

A. International Interests

1. Isolation in the 20's

a) Initiatives to secure international peace

- (i) To pacify American opponents, Wilson persuaded the Great Powers to exclude "domestic questions," such as tariff and immigration policies and the Monroe Doctrine from the purview of the League; but this did not ensure its acceptance with Americans
- (ii) Senate Republicans split into three anti-League camps
- (iii) The "irreconcilables" rejected League membership on any terms
- (iv) "Mild reservationists: backed membership, subject to minor revisions of League's charter
- (v) The majority Republican opposition, the "strong reservationists: led by Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, would accept the League only if American sovereignty were fully protected
- (vi) Wilson refused to yield any ground and undertook a nationwide speaking tour to rally support for the treaty.
- (vii) At Pueblo, Colorado, Wilson collapsed and had to return to Washington
- (viii) Wilson rejected all forms of compromise, and the Senate rejected the Treaty

b) Naval treaties of 1921 and 1922

- (i) Between 1921 and 1922, the world's largest naval powers gathered in Washington, D.C. for a conference to discuss naval disarmament and ways to relieve growing tensions in East Asia
- (ii) In 1921, U.S. Secretary of State Charles Evan Hughes invited nine nations to Washington, D.C. to discuss naval reductions and the situation in the Far East
- (iii) The Five-Power Treaty, signed by the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, France and Italy was the cornerstone of the naval disarmament program
- (iv) It called for each of the countries involved to maintain a set ratio of warship tonnage which allowed the United States and the United Kingdom 500,000 tons, Japan 300,000 tons, and France and Italy each 175,000 tons
- (v) Japan preferred that tonnage be allotted at a 10:10:7 ratio, while the U.S. Navy preferred a 10:10:5 ratio. The conference ultimately adopted the 5:5:3 ratio limits

- (vi) Since the United States and the United Kingdom maintained navies in both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to support their colonial territories, the Five-Power Treaty allotted both countries the highest tonnage allowances
- (vii) The treaty also called on all five signatories to stop building capital ships and reduce the size of their navies by scrapping older ships
- (viii) In the Four-Power Treaty, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and Japan agreed to consult with each other in the event of a future crisis in East Asia before taking action
- (ix) This treaty replaced the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902, which had been a source of some concern for the United States. In the years following World War I, U.S. policymakers saw Japan as the greatest rising military threat
- (x) Heavily militarized and looking to expand its influence and territory, Japan had the potential to threaten U.S. colonial possessions in Asia and the profitable China trade
- (xi) Because of the 1902 agreement between the United Kingdom and Japan, however, if the United States and Japan entered into a conflict, the United Kingdom might be obligated to join Japan against the United States
- (xii) By ending that treaty and creating a Four-Power agreement, the countries involved ensured that none would be obligated to engage in a conflict, but a mechanism would exist for discussions if one emerged
- (xiii) The Nine-Power Treaty, marked the internationalization of the U.S. Open Door Policy in China
- (xiv) The treaty promised that each of the signatories—the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, and China—would respect the territorial integrity of China
- (xv) The treaty recognized Japanese dominance in Manchuria but otherwise affirmed the importance of equal opportunity for all nations doing business in the country
- (xvi) For its part, China agreed not to discriminate against any country seeking to do business there
- (xvii) It lacked a method of enforcement to ensure that all powers abided by its terms
- (xviii) The treaties signed at the Washington Naval Conference served to uphold the status quo in the Pacific. They recognized existing interests and did not make fundamental changes to them

c) Dawes Plan

- (i) Following WWI, the crushing reparations placed on Germany, caused a stalemate between the Allies as they debated over how to collect from the bankrupt country

- (ii) American Charles Dawes was looked to along with his committee to develop a plan.
- (iii) His plan was laid out in 1924
- (iv) Germany's annual reparation payments would be reduced, increasing over time as its economy improved
- (v) However, the full amount to be paid, was left undetermined
- (vi) Economic policy making in Germany would be reorganized under foreign supervision and a new currency, the Reichsmark
- (vii) Foreign banks would loan the German government \$200 million to help encourage economic stabilization. U.S. financier J. P. Morgan floated the loan on the U.S. market.
- (viii) U.S. banks continued to lend Germany enough money to enable it to meet its reparation payments to countries such as France and the United Kingdom.
- (ix) These countries, in turn, used their reparation payments from Germany to service their war debts to the United States.

d) Kellogg Pact

- (i) The Kellogg Pact was an agreement to outlaw war signed on August 27, 1928.
- (ii) The pact was one of many international efforts to prevent another World War, but it had little effect in stopping the rising militarism of the 1930s or preventing World War II
- (iii) In the wake of World War I, U.S. officials and private citizens made significant efforts to guarantee that the nation would not be drawn into another war
- (iv) Some focused on disarmament, such as the series of naval conferences that began in Washington in 1921, and some focused on cooperation with the League of Nations and the newly formed World Court
- (v) Others initiated a movement to try to outlaw war outright. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, an organization dedicated to promoting internationalism that was established in 1910 by leading American industrialist Andrew Carnegie
- (vi) The extension of the pact to include other nations was well received internationally
- (vii) After the severe losses of the First World War, the idea of declaring war to be illegal was immensely popular in international public opinion
- (viii) Because the language of the pact established the important point that only wars of aggression – not military acts of self-defense – would be covered under the pact, many nations had no objections to signing it
- (ix) In the final version of the pact, they agreed upon two clauses: the first outlawed war as an instrument of national policy and the second called upon signatories to settle their disputes by peaceful means

- (x) The first major test of the pact came just a few years later in 1931, with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria
- (xi) Though Japan had signed the pact, the combination of the worldwide depression and a limited desire to go to war to preserve China prevented the League of Nations or the United States from taking any action to enforce it
- (xii) Further threats to the Peace Agreement also came from fellow signatories Germany, Austria and Italy.
- (xiii) It soon became clear that there was no way to enforce the pact or sanction those who broke it

e) Young Plan

- (i) In the autumn of 1928, another committee of experts was formed to devise a final settlement of the German reparations problem
- (ii) In 1929, the committee, under the chairmanship of Owen D. Young, the head of General Electric and a member of the Dawes committee, proposed a plan that reduced the total amount of reparations demanded of Germany to 121 billion gold marks, almost \$29 billion, payable over 58 years
- (iii) Another loan would be floated in foreign markets, this one totaling \$300 million
- (iv) Foreign supervision of German finances would cease and the last of the occupying troops would leave German soil
- (v) The Young Plan also called for the establishment of a Bank for International Settlements, designed to facilitate the payment of reparations
- (vi) However, the Great Depression halted the Young plan and, without American money, caused the German economy to crater
- (vii) At the Lausanne Conference in 1932, European nations agreed to cancel their reparation claims against Germany, save for a final payment
- (viii) After the November 1932 election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, France and the United Kingdom resurrected the link between reparations and war debts, tying their Lausanne Conference pledge to cancel their claims against Germany to the cancellation of their debts to the United States
- (ix) The United States would not accept the proposal
- (x) By mid-1933, all European debtor nations except Finland had defaulted on their loans from the United States.

f) Support for international Labor Organization in the 1920's

- (i) The ILO was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I
- (ii) It was to reflect the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice
- (iii) The constitution of the ILO now provides that any nation can become a member of the ILO by unilaterally accepting the obligations of the ILO constitution

- (iv) Though America was not a member of the League of Nations, they became a member of the International Labor Organization
- (v) "Conditions of labor exist involving such injustice, hardship, and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperiled"
- (vi) With the Bolshevik revolution and fear of a violent revolution being tied with Labor Unions, the ILO provided the effects of labor union without all of the fear that is present

2. "Good Neighbor"

a) Relations with Latin America 1920 - 1939

- (i) While America was technically considered an isolationist country, America displayed an intense interest in Latin America
- (ii) In the post - Civil War years, America began to take hesitant steps toward global policies
- (iii) Attempts to purchase or annex the Hawaiian Islands, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic signaled growing interest in the outside world
- (iv) In addition to traditional commercial interests in Latin America, the United States became increasingly concerned over European influence in the region
- (v) Following the Roosevelt Corollary, for the most part, America had unabashed influence in the region
- (vi) During the 1920s the continued presence of marines and the economic power of the "Colossus of the North" fueled anti - Yankee sentiment in Latin America
- (vii) Under Herbert Hoover, American policy began to treat Latin American nations as equals
- (viii) The Clark Memorandum (1930) disassociated the right of intervention in Latin America from the Roosevelt Corollary
- (ix) According to Clark, the United States' right to intervene depended on "the doctrine of self - preservation"
- (x) This policy was continued by Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- (xi) By 1934 the Marines had withdrawn from Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic; and the United States abrogated the right to intervene in Cuba

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- c) Reaction to Japanese aggression
- (i) Following WWI, the United States was willing to do anything needed to remain isolationist. However, aggression by the budding Japanese Empire constantly put that isolationist policy to the limit
 - (ii) Relations between Japan and the United States deteriorated after Japan resumed its war against China in 1937
 - (iii) Neither the United States nor Japan desired war
 - (iv) Roosevelt considered Nazi Germany to be a more dangerous enemy and dreaded the prospect of a two - front war
 - (v) In the spring of 1941, Secretary of State Cordell Hull demanded that Japan withdraw from China and pledge not to occupy French and Dutch possessions in Asia
 - (vi) Even moderates in Japan did not accept Hull's demand for total withdrawal
 - (vii) In July 1941, the United States retaliated against Japan's occupation of Indochina by freezing Japanese assets in America, instilling trade sanctions, and placing an embargo on petroleum sales and trade
 - (viii) Militarists assumed control to Japan's government, and while the pretense of negotiation continued, Japan prepared to implement war plans against the United States
 - (ix) On December 7th 1941, the Japanese Military led an attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii
- d) "Cash - & - Carry"
- (i) Legislation passed in 1939 following the invasion of Poland by the Germans.
 - (ii) Allowed the United States, though neutral, to sell materials to nations in the process of war as long as they paid cash immediately and agreed to furnish transportation
 - (iii) Thought was that when they had to move material themselves, the US could not be brought to war by an attack on an American vessel similar to the Lusitania situation in WWI.

- (iv) In addition, with cash having to be paid immediately, there was no worry for repayment by a losing side.
- e) “Lend - Lease”
 - (i) As the war carried on and Britain eventually ran out of money, the United States (FDR) developed a program and plan to still offer assistance
 - (ii) Congress passed legislation that would allow FDR to provide through sale, transfer, exchange, or lending, materials used in wartime to nations fighting a war “vital to the security of the United States.”
 - (iii) Britain would receive materials needed for war in exchange for the United States to be able to use British Naval Bases.

3. US and WWII

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