



# JCC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

# TOPIC:

## HEARST-PULITZER CIRCULATION WAR (1895)

In the gritty, fast-paced world of late 19th-century journalism, nothing loomed larger than the tumultuous rivalry between two towering figures: William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer. As delegates of this Joint Cabinet Crisis, you are about to step into their shoes and the bustling newsrooms of 1896, an era that saw the rise of mass media, sensational yellow journalism, and public engagement with the news. The penny press of the 1830s had democratized news, making it accessible to the ordinary citizen. The advent of linotype in the 1880s mechanized typesetting, revolutionizing print media; transportation networks, like railroads and the telegraph, bolstered newspaper circulation. Amidst the churning currents of industrialization and rising literacy rates, the stage was set for explosive growth of newspapers, and at the center of this maelstrom were Hearst's New York Journal and Pulitzer's New York World.

Pulitzer, an immigrant from Hungary, was already a successful publisher by the time Hearst arrived in New York in 1895. Pulitzer's New York World was renowned for its investigative journalism, later known as muckraking, and focus on human interest stories, speaking to a growing, literate middle class hungry for news and novelty. Then came Hearst, the ambitious son of a U.S. Senator and mining magnate. In 1896, he acquired the New York Journal and boldly went head-to-head with Pulitzer. This personal rivalry ignites a circulation war that poses potential to redefine journalism. In this Joint Crisis Cabinet, the newsrooms of Hearst's New York Journal and Pulitzer's New York World will compete against each other, seeking to garner influence and churn a profit for their respective papers. As the newspapers of Hearst and Pulitzer lock horns, they face not just each other but a rapidly evolving socio-political landscape. They grapple with government corruption, economic depression, labor strikes, social reforms, and a nation's rising imperialistic tendencies. The late 19th century, with the

backdrop of dramatic domestic upheaval and foreign conflict like the Spanish-American War, is your playing field.

As you delve into the riveting world of the Hearst-Pulitzer rivalry, you will not only recreate history but also question and understand the role of media, ethics in journalism, and the complexities of running a newspaper empire. The direction of these newspapers is entirely up to the committees of Hearst and Pulitzer. Delegates, and each newspaper, must make a clear choice between growing objectivity and editorialism in their actions. You will decide how your respective newspaper covers issues pertinent to the future of American domestic and foreign policy and politics. You must weigh the balance of incorporating exaggerated stories, bold headlines and comic strips to outdo one another. Is capturing the readership's imagination and increasing sales worth stoking the fires of sensationalism and fear? This Joint Cabinet Crisis is a journey into the heart of America's media past, providing fascinating insights that deeply resonate with our present. Prepare for an exhilarating ride into the high-stakes world of print media in the late 19th-century, shaping public sentiment and influencing national policy amidst the thrilling rush of deadlines and breaking news!



March 8-10, 2024

72nd Session

[jccbmun72@bmun.org](mailto:jccbmun72@bmun.org)