

1 – Pathways to power – USA

In the 1920s and 1930s there was a widespread desire for isolation among the American public and Congress, which led to the United States arguably reverting to a period of isolationism. Indeed the USA took neither economic, military or political sanctions in reaction to the rise in power of dictators such as Mussolini, Hitler, Franco or general Tojo. This sense of “let them get on with it”, so popular at the time, is the result of several factors at the global scale. However, Americans were still very attached to their influence and position in the world, and managed to impose themselves as a global superpower at the end of the second world war and in the following years.

First of all, a sense of “never again” was still lingering from the first world war in American minds, leading to a reluctance at re-arming. Added to this the increase in violence in Asia and Europe, particularly Germany and Japan, led to a strong feeling that the Americans would be better off on their own. Indeed dictators such as Hitler and general Tojo were in the 1920s and especially 1930s becoming more and more aggressive in order to achieve their ambitions : a striking example of this would be Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1931. This diminished even more America’s want to be involved abroad, and in turn led to the creation of the Neutrality Acts of 1935, 1936 and 1937. Furthermore, the end of mass immigration after 1924 led to the USA thinking that it would be better on her own, without foreign help and without helping others, for it gave the country confidence in its resources and labor force.

Added to this, economic concerns were also at the center of the USA’s desire for isolationism. Indeed the Great Depression of 1927 weakened the world economy as well as the US economy, and President Roosevelt was therefore more occupied with re-establishing economic stability at home than with foreign affairs. The Depression also pushed the USA to seek back the money it had lent to European countries in the first world war, and the European incapacity of repaying (in 1933, only \$2.9 billion out of the \$ 9,9 billion owed were paid back). The debts confirmed the American feeling that the USA could only rely on itself. This in turn led to the Johnson Act of 1934, stating that the USA would no longer make loans to countries still in their debts [sic]. Added to this, this led to the country isolating itself economically by fining high tariffs on imports.

Furthermore, when in June 1940 France fell to the Germans, and even though Roosevelt started to perceive that the British were the only ones standing between the USA and the Nazi threat, the Congress and the army still opposed to any involvement abroad. The US military was indeed fearing that Britain would lose and that weapons provided to the British would eventually land in German hands. Added to this, the Conservative Republican leaders of Congress feared an increase of taxation in case of involvement abroad, at a time when the economic situation was already not at its best. Finally, the Liberal Democrat members of Congress feared that involvement abroad would leave domestic matters unsettled. This therefore explains why, despite Roosevelt’s desire for interventionism, the USA didn’t become involved in the war until 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

Finally, the fear of the European’s expanding tendencies [sic] led to the Good Neighbour Policy, in a will to isolate the American continent to prevent it from being reached [sic] by conflict.

In conclusion, the desire for isolationism of the 1920s and 1930s is a result of many factors, economic as well as social and political ones. However, the United States was still determined to maintain and increase its global influence, which makes the concept of isolationism controversial.

In 1945, the USA came out of the war as a global superpower, and this position was mainly due to the actions the country had taken before entering the war.

One of the main and most obvious reasons why the USA came out of the war as a global superpower is because it did not suffer from the damages of the war. Indeed none of the fighting had taken place on US territory, which means that the country did not suffer from massive destruction like the European nations did. Therefore the USA had a huge advantage over Europe by the end of the Second World War, which is that it did not have to worry about reconstruction. Added to this, to a certain extent the American economy prospered during the war, as the country was the main supplier for European weapons and goods. However this argument must be counter-balanced by the fact that a lot of American supplies were never paid for, the European countries being bankrupt. But what the United States wasn't repaid in money, was repaid [sic] in influence, for every time the country supplied European nations with weapons and goods it put the European countries deeper under US dependency and influence.

Roosevelt quickly understood this, and though he had a genuine concern for the victory of democracy and freedom over dictatorship and oppression, the USA became the "arsenal of democracy" was not only for idealistic purposes, but in American interest. Indeed before even entering the war, the United States was already playing a crucial part in it, by supplying weapons to Europe. By 1937, the Fourth Neutrality Act set up by the "cash and carry" principle, which enabled countries to weapons to [sic] the USA provided that they paid for it directly on US soil and transported them back home themselves. However, when in 1941 British Prime Minister Winston Churchill warned President Roosevelt that Britain could not continue paying for the supplies, Roosevelt put into place the lend-lease Act (article VII), which meant that the USA could provide Britain with armament without urging for payment, but against a "consideration" on the British side. Soon Roosevelt extended the lend-lease Act to "any country whose defense the President deemed vital to the US national security", and throughout the war contracted lend-lease agreement [sic] with over 16 countries therefore spending billions of dollars in assisting. This supplying was not, however, an act of generosity or altruism, but was hugely beneficial to America in the sense that it considerably increased its influence. Indeed by 1945 most Western European countries had made "considerations" to the United States, recognizing a sense of owing to the country. Other than a sense of gratefulness, the US, therefore gained from being the "arsenal of democracy" an assured position in the postwar world, with the status of the country without whom the Axis alliance would've [sic] won the war. Added to this, it created a "special relationship" between the UK and the USA, and made most Western European countries dependent upon the US and under their sphere of influence : could we talk about neo-colonialism?

Another key factor in establishing the USA as a global superpower in 1945 was the Atlantic Charter, which took place before the United States joined the war. The Atlantic Charter was an agreement between the United States and Britain about their common vision of what the postwar world should be like. They agreed, among other things, upon the importance of freedom of seas, the lowering of tax barriers between nation [sic], the importance of self-governance and the amount of German reparations. Added to this, the two nations agreed to work on preventing countries from fear and want, and on the necessity of establishing an international organisation to preserve peace. The Atlantic Charter was significant for two reasons. First of all, it was signed before the United States even joined the war, and therefore showed the country's diplomatic influence and importance to the world. Added to this, the Atlantic Charter imposed the United States and Britain's visions of the postwar peace to the world, as a world in which free trade would be dominant and essential. Secondly, the last point of the Atlantic Charter, about establishing an international organization to preserve peace, was a first step towards the creation of the United Nations, in which the US would have an essential role, as is witnessed by the fact that the UN headquarters are located in New York. Therefore the Atlantic Charter was a proof of USA's dominant position in the world, and assumed the country a major global role in the postwar world if the Allies won.

Moreover, two important key factors in the establishing of postwar USA as a global superpower are the Yalta and Potsdam conferences of 1945. The Yalta conference of February 1945, being held before the end of the war, had for purpose to settle the principles of the postwar peace between the "Big Three": Britain, the United States and Russia. It assumed a US dominance in the sense that it settled the United States as part of the three main victorious countries of the second

world war. Added to this, the United States would control one of the four zones of occupation into which Germany was divided, which ensured some US control in Europe. Furthermore, the “Big Three” agreed at the Yalta Conference upon, among others, the setting up of a Provisional Polish Government, and the helping of the freed people to arrange free elections and maintain law and order, in order to help them in the construction of a self-governed nation. This was named the “Declaration of Liberated People”. This is significant because it was respecting the Atlantic Charter, which claimed that people had the right to self-governance, and freedom from want and fear. Therefore the Yalta conference shaped, to some extent, the postwar world according to the vision the US had of it, which witnesses its increasing diplomatic and political influence. However, the Yalta conference also saw the rise of increasing tension between the USA and the Soviet Union, and the 1945 postwar world did not exactly end up shaped as the US would have wished, for it marked the beginning of a new and more complex war.

Finally the Potsdam conference of July 1945, through a failure, is significant in establishing of US influence, in the sense that it revealed to the rest of the world that the two superpowers emerging from the second world war were the United States and the Soviet Union, openly, in conflict both ideologically and about practical issues concerning the shaping of the post-war world, practical issues such as the Russian influence upon Eastern Europe.

In conclusion, between 1937 (setting of the Fourth Neutrality Acts) and 1945, the USA gradually imposed itself as a global superpower, by being successively the “arsenal of democracy” and the shaper of the new postwar world and ideals. However, by 1945 it found itself with a main rival and political opponent which has settled itself as a superpower as well : the USSR. This will of imposing its vision of what the world should be like on other countries can also be witnessed through the following years of US policy, as a parallel is noticeable between the strategy of the “arsenal of democracy” and that of the 1947 Marshall Plan.

Mark awarded = 17

Development issues

(a) How useful are Documents A and B for understanding contrasting levels of development in Africa?

Africa is nowadays one of the most contrasted continents in the world with striking differences of development levels both between and within countries, due to conflict, geographical disadvantages, non established food security and its past history as a colonized continent, among other factors. Documents A and B are respectively a map of Africa showing the levels of HDI and GNP in African countries, [word unclear] for source the World Bank and the UNO, and an extract from “L’Afrique au dessus des nuages” by Alain Faujas, showing the IMF previsions concerning global growth. Both Documents A and B are useful in understanding the strikingly contrasting levels of development in Africa, however both have limits.

First of all, document A is useful in showing the heterogeneity of the African continent regarding GNP. South Africa, for example, has a GNP of about \$300 billions, whereas countries such as Ethiopia only have a GNP of about \$25 billions, which is about twelve times less. Document A is furthermore useful in enabling us to distinguish different categories of countries within Africa; the ones, such as Algeria, Nigeria and Egypt and South Africa, with a GNP rating above \$150 billions, the ones, such as Ethiopia and Kenya and Angola, with a GNP figuring between \$25 and \$ 100 billions, and finally unnamed countries with GNPs lower than \$10 billions. These differences are extremely important, ranking between lower than \$10 bn to higher than \$300 billions. Therefore document A shows the striking differences of revenue generated by African countries. This is important to

understand the level of development of these countries, as a high GNP would usually mean a higher standard of living for the inhabitants of the country.

Document A also shows the contrasting levels of development in Africa by showing the differences of HDI between countries. HDI is a good, though arguably up to date, indicator of development, as it takes into account life expectancy, adult literacy rate, primary education enrolment rates and standard of living of the people. A significant difference in HDI between countries therefore shows a significant difference of development. It is noticeable on the map, for example, that HDI ranks on the continent from fairly high to very low, which shows striking differences of development between countries such as Algeria and Ethiopia. Added to this, it enables us to notice that, while countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya have approximately the same GNP, they vary greatly in their level of development, as Ethiopia's HDI is very low while Kenya's is medium. Document A is therefore useful for showing the development gap between African countries.

However, while document A is useful in showing development gaps between African countries (to some extent), it does not enable one to understand them, as the causes are not shown. The causes of Nigeria's poor level of development compared to Algeria, while Nigeria has a higher GNP, are for example, not explained. Therefore one can witness of the contrasting levels of development in Africa according to the map, but not understand it. Added to this, as the notion of development evolves, so do its indicators, and document A does not take into account the sustainability criteria, which has become essential in the definition of development. However, perhaps the map and the inequalities revealed would be different if sustainability was taken into account. Finally, while Document A shows contrasting levels of development between countries, it does not show these contrasts within countries, which would be crucial to understand contrasting levels of development in Africa, as African countries typically suffer from wide regional inequalities.

Document B is useful for showing the different predicted levels of economic growth between South and North Africa and the rest of the continent, and explaining the reasons for these differences. It therefore enables one not only to notice but to understand the contrasting levels of economic growth between South Africa, North Africa, and the rest of the continent. However document B makes one grouping of "sub-Saharan Africa", therefore not showing contrast between the countries, and even less within the countries. Added to this, while economic growth is a good indicator of the development of a country or region, it is far from being a sufficient indicator, as the documents itself shows : indeed the "rich countries", or more developed countries, only have a predicted growth rate between "1,3% and 1,5%" whereas less developed countries such as countries of "emerging Asia" have a predicted growth rate about six or seven times as high.

In conclusion, if studied together, documents A and B are useful for showing contrasting levels of HDI and GNP between countries, and for explaining some of the reasons why certain countries benefit from a higher growth rate than others. However the sustainability indicator lacks among the development indicators and while one can notice and observe contrasting inequalities from the documents one is not able to understand them. Finally, regional inequalities within countries are not shown.

(b) Evaluate strategies of development with the help of documents A and B.

Development strategies vary and don't work the same way according to a country's natural resources, geographical positive [sic] and advantages. Development strategies therefore need to be adapted to a specific country in order to be efficient, according to that country's characteristics. Documents A and B show some of the development strategies put into place in African countries, however an analysis of the strategies is needed in order to evaluate their efficiency.

The first strategy discussed by document B is the "structural adjustments" put into place by some countries. Structural adjustments are indeed part of the requirements of the World Bank and the IMF in order to make loans to the countries. These structural adjustments consist mostly in opening the country to the world market by lowering tariff barriers. The countries could benefit from this opening to the world market, because it would put forward there [sic] comparative advantage – cheap labor in the case of most African countries – and therefore attract foreign direct investment in the country. An example of a success story of the structural adjustments could be Bangladesh, whose comparative advantage has attracted a lot of FDI into Dhaka, its capital. Today about 4500 clothes factories have been created in Dhaka, which shows that an opening to the global market can boost a country's economy. However as FDI enters the country, most of the profit generated by the production of clothes goes to the TNCs that have relocated in the country. Added to this, this entrance of capital in Dhaka gradually increases inequalities between the city and its periphery. Added to this, if we take the example of Senegal, we can see that structural adjustments don't necessarily benefit the country asking for a loan. Indeed Senegal had for main source of revenue its export of groundnuts, and, by opening its doors to the world market, the country found itself in competition with countries it could not compete with, because the Northern countries can manage to lower their prices due to their efficient mechanization, and not Senegal. Added to this, with the World Bank and the IMF have come interest rates, and this is generally the beginning of a spiral of decline, in which the country borrows money to repay its debts and gradually gets more and more into debts [sic]. Therefore although the structural adjustment policies can be beneficial to the country in boosting its economic growth, whether it enables the country to overcome its development issues is debateable. Added to this, this relocation of foreign factories in the country will lead to a higher pollution degree.

Another development strategy discussed by document 2 is that the countries have "benefited from the appetite of industrialized and emerging countries for its raw materials". This strategy therefore relies on the natural resources of the country to achieve economic growth. A good example of this strategy in Africa would be Nigeria, who has recently discovered its oil resources. This natural resource should have boosted the country's economy and enabled it to achieve a higher level of development, through the use of money to build new infrastructure, schools, and improve the health primary services within the country and their availability. Document A indeed shows that Nigeria has one of the highest GNPs of Africa, ranking among \$ 200 billion. However Nigeria has actually a very poor level of development, with the country's HDI qualified as low. This is due to the fact that the economy of Nigeria started to rely more and more on its natural resources, and while before the 1960s it had a developed agriculture, today Nigeria is importing most of its food. This therefore shows us that the exploitation of its natural resources by a country can be dangerous and create a high dependency upon other countries. Today, although the economic growth of Nigeria has been boosted by the discovery of its oil resources, it led to increasing inequalities, which in turn led to violence and conflict within the country –as well as a high dependency upon other countries, a non established food security and a high level of corruption. Therefore, although the economic growth was boosted, this development strategy has not proved to be efficient but rather the contrary. Finally, countries with natural resources are often exploited by the "industrialized and emerging countries".

Finally, the third development strategy evoked by document B is the "cancellation of several countries' national debts". Cancelling a country's debts could indeed help him get out of the spiral of decline discussed earlier and lead him to be able to focus on things such as establishing food security

and improving infrastructure and the living standard of the people. It could therefore have “good effects” on the country and could even be one of the best ways are helping : by letting the country achieve development by itself, without interfering with loans that only increase debts at the end. Added to this, this strategy could avoid the dependency effect noticed with Nigeria.

In conclusion, although the three development strategies evoked by document do boost the countries’ economic growth, the effect on the level of development is debateable, and in most cases in African countries it leads to huge inequalities, which are afterwards hard to recover from.

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