

U.S. Entry into World War II



German and Japanese aggression in the 1930s presented Americans once again with tortuous questions of war and peace. The United States protested the aggression, but Americans sought to avoid entanglement in the cascading crises that engulfed Europe and Asia. Congress passed neutrality acts that banned arms sales and loans to belligerent nations in the event of major war, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt endorsed the United States's neutral stance. Recalling the horrors of World War I, and beset by an all-encompassing economic depression at home, many Americans embraced peace and some considered themselves to be isolationists. Europeans also remembered the terrible blood-letting of the Great War and recoiled from another such conflict. France and Great Britain in particular refrained from challenging Germany's rearmament and its remilitarization of the Rhineland—both in violation of the Versailles treaty—and the subsequent annexation of Austria. Most dramatically, the British and the French hoped to limit Adolf Hitler's expansionism by adopting a policy of "appeasement," whereby they responded to the dictator's bellicose threats toward Czechoslovakia by recognizing German sovereignty over the Sudetenland, a German-speaking region of the country, in September 1938.

Allied appeasement did not deter the Nazi drive for territory and power. In March 1939, Hitler occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia, and in September, after he ordered his armies into Poland, World War II commenced in Europe. After a brief lull, Hitler's mechanized army launched a devastating "blitzkrieg" across much of western Europe, followed by offensives in the Balkans and Mediterranean. Roosevelt and the nation moved toward an interventionist posture, repealing the arms embargo portion of the Neutrality Acts in late 1939, arranging with Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill to trade destroyers for bases in 1940, and gaining congressional approval to send Lend-Lease supplies to Britain in March 1941. At the same time, Roosevelt won election to an unprecedented third term in the White House by promising that American boys would not be sent to die in a foreign war. When Hitler turned his guns on Stalinist Russia in June 1941, Roosevelt opened up the Lend-Lease spigot to the Soviet Union. By September 1941, U.S. naval convoys escorted cargo ships as far as Iceland, and the United States edged closer to war as its vessels traversed the submarine-infested North Atlantic.

When war came for the United States, however, it occurred six thousand miles away from Europe, in Asia. For most of the twentieth century, the United States had opposed Japanese expansion into China. When the Japanese sought access to vital raw materials and markets to relieve their economic stress in the 1930s, taking

Manchuria and renaming it Manchukuo. Americans viewed Japanese imperialism as a violation of the Open Door and a threat to world order. Later in the decade, the Sino-Japanese war escalated, the United States gradually expanded its navy, granted loans to China, and did not invoke the neutrality acts—thereby permitting China to buy arms from the United States. Yet Washington protested Japanese aggression in a manner designed not to provoke war with the Empire of the Sun. Certain that America's strategic priorities lay across the Atlantic in Europe, the Roosevelt administration hoped to avoid a two-front war.

Following the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact among Japan, Germany, and Italy in September 1940 and Japan's acquisition of bases in northern French Indochina, the administration embargoed shipments of scrap iron and steel to the island nation. The crisis reached a critical juncture when Japanese troops, in July 1941, occupied all of French Indochina. In response, Roosevelt froze Japanese assets in the United States, thereby denying Japan essential petroleum shipments. Tokyo and Washington exchanged proposals and counterproposals for the rest of the year, but to no avail. On December 7, in a surprise attack, Japanese pilots bombed the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands. One day later, the United States declared war on Japan, and on December 11 Germany declared war on the United States.

Historians have long debated the U.S. intervention in World War II. Although most agree that German, Italian, and Japanese militarism threatened world peace, they disagree over the significance of the threat to the United States. They also debate President Roosevelt's handling of the crisis. The most widely shared view is that Nazi racial ideology, Germany's resources, and Hitler's personal ambition produced a war-driven aggression that aimed at world domination. Some scholars praise the Roosevelt administration for recognizing the threat, preparing a reluctant public for action, and aiding the anti-Axis nations by all possible means. Other writers agree that the United States faced imminent danger, but they criticize Roosevelt for not acting earlier and more forcefully against the aggressor states. Still others differentiate between German and Japanese aggression and argue that Hitler posed the most potent and immediate threat to U.S. interests. Thus, why did the United States not negotiate a limited trade accord with Tokyo to dodge or delay a conflict in the Pacific, prepare for a showdown in Europe, and avoid a resource-stretching, two-front war?

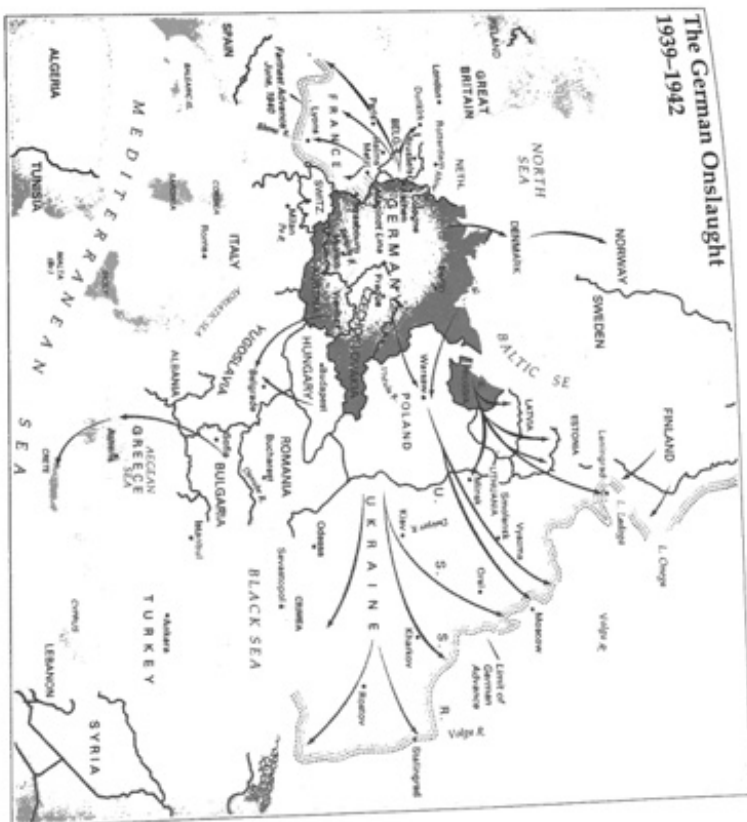
What kind of threat did German and Japanese aggression pose to the United States? Did FDR deftly manage the crisis—or was he too forceful, or too timid, in confronting the danger? Did the various policy options carry moral consequences, particularly in light of Hitler's racism and the Axis's disregard for human rights? These questions continue to hold meaning for a nation whose contemporary position as world leader is traceable to the events of the late 1930s and early 1940s.



DOCUMENTS

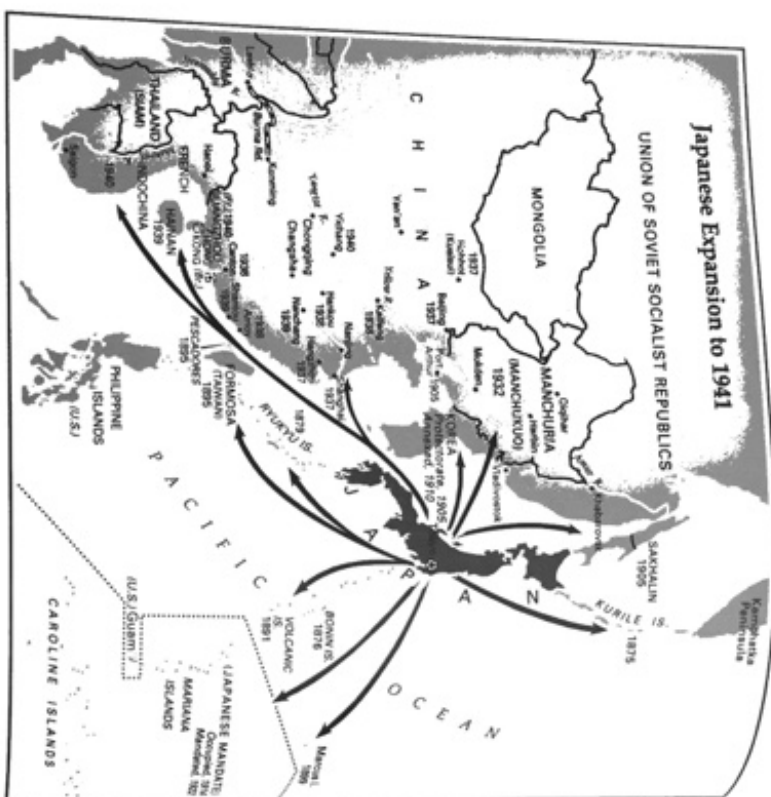
For Americans, events in Europe and Asia during the 1930s raised the ominous specter of a second world war. Adhering to the belief that U.S. trade and shipping to Britain had led the country to war in 1917, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1935, which banned exports to belligerents. At the same time, Senator Gerald P. Nye led congressional hearings to determine if munitions makers and bankers had lobbied President Wilson into war. Nye never proved the allegation, but he did expose the unsavory nature of war profiteering. In Document 1, a radio speech delivered on January 6, 1936, the North Dakota Republican recalls Wilson's "permissive neutrality" and urges passage of additional restrictive legislation. In 1936 and 1937, Congress bolstered the neutrality laws by banning loans to belligerents and prohibiting U.S. travel on belligerent ships.

The German Onslaught 1939–1942



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World events, however, overtook U.S. policy. Tension between the United States and Japan escalated following a clash between Japanese and Chinese troops at the Marco Polo bridge, south of Beijing, in July 1937, and after Japan's full-fledged invasion of China. In an obvious reference to what Japanese leaders called the "China incident," President Roosevelt told a Chicago audience on October 5, 1937, that aggressors should be "quarantined" (Document 2). Although FDR offered no concrete policies, the administration in the following months began to send modest amounts of aid to China. The Japanese were not deterred. Document 3, an official Japanese statement on November 3, 1938, following a string of military victories in China, proclaimed the establishment of a "new order in Asia." Japan's bold actions sparked debate among American policymakers over how best to halt and reverse the aggression. On November 14, 1938, hardliner Stanley K. Hornbeck, a senior State Department adviser on Asian affairs, urged the United States to devise a diplomatic "war plan" to punish and deter the Japanese (Document 4). Hornbeck called for economic measures, including the abrogation of the 1911 U.S.-Japan commercial treaty. U.S. ambassador to Japan Joseph C. Grew disagreed. In a memorandum to Secretary of State Cordell Hull on December 1, 1939, Document 5, Grew predicted sanctions would only alienate Japanese leaders and provoke further conquest.



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War broke out in Europe when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939 and Britain and France came to Poland's defense. Modifying his earlier neutrality, Roosevelt now persuaded Congress to allow arms sales on the basis of "cash and carry." The German military rapidly advanced through Europe, and in September 1940, Germany, Italy, and Japan concluded their Tripartite Pact alliance. In December 1940, FDR proposed his Lend-Lease program that allowed the United States to lease massive amounts of military equipment to Britain (Document 6). The president's program won congressional approval in March 1941. The United States edged closer to war after FDR authorized U.S. naval patrols part way across the Atlantic to protect Lend-Lease shipping. In response to an attempted torpedoing of the U.S. destroyer *Greer* by a German U-boat submarine in September 1941—the *Greer* had been signaling submarine locations to British bombers—the president called for a new policy of "shoot on sight" to safeguard U.S. vessels. His speech of September 11, 1941, is reprinted here as Document 7.

The incident that led to U.S. entry into the war, however, occurred on the other side of the world. On July 25, 1941, following Japan's invasion of the southern portion of French Indochina, the Roosevelt administration froze Japanese assets. Document 8, the final negotiating points adopted by Japan's imperial government on November 5,

1941, sets forth two options for a settlement with the United States: Plan A, which called for a Japanese withdrawal from China only after a successful Sino-Japanese truce had been reached; and Plan B, a more limited understanding that skirted the China issue but pledged that Japan would advance no farther south than Indochina in exchange for an unfreezing of Japanese assets and a resumption of normal trade with the United States. Document 9, a restatement of Washington's proposals to Japan, dated November 26, 1941, rejected compromise and sought to roll back Japanese expansionism and revive the Open Door principle. The Japanese dismissed this U.S. bargaining position, and on December 7, 1941, Japanese planes descended on Pearl Harbor. Document 10 is Roosevelt's war message delivered to Congress on December 8, 1941. Three days later, Germany declared war on the United States.

DOCUMENT 1

Senator Gerald P. Nye Cites the Lessons of History and Advocates Neutrality, 1936

Neutrality is to be had if we are willing to pay the price of abandonment of expectation of profits from the blood of other nations at war. But it defies any man to write a neutrality program that would long endure and succeed in keeping us neutral if the policy contemplated a business boom or even "business as usual" in America while other nations are at war and wanting supplies from our mines, fields and factories. . . .

We saw the last European war until 1917 as one in no degree our business. . . . We rejoiced at the moment that leadership of our Government was showing greatest determination to keep America out of that war, a leadership affording a policy that was presumed to be a guarantee of our neutrality. That neutrality policy is now known as a permissive or a discretionary policy, with its administration in no degree mandatory upon the President. That the policy failed, and that miserably, is record. . . .

The [Woodrow] Wilson permissive neutrality policy held that it was not an unneutral act for America to sell munitions to nations at war so long as it was our policy to sell to both sides alike, and free trade in munitions was the result. Suddenly we became enraged, discovering that this permissive policy of neutrality was based upon international law defining our rights as a neutral upon the high seas, that Great Britain was not recognizing or abiding by that law. Britain, by her blockade, was interfering with our American commerce with Germany, writing new contraband definitions, searching and seizing the cargoes of American ships destined for Germany or even neutral ports which Great Britain suspected might be for ultimate German use. By reason of these practices we were losing even our normal trade with the Central Powers. We didn't like this interference with our trade and profits. President Wilson wrote notes of protest to Germany—notes which when now compared with those of protest later dispatched to Germany, sound like an apology. We were placated, however, with larger orders from the Allies which much more than offset our loss of trade with Germany. These Allied orders were tremendous and caused us to quite overlook the

From Nye radio address 6 January 1936, Gerald P. Nye Papers, Herbert Hoover Library, West Branch, Iowa.

fact that our neutral policy was no longer one finding us furnishing munitions to both sides. It was our increasing commerce with the Allies upon which our prosperity now depended. Who doesn't remember how bitterly severe were our notes of protest to Germany when Germany, in retaliation of the British blockade, used the submarine to destroy commerce upon which the Allies were dependent. But, while this business with the Allies was maintaining a marvelous prosperity for us and while we were counting as a great thing so long as we kept out of it, we were nevertheless highly resolved to continue our neutrality "so called."

The Allies soon exhausted their own means of buying from us. They needed American credit. Our permissive neutrality policy of the hour forbade loans and credits, but it appears that such pressure was brought as caused the administrators of the policy to turn their back upon it. It was concluded, by that administration, that while loans should be prohibited to any nation at war, credits would be countenanced. Our own economic well-being was so dependent upon the continuing boom market of war that we would only cut our own throats by refusing the credit that would let the Allies continue buying from us! So, for a time, the Allies bought upon credit furnished by Americans. But the time comes when individual credit is exhausted and the Allies need large loans if they are to continue buying American supplies. If these loans couldn't be had Europe couldn't continue buying from us! Somewhere the strings were pulled that caused our neutrality administrators to permit loans to the Allies contrary to our neutrality policy—a discretionary policy. To have insisted against loans would have ended the profits and the prosperity of Americans flowing from Europe's war!

Ah, business continues good; prosperity remains on every hand! War isn't such a bad thing when we don't have to be in it! "But," we said, "look at those German; they are destroying American cargoes going to England and France and sinking English passenger vessels with Americans on board! Maybe something ought to be done about it! But, whatever we do, let's not get into that war!" That was our reasoning at the hour. How childish it all was—this expectation of success in staying out of a war politically while economically we stayed in it; how childish this permissive flip-flop neutrality policy of ours and our belief that we could go on and on supplying the sinews of war to one or even both sides and avoid ourselves being ultimately drawn into the engagement with our lives and our fortunes at stake.

Well, to make a long story short, our prosperity, which at the moment was our commerce with the Allies, demanded a more and more warlike attitude on our part. Our rights on the high seas, our commerce is declared in jeopardy! . . .

After we had started stretching our permissive American neutrality policy to accommodate our commercial interests the Allied powers were never in doubt as to what America would ultimately do. They saw what we didn't seem to realize, namely, that where our pocketbook was there would we and our hearts ultimately be. . . .

Insistence now upon establishment of a mandatory policy of neutrality is so reflection upon any one man. It is only fair to say that the present [Franklin D.] Roosevelt determination to keep us out of war is no higher than was that expressed by Wilson. Yet . . . while the Wilson administration was declaring itself neutral, parts of that administration were actually contemplating the hour when we would ultimately get into the war without a doubt as to which side we would enter on. . . .

Based upon such facts and such experience Senator [Bennet Champ] Clark [D-Mo.] and I today introduced in the Senate a bill proposing a strict policy of

neutrality, the enforcement of which shall at once be not permissive or at the discretion of the President, but mandatory upon him. The bill presents requirements and advantages roughly stated as follows:

First, at the outbreak of war between other nations the President shall by proclamation forbid the exportation of arms, ammunition and implements of war for the use of those nations, and that the President shall, not "may" but shall, extend this embargo to other nations if and when they may become engaged in such war.

Second, the bill proposes an embargo on other items of commerce which may be considered essential war materials, such as oil, and provides that the President shall forbid exportation to nations at war of these materials beyond what was the average annual exportation of these materials to those nations during the five-year period preceding the outbreak of war.

Third, the bill requires that the President shall upon the outbreak of war between foreign states proclaim that the buyer of any and all articles to or through the field of operations of belligerent states shall be at the risk solely of the buyer and the bill provides that the buyers shall be without redress in any court of the United States. Thus, it will be seen, there is provided a strict "cash and carry" basis with buyers taking their own risk in accomplishing delivery of supplies they buy from us in time of war.

Fourth, the bill requires that the President shall require American passengers to refrain from traveling on the vessels of belligerent states, and provides that passengers who ignore this requirement at once forfeit their right to protection of the United States. Thus we can avoid a repetition of the Lusitania experience.

Fifth, the bill introduced today does with loans and credits to time of war precisely what it does with war materials—it embargoes and limits them. . . .

There are those who will insist that this measure is too severe. We, who sponsor it, feel that in the light of experience, nothing short of those provisions is deserving of the title of a neutrality policy and we beg the confidence of the people of the land in it not as an instrument that will completely prevent war, but as one that will make it extremely difficult for the United States to be drawn into another foreign war that becomes our war only because of selfish interests that profit from the blood spilled in the wars of other lands.



D O C U M E N T 2

President Franklin D. Roosevelt Proposes to "Quarantine" Aggressors, 1937

Some fifteen years ago the hopes of mankind for a continuing era of international peace were raised to great heights when more than sixty nations solemnly pledged themselves not to resort to arms in furtherance of their national aims and policies. The high aspirations expressed in the Briand-Kellogg Peace Pact and the hopes for

This document can be found in U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Japan, 1937-1941* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943), I, 379-383.

peace thus raised have of late given way to a haunting fear of calamity. The present reign of terror and international lawlessness began a few years ago.

It began through unjustified interference in the internal affairs of other nations or the invasion of alien territory in violation of treaties; and has now reached a stage where the very foundations of civilization are seriously threatened. The landmarks and traditions which have marked the progress of civilization toward a condition of law, order and justice are being wiped away.

Without a declaration of war and without warning or justification of any kind civilians, including vast numbers of women and children, are being ruthlessly murdered with bombs from the air. In times of so-called peace, ships are being attacked and sunk by submarines without cause or notice. Nations are fomenting and taking sides in civil warfare in nations that have never done them any harm. Nations claiming freedom for themselves deny it to others.

Innocent peoples, innocent nations, are being cruelly sacrificed to a greed for power and supremacy which is devoid of all sense of justice and humane considerations. . . .

The peace-loving nations must make a concerted effort in opposition to those violations of treaties and those ignoring of humane instincts which today are creating a state of international anarchy and instability from which there is no escape through mere isolation or neutrality.

Those who cherish their freedom and recognize and respect the equal right of their neighbors to be free and live in peace must work together for the triumph of law and moral principles in order that peace, justice and confidence may prevail in the world. There must be a return to a belief in the pledged word, in the value of a signed treaty. There must be recognition of the fact that national morality is as vital as private morality. . . .

There is a solidarity and interdependence about the modern world, both technically and morally, which makes it impossible for any nation completely to isolate itself from economic and political upheavals in the rest of the world, especially when such upheavals appear to be spreading and not declining. There can be no stability or peace either within nations or between nations except under laws and moral standards adhered to by all. International anarchy destroys every foundation for peace. It jeopardizes either the immediate or the future security of every nation, large or small. It is, therefore, a matter of vital interest and concern to the people of the United States that the sanctity of international treaties and the maintenance of international morality be restored.

The overwhelming majority of the peoples and nations of the world today want to live in peace. They seek the removal of barriers against trade. They want to exert themselves in industry, in agriculture and in business, that they may increase their wealth through the production of wealth-producing goods rather than striving to produce military planes and bombs and machine guns and cannon for the destruction of human lives and useful property.

In those nations of the world which seem to be piling armament on armament for purposes of aggression, and those other nations which fear acts of aggression against them and their security, a very high proportion of their national income is being spent directly for armaments. It runs from thirty to as high as fifty percent. We are fortunate. The proportion that we in the United States spend is far less—eleven or twelve percent.

How happy we are that the circumstances of the moment permit us to put our money into bridges and boulevards, dams and reforestation, the conservation of our soil and many other kinds of useful works rather than into huge standing armies and vast supplies of implements of war.

I am compelled and you are compelled, nevertheless, to look ahead. The peace, the freedom and the security of ninety percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining ten percent who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. Surely the ninety percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, can and must find some way to make their will prevail.

The situation is definitely of universal concern. The questions involved relate not merely to violations of specific provisions of particular treaties; they are questions of war and of peace, of international law and especially of principles of humanity. It is true that they involve definite violations of agreements, and especially of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Briand-Kellogg Pact and the Nine Power Treaty. But they also involve problems of world economy, world security and world humanity.

It is true that the moral consciousness of the world must recognize the importance of removing injustices and well-founded grievances; but at the same time it must be aroused to the cardinal necessity of honoring sanctity of treaties, of respecting the rights and liberties of others and of putting an end to acts of international aggression.

It seems to be unfortunately true that the epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading.

When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.

It is my determination to pursue a policy of peace. It is my determination to adopt every practicable measure to avoid involvement in war. It ought to be inconceivable that in this modern era, and in the face of experience, any nation could be so foolish and ruthless as to run the risk of plunging the whole world into war by invading and violating, in contravention of solemn treaties, the territory of other nations that have done them no real harm and are too weak to protect themselves adequately. Yet the peace of the world and the welfare and security of every nation, including our own, is today being threatened by that very thing.



DOCUMENT 3

Japan Envisions a "New Order" in Asia, 1938

What Japan seeks is the establishment of a new order which will insure the permanent stability of East Asia. In this lies the ultimate purpose of our present military campaign.

This document can be found in U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Japan, 1931-1941* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943), I, 477-478.

This new order has for its foundation a tripartite relationship of mutual aid and co-ordination between Japan, Manchoukuo [the name Japan gave to Manchuria in February 1932], and China in political, economic, cultural and other fields. Its object is to secure international justice, to perfect the joint defence against Communism, and to create a new culture and realize a close economic cohesion throughout East Asia. This indeed is the way to contribute toward the stabilization of East Asia and the progress of the world.

What Japan desires of China is that that country will share in the task of bringing about this new order in East Asia. She confidently expects that the people of China will fully comprehend her true intentions and that they will respond to the call of Japan for their co-operation. Even the participation of the Kuomintang Government would not be rejected, if, repudiating the policy which has guided it in the past and remolding its personnel, so as to translate its re-birth into fact, it were to come forward to join in the establishment of the new order.

Japan is confident that other Powers will on their part correctly appreciate her aims and policy and adapt their attitude to the new conditions prevailing in East Asia. For the cordiality hitherto manifested by the nations which are in sympathy with us, Japan wishes to express her profound gratitude.

The establishment of a new order in East Asia is in complete conformity with the very spirit in which the Empire was founded; to achieve such a task is the exalted responsibility with which our present generation is entrusted. It is, therefore, imperative to carry out all necessary internal reforms, and with a full development of the aggregate national strength, material as well as moral, fulfill at all costs this duty incumbent upon our nation.

Such the Government declare to be the immutable policy and determination of Japan.



DOCUMENT 4

Stanley K. Hornbeck Urges Economic Sanctions Against Japan, 1938

It is an important interest of the United States that Japan not gain control of China. It therefore would be to our interest that Chinese resistance to Japan's effort to gain that control continue. The Japanese nation today is animated by concepts and pursuing objectives which are in conflict with the concepts and the legitimate objectives of the people of the United States. The Japanese are embarked upon a program of predatory imperialism. Unless the Japanese march is halted by the Chinese or by some other nation, the time will come when Japan and the United States will be face to face and definitely opposed to each other in the international political arena. It is desirable that the development of such a situation be prevented. It therefore is desirable that the United States act toward the preventing of such a development.

The American Government should formulate and adopt a program of action (a diplomatic "war plan") toward averting an armed conflict between the United States and Japan. In the conducting of our relations with Japan and with China we should not take haphazard and unrelated steps. Such action as we may take in the realm of use of words should be related to action which we may plan to take in the realm of material pressures (positive or negative, or both). It should be our objective to have Japan's predatory march halted. Our course of action should, therefore, be a course in opposition to that march. That march will be halted only by the power of resistance of material obstacles and material pressures. Any nation which definitely opposes that march should be prepared in last analysis to use, if it prove necessary, armed force. The Chinese have already found resort to armed force necessary; China's resistance may possibly be overcome by Japanese armed force. Resistance which may be made by other countries may in the long run have to take the form of armed force. This country, therefore, in formulating its course of action should make it its business to be prepared if necessary to use armed force.

The American Government has during recent years been opposing Japan by use of words (appeal to principles, to rules of law, to provisions of treaties, etc.). Our Department of State may be able to get the better of the Japanese Foreign Office—though even that is not certain—in the field of argumentation, but victories on our part in that field will not halt the forward march of Japan's military machine. The fact is that unless the United States expects and intends to use weapons stronger than those of argument, continuance on our part along that line is almost certain to lead to the development of a situation in which this country will have either to accept a diplomatic defeat or find itself forced to resort to arms. The more we talk and the longer we refrain from resort to some substantial measures of positive (material) pressure toward preventing the Japanese from taking or destroying our rights, titles and interests in the Far East, the more likely will it be that resort by us to such measures at some future time—if and when—will be replied to by the Japanese with resort to armed force against us, which would, in turn, compel us to respond with armed force.

The most practicable course for us to follow would be that of giving assistance to the Chinese and withholding those things which are of assistance to the Japanese, toward prolonging and strengthening China's resistance and curtailing Japan's ability to continue military operations against China. If and when, however, we commit ourselves to that line of action, we should do so wholeheartedly and with determination. We should not take some one step without expecting, intending and being able to take further steps, many further steps, in the same direction. Such steps should include a combination of diplomatic, economic and potential military pressures. If this Government wishes to embark upon such a course, it should be prepared to consider seriously the taking of such steps as denunciation of the U.S.-Japan Commercial Treaty of 1911, repeal of the Neutrality Act, retaliatory tariff measures against Japan, placing of embargoes upon trade and shipping between Japan and the United States, [and] disposal of our naval resources in such manner as to indicate to the Japanese Government and nation that we "mean business."

D O C U M E N T 5

Ambassador Joseph C. Grew Warns Against Economic Sanctions, 1939

The United States is solemnly (to use that somewhat overworked Wilsonian term) committed to uphold the principles of the Nine Power Treaty, primarily to uphold the territorial and administrative integrity of China and the Open Door. Therein lies the point of principle.

On the other side of the picture, nothing in international affairs can be more mathematically certain (if anything in international affairs is ever certain) than that Japan is not going to respect the territorial and administrative integrity of China, now or in future, has not the slightest intention of doing so and could be brought to do so only by complete defeat. Observance in practice of the Open Door is and will continue to be a matter of degree governed by expediency, not by principle. Herein lies the point of realism.

Given the situation now existing in Europe, there does not now appear on the horizon the possibility of such a defeat being inflicted by any nation or by any set of circumstances, military, social, economic or financial. . . .

Statisticians have proved to their own satisfaction, and will continue so to prove, that Japan can be defeated by economic pressure from without. But the statisticians generally fail to include psychological factors in their estimates. Japan is a nation of hardy warriors still inculcated with the samurai do-or-die spirit which has by tradition and inheritance become ingrained in the race. The Japanese throughout their history have faced periodic cataclysms brought about by nature and by man: earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, epidemics, the blighting of crops, and almost constant wars within and without the country. By long experience they are inured to hardships and they are inured to regimentation. Every former difficulty has been overcome. Estimates based on statistics alone may well mislead. . . .

To await the hoped-for discrediting in Japan of the Japanese army and the Japanese military system is to await the millennium. The Japanese army is no prober-ance like the tail of a dog which might be cut off to prevent the tail from wagging the dog: it is inextricably bound up with the fabric of the entire nation; its ramifications are far too deep for any effective amputation, or any effective withering through discredit. Certainly there are plenty of Japanese who dislike the army's methods; there is plenty of restiveness at the wholesale impressment of the able-bodied young men to fight in China, of the death and crippling of many, and of the restrictions and handicaps in every-day life entailed by the expenses of the campaign. But that the army can be discredited in the eyes of the people to a degree where its power and prestige will become so effectively undermined as to deprive the army of its control or at least of its preponderant influence in shaping national policy is an hypothesis which I believe no one intimately conversant with Japan and the Japanese would for a moment entertain. . . .

Found in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1939* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), III, 605-607, 608, 609-611.

So here we find ourselves squarely faced with a problem which, from all present indications, is to be permanently with us: the problem of principle versus realism. What are we going to do about it? . . .

One course envisages complete intransigence. Unless and until Japan reorients her policy and actions, both as regards her commitments under the Nine Power Treaty (until modified by orderly processes) and her respect of American rights and interests in China, we would refuse to negotiate a new treaty of commerce and navigation and would, if public demand in the United States calls for it, impose an embargo next winter.

This course would set Japanese-American relations moving on a downward slope to a point from which it would be difficult to bring them back to normal for a long time to come; a treatyless situation, with its attending handicaps to Japanese trade, would start the movement; the imposition of an embargo would greatly accelerate it.

The other course, after endeavoring to consider the situation and outlook from all angles, I believe is in our own interests now and, so far as we can foresee the future, the wiser one to follow. We would say to Japan: "The United States concedes no right and recognizes no compromise with respect to the provisions and principles of the Nine Power Treaty. We, however, desire so far as feasible to maintain good relations with Japan. We await progressive implementation of your assurances that American rights and interests in China will be respected, not only in negative ways, such as cessation of the bombings of American property, indignities to American citizens and the more flagrant interferences with American business and trade, but also in positive ways through the presentation progressively of concrete evidence that American commercial, cultural and other rights and interests are not to be crowded out of China by Japanese measures as hitherto has appeared patently to be intentional. As soon as some definite start is made in presenting concrete evidence to the foregoing effect, we, for our part, with a view to facilitating the efforts of the Government in Tokyo to further such a program, will enter into negotiations for a new treaty of commerce and navigation and currently for a *modus vivendi* of limited duration to tide over a treatyless situation, it being clearly understood that the ratification of such a treaty will depend upon future developments, namely, the progressive implementation of such a program. In the meantime, also depending upon developments, we will endeavor to hold in abeyance the question of imposing an embargo against Japan. . . .

A treatyless situation plus an embargo would exasperate the Japanese to a point where anything could happen, even serious incidents which could inflame the American people beyond endurance and which might call for war. The Japanese are so constituted and are just now in such a mood and temper that sanctions, far from intimidating, would almost certainly bring retaliation which, in turn, would lead to counterretaliation. Japan would not stop to weigh ultimate consequences. . . .

It is axiomatic to say that good relations between the United States and Japan are in our own interests. No purely altruistic motives are involved. In our own interests, particularly our commercial and cultural interests, we should approach this problem from a realistic and constructive standpoint. . . . There is no use whatever in quibbling about this, no use in refusing to face facts. The bombings of our property, the personal indignities and interferences, and some of the more flagrant violations of

our commercial rights can be stemmed, but unless we are prepared to fight for it, the Open Door, as we conceive it, is not going to be kept open. We have the choice of losing everything or of saving something from the wreckage, while opening the way to a potential building up of our relations with Japan.

DOCUMENT 6

FDR Proposes Lend-Lease Aid to Great Britain, 1940

December 17, 1940, Press Conference

Now, what I am trying to do is to eliminate the dollar sign, and that is something brand new in the thoughts of practically everybody in this room, I think—get rid of the silly, foolish old dollar sign. All right!

Well, let me give you an illustration: Suppose my neighbor's home catches fire, and I have got a length of garden hose four or five hundred feet away; but, my Heaven, if he can take my garden hose and connect it up with his hydrant, I may help him to put out his fire. Now what do I do? I don't say to him before that operation, "Neighbor, my garden hose cost me \$15; you have got to pay me \$15 for it." What is the transaction that goes on? I don't want \$15—I want my garden hose back after the fire is over. All right. If it goes through the fire all right, intact, without any damage to it, he gives it back to me and thanks me very much for the use of it. But suppose it gets smashed up—holes in it—during the fire; we don't have to have too much formality about it, but I say to him, "I was glad to lend you that hose; I see I can't use it any more, it's all smashed up." He says, "How many feet of it were there?" I tell him, "there were 150 feet of it." He said, "All right, I will replace it." Now, if I get a nice garden hose back, I am in pretty good shape. In other words, if you lend certain munitions and get the munitions back at the end of the war, if they are intact—haven't been hurt—you are all right; if they have been damaged or deteriorated or lost completely, it seems to me you come out pretty well if you have them replaced by the fellow that you have lent them to. . . .

December 29, 1940, Radio Address

This is not a fireside chat on war. It is a talk on national security: because the nub of the whole purpose of your President is to keep you now, and your children later, and your grandchildren much later, out of a last-ditch war for the preservation of American independence and all of the things that American independence means to you and to me and to ours. . . .

Never before since Jamestown and Plymouth Rock has our American civilization been in such danger as now.

For, on September 27, 1940, by an agreement signed in Berlin, three powerful nations, two in Europe and one in Asia, joined themselves together in the threat that if the United States interfered with or blocked the expansion program of these three

nations—a program aimed at world control—they would unite in ultimate action against the United States.

The Nazi masters of Germany have made it clear that they intend not only to dominate all life and thought in their own country, but also to enslave the whole of Europe, and then to use the resources of Europe to dominate the rest of the world. . . .

Some of our people like to believe that wars in Europe and in Asia are of no concern to us. But it is a matter of most vital concern to us that European and Asiatic war-makers should not gain control of the oceans which lead to this hemisphere. . . .

If Great Britain goes down, the Axis powers will control the continents of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australasia, and the high seas—and they will be in a position to bring enormous military and naval resources against this hemisphere. It is no exaggeration to say that all of us in the Americas would be living at the point of a gun—a gun loaded with explosive bullets, economic as well as military. . . .

The experience of the past two years has proven beyond doubt that no nation can appease the Nazis. No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it. There can be no appeasement with ruthlessness. There can be no reasoning with an incendiary bomb. We know now that a nation can have peace with the Nazis only at the price of total surrender. . . .

The American appeasers ignore the warning to be found in the fate of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, and France. They tell you that the Axis powers are going to win anyway; that all this bloodshed in the world could be saved; and that the United States might just as well throw its influence into the scale of a dictated peace, and get the best out of it that we can.

They call it a "negotiated peace." Nonsense! Is it a negotiated peace if a gang of outlaws surrounds your community and on threat of extermination makes you pay tribute to save your own skins? . . .

The British people are conducting an active war against this unholy alliance. Our own future security is greatly dependent on the outcome of that fight. Our ability to "keep out of war" is going to be affected by that outcome.

Thinking in terms of today and tomorrow, I make the direct statement to the American people that there is far less chance of the United States getting into war if we do all we can now to support the nations defending themselves against attack by the Axis than if we acquiesce in their defeat, submit tamely to an Axis victory, and wait our turn to be the object of attack in another war later on. . . .

Certain facts are self-evident.

In a military sense Great Britain and the British Empire are today the spearhead of resistance to world conquest. They are putting up a fight which will live forever in the story of human gallantry.

There is no demand for sending an American Expeditionary Force outside our own borders. There is no intention by any member of your Government to send such a force. You can, therefore, nail any talk about sending armies to Europe as deliberate untruth.

Our national policy is not directed toward war. Its sole purpose is to keep war away from our country and our people.

Democracy's fight against world conquest is being greatly aided, and must be more greatly aided, by the rearmament of the United States and by sending every ounce and every ton of munitions and supplies that we can possibly spare to help the defenders who are in the front lines. It is no more unneutral for us to do that than it

This document can be found in Dec. 17 remarks from *Complete Presidential Press Conference of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1972), XV–XVI (1940), 353–355. Dec. 29 radio address in *Department of State Bulletin* 4 (1941): 3–8.

is for Sweden, Russia, and other nations near Germany to send steel and ore and other war materials into Germany every day.

We are planning our own defense with the utmost urgency; and in its vast scale we must integrate the war needs of Britain and the other free nations resisting aggression. . . .

As planes and ships and guns and shells are produced, your Government, with its defense experts, can then determine how best to use them to defend this hemisphere. The decision as to how much shall be sent abroad and how much shall remain at home must be made on the basis of our over-all military necessities.

We must be the great arsenal of democracy. For us this is an emergency as serious as war itself. We must apply ourselves to our task with the same resolution, the same sense of urgency, the same spirit of patriotism and sacrifice, as we would share were we at war.

D O C U M E N T 7

Roosevelt Orders the U.S. Navy to "Shoot on Sight," 1941

The Navy Department of the United States has reported to me that on the morning of September fourth the United States destroyer *Greer*, proceeding in full daylight toward Iceland, had reached a point southeast of Greenland. She was carrying American mail to Iceland. She was flying the American flag. Her identity as an American ship was unmistakable.

She was then and there attacked by a submarine. Germany admits that it was a German submarine. The submarine deliberately fired a torpedo at the *Greer*, followed later by another torpedo attack. In spite of what Hitler's propaganda bureau has invented, and in spite of what any American obstructionist organization may prefer to believe, I tell you the blunt fact that the German submarine fired first upon this American destroyer without warning, and with deliberate design to sink her.

Our destroyer, at the time, was in waters which the Government of the United States had declared to be waters of self-defense—surrounding outposts of American protection in the Atlantic.

In the North of the Atlantic, outposts have been established by us in Iceland, in Greenland, in Labrador and in Newfoundland. Through these waters there pass many ships of many flags. They bear food and other supplies to civilians; and they bear material of war, for which the people of the United States are spending billions of dollars, and which, by Congressional action, they have declared to be essential for the defense of our own land. . . .

This was piracy—piracy legally and morally. It was not the first nor the last act of piracy which the Nazi Government has committed against the American flag in this war. For attack has followed attack.

A few months ago an American flag merchant ship, the *Robin Moor*, was sunk by a Nazi submarine in the middle of the South Atlantic, under circumstances violating

This document can be found in *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1941* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 384-392.

long-established international law and violating every principle of humanity. The passengers and the crew were forced into open boats hundreds of miles from land, in direct violation of international agreements signed by nearly all Nations including the Government of Germany. No apology, no allegation of mistake, no offer of reparation has come from the Nazi Government. . . .

Five days ago a United States Navy ship on patrol picked up three survivors of an American-owned ship operating under the flag of our sister Republic of Panama—the *S.S. Sessa*. On August seventeenth, she had been first torpedoed without warning, and then shelled, near Greenland, while carrying civilian supplies to Iceland. . . .

Five days ago, another United States merchant ship, the *Steel Seafarer*, was sunk by a German aircraft in the Red Sea two hundred and twenty miles south of Suez. . . .

The important truth is that these acts of international lawlessness are a manifestation of a design which has been made clear to the American people for a long time. It is the Nazi design to abolish the freedom of the seas, and to acquire absolute control and domination of these seas for themselves.

For with control of the seas in their own hands, the way can obviously become clear for their next step—domination of the United States—domination of the Western Hemisphere by force of arms. . . .

To be ultimately successful in world mastery, Hitler knows that he must get control of the seas. He must first destroy the bridge of ships which we are building across the Atlantic and over which we shall continue to roll the implements of war to help destroy him, to destroy all his works in the end. He must wipe out our patrol on sea and in the air if he is to do it. He must silence the British Navy.

I think it must be explained over and over again to people who like to think of the United States Navy as an invincible protection, that this can be true only if the British Navy survives. And that, my friends, is simple arithmetic.

For if the world outside of the Americas falls under Axis domination, the shipbuilding facilities which the Axis powers would then possess in all of Europe, in the British Isles, and in the Far East would be much greater than all the shipbuilding facilities and potentialities of all of the Americas—not only greater, but two or three times greater—enough to win. . . .

It is time for all Americans, Americans of all the Americas to stop being deluded by the romantic notion that the Americas can go on living happily and peacefully in a Nazi-dominated world. . . .

No tender whisperings of appeasers that Hitler is not interested in the Western Hemisphere, no soporific lullabies that a wide ocean protects us from him—can long have any effect on the hard-headed, far-sighted, and realistic American people. . . .

There has now come a time when you and I must see the cold, inexorable necessity of saying to these inhuman, unrestrained seekers of world conquest and permanent world domination by the sword: "You seek to throw our children and our children's children into your form of terrorism and slavery. You have now attacked our own safety. You shall go no further."

Normal practices of diplomacy—note writing—are of no possible use in dealing with international outlaws who sink our ships and kill our citizens.

One peaceful Nation after another has met disaster because each refused to look the Nazi danger squarely in the eye until it actually had them by the throat.

The United States will not make that fatal mistake. . . .

We have sought no shooting war with Hitler. We do not seek it now. . . .

But when you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until it is struck before you crush him.

These Nazi submarines and raiders are the rattlesnakes of the Atlantic. They are a menace to the free pathways of the high seas. They are a challenge to our sovereignty. They hammer at our most precious rights when they attack ships of the American flag—symbols of our independence, our freedom, our very life.

In the waters which we deem necessary for defense, American naval vessels, American planes will no longer wait until Axis submarines lurking under the surface of the sea, strike their deadly blow—first.

Upon our naval and air patrol—now operating in large number over the waters of the Atlantic Ocean—falls the duty of maintaining the American right of freedom of the seas—now, that means, very simply, very clearly, that our naval vessels and planes will protect all merchant ships—not only American ships of any flag—engaged in commerce in our defensive waters. They will protect them from submarines; they will protect them from surface raiders.

It is no act of war on our part when we decide to protect the seas that are in American defense. The aggression is not ours. Ours is solely defense.

The orders which I have given as Commander in Chief of the United States Army and Navy are to carry out that policy—at once.

I have no illusions about the gravity of this step. I have not taken it lightly or lightly. It is the result of months and months of constant thought and prayer. In the protection of your Nation and mine it cannot be avoided.

And with that inner strength that comes to a free people conscious of their guidance and consciousness of the righteousness of what they do, they will—with Divine guidance—stand their ground against this latest assault upon their democratic sovereignty, and their freedom.

DOCUMENT 8

Japan Proposes Two Diplomatic Options to the United States, November 1941

Plan A

The most important pending matters in negotiations between Japan and the United States are: 1) the stationing and withdrawal of troops in China and French Indochina; 2) nondiscriminatory trade in China; 3) interpretation and observance of the Tripartite Pact; and 4) the Four Principles [see the first four principles listed in Document 7]. These matters are to be moderated to the following extent:

1) The stationing and withdrawal of troops in China.

Setting aside for the moment our reasons for stationing troops, we moderate our stance to the following extent, considering that the United States

has (a) attached great importance to the stationing of troops for an indeterminate period of time, (b) objected to the inclusion of this item in the terms for a peace settlement, and (c) called for a clearer expression of intent regarding the withdrawal of troops.

Japanese forces dispatched to China because of the China Incident shall occupy designated areas of north China and Mongolia and Hainan Island for as long as is necessary after peace is concluded between Japan and China. The evacuation of other forces shall commence the minute peace is concluded, in accordance with separate arrangements made between Japan and China, and shall be completed within two years.

Note: Should the United States ask what "for as long as is necessary" means, we shall reply to the effect that our goal is roughly 25 years.

2) The stationing and withdrawal of troops in French Indochina.

The United States entertains misgivings that Japan has territorial ambitions in French Indochina and is attempting to make it into a base for military advances into adjacent territories. In recognition of this, we shall moderate our stance to the following extent:

The Japanese government respects the territorial sovereignty of French Indochina. Japanese troops currently dispatched to French Indochina will be immediately evacuated upon the settlement of the China Incident or upon the establishment of a just peace in the Far East.

3) Nondiscriminatory treatment in trade with China.

In the event that there is no prospect of securing complete agreement to our previous proposal of September 25, we shall deal with this issue on the basis of the following proposal:

The Japanese government acknowledges that the principle of nondiscrimination will be applied in the entire Pacific region and China as well, insofar as that principle is applied throughout the world.

4) Interpretation and observance of the Tripartite Pact.

We shall respond on this matter by making it even clearer that we have no intention of unduly broadening our interpretation of the right of self defense; that as far as interpreting and observing the Tripartite Pact is concerned, the Japanese government will act on its own discretion, as we have frequently elaborated before; and that we think that the United States already understands this fully.

5) As for what the United States calls its four principles, we shall avoid with all our might their inclusion in anything formally agreed to between Japan and the United States (whether that be the Draft Understanding or other declarations).

Plan B

1) Both Japan and the United States shall promise not to make any advances by military force into Southeast Asia and the South Pacific region, other than French Indochina.

2) The governments of Japan and the United States shall cooperate together so as to guarantee the procurement of necessary resources from the Dutch East Indies.

- 3) The governments of Japan and the United States shall together restore relations to what they were prior to the freezing of assets, and the United States will promise to supply Japan with the petroleum it needs.
- 4) The United States government shall not engage in such actions as may hinder efforts toward peace by Japan and China.

Notes

- 1) If it is necessary to do so, there is no objection to promising that if the present agreement is concluded, Japanese forces now stationed in southern Indochina are prepared, with the approval of the French government, to transfer to northern French Indochina, and that these Japanese forces will withdraw from French Indochina upon settlement of the China Incident or the establishment of a peace in the Pacific region.
- 2) If it is also necessary to do so, additional insertions may be made to the provisions regarding nondiscriminatory treatment in trade and those regarding interpretation and observance of the Tripartite Pact in the existing proposal (last plans).

DOCUMENT 9

Washington Rejects Japan's Proposals and Reaffirms the Open Door, November 1941

Section I Draft Mutual Declaration of Policy

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan both being solicitous for the peace of the Pacific affirm that their national policies are directed toward lasting and extensive peace throughout the Pacific area, that they have no territorial designs in that area, that they have no intention of threatening other countries or of using military force aggressively against any neighboring nation, and that, accordingly, in their national policies they will actively support and give practical application to the following fundamental principles upon which their relations with each other and with all other governments are based:

1. The principle of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each of all nations.
2. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.
3. The principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity and treatment.
4. The principle of reliance upon international cooperation and conciliation in the prevention and pacific settlement of controversies and for improvement of international conditions by peaceful methods and processes.

The Government of Japan and the Government of the United States have agreed that toward eliminating chronic political instability, preventing recurrent economic collapse, and providing a basis for peace, they will actively support and practically apply the following principles in their economic relations with each other and with other nations and peoples:

1. The principle of non-discrimination in international commercial relations.
2. The principle of international economic cooperation and abolition of extreme nationalism as expressed in excessive trade restrictions.
3. The principle of non-discriminatory access by all nations to raw material supplies.
4. The principle of full protection of the interests of consuming countries and populations as regards the operation of international commodity agreements.
5. The principle of establishment of such institutions and arrangements of international finance as may lend aid to the essential enterprises and the continuous development of all countries and may permit payments through processes of trade consonant with the welfare of all countries.

Section II Steps to Be Taken by the Government of the United States and by the Government of Japan

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan propose to take steps as follows:

1. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will endeavor to conclude a multilateral non-aggression pact among the British Empire, China, Japan, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, Thailand and the United States.
 2. Both Governments will endeavor to conclude among the American, British, Chinese, Japanese, the Netherlands and Thai Governments an agreement whereunder each of the Governments would pledge itself to respect the territorial integrity of French Indochina and, in the event that there should develop a threat to the territorial integrity of Indochina, to enter into immediate consultation with a view to taking such measures as may be deemed necessary and advisable to meet the threat in question. Such agreement would provide also that each of the Governments party to the agreement would not seek or accept preferential treatment in its trade or economic relations with Indochina and would use its influence to obtain for each of the signatories equality of treatment in trade and commerce with French Indochina.
 3. The Government of Japan will withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indochina.
 4. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will not support—militarily, politically, economically—any government or regime in China other than the National Government of the Republic of China with capital temporarily at Chungking.
 5. Both Governments will give up all extraterritorial rights in China, including rights and interests in and with regard to international settlements and concessions, and rights under the Boxer Protocol of 1901.
- Both Governments will endeavor to obtain the agreement of the British and other governments to give up extraterritorial rights in China, including rights in international settlements and in concessions and under the Boxer Protocol of 1901.

6. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will enter into negotiations for the conclusion between the United States and Japan of a trade agreement, based upon reciprocal most-favored-nation treatment and reduction of trade barriers by both countries, including an undertaking by the United States to bind raw silk on the free list.
7. The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will, respectively, remove the freezing restrictions on Japanese funds in the United States and on American funds in Japan.
8. Both Governments will agree upon a plan for the stabilization of the dollar in rate, with the allocation of funds adequate for this purpose, half to be supplied by Japan and half by the United States.
9. Both Governments will agree that no agreement which either has concluded with any third power or powers shall be interpreted by it in such a way as to conflict with the fundamental purpose of this agreement, the establishment and preservation of peace throughout the Pacific area.
10. Both Governments will use their influence to cause other governments to adhere to and to give practical application to the basic political and economic principles set forth in this agreement.

D O C U M E N T 10

Roosevelt Delivers His War Message to Congress, 1941

Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at peace with that Nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost.

In addition American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our Nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbounded determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

E S S A Y S

In the first essay, Gerhard Weinberg of the University of North Carolina lays out the case for U.S. military intervention in World War II. Weinberg argues that Adolf Hitler pursued a global agenda that included plans to conquer the United States. Wartime exigencies forced the German dictator to delay, but never abandon, the development of naval and air capabilities for a trans-Atlantic attack. Germany's alliances with Japan in 1940 provided the Führer with a naval ally to help him advance his dream. According to Weinberg, President Roosevelt—unlike his isolationist critics—grasped the international dimensions of the threat, but still hoped to avoid war by aiding Britain, Russia, and China. Germany's relentless aggression, and Japan's determination to thrust southward across the Pacific, doomed any chance for peace. Weinberg concludes that U.S. entry into the war was both necessary and inevitable.

Most scholars agree that Germany's global militarism justified U.S. entry into the war, but Washington's response to Japanese aggression has generated a more contentious literature. In the second essay, an excerpt from his award-winning history of U.S.-Japanese relations, *The Clash*, Walter LaFeber of Cornell University emphasizes the economic causes of the Second World War for the United States.