

## Isolationist WWII Assignment

### Arsenal for Democracy Fireside Chat

FDR, "Arsenal of Democracy" Fireside Chat, excerpted from an Address of the President Delivered by Radio From the White House, December 29, 1940, 9:30pm

My friends:

...Never before since Jamestown and Plymouth Rock has our American civilization been in such danger as now. For on September 27th, 1940—this year—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.

...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.

...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? And 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, Austral-Asia, and the high seas. And they will be in a position to bring enormous military and naval resources against this hemisphere.

...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, get them 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.

...In a military sense Great Britain and the British Empire are today the spearhead of resistance to world conquest. And they are putting up a fight which will live forever in the story of human gallantry. There is no demand for sending an American expeditionary force outside our own borders. There is no intention by any member of your government to send such a force. You can therefore, nail, nail any talk about sending armies to Europe as deliberate untruth. Our national Permission is granted to educators to reproduce this worksheet for classroom use policy is not directed toward war. Its sole purpose is to keep war away from our country and away from 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.

...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, and the planes, and the tanks. The nation expects our defense industries to continue operation without interruption by strikes or lockouts. 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.

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

But all of our present efforts are not enough. We must have more ships, more guns, more planes -- more of everything. And this can be accomplished only 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. ...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.

...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 overall military necessities.

We must be the great arsenal of democracy.

1. Who threatens America and the world?
2. Who is fighting to hold off and defeat that threat?
3. What do the people who are defending themselves ask of the United States?
4. How can the United States aid the defenders of Democracy?
5. Why should management and labor get along without strikes or lockouts?
6. Who will decide if the production of consumer or luxury goods needs to yield to defense production?
7. What alternative does Roosevelt pose to arming Britain and other democracies?

Prior to 1941, the United States was reluctant to enter World War II. Many Americans, called **Isolationists**, considered the cost of World War I too great and wanted the country to focus on recovering from the Great Depression and implementing President Roosevelt’s New Deal programs. **Isolationists** did not want to fight another long and costly war. As a result, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1935 which outlawed providing funds or supplies to warring countries.

In 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Then, Germany invaded France and Belgium and attacked England, while the Nazis built concentration camps throughout northern Europe. Germany’s aggression towards other European nations made the United States more inclined to action, called **intervention**. President Roosevelt was an **interventionist**. He created a military draft and sought money from Congress to build new naval vessels. He also asked Congress to allow the United States to provide supplies, arms, and ammunition to Europe in the Neutrality Act of 1939. Roosevelt called on the U.S. to be an “arsenal of democracy.” However, **Isolationists** still opposed **intervention**. Charles Lindbergh and the America First Committee were the leading critics of the U.S. entering World War II and argued that the German military was too strong to defeat.

In 1940, Germany, Italy, and Japan joined together in the Tripartite Pact to form the Axis Powers; they pledged to go to war if any of them were attacked by the United States. In 1941, Roosevelt and Churchill met secretly and drafted the Atlantic Charter in which each country pledged to aid the other. Throughout 1940 and 1941, the United States strengthened its defenses and sent more and more supplies to England and the Soviet Union. U-boat attacks on supply ships increased. Japan sought to control more and more of the western Pacific Ocean and South Asia. **Interventionists** felt that the U.S. economy would suffer if it were left as the only democratic country because it would not trade freely with totalitarian regimes; trade was already being affected by the Japanese control of the Pacific. Finally, on December 7, 1941, Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor. The United States and the **Isolationists** could no longer resist involvement in World War II.

Answer the question from the positions of the Isolationists and Interventionists using the following criteria.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Isolationist</b>	<b>Interventionist</b>
1. Effects of World War I		
2. Domestic Economy		
3. Wartime Preparation		
4. National Security		

Cartoon #1:

He Never Knew  
What Hit Him





Ho Hum! No chance of contagion.

Cartoon #3:



Cartoon #4



Directions: Use the graphic organizer below to explain the meaning of each cartoon.

Cartoon #1:

Cartoon #2:

Cartoon #3:

Cartoon #4: