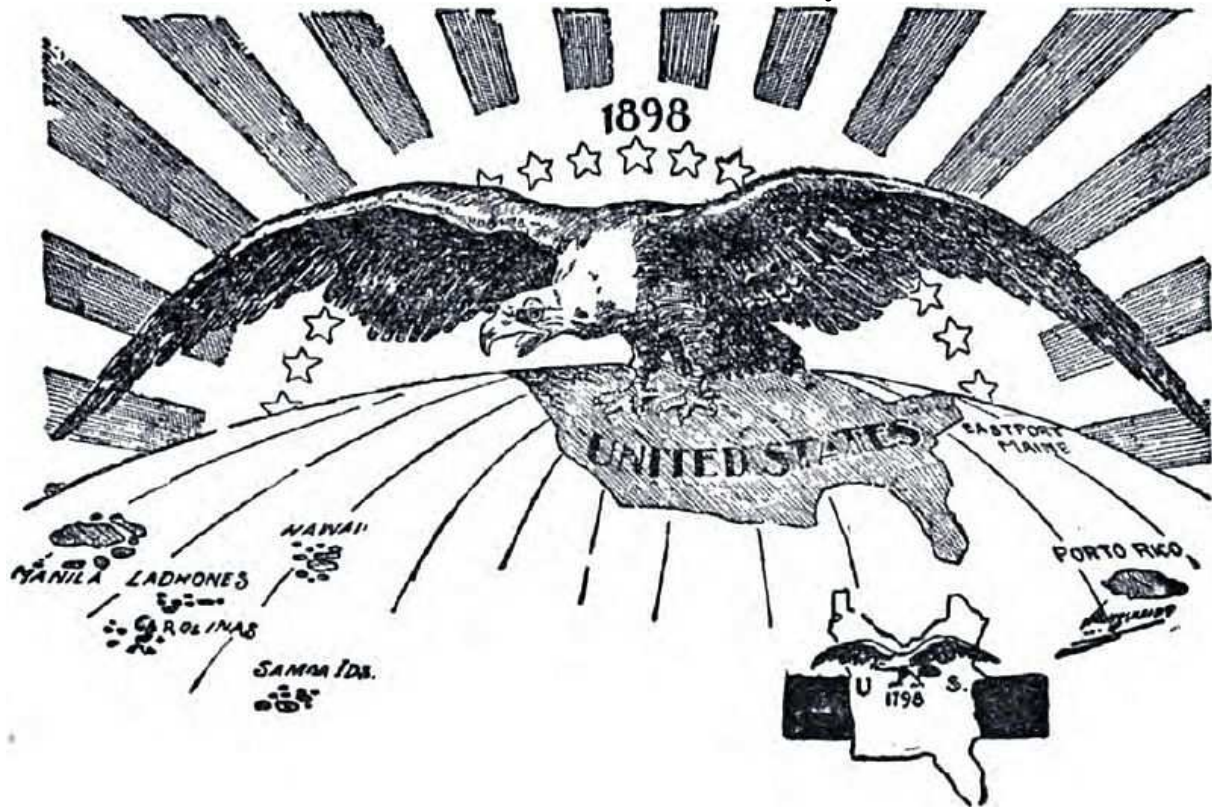


**The paths of power: the USA and the world since the President Wilson's « fourteen points » in January 1918.**

Sources to use: Cartoon Ten thousand Miles from tip tip (*Philadelphia Press*, 1898), map of the US power nowadays.

**Source 1: The US territorial extension in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century:**



**Ten thousand miles from tip to tip.—Philadelphia Press.**

Source: unknown cartoonist, *Philadelphia Press*, 1898

**Source 2: The US superpower in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century:**

Question:

At the beginning of WW1, due to many military conquests, the USA had possessions in the Pacific where they controlled:

- It also had protectorates, i.e. territories supposedly independent but under the protection of a foreign country which controlled the foreign affairs, such as Haiti, Porto-Rico, the Dominican Republic and Cuba.

The Caribbean Sea and its basin also became an US lake.

But, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, apart from the privileged region of the Pacific and the Caribbean basin, the US interventions in the world were rare. The fact it entered late in the first world conflict confirms that. The USA is isolationist.

Key question: How has the USA transformed and modeled the notion of power in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, alternating between isolationism, based on the Monroe Doctrine, and interventionism, based on Wilson's vision of the US role in the world, since 1918?

## **I. Temptation of power but no international interventionism (1917-1941)**

### **A. The legacy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century diplomacy: the Monroe Doctrine, the “Manifest Destiny” Myth and Pax Americana:**

Sources to use: The Monroe Doctrine (President Monroe's seventh annual message to Congress, December 2, 1823 (Transcription courtesy of *the Avalon Project* at Yale Law School)), The Manifest Destiny (Alison Chaney, article the Manifest destiny, Princeton University website, 2014), The Big stick policy (*The Big stick policy*, Britannica Encyclopedia online, 2014), The “open door” policy (*The “open door” policy*, Britannica Encyclopedia online, 2014), The Americans decided to enter at war (History channel, *Germans unleashed U-Boat*, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014).

#### **Source 1: The Monroe Doctrine:**

[...] In the discussions<sup>1</sup> to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate the occasion has been judged proper for asserting [...] that the American continents, [...], are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.

[...] Of events in that quarter of the globe, with which we have so much intercourse and from which we derive our origin, we have always been anxious and interested spectators. The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow-men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers [...] we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all, enlightened and impartial observers. [...] We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those [European] powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States [...].

Source: President Monroe's seventh annual message to Congress, December 2, 1823 (Transcription courtesy of *the Avalon Project* at Yale Law School)

#### **Source 2: The Manifest Destiny:**

**Manifest Destiny** was the 19th century American belief that the United States (often in the ethnically specific form of the "Anglo-Saxon race") was destined to expand across the North American continent, from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific Ocean. It was used by Democrats in the 1840s to justify the war with Mexico [...].

Advocates of Manifest Destiny believed that expansion was not only wise but that it was readily apparent (manifest) and inexorable (destiny). Historians have for the most part agreed that there are three basic themes to Manifest Destiny:

- The special virtues of the American people and their institutions;
- America's mission to redeem and remake the west in the image of agrarian America;
- An irresistible destiny to accomplish this essential duty

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<sup>1</sup> The diplomatic discussions were between Russia, the United Kingdom and the USA.

The concept of American expansion is much older, but John O'Sullivan coined the exact term "Manifest Destiny" in the July/August 1845 issue of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* in an article titled "Annexation". It was primarily used by Democrats to support the expansion [...], but the idea of expansion was opposed by Whigs like [...] Abraham Lincoln who wanted to deepen the economy rather than broaden its expanse. It fell out of favor by 1860.

The belief in an American mission to promote and defend democracy throughout the world, as expounded by Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson, continues to have an influence on American political ideology.

Source: Alison Chaney, article the Manifest destiny, Princeton University website, 2014.

### **Source 3: The Big stick policy:**

In American history, this policy was popularized and named by Theodore Roosevelt<sup>2</sup> that asserted U.S. domination when such dominance was considered the moral imperative.

Roosevelt's first noted public use of the phrase occurred when he advocated before Congress increasing naval preparation to support the nation's diplomatic objectives. Earlier, in a letter to a friend, while he was still the governor of New York, Roosevelt cited his fondness for a West African proverb, "Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far." The phrase was also used later by Roosevelt to explain his relations with domestic political leaders and his approach of the American foreign policy in Latin America.

Source: *The Big stick policy*, Britannica Encyclopedia online, 2014

### **Source 4: The "open door" policy:**

**Open Door policy**, statement of principles initiated by the United States (1899, 1900) for the protection of equal privileges among countries trading with China and in support of Chinese territorial and administrative integrity. The statement was issued in the form of circular notes dispatched by U.S. Secretary of State John Hay to Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, and Russia. The Open Door policy was received with almost universal approval in the United States, and for more than 40 years it was a cornerstone of American foreign policy.

The principle that all nations should have equal access to any of the ports open to trade in China had been stipulated in the Anglo-Chinese treaties of Nanjing (Nanking, 1842) and Wangxia (Wanghia, 1844). Great Britain had greater interests in China than any other power and successfully maintained the policy of the open door until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the first Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), however, a scramble for "spheres of influence" in various parts of coastal China—primarily by Russia, France, Germany, and Great Britain—began. Within each of these spheres the controlling major power claimed exclusive privileges of investment, and it was feared that each would likewise seek to monopolize the trade.

Source: *The "open door" policy*, Britannica Encyclopedia online, 2014

### **Source 5: The Americans decided to enter at war:**

On this day in 1917, Germany announces the renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare in the Atlantic as German torpedo-armed submarines prepare to attack any and all ships, including civilian passenger carriers, said to be sighted in war-zone waters.

When World War I erupted in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson pledged neutrality for the United States, a position that the vast majority of Americans favored. Britain, however, was one of America's closest trading partners and tension soon arose between the United States and Germany over the latter's attempted blockade of the British isles. Several U.S. ships traveling to Britain were damaged or sunk by German mines and, in February 1915, Germany announced unrestricted warfare against all ships, neutral or otherwise, that entered the war

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<sup>2</sup> Theodore Roosevelt was the American president from 1901 to 1909.

zone around Britain. One month later, Germany announced that a German cruiser had sunk the *William P. Frye*, a private American merchant vessel that was transporting grain to England when it disappeared. President Wilson was outraged, but the German government apologized, calling the attack an unfortunate mistake.

[...] In early May 1915, several New York newspapers published a warning by the German embassy in Washington that Americans traveling on British or Allied ships in war zones did so at their own risk. The announcement was placed on the same page as an advertisement for the imminent sailing of the British-owned *Lusitania* ocean liner from New York to Liverpool. On May 7, the *Lusitania* was torpedoed without warning just off the coast of Ireland. Of the 1,959 passengers, 1,198 were killed, including 128 Americans.

The German government maintained that the *Lusitania* was carrying munitions, but the U.S. demanded reparations and an end to German attacks on unarmed passenger and merchant ships. [...]

At the end of January 1917, Germany, determined to win its war of attrition against the Allies, announced the resumption of unrestricted warfare. [...]

On February 22, Congress passed a \$250 million arms-appropriations bill intended to ready the United States for war. Two days later, British authorities gave the U.S. ambassador to Britain a copy of what has become known as the "Zimmermann Note," a coded message from German Foreign Secretary Arthur Zimmermann to Count Johann von Bernstorff, the German ambassador to Mexico. In the telegram, intercepted and deciphered by British intelligence, Zimmermann stated that, in the event of war with the United States, Mexico should be asked to enter the conflict as a German ally. In return, Germany would promise to restore to Mexico the lost territories of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. On March 1, the U.S. State Department published the note and America was galvanized against Germany once and for all.

In late March, Germany sank four more U.S. merchant ships and, on April 2, President Wilson appeared before Congress and called for a declaration of war against Germany. On April 4, the Senate voted 82 to six to declare war against Germany. Two days later, the House of Representatives endorsed the declaration by a vote of 373 to 50 and America formally entered World War I

Source: History channel, *Germans unleashed U-Boat*, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

#### Questions:

1. Identify and explain the four policies or ideologies which were the US diplomatic legacies when they entered at war in 1917.

In 1917, the USA based their foreign policy on four doctrines, legacies from the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

- The Monroe Doctrine. Advocated by the American president James Monroe in 1823, the USA promised not to interfere in the European affairs, and it was fiercely opposed to any European intervention on the American continent, i.e. America to the Americans.
- The Big Stick Policy. It was a corollary of the Monroe Doctrine. It was organized and theorized by the American president Theodore Roosevelt in 1903, quoting an American motto from the period of the expansion of the Frontier: "Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far". That policy concerned the attitude of the American president towards other political leaders but above all, the American foreign policy in Latin America, considered the US "preserve still" (=chasse gardée).
- The Manifest Destiny. That expression was first coined by John Lee O'Sullivan, a journalist, at the time of the war with Mexico. It was based on three main characteristics:
  - o The special virtues of the American people and their institutions;
  - o America's mission to redeem and remake the world in the image of America;
  - o An irresistible destiny to accomplish this essential duty

As a matter of fact, the USA is the chosen Nation to bring progress and liberty to the world.

- The « open door » policy. It was an economic doctrine first advocated in the early 1900's for the Chinese market and trade, but then, it was enlarged to all trades with European colonies and dependent states of colonial powers. The idea was that these colonies and dependent states should let their ports opened to any country which wanted to trade with them.

2. Prove that the diplomatic vision of the US foreign affairs and power was based on isolationism until WW1.

Isolationism means that no intervention should be made abroad except if the immediate interests of a country are threatened. The Monroe Doctrine and the Big Stick Policy advocated an absence of any kind of American intervention in the European affairs, except if the US interests were threatened or if the Europeans landed on the American continent, especially Latin American, considered a preserve still for the USA.

The Open Door policy also shows that the USA refused colonialism and rejected any territorial ambitions.

3. Using source 5 and your knowledge about WW1, explain why the USA entered at war whereas the Monroe doctrine was against the US intervention in the European affairs.

Actually the USA entered at war **because** of the Monroe Doctrine because their interests were threatened. Three events pushed Wilson to declare war:

- The German refusal to respect the “freedom of the seas” and the fact that Germany declared an unrestricted naval warfare, sinking ships providing the Allies with supplies.
- The discovering of the Zimmermann note asking Mexico to enter at war in exchange of Texas, Arizona and New Mexico.
- The revolution in Russia giving the possibility to USA to transform the Entente's action in a crusade of the democracies against autocracy.

Finally, the American interests in recovering the loans to France and the UK or the exclusivity of trade with the Allies pushed the American to enter in that war.

### **B. Wilson's vision of interventionism failed after WW1:**

Sources to use: Wilson's fourteen points on January 8<sup>th</sup> 1918 (bbc.co.uk)

#### **Source 1: Video, hear the text of the Wilson points:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHgZI7xlzIk>

Source: bbc.co.uk.

#### **Source 2: The League of Nations, Wilson's League for Peace:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0ldr18Rnh0>

Source: Ryan Atallah, Documentary competition Day 2010, 4<sup>th</sup> national prize, 2010.

#### **Source 3: American neutrality acts in the 1930's:**

[...] In the 1930s, the United States Government enacted a series of laws designed to prevent the United States from being embroiled in a foreign war by clearly stating the terms of U.S. neutrality. Although many Americans had rallied to join President Woodrow Wilson's crusade to make the world “safe for democracy” in 1917, by the 1930s critics argued that U.S. involvement in the First World War had been driven by bankers and munitions traders with business interests in Europe. These findings fueled a growing “isolationist” movement that argued the United States should steer clear of future wars and remain neutral by avoiding financial deals with countries at war.

*First Neutrality Act*



By the mid-1930s, events in Europe and Asia indicated that a new world war might soon erupt and the U.S. Congress took action to enforce U.S. neutrality. On August 31, 1935, Congress passed the first Neutrality Act prohibiting the export of “arms, ammunition, and implements of war” from the United States to foreign nations at war and requiring arms manufacturers in the United States to apply for an export license. American citizens traveling in war zones were also advised that they did so at their own risk. [...] On February 29, 1936, Congress renewed the Act until May of 1937 and prohibited Americans from extending any loans to belligerent nations.

#### *Neutrality Act of 1937*

The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and the rising tide of fascism in Europe increased support for extending and expanding the Neutrality Act of 1937. Under this law, U.S. citizens were forbidden from traveling on belligerent ships, and American merchant ships were prevented from transporting arms to belligerents even if those arms were produced outside of the United States. The Act gave the President the authority to bar all belligerent ships from U.S. waters, and to extend the export embargo to any additional “articles or materials.” Finally, civil wars would also fall under the terms of the Act.

The Neutrality Act of 1937 did contain one important concession to Roosevelt: belligerent nations were allowed, at the discretion of the President, to acquire any items except arms from the United States, so long as they immediately paid for such items and carried them on non-American ships—the so-called “cash-and-carry” provision. Since vital raw materials such as oil were not considered “implements of war,” the “cash-and-carry” clause would be quite valuable to whatever nation could make use of it. [...]

#### **Neutrality Act of 1939**

[...] After a fierce debate in Congress, in November of 1939, a final Neutrality Act passed. This Act lifted the arms embargo and put all trade with belligerent nations under the terms of “cash-and-carry.” The ban on loans remained in effect, and American ships were barred from transporting goods to belligerent ports. [...]

Source: *Neutrality acts in the 1930's*, office of the historian, US department of state, 2014.

#### Questions:

1. Explain the bases of Wilson’s policy, called *New Diplomacy*.

The wilsonian *New Diplomacy* was based on:

- The high interest in individual sovereignty from the local to the international.
- The principle of collective security, based on international laws, the respect of nations and people, and the refusal to make any country the scapegoat of WW1. It let the possibility of the self-determination.
- The creation of an international League to maintain world peace and development. The League of Nations created among Wilson’s vision urging each member “to respect and maintain, against any aggression, the territorial integrity and the political independence of any members of the League”. It was an opposition of the “European balance” theory, which, according to Wilson precipitated Europe into WW1.

2. Explain Wilson’s vision of peace.

Wilson wanted to protect international peace. He proposed the creation of an international organization, the League of Nation, which should provide to the members the possibilities to cooperate in order to maintain peace.

He said that that organization should be led by the most important powers of the time, including those who lost the War.

3. Find the reasons why the USA didn’t implement Wilson’s policy? Identify the main fear of the opponents to Wilson’s project.

The American senate refused to ratify the treaty creating the League of Nations. That was the main reason explaining the absence of implementation of Wilson's policy. Mainly republican, the Senate wanted to protect the Monroe Doctrine and the "open door" policy and refused to interfere more in the European affairs. In 1920, the American senate refused to ratify the treaty creating the LON, chose to have a foreign policy based on the Monroe Doctrine and to mark the end of the intervention in the European affairs.

4. The US isolationist policy organised from the 1920s had persisted until F. D. Roosevelt's mandates, show how (use source 3)

The 1930's economic crisis, and above all, the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe didn't cause an American intervention in Europe, even if, F. D. Roosevelt, the American president since 1933, was very aware of the European stakes and issues.

The American Congress continued all along the 1930's to raise barriers to avoid "falling into the European intervention trap another time". Those embargos mainly concerned financial loans and arms sale. Several neutrality acts passed from 1935 to 1939:

- The American Congress granted new loans only to countries which had already reimbursed the loans from WW1.
- The Neutrality Acts from 1935 to 1937 embargoed arms and military materials, and warned the American citizens about any travels in war zones.
- In 1937 and 1939, the Neutrality Act, also called "cash and carry" law granted the sale of any non-military material first and then of any material only if the country buying those merchandises could come and take the merchandises with its own ships in the American ports and could pay cash. At the same time, president Roosevelt created the "Quarantine" policy after the Japanese invasion of China, which meant increasing the embargo on shark countries but not entering into war. Roosevelt said: "we are determined to stay out of war".

### **C. Economy, absence of American isolationism:**

Sources to use: Source 3 of the previous paragraph, Economic expansion in the 1920's (Akira Iriye, chapter 6: the economic aspect, in *Cambridge history of the American Foreign Policy*, 2003, p. 88-99).

#### **Source 1: Economic expansionism in the 1920's:**

[...] Any stable international relations must be built on economic foundations, and the situations in the 1920s was no exception. Indeed, given the devastation brought upon the European economies, no postwar order could be conceived that did not include an economic agenda. [...] How to restore the European economies and, through them, reestablish stable international economic relations was a key issue of the postwar period [...]. American capital was the main sustainer of the international economic system during the 1920s, in particular after 1924<sup>3</sup>. The role of American financial resources has sometimes been referred to as "the diplomacy of the dollar". The term signifies the fact that whereas the government in Washington refrained from active participation in world political affairs and was particularly sensitive about domestic opposition to working with the League of Nations, private investments abroad are developed and encouraged. [...]

The League of Nations, and Americans certainly shared such a perspective, developed what may be termed an idea of business civilization as the key to national and international affairs. [...] J. E. Hoover, secretary of commerce for eight years before becoming president in 1929, was a strong believer in private American initiatives – economic and humanitarian – that would contribute to a stabler and more prosperous world. [...]

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<sup>3</sup> 1924 was the moment when the Belgian and the French troops invaded the Ruhr Valley in Germany as retaliation for the fact that Germany didn't pay all that it had to according to the Treaty of Versailles.



Questions:

1. Whereas the USA was isolationist considering the political affairs, identify its attitude towards economy.

The USA was isolationist considering the political affairs, but it was not the case considering economy. The text says: "The League of Nations, and Americans certainly shared such a perspective, developed what may be termed an idea of business civilization as the key to national and international affairs". That means that the USA believed that a prosperous economy and the development of exchanges throughout the world could be the basic foundations of a new world at peace.

As a result, the USA sold their products all over the world and exported its technologies.

It was also a main actor of the European economic, considering first that the European countries needed to pay back the loans from WW1. Moreover, the Americans invested in Europe and let the European investing in the USA.

Finally, the law *cash and carry*, one of the strongest neutrality acts regarding geopolitical questions and matters, was also a real moment of economic opening to the European countries and the rest of the world.

Finally, the Big American firms had factories, mines in different sectors all over the world.

2. Explain how and why economy could be one the US power's instruments, especially in the 1920s.

In the 1920s, capital exchanges with Europe were high. Many American companies and American capitals penetrated all the world markets. Indeed, the USA was at that time the first world economy. It allowed them to increase any kinds of power on the world scale. Indeed, the historian Akira Iriye confirms this by saying: "penetrating world market using capitals, technologies and American merchandises gave the foundation of the new postwar economic order". In the 1920s, economic affairs, more than geopolitical affairs, were considered as the key to dominate the new world order.

3. Show that, because of the importance of economy, the USA was partially actor of the European affairs before 1941 but under specific conditions.

The USA were involved in the European affairs well beyond 1941 because of the high value of economic exchanges with that continent and because of the economic power. The Neutrality Acts, and especially the *Cash and Carry* law, shaped with isolationism, were a mean for the Americans, and especially because of Roosevelt, to help the democracies and to participate to the rearmament in front of the Hitler's threat. Indeed, the USA provided France and Great Britain with weapons.

## **II. A global power with a mission: Protecting the world peace (1941-1991)**

### **A. 1941, the end of the 1930's isolationism:**

Sources to use: Franklin D. Roosevelt, a pragmatic heir of Woodrow Wilson (Article F. D. Roosevelt, US-history.com, 2014), War at the US doors (Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Address to the Congress for the state of Union, January 1941), War and peace according to Roosevelt (Peter Beinart, The legacy of F.D.R., The price of world peace, *Time Magazine*, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009), Roosevelt's « imperial presidency » (Louis W. Koenig, Reassessing the "Imperial Presidency", Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science, Vol. 34, No. 2, The Power to Govern: Assessing Reform in the United States, (1981), p. 31-44.)

### **Source 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt, a pragmatic heir of Woodrow Wilson:**

[...] During the period between the wars, Roosevelt maintained a pragmatic diplomatic stance on foreign affairs. He had been a supporter of Woodrow Wilson's internationalist ideas, but dropped them when the country turned inward to isolationism in the 1920s.

In the late 1930s, however, FDR brought the nation's attention back to foreign affairs. He was alarmed by Germany's aggression in Europe and Japanese incursions in the Pacific. A widespread isolationist perspective held by the electorate, and by Congress, which enacted neutrality laws intended to prevent American involvement in a second world war, inhibited the president.

Roosevelt gained ground when, spurred by Germany's defeat of France in 1940, Congress passed his Lend-Lease legislation to materially support Great Britain's resistance to the Germans. Britain and the Soviet Union were joined by the United States following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941. [...]

Source: Article F. D. Roosevelt, US-history.com, 2014.

### **Source 2: War at the US doors:**

[...] We need not overemphasize imperfections in the Peace of Versailles. We need not harp on failure of the democracies to deal with problems of world reconstruction. We should remember that the Peace of 1919 was far less unjust than the kind of "pacification" which began even before Munich, and which is being carried on under the new order of tyranny that seeks to spread over every continent today. The American people have unalterably set their faces against that tyranny.

Every realist knows that the democratic way of life is at this moment being directly assailed in every part of the world—assailed either by arms, or by secret spreading of poisonous propaganda by those who seek to destroy unity and promote discord in nations that are still at peace.

During 16 long months this assault has blotted out the whole pattern of democratic life in an appalling number of independent nations, great and small. The assailants are still on the march, threatening other nations, great and small.

Therefore, as your President, performing my constitutional duty to "give to the Congress information of the state of the Union," I find it, unhappily, necessary to report that the future and the safety of our country and of our democracy are overwhelmingly involved in events far beyond our borders.

[...] No realistic American can expect from a dictator's peace international generosity, or return of true independence, or world disarmament, or freedom of expression, or freedom of religion, or even good business.

Such a peace would bring no security for us or for our neighbors. [...]

We must especially beware of that small group of selfish men who would clip the wings of the American eagle in order to feather their own nests. [...]

As long as the aggressor nations maintain the offensive, they—not we—will choose the time and the place and the method of their attack.

That is why the future of all the American republics is today in serious danger.

Source: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Address to the Congress for the state of Union, January 1941.

### **Source 3: War and peace according to Roosevelt:**

[...] His basic problem as Nazism stalked Europe was that some Americans wanted to isolate themselves from the world while others wanted to remake it in America's image. Yet both paths, he believed, led nowhere. The U.S. could neither escape the world nor fully redeem it. F.D.R.'s task was to persuade his people to put their money and blood on the line, even though, despite their best efforts, the world would remain a nasty place. [...]

This was the conundrum that had destroyed his old boss Woodrow Wilson, whom Roosevelt had served as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. [...]

Wilson's failure haunted F.D.R. [...] As early as the fall of 1937, F.D.R. began hammering relentlessly on one theme. If Hitler's Germany and Tojo's Japan were allowed to rampage unchecked across Europe and Asia, America would eventually be in danger. The implication was clear. If the U.S. went to war again, it would be a war of necessity, not choice — not a war to remake the world but a war to protect the U.S.

[...] In 1940, when the Nazis overran France, public opinion began to shift, and by the summer of 1941, with Britain under massive assault and German submarines sinking American ships, key advisers told F.D.R. that he could pressure Congress into declaring war. Yet in his gut, Roosevelt felt the timing wasn't right. He feared that unless he somehow showed Americans that the Axis powers were a threat not just to Britain and France — and not even just to American ships but also to Americans themselves — they would come to see World War II as philanthropy, not self-defense. And when the postwar world did not live up to their hopes, they would turn inward again. On Dec. 7, 1941, Japan solved F.D.R.'s problem by turning Pearl Harbor into an inferno. [...]

So when Roosevelt began discussing the shape of the postwar world with Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and Churchill, first in Tehran in November 1943 and then in Yalta in February 1945, it was already becoming clear that Eastern Europe would probably fall under Moscow's thumb. He and Churchill got Stalin to promise that all nations would have the right to choose their own postwar governments, but those lovely words meant little with Soviet tanks squatting on Polish soil.

Roosevelt knew there was not much he could do about this, and he didn't want to alienate Stalin, whose help he thought he would need for a future invasion of Japan. [...] He spent his final months trying to entrench the U.S. in the newly created United Nations, so that even when Americans realized that the postwar world was not living up to their hopes, they could not flee from it.

Source: Peter Beinart<sup>4</sup>, The legacy of F.D.R., The price of world peace, *Time Magazine*, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

#### **Source 4: Roosevelt's « imperial presidency »:**

The spreading use of executive agreements and ever broadening executive privilege were other ingredients that made foreign policy the principal arena of the imperial presidency. Particularly since World War II, according to Schlesinger<sup>5</sup>, "the image of the President acting by himself in foreign affairs, imposing his own sense of reality and necessity on a waiting government and people became the new orthodoxy." [...]

From one perspective, Roosevelt played the role of an imperial president to the hilt, particularly in the crucial interval between the German conquest of France and the attack on Pearl Harbor (June 1940-December 1941), or at the time of Yalta and Potsdam. Moreover, his legacy appeared with the creation of the CIA and the NSC in 1947. [...]

Source: Louis W. Koenig, Reassessing the "Imperial Presidency", *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 34, No. 2, The Power to Govern: Assessing Reform in the United States, (1981), p. 31-44.

#### **Questions:**

1. Identify the two main reasons explaining why Roosevelt progressively withdrew isolationism.

Roosevelt abandoned isolationism for two reasons:

- First, the fact that France was quickly overrun by Germany and that Great Britain remained alone in the fight against Nazi aggressor.

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<sup>4</sup> Senior fellow historian at the Council of Foreign Relations.

<sup>5</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973)

- The fact that the USSR entered at war gave a new breath in the fight against Nazism in Europe. Roosevelt well understood the asset of the Red Army in a future victory against Germany.

2. Identify the main steps of the progressive rupture (use also personal researches).

Three steps can be identified:

- First, Roosevelt allowed lend-lease to Great Britain and then to the USSR. That meant that arms and ammunitions were lent until the end of the conflict. In 1941, the USA was the “great arsenal of the democracies”
- Second, the USA signed the Atlantic charter with Great Britain (August 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 1941), a military alliance.
- Then the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941 threw the USA into the battle. That attack was the end of the American isolationism.

3. Explain Roosevelt’s vision of WW2 and of postwar peace. Was he sure to succeed?

After being at war, the entire country became a war machine: industry was mobilized, as far as the entire population in the backfront and quite 15 million of soldiers in the fronts. The American priority was to win the war. They also tried to create means to be a superpower after the war.

Roosevelt had a very peculiar vision of the world when peace would be back:

- When peace would be back, the Americans would assume their responsibilities as a superpower.
- France, defeated in 1940, would not recover its rank.
- Japan and Germany would be rebuilt on the “American way”.
- China would occupy a higher rank than the one generally granted to it.

The USA would also to be very attentive to its two allies:

- Great Britain led by Winston Churchill was a privileged ally. Without it, no possible postwar because the British should be the head of the European reconstruction.
- The USSR would have a very strong role. Roosevelt didn’t like Stalin but he thought that Stalin could change his mind and would not want to dominate Europe. However, after Yalta (February 4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 1945), Roosevelt saw the imperialist vision organized by Stalin about Europe and he realized that any changes would be difficult.

4. During the war, the historians told that Roosevelt opened the « imperial presidency » (i.e. that the main decisions, especially treaties, were more and more taken by the president instead of the American Congress). Prove it.

After the Attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the declaration of war by the Congress, Roosevelt took a lot of decisions alone.

The Atlantic charter was signed with Churchill without any ratification from the Congress. Yalta and Potsdam agreements were signed directly by the president. The more the president role increased, the less the Congress was solicited.

Two institutions enhanced that matter of facts during the Cold War and especially the Vietnam War: the CIA<sup>6</sup> and the NSC<sup>7</sup> (National Security Council).

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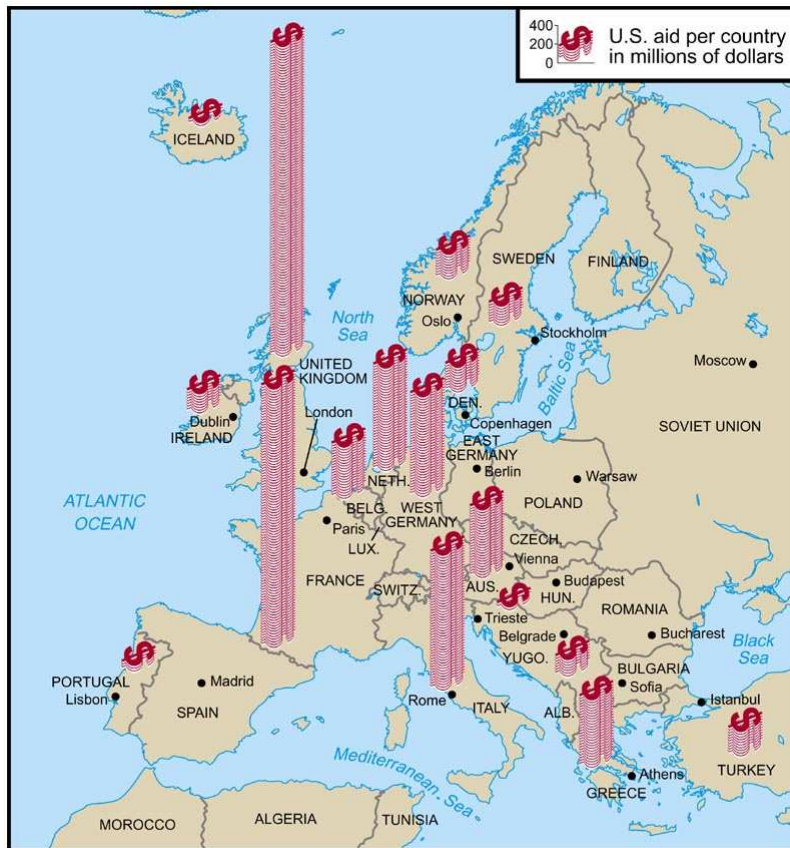
<sup>6</sup> Central Intelligence Agency. Created in 1947 at the beginning of the Cold War, this agency is in charge of gathering intelligence from the entire world, without any intervention of the American soil. Under the president’s authority, its mission, until the end of the Soviet bloc, was mainly to fight against communism. Charged during the Watergate in 1973, it was denounced on attempting assassination on Fidel Castro, on its participation to the coup d’état in Chile in 1973.

<sup>7</sup> Created in 1947, the National Security Council was an administrative organisation directly under the American president’s orders. It has to coordinate, to give advice and sometimes to impulse foreign affairs, national security and strategic questions.

## B. The USA, a superpower responsible of the Cold War?

Sources to use: The Marshall Aid, 1948-1952 (Palgrave Atlas of the Cold War, 2009, p. 23), The Americans at the origin of the Cold War? (Scott D. Parrish, Lecturer, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin, 2012), Marshall aid speech (General Marshall, speech in Harvard, June 5th 1947), Consequences of the Marshall Plan (Scott D. Parrish, Lecturer, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin, 2012), US-Latin America relations during the Cold War (Allen Wells, *Latin America during the Cold War*, Harvard University department of history website, 2012).

### Source 1: The Marshall Aid, 1948-1952:



MARSHALL PLAN AID TO EUROPE, 1948-1952

Source: Palgrave Atlas of the Cold War, 2009

### Source 2: The Americans at the origin of the Cold War?

Did US President Harry Truman cause the Cold War? The two events most associated with Truman and the Cold War are the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

- The Truman Doctrine emerged in a speech in March 1947. In this speech Truman promised help to any country fighting a Communist takeover. The policy became known as Containment of Communism.
- The Marshall Plan was a major program of economic aid offered to all European states to help them recover from the war. In the end, only the Western democracies got any aid.

For many years Soviet and Western historians interpreted Truman's actions differently.

- The Soviet view was that Truman was an aggressor. The Truman Doctrine essentially meant giving money and weapons to enemies of the USSR.
- The Marshall Plan was an attempt to get all of Europe in debt to the USA and allow the Americans to dominate it. The American view was that the Truman Doctrine was stopping the continuing spread of Communism.

The Marshall Plan was partly an act of generosity, partly an act of self interest - America wanted Europe to recover so Americans would have partners to trade with.

In recent times more evidence has emerged from the Soviet archives. We have a clearer picture of the misunderstandings and suspicions of the period. *In general, the new evidence supports the overall thrust of the arguments that Soviet policy in 1947 was largely defensive and reactive ... U.S. officials felt embattled in the spring of 1947, and feared that the deteriorating economic situation in Western Europe could lead to communists coming to power in such countries as France and Italy. If this were to happen, American security would be threatened. Prior to the summer of 1947, then, available ... evidence suggests that Stalin still hoped to pursue a variant of detente [co-operation] with the Western Powers ... The Marshall Plan, however, radically changed Stalin's calculus, and led him to shift away from this more moderate line ... The new archival documentation shows that in making this shift, the Soviet leadership was moved primarily by fear of its own vulnerability to American economic power.*

Source: Scott D. Parrish, Lecturer, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin, 2012

### **Source 3: Marshall aid speech:**

Aside from the demoralizing effect on the world at large and the possibilities of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the [European] people concerned, the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all. It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health to the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is not directed against any country, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Any government that is willing to assist in recovery will find full co-operation on the part of the United States of America. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist.

Source: General Marshall, speech in Harvard, June 5<sup>th</sup> 1947.

### **Source 4: Consequences of the Marshall Plan:**

The Marshall Plan facilitated the rapid recovery of Europe's national economies – but it also had obvious advantages for America. Not only was the Marshall Plan successful in stabilising many European governments and blocking Soviet expansion, it built a 'new Europe' where political economy was based on free trade rather than protectionism and self-interest. This allowed American exporters to enter European markets more easily than before World War II. Other advantages for the United States included:

**Soviet containment.** The Marshall Plan stabilised the economies and the political situation in several European nations bordering the Soviet sphere of influence. This reduced the likelihood of communist takeovers in these countries, which would have given Moscow an excuse to annex them.

**Liberalisation.** The Marshall Plan encouraged the development of democratic systems of government in Europe. Since some European countries, such as Germany and Austria, had no positive experience of democracy, it was important to create conditions of prosperity under liberal democratic governments.

**Profit for American companies.** Because most of the resources and goods purchased with Marshall Plan funds came from the US itself, this benefited American exporters and domestic



industries. It allowed the US to recover from a short-term economic slump in 1946-7 and enter a period of economic boom. American corporations built networks and trade links in Europe that continued well after the Marshall Plan had run its course.

**Encouragement of free trade.** Prior to World War II most European nations had protectionist economic policies – in other words, it was difficult for foreign traders to export to European markets. The conditions of the Marshall Plan rebuilt the national economies of Europe and incorporated free trade policies and practices, which would later prove profitable for American producers and manufacturers.

**Propaganda value.** The Marshall Plan was cleverly marketed by the American government as a generous and visionary policy, to allow the rebuilding of Europe. The conditions on Marshall Plan funds, however, were not publicly advertised. The Americans made the offer of funding to the USSR and Soviet-bloc countries, knowing that the conditions would make it impossible for them to accept.

Source: Scott D. Parrish, Lecturer, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin, 2012

### **Source 5: US-Latin America relations during the Cold War:**

The Cold War (1947-1989) altered Latin America's relationship to the United States profoundly, as the region became a battleground between two competing ideological systems—capitalism and communism. Prior to the Cold War, both economic and geopolitical concerns had motivated U.S. policy toward Latin America. But, after the lowering of the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe, George Kennan, the chief architect of American foreign policy towards the Soviet Union, advocated containment to halt the spread of communism, not just in Europe, but globally. The result was a bipolar world featuring proxy wars fought throughout the Third World by surrogates and clients of the two superpowers. Latin American nations, historically considered to be part of "our backyard," were not permitted to remain neutral as Washington expected Latin America to ally with the United States while the Soviet Union sought to gain access to what had been an American sphere of influence. [...] While the U.S. publicly emphasized its support for democracy and civilian rule, successive Democratic and Republican administrations quietly worked behind the scenes to sustain brutal, anticommunist dictatorships or endorsed them outright. [...] As Kennan put it: "...it is better to have a strong regime in power than a liberal one if it is indulgent and relaxed and penetrated by Communists." Or as Dwight Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles stated: "Do nothing to offend the dictators...they are the only people we can depend on." [...]

Washington's support for such repressive rulers as Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, the Somoza family in Nicaragua, and Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic alienated many Latin Americans [...] When Washington deemed Latin American democracies in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, or Chile too radical, the United States intervened militarily or encouraged their countries' respective armed forces to stage a coup. With peaceful roads to reform forestalled, Latin American rebels felt they had little choice but to opt for armed struggle.

[...] U.S. policy in Latin America after 1959 can be boiled down to three potent words: "no more Cubas." To achieve this goal, Washington pursued a two-track approach: foreign assistance to encourage modernization and economic development, and the training and arming of Latin American militaries supportive of U.S. objectives. [...]

Source: Allen Wells, Latin America during the Cold War, Harvard University department of history website, 2012

Questions :

1. Identify the reasons explaining why the USA decided not to be isolationist anymore after WW2.

The USA decided not to be isolationist anymore after WW2 because it was one of the two remaining superpower after WW2. It wanted to maintain a universal lasting peace and collective safety. As a matter of fact, it followed the paths first developed by Wilson in 1918. Another reason was at the origin of the end of the American isolationism: the fact that the Americans refused to see Communism spreading all over the world.

2. However, in 1945, explain if the USA wanted to control the international relations as a unique and single superpower (use knowledge from première and your history class in french).

In 1945, the USA didn't want to control the international relations as a unique superpower. It proposed, following Wilson's legacy, to create a peace organisation, in order to maintain peace and international security. It would be the UNO. It was organised and led by the victorious powers of WW2.

3. Is it possible to say that the USA was responsible for the Cold War?

It seems to be possible to say that the USA was partially responsible for the Cold War. As source 3 says, the historians identified that Stalin, until 1947 and the Marshall Plan wanted to maintain some sort of a detent with the USA, but that the Marshall Plan pushed him to act more radically.

As a matter of fact, different visions in Truman's councillors explained that vision:

- One group, continuing Roosevelt's vision before Yalta, believed that:
  - o the soviet foreign policy, first, sought the USSR's national interest and not a ideological revolution.
  - o The USSR, even if it was a totalitarian regime inside its borders, didn't want to export that model.
  - o the USA should instigate the idea to the Soviet that the USA had no intend to compromise the USSR's safety. It meant maintaining close link between the USA and the USSR.
- Another group, in which several diplomats working in Moscow before the war could be identified, believed that:
  - o The USSR organised its policies on the base of ideological purposed and not on the base of national interest.
  - o The USSR was a totalitarian model with the ambition to export itself.
  - o The USA should be careful and should have a radical position and should refuse any kind of negotiation.

So, the USA feared more and more the communist expansion in Europe (Churchill's speech in Fulton and Kennan's telegram in 1946) and the communist influence in countries freed from Nazism, like France. It considered it as a thrat, so they decided to develop an interventionist policy: the containment policy.

4. Identify which kind of interests the USA had explaining that it was opposed to an economic depression in Europe and to the development of communism there.

As the map on source 1 shows, the USA lent a lot of money to the European countries (several billions to the United Kingdom and to France). Moreover, a lot of money was conceded as loans during WW2, especially to the UK. If Europe felt into depression or worse, into communism, all that money would be lost.

Worse, after Bretton Woods in 1944, a new monetary system based on dollar parity with gold; so, if Europe felt into depression, an important economic crisis would crash on the USA. Moreover, the expansion of communism in Europe would stop the development and the expansion of liberalism in the world.

5. Identify the different modes of the US intervention in the world during the Cold War (use your knowledge from première)?

In every continents or so, the Americans were interventionist, even imperialist.

The USA developed three modes of intervention:

- Military and economic co-operation as in Europe with development of the Marshall Plan in 1947, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) in 1949 and the support of the European economic construction.
- Wars by proxy as in Asia with the Korean War (1950-1953) and the Vietnam War (1965-1973). It was the concrete implementation of the containment and roll back policies.
- CIA missions and operation to counter-communism as in Latin American, considered as the US backyard. CIA and the American government supported harsh dictatorship as in Salvador or in the Dominican Republic, or participated to the organisation of a coup as in Chile in 1973.

### **C. The USA, until the 1960's, from economic domination to the soft power:**

Sources to use: source 4 from the previous paragraph, A new world economic system (Anglo-American Mutual Aid Agreement, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1942), Bretton Woods, the USA led the new economic system (Steve Schifferes, Economics reporter, BBC News, How Bretton Woods reshaped the world, 14 November 2008), Soft power and American diplomacy (Jones, *Soft Power in U.S. Foreign Policy*, US Foreign Policy, Accessed on 28.01.2013).

#### **Source 1: A new world economic system:**

In the final determination of the benefits to be provided to the United States of America by the Government of the United Kingdom in return for aid furnished under the Act of Congress of March 11, 1941, the terms and conditions thereof shall be such as not to burden commerce between the two countries, but to promote mutually advantageous economic relations between them and the betterment of world-wide economic relations. To that end, they shall include provision for agreed action by the United States of America and the United Kingdom, open to participation by all other countries of like mind, directed to the expansion, by appropriate international and domestic measures, of production, employment, and the exchange and consumption of goods, which are the material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples; to the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce, and to the reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers; and in general, to the attainment of all the economic objectives set forth in the Joint Declaration made on Aug. 12, 1941, by the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

At an early convenient date, conversations shall be begun between the two governments with a view to determining, in the light of governing economic conditions, the best means of attaining the above-stated objectives by their own agreed action and of seeking the agreed action of other like-minded governments.

Source: Anglo-American Mutual Aid Agreement, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1942.

#### **Source 2: Bretton Woods, the USA led the new economic system:**

*In the summer of 1944, delegates from 44 countries met in the midst of World War II to reshape the world's international financial system. [...]*

The meeting was born out of the determination by US President Franklin D Roosevelt and UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill to ensure post-war prosperity through economic co-operation, avoiding the economic conflicts between countries in the 1930s that they believed contributed to the drift to war. [...]

The principal negotiators at the meeting were the US, represented by the US Treasury's Harry Dexter White, and the UK's John Maynard Keynes, who was serving as UK Treasury adviser despite declining health. [...] President Roosevelt told the conference: "The economic health of every country is a proper matter of concern to all its neighbours, near and distant." [...] The meeting was part of the process led by the US to create a new international world order based

on the rule of law, which also led to the creation of the United Nations and the strengthening of other international organisations.

The delegates focused on two key issues: how to establish a stable system of exchange rates, and how to pay for rebuilding the war-damaged economies of Europe.

And they established two international organisations to deal with these problems.

The International Monetary Fund was set up to enforce a set of fixed exchange rates that were linked to the dollar. [...] Countries in balance of payments difficulties could receive short-term help from the IMF to avoid devaluation, and it could sanction changes in exchange rates when necessary.

The World Bank (officially the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) was set up to make long-term loans "facilitating the investment of capital for productive purposes, including the restoration of economies destroyed or disrupted by war [and] the reconversion of productive facilities to peacetime needs". [...]

A third organisation, the International Trade Organisation, designed to encourage free trade, was still-born when the US refused to ratify its charter in 1947 - although tariff reductions were pursued through the Gatt treaty later. [...]

However, more ambitious proposals from the UK's John Maynard Keynes to set up a world central bank which could issue its own currency (which he called *bancor*) were rejected by the US. Keynes hoped a new bank could help reflate the world economy by expanding the money supply. [...]

Instead, the Bretton Woods system gave the US currency - which was linked to gold - the dominant position in the world economy and allowed the US to run a trade deficit without having to devalue. And the US, which contributed the most money to both institutions, also gained the most voting rights, giving it a veto over major policy decisions. [...]

Source: Steve Schifferes, Economics reporter, BBC News, *How Bretton Woods reshaped the world*, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

### **Source 3: Soft power and American diplomacy:**

[...] The classic example of American soft power is the Marshall Plan. After World War II, the United States pumped billions of dollars into war-ravaged Western Europe to prevent it from falling to the influence of the Communist Soviet Union. The Marshall Plan included humanitarian aid, such as food and medical care; expert advice for rebuilding destroyed infrastructures, such as transportation and communication networks and public utilities; and outright monetary grants.

[...] Nye<sup>8</sup> also sees American cultural exports -- such as movies, soft drinks, and fast-food chains -- as an element of soft power. While those also include the decisions of many private American businesses, U.S. international trade and business policies enable those cultural exchanges to occur. Cultural exchanges repeatedly impress foreign nations with the freedom and openness of U.S. business and communication dynamics. [...]

Source: Steve Jones, *Soft Power in U.S. Foreign Policy*, US Foreign Policy, Accessed on 28.01.2013

### **Questions :**

1. Apart from diplomatic and political influence, identify another form of the US influence after WW2.

[The USA also used the economic and financial power to exert an influence all over the world. Bretton Woods agreements in 1944 and the Marshall plan in 1947 increased the supremacy of dollars.](#)

2. Explain how the American economic domination was settled.

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<sup>8</sup> This man is an American teacher in Harvard University considered the major specialist of the American Soft Power in diplomacy.

The American economic domination was settled during the Bretton Woods agreements in 1944. Two challenging projects were proposed :

- On the one hand, the British project from John Maynard Keynes, with an international bank, based on a new international money, the *bancor*, depending on an international organisation.
- On the other hand, the American project led by the White who wanted the dollar to be linked to Gold, because the USA had 2/3 of the Gold world reserves at that time. It also refused the idea of an international bank led internationally.

In Bretton Woods, international economic organisation were created: the IMF, the BIRD or the World Bank but also the International Trade Organisation, designed to encourage free trade, was still-born when the US refused to ratify its charter in 1947 - although tariff reductions were pursued through the Gatt treaty later.

The Marshall plan completed that system to give enough money and financial potentials to develop an international market based on liberalism.

3. Apart from economy, name the other means used by the USA to develop its influence all over the world, immediately after the war.

The USA used the cultural power, on a large definition to broadcast their models and values. The Soft power, i.e. the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment” (Nye, 2004) which included “culture, values and foreign policies”.

It broadcasted brands such as Coca Cola (with the American GI's), MacDonalds (1970's, 1980's). The American values and standards of living were also broadcasted by:

- Movies: Disney movies, Westerns in the 1960's, Blockbusters such as Star Wars at the end of the 1970s and the 1980s, and so on.
- TV Shows: Bonanza, Happy Days, Little House on the prairie, Air Wolf, the A team, Mac Gyver

### **III. From the American « hyperpower »<sup>9</sup> in 1990s to the challenge of the American power in 2000s**

#### **A. A New World Order in the 1990s, a real multilateralism?**

Sources to use: The New World Order according to Georges Bush (Speech to the Congress, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1991), The US military intervention since 1991 (Adapted from a schoolbook, 2008), The USA, a Hyperpower? (New York Times, *To Paris, US looks like a Hyperpower*, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1999).

#### **Source 1: The New World Order according to Georges Bush:**

*This speech has often been cited as the administration's principal policy statement on the postwar order in the Middle East.*

The recent challenge could not have been clearer. Saddam Hussein was the villain, Kuwait the victim. To the aid of this small country came nations from North America and Europe, from Asia and South America, from Africa and the Arab World, all united against aggression.

Our commitment to peace in the Middle East does not end with the liberation of Kuwait. So tonight let me outline four key challenges to be met. This does not mean stationing US ground forces on the Arabian Peninsula, but it does mean American participation in joint exercises involving both air and ground forces. It means maintaining a capable US naval presence in the region, just as we have for over 40 years. Let it be clear: our vital interests depend on a stable and secure Gulf.

We must act to control the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the missiles used to deliver them.

Until now, the world we've known has been – a world of barbed wire and concrete block, conflict and cold war.

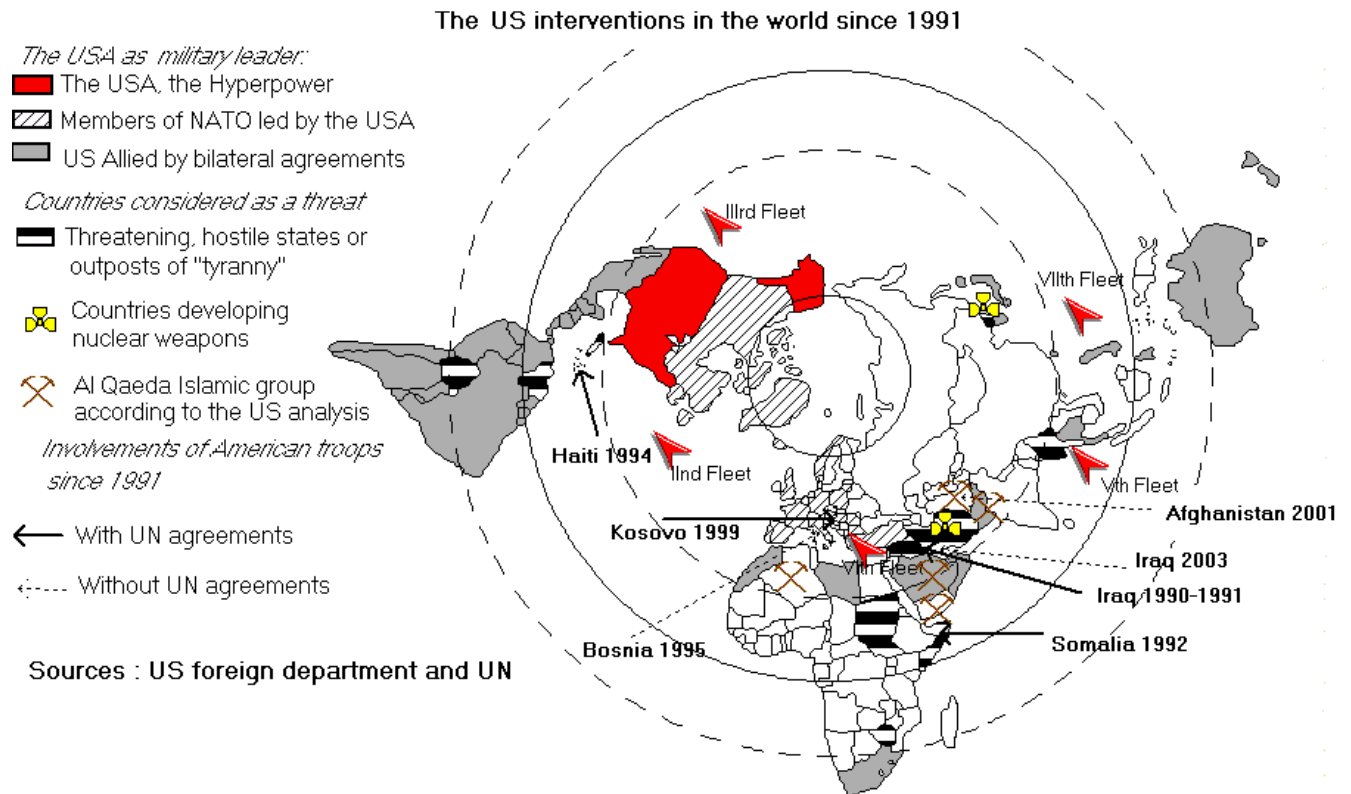
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<sup>9</sup> Word created by an French minister of the Foreign Affair in 1990 to talk about the US power after the collapse of the USSR.

Now we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a "world order" in which "the principles of justice and fair play ... protect the weak against the strong".

Source: Speech to the Congress, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1991

## Source 2: The US military intervention since 1991



Source: Adapted from a schoolbook, 2008

## Source 3: The USA, a Hyperpower?:

Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine says that he now defines the United States as a "hyperpower," a new term that he thinks best describes "a country that is dominant or predominant in all categories."

"Superpower," in his view, was a Cold War word that reflected military capabilities of both the Soviet Union and the United States. But now, the breadth of American strength is unique, extending beyond economics, technology or military might to "this domination of attitudes, concepts, language and modes of life."

In a speech on Monday before the Association France-Amériques, a group promoting friendship between France and the Americas, Mr. Vedrine said that in other times, great dynasties were almost always counterbalanced by other powers.

"Today, that's not the case, and therefore there is this question at the center of the world's current problems," he said.

The remarks were in line with recent attempts by President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin and Mr. Vedrine to draw attention to what France now calls American unilateralism, and to attract other countries to the idea of counteracting it through French-led multilateral initiatives.

Mr. Vedrine described France as a "power of world influence," situated in a category coming immediately after the United States, and including, he declared, "Germany, Britain, Russia, Japan, India, and perhaps others."



Early in the week, in an interview with the weekly newsmagazine L'Express, Mr. Vedrine was asked what could be done "to resist the steamroller," meaning the United States.

"How do you counterbalance these tendencies when they are abusive?" Mr. Vedrine responded, repeating the question.

"Through steady and persevering work in favor of real multilateralism against unilateralism, or balanced multipolarism against unipolarism, for cultural diversity against uniformity.

"None of that will happen automatically and our influence in the world isn't going to grow all by itself. A strategy, a tactic, a method, are necessary. It's possible."

Source: New York Times, *To Paris, US looks like a Hyperpower*, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1999.

Questions :

1. Explain what was the context of source 1 and present his author:

This speech delivered by Georges Bush Senior was made in front of the Congress few weeks after the beginning of the Gulf War or the Persian War in 1990-1991 and few days after the collapse of Saddam Hussein's army and the high progress of the international coalition in Kuwait. The author is the American president, the Republican Georges Bush Senior, who was elected president two years before. He was Ronald Reagan vice-president and he was the one who asked for an international intervention in Kuwait.

2. Explain how the text shows the USA as a "hyperpower".

In the speech, the USA looked like a "hyperpower" because it seems to be the only power which is capable to have a political and a military world leadership in the international institutions. The USA presented itself as the only power able to be the world "watchdogs" and to ensure the maintaining of peace. Anyway, that "hyperpower" was above all military, before being economic and diplomatic. Moreover, the USA had the largest military arsenal in the world and in history. However, it seems that the four criteria of the hyperpower matched the American situation at the time:

- Military superiority
- Economic success
- Technological domination
- Cultural influence.

3. Show that the American position in the world was based on multilateralism.

The US vision of the world was based on multilateralism. Indeed, the USA was the guardians of peace but as G. Bush said, it couldn't do it without the other nations of the world. Indeed the USA would appear as the world watchdogs but not alone:

- "To the aid of this small country came nations from North America and Europe, from Asia and South America, from Africa and the Arab World, all united against aggression"
- "This does not mean stationing US ground forces on the Arabian Peninsula, but it does mean American participation in joint exercises involving both air and ground forces."
- "Now we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a "world order" in which "the principles of justice and fair play ... protect the weak against the strong"'"

The USA attended to have a strong leadership on the international institutions but not to play alone.

4. Prove that the USA intended to maintain their leadership on the international institutions and that some countries began to challenge it.

In the article from the NYTimes, we can see that France recognized how strong was the American leadership on the international institution and on the world peace. Hubert Vedrine

criticised it as some sort of unilateralism. As the map shows, the USA was the only one to intervene fast anywhere in the world, under NATO or UN consent (case of Yugoslavia). It also was the strongest military, economic and cultural powers so it could influence deeply the international decisions.

## **B. Back to unilateralism after 2001**

### **C. Le retour à l'unilatéralisme après 2001**

Sources to use: maps about the US military intervention since 1991 (previous paragraph), Choosing unilateralism (Donald H. Rumsfeld, secretary of defense, *A new kind of war*, New York Times, september 27<sup>th</sup>, 2001), Barack Obama, America and the Muslim world (Barack Obama, speech delivered at the University of Cairo, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009).

#### **Source 1: Choosing unilateralism:**

WASHINGTON -- President Bush is rallying the nation for a war against terrorism's attack on our way of life. Some believe the first casualty of any war is the truth. But in this war, the first victory must be to tell the truth. And the truth is, this will be a war like none other our nation has faced. Indeed, it is easier to describe what lies ahead by talking about what it is not rather than what it is.

This war will not be waged by a grand alliance united for the single purpose of defeating an axis of hostile powers. Instead, it will involve floating coalitions of countries, which may change and evolve. Countries will have different roles and contribute in different ways. Some will provide diplomatic support, others financial, still others logistical or military. Some will help us publicly, while others, because of their circumstances, may help us privately and secretly. In this war, the mission will define the coalition — not the other way around.

We understand that countries we consider our friends may help with certain efforts or be silent on others, while other actions we take may depend on the involvement of countries we have considered less than friendly.

[...] This war will not necessarily be one in which we pore over military targets and mass forces to seize those targets. Instead, military force will likely be one of many tools we use to stop individuals, groups and countries that engage in terrorism.

Our response may include firing cruise missiles into military targets somewhere in the world; we are just as likely to engage in electronic combat to track and stop investments moving through offshore banking centers. The uniforms of this conflict will be bankers' pinstripes and programmers' grunge just as assuredly as desert camouflage.

This is not a war against an individual, a group, a religion or a country. Rather, our opponent is a global network of terrorist organizations and their state sponsors, committed to denying free people the opportunity to live as they choose. While we may engage militarily against foreign governments that sponsor terrorism, we may also seek to make allies of the people those governments suppress.

Even the vocabulary of this war will be different. When we "invade the enemy's territory," we may well be invading his cyberspace. There may not be as many beachheads stormed as opportunities denied. Forget about "exit strategies"; we're looking at a sustained engagement that carries no deadlines. We have no fixed rules about how to deploy our troops; we'll instead establish guidelines to determine whether military force is the best way to achieve a given objective.

The public may see some dramatic military engagements that produce no apparent victory, or may be unaware of other actions that lead to major victories. "Battles" will be fought by customs officers stopping suspicious persons at our borders and diplomats securing cooperation against money laundering.

But if this is a different kind of war, one thing is unchanged: America remains indomitable. Our victory will come with Americans living their lives day by day, going to work, raising their children and building their dreams as they always have — a free and great people.

Source: Donald H. Rumsfeld, secretary of defense, *A new kind of war*, New York Times, september 27<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

### **Source 2: Barack Obama, America and the Muslim world:**

[...]I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles -- principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.

[...]And I consider it part of my responsibility as President of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear. (Applause.)

But that same principle must apply to Muslim perceptions of America. (Applause.) Just as Muslims do not fit a crude stereotype, America is not the crude stereotype of a self-interested empire.

[...]Given our interdependence, any world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will inevitably fail. So whatever we think of the past, we must not be prisoners to it. Our problems must be dealt with through partnership; our progress must be shared.

Source: Barack Obama, speech delivered at the University of Cairo, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

### **Questions :**

1. Show that the USA has adopted a unilateral position since September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and the US government has been based again on the “imperial presidency” which disappeared after the Vietnam War.

Bush's administration had the following vision: The USA should fight against a world terrorist threats and hostile dictatorships. As Donald Rumsfeld said, it was necessary for the USA to fight against terrorism, deciding alone the way to do it and using allies in the purpose to achieve personal goals. As the map shows, in 2001 and 2003, the declared preventive wars on Taliban and on Iraq without any support from international institutions, apart from the right to defend itself by attacking Afghanistan as a retaliation for the 9/11 attacks.

The USA developed the idea of the vital need to secure Middle East, conceived as the main center of the terrorist threats.

Dans l'esprit de cet unilatéralisme américain, l'ONU est d'abord un obstacle : par l'importance « excessive » qu'elle donne au droit et aux procédures, par la lourdeur et l'inefficacité de la bureaucratie et par ses prétentions moralisatrices. Or les États-Unis se considèrent engagés dans une lutte à mort où l'efficacité doit primer.

A lot of decisions, as D. Rumsfeld showed, were at the time taken in the oval office, the national security council or by some agencies as the NSA, the CIA or some other.

2. Show that with the election of Barack Obama, multilateralism has been more developed and that the ideas of developing peace and understanding as Wilson's vision provided have been developed (use also personal research).

As the speech in Cairo Shows, Barack Obama insisted on better understandings between civilisations and especially between America and the Muslims worlds. He tried to ease the situation with the Muslims world.

Even some strikes about Syria or Ukraine, tensions with China and Russia seemed to be calmed. However, Obama shared the idea of “a responsibility” of the USA and the world.

### **D. An economic « hyperpower » since the 1990s?**

The US economic advantage was less strong, but the USA found a new dynamism in the development of NTIC. A lot of FDI helped the USA to expand economically.

In the 1990s, their main competitors faced weaknesses:

- Europe faced difficulties due to the German reunification.
- Japan stagnated after its boom in the 1980s
- The American model seemed to triumph in the world, politically, culturally speaking and concerning consumption.

But, the War on Iraq and the preventive wars had incredibly high costs for the American treasure. Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel prize, talked about 3,000 billions of dollars, plus 1 billion concerning the debt interests and one more billion for veteran pensions and medical treatments. All that money invested in war on terror didn't fit the necessary needs of the American nation: education, infrastructures, health, ...

Today, the US economic and cultural power decreases:

- Economically speaking, the USA is now more balanced by its competitors.
- The USA still is the first military power and the first source of technological innovation.

But the USA faces new competitors: China, Russia, India, some countries in Latin America such as Brazil. China is attracting more and more capitals from the entire world and the debt still causes problems to the American economy.

Moreover, the USA has to face internal stakes in its society: social inequalities, education, and health.