



AMERICANS

AND THE HOLOCAUST

STUDENT PACKET

ISOLATION OR
INTERVENTION?
A CASE STUDY ON
THE LEND-LEASE ACT

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
MUSEUM

WILLIAM LEVINE FAMILY INSTITUTE
FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

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BACKGROUND READING

THE UNITED STATES: ISOLATION OR INTERVENTION?

Key Facts

- In the 1920s and 1930s, the United States government emphasized neutrality, decreased the size of the military, and refrained from joining the League of Nations.
- When World War II began in September 1939, 90 percent of Americans hoped the United States would stay out of the war. President Franklin D. Roosevelt faced numerous challenges as he sought to persuade both the US Congress and the American people that the country needed to prepare for war.
- The American people, and American organizations, held a range of viewpoints between “isolation” and “intervention.”

Isolation after World War I

Twenty years after World War I ended, 70 percent of Americans polled believed that American participation in the war had been a mistake. In the 1920s, the US government took measures to reduce the threat of foreign conflict. The United States signed treaties limiting naval construction, and signed the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact, which outlawed aggressive war. The United States also sought to lessen foreign influence by reducing immigration. The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 limited overall immigration and set country-specific quotas, privileging immigrants from northern and western Europe. These laws, which reflected a widespread belief in eugenics and deeply held antisemitic prejudices, marked the end of a period of mass immigration to the United States. The number of arrivals immediately fell to under 20 percent of the pre-World War I totals.

Neutrality

International unrest in the 1930s threatened US isolationism. In response to foreign conflicts, the US Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts between 1935 and 1939, designed to prevent American involvement. Longstanding diplomatic practice held that countries unwilling to become involved in a conflict had to maintain strict neutrality; even economic sanctions, or selling arms to one country but not the other, could be considered acts of war. The Neutrality Acts, therefore, defined the terms of American neutrality for the world.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, leading Great Britain and France to declare war on Germany—the start of World War II. Americans who were polled immediately after these events overwhelmingly hoped for the defeat of Germany, but more than 90 percent opposed the US becoming involved in the war. A majority did not want to join the fight even if Nazi Germany defeated Great Britain and France.

The America First Committee and other Non-Interventionist Groups

Numerous groups advocated against American involvement in World War II. Some, such as the National Council for the Prevention of War (founded in 1921 to promote neutrality) and the Keep America Out of War Congress (founded in 1938 to oppose Roosevelt’s foreign policy), predated the war. Others united multiple constituencies after the war began in order to lobby more effectively. Mothers who did not wish to send their sons to war, Americans of German or Italian descent, Americans of Irish descent (who opposed helping Great Britain), socialists, students, pacifists, and a host of prominent businessmen, intellectuals, and average citizens took action to prevent US intervention.

Cover photo: A newly freed prisoner of the Buchenwald concentration camp made this flag and gave it to Sergeant Donald Hall in 1945. *US Holocaust Memorial Museum collection, gift of the family of Donald J. Hall*

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The largest and most influential non-interventionist group was the America First Committee (AFC), founded in the summer of 1940 by a group of Yale University law students. The AFC—which may have had some 800,000 members and at least 450 local chapters—encouraged civic engagement, such as letter-writing campaigns to elected officials, and sponsored rallies and speeches throughout the country.

Interventionist Groups

In contrast to non-interventionist or isolationist groups, interventionist groups often advocated a variety of different policies, but generally agreed that the United States should support the Allied war effort economically and militarily. The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies was founded in May 1940. The committee, which ultimately boasted 750 local chapters and an estimated membership of 750,000, staged rallies and performances, took out full-page newspaper ads, and handed out flyers in an effort to gain support for aiding Great Britain.

Fight for Freedom, founded in April 1941, aggressively advocated entering World War II to defend both Great Britain and democratic values. Fight for Freedom had many prominent supporters, including journalists, writers, movie stars, and politicians. The Committee to Defend America and Fight for Freedom frequently worked together, and often coordinated with Roosevelt’s aides or British propagandists to rally public support.

Destroyers for Bases

On May 15, 1940, five days after becoming Great Britain’s prime minister, Winston Churchill cabled President Franklin D. Roosevelt to explain that the British military was in serious trouble. Churchill asked the United States to support Great Britain with all aid short of declaring war, including providing older naval destroyers, new aircraft, and anti-aircraft equipment. After several months of negotiations, Roosevelt announced the “destroyers for bases” deal on September 2, 1940, exchanging 50 old destroyers for a 99-year lease to place American military bases on British-controlled territory in Canada and the Caribbean.

Lend-Lease

In December 1940, Churchill informed Roosevelt that soon Britain would run out of cash to pay for transporting necessary war supplies. In response, Roosevelt told Americans during a “fireside chat” radio address on December 29 that the United States “must be the great arsenal of democracy,” putting every effort toward manufacturing planes, ships, guns, and ammunition for Great Britain.

In January 1941, Roosevelt’s congressional allies introduced HR 1776, a bill that granted the president the power to “sell, transfer title to, exchange, lend, lease, or otherwise dispose of...any defense article” to another country. America First Committee members referred to HR 1776 as the “War Dictatorship Bill,” but most Americans knew it as “Lend-Lease” for short. Polls showed that 68 percent of Americans approved of the lend-lease proposal.

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A BILL

Further to promote the defense of the United States, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as “An Act to Promote the Defense of the United States”.

SEC. 2. As used in this Act —

(a) The term “defense article” means -

- (1) Any weapon, munition, aircraft, vessel, or boat;
- (2) Any machinery, facility, tool, material, or supply necessary for the manufacture, production, processing, repair, servicing, or operation of any article described in this subsection;
- (3) Any component material or part of or equipment for any article described in this subsection;
- (4) Any agricultural, industrial or other commodity or article for defense.

Such term “defense article” includes any article described in this subsection: Manufactured or procured pursuant to section 3, or to which the United States or any foreign government has or hereafter acquires title, possession, or control.

(b) The term “defense information” means any plan, specification, design, prototype, or information pertaining to any defense article.

SEC. 3. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the President may, from time to time, when he deems it in the interest of national defense, authorize the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, or the head of any other department or agency of the Government —

- (1) To manufacture in arsenals, factories, and shipyards under their jurisdiction, or otherwise procure, to the extent to which funds are made available therefor, or contracts are authorized from time to time by the Congress, or both, any defense article for the government of any country whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States.
- (2) To sell, transfer title to, exchange, lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of, to any such government any defense article, but no defense article not manufactured or procured under paragraph (1) shall in any way be disposed of under this paragraph, except after consultation with the Chief of Staff of the Army or the Chief of Naval Operations of the Navy, or both. The value of defense articles disposed of in any way under authority of this paragraph, and procured from funds heretofore appropriated, shall not exceed \$1,300,000,000. The value of such defense articles shall be determined by the head of the department or agency concerned or such other department, agency or officer as shall be designated in the manner provided in the rules and regulations issued hereunder. Defense articles procured from funds hereafter appropriated to any department or agency of the Government, other than from funds authorized to be appropriated under this Act, shall not be disposed of in any way under authority of this paragraph except to the extent hereafter authorized by the Congress in the Acts appropriating such funds or otherwise.
- (3) To test, inspect, prove, repair, outfit, recondition, or otherwise to place in good working order, to the extent to which funds are made available therefor, or contracts are authorized from time to time by the Congress, or both, any defense article for any such government, or to procure any or all such services by private contract.

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(4) To communicate to any such government any defense information pertaining to any defense article furnished to such government under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(5) To release for export any defense article disposed of in any way under this subsection to any such government.

(b) The terms and conditions upon which any such foreign government receives any aid authorized under subsection (a) shall be those which the President deems satisfactory, and the benefit to the United States may be the payment or repayment in kind or property, or any other direct or indirect benefit which the President deems satisfactory.

(c) After June 30, 1943, or after the passage of a concurrent resolution by the two Houses before June 30, 1943, which declares that the powers conferred by or pursuant to subsection (a) are no longer necessary to promote the defense of the United States, neither the President nor the head of any department or agency shall exercise any of the powers conferred by or pursuant to subsection (a) except that until July 1, 1946, any of such powers may be exercised to the extent necessary to carry out a contract or agreement with such a foreign government made before July 1, 1943, or before the passage of such concurrent resolution, whichever is the earlier.

(d) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize or to permit the authorization of convoying vessels by naval vessels of the United States.

(e) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize or to permit the authorization of the entry of any American vessel into a combat area in violation of section 3 of the neutrality Act of 1939.

SEC. 4 All contracts or agreements made for the disposition of any defense article or defense information pursuant to section 3 shall contain a clause by which the foreign government undertakes that it will not, without the consent of the President, transfer title to or possession of such defense article or defense information by gift, sale, or otherwise, or permit its use by anyone not an officer, employee, or agent of such foreign government.

SEC. 5. (a) The Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, or the head of any other department or agency of the Government involved shall when any such defense article or defense information is exported, immediately inform the department or agency designated by the President to administer section 6 of the Act of July 2, 1940 (54 Stat. 714) of the quantities, character, value, terms of disposition and destination of the article and information so exported.

(b) The President from time to time, but not less frequently than once every ninety days, shall transmit to the Congress a report of operations under this Act except such information as he deems incompatible with the public interest to disclose. Reports provided for under this subsection shall be transmitted to the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House of Representatives, as the case may be, if the Senate or the House of Representatives, as the case may be, is not in session.

SEC. 6. (a) There is hereby authorized to be appropriated from time to time, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, such amounts as may be necessary to carry out the provisions and accomplish the purposes of this Act.

(b) All money and all property which is converted into money received under Section 3 from any government shall, with the approval of the Director of the Budget revert to the respective appropriation or appropriations out of which funds were expended with respect to the defense article or defense information for which such consideration is received, and shall be available for expenditure for the purpose for which such expended funds were appropriated by law, during the fiscal year in which such funds are received and the ensuing fiscal year; but in no event shall any funds so received be available for expenditure after June 30, 1946.

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SEC. 7. The Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the head of the department or agency shall in all contracts or agreements for the disposition of any defense article or defense information fully protect the rights of all citizens of the United States who have patent rights in and to any such article or information which is hereby authorized to be disposed of and the payments collected for royalties on such patents shall be paid to the owners and holders of such patents.

SEC. 8. The Secretaries of War and of the Navy are hereby authorized to purchase or otherwise acquire arms, ammunition, and implements of war produced within the jurisdiction of any country to which Section 3 is applicable, whenever the President deems such purchase or acquisition to be necessary in the interests of the defense of the United States.

SEC. 9. The President may, from time to time, promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary and proper to carry out any of the provisions of this Act; and he may exercise any power or authority conferred on him by this Act through such department, agency, or officer as he shall direct.

SEC. 10. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to change existing law relating to the use of the land and naval forces of the United States, except insofar as such use relates to the manufacture, procurement, and repair of defense articles, the communication of information and other noncombatant purposes enumerated in this Act.

SEC. 11. If any provision of this Act or the application of such provision to any circumstance shall be held invalid, the validity of the remainder of the Act and the applicability of such provision to other circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

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January 1941 Poll

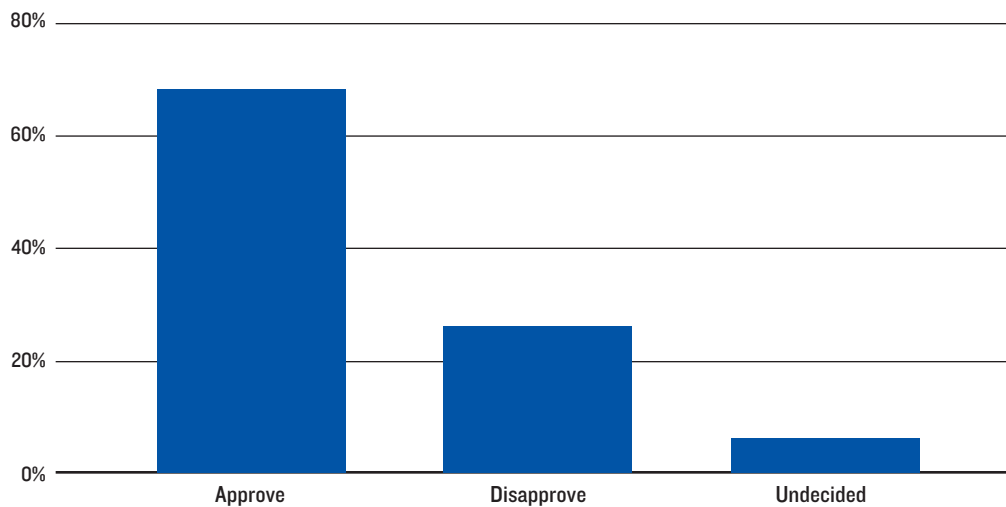
If the British are unable to pay cash for war materials bought in this country, should our Government lend or lease war materials to the British, to be paid back in the same materials and other goods after the war is over?

68% Approve

26% Disapprove

6% Undecided

January 1941: If the British are unable to pay cash for war materials bought in this country, should our Government lend or lease war materials to the British, to be paid back in the same materials and other goods after the war is over?



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PRIMARY SOURCES

Statement of the American Federation of Labor in Support of the “Lend Lease” Bill (S. 275), to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, February 11, 1941 (excerpts)

“The American Federation of Labor supports the approval of S. 275, whose basic provisions it believes to be necessary and indispensable to the defense of the United States.”

“The battle front of Europe is not only a battle front of war, it is more truly a battle front against world-sweeping revolution, a revolution whose purpose it is to uproot and annihilate democracy in order to bring the domination of unbridled political and economic dictatorship in its place.”

“The full force of the revolution of destruction has been turned against Great Britain in the Battle of Britain. The fate of this last democratic nation for Europe is of importance to every other democratic country throughout the world. If Great Britain wins the Battle of Britain, democracy wins. If Great Britain is defeated, then America and democracy are increasingly menaced and our peaceful pursuit of life is seriously threatened. The threat of war will be brought nearer to our homeland as well as to our homes.”

“Resolved, That the Sixteenth Convention of the American Federation of Labor, assembled in New Orleans, go on record as condemning the attack of the Axis Powers upon Britain, and urge vigorous and effective American support of the cause of Britain, but to keep out of war.

While labor believes that S.275 should be perfected by amendments in several details it fully approves the basic principles and the general framework of this measure and urgently pleads for its prompt enactment.

Aid to Britain and to all democratic nations now pitted in battle to stem the onslaught of aggression against self-government of free peoples, must be placed upon a firm foundation of a specific grant of statutory authority accorded to the executive branch of our Government by Congress.

This bill must serve not only as a grant of authority for the execution of a program spelled out by Congress but also as a basic instrument of the national policy of the people of the United States.”

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Statement of the American Federation of Labor in Support of the "Lend Lease" Bill (S. 275), to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, February 11, 1941 (full text)

TO PROMOTE THE DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1941

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met, pursuant to adjournment, at 10 a. m., in the caucus room, Senate Office Building, Hon. Walter F. George presiding.

Present: Senators George (chairman), Harrison, Connally, Thomas of Utah, Van Nuys, Murray, Pepper, Green, Barkley, Reynolds, Guffey, Gillette, Clark of Missouri, Glass, Byrnes, Johnson of California, Capper, Vandenberg, White, Shipstead, and Nye.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, has submitted for the record a statement of the federation in support of the bill before us. Mr. Green is unable to be present as he is presiding over the quarterly meeting of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor, at Miami, Fla.

(The statement is as follows:)

STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR IN SUPPORT OF THE "LEND-LEASE" BILL (S. 275), TO THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

The Seventy-seventh Congress of the United States has been vested with the responsibility of making one of the most momentous decisions in American history. The responsibility which it must discharge is threefold. First, to pass upon the proposal submitted to it by the President and translate its purposes into clear and considered judgment of a Congress acting for and on behalf of the people of the United States. Second, to create, through the medium of S. 275, the most important legal and economic weapon of defense which would not only serve to protect the best interests of our Nation in the course of the current world conflict but also provide a basis for future economic rehabilitation in time of world peace. And third, to discharge its duty with the thoroughness which statesmanship demands and yet with the speed which the pressure of current developments requires.

The American Federation of Labor supports the approval of S. 275, whose basic provisions it believes to be necessary and indispensable to the defense of the United States.

This view expresses the firm will and desire of 5,000,000 wage earners within the ranks of the American Federation of Labor and is based on the policy with regard to defense formulated after full deliberation and adopted by unanimous and democratic vote of the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor, which is the supreme policy-making body of our organization.

The battle front of Europe is not only a battle front of war, it is more truly a battle front against world-sweeping revolution, a revolution whose purpose it is to uproot and annihilate democracy in order to bring the domination of unbridled political and economic dictatorship in its place.

The executive council of the American Federation of Labor in reporting to the convention on the European war fully recognized this and said:

"The full force of the revolution of destruction has been turned against Great Britain in the Battle of Britain. The fate of this last democratic nation of Europe is of importance to every other democratic country throughout the world.

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If Great Britain wins the Battle of Britain, democracy wins. If Great Britain is defeated, then America and democracy are increasingly menaced and our peaceful pursuit of life is seriously threatened. The threat of war will be brought nearer to our homeland as well as to our homes.

"So long as Great Britain successfully resists the attack being made upon her, as she is now doing, we in America can feel reasonably safe. The Atlantic Ocean and Great Britain stand as a barrier of protection to America.

"It is quite logical and sound, therefore, that we in America would manifest a deep interest in the Battle of Britain. She stands as the last outpost in the Old World in defense of democracy and the democratic form of government. Figuratively speaking, she stands as the first line of defense against totalitarian aggression in the Western Hemisphere. We hope and pray Great Britain will win. Our sympathies go out to her people, the men and women who make up the British Trade Union Congress, and to all who are fighting a heroic battle against tremendous odds. We favor the extension of all help and assistance possible to Great Britain in her hour of need, on the part of our Government, short of war itself."

The sixtieth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor not only unanimously adopted the report of the executive council, but also reinforced its stand by passing the following resolution also by a unanimous vote:

Resolved, That the Sixtieth Convention of the American Federation of Labor, assembled in New Orleans, go on record as condemning the attack of the Axis Powers upon Britain, and urge vigorous and effective American support of the cause of Britain, but to keep out of war.

While labor believes that S. 275 should be perfected by amendments in several details it fully approves the basic principles and the general framework of this measure and urgently pleads for its prompt enactment.

Aid to Britain and to all democratic nations now pitted in battle to stem the onslaught of aggression against self-government of free peoples, must be placed upon a firm foundation of a specific grant of statutory authority accorded to the executive branch of our Government by Congress.

This bill must serve not only as a grant of authority for the execution of a program spelled out by Congress but also as a basic instrument of the national policy of the people of the United States.

In order to clarify and perfect the proposed measure, the American Federation of Labor recommends the following substantive modifications of this bill:

(1) *Time limit upon the grant of extraordinary powers.*—Article I, section 8, clause 12 of the Constitution of the United States vests in Congress the power to raise and support armies but provides that "no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than 2 years."

The extraordinary powers for which Congress must grant specific authority should be defined in terms of the real needs which arise out of a practical situation. The constitutional provision to which I have just referred reflects a profound conviction on the part of the authors of the Constitution that a democracy should; not surrender for an indefinite period of time its basic processes and procedures; that extraordinary powers of military authorities should not stand in perpetuity and in time become a substitute for civilian powers which provide the necessary and proper channels for the self-government of a democratic people; and, that a government by consent can only remain a democratic government so long as the popular consent to grants of power is conditioned on resubmission of such grants to the people and their duly elected representatives within reasonable time.

The emergency conditions we are facing are changing rapidly. There is little doubt that we shall soon be faced with new and now unforeseeable problems arising out of new situations. I believe it is necessary, therefore, to place a reasonable limit upon the grant of extraordinary powers provided in the bill, and I believe that a 2-year limit to such powers is not only a reasonable one under the present conditions but also accords with the intent and spirit of those who have so wisely framed our Constitution.

(2) *The grant of power to commandeer production should be circumscribed.* Section 3 (a) (1) of the proposed bill states that—

"Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the President may, from time to time, when he deems it in the interest of national defense, authorize the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, or the head of any other department or agency of the Government:

"(1) To manufacture in arsenals, factories, and shipyards under their jurisdiction, or otherwise procure, any defense article for the government of any country whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States."

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In a statement made on January 10, to the Senate, the majority leader, Senator Barkley, attempted to interpret the meaning of this and other provisions of the bill. In this statement it was pointed out that "the power to manufacture under this provision does not carry with it a waiver of the Eight-Hour Act, the Walsh-Healey Act, and similar domestic legislation."

Labor believes that the implications of such a provision and its possible consequences to our entire national economy are so vast that more than an incomplete clarifying statement is needed to indicate the clear intent of Congress in this basic question of policy. We therefore recommend a specific inclusion into this section of a proviso which would clearly set forth the full and unimpaired applicability of the Eight-Hour Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Walsh-Healey Act, the Bacon-Davis Act, the National Labor Relations Act, and of other laws guaranteeing to workers free exercise of their rights to self-organization and collective bargaining and full maintenance of the minimum labor standards prescribed by Congress. We therefore strongly recommend the insertion in section 3 (a) (1) of a proviso which would fully spell out the desire on the part of Congress to maintain labor standards and labor's rights unimpaired in the operation of the "lend-lease" program.

(3) *Report to Congress.*—In the development of so far reaching a program, it is imperative that the people of the United States be fully informed of progress of every phase in its administration. To accomplish this I believe it would be desirable to embody a specific provision in the bill requiring all agencies of the Government utilized by the President in the administration of the law to report to Congress in detail on the manner in which the tasks assigned to such agencies are being carried out and to require the President to report to Congress at least every 6 months on the progress of the entire program as well as its effect upon the employment, wage, and price trends.

(4) *Reciprocity for aid.*—The object of the lend-lease bill is to make the United States "the arsenal for the democracies" and to carry out President Roosevelt's pledge to send to the democratic nations, "in ever-increasing numbers, ships, planes, tanks, guns." In promulgating this bill, Congress cannot lose sight of the crucial problem we shall be facing possibly in a short time when our Nation stands face to face with the task of returning to normal life and of dismantling the great arsenal we shall have built up. It is only fair to our own people and equitable to all peoples concerned that, in return for effective aid we furnish to other nations, these nations through a solemn covenant would pledge themselves to a cooperative arrangement which would assure an outlet for American goods in a peacetime world market and thus provide a basis for full employment to our workers when peace comes.

The aftermath of the present struggle will be a crucial test of our economic system and even of our institutions themselves. I cannot think of a fairer and yet more imperative safeguard against utter chaos and collapse at the end of this war that is now raging throughout the world than a clearcut formula of full economic participation by the United States in the period of post-war world reconstruction.

STATEMENT OF DR. JAMES B. CONANT, PRESIDENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

The CHAIRMAN. The committee has the privilege of hearing Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, as the first witness this morning on the pending legislation.

Dr. Conant, if you have a prepared statement, you may proceed with the statement without questioning until you have finished the statement.

Dr. CONANT. Mr. Chairman, members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, it is a privilege to appear before this committee in its hearings on the vitally important bill which now concerns you. On many of the points which have been discussed in connection with this bill, I make no claim to be an expert witness. I am neither a military strategist nor a student of constitutional law, nor am I familiar with the intricacies of international law. I presume that I have been invited to appear here today because, speaking as a

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December 29, 1940: President Franklin D. Roosevelt “Fireside Chat” (excerpts)

“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 all the Americas, would be living at the point of a gun—a gun loaded with explosive bullets, economic as well as military.”

“There are those who say that the Axis powers would never have any desire to attack the Western Hemisphere. That is the same dangerous form of wishful thinking which has destroyed the powers of resistance of so many conquered peoples. The plain facts are that the Nazis have proclaimed, time and again, that all other races are their inferiors and therefore subject to their orders. And most important of all, the vast resources and wealth of this American Hemisphere constitute the most tempting loot in all the round world.”

“The British people and their allies today 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.

If we are to be completely honest with ourselves, we must admit that there is risk in any course we may take. But I deeply believe that the great majority of our people agree that the course that I advocate involves the least risk now and the greatest hope for world peace in the future.

The people of Europe who are defending themselves do not ask us to do their fighting. They ask us for the implements of war, the planes, the tanks, the guns, the freighters which will enable them to fight for their liberty and for our security. Emphatically we must get these weapons to them in sufficient volume and quickly enough, so that we and our children will be saved the agony and suffering of war which others have had to endure.”

“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 show were we at war.”

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December 29, 1940: President Franklin D. Roosevelt “Fireside Chat” (full text)

My friends:

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 the things that American independence means to you and to me and to ours.

Tonight, in the presence of a world crisis, my mind goes back eight years to a night in the midst of a domestic crisis. It was a time when the wheels of American industry were grinding to a full stop, when the whole banking system of our country had ceased to function.

I well remember that while I sat in my study in the White House, preparing to talk with the people of the United States, I had before my eyes the picture of all those Americans with whom I was talking. I saw the workmen in the mills, the mines, the factories; the girl behind the counter; the small shopkeeper; the farmer doing his spring plowing; the widows and the old men wondering about their life's savings.

I tried to convey to the great mass of American people what the banking crisis meant to them in their daily lives.

Tonight, I want to do the same thing, with the same people, in this new crisis which faces America. We met the issue of 1933 with courage and realism.

We face this new crisis—this new threat to the security of our nation—with the same courage and realism.

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 of America 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.

It was only three weeks ago their leader stated this: “There are two worlds that stand opposed to each other.” And then in defiant reply to his opponents, he said this: “Others are correct when they say: With this world we cannot ever reconcile ourselves. . . . I can beat any other power in the world.” So said the leader of the Nazis.

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In other words, the Axis not merely admits but proclaims that there can be no ultimate peace between their philosophy of government and our philosophy of government.

In view of the nature of this undeniable threat, it can be asserted, properly and categorically, that the United States has no right or reason to encourage talk of peace, until the day shall come when there is a clear intention on the part of the aggressor nations to abandon all thought of dominating or conquering the world.

At this moment, the forces of the states that are leagued against all peoples who live in freedom, are being held away from our shores. The Germans and the Italians are being blocked on the other side of the Atlantic by the British, and by the Greeks, and by thousands of soldiers and sailors who were able to escape from subjugated countries. In Asia, the Japanese are being engaged by the Chinese nation in another great defense. In the Pacific Ocean is our fleet.

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.

One hundred and seventeen years ago the Monroe Doctrine was conceived by our Government as a measure of defense in the face of a threat against this hemisphere by an alliance in Continental Europe. Thereafter, we stood on guard in the Atlantic, with the British as neighbors. There was no treaty. There was no “unwritten agreement.”

And yet, there was the feeling, proven correct by history, that we as neighbors could settle any disputes in peaceful fashion. The fact is that during the whole of this time the Western Hemisphere has remained free from aggression from Europe or from Asia.

Does anyone seriously believe that we need to fear attack anywhere in the Americas while a free Britain remains our most powerful naval neighbor in the Atlantic? Does anyone seriously believe, on the other hand, that we could rest easy if the Axis powers were our neighbors there?

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 all the Americas, would be living at the point of a gun—a gun loaded with explosive bullets, economic as well as military.

We should enter upon a new and terrible era in which the whole world, our hemisphere included, would be run by threats of brute force. To survive in such a world, we would have to convert ourselves permanently into a militaristic power on the basis of war economy.

Some of us like to believe that even if Great Britain falls, we are still safe, because of the broad expanse of the Atlantic and of the Pacific.

But the width of those oceans is not what it was in the days of clipper ships. At one point between Africa and Brazil the distance is less than from Washington to Denver, Colorado five hours for the latest type of bomber. And at the North end of the Pacific Ocean America and Asia almost touch each other.

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Even today we have planes that could fly from the British Isles to New England and back again without refueling. And remember that the range of the modern bomber is ever being increased.

During the past week many people in all parts of the nation have told me what they wanted me to say tonight. Almost all of them expressed a courageous desire to hear the plain truth about the gravity of the situation. One telegram, however, expressed the attitude of the small minority who want to see no evil and hear no evil, even though they know in their hearts that evil exists. That telegram begged me not to tell again of the ease with which our American cities could be bombed by any hostile power which had gained bases in this Western Hemisphere. The gist of that telegram was: "Please, Mr. President, don't frighten us by telling us the facts."

Frankly and definitely there is danger ahead—danger against which we must prepare. But we well know that we cannot escape danger, or the fear of danger, by crawling into bed and pulling the covers over our heads.

Some nations of Europe were bound by solemn non-intervention pacts with Germany. Other nations were assured by Germany that they need never fear invasion. Non-intervention pact or not, the fact remains that they were attacked, overrun and thrown into the modern form of slavery at an hour's notice, or even without any notice at all. As an exiled leader of one of these nations said to me the other day—"The notice was a minus quantity. It was given to my Government two hours after German troops had poured into my country in a hundred places."

The fate of these nations tells us what it means to live at the point of a Nazi gun.

The Nazis have justified such actions by various pious frauds. One of these frauds is the claim that they are occupying a nation for the purpose of "restoring order." Another is that they are occupying or controlling a nation on the excuse that they are "protecting it" against the aggression of somebody else.

For example, Germany has said that she was occupying Belgium to save the Belgians from the British. Would she then hesitate to say to any South American country, "We are occupying you to protect you from aggression by the United States"?

Belgium today is being used as an invasion base against Britain, now fighting for its life. Any South American country, in Nazi hands, would always constitute a jumping-off place for German attack on any one of the other Republics of this hemisphere.

Analyze for yourselves the future of two other places even nearer to Germany if the Nazis won. Could Ireland hold out? Would Irish freedom be permitted as an amazing pet exception in an unfree world? Or the Islands of the Azores which still fly the flag of Portugal after five centuries? You and I think of Hawaii as an outpost of defense in the Pacific. And yet, the Azores are closer to our shores in the Atlantic than Hawaii is on the other side.

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There are those who say that the Axis powers would never have any desire to attack the Western Hemisphere. That is the same dangerous form of wishful thinking which has destroyed the powers of resistance of so many conquered peoples. The plain facts are that the Nazis have proclaimed, time and again, that all other races are their inferiors and therefore subject to their orders. And most important of all, the vast resources and wealth of this American Hemisphere constitute the most tempting loot in all the round world.

Let us no longer blind ourselves to the undeniable fact that the evil forces which have crushed and undermined and corrupted so many others are already within our own gates. Your Government knows much about them and every day is ferreting them out.

Their secret emissaries are active in our own and in neighboring countries. They seek to stir up suspicion and dissension to cause internal strife. They try to turn capital against labor, and vice versa. They try to reawaken long slumbering racial and religious enmities which should have no place in this country. They are active in every group that promotes intolerance. They exploit for their own ends our natural abhorrence of war. These trouble-breeders have but one purpose. It is to divide our people into hostile groups and to destroy our unity and shatter our will to defend ourselves.

There are also American citizens, many of them in high places, who, unwittingly in most cases, are aiding and abetting the work of these agents. I do not charge these American citizens with being foreign agents. But I do charge them with doing exactly the kind of work that the dictators want done in the United States.

These people not only believe that we can save our own skins by shutting our eyes to the fate of other nations. Some of them go much further than that. They say that we can and should become the friends and even the partners of the Axis powers. Some of them even suggest that we should imitate the methods of the dictatorships. Americans never can and never will do that.

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.

Even the people of Italy have been forced to become accomplices of the Nazis; but at this moment they do not know how soon they will be embraced to death by their allies.

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; 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?

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Such a dictated peace would be no peace at all. It would be only another armistice, leading to the most gigantic armament race and the most devastating trade wars in all history. And in these contests the Americas would offer the only real resistance to the Axis powers.

With all their vaunted efficiency, with all their parade of pious purpose in this war, there are still in their background the concentration camp and the servants of God in chains.

The history of recent years proves that shootings and chains and concentration camps are not simply the transient tools but the very altars of modern dictatorships. They may talk of a “new order” in the world, but what they have in mind is only a revival of the oldest and the worst tyranny. In that there is no liberty, no religion, no hope.

The proposed “new order” is the very opposite of a United States of Europe or a United States of Asia. It is not a Government based upon the consent of the governed. It is not a union of ordinary, self-respecting men and women to protect themselves and their freedom and their dignity from oppression. It is an unholy alliance of power and pelf to dominate and enslave the human race.

The British people and their allies today 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.

If we are to be completely honest with ourselves, we must admit that there is risk in any course we may take. But I deeply believe that the great majority of our people agree that the course that I advocate involves the least risk now and the greatest hope for world peace in the future.

The people of Europe who are defending themselves do not ask us to do their fighting. They ask us for the implements of war, the planes, the tanks, the guns, the freighters which will enable them to fight for their liberty and for our security. Emphatically we must get these weapons to them in sufficient volume and quickly enough, so that we and our children will be saved the agony and suffering of war which others have had to endure.

Let not the defeatists tell us that it is too late. It will never be earlier. Tomorrow will be later than today. 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.

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

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 which are resisting aggression.

This is not a matter of sentiment or of controversial personal opinion. It is a matter of realistic, practical military policy, based on the advice of our military experts who are in close touch with existing warfare. These military and naval experts and the members of the Congress and the Administration have a single-minded purpose—the defense of the United States.

This nation is making a great effort to produce everything that is necessary in this emergency—and with all possible speed. This great effort requires great sacrifice.

I would ask no one to defend a democracy which in turn would not defend everyone in the nation against want and privation. The strength of this nation shall not be diluted by the failure of the Government to protect the economic well-being of its citizens.

If our capacity to produce is limited by machines, it must ever be remembered that these machines are operated by the skill and the stamina of the workers. As the Government is determined to protect the rights of the workers, so the nation has a right to expect that the men who man the machines will discharge their full responsibilities to the urgent needs of defense.

The worker possesses the same human dignity and is entitled to the same security of position as the engineer or the manager or the owner. For the workers provide the human power that turns out the destroyers, the airplanes and the tanks.

The nation expects our defense industries to continue operation without interruption by strikes or lock-outs. It expects and insists that management and workers will reconcile their differences by voluntary or legal means, to continue to produce the supplies that are so sorely needed.

And on the economic side of our great defense program, we are, as you know, bending every effort to maintain stability of prices and with that the stability of the cost of living.

Nine days ago I announced the setting up of a more effective organization to direct our gigantic efforts to increase the production of munitions. The appropriation of vast sums of money and a well coordinated executive direction of our defense efforts are not in themselves enough. Guns, planes, ships and many other things have to be built in the factories and arsenals of America. They have to be produced by workers and managers and engineers with the aid of machines which in turn have to be built by hundreds of thousands of workers throughout the land.

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In this great work there has been splendid cooperation between the Government and industry and labor; and I am very thankful.

American industrial genius, unmatched throughout the world in the solution of production problems, has been called upon to bring its resources and its talents into action. Manufacturers of watches, farm implements, linotypes, cash registers, automobiles, sewing machines, lawn mowers and locomotives are now making fuses, bomb packing crates, telescope mounts, shells, pistols and tanks.

But all our present efforts are not enough. We must have more ships, more guns, more planes—more of everything. This can only be accomplished if we discard the notion of “business as usual.” This job cannot be done merely by superimposing on the existing productive facilities the added requirements of the nation for defense.

Our defense efforts must not be blocked by those who fear the future consequences of surplus plant capacity. The possible consequences of failure of our defense efforts now are much more to be feared.

After the present needs of our defenses are past, a proper handling of the country’s peace-time needs will require all the new productive capacity—if not more.

No pessimistic policy about the future of America shall delay the immediate expansion of those industries essential to defense. We need them.

I want to make it clear that it is the purpose of the nation to build now with all possible speed every machine, every arsenal, every factory that we need to manufacture our defense material. We have the men- the skill- the wealth- and above all, the will.

I am confident that if and when production of consumer or luxury goods in certain industries requires the use of machines and raw materials that are essential for defense purposes, then such production must yield, and will gladly yield, to our primary and compelling purpose.

I appeal to the owners of plants—to the managers—to the workers—to our own Government employees—to put every ounce of effort into producing these munitions swiftly and without stint. With this appeal I give you the pledge that all of us who are officers of your Government will devote ourselves to the same whole-hearted extent to the great task that lies ahead.

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.

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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 show were we at war.

We have furnished the British great material support and we will furnish far more in the future.

There will be no “bottlenecks” in our determination to aid Great Britain. No dictator, no combination of dictators, will weaken that determination by threats of how they will construe that determination.

The British have received invaluable military support from the heroic Greek army, and from the forces of all the governments in exile. Their strength is growing. It is the strength of men and women who value their freedom more highly than they value their lives.

I believe that the Axis powers are not going to win this war. I base that belief on the latest and best information.

We have no excuse for defeatism. We have every good reason for hope—hope for peace, hope for the defense of our civilization and for the building of a better civilization in the future.

I have the profound conviction that the American people are now determined to put forth a mightier effort than they have ever yet made to increase our production of all the implements of defense, to meet the threat to our democratic faith.

As President of the United States I call for that national effort. I call for it in the name of this nation which we love and honor and which we are privileged and proud to serve. I call upon our people with absolute confidence that our common cause will greatly succeed.

From The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15917>.

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“Lindbergh Hits Lease-Lend Bill in Testimony,” Northwest Arkansas Times, February 6, 1941 (transcription)

“Charles A. Lindbergh said today that by aiding Great Britain and other countries the United States ‘is encouraging war, prolonging it and increasing bloodshed in Europe without materially affecting the course of the war.’ Testifying in opposition to the administration’s British aid bill before the senate foreign relations committee, Lindbergh said in a prepared statement that if the country is ever invaded ‘the responsibility will lie with those who send our arms abroad.’”

“The flyer said he had reached the conclusion that, given ‘several years,’ the United States was the one nation that could equal or excel Germany in aviation but he did not believe American assistance could give Great Britain air superiority over the Nazis. He called Germany the ‘natural airpower of Europe,’ and said it was obvious that England could not reach Germany’s air strength without great assistance from the United States. Regardless of assistance, Lindbergh said he did not believe that American and British air forces could fight from the small area of the British Isles on equal terms with a German luftwaffe that had ‘unlimited bases’ on the continent.”

“‘We would have a disadvantageous geographical position from which to fight, and an ocean to cross with aircraft, men, fuel and supplies, while our ships would be constantly subjected to the bombs and torpedoes of our enemy,’ he said. ‘What we are doing in following our present policy,’ he asserted, ‘is giving up an ideal defensive position in America for a very precarious offensive position in Europe.’”

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"Lindbergh Hits Lease-Lend Bill in Testimony," Northwest Arkansas Times, February 6, 1941 (original)

Northwest Arkansas Times

VOLUME 70, NUMBER 174 PAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS, THURSDAY EVENING, FEB. 6, 1941 10 PAGES—TWO SECTIONS PRICE THREE CENTS

BEHIND THE NEWS The War Today

By HERBERT MACKENZIE

Resumption of his visit to Britain, with temporary postponement of the visit, is the very heart of a steady stream of news from London.

The battle of Britain, though had almost closed, however, is still being watched with interest and hope for the day when the British will be able to land in France.

When the day of trial comes it will be in great measure a test of strength between the two nations. There will be, however, a number of other factors which will be important in the final result.

The British will be expected to meet the German in a final battle in the air, which will be the decisive battle in the war.

Masked Woman Disturbs Debate

Masked woman, New York City, walks solemnly from Washington St. to the office of the U. S. State Dept. after disrupting debate on the aid to Britain bill by shouting from the balcony while clad in a black hood and wearing a black mask. (INA Release)

Panic-Stricken Italian Colonists Flee in Africa

Greeks Claim Breaking Up of Counter-Attacks; Light Air Raids

By the Associated Press

Pushed against Italian colonies were reported today by the British in the Middle East, according to a report from London.

The report says that the British have broken up the counter-attacks of the Italian forces in the Middle East.

Light air raids were reported from the Middle East.

"Tugboats" on the Landing Field

New York has no tug for handling large ships and is dependent on tugboats from other ports. The tugboats are being used to handle large ships at the port.

Senate Reverses Itself on Measure To Trap Foxes, Reversing Stand and Opposing All Animal Trapping

University Appropriation of \$700,000 a Year Approved; Moose Kills State Wage-Hour Bill

Lindbergh Hits Lease-Lend Bill in Testimony

Says United States Aid Will Encourage Pro-Long Present War

Washington, Feb. 6 (AP)—Charles A. Lindbergh said today that by aiding Great Britain and other enemies the United States is encouraging war, prolonging it and increasing bloodshed in Europe without materially affecting the course of the war.

Winant Nominated for Ambassador

Former N. Hampshire Governor FDR Choice

Fot Garner Discusses Nazi War Methods and U. S. Defense

Declaring that national defense is a problem not only of the army and navy but of every man and woman in the country, Gov. Charles C. Winterrowd, former governor of North Carolina, discussed Nazi war methods and U. S. defense today.

Strike Threat At Ford Plant Is Implied

Demands Made by
CIO Affect Thousands
of Workers

Adkins Urged To Be Senator

But Governor Says He
Will Not Resign

Weather Forecast—

Mostly clear, periods of rain in east, cold wave, heavy freezing in north, hard frost in north tonight. Friday, cloudy, colder in east and north. Today's temperature—low 25, high 35.

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ISOLATION OR INTERVENTION? A CASE STUDY ON THE LEND-LEASE ACT

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Statement of General Robert E. Wood, Acting National Chairman, America First Committee, February 4–10, 1941 (excerpts)

“Certainly no patriotic citizen at this time wishes to be put in the light of an obstructionist but Senate bill 275 is of such a character that any citizen opposed to our entry into the war has no choice but to oppose it.”

“I, with the majority of American citizens, favor any measure tending to expedite our defense or any measure to expedite material help to England.”

“But this bill is not a defense measure or a lease-lend bill; it is really a war bill, transferring the war-making powers of Congress to the President. As such, I oppose it.”

“The bill gives the President a blank check on the American taxpayers’ money for the defense of Britain with no safeguards or checks. I presume the majority of the American people would approve a pretty big check, but I doubt whether they would make it unlimited.”

“I cannot understand the pressure on time put on the passage of the bill. Its passage does not of itself produce a single additional airplane, ship, or tank. Certainly the defense program is being rushed, and we understand that the bulk of munitions now being produced is being shipped to Britain as fast as possible. While I can see the urgency of England’s condition, while I certainly want to see her hold out, and while I concur in all possible aid short of war being sent to her, I cannot subscribe to the opinion that even if she is defeated this country is in immediate danger of invasion. There should be no occasion for fear on our part.”

“I am not ready to admit that our material and moral resources are so low that we must fall back on the resources of other nations or else go under ourselves. I doubt whether the American people really understand the implications of these phrases. They have been told that this is a bill to promote the defense of the United States. They have not been told that this is a bill which puts equal importance on the defense of foreign nations. They have been told that this is a bill to aid the Allies. They have not been told that this is a bill which definitely makes the cause of the Allies our own; that national defense, which is the supreme concern of all Americans, would be identical with defense of the Allies. For Congress to admit that we must tie our fate to the fate of any foreign nation seems to me to be bad enough. But this bill is even worse. It gives the President the sole power to decide which are the foreign nations whose defense is synonymous with United States defense. This bill turns over to the President the blood and resources of our entire Nation and gives him power to use it wherever in the world he deems there is a country vital to the defense of the United States.”

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Statement of General Robert E. Wood, Acting National Chairman, America First Committee, February 4–10, 1941 (full text)

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STATEMENT OF GEN. ROBERT E. WOOD, ACTING NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, AMERICA FIRST COMMITTEE

General Wood. Certainly no patriotic citizen at this time wishes to be put in the light of an obstructionist but Senate bill 275 is of such a character that any citizen opposed to our entry into the war has no choice but to oppose it.

As far as the defense program is concerned, there is no question but that any specific proposals the President desired to put forth would have the overwhelming support of all citizens.

If, as appears from the Secretary of War's testimony, there are any regulations or red tape that interfere with the President's desire to obtain increased production for defense, he can certainly obtain the overwhelming support of all citizens to remedial action.

If the President desires action to obtain unified purchasing and production, he could and should get unanimous support.

If, in accordance with his lease-lend message, he wants further credits or gifts for Britain when her own resources are exhausted so that the manufacture and supply of munitions may continue uninterrupted, he could probably obtain such action.

I, with the majority of American citizens, favor any measure tending to expedite our defense or any measure to expedite material help to England.

But this bill is not a defense measure or a lease-lend bill; it is really a war bill, transferring the war-making powers of Congress to the President. As such, I oppose it.

There are no limits in the bill as to time, countries, and money. The word "any" is repeated exactly 30 times in its verbiage—that little word seems to mean unlimited as to numbers, quantity, and degree. There is no limitation whatever to the President's judgment.

There is nothing in the bill to prevent the use of merchant vessels into the war zone. That step means war. Yet the Secretary of War objects to any prohibition against such a step being placed in the bill.

There appears nothing in the bill to prevent the use of our Navy or our air force by Great Britain. That means war.

There is apparently nothing in the bill to prevent sending our armed forces to the scene of the European conflict.

There is nothing in the bill to prevent involvement in war as distinguished from a declaration of war by Congress.

There is nothing in the bill to prevent alien ships now in sanctuary in our harbors from being seized. That may mean war.

The provision in the bill permitting the use of our ports for the repair and supply of foreign warships is contrary to international law, and contrary to agreements which I understand we have recently signed. This may or may not mean war.

The bill gives the President a blank check on the American taxpayers' money for the defense of Britain with no safeguards or checks. I presume the majority of the American people would approve a pretty big check, but I doubt whether they would make it unlimited. If we are to throw open the doors of our Treasury to Britain, it seems only fair that all British resources in this country be liquidated. Large companies, unlisted, like Lever Bros., the American Viscose Corporation, the Dunlop Tire Co. plant, insurance companies, cotton plantations, cattle ranches, other real estate, evidently did not ap-

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pear in Secretary Morgenthau's figures. That does not mean Great Britain would be stripped of resources, for she has large resources in other countries. My remarks only pertain to her resources in this country.

It is not to the point to say that these powers will not be exercised; they can be exercised, and Congress is dodging its responsibilities when it transfers these powers. And no consideration is given to any possible illness or accident to the Chief Executive, whereby these immense powers may be lodged in other hands, who might be desirous of getting us into this war as an active belligerent.

I cannot understand the pressure on time put on the passage of the bill. Its passage does not of itself produce a single additional airplane, ship, or tank. Certainly the defense program is being rushed, and we understand that the bulk of munitions now being produced is being shipped to Britain as fast as possible. While I can see the urgency of England's condition, while I certainly want to see her hold out, and while I concur in all possible aid short of war being sent to her, I cannot subscribe to the opinion that even if she is defeated this country is in immediate danger of invasion. There should be no occasion for fear on our part.

After 22 years out of the Army I do not profess to be a military expert, but I do know something about the question of supply and lines of communication. I know something about the preparation involved in such an immense undertaking as an invasion from Europe by land, air, or sea power from a point 3,000 miles from our shores. I know what the immense difficulties of supply are over such an extended line of communication. I would say unhesitatingly that even with the great military power possessed by Germany, it would take a minimum of 1 year after the conclusion of the present European war before such an attempt could even be started. And by the middle of 1942 we ought to be in such shape as to repel such an attempt, if made. I do not believe it will ever be made, not that I believe any Nazi promises, but because I think it is plainly in their self-interest not to make such an attempt. Our people seem to overlook the truth of the mathematical axiom that a force varies inversely as the square of the distance. The military strength of Germany is great on the Continent of Europe; translated 3,000 miles away, it becomes very weak. Conversely our industrial strength is immense here, even in the Caribbean, but translated 3,000 miles away, it becomes weak.

I cannot understand the defeatism of some of my fellow countrymen. When this Nation was small and weak, it had no such fears. Now with a population of 130,000,000 people, with 16,000,000 young men between the ages of 21 and 35, with the greatest industrial plant in the world, with two great ocean barriers, we seem to be paralyzed with fear of Hitler. What we need is not faith in England, fear of Hitler, but faith in ourselves. The great Nation that trusts to other countries for its protection, and not in itself, is on the road to destruction.

Our cabinet officers have told us that if this bill is not rushed through to passage it may be too late to save England. What class of aid that we are not giving now will be given if the bill is passed? Does the passage of this bill mean convoys, the sending of our Navy or air force to the assistance of England—in other words, definite involvement in the war, in definite violation of the President's pre-election pledges and the platforms of both parties? What objection can there be to telling

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the American people frankly just what is proposed to be done under the terms of this bill? I have read the testimony of the cabinet officers, and I do not yet grasp the specific objectives of this bill, or how they cannot be attained by a specific bill or bills giving specific authority.

There is not or should not be any question of partisanship in regard to the bill. It should only be considered from the point of view of the best interests of the country. The real question is not one of defense or aid to Britain, but whether this country is going to be involved in this war as an active belligerent, and that is the greatest decision that the American people have had to face since the Civil War. Now we can have our differences on domestic policy; if one side makes mistakes, sooner or later another Congress or another Chief Executive can undo those mistakes and the country is strong enough to stand the consequences. But if we make a mistake now, in entering this war, it is probable that no succeeding Congress or President can undo the consequences of that mistake, and succeeding generations will bear those consequences.

The heart of S. 275 lies in its granting of virtually unlimited powers to the President to aid "the government of any country whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States." Here is enunciated a policy unprecedented in American history—namely, that our continued national existence depends on the defense of foreign countries. In effect you are called upon to write into law the admission that the United States cannot defend its own integrity by itself. In those few phrases we in a way abandon our independence as a nation. These phrases do not say that the continued resistance of certain nations may be helpful to our own world position under certain future conditions; they say that we cannot survive as a nation unless these other nations survive.

I am not ready to admit that our material and moral resources are so low that we must fall back on the resources of other nations or else go under ourselves. I doubt whether the American people really understand the implications of these phrases. They have been told that this is a bill to promote the defense of the United States. They have not been told that this is a bill which puts equal importance on the defense of foreign nations. They have been told that this is a bill to aid the Allies. They have not been told that this is a bill which definitely makes the cause of the Allies our own; that national defense, which is the supreme concern of all Americans, would be identical with defense of the Allies. For Congress to admit that we must tie our fate to the fate of any foreign nation seems to me to be bad enough. But this bill is even worse. It gives the President the sole power to decide which are the foreign nations whose defense is synonymous with United States defense. This bill turns over to the President the blood and resources of our entire Nation and gives him power to use it wherever in the world he deems there is a country vital to the defense of the United States.

It seems to me it is more important for the supporters of this bill to consider the advisability of its passage than for its opponents. It is not a question of political power, prestige, or pressure to pass a bill, it is a question of the good of our country now and in future. Certainly the President and Congress desire at this time national unity. I do not believe they can get national unity by the passage of this bill, with 85 percent of the people still opposed to our entry into the

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war. If as a result of the passage of this bill we are actively involved in the war within the next 90 days—and I believe there is this possibility if the bill passes—you can not have a united people. A vast minority if not an actual majority of the people will believe that we have been tricked into the war by the passage of this bill, will believe their leaders in Congress have betrayed them. If we are to go into this war as an active belligerent, the mass of the people must be convinced that it is necessary to do so, and certainly they are not convinced thus far.

That is all.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Harrison?

Senator HARRISON. I do not desire to ask any questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Connally?

Senator CONNALLY. I will ask the General some questions later.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Johnson, have you any questions?

Senator JOHNSON of California. General, where do you reside, please?

General WOOD. Chicago.

Senator JOHNSON of California. You have resided there a great many years?

General WOOD. I have resided there since the close of the last war.

Senator JOHNSON of California. Were you in the last war?

General WOOD. Yes, sir.

Senator JOHNSON of California. How long did you serve, and in what capacity, please?

General WOOD. I was out of the Army when the war began, although I was a graduate of the Military Academy. I was called back, and I assisted General Goethals for 3 months in the Emergency Fleet. I then went over to France as a colonel of infantry in the Rainbow Division.

I arrived in France in September 1917. I was then transferred to the General Staff at Chaumont, and I was called back at the end of March 1918, to become Acting Quartermaster General of the Army, and I served as such.

Senator JOHNSON of California. You were at Chaumont for what period, please?

General WOOD. Between October 1917 and March 1918.

Senator JOHNSON of California. I asked you that question purely from a personal standpoint. I did not know whether you knew my lad, there, or not.

General WOOD. No, sir; I did not.

Senator JOHNSON of California. How?

General WOOD. I did not, sir.

Senator JOHNSON of California. What position do you hold in Chicago now, in reference to any committee?

General WOOD. You mean my business position?

Senator JOHNSON of California. No; first, tell me your business.

General WOOD. I am chairman of the board of Sears, Roebuck & Co.

Senator JOHNSON of California. Now, tell me if you preside over the destinies of any committee there?

General WOOD. I am acting chairman of this America First Committee.

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