

# VEFAMUN'26

## JOINT CRISIS COMMITTEE

### STUDY GUIDE

THE GREAT WAR FOR THE NORTH SEA THRONE

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# 1. Letter from Secretary-General

Most Special Participants of VefaMUN'26,

As the Secretary-General of VefaMUN'26, I'm absolutely thrilled to welcome you to our 6th edition, happening on March 28-29 right here at Vefa High School.

My journey with this club began on day one of my high school career, and it's been a true passion ever since. I started as an Academy Team Member, climbed to Head of Academy, served as the Deputy Secretary-General, and now stand proudly as Secretary-General. Over these years, I've given my all to this club and this family. We've faced endless obstacles together, and turned "an idea that became reality" from our slogan into our living truth. Every challenge we overcame only made us stronger, more united, and ready to deliver something extraordinary.

Our academy and organisation teams have poured relentless effort into this conference. We tackled every hurdle with grit and designed eight dynamic committees to challenge your minds, spark debates, and create unforgettable memories. From crisis simulations to deep policy dives, each one is crafted for maximum engagement and growth.

But here's the heart of it: none of this shines without you, our incredible participants. Your energy, ideas, and passion are what breathe life into VefaMUN. So come join our family, dive into action, and let's make this edition legendary together.

Best Wishes,

Melis Usanır

Secretary-General of VefaMUN'26

## 2. Letter from Under-Secretary-General

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you to this committee and this year's annual session of VEFAMUN.

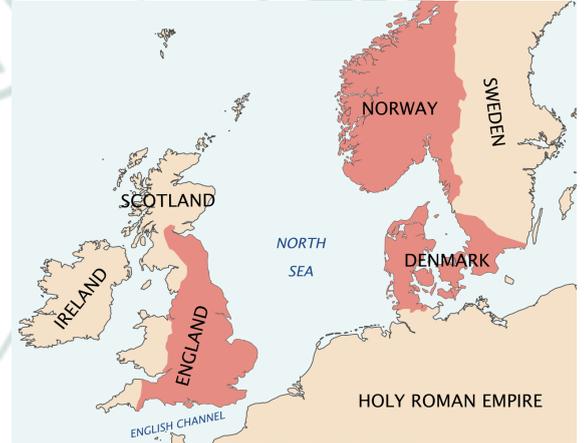
I am more than glad to be the Under Secretary General of the Joint Crisis Cabinet. Since we are in a crisis committee, we will proceed with another procedure instead of the General Assembly procedure. My crisis team and I have been working on this committee to provide you with a wide range of crisis experiences. Whether you have any questions about the guide, the committee, or the procedure, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail.

Your Sincerely,

Kerem Kılıç

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### 3. Introduction to the Committee

The Joint Crisis Committee is a simulation of the historical events, which creates a big part of both Danish and English history. A Joint Crisis Committee refers to a committee where two different cabinets, which consist of important historical figures of the event called Cnut's Invasion of England. Both cabinets will fight with each other throughout the sessions by writing directives. In this committee, you will write directives instead of speaking and debating. If you are a first-timer in crisis, do not worry, in the first session of the conference, the academic team will give you a comprehensive directive workshop. Since you will have the opportunity to change history with your choices, we will not be able to follow the events chronologically. Historically, in the autumn of 1016, the Danish prince Cnut the Great, widely known as Canute, who had been supported by Eirikr Hakonarson and Thorkell the Tall, successfully invaded England. Cnut's father, known as Sweyn Forbeard, had previously conquered and briefly ruled England for less than five weeks.

### 4. Directive Format

The procedures of the crisis committees are much different from those of the General Assembly committees.

Firstly, you are not representing a country, but representing a character from the date that we will simulate. That means you don't have to use "we" language in these kinds of committees. Crises are the events and updates that the crisis team will give you according to your actions throughout the committee. You will receive lots of them since you will take your next movements according to these crises and updates. One of your aims in the committee will be to solve these crises by taking proper action.

You will take these actions by using your personal or the cabinet's power and write directives instead of the resolution papers, like in the GA committees. Directives are the documents you write to take immediate actions and create short-term solutions, which is the difference between directives and resolution papers. Another aspect of directives differing from resolution papers is that you write multiple directives and write them on your papers via handwriting. Now, let's learn what exactly directives are and how to write them.

#### Directive Types

**Personal Directives:** In personal directives, you take actions as yourself by using your own personal powers. Since you will be using your own powers, you should consider what powers your character has. For example, a character who is a commander can take some military actions, etc.

**Joint Directives:** Joint Directives are directives that are written by more than one person. You can separate and write the directive part by part. While writing these directives, you must work together in coordination and reach a middle ground about your ideas.

**Information Directives:** In information directives, you ask for some data that is not written in the study guide. These types of directives should be short and clear. The Crisis Team will tell you the info you need in the next update if what you ask is necessary and clear. An information directive example:

“From: Genoveva de la O  
To: Emiliano Zapata  
JCC  
14.07

I would like to be informed about our troop counts, military bases, and the distribution of soldiers to military bases.”

**Press Releases:** In press releases, you are addressing the people in the country by using the media organs. They are crucial for controlling public opinion, so you should use them wisely. Language skills are crucial in order to write a well-structured and effective press release.

**Top Secret Directives:** In top secret directives, you also take actions by using your powers, but the difference is that the directive will not be known by anyone in your cabinet. These types of directives are mostly used for assassinating someone in your cabinet or even your chair. You have to give these directives secretly to the administrative staff members for them to bring your directives to the crisis team members. Since your chair shouldn't see top secret directives, find a way to give it to the admins. You can give it via hiding it inside your empty water cup, secretly putting it in their pockets, etc.

#### **How to Write a Proper Directive:**

- Always write your character's name and the committee on the directive.
- You need to write the time on top of your directive that you are sending. The crisis team will evaluate your directives according to timestamps.
- It is highly suggested to give enough details in your directives for them to be accepted and evaluated. Your directive must answer the “Five Ws and one H” questions (Who, What, Why, Where, When, and How)
- Your directive's purpose and aim should be clear.

- You should use accurate information. If you cannot find the information you want on the internet, you can send an information directive about it.
- While you are writing your directives, do not forget to stay on topic. Even if you write a perfectly detailed directive, if it's not related to the topic or is unnecessary, the crisis team could reject your directive.
- Your directives should be realistic. Depending on your committee's topic, the realism of your directives can change.
- You should not write your directives like writing a story. Using "If" or "Else" clauses in your directives will improve the quality of your directives.
- You should write your directives in readable handwriting for the crisis team members to give them fair updates.

### **Wrong Written Directive Example:**

"From: Elaine Kamarck  
To: Related Departments

We are establishing a Video Editing Agency (VEA) under the Internet Agency of Mexico as soon as possible. The centre of the Video Editing Agency will be held in Tennessee."

Mistake 1: You cannot write "Related Departments" to the "To:" part. You must specify which department you are writing this directive to.

Mistake 2: There is neither a timestamp nor the name of the cabinet.

Mistake 3: This directive is not detailed enough and does not answer the "Five Ws and One H" questions (Who, What, Why, Where, When, and How).

You can see the detailed version of this directive below.

### **Properly Written Directive Example:**

"From: Genovevo de la O  
To: Emiliano Zapata  
JCC  
16.21

We are establishing a Video Editing Agency (VEA) under the Internet Agency of Mexico as soon as possible. We will pick 100 professional video editors and pay them a monthly 20.000 USD for educating partisans of the Parties who want to learn how to montage a video. If they do not accept the offer, we will increase the offer to 35.000 USD, if they do not accept it again, those who reject our offer will not work with us. The education will be given Saturdays and Sundays every week. We will rent 5 schools and use 20 classes in each school. We will pay monthly 10.000 usd for each class we rent. If they do not accept our offer, we will offer 15.000 us for each class. If they do not accept our offer, we will not work with those schools. In every class, there will be 1 professional video editor and 6 partisans of the democratic

party who want to learn how to montage a video. The education will be free for partisans of the democratic party. All of the costs will be paid by the democratic party. The education will be produced until partisans of the democratic party learn how to montage a video.

5 high schools, which we will rent if we can agree with the schools:

1. Staten Island Technical High School
2. Bronx High School of Science
3. Townsend Harris High School
4. Stuyvesant High School
5. High School of American Studies at Lehman College

We will try to rent another Mexican school if we cannot agree on the 5 schools written above.”

## 5. Key Figures

**Edmund Ironsate:** Also known as Edmund II, he was the Son of Aethelred the Second and the King of the English from April 23 to 30 November 1016. His reign was spent fighting with Danish invaders under Cnut, especially at the Battle of Penselwood, Sherston, and Brentford, all of which were Saxon victories. By the time he faced Cnut at the Battle of Assandun, he was backed by the “whole English nation,” but Eadric Streona, the Ealdorman of Mercia, fled, causing a decisive English defeat.

**Aethelred the Second:** Having been haunted by Viking attacks from the start of his reign till the end, Aethelred sought out ways to free England from the Danish invasion all his life, including giving them tribute to leave England. In 1002, Æthelred ordered the St Brice’s Day massacre of Danes, which is seen by historians as a sign of his increasing paranoia. As Cnut’s victories and power in England grew, Edmund and Aethelred tried to unite against him, but suspicion between father and son hampered them, as did Eadric's treachery and Æthelred's poor health.

**Cnut the Great:** He was elected as the King of England by the Danelaw. Though the English nobility had different ideas. They fought against his rule, and the Former King Aethelred was even able to drive him off during the first half of 1014. After many battles, in 1016, Cnut was finally able to secure the throne after the deaths of both Aethelred and his son Edmund. Knut went on to be a strong and effective ruler of a North Sea empire comprising Denmark, Norway, and England, for which he was afforded the epithet, The Great.

**Sweyn Forkbeard:** He was King of Denmark from 986, King of England for five weeks from December 1013, and King of Norway from 999/1000, all until he died in 1014. He was the father of King Cnut the Great. It’s recorded that he was involved in raids against England during 1002–1005, 1006–1007, and 1009–1012. Some historians say Swein’s invasion was partly motivated by the St Brice’s Day Massacre in November 1002, while others defend that it was simply the prospect of revenue.

## 6. Historical Background

### 6.1. The Anglo-Saxon Kingdom Before the Invasion

At 410 AD, the weakened Roman Empire and its military withdrew from the island, leaving the Britons vulnerable to the attacks of the Picts and Germanic invaders. The Pitts were a local group of people who lived on the North of the island, where Roman rule was never established. The Germanic tribes mostly consisted of the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. Usually referred to as just Anglo-Saxons.

Even as numerous British warlords tried to fight against these attacks and reestablish order through the island, they failed to stand as one against their opponents, which led them to bitter defeats in the latter half of the 5th century AD, a ruler referred to as Vortigern came up with a temporary solution to pay one group of raiders to drive off the others, thus pitting their enemies against each other. Vortigern met with two Anglo-Saxon chieftains, the brothers Hengist and Horsa, and offered them land to settle if they managed to drive off the Pitts. The Anglo-Saxons followed up with their promise and drove off the Pitts; in return, they were granted land where today's Kent is in Southeastern England.

At one point, the Anglo-Saxons turned against the Britons and waged war against them for many years. Many battles ended with Anglo-Saxon victories, as other Anglo-Saxon tribes had joined forces to not only raid the land but to claim it. Roughly around the year 500, Anglo-Saxon expansion halted when a leader named Ambrosius Aurelianus, leading the Britons, met with the Anglo-Saxons at the Battle of Badon, which was a massive Briton victory. After the battle, it is said that a period of peace followed through the first half of the 6th century, though Anglo-Saxons still retained control of the Southeast of the island.

As the power the Anglo-Saxons held grew, more and more Christian Britons tried to convert them to Christianity. The majority of the Anglo-Saxon tribes believed in their own local version of Germanic Paganism. These attempts at conversion were unsuccessful until, at 597 AD, the missionaries of the Pope arrived at the kingdom of Kent and convinced King Aethelbert to accept Christianity. This began the Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons; all Anglo-Saxon kings had converted to Christianity by 687.

Anglo-Saxons didn't stand as one against their enemies all the time. As their powers grew and their borders met, they fought against one another to be the one dominant kingdom on the island. By the start of the 7th century, there were seven Anglo-Saxons in Great Britain. This period in history is called "The Heptarchy," meaning seven kingdoms. Though historians often disagree with this term because the number of kingdoms, the relevance of these kingdoms, and their power changed through the century, it is still an important part of English culture today. Battles for power and dominance continued until 793 AD. The Viking Invasion came and changed the Island's politics forever.

## 6.2. The Rise of Viking Raids and Danish Influence

At 793 AD June 8th, Vikings attacked an island called Lindesfarne located in the North of Northumbria. Lindesfarn was home to a prestigious and wealthy monastery. It was relatively unprotected due to being isolated from the rest of society to encourage a monastic lifestyle. While this was not the first Viking raid seen or documented in England, it is usually treated as the start of the Viking Age because of how dramatic and shocking it was for the local people.

Vikings were not a single united force. Many of them didn't regard themselves as a single people, but acted as different tribes from today's Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The Vikings that troubled England were mostly from Denmark, and thus they are usually called the Danes. The Danes did not come to England with the intention of conquering or settling. In most cases, they raided villages for what riches they could find and then returned home. After the initial raids ended, a generation of relative peace followed. That would later change.

In AD 835, Danes returned to raid the Saxons regularly. As time passed, the threat they posed became much more severe. Danes could only be swayed by paying them off. In 850, the Vikings wintered in England for the first time. In 851, the Vikings sacked both London and Canterbury, but were later defeated in battle. In 865, the largest single force of Vikings that had ever been seen in England landed on the coasts of East Anglia. This force is remembered as the Great Heathen Army. The army was a coalition of different Viking groups. They now aimed to conquer the land and become its rulers.

After the Great Heathen Army directed its forces north, it established the Viking kingdom of York. At 871, the Vikings were reinforced by what is called the Great Summer Army. As the Viking conquest progressed, in 878, there was finally only one kingdom that didn't fall to their attacks: the Kingdom of Wessex.

Wessex and Danish forces met at the Battle of Edington, which was an important victory for the Anglo-Saxons.

## 6.3. Escalation of Conflict and the St. Brice's Day Massacre (1002)

Relations between the Anglo-Saxon and the Danish people had become increasingly tense. The Viking raids, combined with Danegeld, created fear among the English people and the royal court. The settled Danish people who had been living for years in the land were now not recognised as foreigners. They were deemed as potential collaborators with enemy forces. In time, King Æthelred the Second made a decision. On St. Brice's Day, he ordered his army to kill the Danish people who live under his kingdom. The king believed that it was a coordinated act directed by the royal authority, and the Danish people posed a serious threat that could assist future invasions. Instead of restoring security, the massacre escalated the conflict. As you may predict, this significant action angered Scandinavian rulers, especially

Sweyn Forkbeard of Denmark. According to the rumours, his sister was also on the list of the victims who had been killed on St. Brice's Day. After this event, Danish attacks became more organised and destructive, and raids evolved into big military campaigns. The objective at first was to eliminate the Danish threat, but it instead strengthened it. It directly contributed to large-scale invasions.

#### 6.4. Collapse of English Resistance (1013)

England lost his ability to resist Danish attacks almost completely collapsed. After years of continuous raid and the repeated payment of Danegeld, the kingdom. After this weakening many regional leaders no longer believed that the king was capable of defending them. When Sweyn Forkbeard of Denmark invaded in 1013, the resistance was even poorly coordinated. Several regions and cities chose to submit to Sweyn rather than face destruction. Even London was left isolated without wider support. As Danish forces advanced, noble defections increased, further undermining any unified defence. Because of the overwhelm and the pressure, the king fled to Normandy, abandoning the kingdom. With no king to lead the situation, Sweyn was accepted as the ruler by much of England.

#### 6.5. Death of Sweyn and Power Vacuum (1014)

At the beginning of 1014, Sweyn suddenly died. His death created a deliberate power vacuum and brought uncertainty to the rule. Sweyn had been accepted as the king largely because of his success in the military. To sum up, his death led to the collapse of his authority. His son Cnut attempted to claim the throne, but he lacked support in the English nobility. Nobles saw this moment as an opportunity to restore the royal line, so they invited Aethelred the Second to return from Normandy on the condition that he promise to rule more correctly than in the past. His return temporarily restored the rule, but still unstable. The trust again was fragile, and the Danish forces again were actively remaining. This power vacuum allowed both sides to reorganize and to renew their tactics.

#### 6.6. Cnut's Invasion (1015)

Unlike the earlier raids in 1015, Cnut of Denmark launched a new invasion which was far more organised. The aim of this invasion was the permanent conquest. After political instability, Cnut assembled a large Scandinavian force which consists of the North Sea world. He first landed at Sandwich on the coast, then started to secure local support with a combination of



military pressure and negotiation. The response from England was not a unified defence. The king's authority was still unstable. Several regional leaders chose to submit to Cnut rather than resist. This pattern of submission allowed Cnut to move fast through southern and western regions. While Aethelred attempted to reorganise the army, his son Edmund Ironsate often acted without royal coordination. Meanwhile, powerful nobles shifted their royalty repeatedly.

Cnut advanced into Wessex and Mercia. During the invasion, he devastated regions that resisted and rewarded regions that cooperated. By the end of the year, the conflict evolved into a civil war. England was divided between the supporters of the Anglo-Saxons and the allies of Cnut and himself.

### 6.7. Death of Æthelred and Dual Kingship

In April, King Aethelred the Second died in London. His death did not bring peace; instead, it deepened the crisis. Immediately after the death, the people in London and several nobles proclaimed Edmund Ironsate as the new king. Edmund was known for his military success in resisting the Danish forces. However, Ironsate's rule was not universally accepted. Also, many people supported Cnut outside of London. To sum up, England entered a period of dual kingship. Ironsate ruled south and west, while Cnut ruled north and east. This division led to continued warfare throughout 1016.

### 6.8. The Treaty and Division of England

After the defeat of the English forces at the Battle of Assandun in October, both kings understood that continuing the war would be costly. However, England was not yet fully pacified. Ironsate still had support in the west while Cnut held the military advantage. The treaty, concluded later in 1016, divided England along practical and political lines. Cnut received control of Northumbria, East Anglia, and much of Mercia, regions where Danish influence and support were already strong. These areas provided access to wealth, manpower, and coastal routes essential for maintaining his North Sea Empire. Edmund Ironsate retained Wessex, the historic heartland of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy. Although this represented a reduced realm, it preserved Edmund's royal authority and allowed him to rule a unified and loyal population. This settlement temporarily ended open warfare. For both kingdoms, it was a strategic pause, especially for Edmund Ironsate, as it was an opportunity to survive in his own land.

### 6.9. Death of Edmund Ironsate and Cnut's Sole Rule

The political settlement reached temporarily stabilized, but it did not end the struggle for the throne. In November 1016, after the division, Ironsate died suddenly. Ironsate's death immediately triggered the succession clause of the treaty. Directly, Cnut inherited the entire kingdom of England and was recognised as the sole king. Without any further military

conflict, Cnut gained full control of England. For the Anglo-Saxon elites, it was a moment of loss but also a pragmatic acceptance. The resistance was no longer realistic, and many nobles chose cooperation over rebellion. Cnut reinforced this transition by retaining much of the existing administrative system and respecting English laws. Cnut's sole rule marked a shift from invasion to consolidation. By combining Danish military power with Anglo-Saxon governance, he stabilized the kingdom and integrated England into a wider North Sea empire that included Denmark and later Norway.

## 7. Major Battles

### 7.1. Battle of Penselwood

This battle was fought sometime between mid-May and midsummer. The English army routed Cnut's army near the village of Penselwood. The battle is omitted in Scandinavian sources.

### 7.2. Battle of Sherston

The battle was fought in the city of Sherston in England for about two days in 1016. The sides were the forces of King Edmund and the Danish king. The West Saxons fighting for Edmund were victorious against the Danish and their allies. As rumours said, the West Saxons formed into an infantry phalanx and advanced towards Cnut's army. Furthermore, the West Saxon militia, whose name is John Rattelbone was injured in the battle; however, he continued to fight, holding in his innards using a nearby piece of stone.

### 7.3. Siege of London

Cnut returned southward, and the Danish army evidently divided, some dealing with Edmund, who had broken out of London before Cnut's encirclement of the city was complete, and had gone to gather an army in Wessex, the traditional heartland of the English monarchy. Part of the Danish



army besieged London, constructing dikes on the northern and southern flanks and a channel dug across the banks of the Thames to the south of the city, enabling their longships to cut off communications upriver.

#### 7.4. Battle of Brentford

The sides of the battle were the same as the other,s while this battle was located as a part of a campaign by Cnut to conquer England in Brentford. The battle resulted in the victory of the Anglo-Saxons. Cnut the Great attacked with an army which consists of barely ten thousand infantrymen. Not having heavy casualties, however, the Anglo-Saxons won with fewer casualties.

#### 7.5. Battle of Otford

Fought near the village of Otford in Kent, the Battle of Otford witnessed the Scandinavians being routed and chased by the Anglo-Saxon army into the Isle of Sheppey. Chronically the battle was when Eadric switched his allegiance back to the English.

#### 7.6. Battle of Assandun

Fought in October 1016 The Battle of Assandun was the decisive confrontation of Cnut's Invasion of England and marked the effective end of organized Anglo-Saxon resistance. It took place at Assandun, which is a strategically pivotal place that connects eastern England to the political heart of the country. Before this battle, England had already been weakened by prolonged warfare, internal divisions among the nobility, and repeated betrayals. English forces were limited and unstable to be unified; however, the battle itself was hard fought and initially balanced. Eadric Streona, who was one of the most powerful English nobles, brought a turning point to the battle. The withdrawal of his forces led to the collapse of the English battle line. So with this betrayal, he transformed a contested engagement into a decisive Danish victory. Militarily, it destroyed Ironsate's capacity to continue the war. Furthermore, this event forced negotiations between the two kings and led directly to the Treaty of 1016. This treaty was about dividing England between them.

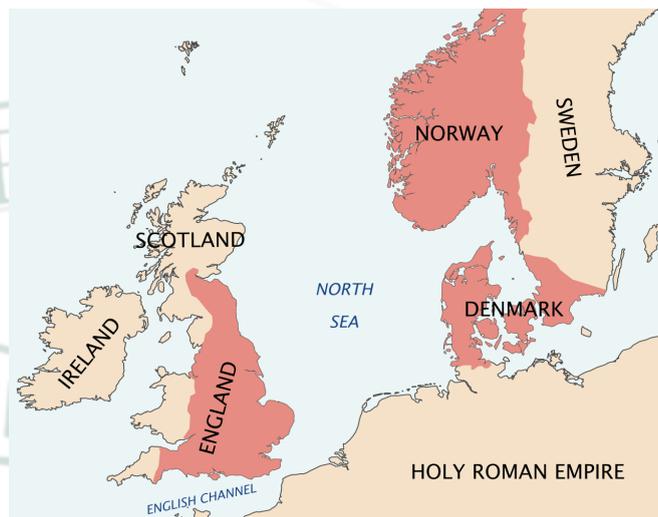
### 8. Aftermath of the Battle of Assandun

Following his defeat, Edmund was forced to sign a treaty with Cnut. By this treaty, all of England except Wessex would be controlled by Cnut, and when one of the kings should die, the other would take all of England, that king's son being the heir to the throne. After Edmund's death on 30 November, Cnut became the king of all of England. On 18 October 1032, a church at Assandun was consecrated to commemorate the battle and those who had died during it. The Treaty of 1016 divided England along the River Thames. Edmund Ironsate retained control of Wessex, while Cnut assumed authority over Mercia and Northumbria. The agreement included a mutual succession clause, ensuring that the survivor would inherit the entire kingdom. Although the treaty temporarily stabilized the political situation, it clearly reflected Cnut's superior military and political position.

## 9. Political Situation of Scandinavia

At the beginning of the 11th century, Scandinavia was undergoing a profound political transformation. The region was shifting from organized Viking chiefdoms into more centralized monarchies. Authority remained highly personal, basically dependent on military success and the loyalty of regional elites. As a result, kingship in Scandinavia was inherently unstable, and foreign conquest often functioned as a tool for domestic legitimacy.

Among the kingdoms, Denmark was the most politically consolidated and oriented power. Under Sweyn Forkbeard, Denmark pursued an aggressive expansionist policy focused on the North Sea world. Forkbeard combined traditional Viking raiding practices with more organized military campaigns. However, Forkbeard's sudden death in 1014 revealed the fragile foundations of Danish imperial authority. Successions were not firmly institutionalized, and elite support had to be actively maintained.



In contrast to Denmark, Norway remained politically fragmented. Royal authority competed with powerful regional jarls who exercised near-independent control over their territories. Geography reinforced this decentralization; mountains and fjords made unified governance difficult and fostered local autonomy.

Norwegian rulers lacked the administrative structure and naval coordination. However, Norway held immense strategic value. Control of Norwegian ports meant influence over North Atlantic trade routes and access to additional manpower.

For Cnut, Norway represented both an opportunity and a threat. If controlled, it would complete his dominance of the North Sea. If left independent, it could become a base for rivals or anti-Danish coalitions. This strategic calculation would later shape Cnut's post-English consolidation, culminating in his conquest of Norway in 1028.

Sweden occupied a different geopolitical sphere. Rather than focusing on the North Sea, Swedish expansion and trade were oriented eastward along the Baltic and into the river systems of Eastern Europe. Swedish elites were deeply involved in trade networks reaching Kyivan Rus' and Byzantium. Because of this orientation, Sweden played a limited direct role in the Anglo-Danish conflict. However, Sweden's indirect importance should not be underestimated. Baltic trade wealth contributed to the broader Scandinavian war economy, and shifting alliances could still influence regional balance.

Christianization was also reshaping Scandinavian politics. Conversion to Christianity strengthened royal authority by aligning kings with continental European models of sacred monarchy. Sweyn and Cnut both used Christianity diplomatically. This religious dimension added another layer of political strategy. By ruling England as a Christian king rather than a pagan conqueror, Cnut could secure both Anglo-Saxon acceptance and ecclesiastical support.

## 10. Current Situation of the States

### 10.1. Kingdom of England

After Sven's death at the start of 1014, the English nobles took advantage of the situation to invite Aethelred back to the Kingdom to fight against Cnut's forces. In return, they promised to give Aethelred the throne of England back. After becoming king again, Aethelred started to punish and assassinate subjects who sided against him. This caused the distrust Edmund held for his father.

Despite outnumbering their enemies, the military capabilities of the Anglo-Saxons were limited due to their inability to work together as a united force. Most military forces consisted of militias liable for protecting their local shires called Fyrd. The soldiers forming these militias were able-bodied men drafted into obligatory military service.

We do know that the king had an 'elite' corps of ðegns or thegns, who made up the king's personal 'Hearth Troop' or hirð. These troops had no other purpose in life other than to enforce the will of their lord. They had to become 'professional' warriors, not because they were a trained elite, but because their position depended on it. Because the Hearth Troop couldn't be everywhere at once, the protection of small settlements often fell to the Fyrd forces.

England's main objective was to defend itself from a Viking invasion and protect its territorial integrity, as well as to finally be free from the economic strain all the Viking raids had put on the nation since the 8th century. During this period, they were in a purely defensive position and never had the chance to attack the Vikings' Scandinavian lands.

The local nobles wanted an English king in charge, as opposed to Sven's heir, Cnut. Aethelred and Edmund wanted the same thing: to win the throne of England and rule over the kingdom. This was another reason for their inability to trust each other. Historically, the war ended in English defeat.

### 10.2. Kingdom of Denmark

The Danes were led by Sven's son, Cnut. Their main objective was to invade and colonize England and claim the land as their own. Cnut's main objective was to eliminate major

opposing English forces –such as Edmund- and take the throne to assume power all over the island.

Despite being outnumbered by their enemies, the Vikings were formidable enemies with their exceptional hand-to-hand combat skills, efficient warships, intimidating war tactics, and fearlessness. Because the English forces lacked military sea assets, no seafaring battles were fought during this period. The Vikings used their ships to land their forces on the island's shores.

Viking tactics were unconventional by wider European standards at the time, and this element of "otherness" brought with it a tactical advantage. They also attacked holy sites far more regularly than Frankish and other Christian armies did, and they never arranged battle times. Deceit, stealth, and ruthlessness were not seen as cowardly. They were also willing to make tactical retreats when necessary. During raids, the Vikings targeted religious sites because of their vulnerability, often killing or taking the clergy at these sites' prisoners, to then be either ransomed or taken as slaves. The taking over of towns was sometimes accompanied by wholesale destruction and slaughter to create a terrified population, which was more likely to provide the Vikings with hostages and loot.

## **11. Summarized Timeline of the Events**

**Late 1013:** English resistance against the Viking forces collapses, and Sven becomes the King of England.

**Early 1014:** Sven dies after sitting on England's throne for only a month, leaving his son Cnut to rule England; English nobles seek Aethelred back to England to drive off the Vikings.

**February 1014:** Aethelred drives Cnut back to Scandinavia and sits on England's throne once more.

**Mid to Late 1014:** In response to Aethelred's unfair rule, many military forces start to act without his coordination –usually led by his son, Edmund- This causes insecurity in the kingdom.

**Early 1015:** Cnut returns from Scandinavia to launch an attack on English forces.

**Mid to Late 1015:** The distrust between Aethelred and Edmund hinders any effort on a union against Cnut's invasion and greatly limits their military victories.

**23 April 1016:** Aethelred dies at the age of 48 from natural causes.

**25-26 June 1016:** Battle of Sherston happens, resulting in a major Saxon victory.

**16 October 1016:** Edmund is defeated by Danish forces at the Battle of Assadun, which marks the success of Cnut's forces. The Treaty of 1016 was signed afterwards.

**30 November 1016:** Edmund plans to take over England but is killed by Earl Godwin before he can raise a rebellion.

**25 December 1016:** Cnut is crowned as the King of England.

## 12. Bibliography

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