ACCESS DENIED? NON-ALIGNED STATE DECISIONS TO GRANT ACCESS DURING WAR

Emily Ellinger

Access decisions play a crucial role in war, with belligerent states employing various methods to gain access into neutral states. Yet, the decision-making process of potential host nations has largely been unexplored for modern, large-scale conflicts. This gap is addressed by exploring three themes — political survival, economic consequences, and the risk of retaliation — through two historical cases: Greece in World War I and Sweden in World War II. Internal division in Greece enabled access through inaction, while Sweden denied access to maintain neutrality. These cases emphasize the importance of understanding historical access decisions to inform future engagement strategies in potential conflicts.

How do state leaders determine whether they should grant military access to outside powers during a war in which their country is not involved? In many cases, leaders may feel they have pre-committed to a decision either through an existing alliance with a foreign power or through their own involvement in the conflict. The decision to grant access therefore becomes secondary to the decision to become directly involved. But for states that are neutral and still have the option of remaining uninvolved, the decision to grant access becomes harder. During a large-scale war involving multiple states and fronts, a would-be host nation must weigh the potential benefits and costs of providing access in a condensed, high-pressure timeline. While examples of such decisions are rare, they can offer valuable insights into the behavior of state leaders whose countries are perceived as being strategically located.

To examine how outside powers negotiate access to neutral states during war, I chose two historical cases: British efforts to gain access to Greece in World War I and to Sweden in World War II. In both cases, the potential host country faced possible retaliation for their decision from belligerents on both sides through punitive economic, political, or military actions. Greek and Swedish state leaders had to carefully consider this possibility while simultaneously evaluating how their decisions would affect their country's economic well-being as well as their own political survival.

These cases were chosen for several reasons. There are more recent cases of requests by outside powers to non-aligned states for access during conflicts in the Cold War and post-Cold War period, with most involving the United States as the outside power. However, the world wars provide the last clear examples of large-scale international conflict where the potential host nation had a substantial fear of retaliation for their decision.[1] U.S.-involved conflicts in particular since 1945 have tended to involve a high degree of power asymmetry, with the United States requesting access in order to attack a substantially less powerful adversary. These less powerful adversaries tended to pose a more limited risk of retaliation for the potential host nation, reducing the likely salience of this concern in host nation decision-making.[2] The specific cases were chosen as examples of states that were asked for access while primarily remaining out of the conflict themselves and were instead approached by belligerents on both sides who sought to gain influence over them.

During the period examined, the United Kingdom was a far-reaching power that could exert economic, political, and military influence in its interactions with smaller states, similar to the current reach of the United States. By choosing two cases where non-aligned states interact with the same larger power, focus can be placed on the comparison between the smaller state reactions.

Comparing these two cases can help provide insight into potential policy questions regarding U.S. basing and alignment of regional non-aligned states. In addition to providing a set of cases that can help explore a fuller set of factors that may affect state decision-making, this set of conditions also may provide a better comparison with requests that the United States may make to more non-aligned partners

1 Throughout this manuscript, retaliation refers to the act of responding to the actions of another state through the use of punitive economic, political, or military measures. Evelyn Speyer Colbert, *Retaliation in International Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948).

2 This dynamic, however, likely reflects the specific circumstances of the post-1945 era, which may be unrepresentative of cases that take place in eras where the outside power requesting access is militarily dominant to the extent that the United States has been in most regions of the world over this period.

in future full-scale conflicts.[3] The above criteria place these two relatively understudied cases forward to examine the types of pressures that national leaders are under in any large-scale conflict with the potential for fear of retaliation. Other scholars have discussed these cases previously, including Keith Robbins, George Kaloudis, M. Gunnar Hagglof, Peter Hedberg, Lars Karlsson, and others. But access negotiations is not the primary focus of their work.

These key leadership considerations of regime survival, economic repercussions, and potential retaliation do not always receive equal weight, nor do they provide a comprehensive list of all the factors that leaders consider when making access decisions. They are also not mutually exclusive. They must be balanced by leaders among a myriad of lower-level issues, and this calculation is made differently by each regime and leader of the nation granting access. The historical evidence surveyed and analyzed here gives insight into how access decisions have been made in prominent past examples that played a key role in the global conflicts, using the words of the people who wrestled with these considerations in real time.

In large-scale conflicts, literature on this topic tends to focus on the interactions between large and powerful belligerents. However, small and medium powers often have a crucial role in the wider analysis of conflicts and the course of history, especially when granting access to one or more belligerent parties.[4] This leads to a complicated question on these non-aligned states and the position of neutrality in conflict. The concept of neutrality during conflict is not new: In fact, stakeholders in ancient Greece frequently evoked neutrality to avoid participating in conflict.[5] However, the literature on neutrality frequently focuses on legal definitions or historical examples rather than describing how neutrality works in practice.[6] This includes literature on how neutral states understand, interpret, and employ neutrality during conflict.[7] These neutral states may seek to utilize their relative bargaining power to strike a balance between two opposing pressures through economic, military, strategic, or other means to avoid larger destruction.[8]

During the case studies discussed, the Hague Convention had already established and institutionalized the concept of neutrality into state politics to limit small wars. The convention, signed in 1907, was an international agreement that, among other things, offered a definition of neutrality. The document's understanding of neutrality focused on the concept of impartiality in war, preventing uncertainty, and allowing redress for unaligned states if their status of neutrality was violated.[9] By codifying neutrality, non-aligned states were offered more legal protections. However, a declaration of neutrality is not itself sufficient, unless it is accompanied by legal underpinning and international recognition.[10] These declarations

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3 Cheng-Chwee Kuik, "How do weaker states hedge? Unpacking ASEAN states' alignment behavior towards China," *Journal of Contemporary China*, 25.100 (2016): 500-514.

4 In this report, "smaller and weaker" states do not refer to geographical size, but rather describe states with limited military, economic, and/or political power compared to the major belligerents of the conflict.

5 Most famously, and unsuccessfully, in the case of Melos during the Peloponnesian War. Robert A. Bauslaugh, *The Concept of Neutrality in Classical Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

6 Jari Eloranta et al (eds.), *Small and Medium Powers in Global History: Trade, Conflicts, and Neutrality from the 18th to the 20th Centuries (Perspectives in Economic and Social History)* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

7 Christine Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality: Challenges to Swedish Identity and Sovereignty (New Approaches to Conflict Analysis)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

8 Nils Örvik, *The Decline of Neutrality, 1914-1941* (Oslo: J. G. Tanum, 1953); Jari Eloranta et al (eds.), *Small and Medium Powers in Global History*.

9 These agreements, among other aspects of neutrality, stated that "the territory of neutral Powers is inviolable" and "belligerents are forbidden to move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral Power." Violations covered many issues, including allowing the passage through or use of neutral territory by belligerent troops and providing logistical or military support to belligerents. *Convention (V) respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land* (The Hague: International Peace Conference, 1907).

10 Cyril E. Black et al., *Neutralization and World Politics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968). http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt183ps6q.

do not hold when powerful states are engaged in a conflict that may lead to the total physical or ideological destruction of the state. In such conflicts, the concept of neutrality becomes incompatible with the belligerents' priorities and efforts are made to appeal to or coerce neutral states on the grounds of mutual protection, ideological affinity, economic incentives, threats, among other methods.[11] This analysis will focus on how small and medium powers grappled with their position in large-scale conflicts where formal neutrality became difficult to maintain and instead loose alignment became necessary for survival.

Using primary source documents from the British National Archives, this study examines how state leaders make decisions about providing foreign access during war. It also demonstrates some of the tools that have historically been at the disposal of requesting states, as the United Kingdom sought to coerce or entice access to these nations during the conflicts, using both public and private negotiation tactics. Prior to this analysis, little scholarly discussion has directly focused on Britain's negotiation for access to Salonica in Greece or its "Plan R4" in Sweden.[12]

This analysis first discusses Greece in World War I and Sweden in World War II in the context of three considerations that leaders must contend with: regime survival, risk of retaliation, and economic implications. It compares the offers made by the United Kingdom and the choices made by the leaders of these third-party nations. Finally, the analysis brings together these two case studies for the first time to offer a unique perspective on basing decisions for two, often overlooked, negotiations.

Historical Context

The Balkan Wars were a series of conflicts in 1912 and 1913 that ravaged southeastern Europe before the outbreak of World War I. They ended with a treaty between Greece and Serbia pledging mutual protection and an agreement defining the shared border between the two states.[13] As the Central Powers began to advance through the Balkans into Serbia in 1915, Greece ostensibly broke its commitment by declaring neutrality instead of coming to its ally's defense. This decision was the result of a disagreement between Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos and the King of Greece, Constantine I, over the interpretation of the treaty and whether to take a side in the growing war.[14]

While Athens stood on the sidelines, the United Kingdom sought military access to the Balkans, primarily through the Greek port city of Salonica.[15] The British government believed "the Greeks were, and are, in no position to refuse demands made by either the Entente or the Central Powers" and sought to gain approval to land through a mixture of offers and threats.[16] Similar to its overall position in the war, the Greek government could not decide whether the British military was welcome on Greek territory. This was due to the conflicting opinions between the Greek king and prime minister, economic insecurity that allowed larger states to exert greater pressure, and fears of retaliation from the Central Powers. The United Kingdom ultimately chose to land in Greece without authorization from Greece, and though Greece never officially gave approval for the British to operate

11 A. J. Jacobs, "Neutrality, " *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 8 (1922), http://www.jstor.org/stable/742711.

12 Some existing analysis on the Greek case includes work from the period that discusses the friction between the King of Greece and the prime minister, such as N. J. Cassavetes' "The Case of Constantine and the Allies" and J. Gennadius' "The Truth about Constantine and Venizelos." More recent analysis includes Keith Robbins' "British Diplomacy and Bulgaria 1914-1915" and George Kaloudis' "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?", though these articles only briefly mention the British efforts to negotiate access. For the Swedish case, there is slightly more information available with J. R. M. Butler's *History of the Second World War: Grand Strategy Volume II* and Thomas Munch-Petersen's *The Strategy of Phoney War: Britain, Sweden, and the Iron Ore Question 1939-1940* offering information on Plan R4 as a British strategy, though without much attention on the Swedish decision-making process. Additionally, Swedish neutrality over the course of World War II is a large topic of academic interest, though early World War II access decisions are a less frequent topic. See, for example, M. Gunnar Hagglof's "A Test of Neutrality: Sweden in the Second World War," Peter Hedberg and Lars Karlsson's "Neutral trade in time of war: The case of Sweden, 1838–1960," and Eric B. Golson's "Did Swedish ball bearings keep the Second World War going? Re-evaluating neutral Sweden's role. N. J. Cassavetes, "The Case of Constantine and the Allies, " *Current History (1916-1940)* 14, no. 6 (1921), http://www.jstor.org/stable/45326238; J. Gennadius, "The Truth About Constantine and Venizelos, " *Current History (1916-1940)* 16, no. 5 (1922), http://www.jstor.org/stable/45329378; Keith Robbins, "British Diplomacy and Bulgaria 1914-1915, " *The Slavonic and East European Review* 49, no. 117 (1971), http://www.jstor.org/stable/4206453; George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?," *International Journal on World Peace* 31, no. 4 (Dec 2014); J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War: Grand Strategy*, vol. Volume II (London: HM Stationery Office, 1957); Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War: Britain, Sweden, and the Iron Ore Question 1939-1940* (Stockholm: Militärhistoriska Förlaget, 1981); M. Gunnar Hagglof, "A Test of Neutrality: Sweden in the Second World War, " *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 36, no. 2 (1960), https://doi.org/10.2307/2612040, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2612040; Peter Hedberg and Lars Karlsson, "Neutral trade in time of war: The case of Sweden, 1838–1960, " *International Journal of Maritime History* 27, no. 1 (2015), https://doi.org/10.1177/0843871414567077, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0843871414567077; Eric B. Golson, "Did Swedish ball bearings keep the Second World War going? Re-evaluating neutral Sweden's role, " *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 60, no. 2 (2012/06/01 2012), https://doi.org/10.1080/03585522.2012.693259, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03585522.2012.693259.

13 Michael Llewellyn-Smith, *The Making of a Greek Statesman, 1864-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

14 National Army Museum, "Salonika Campaign," 2022, https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/salonika-campaign.

15 Alternative spellings of this location include Salonika and Thessaloniki.

16 "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway," WO 158/455 (British National Archives, 1916).

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from its territory, the British military was able to use Greece as a base for the rest of the war.[17]

During the opening months of World War II, the British government sought to impede Germany's raw material supply lines and industrial capabilities in several ways. One option was to entice Sweden to reduce its iron ore and iron ball bearing exports to Germany, which accounted for 41 percent of Germany's iron ore imports and 58 percent of ball bearing production.[18] British government officials believed that Sweden would not follow through on its trade agreements, so another method was required.[19] The British considered a significant disruption of iron ore through one of the major shipping ports, either Narvik in Norway or Lulea in Sweden itself. Another option was to post British forces at the ore fields in Gällivare to prevent shipments, which might have shortened the war by starving the German arms industry of a crucial raw material needed for manufacturing weapons and ammunition.[20] In 1939, Germany cut off British naval access to the Baltic Sea, so attempting to stop the flow of iron from the port of Lulea would have required a significant undertaking. Instead, British attention focused on entering Sweden through the Norwegian port of Narvik.[21] The British chiefs of staff considered the Swedish ore fields a prize so great that if an opportunity were presented "we should seize it with both hands."[22]

In December 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Finland, beginning the Winter War. This presented both an opportunity and a concern for the ore fields of Sweden and their supply of iron to the United Kingdom as British observers became concerned about Sweden's ability to defend its border with Finland in the north. If the Soviet forces crossed from Finland into Sweden, British analysts postulated it would lead to two possible outcomes. Either the Axis Powers, the Soviet Union and Germany, would share equal access to the Swedish iron ore, or the Soviets would try and retain exclusive rights, leading to a German invasion of Sweden and German control of the mines.[23] The British developed a plan to secure the iron ore mines in Sweden while disguising the British forces deployed there as aid for Finland in its war with the Soviets, which became known as Plan R4.[24] Despite popular support for the allied cause in Sweden, the Swedish leadership ultimately refused access due to a drive to maintain neutrality, economic interest in maintaining trade with both sides, and fears of retaliation from the Axis powers. In fact, it was one of three democratic European nations that was neither occupied by Nazi Germany nor participated in the war.[25] While Greece became a battleground of World War I, Sweden remained ostensibly neutral throughout World War II.

Access and Regime Survival

All political leaders are incentivized to remain in power, as this provides them with a possibility of enacting their larger agenda and avoids the hazards

17 Some scholars argue this "disregarded" front of the war was a major launching point that brought about the collapse of the Central Powers.

18 In 1938, Germany imported 22 million tons of iron ore, and scholars calculate that Germany imported at least 9 million tons, approximately 41 percent, of its iron ore from Sweden. Eric B. Golson, "Did Swedish Ball Bearings Keep the Second World War Going?"; J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

19 Talbot Charles Imlay, "A Reassessment of Anglo-French Strategy during the Phony War, 1939-1940, " *The English Historical Review* 119, no. 481 (2004), http://www.jstor.org/stable/3490233.

20 Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War.*

21 J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

22 J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

23 In contemporary internal British analysis, scholars were unclear on how deep the friendship was between the Soviet Union and Germany. Analysts believed that if the two nations were willing to work closely together, Sweden would likely be divided between the two powers. If relations were less friendly, Germany would likely invade Sweden to cut off Soviet access to the iron mines. Bernard Kelly, "Drifting Towards War: The British Chiefs of Staff, the USSR and the Winter War, November 1939–March 1940," *Contemporary British History* 23, no. 3 (2009), https://doi.org/10.1080/13619460903080010; "Additional Forces for Operations in Norway," Note by the Secretary, CAB 80/105 (British National Archives, 1940).

24 Scholars have divergent opinions regarding the quality of Plan R4. Some argue it was like "trying to kill a flock of birds with a pebble" while others argue that the British interest in the region may have prevented Russia from pushing into Sweden. Bernard Kelly, "Drifting Towards War."

25 Ester Pollack, "As the Holocaust escalated, the Swedish press fell silent: media and the normalisation of passivity and non-engagement in World War II Sweden," *Social Semiotics* 30, no. 4 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1766195.

of losing leadership, which can be as harsh as exile, imprisonment, or death.[26] Providing access during a conflict pulls a third-party nation into the costs and consequences of the conflict. The interests of the third party inevitably affect the chosen course of action. If a nation provides access, the side that they hosted may win or lose the conflict, leading to positive or negative effects for the host nation.

One of the most obvious possible costs of providing access is either a domestic or foreign loss of faith in the current leadership of the host country, thus leading to the leader or regime losing power. Both historical cases exemplify this dynamic, and the following sections will show how the Greek leadership in World War I and the Swedish leadership in World War II navigated their concerns of political survival.

Greece

During World War I, the Greek government experienced significant internal turmoil and disagreement over interaction with both belligerents. Contradictory statements and scattershot messaging with Britain gave the impression that state leaders disagreed about the country's foreign policy course. Constantine I sought to hedge between the Central Powers and the Entente by maintaining Greek neutrality while Venizelos wanted Greece to be a more active participant in the conflict on the side of the Entente, which he saw as the most likely winner.[27]

Throughout 1914 and 1915, the government of Greece, both through the prime minister and the king, gave many indications that the British would be welcome to land in Greece. In January 1914, Venizelos met with British officials and stated that a bilateral agreement would help to preserve the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, which was largely neutral at the time. Venizelos also impressed upon the representatives that this deal was highly confidential in an effort to avoid any possible retaliation from the Central Powers.[28]

Venizelos often requested that British offers of Greek assistance and concessions to Bulgaria remained extremely confidential as they would not be popular with the Greek public and may even be seen as "unpatriotic."[29] British officials believed that this was due to several possible factors: Venizelos wanted to uphold the Serbian treaty, he had failed to gain popular support due to his willingness to work with Bulgaria, and he held a strong belief that "the present Government is ruining the future prospects of Greece."[30] All of these factors, combined with his passionate nature, led him to take significant risks in opposing public opinion. However, Greek prime ministers were often heavily concerned with the perception the United Kingdom had of their actions. One previous prime minister, Charilaos Trikoupis, stated, "The English are practically our only neighbors, for they alone touch us everywhere."[31] This shows the influence that the United Kingdom wielded as a global power at the time and how the weight of Britain's political, economic, and military strength factored into Greek decision-making. At the outset of World War I in July 1914, British officials did not make a firm decision on whether to enter into a formal agreement with Greece but noted that they believed Venizelos' position in the government was secured.[32] In August 1914, after the start of the war, Venizelos met with British representatives again and stated that he had come with full approval of Constantine I to offer all Greek military resources, including naval support, to the Entente Powers.[33] Following the lukewarm thanks from the United Kingdom, Constantine I reiterated that "my Prime Minister had talked to your Government with my full approval several months ago. It would be very highly appreciated by my country and myself if a friendly understanding could be reached."[34] The British representative thanked the Greek official for the offer but noted that "if the other Balkan States

26 Bruce Bueno De Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005); Giacomo Chiozza and Hein Erich Goemans, *Leaders and International Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

27 From the 19th century to the early 20th century, a political concept called the "Great Idea" permeated Greek politics. It championed the unification of all Greek settlements in the near east under a single state, with its capital in Constantinople. Following the humiliating failure of the Thirty Day War against the Ottoman Empire in 1897 for the island of Crete, the "Great Idea" was laid aside for several years. However, Venizelos helped rekindle this concept in the minds of the Greeks, restoring self-confidence and hope for the new century. This interest in expansion appealed to the Greek public and became a central part of Venizelos' platform. Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Spyridon Tsoutsoumpis, "Morale, Ideology and the Barbarization of Warfare among Greek Soldiers," in Katrin Boeckh and Sabine Rutar (eds.), *The Wars of Yesterday: The Balkan Wars and the Emergence of Modern Military Conflict, 1912-13* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018).

28 "Greece," FO 800/63 (British National Archives, 1915).

29 "Greece"; Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece.*

30 "Greece."

31 Michael Llewellyn-Smith, *The Making of a Greek Statesman.*

32 "Greece."

33 Venizelos offered 25,000 troops, full use of the Hellenic Navy and ports, and added that Greece would be willing to send 50,000 troops to Egypt in case the Entente requested it. "Greece."

34 "Greece."

remained neutral, Greece should do so too."[35] These early meetings show little indication that the king and Venizelos were at ideological odds throughout this period and instead indicate an interest from Greece for further reassurance from the United Kingdom.

In addition to the many meetings between British and Greek politicians, the royalty of both nations also had several ongoing discussions regarding the situation in the Balkans. Constantine I was related to many of the other major players in World War I — the British queen was his aunt and the kaiser of Germany, Wilhelm II, was his brother-in-law through his wife, Sophie of Prussia — creating conflicting loyalties that changed the relationship between the king and Venizelos.[36] Constantine wrote several letters to the British Queen Alexandra, reassuring her of the Greek position. In March 1915 he wrote,

> *Nothing whatever has been changed. Our politics remain the same; but I do not consider it is the time to take part in the war; and nobody has asked us to do so. Our feelings are of the most cordial for the three Powers, particularly England. Please don't be anxious.*[37]

Through these letters between the royalty of Greece and the United Kingdom, Constantine convinced the British government that he was popular among the Greek people and that his position of neutrality saw widespread support in the country.

In February 1915, Venizelos and Constantine disagreed about whether Greece should mobilize the Hellenic Army, because the country's treaty with Serbia stipulated that Greece would come to Serbia's defense in a conflict. While Venizelos interpreted this treaty to imply that Greece would come no matter which country attacked Serbia, Constantine believed the treaty would only be in effect if Bulgaria invaded alone without help from outside powers. As a result of this disagreement, Constantine dissolved parliament and Venizelos was forced to resign his position. Constantine admitted to a British representative that he went beyond the constitution and should have supported Serbia, he excused it as saying that "the times require a strong man and he was that man and not Venizelos."[38]

Amid confused reports from Greece on the internal politics and questions as to whether British troops had permission to land, the United Kingdom believed access to Salonica was pivotal to Entente success in the region. One British official warned that it may be necessary to coerce access out of Greece, advising "I regard occupation of Salonica as essential and we could not obtain this within a reasonable time without strong pressure."[39] However, Venizelos' precarious position in Greek domestic politics did not allow him to grant the British access while also remaining in power.

Constantine fell ill in early 1915 and did not recover until that August, which delayed further communication about the decision to allow British forces access to Greek territory.[40] As Constantine was recovering, Venizelos was reelected as prime minister. The illness of Constantine, the resignation and reelection of Venizelos, and an ongoing typhoid epidemic in the region "indefinitely postponed" any consideration of landing troops until the typhoid situation cleared at the end of the summer of 1915.[41]

In late September, Venizelos told a British official that Entente interference in the region was not necessary as he wanted any Bulgarian interference in Serbia to remain a limited regional war. He told the official, "Yes, we are a Balkan people, and wish to remain such. So long as the Bulgarian attack does not become a reality, our [the Greek] situation as neutral remains unchanged."[42] The British government officials became frustrated at the changing direction from Venizelos' interest in British support to declarations that the Greek government wished to engage in a regional conflict. These shifting signals made the position of Greece extremely unclear.

On Sept. 24, the Greek government mobilized the Hellenic Army. Constantine's brother, Prince Nicolas, wrote a letter to Queen Alexandra explaining that Constantine had been against Venizelos mobilizing troops and Venizelos had often approached British representatives without consulting the king and falsely claimed to have gained the king's approval to engage Britain

35 Available British archival documents are unclear as to why the United Kingdom chose this course of action. British officials later regretted rejecting this offer, with one politician calling it a "calamitous error" of World War I. "Greece"; George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

36 George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

37 "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra," FO 800/103 (British National Archives, 1915).

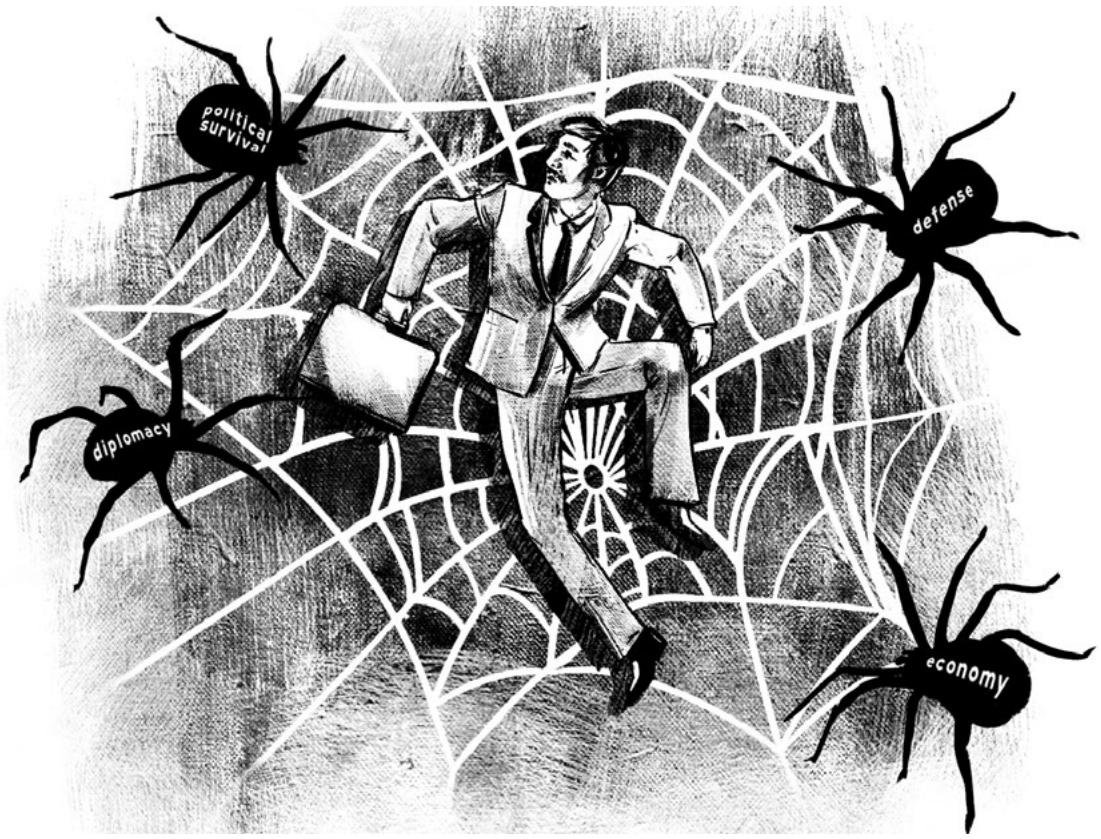
38 "Greece."

39 "Greece."

40 "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

41 "Public Health Weekly Reports for SEPTEMBER 3, 1915," *Public Health Rep (1896)* 30, no. 36 (September 3, 1915); The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State," November 1, 1915, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1915 Supplement, The World War, Document 115.

42 "Foreign Office: Memoranda, etc.," FO 800/95 (British National Archives, 1915).



in dialogue.[43] In another instance, Venizelos offered to cede Greek territory gained during the Balkans War to Bulgaria, including southern parts of Macedonia and western Thrace. Venizelos told the officials that he had permission of Constantine to make these offers. However, the British knew this had not been discussed with the king.[44] Instead, British officials noted that they believed Venizelos had hoped to convince Constantine through a "spontaneous proposition" without giving time for debate.[45] Alexandra believed that Venizelos changed towards the Entente because he believed the Dardanelles were going to be taken and Constantinople would be given to the Entente. And if Greece was an ally, then Greece would receive some of the spoils of the Ottoman Empire.

A British official stated to the Greek cabinet that, should Greece publicly declare neutrality and seek to disarm and impede the Allies upon landing at Salonica, the United Kingdom would consider blockading Greek ports. The reply from the Greek government arrived the following day and stated that "the Cabinet had been unable to come to any decision" and if pressed to make a statement the Greek government would maintain neutrality.[46]

On Sept. 23, Venizelos reportedly told a British official that a British force would be welcome at Salonica, but Constantine would likely oppose the landing. However, another report from the Greek government on the same day stated that Venizelos did not want the troops to go directly to Salonica.The following day, Venizelos resigned from office, reportedly as a result of disagreements with Constantine regarding mobilization. On Sept. 28, Greece once again sent two conflicting telegrams to Britain. The first stated that there was no need for any Entente intervention in the region as Bulgaria had assured Greece that there would not be war and, as a result, British troops were no longer welcome. However, later that same day, another telegram from Greece advised Britain to ignore the previous message and that the Greek offer to accept British troops still stood.[47]

In response, the British decided to send a small

43 The prince added that they could not go to war as "the greatest and ever-existing menace against Greece" was Bulgaria and troops must remain in Greece to defend the country. Underline in original text. "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

44 Another deal that Venizelos suggested was a desire for the Entente to convince Romania to join Greece in fighting Bulgaria. The United Kingdom refused the offer as it seemed unlikely Romania would depart from neutrality. "Greece"; Vincent J. Seligman, *The Victory of Venizelos: A Study of Greek Politics, 1910-1918* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1920).

45 "Greece"; "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

46 "Greece."

47 Keith Robbins, "British Diplomacy and Bulgaria."

vessel to test the Greek position on the access issue. On Sept. 30, a small cruiser landed at Salonica on the quay outside of the port, with 36 British troops under the command of Brig. Gen. Angus Bruce Hamilton. Despite the lack of an official announcement regarding the deployment, the United States was not surprised by the British landing without explicit permission.[48]

On Oct. 1, the day after landing, British officers contacted Greek Gen. Konstantinos Moschopoulos and announced the British intention to land further troops, along with a request for a location to set up a military camp. This correspondence was the first time Moschopoulos had been informed that the Entente were planning to land in Salonica. Moschopoulos "expressed his regret" and told the British military he would have to ask the Greek government in Athens how to proceed. Athens informed Moschopoulos that he should "exercise his own discretion" as to whether or not to grant permission. Instead of picking a location, Moschopoulos allowed the British and later the French forces to choose their own campgrounds. In a display of the disagreement within the Greek government, the Greek government made formal protest regarding the landing. This was on the same day that Venizelos made a speech that Entente troops would not be inhibited by the Greek military.[49]

Over the next week, more British and French troops landed at Salonica, amassing a total of 6,500 troops by Oct. 5. The British military planned that once Salonica was secured "Greece should be called upon to join us (which the King will not do) or to demobilize." However, soon after troops amassed in Salonica, Venizelos announced that it would be the duty of Greece to disarm British and French troops who crossed into Greek territory while retreating from Bulgaria. British officials were concerned by the announcement, believing without evidence that the German government had been behind it.[50] A British representative stated to the Greek cabinet that, should Greece declare a strict neutrality and seek to disarm and impede the Allies, the United Kingdom would be forced to resort to compulsion, which would likely include a barricade of Greek ports. Greece replied that they were unable to come to any decision and no barricade was laid. As a result of these inconsistencies, Greece made no moves to disarm allied troops and the British and French kept Salonica as a base in the ongoing war.

There are many conflicting reports as to the sentiments of Constantine I, with some sources arguing he was firmly supportive of a German victory, because of his previous exposure to German culture, while other reports argue that his wife coerced him into supporting Germany.[51] One British report described Constantine's court as "hotbed of German espionage, intrigue, and secret police, the Queen of Greece being at the head of the organization."[52] However, other contemporary sources indicate that Constantine favored neutrality, making his true position hard to ascertain.[53]

More recent scholars have argued that while Constantine had a true understanding of the strength of the Central Powers' military, he was also aware of the vulnerability of Greece to naval attack and the strength of British naval power, therefore he advocated neutrality as he believed Greece could not survive joining the Central Powers.[54] His political disagreements with Venizelos, which were having a negative effect on his popularity at home, gave another incentive for Constantine to maintain neutrality despite a pro-German attitude.

Comparably, Venizelos' position during this period is equally difficult to ascertain. His opinion on many topics changed without a clear indication as to the impetus for the adjustment, leading to two resignations from his position as prime minister and finally the king's dissolution of the Greek Parliament in December 1915. Throughout negotiations with the United Kingdom, Venizelos made several speeches and maneuvers directly against the statements of other representatives of the Greek government and Constantine, including the mobilization of the Hellenic Army and the message to Britain giving permission to deploy troops at Salonica. By the end of the year, the Entente had landed approximately

48 "The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State."

49 "The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State."

50 "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway."

51 "Greece"; "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra"; N. J. Cassavetes, "The Case of Constantine and the Allies"; M. Tsamados, "Venizelos Vindicated," *Current History (1916-1940)* 16, no. 3 (1922), 392-94; J. Gennadius, "The Truth About Constantine and Venizelos."

52 The level of Queen Sophie's active participation in persuading Constantine I to support Germany varies between reports. Recent analysis argues that many queens in World War I were accused of being agents of their country of origin without justification. The article notes that "Rumours circulated about a secret German U-boat base on Corfu, a radio station in the royal palace in Athens, and an underwater petrol station for submarines at the beach of the Greek capital, which the Prussian-born queen allegedly visited frequently." However, the article also states that "in her correspondence, the Prussian-born Sophie showed a much stronger sense of duty to Germany than the other German-born consorts." "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway"; Moritz A. Sorg, "Of Traitors and Saints: Foreign Consorts between Accusations and Propaganda in the First World War," *The Court Historian* 24, no. 1 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1080/14629712.2019.1579417.

53 "Greece"; "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

54 Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*.

80,000 troops in Greece.[55] As World War I raged on, the national schism between the prime minister and the king grew, stoked by rumors published by the Entente depicting the Greek queen as an agent of Germany who held power over Constantine.[56]

As shown above, Venizelos' changing position, combined with the King's hesitancy to depart from neutrality, created significant internal strife between the two men. This greatly inhibited the country's ability to make a clear decision on access. The internal conflict within Greece would soon lead to the National Schism and the eventual abdication of Constantine I in 1917.

Sweden

Similarly to Greece in World War I, Swedish leadership also struggled with balancing regime survival and relationships with the Allied and Axis Powers in World War II. In August 1939, the Soviet Union and Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which divided Poland between the two powers.[57] The pact unnerved Swedish officials, as they believed that the Soviet Union and Germany were going to divide all of Europe into two spheres of influence.[58] This was further exacerbated when the Soviet Union "invited" Finland to discuss "matters of common interest" in the months leading up to the Winter War.[59] As a result, some Swedish officials believed that being friendly to Germany may lead Germany to protect Sweden against the Soviet Union — this was considered less "irksome" than coming under Soviet influence.[60] In order to prevent internal fracturing during this period, the Swedish government formed a united front, combining into a coalition government made up of members of all political parties except the communist representatives to manage the Swedish neutrality policy.[61] The Swedish king, Gustaf V, also promoted a strong neutral stance both publicly and in telegrams to the United Kingdom.[62] Despite claims of neutrality, several covert offers of support were sent to Finland in the first few months of the Winter War, and it is possible that Sweden was more willing to engage in the Winter War than World War II, although no evidence could be found that the Swedish government made a distinction between the two conflicts.

British experts on Sweden observed that Sweden's official attitude was diplomatically astute and amicable in the first months of the war.[63] Some observers believed that the Swedish declaration of neutrality was made to preserve commercial ties with Britain but not maintained in practice.[64] Despite the United Kingdom's disappointment at Sweden's declarations of neutrality, no hostile discussions resulted from the disagreement.[65]

The British government, however, was focused on securing the Gällivare iron mines in the far north of the country and designed Plan R4 to cut off German access to Swedish iron. The war cabinet noted that "the object of the campaign in Scandinavia and Finland is to render assistance to Finland, while ensuring that the North Swedish ore fields are denied to Germany and the Soviet Union for the longest possible period." It was understood that it may not be possible to defend the territory around the mines for a significant length of time, especially if Germany invaded. Therefore, if they had to retreat, British forces were instructed to immediately sabotage the supply of ore with or without the assistance of Swedish forces while maintaining the supply of Allied ore through Narvik as long as possible. Officers' instructions stated that it was up to their discretion to determine when to withdraw depending on the reaction of the Norwegians and Swedes.[66]

55 "The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State."

56 Additionally, unable to trust the Greeks to continue, "Nevertheless, fearful of a Bulgarian assault on Salonika, and uncertain of neutral Greece, the Allies spent the first half of 1916 constructing a fortified line known as 'The Birdcage' in the hills around the city." Moritz A. Sorg, "Of Traitors and Saints."

57 "German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/event/German-Soviet-Nonaggression-Pact.

58 "Annual Report: Political Survey of Sweden for 1939," FO 188/351 (British National Archives, 1940).

59 Quotes around the term "invited" are from the original text, implying the lack of choice Finland had in accepting the invitation from the eyes of the Swedes. Following the invitation, the Swedish prime minister gave a speech in which he expressed "dismay" at the invasion and "assured the Finnish people of Sweden's sympathy." The prime minister warned that this sympathy would not cause Sweden to enter the war to support Finland. "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

60 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

61 Beyond this, "Swedish internal politics in 1939 were so overshadowed by the international situation that party controversies dwindled into insignificance." "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

62 "Record Type: Conclusion Former Reference: WM (40) 111," CAB 65/7/3 (British National Archives, 1940).

63 Correct but friendly likely implies that the Swedish representatives were warm to the British without it reaching a level of familiarity that would be considered impolite for the setting. "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

64 Peter Hedberg and Lars Karlsson, "Neutral trade in time of war."

65 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

66 "CAB 80. COS Secret Series of Memoranda 271(S)-319(S)," CAB 80/105 (British National Archives, 1940).

The Swedish public was universally sympathetic for Finland.[67] One press article lamented that the invasion of Finland was "cruel." As noted by British analysts, Swedish public opinion was "overwhelmingly favorable to the Allied cause", especially following the Germans' sinking of Swedish merchant vessels in 1939.[68] The Swedish public found the government's response inadequate, but this disapproval did not lead to more significant protests. This is likely due to the unique domestic political situation at the time, in which there was no significant opposition faction. After World War II began, a new coalition government comprising both conservative and liberal representatives and policies was formed. During this time, the Social Democratic prime minister, Per Albin Hasson, prioritized maintaining peace to ensure trade with both belligerents continued.[69] The Swedish king also supported neutrality, fearing involvement on either side of the war.[70] There were also fears among the Swedish public that external powers exerted control over Swedish politicians.

The Swedish public perceived that Germany held significant sway over the Swedish government, due to a lack of transparency in government policies and censorship in the press.[71] The German press alluded to Foreign Affairs Minister Rickard Sandler's failings as a minister and hinted he would soon be deposed. Sandler resigned several weeks later, and the official reason was that there was disagreement between him and other government officials regarding the plan to refortify the Åland islands, which would have provided greater protection of their coastline and granted control over the Gulf of Bothnia. Contemporary British analysts note that this official reason was unlikely to be the full story and the circumstances of Sandler's removal were murky. They said it was most likely that German intelligence discovered Sandler was set to resign and engaged in a public campaign to insinuate that the German government had the power to order Sweden to depose a popular minister.[72]

Sandler's downfall suggested that straying too far outside of the official neutrality position could imperil a leader's position within the government. The Swedish government's desire to maintain friendly relations with Germany appears to stem from a variety of security and economic concerns. They believed that forming a united front on domestic affairs was necessary for the survival of the sitting government. Whether or not concerns that German influence could lead to the deposition of ministers were founded, it affected the Swedish public perception of the Swedish government and their willingness to make decisions either in support of Finland or the United Kingdom. On Feb. 2, 1940, Swedish officials informed the United Kingdom that the Swedish government would not enter political discussions with the United Kingdom due to its neutrality. On two other occasions, a British representative met with Swedish representatives concerning the passage of allied troops and both appeals were rejected.[73]

Both Greece and Sweden struggled with maintaining a balance between competing larger powers by weighing personal and political convictions, mitigating strong public opinion, and avoiding accusations of outside influence.

Comparably, Germany maintained a strong pressure on Swedish politics through this period, pushing for Sweden to maintain its neutrality and continue iron exports.[74] Additionally, Germany was granted

67 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

68 One such attack, on Dec. 3, 1939, occurred when a German U-boat hit the Swedish merchant vessel *Rudolf* and killed nine Swedish sailors. "Rudolf: Swedish Steam merchant," U-Boats.net, 2022, https://uboat.net/allies/merchants/ship/123.html; "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

69 Ester Pollack, "As the Holocaust escalated, the Swedish press fell silent."

70 John Gilmour, "Isolation, 1939–1941," in *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

71 Ester Pollack, "As the Holocaust escalated, the Swedish press fell silent."

72 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

73 Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War.*

74 These pressures were increased as war continued with a memo from the German minister in Stockholm, Prince Viktor zu Wied, which specified that Sweden should restrict its naval activity to territorial waters, maintain communications with Germany, continue iron exports, and maintain neutrality. John Gilmour, "Isolation, 1939–1941."

access through Sweden during the war for troops and economic exports.[75] The Swedish public lamented this transit concession to German forces as a severe violation of Swedish neutrality.[76]

Between the two cases, we can see the prominent role that maintaining position in domestic politics held in the decisions over providing access. In Greece, Constantine worked to balance between royal familial obligations and conflicting internal opinions to prevent Greece from entering the conflict while Venizelos flitted between supporting the Entente and preferring neutrality. In Sweden, the leaders sought to maintain neutrality to avoid choosing an alliance with any specific power in the region, and leaders who went beyond this position lost their role in government. Both Greece and Sweden struggled with maintaining a balance between competing larger powers by weighing personal and political convictions, mitigating strong public opinion, and avoiding accusations of outside influence.

While there was vocal public opinion in both cases, Sweden largely ignored the dissent from the public while Venizelos actively sought to hide decisions, he believed would be unpopular. Additionally, both Sweden and Greece were accused by domestic and international observers of bending to pressure from Germany to make specific political and economic concessions. Therefore, the leadership of a state strongly considers how granting access will affect the survival of the regime and seeks to balance these concerns with their own personal convictions and desire to remain in power.

The Effect of Granting Access on Security

State leaders are sensitive to issues that may affect the protection of national borders from military threats and thus the intentions of neighboring states.[77] States are more likely to join in conflicts when it appears their security will be enhanced by participation. This is possible either when one side of the conflict appears strong enough to repel any retaliatory responses from the opposing side, or when the state's neighbors are likely to join the same side of the war. Immediate benefits or dangers can affect a state's decision, if the possibility for direct benefit or retaliation is present.[78]

However, immediate security issues or benefits are not the only considerations weighed by states, as leaders also balance long-term security interests in access decisions due to longer-term possibilities of retaliation. Defense cooperation agreements, defense guarantees, or even full alliances are possible outcomes of short-term basing and access agreements.[79] These guarantees may alleviate some concerns for potential host nations, but they are not sufficient to overcome all possible dangers of granting access. States must balance the possible detriments and benefits in both short- and long-term security scenarios to ascertain the most beneficial arrangement for their nation while minimizing the potential for retaliation. In this context, benefits refer to any gains made by the host state including favorable economic agreements, territorial gains, and increased influence. Conversely, detriments could include a reduction in existing economic power, weakened political autonomy, or territorial losses. Additionally, the access-granting nation may attempt to gain a positive outcome from the conflict without paying a cost through minimal engagement with the external power. This process, often called free-riding in the international system, attempts to provide a delicate balance for leaders who are unable or unwilling to fully commit to a conflict.[80]

Greece

Greece had many concerns of retaliation during World War I, including a desire to avoid angering Germany and fear of Bulgarian retaliation for its lost territory from the Balkan Wars, including southern parts of Macedonia and western Thrace.[81] The Balkan region had been embroiled in war only a year prior to the start of World War I and tensions between Greece,

75 Exact numbers of troop movements are conflicting but the U.S. archives estimate that Sweden allowed the transit of 250,000 German troops through Swedish territory by August 1943. *Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State,* RG 84 (1936-1952).

76 John Gilmour, "Isolation, 1939–1941."

77 Elizabeth N. Saunders, *Leaders at War* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2011).

78 For example, Bulgaria joined Germany in World War I in exchange for immediate assistance in regaining Bulgarian territory along the Aegean Sea while Spain denied U.S. access during the bombing of Libya in 1986 due to fears of immediate retaliation from Libya. Sean McMeekin, *7/1/1914: Countdown to War* (Arizona: Basic Books, 2013); Judy G. Endicott, *Raid on Libya: Operation El Dorado Canyon, in Short of War: USAF Contingency Operations 1947-1997* (Department of Defense, 1999).

79 Sean D. Murphy, "The Role of Bilateral Defense Agreements in Maintaining the European Security Equilibrium," *Cornell International Law Journal* 24, no. 3 (1991).

80 Christopher J. Fettweis, "Free Riding or Restraint? Examining European Grand Strategy," *Comparative Strategy* 30, no. 4 (2011), 316–32; Brandon J. Kinne and Stephanie N. Kang, "Free Riding, Network Effects, and Burden Sharing in Defense Cooperation Networks," *International Organization* 77, no. 2 (2023), 405–39; John A. C. Conybeare, "The Portfolio Benefits of Free Riding in Military Alliances," *International Studies Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1994), 405-19.

81 This is approximately 25,000 square miles of territory, including the port city of Salonica where the British sought to access the Balkans.

Serbia, and Bulgaria continued to remain high in the region over lost territory. Bulgaria lost territory to Serbia and Greece, and Greek government officials believed that Bulgaria would seek to regain land.[82] This was especially troubling due to the poor state of the Hellenic military following the Balkan Wars. Although the war was won, many soldiers were unable to marry the heroic images and promises of masculinity prior to the war with the reality and brutality of the warfare.[83]

In 1915, the Entente powers sought access to Greece through the port of Salonica to offer aid to Serbia, as British officials believed it was likely that Bulgaria would soon invade Serbia.

This further entrenched animosity toward Bulgaria, especially among the Greek armed forces.

In January 1915, Venizelos secretly met with British representatives, requesting that the meeting remained between the United Kingdom and Greece, without the interference of the other Entente Powers.[84] Venizelos offered to concede the region of Kavalla, in eastern Macedonia, to Bulgaria, which Greece had won from Bulgaria in the Balkan Wars, in exchange for cooperation with the United Kingdom and several territorial concessions within what is present-day Turkey.[85] Venizelos told British representatives that "If we do not participate in the war, Hellenism in Asia Minor would be lost forever."[86] This was likely due to fears of retaliation from Bulgaria for lost territory. However, the rest of the Greek government was extremely unwilling to give up any territory, because there existed a "rooted mistrust and hatred of Bulgaria" in Greece.[87]

In 1915, the Entente powers sought access to Greece through the port of Salonica to offer aid to Serbia, as British officials believed it was likely that Bulgaria would soon invade Serbia. This request for access followed a similar successful maneuver in late 1914 and early 1915 where British and French doctors were dispatched through Salonica to Serbia to aid in a typhoid epidemic.[88] The plan to land troops was reconsidered in September as Bulgarian forces began to mobilize and other fronts of World War I were established in the region.

The United Kingdom wanted to get both Greece and Bulgaria on the side of the Entente during World War I.[89] However, both countries held deep rooted animosity towards each other, partially stemming from a desire to regain lost territory after the recent Balkan Wars. Contemporary British analysts believed that offering the region to Bulgaria would "satisfy their national aspirations, and any further participation in the general war would have no inducement other than that of German pressure."[90] Despite these benefits, British officials held the inaccurate view that the hostility between the two nations was too deeply instilled for Bulgaria and Greece to work together under the Entente as "the Bulgarians and the Greeks are natural enemies."[91] In fact, prior to the Balkan wars, Greece and Bulgaria had historically enjoyed a close relationship due to their cultural and religious ties.[92] The British representatives decided not to propose the offer to Bulgaria as the matter was seen as too "delicate a matter it must be left to the initiative of Greece."[93]

During a separate meeting with the United Kingdom, Venizelos warned that Greece would not fight alongside Bulgaria, stating that he believed Greece would willingly join the Entente if it could be guaranteed

82 "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway."

83 Spyridon Tsoutsoumpis, "Morale, Ideology and the Barbarization of Warfare among Greek Soldiers."

84 "Greece."

85 This includes the western coastline from Cape Phineka to the Gulf of Adramytteion (Edremit), along with a significant inland area spanning approximately 50,000 square miles. George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

86 George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

87 While the reasoning behind both the Entente and Venizelos' proposals for Greece to forfeit territory are not clearly stated, it is likely that the goal was to satisfy Bulgaria and prevent either a Bulgarian invasion or a Bulgaria supported by the Central Powers. "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

88 "The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State."

89 "The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State."

90 "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway."

91 Additionally, Greek officials informed British officials that Germany had promised that the Central Powers' position in the region would be used to "keep the Bulgarians in order." "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway."

92 Nevill Forbes, Arnold Toynbee, David Mitrany, and David George Hogarth, *The Balkans: A History of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915).

93 "Greece."

protection against Bulgaria. However, the United Kingdom did not believe British forces would be sufficient to hold off Bulgaria and refused to make any guarantee regarding Bulgaria.[94] Despite these concerns, the United Kingdom offered Bulgaria to join the Entente on Sept. 14. This offer failed as Bulgaria had signed an alliance with Germany in exchange for territory in Macedonia, Serbia, Romania, and Greece a week earlier on Sept. 6.[95] Greece's overtures of neutrality and belief that the Bulgarians would soundly defeat Greece on the battlefield was heard and supported by the Bulgarian people.[96] This likely affected the Bulgarian decision to sign a treaty with Germany and the Central Powers to regain regional territory.

Despite that many Greek citizens held a favorable view of the United Kingdom, the Entente's overtures to Bulgaria made the Greek public feel that their country was being treated unfairly.[97] This was largely due to the reactions to a speech made in Parliament by the British secretary of state for foreign affairs, Sir Edward Grey, which said "there is traditionally a warm feeling of sympathy for the Bulgarian people."[98] This speech caused "consternation" among the Greek people who began to believe that Constantine I had been tricked, as it appeared to the Greek people that Venizelos did not have the Entente's backing like he "had led the King to believe."[99] As a result, by the time the British troops reached Salonica, the Greeks were "obstructive rather than friendly."[100] The issue regarding possible invasion or cooperation with Bulgaria remained a sticking point with all levels of Greek society throughout the war, with the belief that any overt aid to the Entente would lead to retaliation from Bulgaria and the Central Powers.

Greece was also concerned about Germany's reaction to any moves it made during the crisis due to Constantine's relationship with the kaiser. In late October 1914, the Greek ambassador to Germany, Nikolaos Theotokis, discussed the invasion of Serbia with German representatives. Theotokis stated that Greece maintained a treaty with Serbia and the German representative responded that "today treaties have very little value" as German leadership wished to keep Greece neutral in the war.[101] Some reports argued that Constantine was not influenced by familial ties to the German kaiser. One report stated, "The King said that no family considerations would prevent him from doing his best for his country" and "Greece's refusal was prompted solely for reasons of her own national interests and security."[102] George Kaloudis argued, "King Constantine and his allies, many of whom had been educated and had received their military training in Germany, did not believe that Germany could be defeated."[103]

Comparably, some sources argue Constantine remained neutral due to fears of a German invasion of Greece. One report from a British representative who interviewed the king stated he received the impression that Constantine did not believe the United Kingdom would use force to make Greece fight in World War I, but did believe Germany would be willing to force cooperation.[104] The king admitted to the British representative that his plan was to attack Bulgaria at the end of the war when it was weak, and believed that the United Kingdom would help him. Thus, only after the risk of retaliation had been reduced would Greece offer any kind of material support to the Entente powers.

In February 1915, rumors began appearing that Bulgarian maneuvers were planned, though the British government was unaware of this. Constantine told the kaiser that Greek forces would be mobilized in response to any movement by the Bulgarians, after which the Bulgarian maneuvers were countermanded.[105] To what extant Germany could influence Greek decision-making was unclear, but there were several reports of the public's fear of Germany and the power of German

94 "Foreign Office: memoranda, etc."

95 Keith Robbins, "British Diplomacy and Bulgaria 1914-1915."

96 As noted by a British official, "Even the Bulgarians believed it, and they wished to profit thereby. Therefore they mobilized." "Foreign Office: memoranda, etc."

97 George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

98 Sir Edward Grey, "Allies and Balkan States: Announcement by Sir E. Grey," cc731-2 (British Parliament Archives, 1915).

99 This was exacerbated by the fact that the section of the speech regarding Bulgaria was published 12 hours before the rest of the speech in Greece. When the rest of the speech was published, it only partially calmed the public. "Foreign Office: memoranda, etc."

100 "The incivilities [between Entente and Greek soldiers] reached the point where it became necessary to issue "orders of the day" enjoining their commands to extend the regulation military courtesies to fellow officers and soldiers." "The Consul at Saloniki (Kehl) to the Secretary of State."

101 Stavros Stavridis, "Historical Observations: The Secret Greek Loan with Germany in 1915-16," *The National Herald*, July 27 2022, https://www.thenationalherald.com/historical-observations-the-secret-greek-loan-with-germany-in-1915-16/.

102 "Greece"; "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

103 George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

104 "Greece."

105 The British learned of this incident in August 1915, seven months after it occurred. "Greece."

propaganda over the Greek military and public.[106]

There was a lack of unity within the Greek government over the issue of joining the war. The Greek royals lamented that Venizelos' desire for the Ottoman capitol Constantinople made him forget the threat of Bulgarian aggression. As rumors spread that the Ottoman Empire was unlikely to survive the war, leaders of neighboring states saw rich opportunities for territorial gain.[107] Kaloudis points to Venizelos' interest in the spoils of World War I as something that "blinded Venizelos both to the military dangers of the action he proposed and to the ruinous effects of the Kavalla proposal on national unity."[108] Concerns about possible German retaliation, fears of Bulgarian invasion, and disagreement about the possibility of Ottoman collapse played into the Greek leadership's calculations about entering World War I as well as granting access to British forces.

Constantine and Venizelos' decisions were colored by a perception that the United Kingdom was unlikely to win the overall conflict, which could leave Greece vulnerable to retaliation. Venizelos initially convinced Constantine that the United Kingdom had the upper hand in the Mediterranean due to its naval superiority. However, a series of developments affected this perception including the German army's advance towards Paris, the defeat of Russian forces in the Battle of Tannenberg in Prussia, and the Ottoman Empire's decision to join the war on the side of the Central Powers. This shift in the war led Constantine, and many Greek officials to fear the British army could not defeat the Central Powers in the Baltics.[109]

Sweden

Similarly, the Swedish leadership's position in World War II was greatly affected by fear of an invasion by Germany and Soviet Union despite their public attempts at Scandinavian unity and private desires to aid Finland after the start of the Winter War in 1939.

At the start of World War II, Sandler stated that Sweden intended to remain neutral and must be left out of political alliances in Europe.[110] This was backed up by several Scandinavian declarations of neutrality in August and September of 1939.[111] Furthermore, Swedish officials believed that choosing to align with the Allies would make an invasion more likely, especially as, from the German perspective, a Swedish government aligned with the British would make Germany lose its control of the Baltic.[112] British analysts stated in 1939 that Sweden's geographical position affected its policy towards Germany as the Swedes believed that Germany was in a place to inflict immediate damage and therefore Swedish policy on Germany took priority. While Sweden declined to enter into a non-aggression pact with Germany in May 1939, the Swedish minister of justice announced that he disagreed with the United Kingdom's security guarantee of the Baltic States and Finland.[113] Sweden was keen to discretely send volunteers and material aid to Finland, but was unwilling to provoke German or Soviet hostility as they did not believe the Allies could defend Sweden from retaliation.[114]

Sweden was keen to discretely send volunteers and material aid to Finland, but was unwilling to provoke German or Soviet hostility as they did not believe the Allies could defend Sweden from retaliation.

After the start of the Winter War, the Swedish government made several moves to establish Scandinavian solidarity. The foreign ministers and leaders of the Scandinavian nations several meetings in both 1938 and 1939, which led to declarations of unity and neutrality in the great power conflicts of Eu-

106 The head of this German propaganda was identified as Baron Shenk by the majority of British sources, who cited his deep pockets, charisma, and skill at lying as highly detrimental to Entente sympathies in Greece. "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

107 Leslie Rogne Schumacher, "The Eastern Question as a European Question: Viewing the Ascent of Europe' through the Lens of Ottoman Decline," *Journal of European Studies* 44, no.1 (2014), 64-80.

108 George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

109 George Kaloudis, "Greece and the Road to World War I: To what end?"

110 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

111 On Sept. 18, 1939, Scandinavian prime ministers and foreign ministers met and confirmed their position of "strict neutrality" while maintaining "traditional commerce." "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

112 J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

113 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

114 J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

rope.[115] On Dec. 13, 1939, the new Swedish government announced it would provide "the fullest possible measure of humanitarian and material assistance to Finland."[116] This show of support for Finland, along with the declarations of Scandinavian unity, likely implied to the British government that Sweden was willing to aid Finland and resist the Axis powers.

These British expectations, however, were not often met. By the end of 1939 no further movement was made by Sweden to aid Finland, and after Finland made the plea to the League of Nations for intervention, Sweden voted against a motion to expel the Soviet Union from the organization. Following the lack of success Finland received at the League of Nations, the United Kingdom pledged to help Finland repel the invasion and maintain its independence. The United Kingdom had sought to help the Scandinavian countries in the diplomatic arena by supporting League of Nations efforts. This plan included public support of League proposals for the refortification of the Åland islands, removal of the Soviet Union from the League, and aid to Finland, all of which failed. This led British observers to become concerned that Swedish overtures of Scandinavian unity were outweighed by fear of Soviet and German retaliation. This suspicion was confirmed when Swedish officials told British representatives that the best the way to help Finland would be through moral support.[117]

Such ambivalence toward the Soviet invasion did not extend to Swedish actions in private. Behind closed doors, the Swedish military requested British war materials including aircraft and anti-tank guns to support Finland. The United Kingdom offered supplies and Swedish representatives "were at pains to insist that assistance must not be given in a way that might be interpreted as Allied intervention."[118] Swedish officials noted their appreciation of Britain's assurances that they were taking special measures in handling imports to Finland while also facilitating Swedish imports of non-military goods to replace those which had been supplied to Finland. At the end of 1939, Britain asked Sweden to consider under which circumstances and methods it could assure Sweden if consequences arose from further direct or indirect Swedish assistance to Finland — to which no response was given.[119]

British analysts believed Sweden's physical location placed it in "a trial of strength between two fears."[120] Firstly, Sweden's traditional enemy, the Soviet Union, may seek further expansion, and secondly, there was a possibility that Germany would help the Soviet Union invade in order to give the Soviets a Baltic port and put further pressure on Sweden.

There was a palpable concern in Sweden that Germany not only had the capacity to invade, but Germany was also in a position to sway Swedish domestic politics in Germany's favor. At the end of 1939, the president of the Reichstag, Herman Göring, assured Swedish officials that Germany would not punish Sweden for supporting Finland or the Allied cause by allowing the transit of war materiel. However, Göring told Sweden that Germany "would be compelled to take action if troops were sent to Finland direct — or via Norway and Sweden."[121] Contemporary British analysts assumed that this was due to the fact that Germany would have to commit naval units to Scandinavia that could otherwise be used against Britain, and that Germany likely feared Allied intervention in Finland might be motivated by efforts to secure iron ore to the Gulf of Bothnia or Narvik.

Additionally, on Jan. 17, 1940, Swedish representatives told the United Kingdom that the Swedish government had not received anything from Germany regarding Sweden's policy on the Winter War. The opinion of analysts in the United Kingdom was that this was incorrect, as rumors as far back as Dec. 3, 1939 reported that a German ministerial liaison had met with Swedish government officials. In another instance, Swedish representatives were quoted in the German press saying that they would not submit to threats by the Allies and implied that they were nervous about Allied intentions. This was seen as proof by British observers that the Swedish government was capitulating to German pressures to distance themselves from the Allies, particularly as British observers reported that no such threats had been made.[122]

In January 1940, the United Kingdom examined the possibility of sending volunteers to Finland to aid in the Winter War based on public pressure in Britain to support Finland. The Swedish government found the request embarrassing as they would be put in an awkward position vis-à-vis Germany and the Soviet Union if a large contingent of volunteers crossed

115 This included leaders of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark. Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War*, "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

116 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

117 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

118 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939.".

119 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

120 Bernard Kelly, "Drifting Towards War."

121 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

122 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

Swedish soil, and Swedish officials also believed that a small force would not be considered helpful. Swedish officials indicated that only a few volunteers would be allowed under the following conditions: they traveled in small groups or as individuals, they did not carry arms or wear uniforms, and they were not members of the British armed forces.[123]

While the Swedish government declined to send conventional forces to Finland, it did create a secret volunteer force under the direction of Swedish army officers and non-commissioned officers who temporarily released from army service.[124] Britain also supported and refilled supplies that Sweden had sent to Finland. Sweden "urged that Allied assistance should be unostentatious" to prevent Germany from having to acknowledge it, and that the Allies should use counter-measures to prevent detection.[125] Sweden's position between the Soviet Union's successful invasion of Finland and Norway, which had not aided Finland, was exacerbated after Germany invaded Norway in April 1940, placing Sweden between two hostile powers. In such a position it is not surprising that Sweden's government would be unwilling to declare open allegiance to a power that was on poor terms with its two invaded neighbors and that did not have the capability to protect it against the armies on both borders.

The leaders of both Greece and Sweden had the potential to suffer economic damage from granting wartime access to the United Kingdom, and it played a crucial role in their decision making.

While the United Kingdom believed their forces would be able to hold their positions in Greece in World War I, British government documents from World War II were not as hopeful British forces could hold their position in Sweden. British military papers stated that the United Kingdom would be unlikely to hold the Lulea region on the coast near the Finnish border for long. From correspondence it appears that Sweden agreed with the British view that Germany's success in Poland and France implied that the Wehrmacht would quickly invade and defeat any Allied forces in Sweden. Internally, British analysts wrote that "it appears unlikely that Sweden would willingly depart from neutrality" but pointed out that if Sweden remained neutral, Germany would likely invade eventually, which would lead the United Kingdom to lose further prestige in the war and access to iron.[126] British observers noted "We do not, however, believe that Germany would invade Sweden except as a last resort, particularly as this would present us with an opportunity of securing the ore fields."[127] The Swedish government calculated that the only potential way to forestall a German invasion was to maintain its formal neutrality. Doing otherwise could serve as pretext for triggering a German invasion.

In both historical examples, the Greek and Swedish governments had to weigh the perceived benefits of choosing a side in an ongoing war against the risk of losing power.

The Effect of Granting Access on the Country's Economy

Aside from regime survival, state leaders also care about their countries' economic vitality. Economic power correlates to military power, allowing the growth of a defense-industrial base and contributing to the defense against potential military threats. As a result, leadership survival is very closely tied to the state of the economy across all government types.[128] Additionally, economic growth and development are directly tied in with the perception of success for the nation and are considered independently positive states for a country. Any basing or access decisions that a leader determines are likely to harm the economy of the host nation can be considered as a reduction of the security of the host nation. Therefore, a short-term gain in security against a regional adversary may not provide the long-

123 Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War.*

124 Anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns and aircrafts were dispatched to Finland from Sweden. Britain received urgent requests from Sweden to replace these military materials, partially to help Finland but primarily to replace Sweden's supply that had been sent to Finland. "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

125 "Annual Report: Political survey of Sweden for 1939."

126 "Additional Forces for Operations in Norway."

127 "CAB 80. COS Secret Series of Memoranda 271(S)-319(S)."

128 Paul J. Burke, "Economic growth and political survival," *The BE Journal of Macroeconomics* 12 (2012), https://ideas.repec.org/a/bpj/bejmac/v12y2012i1n5.html.

term economic security the host nation requires to maintain its position. The leaders of both Greece and Sweden had the potential to suffer economic damage from granting wartime access to the United Kingdom, and it played a crucial role in their decision making.

Greece

The United Kingdom made several bids to gain military access to Greece through offering economic incentives. However, the Greek government rejected these offers even though the economy had contracted following the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. Before World War I, income taxes were imposed inconsistently due to a lack of a uniform tax system. During this time the Greek economy experienced significant rises in domestic production and export trade, enabling the Greek government to secure foreign loans to fund the Balkan Wars.[129] However, these loans, combined with the collapse of the gold standard, the drop of the price of government bonds, and the massive influx of refugees at the end of the Balkan Wars ended the period of growth for the Greek economy.[130]

In December 1914, Greece demobilized the Hellenic Navy seemingly due to funding shortages. Some British representatives speculated that Germany had instead influenced the decision. However, the British envoy in Greece believed the reason was truthful and related to the extravagance of the Greek minister of marine and the poor state of the Greek budget.[131]

In August 1915, each member of the Entente sent a top general from each nation to discuss possible plans to attack the Central Powers at the Chantilly Conference in France. According to the Greek royalty, "the meeting led to all three absolutely agreeing that it would expose the Greek army to certain defeat and the request was dropped."[132] During these meetings, the United Kingdom offered funds to Greece several times, as British officials were aware of the poor state of the Greek economy, but these offers were refused.[133] Despite this refusal, Germany had more success in offering Greece a loan several months later. In December, Germany secretly negotiated a loan with Greece, offering 40 million marks without formally requesting any political conditions for the loan, which the Greek leadership accepted.[134] While the loan was not voted on in Parliament, British and French ministers asked about the rumors of a deal, but Greek officials denied it. Germany wanted Greece to remain neutral so the family ties between Constantine and the Kaiser might have made this goal easer to attain.[135]

In September 1915, the issue of funds occurred again following the mobilization of the Greek army. On Sept. 24, Greece mobilized the Hellenic Army despite lacking the budget to support a standing army. Venizelos' second dismissal from the role of prime minister likely resulted from the internal controversy over this poor economic decision. As a result of mobilization, Greece experienced significant detrimental economic effects, with able-bodied men exiting the work force and supplies being requisitioned. The state of Greece's finances did not improve and, in November, British officers observed that if the United Kingdom wished to see Greek soldiers in battle, the Hellenic Army "would have to be largely re-equipped by [the British], and would not be able to take the field for at least several weeks." Adding to these concerns, the Hellenic military was not highly regarded by the British troops, who stated that "difficulties of supply, the lack of training and the varied politics of the Greeks have caused in the Army a distinct tendency towards demoralization." Furthermore, the British troops noted the situation only worsened as the war progressed, with one report lamenting that in Salonica, "Food and accommodation are at famine prices."[136]

Contemporary British military reports indicated a low opinion of Greece's capacity to engage in World War I as a direct result of the poor state of the Greek economy. While the documents reviewed for this article are unclear as to the exact nature of British thinking on the decision to land, it is likely that their unfavorable impression of the Hellenic Army may have made British forces willing to risk landing despite the lack of approval. It is also possible that the poor state of the Greek military and economy affected how willing the United Kingdom was to exert effort in gaining the support of Greece in World War I.

129 Sophia M. Lazaretou, "The drachma, foreign creditors, and the international monetary system: tales of a currency during the 19th and the early 20th centuries," *Explorations in Economic History* 42, no. 2 (2005), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2004.06.002, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0014498304000361.

130 The drachma was the currency of Greece during this time period. Sophia M. Lazaretou, "Monetary System and Macroeconomic Policy in Greece, 1833-2003," *Bank of Greece Economic Bulletin* 22, no. 2 (2004).

131 "Greece."

132 Underline in the original text. "H.M. The King, and Queen Alexandra."

133 "Foreign Office: memoranda, etc."

134 Approximately $300 million today. Harold Marcuse, "Historical Dollar-to-Marks Currency Conversion Page," University of California Santa Barbara, 2018, https://marcuse.faculty.history.ucsb.edu/projects/currency.htm.

135 Stavros Stavridis, "Historical Observations."

136 "Patrol and road reports: Usambara Railway."

Sweden

In order to wage war in World War II, Germany required massive imports of iron. In 1938 alone, the United Kingdom estimated that German imported 22 million tons of iron ore from Sweden.[137] The primary iron field in Sweden was located in Kiruna-Gällivare district, near the Finnish border in the north. When British intelligence analysts determined that stopping the ore at the port of Narvik would not be sufficient, British plans shifted to launching a land operation in the Gällivare region.[138] On Sept. 19, 1939, British officials began looking into the possibility of stopping the supply of iron ore by landing in the Norwegian port of Narvik and moving across Norway into Sweden by land and rail.[139] Near the end of the year, British representatives met with Swedish officials who informed the United Kingdom that while Sweden would not stop supplying ore to Germany, should something hamper them from supplying it "they would do little to assist this delivery, providing that delivery delay could not in any way be attributed to them by Germany."[140] While this was not put into practice, this position would have allowed Sweden to maintain economic ties with Germany by maintaining trade networks and balancing support for British maneuvers.

It is worth studying the reactions that Greece and Sweden had to the United Kingdom in order to evaluate the kinds of reactions that countries hedging between two near-peer adversaries may have.

While Sweden did show support for the United Kingdom, it continued to maintain its economic ties to Germany throughout World War II. In 1939, the Swedish and British governments signed an agreement for Sweden to maintain exports to Germany at or below the level of 1938 exports. However, historical analysis indicates that Swedish exports were above this level throughout the war, at least in the area of iron ball bearings. During World War II, the Swedish government favored Germany in the quantity of exports in iron goods such as ball bearings. At the same time, Sweden gave the United Kingdom discounts and access through the German blockades to ensure the delivery of Swedish ball bearings, machine tools, specialty steel, and other wartime goods.[141] These small economic advantages seem to display an indication for Sweden to provide the United Kingdom with an increased level of support. Sweden sought to balance this support with the reliance that its economy had on German business in iron, steel, and other materials.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Sweden and Germany enjoyed strong economic relations, primarily focused on the trade of raw materials. These relations became strained as Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party took power. Germany had also sunk Swedish merchant ships leading to possible indications of the level of economic damage Germany could inflict on Sweden if it openly sided with the Allies. Despite this, both nations retained a level of trade interdependency, with the primary trade of Swedish iron ore and ball bearings exchanged for German coke and coal.[142] This decision to sink Swedish vessels despite the importance of Swedish iron ore and ball bearings to the German wartime economy likely indicates Germany's confidence in Sweden's continued reliance on German trade. This could have not only damaged Swedish industry and prevented it from trading with Germany but also with the Allies, which may have created an even larger economic problem.[143]

Conclusions: Context, Limitations, and Implications

This study provides a detailed analysis of the access and basing decisions of regional leaders during a large-scale conflict. Considerations of regime survival, economic repercussions, and potential retaliation significantly affect the decision-making process of leadership.

137 Out of that total 9.5 million tons of iron were imported to Germany from countries that ceased exports after the start of the war, leading British scholars to calculate that Germany imported at least 9 million tons of iron ore in 1938 from Sweden. J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

138 J. R. M. Butler, *History of the Second World War.*

139 Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War.*

140 "Operation LUMPS: sabotage of iron ore installations and ports," HS 2/263 (British National Archives, 1938-1940).

141 Eric B. Golson, "Did Swedish ball bearings keep the Second World War going?"

142 Ester Pollack, "As the Holocaust escalated, the Swedish press fell silent."

143 For example, the German U-boat hit Swedish merchant vessel *Rudolf*, which was carrying 2,760 tons of coal. "Rudolf: Swedish Steam merchant."

Throughout 1915, the king and prime minister held different views on Greek neutrality. While Constantine sought to maintain neutrality, Venizelos wanted to side with the likely victor to enhance Greece's status on the world stage. Primary documents from the king and his brother show a clear frustration with Venizelos and his lack of communication. It is likely that this animosity stemmed from Venizelos' independent approach, political position, and unwillingness to compromise, as well as his growing influence in the eyes of the public. The opinions of Constantine and Venizelos varied on broad fears of retaliation and possible economic repercussions, but also played into personal concerns regarding political survival. These conflicting opinions, combined with personal connections through royals and other high-level officers, made the cabinet and military unwilling to take decisions.

Internal strife in Greece between the king and prime minister, as well as a lack of clarity in the signals sent by Greece, led to the British landing without a clear understanding of whether the Entente forces would be welcomed, disarmed, or attacked. Rather than work with the Hellenic Army, the British forces merely sought to maintain friendly relations between Greek and British troops. While no open conflict occurred, by landing without full permission and attempting to gain the favor of Bulgaria, the British forces struggled to maintain friendly relations with Greece throughout World War I.

By contrast, over the course of the Winter War, the Swedish government sought to balance between German, Soviet, and British efforts in the region while remaining out of the conflict. Sweden feared German or Soviet retaliation for assisting Finland or the Allies, and it took many steps to hide any small support that was provided, despite the public push for Scandinavian solidarity. Germany was active in causing Sweden to fear potential retaliation, using political meetings and the media to emphasize German strength and possible coercion. As a result, Sweden remained extremely cautious and continued to deny access, while the United Kingdom became more reckless in its efforts to slow the German war machine.

The British considered other plans throughout the Winter War and following it, including sinking ore ships, sabotaging cranes near ports or at iron mines, and mining the Norwegian channel to prevent ore supplies. None of these were carried out, and by April 29, 1940, German forces occupied Narvik and the rest of Norway soon followed. The United Kingdom saw three reasons for this German move. Firstly, Germany sought to stop the flow of iron to the United Kingdom from Sweden. Secondly, Germany feared Allied movement into Sweden would cut off German ore supplies. Finally, Germany wanted to prevent the Allies from supplying Sweden. As a result, the United Kingdom concluded that further efforts to carry out Plan R4 were untenable.

While the United Kingdom was able to use Salonica as a base in World War I, access was never officially granted, whereas Sweden denied access in World War II. Both potential host nations feared offering official aid due to concerns of retaliation, economic instability, and political upheaval that plague regional powers today just as much as they did a century ago.

The United Kingdom used a variety of tactics to appeal to Greece and Sweden. In the Greek case, the British offered additional territory in the region for Greece to join the war, but they never offered a guarantee against a Bulgarian retaliation. However, in World War II the United Kingdom not only offered diplomatic support of united Scandinavian efforts but also promised Sweden protection from the Soviet Union or Germany. Moreover, there was no indication that the United Kingdom threatened Sweden in order to gain access in World War II. On the other hand, the United Kingdom did threaten to barricade Greek ports after Greece signaled an intent to attempt disarming British forces upon landing on Greek territory. However, the United Kingdom was able to gain *de facto* access through the Greek government's internal division. Comparably, the United Kingdom offered more protection to Sweden but also received a stronger refusal to access from Sweden, leading to an inability for British troops to secure the iron mines.

It is important to acknowledge some limitations. This study's primary sources are all in English. While I draw on secondary literature that relies on Greek and Swedish primary sources, the focus on English-language documents provides a biased and incomplete understanding of events. To deal with this, I am careful to identify the source of many conclusions on Greek and Swedish sentiments as British government official interpretations.[144] While

144 In my analysis of the Greek case, I noted that the reports regarding the king's choices in this period are frequently directly contradictory, thus making a clear analysis of his position difficult to obtain. There were fewer English-language documents from Venizelos regarding his interactions with the king outside of communications with the British Government. However, secondary sources, including those that used Greek primary sources, show Venizelos was also frustrated with Constantine changing his mind and wished for Greece to take a stronger position in the conflict. Further, in the Swedish case, it is worth noting that there is very little information available regarding the actual discussion for Plan R4 access between Swedish and British representatives. One Swedish scholar notes that primary documents showed Swedish officials were confused by the British plan to halt iron ore as they felt the iron ore question had been settled following the negotiations to maintain ore trade at the pre-World War II levels. This "gentlemen's agreement" did not specifically mention iron ore but stated that Sweden would export "indigenous commodities" at pre-war levels, using the numbers from 1938 as the last year of peace. Over the course of the war, this agreement was broken by Sweden. Michael Llewellyn-Smith, *The Making of a Greek Statesman;* M. Gunnar Hagglof, "A Test of Neutrality"; Thomas Munch-Petersen, *The Strategy of Phoney War.*

this limits the analysis, it does provide an important discussion of how the decisions of potential host nations are interpreted by a larger power that are contending with negotiations while at war.

Finally, World War I ended over a century ago and World War II about seven decades ago. Changes in communications, technology, and international dynamics present different considerations to today's leaders. While many economic and political drivers remain similar, there are aspects of the military requirements for basing, such as modern materials and communication technologies, as well as the capacity for economic, military, informational, and cyber retaliation that have changed drastically in the intervening century. Despite these clear differences, understanding historical events can greatly improve contemporary decision-making. As Ernest May and Richard Neustadt famously argued, by reviewing historical cases, policymakers are given powerful analytical tools to examine current issues for similar themes and considerations while understanding the limitations of drawing direct comparisons.[145]

It is worth studying the reactions that Greece and Sweden had to the United Kingdom in order to evaluate the kinds of reactions that countries hedging between two near-peer adversaries may have. For example, policymakers grappling with future contingencies related to basing and access in the Indo-Pacific may be able to use this study to find parallels and highlight differences in how non-aligned states navigate pressures from larger powers. In this region, the decisions of potential host nations to provide or refuse access could significantly affect Washington's ability to guard and advance its interests, especially if the worst happens and a large war breaks out.[146] Through a clearer understanding of historical access decisions, the United States will be able to inform decision-making on how best to approach these third-party nations in potential future conflicts.

Emily Ellinger *is a policy analyst at the RAND Corporation focused on the areas of strategic competition, security cooperation, and alliance formation and politics. She received her M.S. in International Relations from the University of Edinburgh.*

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Image: *Nationaal Archief (CC0 1.0 DEED)*[147]

145 Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York: The Free Press, 1986).

146 Bryan Frederick, Kristen Gunness, Gabrielle Tarini, Andrew Stravers, Michael J. Mazarr, Emily Ellinger, Jonah Blank, Shawn Cochran, Jeffrey W. Hornung, Lyle J. Morris, Jordan Ernstsen, Lydia Grek, Howard Wang, and Lev Navarre Chao, *Improving Conflict-Phase Access: Identifying U.S. Policy Levers* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2023).

147 For the image, see https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Venizelos_reviewing_a_Greek_regiment_before_it_marches_out_of_Salonica_to_meet_t,_Bestanddeelnr_158-2180.jpg. For the license, see https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en.