part of the LON at one point, this illustrates how divided the League was, and how these multiple countries were not focused on peace later on after the founding of the League.

In total it is approximated that 75 million people died from WW2, split between 20 million being military personnel and 40 million civilians, the other 15 million split between multiple statuses. 85% of the deaths being split between the Allied forces and 15% between the Axis forces, most civilians death resulting from war crimes.

The largest part of these deaths and assaults lay with the Jews. They were the victim of systematic enslavement and killing by the Nazis. Another major group that had to endure assault, such as rape, and death were millions of civilians in China, caused by the Japanese military personnel.

The spending in all countries was at a determining effect on their economies many countries going through rations throughout the years of the wars, and many economies such as the US increasing their national debt, this can be seen in the US where the national debt jump 1036% a total of \$236 billion dollars. Despite this sudden drop, the end of WW2 should open up the possible future economic expansion for all countries as seen after WW1 we can be expecting a baby boom, and an increase in spending stimulating all aspects of an economy and improve living conditions for all.

Major Parties Involved

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom played a large role throughout WW2 and was one of the founding and permanent members of the LON. The UK holds a variety of international ties with multiple countries and is extremely economically powerful. The UK contains a variety of smaller regions than England, and has had a powerful reign in the past and continues to strive for the improvement of human rights all around the world.

France

France played an important role in WW2 and was one of the founding and permanent members of the LON, France was very heavily attacked during WW2

and therefore suffers extreme losses on all fronts. France wishes for Germany to be heavily punished for their actions in WW2 more than both England and the US. France is also economically strong despite being weakened throughout WW2 and holds a high status compared to its regional countries.

USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

The USSR lost 20 million individuals throughout WW2, more than any other nation, although was kicked from the LON in 1939 as they did not respect the laws and rules emplaced by the LON. The USSR is still the largest country in terms of sheer space, and holds a large army, and a strong and powerful economy.

Germany

Germany initiated WW2 and was on the LON for a short period of time, despite disagreeing completely with the Treaty of Versailles as it greatly affected all aspects of Germany. Still having many allies, Germany will be an important aspect of any future solutions, yet may also be punished for their behaviour throughout WW2. Germany can be expected to be punished for its actions in WW2 along with the rest of the Axis forces, and cannot be expected to hold a big role when deciding on the future.

USA (United States of America)

The USA was vital throughout the end of WW2 and is a great economic power expected to excel in the future years ahead. The USA will be important as shown previously in the LON. If the US is not a part of any future solutions this may lead to more problems or failures. The USA also has a growing military presence and will be a leader in the future based on its current status and growth.

Timeline of Key Events

July 28 th 1914	Start of World War 1
Nov 11 th 1918	End of World War 1
Jan 10 th 1920	Foundation of the League of Nations
Jan 18 th 1919	Start of Paris Peace Conference
Jan 21 st 1919	End of Paris Peace conference
Sept 1 st 1939	Start of World War 2



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April 20th 1946 League of Nations ceased operations

Sept 3rd 1946 Today (1st day of the conference)

Possible Solutions

As this section is the reason of our debate, this section will be a collection of the reasons as to why we need an organisation or a compromise to the League Of Nations.

The League of Nations as previously stated take the higher level in all situations including two countries, as it entails not bias and allows for situations to be dealt with in a peaceful manner. Situations like the ones mentioned before would not have had peaceful endings if it was not for the LON, and therefore this proves the necessity for an organisation as such. By having no power to overthrow or force a country into changing its way of ruling, the LON posed no threats to nations sovereignties. The idea of being able to guide multiple countries into the right path is something that was great about the LON and a necessity in the future.

The creation of any solution is recommended for the Historical Security Council, whether it has previously been created in real life or whether suitable solutions will be provided in the (near)future.

Further Reading

https://www.cs.mcgill.ca/~rwest/wikispeedia/wpcd/wp/l/League_of_Nations.htm

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