



Essay Question 2

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- “President Roosevelt recognized the dangers of fascism early and did all that he could, under the circumstances, to lead the nation away from a policy of isolationism.”
- Assess the validity of this statement by analyzing THREE of the following:
- cash and carry; quarantine speech; destroyers-for-bases deal; Lend-Lease

Thesis

➤ FDR did recognize the dangers of fascism, and broke away from isolationism as shown in the quarantine speech, Lend Lease and cash and carry.

Quarantine Speech

➤ "The epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading. When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease...There must be positive endeavors to preserve peace." FDR October 5, 1937

➤ After World War I, Woodrow Wilson hoped that the United States would never return to war, and much of the country felt the same way.

➤ The U.S. took a stance of isolationism, by simply ignoring war activity throughout the rest of the world.

- By 1937, however, the mood was beginning to shift due to the threats posed by Hitler.
- FDR promulgated the decision to shift U.S.' foreign policy to find a middle ground between declaring war on the nations of Germany, Italy and Japan, and simply ignoring the threat that these nations posed.

➤ However, he did not lay out a specific plan within the speech, but it was inferred that there would be an embargo enacted against the nations by the United States and other peaceful nations. The lack of a specific plan within the speech made the effects of the speech turn out to be less than what the President had hoped.

➤ Although the speech didn't directly do anything, it was the first step America took towards taking up arms against the axis powers.

➤ The U.S' non-war tactics before completely joining the Allies, as implied in the quarantine speech, were also reflected in...

Lend-Lease

➤ Lend-Lease was the law that started a program under which the United States of America supplied the United Kingdom, the USSR, Republic of China, France, and other allied nations with material between 1941 and 1945. It was signed into law on March 11, 1941, a year and a half after the outbreak of World War II in Europe in September 1939. This was nine months before the U.S. entered the war in December 1941. Formally titled *An Act to Further Promote the Defense of the United States*, the Act effectively ended the United States' pretense of neutrality.

➤ In December 1940 President Roosevelt proclaimed the U.S. would be the "Arsenal of Democracy" and proposed selling munitions to Britain and Canada. The strongest opposed to this was among the isolationist Republicans in Congress, who feared that the measure would lead to American involvement in what was seen by most Americans as an essentially European conflict. Isolationist would say that it would be "the longest single step this nation has yet taken toward direct involvement in the war abroad."

Cash and Carry

- Cash and carry was a policy requested by FDR at a special session of the United States Congress on September 21, 1939. It replaced the Neutrality Acts of 1936, and allowed the sale of material to belligerents, as long as the recipients arranged for the transport using their own ships and paid immediately in cash.)

➤ Though "cash and carry" concepts had been introduced in the Neutrality Act of 1936, it only pertained to materials that could not be used in war efforts. Originally presented to Congress by Senator Key Pittman earlier in 1939, the bill was designed to replace the Neutrality Act of 1937. The bill had been defeated repeatedly by the Senate and the House on more than one occasion as Isolationists feared that passing the bill would draw the US into the conflict in Europe. However, President Roosevelt felt that further help was needed in Europe after Germany invaded Poland in September 1939. He then asked Congress to pass the legislation again. The bill passed the Senate in late October, gaining approval from the House on November 5, 1939. The President gave his signature the same day. The purpose was to hold neutrality between the United States and European countries while still giving aid to Britain, exploiting the fact that Germany had no funds and could not reliably ship across the British-controlled Atlantic. Various policies, such as the Neutrality Acts of 1935, 1936, and 1937, forbade selling implements of war or lending money to belligerent countries under any terms. The U.S. economy was rebounding at this time, following the Great Depression, but there was still a need for industrial manufacturing jobs. The cash and carry program helped to solve this issue and in turn Great Britain benefited from the purchase of arms and other goods.

Conclusion

➤ Because FDR knew the dangers of fascism, he moved away from isolationism, as seen in lend lease, cash and carry, and the quarantine speech.