

## Anglo-American Relations in the Interwar Period

### Source A

I am no longer prepared to take dictation from the U.S. and if they attempt to bully us by threatening a large programme [of naval building] I hope I shall be able to range myself with you and [Admiral] Beatty [First Sea Lord] as to the manner in which such a threat should be dealt with.

Winston S. Churchill, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to William Bridgeman, First Lord of the Admiralty, 22 December 1927; quoted in John Charmley, *Churchill's Grand Alliance: The Anglo-American Special Relationship 1940-57* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995), p. 6.

### Source B

[W]e have been too tender, not to say subservient, with the US for a long time past. It is we who have made all the advances, and received nothing in return. It is still necessary, and I desire as much as ever, that we should get on well with this untrustworthy race. But we shall never get very far; they will always let us down.

Minute by Sir Robert Vansittart, Permanent Under Secretary, Foreign Office, 5 February 1934; quoted in David Dimbleby and David Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart: The Relationship Between Britain and America in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p. 103.

### Source C

Neutrality is to be had if we are willing to pay the price of abandonment of expectation of profits from the blood of other nations at war....

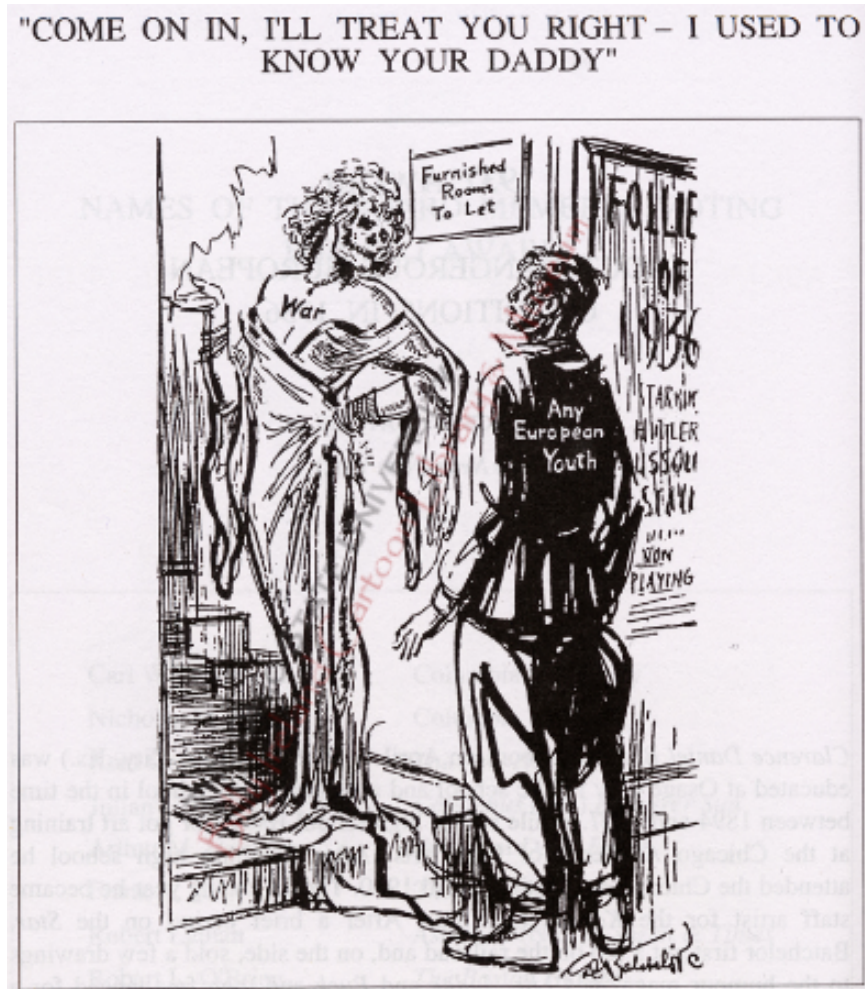
The [Woodrow] Wilson permissive neutrality policy held that it was not an un-neutral act for America to sell munitions to nations at war so long as it was our policy to sell to both sides alike, and free trade in munitions was the result....

Yet ... while the Wilson administration was declaring itself neutral, parts of that administration were actually contemplating the hour when we would ultimately get into the war without a doubt as to which side we would enter on ....

Based upon such facts and such experience Senator [Bennet Champ] Clark [D-Missouri] and I today introduced in the Senate a bill proposing a strict policy of neutrality, the enforcement of which shall at once be not permissive or at the discretion of the President, but mandatory upon him.

Radio address by Senator Gerald P. Nye [R-North Dakota], 6 January 1936, Gerald P. Nye Papers, Herbert Hoover Library, West Branch, Iowa. Reprinted in Dennis Merrill and Thomas G. Paterson (eds), *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations. Documents and Essays, Concise Edition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006), pp. 239-40, and 241.

**Source D**



Cartoon by Clarence D. Batchelor, *New York Daily News*, 25 April, 1936. Ohio State University Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum, Cartoon Image Database, available at: <https://cartoonimages.osu.edu/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.seeltemInSearchResults&ItemID=ec54131d-6007-4c17-9544-3eebb18e3374&CollectionID=02d5386b-a575-4bfa-8005-cf676fd41345&listOfKeyWords=Clarence%20D.%20Batchelor>

**Source E**

[O]n the evening of January 11<sup>th</sup> [1938] the American Under-Secretary of State, Mr Sumner Welles, had called upon our Ambassador at Washington, Sir Ronald Lindsay, by direction of the President. His purpose was to convey a message ... that the President was deeply impressed by the deterioration of the world situation....

He accordingly wished to take action along the only lines open to him, given the state of American public opinion. This initiative, the Under-Secretary had said, was designed to work parallel to the effort which the British Government were making with the Central European powers....

The President proposed to call the whole Diplomatic Corps of Washington to the White House on January 22<sup>nd</sup> ... [to] lay before all governments the suggestion that they should agree

on the essential principles to be observed in the conduct of international relations. These were the reduction of armaments, equal access to raw materials, and the laws of warfare....

Roosevelt would only proceed with it if he received an assurance from Chamberlain, no later than January 17<sup>th</sup>, that it met with the 'cordial approval and whole-hearted support of His Majesty's Government.'...

Chamberlain evidently viewed the President's initiative 'with the gravest concern'. He refused to make any offer of support towards it and determined to send his reply without consulting me or any other member of the Cabinet.

The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Avon, *The Eden Memoirs: Facing the Dictators* (London: Cassell, 1962), pp. 548, 549, and 551.

### Questions

1. Using these sources and your own knowledge explain why the United States and Britain did not act jointly to halt international aggression in the 1930s. **(30 marks)**
2. How useful are these sources for historians studying Anglo-American relations in the 1930s? **(20 marks)**