

The Origins of the Second World War: An International Perspective

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Chapter 26

*A Pivotal Power:
The United States and the International System of the
Inter-War Period*

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Seeking to shed new light on the wider origins of the Second World War, this chapter will re-appraise two central questions. What was the United States' role in the international system of the inter-war period? And what part did US policy play in the pre-history of the twentieth century's second global cataclysm?

The view that following the Senate's rejection of the Versailles treaty the United States became more or less completely isolationist, above all in the crucial realm of international security, was originally prevalent after 1945. More recent studies have acknowledged some US influence on international developments, but they have tended to confine it to the sphere of 'economic diplomacy', especially in Europe. More importantly, there has not been any consensus in the long-standing debate over what made the American quest for international stability between the two world wars ultimately futile.¹ Liberal critics of US policy after Wilson have argued that by failing to support the League it decisively weakened efforts to fortify peace through collective security and binding standards of international law.² By contrast, influential 'realist' studies have claimed that by failing to extend post-war security guarantees, especially to France, US decision makers undermined not only the Versailles system but also any prospects of establishing a balance of power against Germany's allegedly inevitable turn to aggressive revisionism. Similar claims have been advanced regarding America's failure to contain Japan's aggressive advances in China, especially since the Manchurian crisis of 1931.³

The following analysis aims to advance a different interpretation of the pivotal yet also distinctly constrained role of the United States in the inter-war period's embattled international system. While examining the extent and consequences of America's *relative* isolationism after 1919 it seeks to explain the impact – and failure – of aspirations that in fact prefigured those of the post-Second World War era: to reform the unstable Versailles system and to extend an 'American peace' in Europe, on which this chapter will focus, yet also in the Far East. Both positively and negatively, the pursuits of American policymakers between 1919 and 1941 were formative for redefining the United States' relations with the world in the twentieth century. Exploring their endeavours can elucidate a momentous re-orientation and learning process. The critical

challenge for US decision makers ever since the Great War was to learn how to exercise *and legitimate* a liberal American hegemony. More profoundly, a '*Pax Americana*' was only sustainable if the United States took the lead, not in unilaterally extending an informal 'American empire' while eschewing international commitments, but in co-operating with other powers to establish new ground-rules of international politics, security and economics.⁴

Re-appraising the question why neither a constructive US hegemony nor a legitimate international order emerged in the inter-war period can also broaden our understanding of the developments and crises that ultimately led to the Second World War. To this end, the chapter will examine a process of adjustment and reorientation that fundamentally altered America's global role. Broadly speaking, this process, which progressed and regressed between the early 1920s and the world crises of the 1930s, comprised four stages. In its first two stages, it culminated in two quests to reform international order after Versailles. First came the attempt of the pre-eminent US Secretary of State of this crucial decade, Charles E. Hughes, to establish – under the isolationist constraints of the Republican 'New Era' – a transatlantic 'community of ideals, interests, and purposes' and a new peace system in the Far East. Then, in the latter 1920s, followed a second bid, dominated by the influential Commerce Secretary and Later President Herbert Hoover, to expand a more non-committal and predominantly economic 'American peace'. The third stage of America's re-orientation process was reached when Hoover saw no alternative to reverting to an ever more unilateral course in the vain hope of mastering the unprecedented shockwaves of the Great Depression. The fourth and final stage of this process began with Roosevelt's quest to overcome the depression and embark on a fundamental reform of the American capitalist republic through the New Deal. It was only then that the real shift to a more or less unmitigated American isolationism occurred and Roosevelt felt compelled to disengage from world politics. As a consequence, the United States withdrew from any meaningful international commitments in Europe and East Asia. Arguably, Roosevelt's underlying aim was to create the preconditions for a renewed and more powerful international engagement of the United States, which then proved decisive during and after the Second World War. But America's withdrawal in the crisis-ridden 1930s contributed significantly to creating the constellation that led to the abyss of 1939.

There is no doubt that the Great War had destroyed all prospects of re-establishing the Eurocentric – and war-prone – international system of the Imperialist era. At the same time, the war had turned the United States into the new 'world creditor', particularly of its wartime allies Britain and France, and made it the predominant financial and economic power, with Wall Street replacing the City of London as the hub of the international financial system. But the post-war international constellation confronted US decision makers with an unprecedented challenge in the sphere of international politics. In short, they had to devise policies that accorded with the new power America

wielded, and gain international legitimacy for their aspirations. At the same time, they faced a critical domestic challenge. Here, they had to legitimate any international engagement, let alone commitments, they considered necessary. And they had to do so against strong counter-currents of isolationism that manifested themselves – in the 1920s and overwhelmingly in the 1930s – not only in US public opinion but also, and crucially, in Congress.

Wilson's failure to gain the Senate's endorsement of the Versailles treaty ended his quest for an 'American peace'. Unquestionably, his defeat weakened both the League and the Versailles system severely. But it did not signify the end of US attempts to transform the international system. Although on different terms, this quest was continued under his successors in the 1920s and 1930s.

The original post-war constellation created an antagonism between an isolated Germany, which might eventually pursue an assertive revisionism to cast off Versailles, against an apprehensive France that sought ever more assertive ways to contain the looming German threat. Having lost the Anglo-American alliance guarantee of 1919 the preponderant French Premier of the 1920s, Raymond Poincaré, eventually felt compelled to go beyond the status quo of 1919 in order to bolster French security. In an attempt to gain control over strategic German resources, especially in the Ruhr area, he not only brought Weimar Germany to the brink of disintegration. He also provoked the crucial crisis of the post-war years, the Ruhr crisis of 1923. It led to the emergence of a new, though as yet unconsolidated, Euro-Atlantic international system in the mid-1920s.

Unlike the Versailles system, which in fact aggravated European post-war calamities, the system of London and Locarno, forged in the aftermath of the Ruhr conflict, created the essential framework for Europe's political and economic reconstruction. At the same time, it laid the groundwork for the stabilization and international integration of a democratic Germany, also furnishing the foundations of a new though as yet far-from-consolidated security architecture indispensable to this end. More precisely, what emerged as the (unfinished) Euro-Atlantic peace order of the 1920s was founded through the first and formative strategic bargains of the post-First World War era, the London reparations settlement of 1924 and the Locarno security pact of 1925. These settlements achieved what had proved impossible at Versailles: they inaugurated principles and ground rules through which the only realistic path towards a sustainable post-war order could be opened up – principles and ground rules that could underpin balanced *and reciprocal* agreements forged with, not against, the representatives of the embattled Weimar Republic.⁵

To understand how the essentially transatlantic system of London and Locarno was built, and why it ultimately collapsed, requires a re-appraisal of what became the second US quest to establish a 'Pax Americana' after the Great War. This quest was pursued by two protagonists who each pursued their own in many ways post-Wilsonian yet also distinct visions of international order: the aforementioned secretary of state Hughes, who seized the reins of

US diplomacy in 1921, and the increasingly influential Commerce Secretary Hoover, who from 1929 directed American policy from the White House. As noted, both had to operate in a predominantly isolationist environment. Undeniably, the 1920s saw the emergence of many new internationalist and pacifist pressure groups, including the influential 'outlawry of war' movement. Yet Republican policymakers clearly perceived as predominant those forces that desired to return to an – elusive – isolationist 'normalcy' after the Great War.⁶

In response to the Ruhr conflict Hughes initiated a marked reorientation of Republican post-war policy *vis-à-vis* Europe. Transcending narrowly defined economic diplomacy, he advanced his own doctrine, declaring that its guiding principles would be 'Independence', which did not signify 'isolation', and 'Co-operation', which did not extend to 'alliances and political entanglements'. On these premises, Hughes aspired to foster not the unilateral expansion of a commercial empire but a new 'peace system': an international 'community' of ideals and interests in which the American government acted as an informal but consistently committed arbiter.⁷ Its nucleus was to comprise the United States, the states of Western Europe and, crucially, Weimar Germany. The more long-term challenge was to extend such a fledgling community towards Eastern Europe. More generally, Hughes pursued a regional approach to international order. He sought to establish viable regional peace systems, notably in Europe and the Far East, that could become building blocks of a stable global order. Hughes had thus taken the lead in creating the Washington system of 1922, which established the first global naval arms-control regime and a 'Magna Carta' protecting China's integrity. It should be stressed that the Washington accords could not yet settle a tenable East Asian status quo. They were forged in a transition period in which long-standing European and American claims, Japan's interests and the rivalling aspirations of Chinese nationalists and communists, eventually advanced by Chiang Kai-shek and Mao, were hardly reconcilable. But the Washington system nonetheless marked an important advance. It stabilized a complex constellation for nearly a decade, and it had the potential of paving the way for a post-imperial order in East Asia. By including Japan, it also began to strengthen exponents of a new liberal and Western-orientated course in Tokyo like the subsequent foreign minister Shidehara Kijuro and the later premier Hamaguchi Osachi.⁸

In Hughes' view, initiating a Washington process in Europe was no less imperative. And he indeed found a way to do so, and to foster 'effective international co-operation', by promoting the 'depoliticization' and 'rational' settlement of the Ruhr conflict through the so-called Hughes plan, which he had proposed in December 1922. It gave rise to the formative Dawes plan of 1924. Joining forces with the first British Labour government under Ramsay MacDonald and Anglo-American financiers, Hughes was instrumental in transforming the Dawes plan into a complex but overall legitimate political agreement at the London reparations conference.⁹

The London settlement of August 1924 was greeted in Europe as no less than the dawning of an 'American peace'. It did not yet resolve the dispute over

German reparations that had burdened post-war politics. Crucially, however, it was the first agreement negotiated between the victors and the vanquished of the war. And it finally created an instrument for settling the most acute post-Versailles problem: reparations. Taking into account its 'actual capacity to pay', the Dawes scheme lowered Germany's annual obligations, and it led to the initial 800-million Goldmark loan to Germany that a syndicate headed by the House of J.P. Morgan and Co arranged in October 1924. The Dawes regime thus initiated an asymmetric cycle of financial stabilization: Germany mainly relied on US capital to pay reparations to France and Britain, and the latter – both debtors of the United States after 1918 – could in turn use reparations funds to meet their obligations *vis-à-vis* Washington, although France would only ratify the Mellon-Bérenger debt settlement in July 1929. It is worth underscoring that a massive crisis of the reparations and debt regime was not inevitable. Under the circumstances, the settlement of 1924 offered the best possible framework for consolidating Weimar Germany. It set Europe on a path of pacification in the 'golden' latter 1920s. But it had to be sustained.¹⁰

The second pillar of what would evolve into an unfinished transatlantic peace order was the security pact of Locarno, signed in October 1925. The Locarno accords not only enshrined Germany's acceptance of the post-war status quo on its western borders and, through separate arbitration treaties, Berlin's commitment to peaceful change in Eastern Europe. More precisely, the German government committed itself, against tangible domestic opposition, to seeking changes of Germany's borders with Poland and Czechoslovakia, which had been imposed on the vanquished at Versailles, only by peaceful means. Even more significantly, Locarno also laid the foundations for the emergence of a new European concert whose core comprised Britain, France and the Weimar Republic. It is critical to understand, however, that only the transatlantic advances of 1924 had created the necessary and essential preconditions for a success of the Locarno process – and that US support for the pact had a significant part in its success.¹¹ The American government was still not prepared to countenance any direct strategic commitments in Europe. Instead, the State Department emphasized that the responsibility for creating a new European security framework lay squarely with the European powers. Viewing the Locarno pact as an important step in this direction, the Coolidge administration and leading Wall Street bankers thus brought America's financial and political influence to bear on its behalf. At the same time, the Locarno approach had the virtue of relieving Washington of any official obligations that neither the Senate nor the American electorate would have sanctioned.¹²

As noted, 'realist' studies have criticized Washington's myopic 'dollar diplomacy' and alleged disregard for America's long-term security interests during this seminal period. And they have claimed that their net-effect was to prepare the ground for Nazi Germany's subsequent assault on international order.¹³ But neither the eventual failure of US post-war policy nor the disintegration of the transatlantic system of London and Locarno were unavoidable.

What occurred between 1930 and 1932, and what Hitler completed thereafter, was *not* the inevitable consequence of misdirected US pursuits of peaceful change. Rather, US policymakers failed because they did not fulfil the United States' new hegemonic responsibilities in consolidating the advances of London and Locarno. Above all, they did not sustain previous efforts to stabilize the newly republican Germany and to promote its international integration. Both hinged on further strategic agreements with those who, like the German foreign minister Gustav Stresemann, struggled to pursue peaceful change and a *rapprochement* with the Western powers.¹⁴ Instead of promoting such agreements, Republican policy reverted to disengagement. Essentially, the successes of the mid-1920s led leading actors like Hoover and Hughes' successors Frank Kellogg and Henry Stimson to conclude that they had already taken decisive steps towards reforming the Versailles system and that Europe's further stabilization would not require the American government to make any more binding commitments. This placed severe limits on the prospect of transforming the settlements of the mid-1920s into a more permanent peace order.

Washington thus retreated to a largely economic pursuit of international stability, which came to be dominated by Hoover's aspiration to promote his own version of 'American peace'. In contrast to the Republican majority in Congress, the Commerce Secretary and future President was never an isolationist who focused on safeguarding narrowly conceived national interests. Though insisting on a high degree of US 'self-sufficiency', he was not oblivious of the growing transatlantic interdependence, not just in the sphere of high finance. Keen to expand US commercial predominance *and* what he regarded as salutary American practices, Hoover in fact came to pursue an ambitious agenda. He became the most influential proponent of economic diplomacy: an economically underpinned, and politically aloof, approach to international relations. Consequently, he interpreted the reparations settlement of 1924 not as a *caesura* in international politics but as the result of America's economic expertise.¹⁵

What subsequently gained ground in Washington was Hoover's assertive claim that the time had come to establish a different kind of '*pax Americana*', which finally replaced the defunct Eurocentric world order of the nineteenth century. Hoover conceived of it as a system of liberal-capitalist states – under the *informal* hegemony of the United States – that regulated their interests mainly through peaceful economic competition and the transnational co-operation of financial elites. In Hoover's projection, such a system would allow the American government largely to stay aloof from international politics.¹⁶ It would mainly employ private or semi-official agents like the architect of the Dawes regime, Owen Young, and the aforementioned reparations agent Parker Gilbert. More generally, Hoover believed that such agents could effectively promote the wider process of 'rational' economic and political modernization he advocated. In his judgement, such US-style modernization would be the most effective way of consolidating the Weimar Republic, and it would foster European stability

without requiring serious efforts to countenance European debt-relief or to reduce US tariff barriers, which the Fordney-McCumber Act of 1922 had raised steeply. In short, the progressive modernism of America's Republican 'New Era' was to set an example for all of Europe.¹⁷ Though less confident about the prospects of Europe's long-term pacification, Kellogg and Stimson essentially supported Hoover's overall orientation. Both concluded that Washington's promotion of the Dawes scheme and the Locarno pact had marked the essential limits of official US intervention in post-war Europe.¹⁸

Against this background it is hardly surprising that there was no real prospect of widening the nascent European concert of 1925 into a more robust Euro-Atlantic security system. This became most obvious during the negotiations over the Kellogg-Briand Pact. In the spring of 1927, the French foreign minister Aristide Briand proposed to Washington a bilateral pact of perpetual peace, committing both nations to 'the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy'.¹⁹ Briand's initiative propelled an intricate process of transatlantic negotiations that resulted in an unprecedented though ultimately ineffectual treaty. Pressed by the American 'war outlawry' movement, a champion of which was his political mentor, the overall isolationist Republican Senator William Borah of Idaho, Kellogg essentially steered this process in accordance with US interests and self-imposed strategic constraints. In the end, the Coolidge administration did not conclude not bilateral 'defensive treaty' with Paris that would have committed the United States to Europe's post-war status quo. Rather, on 27 August 1928 it joined Britain, France and Germany as well as Poland, Czechoslovakia and Japan in signing a general war-renunciation pact, which was also underwritten by numerous other states (eventually including the Soviet Union). Yet what became known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact lacked any international mechanisms to enforce the treaty's core provisions or to impose sanctions against those who departed from the pledge to renounce war as a means of international politics.²⁰

More consequentially still, the Hoover administration decided to abstain from any political steering role in making of the Young plan and the negotiations that led to the most significant Euro-Atlantic settlement before the Great Depression: the comprehensive though not yet final reparations agreement forged at the first Hague conference in August 1929. The compromise thrashed out at The Hague – by the Locarno powers, yet without any American participants – also settled the most critical facet of the cardinal Rhineland question that had divided France and Germany. It was agreed that the Franco-Belgian occupation was to be terminated by June 1930, significantly prior to the Versailles treaty's 1935 deadline. In retrospect, however, this settlement not only came too late to pre-empt the subsequent demise of international order. It also was also less substantial than it could have been. And the limitations of US policies, notably those of the newly inaugurated Hoover administration, had a significant bearing on this outcome, with ultimately disastrous consequences for the fledgling post-war order of the 1920s.²¹

Undoubtedly, US decision makers opted for disengagement in part because they did not want to be involved in political negotiations that could raise the spectre of debt relief. Yet their aloofness was also motivated by more fundamental considerations. Particularly, Hoover adhered to his conviction that a reliance on outmoded European diplomacy was part of the problem, not the solution. And he also adhered to his creed that a genuine solution to the reparations dispute, and Europe's wider post-war problems, had to be founded solely upon 'economic ground', without undue regard for 'political considerations'. Precisely because they championed progressive aloofness on these terms, US decision makers saw no need for what their European counterparts, especially Stresemann and Briand, deemed critical for advancing European stabilization: further comprehensive settlements that comprised both financial and political components.²²

The Young plan, whose adoption was the other central result of The Hague, was more than short-lived compromise dominated by the narrow financial interests of the reparations creditors Britain and France – and their American creditor. It provided Weimar Germany with an urgently needed, if imperfect, framework of financial and political certainty. Terminating the control regime of the Dawes plan, the Young settlement also paved the way for the creation of what could potentially become the hub of a more crisis-proof global financial system: the Bank for International Settlements. But the first Hague conference did not produce what would have been most imperative to ensure the post-war order's further consolidation: a more fundamental reform of the Dawes regime that essentially turned it into a more solid framework not only for controlling the cycle of US loans, German reparations and British and French debt payments but also, and crucially, for regulating Europe's further financial *and political* stabilization. Washington's refusal to underpin the Young settlement through effective political commitments had crucial repercussions. The Bank for International Settlements could only become an ephemeral precursor of the World Bank. The Young regime remained an equally limited and ephemeral precursor of the Bretton Woods system. Thus, a critical opportunity was missed to strengthen the international system of the inter-war period before the Great Depression. Above all, it was missed by an American administration unable, and unwilling, to fulfil its hegemonic responsibilities.

The escalation of the World Economic Crisis after 1929 turned into a vicious spiral of successive crises that international policymakers could ultimately no longer control. While the power of European states to contain the crisis was highly constrained, the Hoover administration's responses to what became a rapid deterioration process came late, and they proved insufficient to prevent the disintegration of the nascent 'American peace' of the 1920s. Once the Great Depression overshadowed everything else, the United States lacked the means to forestall the demise of international order. Above all, US decision makers had ever fewer incentives or sanction powers at their disposal to counter, let alone reverse, the disintegration of the Weimar Republic and Japan's eventual turn to

militaristic authoritarianism. It is important to understand, however, that the world crisis of the early 1930s did not prove that the system of London and Locarno was inherently flawed and that the advances made since 1923 had in fact prepared the ground for the calamities that engulfed Europe and the world after 1929.

The underlying causes of the Great Depression have to be sought in the financial and economic realm. Of critical import was the failure of the Republican post-war administrations to institute tighter control mechanisms to restrain Wall Street hyper-speculation during the 'roaring twenties'. Equally critical were the deficiencies of the supposedly self-regulating gold-standard system that had been reconstituted after 1918 and the asymmetric trade system of the post-war decade. Here, the double standards of US foreign economic policy even increased imbalances between 1919 and 1929. That the protectionist Smoot-Hawley Act was passed only months after 'Black Friday' while the Hoover administration still pursued 'open door' policies abroad only underscored these double standards.²³ More broadly, the unwillingness of US political and financial decision makers to foster a more robust architecture of international politics and finance bore a significant share of the responsibility for the fact that the Wall Street Crash could eventually escalate into a full-blown world crisis in 1931.

Once the Great Depression reached its peak, its debilitating effect on internal politics – and national economies – made it ever harder for governments on all sides to pursue international co-operation. Not least because they had failed to develop the system of London and Locarno further, in co-operation with the European powers, Hoover and Stimson now found it all the harder to cope with the greatest challenge to global stability after 1919. The United States' behaviour in fact accelerated a fundamental reversal towards 'self-help' policies that finally corroded the international system of the 1920s. The world financial and trade system dissolved into protectionist blocs and closed national spheres of influence. What spelled even more disastrous consequences was that a 'renationalization' process also affected international politics. Dissolving the European concert, it also rendered the Hoover administration's belated and limited crisis-management attempts futile.

What proved most consequential in the early 1930s was that US policymakers had been unwilling to persuade Congress to consolidate the Young regime through political guarantees, bail-out provisions and crisis-reaction mechanisms. By 1931 it was too late for any decisive initiative to cut through the Gordian knots of post-war debt and reparations politics. On 20 June 1931 Hoover proclaimed a one-year moratorium on all 'intergovernmental debts' and reparations.²⁴ Yet the moratorium could not rescue the Young regime. Because the Hoover administration still dreaded concessions to its debtors, it had no part in the decisive Lausanne conference convened in the summer of 1932. Thus it had to register from afar that Britain and France not only renounced their reparations claims *vis-à-vis* Germany but also effectively abandoned any further debt payments to the United States.

Earlier, the Hoover administration had also finally abandoned its maxim of non-entanglement in Europe's political affairs. Yet its efforts to spur pacific though in fact drastic changes in the post-war status quo – at a time of acute crisis – proved ineffectual. In short, both Hoover and Stimson now concluded that it was high time to address what they considered legitimate German grievances. They sought to induce France to moderate its reparations claims, pursue substantial disarmament and finally accept a revision of the Polish-German frontier, all to moderate the increasingly assertive policies of the Brüning government. American efforts to this end culminated in talks with the French premier Pierre Laval in Washington in the autumn of 1931.²⁵ But these initiatives never amounted to a consistent strategy. They were still constrained by Hoover's reluctance to make the case for wider strategic commitments to rescue the Euro-Atlantic post-war order. When the final Geneva Disarmament Conference began its proceedings in February 1932, the Hoover administration had reverted to strict non-engagement, distancing itself from any League-based efforts to establish a general arms-limitation regime.²⁶ The subsequent failure of the Geneva conference all but completed the disintegration of the system of London and Locarno. This process and the parallel dissolution of the Weimar republic would ultimately allow Hitler to launch his assault on global order.

The most striking instance of the United States' inability to uphold international order in the depression era of course occurred not in Europe but after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in September 1931, which led to the establishment of the puppet regime of Manchukuo in February 1932. The Hoover administration not only refused to participate in international sanctions or embargos against Japan, but also refrained from any forceful protests against Japan's violation of the Washington system's nine-power treaty, which formally protected China's integrity. Washington's response was ultimately restricted to the Stimson Doctrine. It stipulated that the United States would not recognize either the Manchukuo regime or any further forcible changes of the East Asian status quo. Stimson himself had earlier advocated a firmer policy. But Hoover was not prepared to countenance any military or economic measures to enforce the new doctrine, not least because he feared Congressional opposition. The Hoover administration's reaction to the Manchurian crisis underscored to what extent America's progressive aloofness had undercut any prospects of preserving international order in the maelstrom of the depression years. The crisis also sealed the fate of the Washington system. Despite the naval compromise of the 1930 London conference, this cornerstone of the nascent 'American peace' of the 1920s had already been corroded by the underlying conflict between the Anglo-American powers and the aggressive aims of the Japanese military, which gained an ever more dominant influence on Japan's international policies.

When Roosevelt entered the White House in March 1933, just over one month after Hitler had been appointed *Reichskanzler* in Berlin, he had one clear priority. He intended to use the mandate of his election victory in November

1932 to concentrate on a national rather than an international policy of renewal: the aspiration to reinvigorate and profoundly reform the American republic 'from within', through what became known as the New Deal. Arguably, even if he had desired to do so, Roosevelt would neither have had the international leverage nor the critical domestic backing to direct common international efforts to prevent a further deterioration of the European and global situation. The political consequences of the World Economic Crisis were too immense, the domestic constraints they imposed too severe. In the mid-1930s, the Senate's expanding neutrality legislation and the ever more entrenched isolationism of a majority of Americans underscored that the Roosevelt administration was not in a position to effect a major reorientation of US foreign policy, a reorientation that could have prevented the descent to the Second World War. Notably, Roosevelt did not have any mandate to offer credible strategic support to Britain and France, strengthening their resolve to resist Hitler instead of 'appeasing' the German dictator until it was too late to contain him. As in the case of Japan, the decisive opening for integrating a German republic rather than an increasingly assertive dictatorship in a new international order had existed in the 1920s. It did not re-appear in the 1930s.

In the early phases of the New Deal, the Roosevelt administration essentially withdrew from any leadership role in the spheres of international politics and finance. Most notoriously, Roosevelt refused to prop up the ailing British pound when this issue came to a head during the 1933 London economic conference. He thus sealed the fate of the already brittle monetary system of the inter-war period. More generally, Roosevelt essentially came to opt for national, often unilateral approaches to all major issues from financial stabilization to disarmament. Seeking to bring about a self-reliant recovery, he aspired to no less than a progressive modernization of the American model of liberal-capitalist democracy, replacing the *laissez faire* paradigm of the 1920s. Through the New Deal the federal government acquired a newly central role in regulating the US economy and safeguarding the welfare of American citizens, particularly through social and job-creation programmes like the Tennessee Valley Authority. While the economic success of the New Deal remains in dispute, its long-term international significance seems beyond doubt. It not only salvaged the fundamentals of America's hence more regulated capitalist republic in a decade in which this 'model' appeared to be in decline *vis-à-vis* more authoritarian systems, including the Soviet Union. It also fulfilled Roosevelt's underlying hope: the transformative revitalization of its state and society in the 1930s created the preconditions for the success of America's unprecedented mobilization and war effort that enabled it to prevail over the Axis powers in the 1940s.

But while authoritarian forces appeared to triumph in the 1930s the United States turned inward. It was now, rather than after Wilson's defeat, that it turned its back on Europe and the international system. The Roosevelt administration did not actively abet the expansionism of the Hitler regime, let alone Imperial

Japan, but its inability to pursue a more active global engagement, which was essentially due to towering domestic constraints, contributed significantly to the rapid deterioration of what even before 1929 had been an unconsolidated international system. This created a growing strategic vacuum in which Hitler, Mussolini and the leaders of the Kwantung Army in China and their political allies in Tokyo could operate – and undermine all the international standards and rules that had been painstakingly established in the 1920s.

Even under the constraints of the 1930s, however, the Roosevelt administration never adopted a course of complete isolationism. It recognized the Soviet Union in 1933, for example. In some respects, Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, also began to define their own, though necessarily restrained, version of an 'American peace' – aspirations for a '*Pax Americana*' in the Western hemisphere and for an 'economic peace' on American terms. Firstly, Roosevelt placed the United States' relations with the countries of Latin America on new foundations. Through what became known as his 'Good Neighbour' policy he signalled a clear break with previous US imperialism, seeking to foster instead an essentially post-imperial peace order in the Western hemisphere. In his conception, a new 'inter-American peace' was to serve as an exemplary model for global order. It challenged German, Italian and Japanese conceptions of imperialism and autarky, yet also British and French ambitions to preserve their overseas empires. In his inaugural address on 4 March 1933 Roosevelt demonstratively dedicated his presidency to 'the policy of the good neighbor'. He sought to cultivate an ideology of 'Pan-Americanism', based on 'equality and fraternity'.²⁷ At the inter-American Montevideo conference in December 1933 Hull officially underwrote the new maxim of non-interference in the internal or external affairs of Latin American states.

Of long-term significance was also the thrust of the Roosevelt administration's foreign economic policy. In short, it sought to build on US 'Open Door' maxims in an effort to reverse the underlying trend of the depression era: the fragmentation of the world into closed and hostile economic blocs. US aspirations to liberalize world trade were primarily directed against German and Japanese attempts to consolidate 'autarkic' spheres of influence. Yet they also challenged the protectionist imperial-preference system that Britain and its Dominions had established at Ottawa in 1931. A consistent liberal policy of course also called for a reversal of Congressional protectionism. But this would only be achieved after the Second World War. After 1933, Hull became the champion of a new American doctrine of 'peace through free trade'. Echoing Cobdenite liberalism in mid-nineteenth-century Britain, he espoused the maxim that 'freer commerce made for peace and unfair trade made for war', which he had first formulated as an ardent supporter of Wilson.²⁸ As Secretary of State, Hull fought for a reciprocal trade law, which was then passed in 1934. By 1939 he had managed to weave a network of trade and tariff-reduction agreements with Britain and fifteen other countries.²⁹ But Hull and likeminded policy makers like Dean Acheson, then Under-Secretary of the Treasury,

had more far-reaching ambitions. They sought to create a liberal economic world order on American terms. In 1938 Acheson outlined the measures he considered imperative: the elimination of tariff barriers; the removal of any 'exclusive or preferential trade arrangements'; and the creation of 'a broader market for goods made under decent standards'. No less important, though, was the establishment of a new 'stable international monetary system'.³⁰ Eventually, these aspirations would give rise to the Bretton Woods system.

Yet while the first contours of a new economic 'American peace' thus appeared as the United States emerged from the depression, US foreign and strategic policy *vis-à-vis* Europe and East Asia became profoundly isolationist. Why? The question how far Roosevelt was fundamentally constrained by overwhelming isolationist tendencies in US domestic politics remains controversial.³¹ It would be erroneous to conclude that he actively promoted such tendencies to concentrate on his New Deal agenda. As noted, his underlying aim became to create the domestic conditions for America's return to a more decisive international role. Like Wilson, he saw himself as a steward and tutor. To guide the American people in domestic and foreign affairs was to become a key component of his famous 'fireside chats', the radio broadcasts he would continue until the final stages of the Second World War. But it was and remained a hallmark of his foreign policy in the 1930s that he only acted once he could be assured of as broad a popular consensus as possible regarding any step he contemplated. And there is little doubt over how pronounced the overall turn to unmitigated isolationism was both in the US Senate and the wider American public. This indeed placed tangible checks on Roosevelt's room to manoeuvre.

Most importantly, urged on by a Senate Select Committee headed by the Republican Senator Gerald Nye from North Dakota, Congress passed a series of ever more restrictive Neutrality Laws between 1935 and 1939, chief among them the Neutrality Act of 1937. But the majority of its supporters only represented a groundswell of isolationist sentiment which exceeded that of the 1920s.³² This sentiment became particularly entrenched but was by no means confined to the mid-western heartland of small-town America that had found its champions in Nye and the then still staunchly isolationist Senator Arthur Vandenberg from Michigan. It was sharpened by influential 'America First' papers like the *Chicago Tribune*. Support for 'impartial neutrality' also came from the Federal Council of Churches and influential anti-war groups like the National Council for the Prevention of War, the National Peace Conference and the Women's League for Peace and Freedom. Only a minority of conservative and progressive internationalists, notably those grouped around the League of Nations Union and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, continued to stress the need to strengthen international co-operation. But for the time being they were prophets in the wilderness. By the mid-1930s, the notion that, pushed by the interests of East Coast high finance and arms manufacturers, the Wilson administration had dragged the United States into an unnecessary war in 1917 had become very widespread. In 1934 the publication of the influential book

Merchants of Death by H.C. Engelbrecht and F.C. Hanighen had heightened popular suspicions of this kind and increased support for a more unequivocal neutrality policy. The Nye committee inquired into the dealings and interests of weapons manufacturers and major New York banking firms like J.P. Morgan for whose interests the American people had allegedly made sacrifices in the trenches of the Great War. To prevent a recurrence of such a scenario the Nye committee made recommendations that led to the first neutrality law of 1935. Setting the precedent for all subsequent legislation, whose impact can hardly be understated, it banned Americans from travelling to war zones; it prohibited any American loans to belligerents; and above all it imposed an impartial arms embargo, which barred not only aggressors but also their victims from obtaining American weapons. The aim of the Neutrality Act of 1937 was to make these laws permanent.

But even under the Neutrality Laws the United States did not pursue a strictly isolationist policy. Roosevelt eventually managed to modify Congressional restraints, arguing that they could benefit an aggressor that had built up 'vast armies, navies, and storehouses of war' while denying support to its victims. The President adopted a plan by his adviser Bernard Baruch who had proposed that trade with belligerents should be conducted on the basis of the 'cash-and-carry' principle. Following the outbreak of war in Europe he in September 1939 proposed an amendment under which a formally neutral United States could sell arms and goods to any country, on the provision that the buyers collected their purchases and paid for them in cash straightaway.³³ In practice, as he knew well, this would allow the United States to aid the maritime power Britain as well as France against Nazi Germany. Congress passed the amended Neutrality Act in November 1939. The end of American 'neutrality' would precede the attack on Pearl Harbor. It came with the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941, which authorized the American government to sell, lend or give war materials to friendly nations.

The inner-American controversies over the meaning and extent of 'neutrality' had been raging against a background of rising political tension and acute crisis in Europe and East Asia. The United States remained aloof when in July 1937 the Kwantung Army provoked the second Sino-Japanese war in which, abetted by the authoritarian government in Tokyo, the Japanese military sought to widen its dominion against Chinese nationalist forces under Chiang Kai-shek. In Europe, the same attitude prevailed when Hitler began to unhinge the international order of the 1920s, remilitarized the Rhineland, brought Austria 'home to the Reich' in 1938 and subsequently sought to reclaim the Sudeten area, allegedly to protect the local German minority.³⁴ This has given rise to the thesis that Roosevelt became a 'silent accomplice' of Hitler and those who destroyed global order in the latter 1930s and that he even pursued his own version of 'appeasement', particularly towards Nazi Germany, which gave Hitler the opening to wage war.³⁵ But these interpretations seem misleading. In the final analysis, Roosevelt did not join the British premier Neville Chamberlain in

adopting a policy of 'appeasement' that actively sought to accommodate Hitler's demands on the assumption that this would avert war. Rather, he ultimately pursued a policy of temporization that aimed to pre-empt an escalation of the European situation and restrain Hitler through general but insubstantial US peace initiatives. The underlying rationale of this policy was to gain time to prepare the ground for a major reorientation from isolationist 'neutrality' towards war-preparedness and the capacity to aid and possibly lead a coalition of states against the authoritarian challengers of the 1930s should this become unavoidable. Roosevelt's main challenge in this context remained a domestic one: to legitimate such a reorientation and to build a bipartisan coalition of support.

Also from an American perspective a fundamental distinction has to be made between the pacification policies of the 1920s and 'appeasement' after 1933. The former sought to address core problems and inequities of the original Versailles system, and thus also to allay German grievances. But they did so through mutually agreed rules for the settlement of international disputes, on the premise of committing democratically elected German leaders to international rules *and obligations* under the system of London and Locarno. The latter, though pursued for understandable reasons in the grim constellation, was an ultimately misguided and futile series of attempts to 'appease' a dictator who never had any intention of respecting international agreements and seized on long-standing German grievances to advance his own, qualitatively different agenda of aggressive expansionism, which contravened anything resembling a legitimate international order. *Vis-à-vis* Hitler, the incentives of a mutually beneficial interdependence that US policy makers had offered after 1919 were meaningless. All major concessions the United States could potentially press for from afar – on the Sudeten question or the 'Polish Corridor' – would not only have been morally reprehensible. They also would have failed to pacify the Nazi regime. Giving in to unilateral German demands was bound to whet the Nazi appetite for more. On the other hand, the cardinal American problem was that Roosevelt did not have the political leeway or military means (yet) to pursue an effective policy of containment – a policy that strengthened the political will and ability of Britain and France to pursue the strategy that Winston Churchill advocated in 1938: to put a 'lid' of moral and political isolation on the Hitler regime to provoke its implosion.³⁶

Roosevelt did not intend to drag the United States into a European war, though he considered it increasingly likely. He only deemed an actual intervention unavoidable in the spring of 1941. But since the mid-1930s he regarded it as one of his main tasks to loosen the shackles of isolationism. He realized that in the face of the rising authoritarian threats, and the new technological power they too commanded, the United States could no longer afford to rely on its relative hemispheric insulation: it had to assume a global security posture. To achieve this, Roosevelt had to effect a profound change of domestic attitudes towards America's international role and responsibilities. Yet he remained

highly cautious and at times ambivalent, sending different signals to different audiences. The most famous example of Roosevelt's early public efforts to alert the American public was his 'quarantine speech' of October 1937. He warned that 'the present reign of terror and lawlessness' threatened 'the very foundations of civilization', and thus all 'peace-loving nations must make a concerted effort' to oppose such forces, and there was no escape either for the United States into 'mere isolation or neutrality'. Rather, America had to join forces with others to stem 'the epidemic of world lawlessness' through a 'quarantine'. But Roosevelt remained vague about what such a 'quarantine' would entail. The only exception was his proposal that America join the other powers of the Washington Nine-Power Treaty of 1922 in denouncing Japanese aggression and re-asserting China's integrity. Yet this was to no avail.³⁷

While hardening his rhetoric Roosevelt also temporarily contemplated – furtively – an American role in the peaceful settlement of European disputes. He did so, as noted, to restrain rather than appease Hitler: to commit him to a negotiating process that would at least postpone a further escalation of the Old World's crisis while the United States was still politically and militarily unprepared. For a time, Roosevelt thus entertained the idea of making the United States the arbiter of European peace efforts. This was first proposed by his key adviser, the Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, in 1937. The Welles plan stipulated that Washington should call a general peace conference to forge an international agreement on what he called 'fundamental norms' and 'standards of international conduct'. Outlining a new regime of guarantees for equal access to raw materials, Welles also proposed a new Washington conference of the major powers, this time to promote general disarmament. Essentially, Welles sought to revive US approaches of the 1920s to deal with a dictator who disdained consensual methods of peaceful change. He had earlier advised Roosevelt to support Hitler's colonial claims and to consider promoting certain 'European adjustments', notably regarding the 'Polish Corridor' and the Sudeten area, to salvage European peace. Roosevelt sounded out the British government on Welles' proposals at the beginning of 1938. Eden favoured the scheme, but Chamberlain and Halifax dismissed it as unrealistic. In Washington, Hull registered his staunch opposition to what he deemed an 'illogical' and fatuous scheme. Eventually, Roosevelt distanced himself from it as well.³⁸

Once the Sudeten crisis had escalated Roosevelt renewed his overtures. He went so far as to send a 'peace message' to the four powers involved in the dispute – Nazi Germany, Czechoslovakia, Britain and France – urging them on 26 September to seek a 'pacific settlement' of their controversies. On 19 September he had held out the vague possibility of holding a world conference 'for the purpose of reorganizing all unsatisfactory frontiers on rational lines', only to discard it later.³⁹ And he had dispatched Welles to renew the – futile – proposal for a peace conference not just to address the Sudeten question but also to approach a wider European agreement. Despite these overtures, Roosevelt never desired to be the chief architect of European appeasement. He only took

initiatives once his main aim had become to postpone the outbreak of war in Central Europe. Secretly, Roosevelt had actually encouraged Chamberlain and the French Premier Édouard Daladier to take a firm stand against Hitler's pressure, and he above all urged both governments to prepare for a defensive war. He told Britain's Ambassador Lindsay that while he would be delighted if Chamberlain's appeasement strategy bore fruit he basically did not believe it was workable: putting pressure on the Czechoslovak government to acquiesce in Hitler's demands would only lead to further German ultimatums, particularly for a return of the 'Polish Corridor'.⁴⁰ Yet America's international influence was distinctly limited at this critical juncture. Roosevelt had nothing to offer to back a firm Anglo-French policy. He could provide neither troops nor loans or other incentives to this end. So he finally backed Chamberlain's course and praised the British premier when he infamously claimed to have salvaged 'peace for our time' at the Munich conference on 29 September 1938. Roosevelt expressed his hope that the Munich settlement would dampen further German aspirations in continental Europe. But he essentially viewed it as a reprieve – an agreement that gave the West European democracies, and the United States, some breathing space to re-arm and take a firmer stance in the future.⁴¹ Hitler would dash such hopes when occupying the remaining parts of Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1939.

In the aftermath of Munich, Roosevelt told a conference assembling the heads of US military and civilian defence in mid-November 1938 that 'the recrudescence of German power at Munich had completely reoriented our own international relations' and confronted the United States with a historic threat: 'for the first time since the Holy Alliance of 1818' it faced 'the possibility of an attack on the Atlantic side in both the Northern and the Southern Hemispheres'. To respond to this threat, he demanded above all the rapid expansion of American air power.⁴² But the Roosevelt administration's foreign policy remained a tightrope walk. Not even the outbreak of the Second World War allowed Roosevelt to set a new course. It was *not* a watershed for America's role in the world. On the one hand, the president insisted on numerous occasions that he was not moving his country towards intervention. On the other, he sought to pave the way – *vis-à-vis* Congress and the American public – for more effective aid to Britain and France and for an active policy of war-preparedness. During Europe's 'Phoney War' Roosevelt contemplated proposing peace talks with the aim of averting a defeat of Britain and France and a constellation in which Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union would dominate the bulk of the Eurasian land mass. In February 1940, he sent Welles on another peace mission to Berlin, Rome, Paris and London. Predictably, though, Welles' talks with Hitler and his Foreign Minister Ribbentrop proved fruitless.

After Nazi Germany's *Blitzkrieg* victory over France, Roosevelt redoubled his efforts to loosen the constraints of America's neutrality policy and to steer both Congressional and public opinion in the direction of a war-preparedness. He strove to broaden public support for his course at a time when Congressional

opposition to involvement remained strong and the newly introduced Gallup Polls showed that in the summer of 1940 sixty-one per cent of Americans still thought the United States should stay out of the conflict. Such attitudes were hardened by the isolationist America First Committee, founded in September 1940, whose most prominent spokesman was Charles Lindbergh. Yet Roosevelt could count on the support of the internationalist Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, formed in May 1940. He now pressed for stepped-up armament programmes and the re-introduction of the draft, then implemented through the Selective Training and Service Act.

Following his re-election, Roosevelt announced in his famous 'fireside chat' on 29 December 1940 that the United States must act as 'the great arsenal of democracy' against the axis powers.⁴³ Having authorized the destroyers-for-bases deal in August, he had already embarked on a policy of *de facto* making the US Britain's 'arsenal', aiding Britain short of breaching neutrality legislation, while the Battle of Britain was approaching its climax. On 6 January 1941 the President told Congress that the United States could not accept 'a dictator's peace'. Instead, he proclaimed US allegiance to a different 'world order': 'the moral order' of the 'Four Freedoms', premised on the freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear, which he sought to achieve through 'a world-wide reduction of armaments'. To advance towards this order, and to defend the security of the western democracies, he asked Congress for authority and funds to supply 'in ever increasing numbers, ships, planes, tanks, guns' to 'those nations which are now in actual war with aggressor nations'. He thereby vindicated the seminal Lend-Lease Programme, which would be passed with a substantial Congressional majority.⁴⁴ Roosevelt thus made clear that the United States would not seek a peace of accommodation with Hitler Germany or Imperial Japan. In a wider context, it became clear by the summer of 1941 that the threat both regimes posed, for the first time, to the United States' hemispheric security had been critical for creating a new geo-political and domestic constellation: a constellation in which Roosevelt could eventually oversee the transformation of America's role from an originally passive, isolationist power to the pivotal power of the Second World War. But only the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor precipitated the decisive shift.

Pearl Harbor marked a fundamental *caesura*. It not only led to America's entry into the war but also spurred a momentous transformation. The United States, which had become the international system's potential hegemon after 1918 but reverted to isolationist aloofness after the Great Depression, would emerge as the pivotal power after 1945. Building on Wilsonian maxims, yet also searching for more 'realistic' ways to realize them, Roosevelt came to envisage a universal and integrative post-war order, though he would insist that, as the world's principal new powers, the 'Four Policemen' – the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and China – had to form a kind of world directorate to oversee the establishment of this order. During their Placentia Bay summit

in August 1941, he and Churchill had mapped out its general principles. The system of the Atlantic Charter was essentially premised on the 'Four Freedoms' and can in fact be seen as the blueprint for a new 'American peace'. More profoundly, what occurred after 1941 can be seen as the culmination of a drawn-out learning and reorientation process. It led the United States to assume a hegemonic role and unprecedented international commitments in the international system that came to be built after the Second World War, not only in the United Nations – and, eventually, America's post-war alliance systems in Europe and East Asia – but also in the new international economic order of Bretton Woods.

Notes

- 1 See M. Hogan (ed.), *Paths to Power*. Cambridge, 2000, pp. 168–267; M. Leffler, *The Elusive Quest*. Chapel Hill, 1979.
- 2 See S. Pedersen, 'Back to the League of Nations', *American Historical Review* 112/4 (October 2007), pp. 1091–117.
- 3 See H. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations* 4th ed. New York, 1967, pp. 20–40; and for an overview A. Iriye, *The Origins of the Second World War in Asia and the Pacific*. New York, 1987.
- 4 This builds on P. Schroeder, 'The Mirage of Empire versus the Promise of Hegemony' in P. Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft*. New York, 2004, pp. 298–300. See also M. Hunt, *American Ascendancy*. Chapel Hill, 2007, pp. 70–114.
- 5 See P.O. Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace after World War I*. Cambridge, 2006, pp. 129ff., 201 ff. Cf. Z. Steiner, *The Lights That Failed*. Oxford, 2005, pp. 240ff., 387ff.
- 6 See D. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*. Oxford, 1999, pp. 385–9.
- 7 Hughes addresses, 4 September and 30 November 1923, in C.E. Hughes, *The Pathway of Peace*. New York, 1925, p. 8; Hughes memorandum, 1 July 1924, cited in after S.F. Bemis (ed.), *The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, vol. X. New York, 1928, p. 369.
- 8 See Hughes address, 29 December 1922, in Hughes, *The Pathway of Peace*, pp. 32ff.; A. Iriye, *After Imperialism*. Cambridge, MA, 1965.
- 9 Hughes address, 29 December 1922, in Hughes, *The Pathway of Peace*, pp. 50–3; Hughes memorandum, 18 December 1922, *Hughes Papers*, Library of Congress.
- 10 See Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace after World War I*, pp. 154–86.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 237–58.
- 12 Kellogg to Coolidge, 8 November 1925, *Kellogg Papers*, Minnesota Historical Society, St Paul; Strong memorandum, 11 July 1925, *Strong Papers*, Federal Reserve Bank Archives, New York.
- 13 See S. Schuker, *The End of French Predominance in Europe*. Chapel Hill, 1976, pp. 385–93.
- 14 See P. Krüger, *Die Außenpolitik der Republik von Weimar*. Darmstadt, 1985, pp. 372–506.
- 15 Hoover address, 14 December 1924, box 75, Hoover Papers, Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, Iowa.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 See Hoover address, 'The Future of our Foreign Trade', New York, 16 March 1926, Washington, DC, 1926.
- 18 See Kellogg to Coolidge, 7 October 1924, *Kellogg Papers*; Stimson to Hoover, 8 June 1929, NA RG 59 462.00 R296/2941/1/2.
- 19 Briand statement, 6 April 1927; Kellogg to Herrick, 11 June 1927, papers relating to the *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1927, vol. II, pp. 611–14 (hereafter *FRUS*).
- 20 Kellogg memorandum, January 1928, *Kellogg Papers*, roll 27. The Soviet Union acceded to the pact in 1929.
- 21 See Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace after World War I*, pp. 531–71.
- 22 Hoover address, 14 December 1924; 'Memorandum on War Debt Settlements', 1927, Hoover Papers, Commerce Department, boxes 75, 365.
- 23 See C. Kindleberger, *The World in Depression, 1929–39*. Berkeley, 1973, pp. 95ff., 291–308.
- 24 See H. Hoover, *Memoirs* vol. II. London, 1952, p. 70; Stimson diary, 15 and 18 June 1931, Stimson Papers, Sterling Library, New Haven.
- 25 Stimson diary, 30 September 1931. See also *ibid.*, 30 July 1931, vol. XVII, nos 169–73, Stimson Papers; Hoover, *Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 88–9.
- 26 Stimson diary, vol. XVII, no. 183, July 1931, Stimson Papers; *FRUS* 1931, vol. I, pp. 501–4.
- 27 Roosevelt inaugural address, 4 March 1933, and speech to Pan-American Union, 12 April 1933; F.D. Roosevelt, *Roosevelt's Foreign Policy*. New York, 1942, pp. 3–5.
- 28 C. Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*. New York, 1948, vol. I, pp. 100–1.
- 29 R. Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932–1945*. Oxford, 1995, pp. 84–93.
- 30 Quoted after D. Hendrickson, *Union, Nation, or Empire*. Lawrence, 2009, p. 363.
- 31 See S. Casey, *Cautious Crusade*. Oxford, 2001, pp. 3–45.
- 32 See M. Jonas, *Isolationism in America, 1935–1941*. New York, 1966.
- 33 Roosevelt speech, 21 September 1939, US Department of State, *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1943*. Washington, 1943, pp. 485–7.
- 34 Official US reactions to Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia in 1935 and the Spanish Civil War were no different. See Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, pp. 101–28.
- 35 See A. Offner, *American Appeasement*. Cambridge, MA, 1969, pp. 276–80; F.W. Marks, *Wind over Sand*. Athens, GA, 1988, pp. 136–45.
- 36 See Churchill broadcast, 16 October 1938, in M. Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill*, vol. 5, Companion Volume. London, 1982, III, pp. 1216–27.
- 37 Roosevelt address, 5 October 1937; 'Fireside Chat', 12 October 1937, Roosevelt, *Roosevelt's Foreign Policy*, pp. 129–32, 132–3; *FRUS* 1937, vol. I, pp. 665–70.
- 38 See Welles to Roosevelt, 26 October 1937, Roosevelt Papers, PSF, box 23, Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York; Eden memorandum, 21 January 1938, FO 954, vol. 29, British National Archives, Kew; Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. I, pp. 546–8.
- 39 Roosevelt message, 26 September 1938, Roosevelt, *Roosevelt's Foreign Policy*, pp. 148–9; [memorandum of conversation Roosevelt–Lindsay, 19 September 1938], *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939*, series III, vol. VII. London, 1954, pp. 627–9.
- 40 *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, series III, vol. VII, pp. 627–9.
- 41 Roosevelt to King, 11 October 1938, in E. Roosevelt (ed.), *F.D.R.: His Personal Letters* (New York, 1947–50), vol. IV, p. 816; to Phillips, 17 October 1938, Roosevelt Papers, PSF; Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. I, pp. 593–5. Cf. Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, pp. 162–72; and B. Farnham, *Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis*. Princeton, 1997, pp. 91–137.
- 42 Oliphant memorandum of White House meeting, 14 November 1938, Morgenthau Diary 150: 338, Roosevelt Presidential Library.
- 43 US Department of State, *Peace and War*, pp. 598–607.
- 44 Roosevelt message, 6 January 1941, Roosevelt, *Roosevelt's Foreign Policy*, pp. 318–24.