



ROLE OF USA IN WORLD WAR

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1. INTRODUCTION

August 1914 marked the beginning of the Great War, which was mostly fought on European soil for the first three years of the conflict. The times when United States amalgamated the Great War on April 6, 1917, it elevated the conflict to the status of a world war. As a direct reaction to German activities that resulted in the loss of American lives and desecrated nonaligned rights, United States joined World War I. The aptitude that the Great Conflict will be the conflict that would end all wars was violated with the victories in Europe by Adolf Hitler and the invasion of Asia by Japan, which initiated the Second World War. Both of these events occurred after the Great War. The United States of America would also be brought into this conflict; but, in contrast to World War I, it would not be German acts that would bring them in; rather, it would be an assault on US Marine Forces by the Japanese on December 7, 1941.

The employment of unobstructed submarine warfare by Germany, which bring about in the demises of individuals of America, and the assault on the United States Marine Forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, were the primary activities that led to the United States entering both wars.¹

These occurrences were critical in determining the path that the United States would take throughout the wars, although Wilson and Roosevelt had a role in shaping them to some extent. These 2 presidents put warfare strategies into effect in a way that were initially intended to retain the United States out of the conflicts, but later, these strategies evolved as a result of the effects of the wars that were taking place in Europe and Asia. Wilson's strategy was not only intended to retain the United States out of the war, but it was also intended to launch nonviolent defrayal amongst the belligerents. However, this goal was not achieved since Germany initiated unobstructed submarine fighting, which caused Wilson's policy to be abandoned. The initial intent of Roosevelt's strategy was to prevent United States from being involved in a war; but, it was finally modified to include provisions and assistance for the United Kingdom.

¹ Martin Gilbert, "From Roosevelt to Winston Churchill," Winston S. Churchill; Vol. VI Finest Hour 1939-1941, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983), 52.

The last factor that determined whether or not the United States would intervene was public opinion. In the years foremost up to the United States' participation in the conflicts, public opinion was uniformly against the country becoming involved.²

a. OBJECTIVES

- To Study the role of USA in World War one
- To discover what were the reasons that led to US's entrance in WWII

b. RESEARCH QUESTION

- What role did USA play during WWI and WWII
- How did Wilson and Roosevelt deal with World Wars

c. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher has relied on various primary and secondary sources including articles from various books, newspapers, websites, journals and research papers and other online sources.

d. LITERATURE REVIEW

The works of John Dos Passos, including *One Man's Initiation: 1917* (1920) and *Three Soldiers* (1921), Ernest Hemingway, including *In Our Times* (1925) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), and E. E. Cummings, including *The Enormous Room* (1922), have been grouped composed as a shared appearance of American disenchantment with World War 1. The conflict was portrayed in these works as being cold, savage, and devoid of heroism. Soldiers were reduced to little more than cogs in the war machine, either being crushed by the bureaucracy of the military or being destroyed by cannon fire or machine gun fire. Because of these circumstances, courage became meaningless and was reduced to an empty gesture.

Henry May's book, published in 1959 and titled "The End of American Innocence," describes it as having its origins in a revolt against the cocky optimism and limiting moral standards of the nineteenth century. As it expanded out from Greenwich Village and Chicago in the prewar years, it was promoted via small publications and reviews. Its followers attacked tradition and Puritanism, jubilantly asserting that they were free to write and behave whichever they wanted as a result.

According to Hugh Selwyn Mauberley (1920), the battle was fought "For an old bitch gone in the teeth, [For] a bungled civilisation... [For] two gross of shattered sculptures... [and] a few thousand worn volumes."

² Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979) 76-77.

Joseph Corn demonstrates in his book "The Winged Gospel" (1983) that the war did not have a negative impact on the optimistic picture of the aircraft that arose following the Wright Brothers' flight.

Despite the fact that it was obviously an offspring of the same technology that created high explosives, tanks, poison gas, and flame throwers, the aircraft was the weapon that was least linked with the death and devastation of a large number of people during World War I.

2. ANALYSIS

a. WORLD WAR I

The initial declaration of war was made on August 1, 1914, and by August 10, England, France, and Russia had proclaimed that they would be joining forces to fight against Austria-Hungary and Germany, sometimes called as the Central Powers. This conflict lasted from August 1914 through November 1918. On August 4, President Woodrow Wilson released declaration that proclaimed United States of America to be a neutral country in ongoing conflict. On August 10, Woodrow Wilson issued a call to the American people, urging them to behave and talk in a manner that adhered to a strict neutrality. He cautioned the people of the United States against abandoning their impartial stance and expressing support for one side over the other.³

i. SUBMARINE WARFARE

Throughout World War I, the British blockade prevented the German administration from making usage of the majority of its external navy. As a result, the German government was only able to use one naval weapon: the submarine. The effectiveness of the operation was rapidly recognised by German leaders, who made the decision to initiate submarine attacks as a result of the success. The German government did not make the verdict to employ the submarine as a armament contrary to British commerce until 4th February. On February 4th, Germany announced that the area off the coast of Britain & inside the English Channel would be considered a warfare region. They issued an announcement that trade ships drifting into the war zone were at danger of being attacked, and although measures will be engaged to evade attacking neutral ships, it was difficult for Germany to assure protection of neutral mercantile ships due to deployment of neutral flags by British.

The successful completion of the U-9 produced a useful weapon that could be used contrary to the British blockade. Though, submerged conflict was a novel approach to marine conflict that had the potential to give rise to ethical and legal concerns. Due to the malnutrition caused by the British blockade as well as the absence of objections from neutral parties against the starving of the German people, Germany came to the conclusion that the dangers were tolerable. In spite of the decision made by the German government, the United States administration voiced its opposition to the submarine campaign. Wilson responded by saying that the United States will subject the German administration to the highest standards of accountability for the activities it took with the submarine.⁴

³ Harry Notter, *The Origins of the Foreign Policy of Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1965) 560-561, 572.

⁴ Arthur S Link, *Confusions and Crises 1915-1916*, vol. 4 of *Wilson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964) 222-224.

ii. WAR POLICIES OF AMERICANS

Between 1914 and 1915, the British embargo had a negative impact on American commerce. The American economy did not start to benefit from the war until 1916, when the United States gave in to the embargo and allowed it to continue. At this time, American commerce had been embraced to fulfil the demands of the Allies since they were the only country to whom the Allies could send goods. This was due to the fact that America was the only nation to which the Allies could ship supplies. Wilson was obliged to reexamine a section of his nonaligned strategy as a result of the changing nature of American commerce. In August of 1914, President Woodrow Wilson made the announcement that in order to maintain complete neutrality, American banks were not to make loans to combatants. This policy was changed in October 1914 to permit marketable or credit loans to be made to the belligerents.

Wilson enabled increased capitulation to the British control of commerce in Europe by making it possible for the belligerents to get loans from the United States. Even though the United States gave down to majority of British authority, it did not do so quietly. Instead, President Woodrow Wilson's administration lodged numerous objections with the British government against the latter's practises.⁵

iii. AMERICA'S ENTRANCE IN WAR

The United States of America go in World War I as a result of the progression of events that took place between January and April of 1917. During the unrestricted submarine campaign carried out by Germany from the 12th to the 21st of March, a total of eight American ships were lost. These actions were the last overt efforts that were taken to put burden on President Wilson to safe consent from Congress to announce war against Germany. The next day, on April 2, Wilson delivered his speech to Congress, and between that day and the next, on April 6, the House and Senate chosen to endorse Wilson's announcement of war.⁶

iv. WOODROW WILSON

Between 1914 and 1917, Woodrow Wilson pursued an ideology that was progressive, moralistic, and idealistic in its approach to foreign affairs. Wilson endeavoured to establish his policies on the basis of these beliefs in the hope that it would persuade the European influences to agree to a nonviolent solution. Wilson's definition of neutrality was so stringent when the war started in August 1914 that in 1916 he declined a rose cutting from Verdun in order to evade giving the impression that he was favouring one side over the other. Wilson was unable to accurately gauge what was happening in other countries or internationally, which was a major obstacle for him as a diplomat, despite the fact that he had the best of intentions.

Wilson thought that the United States had a special ethical commitment to all of mankind from the outset of World War I. His reasoning was based on the fact that Americans had a common ancestry with all people. He considered that the United States' most significant contribution to the world was the establishment of

⁵ Charles Callan Tansill, *America Goes to War* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1938) 627-629.

⁶ Wilson, "An Address to a Joint Session of Congress," January 24-April 6, 1917, 108-112.

peace. In addition to this, he was of the opinion that the destiny of the United States of America was to serve mankind, uphold justice, and aid as an instance for the respite of the globe. Wilson believed that maintaining America's neutrality was a responsibility in light of the commitments listed above. In addition to these ambitious aspirations, Wilson's primary focus was on the establishment of a just peace. This was one of his key objectives. In order for Wilson to secure this peace, it was necessary for the United States to maintain its neutrality. This goal was also the basis for his lack of willingness to criticise Germany's attack of Belgium in 1914, as he considered that neutrality was vital for his acceptability as a neutral intermediary. In other words, he believed that he needed to maintain his status as a neutral mediator.⁷

b. WORLD WAR II

The formal beginning of Globe War II was in 1939; nonetheless, events that occurred in 1931 caused fresh wars all across the world. The United States of America became involved in the Second World War as a result of a series of events that started as aggressiveness levels rose. In the 1930s, the administrations of Germany, Japan, and Italy were all either dictatorial or militaristic, and all three states pursued aggressive policies. The United States of America, as well as the safety of the United States itself, were under the greatest threat from Germany and Japan. The conduct of the Germans and the Japanese would eventually transport the United States into World War II.

i. ENTRANCE OF AMERICA

On the 8th of December 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt carried a speech to Congress in which he stated that the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor had resulted in the United States entering a condition of war with Japan. He detailed efforts made by the United States of America to bring about concord amongst the 2 countries, along with Japan's decision to abandon discussions afterward assault had already begun. He was able to see the preparations that the Japanese had made for the assault, as well as the fact that the attack had been planned in advance. FDR also said that he had given orders for any and all actions to be done in accordance with securing the safety of the American people. He continued by saying, "Regardless of how much time it may take us to resist this deliberate invasion, the American people, in all of their rightful force, will prevail via total victory.... We will achieve the unavoidable victory if we have faith in our military forces and if the American people remain unwavering in their resolve."

In conclusion, he requested that Congress initiate a state of war with Japan. As soon as Roosevelt ended his remarks, Congress swiftly chose to declare war, and by 4:10 p.m. on December 8th, Roosevelt had retained the announcement of war. Germany and Italy were not a part of the proclamation that was made on December 8th. On December 11, 1941, the residual associates of the Axis Powers acknowledged warfare on the United States of America, which prompted the passing of these declarations.⁸

⁷ Harvey A. DeWeerd, *President Wilson Fights His War, World War I and the American Intervention* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968) 5, 7-8.

⁸ Edward S. Miller, *Bankrupting the Enemy; The U.S. Financial Siege of Japan Before Pearl Harbor* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2007) 48-49.

ii. ROOSEVELT'S WAR POLICY

Throughout the Second World War, strength of the United States' international relationships with the United Kingdom was in part dependent on the personal friendship and communication that existed amongst President Franklin D. Roosevelt & Prime Minister Winston Churchill. It was likewise dependent on Roosevelt's obsession with preventing the downfall of Britain, which he saw as an essential component of American safety. Through the early years of World War II, FDR used this purpose as a means of inviting the British management inside the discussion & allowing Britain to obtain assistance from the United States. The desire of Franklin D. Roosevelt to develop a private connection with Winston Churchill throughout the conflict insured that Britain would continue to receive help for the remainder of the conflict and provided the groundwork for Anglo-American collaboration once the United States entered the conflict.⁹

3. CONCLUSION

The United States of America participated in both World Wars because of the danger that was presented by Germany in World War I and Japan in World War II. These intimidations modeled a threat to the nationwide security of the United States, and Presidents Wilson and Roosevelt utilised this fact to their advantage while trying to persuade Congress to announce war as a amount to safeguard United States. In comparison to World War I, the United States faced more severe physical danger through World War II. Risks that were generated as a outcome of the incapacity of US's friends to defeat their opponents made it inevitable that the United States wil engage the conflict at some time. The United States' involvement in both World Conflicts was precipitated by comparable reactions to the events that transpired during both wars. The population in the United States developed a dread of war as a result of aggressive tactics implemented by Germany and Japan during the First and Second World Wars. Before the United States became involved in the conflicts, there was a robust wish among the American public to keep the country out of the wars on the grounds that the conflicts did not directly affect the United States and that the United States must not become tangled in the affairs of other countries. Both of these mindsets indicate the United States' incapacity to appreciate the significance of international occurrences on domestic issues in the United States.

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⁹ Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Proclamation No. 2413" 2 July 1940, in 1940 War and Aid to Democracies, vol. 9 of The Public Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1941) 277-281.

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