

US History

Origins of World War II

Learning Target:

I can outline the foreign policy the United States followed after WWI.

1. American Isolationism

“We ask only to live our own life in our own way, in friendship and sympathy with all, in alliance with none.”

– Senator Hiram W. Johnson

Isolationism –

A complete or partial withdrawal from world affairs

Reasons for American Isolationism –

1. The belief WWI did not achieve a world safe for democracy –
 - Postwar chaos in Europe and the founding of communism in Russia illustrated these beliefs
2. Fear of Entangling Alliances –
 - Believed that the world was ripe for another conflict
 - Did not want to be pulled into a foreign conflict
 - Did not want the United States to fight a war not directly influencing it

Isolationism and International Organizations –

- Isolationist policies led the US to avoid membership in international organizations
- These organizations included the League of Nations and the World Court
 - Both were formed to maintain peace following WWI
- President’s Coolidge, Hoover, & Roosevelt all supported joining the World Court
 - Public opinion ran strongly against membership
 - The Senate refused to allow the US to join

Isolationism & Promoting Peace –

The Use of Diplomacy –

- Diplomacy** - The art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations or the skill in handling affairs without arousing hostility
- Since the US would not join international peacekeeping organizations it decided to use diplomacy to promote world peace
- Disarmament** – Reducing the size of a country’s military
- Groups promoting peace urged the US government to use diplomacy to negotiate disarmament of the world’s powers