

Independent internationalism under harding and coolidge critical thinking example...

[Countries](#), [Germany](#)



The foreign policy strategy taken by was called ' independent internationalism.' At first glance the policy seems impossible because independent is the opposite of internationalism. This was a useful as a strategy only by understanding the differences between the two stands and developing a way to make them complement each other into a workable and successful policy for the United States.

After WWI there was a cultural shift happening in the United States which was causing lot of tension; the 1920s can be thought of a time of clashing cultures. The changes were the result of people flowing into cities for jobs in factories and new innovations, especially the automobile. Essentially one group embraced the changes as an opportunity for more opportunities, more independence and more fun. The other group was paranoid about the change and clung to conservative, traditional values. The foreign policy of Presidents Harding and Coolidge reflected this dichotomy.

President Warren G. Harding (1921 to 1923) and President Calving Coolidge (1923 to 1929) were both conservative members of the Republican Party. World War I had made clear that the United States could not isolate itself from the rest of the world. Yet their constituencies had traditionally been in favor of the United States taking an isolationist or independent approach. Independent isolationism was the method of balancing the two contrasting strategies. To meet the ' internationalism' part of the strategy the presidents encourage international trade and find new global markets for goods made in the United States. The ' independent' part of the strategy was met by limiting the role of government in setting business regulations and keeping

the United States (US) out of foreign wars. On the other hand the use of the military was used to protect interests in Central America and economic coercion was used in Latin America to control US interests there.

There were other contradictions in the foreign policy. For example, the purpose of the Washington Naval Treaty was to slow the arms race that had begun after WWI with the building up of the US, Britain and the Japanese navies. Loopholes in the treaty made it possible to expand the navies though if they build submarines and military war ships. Also there was no way to check whether countries were or were not adhering to the treaty. The other world leaders did not want Russia to attend the conference, Russia was isolated and this was perceived as a success.

Another example is the Dawes Treaty. The result of the Dawes Treaty was to bolster German war reparations and recovery with American money.

Particular favoritism was given to Germany after the war because the US felt that Germany was the economic engine of Europe. This was done against the wishes of Germany's European neighbors. Essentially a main perpetrator of WWI, the German Empire, was rewarded with money to rebuild.

In short the foreign policy goals and results of Independent Internationalism reflect the contradictions that its name suggests. Both President Hardy and President Coolidge used the foreign policy to promote the interests of US business and finances throughout the world. Although the policy may have satisfied most of their constituents, when looking back over history a positive opinion can be debated. The results seem to have the capacity to lead to

new problems (financial and power dynamics) which led to more world instability.