

### **The Neutrality Act of 1936**

... it shall ... [during period of war] be unlawful for any person within the United States to purchase, sell, or exchange bonds, securities, or other obligations of the government of any belligerent country, or of any political subdivision thereof, or of any person acting for or on behalf of such government, issued after the date of such proclamation, or to make any loan or extend any credit to any such government or person ...

1. *In your own words, explain what this law does.*
2. *Why do you think Congress enacted this law?*

### **The Neutrality Act of 1937**

Section 1 - Whenever the President shall find that there exists a state of war between, or among, two or more foreign states, the President shall proclaim such fact, and it shall thereafter be unlawful to export, or attempt to export, or cause to be exported, arms, ammunition, or implements of war from any place in the United States to any belligerent state named in such proclamation, or to any neutral state for transshipment to, or for the use of, any such belligerent state. Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of section 1 of this Act it shall thereafter be unlawful for any citizen of the United States to travel on any vessel of the state or states named in such proclamation,

3. *In your own words, explain what this law does.*
4. *Why do you think Congress enacted this law?*

### **Article in the New York Times by Charles Lindbergh Advocating Neutrality in the European War, April 1941**

... I do not believe that our American ideals, and our way of life, will gain through an unsuccessful war. And I know that the United States is not prepared to wage war in Europe successfully at this time. ...

... it is now obvious that England is losing the war. I believe this is realized even by the British Government. But they have one last desperate plan remaining. They hope that they may be able to persuade us to send another American Expeditionary Force to Europe, and to share with England militarily, as well as financially, the fiasco of this war.

... We have only a one-ocean Navy. Our Army is still untrained and inadequately equipped for foreign war. Our air force is deplorably lacking in modern fighting planes.

...

... There is a policy open to this nation that will lead to success—a policy that leaves us free to follow our own way of life, and to develop our own civilization. It is not a new and untried idea. It was advocated by Washington. It was incorporated in the Monroe Doctrine. Under its guidance, the United States became the greatest nation in the world.

It is based upon the belief that the security of a nation lies in the strength and character of its own people. It recommends the maintenance of armed forces sufficient to defend this hemisphere from attack by any combination of foreign powers. It demands faith in an independent American destiny. This is the policy of the America First Committee today. It is a policy not of isolation, but of independence; not of defeat, but of courage. It is a policy that led this nation to success during the most trying years of our history, and it is a policy that will lead us to success again.

We have weakened ourselves for many months, and still worse, we have divided our own people by this dabbling in Europe's wars. While we should have been concentrating on American defense we have been forced to argue over foreign quarrels. ...

The United States is better situated from a military standpoint than any other nation in the world. Even in our present condition of unpreparedness no foreign power is in a position to invade us today. If we concentrate on our own defenses and build the strength that this nation should maintain, no foreign army will every attempt to land on American shores.

... Over a hundred million people in this nation are opposed to entering the war. If the principles of democracy mean anything at all, that is reason enough for us to stay out.

Most of these people have no influence or power. Most of them have no means of expressing their convictions, except by their vote which has always been against this war. They are the citizens who have had to work too hard at their daily jobs to organize political meetings. Hitherto, they have relied upon their vote to express their feelings; but now they find that it is hardly remembered except in the oratory of a political campaign. These people—the majority of hardworking American citizens, are with us. They are the true strength of our country. And they are beginning to realize, as you and I, that there are times when we must sacrifice our normal interests in life in order to insure the safety and the welfare of our nation.

5. *Who was Charles Lindbergh? Was he someone that most Americans respected? Explain.*
6. *What is Lindbergh's position on whether the US should enter the war in Europe?*
7. *List and explain six reasons that Lindbergh gives for this position.*
8. *Highlight one quote each from the document that describes each reason.*
9. *Do you believe Lindbergh's position on whether the US should enter the war was correct? Explain why or why not in at least 30 words.*

### **Franklin Delano Roosevelt - Fireside chat - December 29, 1940**

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

...

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

10. *Even though FDR's speech was given before Lindbergh's, it reads like a response to Lindbergh's arguments. In your own words, explain how FDR's words could be used to refute the arguments made by Lindbergh.*
11. *Which perspective, Lindbergh or FDR, do you think most Americans at the time would have agreed with? Explain your answer.*