

Example of essay on role of the united states in the second world war

[War](#), [World War 2](#)



It is undeniable that today, the United States remains as the most powerful nation in the globe, followed by its allies and partners. Its sway in the international community, as well in regional conflicts is unparalleled due to its capacity to support its words with action. Many would believe that despite the power the US now amasses, the US was once similar with other nations who did not actively sought an active role in the international sphere. The Americans did not see the need for them to influence other conflicts that threatened the balance of power, as well as the path of peace. There was also the lingering fear that the Revolutionary War would be repeated should they take part on the world war, opening them up to newer powers that could claim their independence. In the beginning of the war, the United States remained under its isolationist policy due to the fear of the Americans be threatened by outside forces. However, they played a key role in defeating the opposing forces when the Americans themselves have been struck by the Japanese in Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Historians have noted that the Americans were very reluctant to engage in international conflicts as it may threaten the independence they have strove to attain against the English Empire in the Revolution. On the dawn of the First World War in 1914, the Americans immediately went on the offensive and assisted their fellow Allied Powers to defeat the Germans. The American declaration of war against the Nazis on April 6, 1917 pointed that with Germany continuously refusing to sink the ships of the British troops, the Americans have no choice but to retaliate back as some of its passengers were innocent. By the end of the war, the Americans returned back to the “isolationist” stance it has been under before the war. The US Economy

visibly declined upon their entrance to the First World War as military expenditures and other related expenses already influences the country's budget . With the Americans back into isolation, it was noted by a few that the Americans would also spring back into battle once the Second World War took into place. However, the Americans no longer wanted to support war efforts should another war similar to World War I occur. In the Gallup Poll in 1937 and 1939, the American public noted that they would not allow the government to side with any conflicting nation. Aside from this, the public and the legislators made sure America would not become an active leader in the international community. From Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations concept, up military and financial assistance to the country's Allies; the Congress made sure the government remained passive regarding the conflicts outside its territories .

It would have been likely that the US could have continued isolation by the time of the Second World War given the sentiment of public regarding the First World War and the American image outside the country. However, this sentiment changes when the Japanese attacked the base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. The surprise attack took 2, 403 American casualties - both civilian and military, while 1, 143 others were wounded. Not only did the attack sparked criticism regarding America's continuous disregard to the Second World War, it pinpointed the role they must play in the international arena. The US military production schemes were implemented similar to the First World War, enabling the reconstruction of the country's economic and social system from the economic and social crisis of the 1930s. Civilians also found it a moral duty to aid in the war as

they also believed that if America was able to overcome the British Empire from taking over their independence, as well as their freedom; the Europeans and the Asians also deserved the same. The American troops also considered the Second World War as their own way of destroying the threat of a growing tyranny in the European and Asian regions led by the Axis powers .

It could be noted that Franklin Roosevelt, who was then the president upon the dawn of World War II, considered the American's role in the war as an effort to secure four freedoms – freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. Each of these four freedoms had been violated throughout the war in several aspects. The Axis Powers made sure that only their propaganda is distributed to their constituents and made sure that the minorities would be taken care off should they protest against the orders of their respective governments. Jews and other religious minorities also suffered a heavy beating in the Second World War as they were forcefully taken from their homes, brought to concentration camps and killed. Some of them were even charged without evidence, and even women and children were mutilated by the Germans. Most of the refugees and the people caught within the crossfire of the war also were placed in fear, as well as in the other nations that these Axis Powers would eliminate them all with their weaponry and campaigns. Most of them were unable to call to their governments as to what they would want; namely peace and no conflict. The minorities also found themselves fearing for their lives as some had to go on bunkers or refugee hideouts to escape the genocide. America's involvement not only secured all of these four

freedoms as they entered in the war; but also fostered the beginning of democracy for all countries. Roosevelt also noted that the American role in the Second World War was also to foster the beginning of an association – namely the United Nations, to secure peace and stability in the globe once the war has ended. Similar to Woodrow Wilson’s ideology, Roosevelt also envisioned the war as a means to guarantee the post-World War II world order; a world wherein self-determination principles and an open international market would take place. His ideology of this world order was then continued by Roosevelt’s successor, Harry S. Truman .

America’s role in the Second World War could be considered as complex as the war itself as it would need to become a strong backup to the already installed Allies within the European and Asian regions. The country had to make sure that they have the enough ammunition, as well as food, transportation and clothing for its forces once they move out to the region. Aside from this, given that the Allies already in the area had already gotten casualties in their ranks, the Americans had to serve as the supplier for food and munitions to these groups. The Great Depression itself had been put into an end due to the war effort of both parties. The Americans produced various weaponry and withheld the creation of other materials, putting forward strict economic policies to make sure that everything is saved from fuel to water. The Americans also produced the members of the military that would aid the Allied forces in removing the Axis troops. The White and Black American conflict was also put into a halt because of the war as many Black Americans had marched to Washington to allow them to go to war. Native Americans had also served in the national arm of the American contingent in the war,

some even playing the key roles of code decoders and talkers. Since the country did not suffer much from the war due to its location and vast land, it eventually became the center for commerce and economy.

It could be noted that the American forces made a big role in the Asian region in the time of the Second World War considering it had outposts in Guam, Wake, and the Philippines which the Japanese targeted after the Pearl Harbor attack. Their entrance to the Japanese invasion not only freed most of the puppet governments held by the Japanese in the region, but also managed to thwart the Japanese from advancing. In their first attempt to take out the Japanese forces in the Philippines, General MacArthur managed to hold off the Japanese for 5 months before they had to surrender on April 9, 1942. MacArthur vowed to return for more backup by the time the island fortress of Corregidor fell to the hands of the Japanese on May 6, 1942. Elsewhere, the American navy fought head to head with the Japanese through the help of the Australian support. On June 3 up to 6, 1942, both groups fought near Midway and became a turning point for the war as Admiral Chester Nimitz maneuvered his carrier force against the much powerful Japanese fleet. Thanks to Nimitz's strategy, the Japanese had to retreat after losing most of its carriers and subsequently lose in other fights. In addition to the Midway victory of the Americans, its success in the Battle of Coral Sea enabled the Allies to gain an upper hand in the Asian region. The Americans also made it possible for the Allies to enter Japanese territory through a combination of naval, air and ground units.

Back in Europe, the Americans became the integral strategists and main troops for the Allies to thwart Germany from advancing towards the other

European nations. Many of the battles done by the Allies were also led by American military officers, making the country the leader in fighting against the Axis Powers. Americans first thought of using diversionary tactics to protect France from the invasion in 1942-1943 by facing Germany head on. However, the British troops thought the possible setback of this plan and opted to ask America to attack Hitler through the Mediterranean nations. Dwight Eisenhower led the Allied assault on North Africa, which trapped both the German and Italian forces in Tunisia. Roosevelt made his influence when he met up with Winston Churchill in January 1943 to step up their game in the Pacific and reclaim Italy, which enabled them to force Italy to surrender on September 1943. The Germans strove hard to reclaim Italy and killed many Italians who surrendered to the Allies; however, the Allies led by the Americans managed to repel them and opened the Mediterranean for the Allies to take over. Roosevelt, alongside Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin and Churchill, met up in Iran on the 28th of November to December 1st to work on the second attack to the Germans. Since the Americans provided most of the troops for the Allies, they became the leaders of the attack under Eisenhower. The Americans managed to liberate France on D-Day, or June 6, 1944, as they managed to bring down the Germans surrounding French Normandy. With Normandy and France open, the Americans led the Allies to towards Germany.

Once in Germany, the Americans had to fight against Hitler's army on December 16, 1944 in the Ardennes Forest as Hitler tried to claim Antwerp, Belgium since it houses the Allied supply bases. While the Germans managed to push down the Americans, the American air force managed to

reclaim its ground in the Battle of the Bulge, led by Brigadier General A. C. McAuliffe. Eisenhower's troops managed to reach the Nazi concentration camps in April 1945, saving many Jews from termination from these camps. Berlin slowly lost its power and Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945 seeing that he could no longer hold on his power. Germany then surrendered on May 7, 1945 as it no longer has a leader and the Allies had already barricaded West Germany. Returning back to Japan, the Americans returned back to the Philippines, now with 600 ships and 250, 000 troops and took out various Japanese fleets surrounding the archipelago. From 1944- 1945, the Philippines became heavily bombed by both groups and MacArthur eventually reclaimed Manila on March 1945. Okinawa was also captured by the Americans due to its close location to various Japanese installations on June 1945. With the final remaining months of the war, the Allies issued the ultimatum for Japan to surrender or else face destruction. With Japan refusing to surrender, the Americans launched the atomic bombs in the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima around August of 1945, making the Americans the ones who struck the final blow to end the war. A day after the Nagasaki bombing, the Japanese surrendered on August 10, 1945 with 1 million casualties in the side of the Americans .

It is undeniable that the American role in the Second World War enabled it to become the superpower it is known today. Its role in the war also showcased the beginning of international peace as many agreed to the creation of an international organization that would sustain the peace of the world and recovery for the war-torn regions in Europe. On the one hand, the Second World War would have been an Axis victory should the Americans remained

isolated and the Japanese did not attack them. With Germany and Japan managing to conquer their intended territories, the Allied Powers would have not been able to contain them without the American influence. It would be likely that America would only join in the war if Roosevelt was replaced with a more assertive leader or if the public themselves no longer see the benefits of isolationism to the country. With their Allies losing a lot of funding with the war and their economy affected in the process, America would also feel its side-effects; which would force them to act. If America only appeared late, it is possible that the casualties have already been decimated and the Allies would take longer in eliminating the Axis Powers due to the heavy toll they have already received. On the other hand, eliminating Axis Powers would be the key to peace and America's entrance to the war would have secured this peace and eventually, how the world would see conflicts.

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