**Position:** Chair, Council of Economic Advisors

**Institution**: Council of Economic Advisors

**Faction:** Domestic Economics

**Historical Reference:** Christina Romer

**Biography:**

As the first female Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, you work in collaboration with the National Economic Council and the Economic Recovery Advisory Board to advise both President Obama and Timothy Geithner, the Treasury Secretary. While you are responsible for providing Congress with economic advising reports, you must coordinate with other branches shaping economic policy. The primary focus of your agency is to provide scientific, evidence-based policy analysis and recommendations. This role suits you well, as you are smart and believe that excellent policies should be based on evidence and data. Your role is critical as the US attempts to dig its way out of the great recession of 2008.

You have little formal background in the technical aspects of cybersecurity, and you tend to view the issue through an economic lens. First, you see the primary threat in cybersecurity to be posed by foreign actors (governments and non-state actors) who would seek to damage underlying US economic interests. This includes the theft of intellectual property and commercial espionage. Second, you what to guarantee that any policies that the NSC adopts do not harm the economy by stifling economic innovation in a manner that would halt the fledgling recovery.

**Faction Advisory**

You are one of several NSC members to advocate for the domestic economic interests of the United States. Overall, your faction is focused on economic growth and stability. In the NSC, you strongly oppose any policies that negatively affect economic growth and stability. This includes using economic sanctions as a first response to cyber-attacks. You are very concerned that trade sanctions will be used too frequently because they are politically popular. You can argue against burdensome cyber regulation because of the current economic crisis. However, you also oppose direct military action unless it is absolutely necessary to protect the economy and the American way of life. You are generally supportive of attempts to craft new global agreements on cybersecurity and may support factions focused on diplomatic efforts. The health of the American economy is as important as national security. Indeed, you believe it to be the most critical issue in the cyber domain.

**Assignment**

At an upcoming meeting, the President (instructor) will convene the National Security Council (NSC) and ask it to develop a National Security Strategy for Cyber Security. You need to ensure that the final document the NSC produces reflects your institution’s priorities (see objectives). Because the NSC contains representatives from institutions (or agencies) with vastly different perspectives, this will be no easy task. Government agencies fight hard for influence and resources (e.g., a budget). Not everyone can get what they want. Thus, your colleagues need to hear your ideas, but you also need to convince them that your priorities belong in a document that will not—indeed, *can not*—contain everything. Evidence-based arguments will serve you best here, and you can prepare in the following ways:

* Research your *institution*. What does your institution generally do day-to-day? What are its general interests? This puts you in the mindset of the institution.
* Research the current state of cyberspace (as of January 21, 2009; no later). What are its characteristics? What are its main opportunities and challenges? The instructor will provide you with access to a database of resources to get you started, but you should not confine yourself only to those resources. You may use any time appropriate research.
* Research your policy toward cyberspace. Given (i) and (ii) above, what do you think a national cyber policy needs to contain? What do you think it should avoid? What language should it use?

As the game unfolds, the instructor will distribute additional assignments. You will need to complete those assignments as they arise.

**Objectives**

Your mandate is broad, and there are many different ways that you can ensure that your goals are met. You will need to be both creative and direct in pursuing your agenda. At a minimum, you should seek to:

* Strengthen public-private partnerships to ensure a robust cyber defense.
* Include what an ‘act of war’ against the American economy looks like and define a response that would deter bad actors.

You strongly oppose:

* The ‘first use’ of cyber. It establishes an unwanted norm.
* Trade sanctions.
* Regulation of the US “Tech Industry”

**Strategy Advice**

Perhaps ironically, you may have some common ground with the Department of defense, because it also believes that the US economy must be protected. However, you will need to convince them that military threats are appropriate only when the US confronts the risk is catastrophic economic damage - i.e., broad-scale attacks against US commercial interests and financial institutions. You may also find common ground on specific issues with many other factions. While no faction’s interests will entirely overlap with your own, you should seek allies whenever possible. For example, the diplomatic corps would strongly oppose the threat of unliteral military action, and trade representatives would oppose the use of sanctions as a primary policy tool. The Department heads responsible for the other components of the domestic economy, and representatives from trade delegations, are primarily aligned with your view. You may also find that some factions approach the issue differently. For example, military and intelligence factions may desire more oversight of the tech industry and may be more supportive of a tit-for-tat policy of cyber relations. The political faction may actively support trade sanctions because they are politically expedient.

Finally, you note that the Bush Administration’s cybersecurity plan emphasized domestic security over a global approach. But the world has changed, while many are now convinced all that cybersecurity is no longer a national-level issue, you must keep the NSC focused on the threats to economic interests posed by cybersecurity. For example, American tech companies are the most dynamic in the world. Over-regulation would stifle their creativity and damage the US economy.

**A Cautionary Note**

The game begins on January 21, 2009. Many subsequent administrations, including the current one, likely have a cyberspace policy. Your institution may even currently have cyber-related policies. These, however, will not necessarily be the administration’s or institution’s *historical*