

American Foreign Policy: Processes and Outcomes

In-Class Activity: Řuritá Království

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You are a member of a foreign policy think tank. The current Director of National Intelligence has come to you for your input of what the administration should do, if anything, to the unfolding events in the small European state of Ruritania.

Background of Ruritania

Ruritania (officially: *Řuritá Království*) is an autocratic kingdom in central Europe surrounded by Germany and the Czech Republic. Its inhabitants are Slavonic-speaking Roman Catholics under an absolute monarchy. King Rudolf II recently died, and his grandson, Rudolf V, is to be crowned in a fortnight.

Geography

Ruritania is a small (62 mi²) land-locked state in central Europe. It is located between southern Germany and western Czech Republic. The land is a combination of high mountains in the west (the Ruritanian Alps) and rolling farmland in the east (the Ruritanian Veldt).

Government and Population

Ruritania is an autocratic kingdom, not a constitutional monarchy; the king rules as he sees fit. The king is advised by a council of ministers that he selects. These ministers do not have to be citizens of Ruritania. In fact, the current Minister of Economics is a Yale-educated Nebraskan. These councilors also perform the tasks of a Committee King when the king is unable to perform his duties as Head of State and Head of Government.

The official capital city, Strešlau, lies on the railway line between Dresden and Prague and has a population of 9,300. The royal capital, Ščwânstein, has a population of 2,800 and does not lie on that rail line. The total population of Ruritania is 14,000, with 90% of the population living in its three cities: Strešlau, Ščwânstein, and Děčín (population of 500).

Economics

The previous king, Rudolf II, was an able administrator and businessman. As such, he was able to lift many of the Ruritanians out of poverty. When he took power in 1944, the GDP per capita was approximately US\$50, with a poverty rate of 95%. Today, it is approximately US\$45,000, with a poverty rate of 60%.

The primary source of revenue for Ruritania is its banking industry—the source of a full 75% of its GDP. The remainder comes from tourism (15%) and agriculture (10%). The primary crops grown are corn (55%), winter wheat (25%), and hazelnuts (15%). Because of the strength of the monarchy, Ruritania is neither a producer nor a transshipping point for drugs.

Ruritania's tourism industry primarily bases itself on winter recreation in the west. Because of favorable visa requirements and low costs for hotels, Ruritania is the destination of choice for vacationers (and skiers) from (in descending order of visitors) the Czech Republic, Turkey,

Germany, Oman, Morocco, United States, and Spain. Hazelnut exports go to the Czech Republic, Germany, and Switzerland, where they are turned into delicious confections. Imports to Ruritania come from Turkey and Oman (petroleum), the Czech Republic and Germany (foodstuffs and manufactured goods).

Ascension talks between Ruritania and the European Union have unfortunately stalled. The two issues are lack of democratic structures and controls on the press. Regardless of not being a member of the EU, or of the associated monetary union, Rudolf II pegged the Ruritanian Koruna to the Euro at 2.00 Kč to €1.00. This offers greater stability for the Koruna in the currency market. Three decades ago, economic reform has allowed the Koruna to be entirely convertible on the world market. It also eliminated the black market in Ruritania.

US-Ruritanian Relations

The United States and Ruritania share full diplomatic recognition. However, the United States does not have an ambassador to Ruritania. Our U.S. interests in Ruritania are handled by the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Victor Ashe. This is not an unusual circumstance, as embassies are quite expensive. Unfortunately, this reduces the amount of information coming out of Ruritania. The Ruritania Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Troy Goodale, is not much help since he can usually be found at the Brickskeller (a bar) on Dupont Circle. As it stands, our information comes from the official newspaper of Ruritania and a group of 15 Ruritanian émigrés, who were exiled to Amsterdam from Ruritania for anti-government activities.

King Rudolf was a strong supporter of the United States during the Cold War. However, with the geographic position of his country in the world (surrounded by Soviet satellite states), he was unable to offer the United States anything other than intermittent moral support. For fear of losing sovereignty, Rudolf kept quiet and followed the lead of the Soviet Union in all but economic matters.

When the Soviet Union fell, Rudolf continued his support of the United States and its efforts to bring peace to the world. As Rudolf often pointed out to various US presidents, Ruritania has never seen one of its sons die in battle. With his declining health and advancing age, Rudolf became much more vocal in his support of the United States, especially with respect to the ongoing Global War on Terrorism.

This relationship seemed so important to the United States that President Bush traveled to Sčwânstein to personally apologize for a public gaff by then-US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, who told an ageless joke during a press interview on the war in Iraq:

Q: Why do Ruritanian dogs have flat faces?

A: From chasing parked cars.

The old king finally died. The circumstances are a bit hazy. Official word from state-run news source, *Řuritě Noviny*, holds that the king died in his sleep. However, our sources tell us that the king's body was found on the floor of the garage with flecks of foam around his mouth. The heir-apparent, Rudolf V, is not releasing the body for examination; he asserts that he does not have to as the old king died naturally in his sleep.

The Current Situation

The above information is publicly known. Vice Admiral John Michael McConnell, Director of National Intelligence, has come to you with the following information, which is not publicly known. Again, your input for what the administration should do (if anything) to the unfolding events in Ruritania is sincerely requested.

1. Our informants tell us that the heir-apparent, Prince Rudolf V, personally poisoned his grandfather (Rudolf II) to ascend the throne. Additionally, the exiles tell us that Rudolf V also poisoned his father (Rudolf III) and all three of his uncles (Rudolf IV, Ludwig XXI, and Václav II).
2. Rudolf V is a vocal critic of his grandfather and of the United States. Rudolf V spent fifteen years in the Soviet Union and studied at the infamous University of Moscow, learning the Soviet style of government. Even with the end of the Cold War, Rudolf V has not quieted his rhetoric against either the United States or the capitalist world.
3. There is intelligence showing that Rudolf V financially supported the following terrorist groups: Hizballah, Greenpeace, the Baader-Meinhof Group, the ETA, the IRA, and the Earth Liberation Front.

We currently have no hard evidence that he has any certain connections with Osama bin Laden or al Qaeda. However, Rudolf V and Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, al Qaeda's official spokesman, were in Prague at the same time in February 2002. Despite this, Rudolf V has spoken out against Islamic fundamentalism in the world. He has also spoken out against Christian fundamentalism.

4. Rudolf has never called for the overthrow of the United States government. He has never suggested that Ruritania enter in a war against the United States. He has publicly, and often, called for the continuation of Ruritania's historic neutrality in wars. He said in a recent interview with Czech newspaper *České Noviny* that he wishes to be able to die knowing that no Ruritanian had to die in a war while he was king.
5. Because of the autocratic government, there are no groups inside Ruritania dedicated to the overthrow of the monarchy. Furthermore, the previous king was well-loved by the people. This obviously does not include the 15 exiles living in Amsterdam.
6. The coronation of Rudolf V will take place in 14 days. The administration has until then to make a final determination of a course of action with Ruritania.