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U.S. Role in the World

by Joe Escobar - Thursday, April 18, 2013, 11:01 PM

This forum thread is for The Role of the United States in the World posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the individual questions in SEPARATE posts.

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

Since there are multiple questions, BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Don't simply leave it RE: U.S. Role in the World

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Wilson's Vision Embodied by the League of Nations

by William Jones - Monday, April 22, 2013, 8:22 PM

The Lodge article definitely made me reconsider where I stand regarding the internationalist to isolationism spectrum, but in the end I stuck with my original choice. Lodge's opposition to Wilson's belief that all people had a right to form their own nation is what bothered me. Lodge felt that the world should be controlled by a few nations both powerful economically, militaristically and influentially. Lodge and his supporters identified with the beliefs of Theodore Roosevelt who would do anything to not compromise the power of the United States. This ideology leads to the rejection of the belief that all people, regardless of size, influence or condition should have a say in world affairs.

Many claimed that Wilson's Fourteen Points and approach was too idealistic and threatened the protection of U.S. power. To me, saying that something is "too ideal" or "only good on paper" is to deny the idea its' potential. No progress would ever be made if people stopped the inception of ideas in their infancy. Wilson

envisioned a world of peace. A world where everyone was represented and disputes would be settled democratically. The textbook outlines Wilson's vision by stating, "The League of Nations would function as an international parliament and judiciary, establishing rules of international behavior and resolving disputes between nations through rational and peaceful means." That quote, to me, sounds like the progressive thinking needed to truly reach world peace.

Many, including Lodge felt that Germany were not only fighting for the wrong reasons, but were inherently evil. Many felt that Wilson's Fourteen Points would let Germany go unpunished and award them with undeserved economic victory. Those who felt this way pointed specifically to the one-sided victory of Germany over France and felt that Germany's destruction of French industry was to go unpunished. These are all valid points, but I feel that to hit Germany with such heavy war reparations was a step backwards rather than a progressive step. The nation was to also take full responsibility of the war which I felt was counterproductive. It's understandable that they should be punished, but I think that steps should have been taken towards peace and equality rather than banishment and blame. Wilson's vision would never be achieved unless all nations embodied his beliefs and stuck true to what he was aiming for.

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Limited Internationalist

by Haley Shaw - Tuesday, April 23, 2013, 8:39 AM

My view on U.S. role in the world is my belief is that the U.S. should have stated out of world affairs. There was no not joining the war but staying out of the affairs from the beginning and not sending supplies or allowing credit. But I agree with the Limited Internationalist Positions "The combined pressure of the world's nations will prevent the unlikely possibility that the U.S. could be forced into a war against its will." The war was just too big for us to stand back and watch there was too many deaths and countries involved for us to just look the other way.

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Black and White Morality

by Jennifer Smith - Tuesday, April 23, 2013, 12:23 PM

I found the article on Lodge very interesting. It showed that, especially in politics, how two people can share similar view points on many things and yet where they differ will often make them enemies. All it took was for Wilson to say that there was "no moral difference between the European antagonists" for the two of them to begin seeing one another as adversaries in the political pool, since it went against Lodge's very ideal that the world was divided along black and white lines of morality. To him, there was good and there was evil, and unlike Wilson he could see no shades of gray.

I could almost agree with Lodge on many other points, at least to some extent - I personally don't believe that the world can run on isolationist tenancies. Getting involved in certain affairs for any country is often the only way things can get resolved between warring parties. Mediation is needed when two or more sides are unwilling to see past their own upsets, complaints and demands. And sometimes a little show of power (sending the Great White Fleet out around the world) is needed to get across that if a resolution can't be found there is a power out there that will fight for one. It doesn't *always* work, though, and I'm certainly not saying there are other ways to deal with things, but Lodge's support of Roosevelt echos my own thoughts on the matter.

However Lodge's way of seeing things strictly in black and white bothers me. Certainly there have been cases, like the Spanish-American war and the issues with how Cuban people were being treated, where it is a clear cut case of right and wrong. However I don't personally believe that the world runs solely on this ideal. There *are* shades of gray. Just because a person is a thief doesn't mean they are going to be a murderer as well. Just because a leader runs their country in a dictatorship doesn't always mean they are going to run it *poorly* and do nothing but stomp on people's rights. There are good people who do bad things for the sake of good. Lodge was so quick to divide people on side or the other that anything less to him was, as the article put it, blasphamy.

It seems to me that both Wilson and Lodge had excellent points on how the country should be run, and had they been able to work together instead of against one another, the world may have become a very different place.

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New Internationalism

by Jemiel Lowery - Tuesday, April 23, 2013, 1:00 PM

The role that the U.S. played in the world was decided when they chose to join the League of Nations, which later became known as the United Nations that currently consists of 192 member states all across the world. I have always been one for Internationalism and the american involvement in world affairs because i feel as though it is our obligation to do whats right. Our involvement in conflicts such as the Korean War can be seen as something we should have stayed out of, but due to the fact they we were apart of the League of Nations, a organized group of nations who's soul purpose was to bring peace the the world, conflict was inevitable. After reading the Lodge article, my views haven't changed a bit. I completely stand behind Lodge and his views on American Idealism and how it can play a significant role in a better world without the use of imperialistic ideals.

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Re: New Internationalism  



by Jennifer Smith - Saturday, April 27, 2013, 5:34 PM

Actually the League of Nations ended after 27 years and was replaced by the UN, which did assimilate a lot of the programs that the LN started, and the United States didn't actually join it in spite of Wilson's best efforts to promote it. Opposition from the Senate and people like Lodge and other Republicans played a huge part in this, and added to Wilson leaving the office of president a bitter and dejected man.

That said, though, I do agree with you regarding how America can continue to play a role in bettering the world, and that isolationism isn't necessarily a route that would benefit us or the world, and that in many cases conflict does seem to be inevitable no matter how hard we try to refrain from or prevent it.

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Pro Internationalism

by Jesse Nichols - Saturday, April 27, 2013, 9:19 PM

After reading the Lodge article, my standpoint on the Internationalist to Isolationist spectrum remained unchanged. I was, and still am, a believer in internationalism because I feel that there are certain issues that occur in the world that the United States along with other countries, are morally inclined to attend to. I agree with Lodge's views on American Idealism and I also believe that we can continue to better the world with out having to use imperialistic methods. Isolationism is not a practical solution either because as a world power it is our duty to help those who can't help themselves.

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