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## The Indiana Congressional Delegation and Foreign Policy Issues 1939-1941

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THE INDIANA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION  
AND  
FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES  
1939-1941

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Loretta S. Glaze

## PREFACE

This paper is an examination of the foreign policy attitudes of Indiana's United States Senators and Representatives during the critical years before the Second World War. My purpose is to determine whether these particular Mid-Westerners were a part of the isolationist bloc in Congress which exerted a significant influence on the formulation of foreign policy. The scope of the study is limited to an elucidation of the individual views as expressed in Congress by the members of the delegation and an analysis of the campaign for re-election waged by each of them as it relates to the broader issue.

The principal source is the Congressional Record for the First, Second, and Third Sessions of the Seventy-sixth Congress and the First Session of the Seventy-seventh Congress. Although committee hearings were consulted, there proved to be inadequate participation in the hearings to provide supplemental information. However, comments made during floor debate on the critical measures enunciate the views of most members so as to provide an invaluable insight into the opinions of the delegation. Floor discussion coupled with the roll call votes

on the bills which clearly delineate the positions held by the members permit certain conclusions to be made regarding the posture of the delegation as individuals and as an entity.

The election of 1940 was analyzed by reading articles from at least one newspaper from each congressional district for the months of September, October, and November of 1940. However, the congressional campaigns that year were not given extensive coverage by the newspapers, which concentrated on the Wilkie-Roosevelt presidential campaigns. The only available manuscript collections in Indiana are the Ludlow and Halleck papers which are a part of the Lilly Library Collection at Bloomington. The Halleck papers for these years are almost exclusively concerned with constituent services and contain no mention of foreign affairs. On the other hand, the Ludlow papers are primarily concerned with his resolutions calling for a constitutional amendment to require a war referendum. Because he was a Representative who spoke out openly and frequently, Ludlow's attitudes were easily ascertained and the manuscript materials merely supply further affirmation of his views. Manuscript materials are unavailable for the Representatives and Senators who were less vocal in expressing their opinions and for whom such materials would have been immensely valuable.

The most important secondary sources are Robert A. Divine's The Illusion of Neutrality which is a detailed presentation of the congressional debate over neutrality legislation through 1939 and Warren Kimball's The Most

Unsordid Act, a description of the genesis of Lend-Lease and its passage by the Congress. Also useful for general background information are Manfred Jonas' Isolationism in America and William Langer and Everett Gleason's two books on this period, The Challenge to Isolation and The Undeclared War. The Congressional Directories and The Biographical Directory of the American Congress are the sources of biographical information concerning each member of the delegation. Pages on which this information is found are listed in the Bibliography and will not be footnoted in the introductory section.

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## INTRODUCTION

American foreign policy may be viewed historically as a quest for compromise between internationalism and isolationism. One approach advocated a prominent and active role in world affairs for the United States while the other warned against entanglements in centuries-old European hatreds and jealousies. Reconciliation of the two philosophies occurred because Americans conceived of their country as a nation committed to expansion of its foreign commerce, as a haven for immigrants, and as a nation hopeful that its institutions would serve as a model for the rest of the world.

Consequently, the intense battle over foreign policy during the 1930's was not fought to restore or to continue a genuine isolation. Instead, it was a struggle to preserve the American government's absolute control over its foreign policy by avoiding any long-term political commitments to other nations. The isolationists of this era advocated a kind of unilateralism which would allow the United States to act in accordance with the dictates of national self-interest.

An intense debate took place during the years before the war because the two groups, the internationalists and the isolationists, were unable to agree upon which course of



action would actually best serve the national interests. During the three critical years before the United States entered the war, the debate was acted out in Congress where a small group of isolationist-minded Senators and Representatives were able to play a substantial role in the formulation of the nation's foreign policy. Their greatest achievement was the passage of a series of neutrality measures which by 1939 President Roosevelt wished to revise. His efforts to repeal various sections of the Neutrality Act of 1937 provide a continuous thread running throughout the period, ending finally less than one month before the United States declared war against Germany and Japan.

A measure which provoked a violent and emotional reaction from the isolationists in Congress was the President's request in 1940 for authorization to conscript men for military service. This was the first time in the nation's history that peacetime conscription had been proposed. Such a request by the President confirmed the anti-interventionists' suspicions that Roosevelt was intent upon leading the nation into war.

The third major issue to come before the Congress and incite massive resistance from the isolationists was the Lend-Lease proposal. Although the President was assured of sufficient votes to pass Lend-Lease, the minority opposing it in the House and Senate fought to impose crippling restrictions on the measure.

These, then, were the significant issues before the Congress during 1939, 1940, and 1941 against which an unrelenting group of Senators and Representatives rallied. Such isolationism has traditionally been identified with the Middle Western region of America. The corollary that the Indiana congressional delegation was composed of men with isolationist convictions begs to be investigated. Under careful scrutiny do the attitudes of Indiana's Senators and Representatives exhibit characteristics of isolationist convictions and do they support the proposition of Mid-Western isolationism?

Preliminary to a discussion of the issues and attitudes, a brief comment on the political situation in Indiana during the 1930's and an introduction to the members of the congressional delegation follows:

Significant changes in the economic well-being of large portions of the population are usually reflected in political activities. The Depression affected Indiana as it did the entire United States, and economic instability became a personal problem for many families. The Republicans who were in control of the state as well as the nation were held responsible for their misfortunes by the voters of Indiana.

The election of 1932 was a sweeping and decisive victory for the Democratic party. Roosevelt and Garner and the Democratic nominee for Governor, Paul V. McNutt, and his state ticket carried Indiana. Democrat Frederick

Van Nuys was elected to the Senate in place of the third-term incumbent James Watson. A solidly Democratic delegation was sent to the U.S. House of Representatives.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the agencies created by President Roosevelt for relief, recovery, and reform purposes operated in Indiana, and the mid-term elections of 1934 thus favored the Democrats, although not in the landslide proportions of two years earlier. The Republicans were able to elect one congressman, but the Republican senatorial incumbent was defeated by Sherman Minton.<sup>2</sup>

The elections of 1936 in Indiana were largely dominated by national issues and national candidates. The Roosevelt Administration was endorsed by the Indiana voters who gave the Democrats nearly a two-hundred-fifty-thousand vote margin. M. Clifford Townsend, the Democratic nominee for Governor, defeated his Republican opponent, Raymond F. Springer, and the Republicans managed only to retain their one seat in Congress.<sup>3</sup>

President Roosevelt's efforts to reorganize the Supreme Court in 1937 had serious repercussions within the Democratic party in Indiana. Senator Van Nuys was among those who opposed Roosevelt's attack on the Court although he had

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<sup>1</sup>John D. Barnhart and Donald F. Carmony, Indiana From Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth, Volume II (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1954) pp. 476-479.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 479.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 481.

otherwise supported the New Deal. Substantial ill-feeling within the party in Indiana was created when President Roosevelt decided to purge Van Nuys from the Senate and gained the support of Governor Townsend in this effort. The Republicans saw in the 1938 elections an opportunity to capture a Senate seat and nominated Raymond E. Willis, an Angola newspaper editor and publisher. However, at the last minute Governor Townsend retracted his opposition to Van Nuys, who had declared he would run as an independent if denied the nomination by his party, and the Democrats renominated him.

By this time the New Deal was not going well in Indiana even though many benefits accrued to the citizens of the state as a result of the relief and recovery programs, increased agricultural prices, and establishment of unemployment insurance. However, poor relief necessitated high local taxes and agricultural benefits had resulted in near regimentation. Business had become increasingly hostile to the regulatory provisions of the reform measures. Prosperity was slow in returning, and a serious recession had interrupted the recovery in 1937. Indiana citizens became restive, and their traditional conservatism began to reassert itself. Senator Van Nuys was re-elected although by a margin of less than five thousand votes. The Republican vote was greater than at any election since 1932 and the Democratic vote smaller than in 1932 and 1936. Republican candidates for Congress were successful in seven districts while the Demo-

crats retained five seats.<sup>4</sup> The Indiana delegation to the 76th Congress, thus, was composed of two Democratic Senators and five Democratic and seven Republican members of the House of Representatives.

William Theodore Schulte, a forty-eight-year-old Democrat from Hammond, represented the First Congressional District composed entirely of Lake County, the highly industrialized, immigrant-populated northwestern corner of the state. Representative Schulte had served from 1918 to 1922 as a member of the city council of Hammond prior to his election to Congress in 1932.

From the lower northwestern, primarily rural, Second District, Charles A. Halleck was sent to Washington by the voters of Benton, Carroll, Cass, Fulton, Jasper, Kosciusko, Marshall, Newton, Porter, Pulaski, Starke, Tippecanoe, and White Counties. Included in this District were the cities of Lafayette and Logansport as well as the smaller towns of Fowler, Winamac, and Delphi. Halleck, who was born in Jasper County in 1906, had graduated from Indiana University in 1922 and its law school in 1924. For a time he had practiced law in Rensselaer and served as a prosecuting attorney for the 30th judicial circuit for ten years. Halleck was first elected as a Republican to the 74th Congress to fill the vacancy created by the death of the Congressman-elect.

Another Republican attorney was elected to his first

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 486.

term in 1938 to represent the northern border counties of Elkhart, LaPorte, and St. Joseph which comprised the Third Indiana Congressional District. These three counties, like Lake, had a substantial proportion of foreign-born population living in their principal cities of South Bend, LaPorte, and Elkhart. The youngest member of the delegation, Robert A. Grant, thirty-three at the time of his election, represented this area.

The son of Scottish parents who moved to the United States in 1882 with their two-year-old son, George W. Gillie, a Republican from Fort Wayne, was another freshman member of the 76th Congress. Gillie was a doctor of veterinary medicine whose previous public service had consisted of six years as sheriff of Allen County. He represented the northeastern counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wells, and Whitley, which by this time were becoming more densely populated as they turned from agriculture to manufacturing. Decatur, Auburn, and Angola were in this District.

The north central counties of Blackford, Clinton, Grant, Howard, Huntington, Jay, Miami, Tipton, and Wabash belonged to the Fifth District and another first-term member, Forest A. Harness. In this District Frankfort, Marion, Huntington, and Kokomo were growing into small cities. Born at Kokomo in Howard County in 1895, Harness had graduated from the law department of Georgetown University in 1917 and served overseas during the World War as a first lieutenant in the infantry, remaining a captain in the Infantry Reserve

of the Army from 1920-1949. He practiced law at Kokomo, was prosecuting attorney for Howard County for four years and was a special assistant to the Attorney General of the United States from 1931 until 1935 when he resumed the private practice of law until his election in 1938 as a Republican to the United States House of Representatives.

Legal practice and service as both deputy and prosecuting attorney were also in the background of Noble Johnson of Terre Haute, a Vigo County resident since his birth there in 1887. Johnson, a Republican, was first elected to Congress in 1924 and served through the two succeeding Congresses. Although he ran and lost in 1930 and again in 1936, Johnson was victorious in 1938. His was the Sixth District, composed of the centrally-located counties of Boone, Fountain, Hamilton, Hendricks, Montgomery, Parke, Putnam, Vermillion, Vigo, and Warren. Terre Haute was the largest city in this primarily agricultural area which also included the smaller towns of Lebanon, Noblesville, and Rockville.

The former athletic director and business and law instructor of the Linton High School, Gerald Landis was elected in 1938 from the Seventh District counties of Clay, Daviess, Gibson, Knox, and Sullivan. Landis was a forty-three year-old native of this rural area including Sullivan, Brazil, and Vincennes.

John William Boehne, Jr., the son of a former member of Congress from the Eighth District, was elected to his fifth

term in the United States House of Representatives in 1938. Born in Evansville in 1895, Boehne graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1918, served one year with the U.S. Army during the World War, and returned to Evansville, the major city of the District, to become secretary and treasurer of Indiana Stone Works. The Vanderburgh County Democrat also represented Crawford, Dubois, Floyd, Harrison, Perry, Pike, Spencer, and Warrick Counties which composed the rural southwestern corner of the state.

Another Democrat fifth-termmer from southern Indiana, Eugene Crowe, was a sixty-year-old former businessman. His Ninth District included the sparsely populated rural counties of Bartholomew, Clark, Dearborn, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Lawrence, Ohio, Orange, Ripley, Scott, Switzerland, and Washington. Columbus and Madison were the principal cities in this District. Crowe was the only Indiana Congressman to be defeated in the election of 1940. He was replaced by Republican Earl Wilson, a thirty-four-year-old high school teacher and principal from Bedford.

Republican Raymond Springer of the Tenth District was born in 1882 and attended Earlham College, Butler University, and the Indiana University Law School at Indianapolis from which he was graduated in 1904. He practiced law for twelve years and was judge of the 37th judicial circuit from 1916 until 1922. During the World War Springer served as an infantry captain and was a lieutenant colonel in the Officers Reserve Corps from 1918 until 1946. The unsuccessful Repub-



lican candidate for Governor of Indiana in 1932 and 1936, Springer was elected to the U.S House of Representatives in 1938 to represent the eastern counties of Decatur, Delaware, Fayette, Henry, Randolph, Rush, Shelby, Union, and Wayne. Another District much like the Fifth with its small town configuration, the Tenth included Elwood, Muncie, Alexandria, and Richmond.

The eldest member of the Indiana delegation was William Larrabee, who was born in 1870. He began practicing medicine and surgery at New Palestine in 1898 and served as secretary of the Hancock County Board of Health and as a member of the New Palestine City Council before his election to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1923 and 1925. Elected from the urban Eleventh District to the 72nd Congress in 1930, Larrabee represented Hancock and Madison Counties as well as the Marion County townships of Franklin, Lawrence, Perry, Warren, and all of Center except the area northeast of Ward 6, including nine wards of the city of Indianapolis.

The remaining Marion County townships of Decatur, Pike, Washington, Wayne, and that part of Center not in Doctor Larrabee's District were represented by the most colorful member of the Indiana delegation, Democrat Louis Ludlow. Born in rural Indiana near Connersville, Ludlow went to work in Indianapolis in 1892 at age nineteen as a reporter for the Indianapolis Sun. His beat included the State House and Ludlow met many important figures in Indiana politics before he left the state in 1901 to become the Washington correspond-

ent for a number of Ohio and Indiana newspapers. A member of the Congressional Press Galleries until 1928, Ludlow was then elected to represent Indiana in the House of Representatives.

In an autobiography, From Cornfield to Press Gallery, written in 1924 just four years before his election, Ludlow explained that he had difficulty classifying himself politically even though his father had been a staunch Democrat.

I had no trouble keeping my politics on fairly straight until Woodrow Wilson began to project America into the international sphere and to proclaim Uncle Sam as the partner and paymaster for all of the unruly, trouble-breeding, busted nations of the world. As nearly as I can ascertain from careful introspection, I am today a Democrat nationally and a Republican internationally.<sup>5</sup>

Ludlow discussed his belief in the Jeffersonian principles of equal rights and democracy. Coupled with his father's rigid adherence to the Democratic party this belief must have been sufficient to cause him to consider himself a Democrat when he decided to run for office.

There is no discernible evidence such as an intensely religious upbringing to suggest why Ludlow was to become such an ardent and outspoken pacifist. However, by 1924 his convictions were already strong enough for him to write,

Persons who decry the so-called isolation policy as selfish do not know whereof they

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<sup>5</sup>Louis L. Ludlow, From Cornfield to Press Gallery (Washington, D.C.: W.F. Roberts Company, Inc., 1924), p. 400.

speak. It is the only way America can preserve its strength and capacity for doing good deeds for the benefit of humanity everywhere.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, Ludlow stated his firm belief in the need for an amendment to the Constitution to provide for a referendum on war, an objective which was to become the primary focus of his efforts as a Congressman during the years ahead.

Two Democrats represented Indiana in the United States Senate during the 76th Congress. Sherman Minton of New Albany was a forty-eight-year-old attorney who had received his LL.B. from Indiana University in 1915 and an LL.M. from Yale University in 1916. He had served as a captain in the Army during the World War and then as a captain in the Officers Reserve Corps. Minton was first elected to the Senate in 1934, following a term as public counselor for the state of Indiana in the Administration of Governor McNutt. He made known his sympathies with the New Deal soon after his arrival in Washington and was offered the Senate's assistant Democrat leadership after the death of Senator Joseph Robinson. The Indiana Senator was most active on the Lobby Committee of the Senate, set up to investigate the entire lobbying situation in Washington. He was a member of the Committee in 1935 and its chairman in 1937, a position which caused Minton to become a subject of controversy. In 1941 President Roosevelt appointed Minton to the White House staff as Administrative Assistant and then as judge of the Seventh

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 402.

Circuit Court of Appeals where he remained until 1949 when he was appointed an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court by President Harry S. Truman.

Indiana's senior Senator, Frederick Van Nuys, was first sent to the U.S. Senate in 1932. Another attorney, Van Nuys had served in the Indiana Senate from 1913 through 1916 and was chairman of the Indiana State Democratic Committee during 1917 and 1918. Van Nuys, born in 1874 in Rush County, was a graduate of Earlham College and Indiana University Law School in Indianapolis.

Indiana's senatorial delegation changed with the 77th Congress as a result of the defeat of Sherman Minton in the election of 1940 by Raymond Willis, an Angola newspaper editor and publisher. Sixty-five years old when elected, Willis had been a member of the Indiana House of Representatives during the 1919 and 1921 General Assemblies.

## CHAPTER ONE

### NEUTRALITY REVISION

#### 76TH CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION

During the years following the World War, the United States gradually began turning inward as evidenced first by its failure to join the League of Nations. The advocates of collective security met with great frustration during the 1920's and early 1930's as evidenced by their untiring and equally unsuccessful efforts to bring the United States into membership on the World Court.

The War had made America the world's creditor, a status of increasingly grave consequence in the shaping of attitudes during the inter-war years. The tangled war debts problem resulted from the inability of the Germans to meet their reparations obligations which in turn prevented the Allies from meeting their loan repayments. Proposals to cancel the Allied War Debts were becoming more frequent by the late 1920's. Finally, because of the world-wide economic crisis the Hoover Moratorium on reparations and war debts was established. When the Moratorium expired a settlement was reached which for all intents and purposes repudiated the war debts. This result of the Depression intensified the growing isolationism in the United States.

The widespread publicity surrounding the investigation of the munitions industry conducted by a specially created Senate committee under the direction of Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota increased the disillusionment of the American people. Nye, who himself had long been convinced that the United States had been drawn into the war because of profit-seeking weapons makers, was able to popularize his theory. Eventually, feeling became widespread that American entry into the war had been a tragic mistake which should not be repeated and a pervasive desire for noninvolvement resulted.

However, German activity in Europe and Japanese activity in the Far East caused the question of America's role in international affairs to be posed once again. Both those who believed the United States should remain uninvolved and those who preferred a system of collective security in the world arrived at agreement upon the need for a change in the nation's neutrality policy.

With the impending Italo-Eithiopian war acting as the catalyst, pressures for neutrality revision increased during the early months of 1935.<sup>1</sup> The problem of formulating an American policy toward foreign aggression had occupied the Congress, the Department of State, and international lawyers for some time. With the imminent threat to world peace, the public became more aware of the possible effect events taking place abroad could have upon the security of the United States.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert A. Divine, The Illusion of Neutrality, 1937-1941 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 81.

As the foreign situation worsened, the impulse grew within America to insulate the nation from any possibility of being drawn into another foreign war. The push for neutrality revision was being transformed into a drive to establish a rigid program of isolation.

Therefore, with agreement reached upon the necessity for neutrality revision, there remained the question of what form a new policy should take. Congressional opinion favored an impartial arms embargo to be imposed by the President when he recognized that a state of war existed between two countries. President Roosevelt approved an embargo but preferred that it be of a discretionary nature allowing him to name the aggressor nation. A bill was prepared by the State Department and introduced in Congress embodying the views of the President. This measure was opposed by the growing bloc of Congressmen and Senators who inclined toward an isolationist position. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Key Pittman of Nevada, introduced the bill which was finally passed by Congress. The Neutrality Act of 1935 required the President, in the event of a foreign war, to proclaim its existence and to withhold the shipment of arms to or for all belligerents. This mandatory embargo feature did allow the President discretion in defining arms, ammunition, and implements of war and in applying the embargo to other states when they entered a war already in progress. American vessels were prohibited from carrying such embargoed goods for the warring nations, and the President was

authorized to warn American citizens that they could travel on belligerent ships only at their own risk. Also provided for was the creation of a National Munitions Control Board, headed by the Secretary of State, to license and supervise all arms shipments. President Roosevelt signed the neutrality act on August 31, 1935.<sup>2</sup>

The 1935 act did not resolve the neutrality debate because the vital arms embargo feature was due to expire February 29, 1936.<sup>3</sup> Thus congressional attention assuredly would be directed again to this issue. The focal point of the debate during the Second Session of the 74th Congress was the question of restricting trade in materials other than arms. A drastic measure supported by only a few extreme isolationists was introduced by Representative Louis Ludlow, Democrat of Indianapolis, which would have placed an absolute embargo on all trade with belligerents.<sup>4</sup> More moderate measures were proposed by both the Administration and the neutrality bloc in the Congress, which worked frantically to enact new legislation by the time the 1935 act was to expire. Passed and signed by the President was an extension of the original law for fourteen months which stiffened the embargo provisions. While the first law had merely authorized the President to extend the embargo when an existing war spread, the new law required him to do so. Also included

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 139.



was a prohibition on loans to belligerent powers made through purchase of their securities or in any other way, long a goal of neutrality enthusiasts. The primary debate of the session was resolved in a manner that further curtailed the President's freedom in the conduct of foreign policy in the event of war abroad by denying him authority to restrict trade in raw materials.

This problem of trade with belligerent nations was treated in the first permanent neutrality legislation, which was enacted just as the previous act expired. Passed on April 30, 1937, and signed into law the following day, the Third Neutrality Act extended indefinitely the arms embargo and the prohibition against loans.<sup>5</sup> Included were two new features. Instead of merely discouraging travel of Americans on belligerent ships the new law forbade such activity. Further, for a period of two years the President was permitted to allow the export of certain non-military goods to belligerents if those commodities were paid for in cash and carried away in foreign ships. This cash and carry provision was never put into effect as it expired before the outbreak of general war.

Also occurring during these years and important in this study because of the prominent position in the effort occupied by Indiana Congressman Ludlow was the movement to adopt a constitutional amendment requiring any declaration of war by the

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<sup>5</sup>Alexander DeConde, A History of American Foreign Policy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), p. 569.

United States to be subjected to a national referendum. Ludlow had long supported this concept, mentioning it in his autobiography published in 1924. Such a proposal was first introduced in 1917 by Senator Thomas Gore of Oklahoma and similar proposals were made in every subsequent Congress except the Sixty-sixth. All such resolutions were referred to the appropriate Judiciary sub-committee and remained buried there. However, in 1935 Representative Ludlow, who was to become the most persistent and energetic advocate the war referendum movement gained, introduced yet another such proposal. He actively sought support for his measure both in the Congress and among organizations in the peace movement. Although he received the enthusiastic support of most isolationists, his amendment proposal again died in committee at the end of the session.<sup>6</sup>

At the beginning of the next Congress in 1937 Ludlow reintroduced his resolution. At this same time, Ludlow published Hell or Heaven, a book written

to show that America is sitting on a powder keg; that it is without any adequate safeguards against war; that its peace and security are constantly imperilled by selfish interests lured by profits; that its position in a world of strife is extremely precarious and that it's likely at any time to be dragged into another foreign conflict.<sup>7</sup>

In this book Ludlow presented the case for his war referen-

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<sup>6</sup>Manfred Jonas, Isolationism in America, 1935-1941 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 158.

<sup>7</sup>Louis L. Ludlow, Hell or Heaven (Boston: The Stratford Company, 1937), p. ii.

dum amendment and made a plea for support. When the House Judiciary Committee failed to report out his resolution, Ludlow introduced a new resolution to bring the amendment proposal directly to the floor as a special order of business. However, the new resolution was referred to the Rules Committee which took no further action. Ludlow's diligence eventually resulted in the obtaining of sufficient signatures to discharge his resolution from Committee and allowed him to move that his war referendum proposal be brought to the floor. His motion was defeated by only a 188 to 209 vote margin, another indication of the strength of isolationist sentiment within the Congress.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the seemingly inexorable march of events during 1938 including Hitler's Austrian coup, the Munich conference, and increasing Japanese activity in the Pacific, led the President to conclude that the foreign policy of the United States should be re-evaluated. In his annual message to the Congress given in January, 1939, he expressed his dissatisfaction with existing neutrality legislation and declared that such laws often operated to permit aid to aggressor nations and deny it to the victims of aggression. With the cash and carry provision of the current law due to expire May 1, and the President's obvious wish for neutrality revision, the 76th Congress faced the most complex and involved discussion of the issue yet to be held.

Fearing those who had opposed his domestic programs

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<sup>8</sup>Jonas, Isolationism, p. 162.

would be equally intransigent toward any foreign policy closely identified with him, President Roosevelt agreed to allow Senator Key Pittman and his Foreign Relations Committee take charge of revision of the existing neutrality legislation. Although Pittman announced in January that his committee would hold hearings to discuss the neutrality issue, no action came until after the German seizure of Czechoslovakia in March of 1939. Senator Pittman met with State Department officials and drafted a comprehensive neutrality bill embodying the basic position the Department had been urging since the previous winter. The bill provided for repeal of the arms embargo and adoption of cash and carry for all trade with belligerents. It forbade any American ship to enter a belligerent port and required American citizens to transfer title to all exports to nations at war before the goods left the United States. In addition, the Pittman Bill continued the other provisions of the 1937 act. Two changes were written in, requiring the President to put the law into effect within thirty days after the outbreak of either a declared or undeclared war and giving him the discretionary authority to proclaim combat zones from which he could ban all American ships and travelers, even if they were enroute to a neutral port.<sup>9</sup>

Congressional reaction to the Pittman Bill was indicative of the ensuing struggle which consumed the next three years. Formal consideration of the neutrality issue began

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<sup>9</sup>F.O. Wilcox, "Neutrality Fight in Congress: 1939," American Political Science Review, XLVII (June, 1953), 813.

April 5, 1939, when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee opened public hearings on the various proposals to revise the 1937 act.<sup>10</sup> The committee hearings continued through the first week in May and heard testimony from representatives of pacifist groups, veterans organizations, labor unions, women's clubs, and ethnic societies, in addition to such distinguished witnesses as the former Secretary of State, Henry Stimson, and Bernard Baruch. Frederick Van Nuys, the senior senator from Indiana and a Democrat, was the only member of the Foreign Relations Committee who failed to attend even one of the hearings, thus precluding an expression of his views which would have been provided had he participated in the hearings.<sup>11</sup>

When in mid-May Senator Pittman announced he was planning to postpone any further consideration of neutrality revision for several weeks, the Administration decided to move the fight into the House of Representatives under the direction of Representative Solomon Bloom of New York who was chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Although Bloom was judged by the Administration to be no more competent and forceful a leader than Pittman, he introduced a new neutrality resolution on May 29 which embodied

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<sup>10</sup>Divine, Illusion, p. 246.

<sup>11</sup>Hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Neutrality, Peace Legislation, and Our Foreign Policy, 76th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939).

the program Cordell Hull had formulated.<sup>12</sup> The Bloom Bill, as reported out of the Foreign Affairs Committee, on which no members of the Indiana delegation served, had undergone slight modification but still proposed significant changes in the existing neutrality act. It repealed the arms embargo, granted the President discretion to invoke the act only when necessary to promote the security and preserve the peace of the United States, allowed the President to decide when to apply the transfer of title provisions as well as to select the types of exports to be covered by this clause, and authorized the President to designate combat zones which would be closed to both American ships and travelers.<sup>13</sup>

Debate on the Bloom Bill began on the floor of the House on June 27, 1939.<sup>14</sup> Representative Ludlow of Indianapolis was one of the leaders of the group of Democrats firmly opposed to any changes in the 1937 act. Ludlow, who had once again introduced his resolution calling for a war referendum amendment to the Constitution, labelled the Bloom Bill one of the most dangerous brought before the Congress during his tenure there. He contended the bill would push America into world power politics, making it easy to get into war and difficult, if not impossible, to stay out of war. The cash and carry provisions, according to Ludlow,

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<sup>12</sup>Divine, Illusion, pp. 262-266.

<sup>13</sup>Wilcox, "Neutrality Fight," 818.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 821.

would convert America into an arsenal, storehouse, and source of supply for Great Britain because in any war Britain and France would control the seas. Voicing the revisionist line developed by the Nye Committee, the Indianapolis Congressman mentioned the lure of war profits and prophesied that a lucrative war trade would be built up. He questioned whether a professedly Christian people were willing to furnish implements of war and declared,

If we are going to furnish war-mad nations with implements for killing and torturing human beings by wholesale we had better burn our Bibles and our churches and confess that we have no love left in our hearts for the living God.<sup>15</sup>

Representative Gillie of Fort Wayne spoke the next day. Although he expressed his agreement with Ludlow, he made a less emotional though equally vehement statement. Gillie saw the critical situation facing Great Britain and France as completely outside the national interests of the United States. He defined neutrality in terms of an absolute refusal to give any support to either side in a foreign war and advocated a policy forbidding exports of all kinds and loans and credits to all belligerents upon outbreak of war. Congressman Gillie added that a "preponderant majority" of his constituents had made known to him their confidence that such a program would do more than any other neutrality bill to keep the United States out of war and entanglement.<sup>16</sup> How-

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<sup>15</sup>Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 1st Session (June 27, 1939), 8017.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid. (June 28, 1939), 8177.

ever, he did not explain the specific manner in which these views had been conveyed to him.

This feeling that avoidance of war was paramount to all other considerations was also shared by Republican Congressman Charles A. Halleck of Indiana's Second District. On May 1, Halleck had stated that nothing was more important at that time than keeping the United States out of war. Furthermore, "If we're involved in another war it will mean the end of democracy in this land. It will mean the establishment of a Fascist regime of government."<sup>17</sup>

Another staunch and vocal supporter of strict neutrality was Republican Raymond Springer who thought that the formulation of foreign policy should remain vested in the representatives of the people rather than be given up to the executive branch. He expressed his faith in an embargo against the transportation of arms, munitions, and war supplies as the secure way of maintaining neutrality. Springer suggested that the United States should abstain from committing any overt act which might possibly involve the nation in the foreign war.<sup>18</sup>

Although no other members of the Indiana delegation spoke out on the Bloom Bill, three roll call votes taken on the bill provide a clear indication of where they stood. Perhaps most illustrative of attitude is the vote on the

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid. (May 1, 1939), 4957.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid. (June 29, 1939), 8249.



Vorys Amendment. Representative John Vorys, a Republican from another Mid-Western state, Ohio, offered the crucial amendment which was to virtually nullify the Administration's revision program that session. He proposed the enactment of a limited embargo covering arms and ammunition but excluding implements of war. Vorys argued that since the latter category included items such as aircraft that were also used for peaceful purposes his proposal was a reasonable compromise.<sup>19</sup>

The Vorys Amendment was accepted by a 214 to 173 vote. Only two from Indiana, both Democrats, opposed this effort to cripple neutrality revision. Eugene Crowe and Dr. William Larrabee voted with the minority favoring repeal of the arms embargo, with William Boehne recorded as not voting. The entire Republican contingent from Indiana favored this measure and was joined by the staunch advocate of mandatory neutrality, Democrat Ludlow. Also voting with the majority was Democrat William Schulte of Lake County.<sup>20</sup>

Schulte opposed only the arms embargo repeal and not the other sections of the bill and joined Crowe and Larrabee to oppose recommital of the bill to committee which was an attempt to kill any chance of revision that session.<sup>21</sup> The vote on final passage supports the conclusion that Schulte was not firmly opposed to all neutrality revision as he

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<sup>19</sup>Divine, Illusion, p. 272.

<sup>20</sup>Congressional Record (June 30, 1939), 8511.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 8512.

again joined Crowe and Larrabee to vote with the majority to pass the Bloom Bill, 201 to 196.<sup>22</sup> With Representative Boehne again recorded as not voting, the remainder of the Indiana delegation chose to oppose even the emasculated attempt to revise foreign policy which the amended Bloom Bill would provide.

Attention next shifted to the Senate where Pittman had deferred meeting his committee until the House acted. Finally on July 11, the Foreign Relations Committee met and quickly accepted a motion to postpone any further consideration of neutrality revision until the next session of Congress in 1940. The vote was twelve to ten on the motion with Senator Van Nuys voting with the isolationist majority. Because he neither attended the public hearings of the committee nor spoke out on the floor of the Senate, it is difficult to learn Van Nuys' views. However, in Robert Divine's account of the subject, for which he had access to vast resources, the Indiana Senator is not mentioned as one of the equivocating members of the Foreign Relations Committee but rather is included among the isolationists.<sup>23</sup>

With the vote of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to postpone action on the Pittman Bill, the chance ended for neutrality revision during the First Session of the 76th Congress. Those who opposed the involvement of

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 8513.

<sup>23</sup>Divine, Illusion, p. 279.

America in the critical situation in Europe succeeded at least temporarily in their attempt to prevent repeal of the arms embargo. The Indiana delegation almost in its entirety was a significant part of that group. On August 5, 1939, the Congress adjourned.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 282.

## CHAPTER TWO

### NEUTRALITY REVISION ACHIEVED

#### SPECIAL SESSION

The long-developing European crisis finally culminated in world war on September 3, 1939, following the march of the German Army into Poland two days earlier.<sup>1</sup> When the formal declaration of war against Germany was issued by Great Britain and France, President Roosevelt invoked the Neutrality Act of 1937, which applied the arms embargo to all belligerents. However, he soon announced that he would call Congress into special session on September 21 for the express purpose of repealing the arms embargo.<sup>2</sup> Indiana Democratic Senator Sherman Minton attended a meeting with the President and several other Congressional leaders on the day before the new session began and was one of those entrusted with steering repeal of the arms embargo through the Senate.

In order to avoid the legislative delay that would face a new bill, the Administration chose to use the Bloom Bill which had already passed the House as the vehicle for neutrality revision. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee

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<sup>1</sup>Divine, Illusion, p. 286.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 292.

would draft a substitute and, following Senate action on this substitute, the House could agree to the new legislation simply by instructing its conferees to agree to the Senate version. The new measure was reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee on September 28. While Senator Van Nuys had voted in June to postpone neutrality revision, this time he voted to report the measure out of Committee rather than with those who still voted against sending the bill to the floor to try to block embargo repeal.<sup>3</sup> The chief features of the bill approved by the Committee were repeal of the arms embargo and a sweeping application of the cash and carry formula. All American exports to belligerent ports would have to be carried in foreign ships with transfer of title taking place before the goods left the United States. The President was given authority to ban the entry of American ships, aircraft, or citizens into any area which he designated as a combat zone. In addition, the bill continued the ban on loans and on American travel on belligerent ships as well as forbade the arming of American merchant vessels.<sup>4</sup>

On October 2, the Senate began the debate on the bill which was to continue for four weeks.<sup>5</sup> Administration spokesmen, following the advice of Vice-President John Nance Garner, allowed the isolationists to dominate the debate.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 313.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 314.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 315.

However, Sherman Minton, who was the Senate Democratic whip, sometimes replied to the charges made by opponents of embargo repeal. He joined Democratic Senator Tom Connally of Texas in attacking the isolationists' contention that the export of arms had caused American involvement in the World War. Minton asserted, "Never in the history of our country or of any other country did the sale of munitions ever drag a country into war."<sup>6</sup>

Senator Minton responded to the charges of Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., Massachusetts, that the effects of repeal would actually be the creation of a state of unneutrality in favor of France and Great Britain. Minton did admit repeal would help Britain and France but held that the advantage stemmed from the fact that the two countries had better navies than their adversary. Thus, their advantageous position would not exist because of any favor the United States had granted them.<sup>7</sup> In spite of such intricate reasoning, Senator Minton's desire to see Great Britain aided was not obfuscated.

On October 24, consideration of amendments to the bill began.<sup>8</sup> For the next three days a series of restrictive amendments were offered by the isolationists, all of which were voted down. Both Senator Minton and Senator

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<sup>6</sup>Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 2nd Session (October 16, 1939), 745.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. (October 14, 1939), 435.

<sup>8</sup>Divine, Illusion, p. 324.

Van Nuys voted with the majority to defeat these efforts.<sup>9</sup> The only clue to the shift in position of Senator Van Nuys from June, when he had voted to postpone neutrality revision, was a statement he made while participating in a discussion of the issue on a radio program which was reprinted in the Record. He stated that he wanted the American public aware that no one willing to pass the Pittman Bill wanted America involved in the war. Rather, the question was how best to accomplish a stop to the spread of Hitlerism.<sup>10</sup> After voting down three amendments which would have restored the arms embargo, on October 27, by a vote of 63 to 30, the Senate passed the revised Bloom Bill, with both Indiana Senators voting yea.<sup>11</sup>

The House of Representatives then accepted a motion from its Rules Committee to disagree with the Senate amendments to the Bloom Bill and called for a conference. Debate in the House centered on whether or not to instruct the conferees to insist on any amendments to the bill as passed by the Senate.

Indiana Representatives from both political parties took part in the discussion of the proposed neutrality revision. Democrat Eugene Crowe of the Ninth Indiana Congressional District, while affirming his opposition to American

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<sup>9</sup>Congressional Record (October 24-26, 1939), 794, 800, 841,

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. (October 11, 1939), App. 243.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. (October 27, 1939), 916, 986, 1023, 1024.

entry into any foreign war, declared that the best way to keep the United States out of war would be to keep American ships out of combat zones and away from belligerent ports. He offered his support for the cash and carry provisions of the neutrality proposal then under consideration.<sup>12</sup> Representative Crowe was the only member of the Indiana delegation to speak out in favor of the proposed legislation.

Louis Ludlow, one of the leaders of the House Democrats opposing the Administration's program, delivered a defense of their position. "In this country of ours we have two ideologies in respect to war," he began.

Those ideologies have come to a clashing point and a choice must be made. If we adopt as our permanent policy one ideology, sometimes contemptuously called isolation but which is not isolationist at all, we may safely count on remaining at peace with the world.

On the other hand, he continued, adoption of the interventionist ideology would make it simply a question of time before America was dragged into war. Ludlow explained the isolationist ideology as one which

does not suggest or even intimate that America should isolate itself from the world. It merely suggests that we should isolate ourselves from the wars that eternally are brewing in the cockpit of Europe and in other foreign trouble areas of the globe.

An embargo levied on all goods to belligerents was suggested by Congressman Ludlow as a true neutrality policy.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid. (October 25, 1939), App. 502.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. (October 16, 1939), 485.



Representatives Halleck, Republican from Rensselaer, and Springer, Republican from Muncie, made short speeches voicing their opposition to repeal of the arms embargo. A more impassioned speech was delivered by a first-term Republican from South Bend, George Grant, who proclaimed,

Every impulse of patriotism and every consideration of real Americanism impels me to vote against repeal of the embargo on arms, ammunition, and implements of war.<sup>14</sup>

His speech assigned the outbreak of war in Europe to a culmination of age-old hatreds, class conflicts, religious antagonisms, and boundary disputes. Grant called Europe a "seething cauldron of diplomatic intrigues and real estate aggressions. If we maintain peace, we will continue to hold aloft the beacon light of freedom for all humanity."<sup>15</sup>

Reiterating the same theme, Representative Gerald Landis, Republican from the Seventh District, in a speech on the floor of the House during debate on repeal of the arms embargo said, "Now that Europe is back again at its 1100-year-old job of war, the primary job of the U.S. is to keep out of war,"<sup>16</sup> In stating that those who opposed the changes in the neutrality law were not isolationists but were simply against becoming entangled in war, Landis stressed that the conflict was an internal European one and essentially foreign to the concerns of the United States.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid. (November 1, 1939), 1219.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 1220.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 1225.

He gave his support to a cash and carry program for all non-military supplies and to retention of the arms embargo.

Representative Gillie informed the Congress on November 1 that during the previous five weeks he had received correspondence from nearly 15,000 citizens of the Fourth District who almost unanimously called for retention of the arms embargo. Charging that opponents of the embargo had tried to cloud the issue by saying that cash and carry and the embargo were incompatible, Gillie expressed his approval of a cash and carry program for all general supplies without repeal of the embargo on arms.<sup>17</sup>

Representative James Shanley, a Connecticut Democrat, moved to instruct the House conferees to insist on the retention of the embargo when they met in conference committee. Before voting on the Shanley motion, the House considered a compromise proposal by Ohio Representative Vorys to amend the Shanley motion to instruct the conferees to insist on a limited embargo which would forbid the sale of arms and ammunition but permit the export of implements of war. This motion was identical to the amendment which Vorys had succeeded in attaching to the Bloom Bill the previous spring. However, this time the House rejected the limited embargo. Congressman Ludlow joined the Republican members from Indiana in voting in favor of keeping an embargo on arms and ammuni-

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 1220.

tion.<sup>18</sup> Next, the House voted down the more stringent Shanley proposal, and again only the Indiana Democratic Congressmen Boehne, Crowe, and Schulte opposed retention of the embargo. Republicans Gillie, Grant, Halleck, Harness, Johnson, Landis, and Springer, joined by the vocal anti-interventionist Democrat Ludlow favored the Shanley motion.<sup>19</sup>

On the next morning, the conference committee met, and the House conferees accepted the revised bill as amended by the Senate. Both Houses quickly accepted the conference report that same day, November 3, 1939, with a final vote of 243 to 172 in the House and 55 to 24 in the Senate.<sup>20</sup> The vote of the Indiana members was predictable. Boehne, Crowe, Larrabee, and Schulte in the House and Senators Minton and Van Nuys voted to agree to the conference report. Thus, neutrality revision was achieved with a majority of the Indiana delegation opposing such a program. In essence, the new legislation made only two vital changes in American neutrality policy. With the signing of the act, Americans could ship arms, ammunition, and implements of war to belligerents, but all trade with nations at war in Europe had to be conducted in foreign ships, with transfer of title to cargoes taking place before the goods left the United States. The restrictions on loans and passenger travel in the 1937

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid. (November 2, 1939), 1343.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 1344.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. (November 3, 1939), 1389, 1356.

act were continued under the new legislation. American ships could not enter war zones as proclaimed by the President even if destined for a neutral port.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Divine, Illusion, p. 330,

## CHAPTER THREE

### PASSAGE OF PEACETIME CONSCRIPTION

#### 76TH CONGRESS, 3RD SESSION

Following the lull in the war during the winter of 1939-1940, events in Europe once again reached the critical stage when spring came. Hitler launched the great western offensive which culminated with the fall of France. His armies occupied Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg during April and May.<sup>1</sup>

In the United States public opinion had shifted sufficiently to permit Congress to pass programs with little opposition providing for rearmament and military preparedness. However, when the question of peacetime conscription was raised, controversy surrounded it and once again the isolationists were given an issue. America had never conscripted men for military service in time of peace, and the idea of compulsory service was repugnant. But at this time, the regular army was limited by law to 375,000 men, with its actual strength including the National Guard at not more than half a million. Such a force was obviously inadequate to cope with an invasion. Consequently, the Burke-Wadsworth Selective

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<sup>1</sup>DeConde, American Foreign Policy, p. 584.

Service Bill was introduced in Congress on June 21, 1940.<sup>2</sup>

By the time debate in Congress began on August 9, a state-by-state survey taken by George Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion showed every state in favor of peacetime conscription, with the closest division of opinion in Indiana where only 55% supported the measure.<sup>3</sup> However, in spite of public opinion in favor of conscription and the endorsement of Republican presidential candidate Wendell Wilkie, the Indiana delegation exhibited reluctance to support the measure. Even Senator Minton, who was a member of the Military Affairs Committee and Democratic whip, remained, for the most part, silent on the issue. His comments during the debate in the Senate were primarily of an informational nature and were not expressions of his opinion of the bill, although he did support the President's goal of strengthening the preparedness of the United States. Earlier in the summer, Minton had assailed the efficacy of an isolationist foreign policy in an exchange with Senator Nye of North Dakota. The Indiana Democrat defended the President as a "patriotic high-minded public servant" with no purpose of leading the nation into war. Minton declared his respect for those who sincerely held isolationist views but added that isolationism had not recently led to peace. Pointing out that Holland, Belgium,

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<sup>2</sup>William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-1940 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 680.

<sup>3</sup>Evansville Press, August 11, 1940, p. 8.

Denmark, Norway, and Luxembourg had been isolationist, Minton reminded Nye that those states had been invaded and crushed. "No, Mr. President," he continued, "isolationism does not lead to peace. The world today knows the sad lesson that isolationism leads to war, total war."<sup>4</sup>

Representative Landis appended a statement to the Record on August 12 explaining his opposition to peacetime conscription. The former Army lieutenant called such action "foreign to the fundamental principles of democracy and the American way of life."<sup>5</sup> Only after it was proven that voluntary enlistments had not provided sufficient numbers for an adequate defense was there justification for the passage of the Burke-Wadsworth Bill according to Landis.

Indiana's Representatives had been so taciturn regarding their views on peacetime conscription that on the day Burke-Wadsworth passed the House the Muncie Evening Press reported that only Representative Crowe favored the bill.<sup>6</sup> Actually, votes on the amendments and the bill itself reveal support from others for the bill or at least some of its provisions.

The Senate acted before the House and ended debate on August 28, 1940. Before the vote on passage of the bill

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<sup>4</sup>Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session (June 21, 1940), 8800-8802.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. (August 12, 1940), App. 4932.

<sup>6</sup>Muncie Evening Press, September 7, 1940, p. 4.

was taken, two amendments were offered to postpone the enactment of the bill until after voluntary enlistments had been given an opportunity to provide adequate numbers. Both amendments were voted down with Senator Van Nuys supporting postponement and Senator Minton opposing it.<sup>7</sup> The bill passed 58 to 31, including Senator Minton in the majority and Senator Van Nuys in the minority. As passed by the Senate, the bill authorized the President to select for training and induction for service such numbers of men as were required in the national interest whether or not a state of war existed. A system of deferments for those engaged in occupations in the national interest and for conscientious objectors was included.<sup>8</sup>

Advocates of a trial period for voluntary enlistments were able to attach an amendment in the House to the conscription bill. The Fish Amendment, sponsored by Republican Hamilton Fish of New York, provided for postponement of registration of men for sixty days and gained the support of eleven of the twelve Indiana Congressmen.<sup>9</sup> Only Representative Larrabee opposed postponement of registration. On final passage of the bill, Eugene Crowe, as predicted by the Muncie newspaper, did vote in favor of the establishment of a system of selective service. Representative Larrabee was the only other member of the Indiana delegation to vote with the majority which passed the bill by a vote margin of 263

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<sup>7</sup> Congressional Record (August 28, 1940), 11124-11125.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 11142.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. (September 7, 1940), 11748.



to 149.<sup>10</sup>

The House of Representatives requested a conference to reconcile the two bills. The major differences between the House and Senate versions were the House amendment providing for a sixty-day delay in conscription pending further trial of voluntary enlistments and the expanded age bracket for registration passed by the House of twenty-one years to forty-four years instead of twenty-one years to thirty-one years as set by the Senate. Senator Bennett C. Clark of Missouri, one of the most ardent isolationists in Congress, moved to instruct the conferees to disagree to the change in the age bracket for registration and to agree to the Fish Amendment providing for postponement of registration for sixty days. Both instructions were voted down. Senator Minton voted with the majority which favored the immediate implementation of a Selective Service System, while Senator Van Nuys voted to postpone enactment.<sup>11</sup>

The conference report incorporated a compromise age bracket for registration and provided for the immediate establishment of a Selective Service System. The vote on agreement to the conference report taken on September 14, 1940, showed only four members, Senator Minton and Representatives Crowe, Larrabee, and Schulte, of the fourteen member Indiana delegation were willing to vote with the

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 11754.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. (September 9, 1940), 11792.

majority to conscript men during peacetime to strengthen the standing army of the United States.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid. (September 14, 1940), 12227.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ELECTION OF 1940

The election of 1940 marks the end of a period of Democratic control in the state of Indiana. In that election all twelve of Indiana's U.S. Representatives and one U.S. Senator, Sherman Minton, asked the voters of the state to return them to Congress. An analysis of the campaigns reveals what the candidates said or (equally important) what they did not say in order to gain re-election. Although newspaper coverage of the congressional campaigns was not extensive, a district by district examination of articles during the fall of 1940 gives an indication of the foreign policy posture of the Congressmen at that time as well as an indication of the relative importance of foreign and domestic issues to the voters.

Most attention, of course, centered on the presidential campaign, not only because Franklin Roosevelt was running for a third term but also because the Republican nominee Wendell Wilkie was a native of Indiana. Wilkie did not have the isolationist convictions of many Republicans in Congress and early in the campaign endorsed Roosevelt's general foreign policy goals, criticizing only the means the President employed. Consequently, foreign policy was

neutralized as the major presidential campaign issue with both men making sweeping promises to keep America out of the war if elected. Wilkie attacked the New Deal and Roosevelt defended the success of his domestic program. Perhaps partly because of this nature of the presidential campaign, the congressional races did not provoke sharp differences in opinion on external affairs.

Of the state campaigns the most widely covered was that for the senatorial seat held by Sherman Minton, the Senate Democratic whip and a staunch defender of President Roosevelt. Minton's Republican opponent, Angola newspaper publisher Raymond Willis, having run a close contest for the Senate two years earlier against Senator Van Nuys, was a formidable candidate. Willis had the advantage of having already participated in a state-wide campaign and was not unknown to the voters. Another significant factor was the decision of the State Election Board to attach the senatorial candidates to the national rather than the state ticket on the paper ballots. The coupling of senatorial and presidential candidates was viewed as an advantage for Willis as he would appear with the Indiana-born Wilkie.<sup>1</sup> Further, Minton's close identification with the President and the New Deal was a liability in his home state, which was becoming disenchanted with the New Deal as evidenced by an editorial, typical of many which appeared during the the campaign.

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<sup>1</sup>Gary Post-Tribune, September 6, 1940, p. 4.

Senator Minton, who has boasted that he is a New Deal rubber stamp, is probably the most easily controlled Senator in Congress. His record has been one of unvarying submission to White House orders, and he has at times subordinated the interests of his constituents to the wishes of the New Deal administration at Washington. His defeat should be a certainty.<sup>2</sup>

With anti-Roosevelt sentiment growing in Indiana, Willis quite naturally devoted much of his campaign to attacks upon the Democratic incumbent's support of the New Deal. **The Indiana Republican Editorial Association lent their substantial support to the Angola publisher, one of their own members,** [redacted] who waged an intensive campaign from mid-September until election day.

Senator Minton, on the other hand, was not able to open his campaign until October 2, on which evening he spoke at Sullivan upholding his allegiance to the President and the New Deal.<sup>3</sup> Newspaper accounts of the speeches of the two candidates indicate Minton concentrated more on the foreign situation than did his Republican opponent, perhaps because he was aware his actions in the area of domestic affairs were unpopular in Indiana. In a speech on October 15, Minton accused the Republican party of appeasement by opposing many Roosevelt-sponsored measures to strengthen American defenses.<sup>4</sup> Although he made relatively few speeches during the campaign, Minton advocated building up the strength

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<sup>2</sup> (Goshen) News-Democrat, October 30, 1940, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> South Bend Tribune, October 3, 1940, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., October 16, 1940, p. 2.

of the United States and repeatedly assured the people that Roosevelt was not leading them into war.

The foreign policy comments of Willis were primarily charges that Roosevelt was using the international situation as a smoke-screen to distract attention from his failure to solve domestic problems. In a speech at Madison, Willis declared, "I am not an isolationist. I am not now an interventionist in the true sense of the word."<sup>5</sup> Assuring the people that although he favored arming for the protection of the country, Willis pledged never to vote to send Americans to fight in a European war. Newspaper coverage indicates Willis concentrated on linking Minton with the President and then attacking the New Deal domestic policies. The Republican candidate discounted the foreign situation, accusing Roosevelt of creating a war scare to divert emphasis from domestic affairs. His statements regarding the war in Europe were of a cautious nature designed to alienate no one and avoided a concrete position. Minton defended the President and his own part as a pro-Administration Senator without discussing that role and his record in detail. He talked national defense but did not directly encourage greater participation of the United States in the European war effort. Both men identified themselves closely with their party's presidential candidate.

On election day, Tuesday, November 5, 1940, the voters

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., October 3, 1940, p. 4.

of Indiana rejected their incumbent U.S. Senator and chose instead the Republican candidate they had turned down two years earlier. The vote closely paralleled that cast for President with Wilkie winning over Roosevelt 899,248 to 875,418 and Willis over Minton 884,194 to 868,689.<sup>6</sup> The lack of any significant difference in foreign policy aims enunciated by Wilkie and Roosevelt as well as the unpopularity of the New Deal with Indiana voters indicate Minton's defeat was not due in any large measure to his anti-isolationist stand in Congress. Minton's support of neutrality revision and selective service were not mentioned in any newspaper accounts of his opponent's attacks upon him. The obvious conclusion is that many citizens of Indiana were disillusioned with Franklin Roosevelt and eagerly grasped at the opportunity of electing a native of their own state with substantial benefits to the Republican senatorial candidate and to the disadvantage of the pro-Roosevelt Democratic Senator.

Similarity exists between the plight of Senator Minton and the other Democratic incumbent defeated in 1940. Sixty-two-year-old Eugene Crowe had served in Congress since the election of 1930, representing the predominantly rural southeastern section of the state.<sup>7</sup> The veteran congressman was defeated by a young Republican high school principal,

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., November 7, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Official Congressional Directory, 76th Congress, 1st Session, 1st edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 31.

Earl Wilson, in a District often called the "solid South Democratic, Ninth District," a District which Crowe had carried by spectacular margins of up to 20,000 votes in previous elections.<sup>8</sup>

Candidate Wilson conducted a vigorous campaign and enjoyed the support of a strong old-age pension pressure group. He made frequent appearances throughout the five counties which made up the District, generally speaking out against the weaknesses of Roosevelt's domestic policies. However, in a speech in Eton near the close of the campaign, Wilson declared his main objective, if elected, would be "to keep America out of the War."<sup>9</sup> References to the campaign speeches of Congressman Crowe indicate he emphasized little but his wholehearted support of President Roosevelt and the fact that he had never opposed a New Deal measure.

When the votes were counted Earl Wilson had defeated Crowe by a 2639 vote margin in what was considered an upset by Indiana political writers.<sup>10</sup> Wilson's victory was attributed to a protest by the residents of the five southern Indiana counties against the New Deal since Crowe in his campaign had cited his record of full support of Roosevelt's policies as the major issue and Wilson had accepted that issue and attacked those policies. Consequently, if reports

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<sup>8</sup> (Columbus) Evening Republican, November 7, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Seymour Daily Tribune, October 29, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> (Columbus) Evening Republican, November 7, 1940, p. 1.



at the time by those considered authorities can be accepted, Crowe's defeat was not due to his refusal to espouse isolationism as much as to his complete support of the domestic programs of a President unpopular in his District.

The remaining four Democratic incumbents, none of whom were as closely identified with Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal as Minton and Crowe, were re-elected. Eighth District Congressman William Boehne, member of a prominent Evansville political family, ran for his sixth term in Congress. He had voted against peacetime conscription of men in September in spite of its endorsement by his hometown newspaper. The Republican candidate, Charles Werner, who had run against Boehne in every election since 1934 did not wage a vigorous campaign. Foreign affairs were not mentioned in any accounts of the campaign and cannot be considered to have played a part in Boehne's 17,000 vote re-election margin over Werner.<sup>11</sup>

Another rematch was held in the First Congressional District composed of the highly industrialized and heavily immigrant-populated Lake County. William Schulte, who had represented this area since 1932, was opposed by Elliott Belshaw, a Hammond attorney, whose first attempt to gain public office was his 1938 candidacy against Schulte.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Sharron E. Doerner and Wayne L. Francis, eds. Indiana Votes: Election Returns for United States Representative, Election Returns for State General Assembly 1922-1958 (Bloomington: Bureau of Government Research, Indiana University, 1962), p.47.

<sup>12</sup>Gary Post-Tribune, November 2, 1940, p. 15.

Newspaper articles which appeared during the fall indicate neither candidate conducted a vigorous campaign in Lake County, a traditionally Democratic stronghold. Representative Schulte was re-elected by the greatest percentage margin received by any Indiana Congressman in the election, 60.8% of the total vote cast in the District.<sup>13</sup> Lake County also voted to elect President Roosevelt and Senator Minton in contrast to the preference indicated by the state as a whole.

In the 11th District re-election was less assured for seventy-year-old Democratic Representative William Larrabee who was seeking his sixth term. In the judgment of one newspaper from outside the District, the Republicans offered an

unusually capable congressional nominee in Maurice (Red) Robison, a young Anderson lawyer . . . Robison is without doubt the ablest orator the party has seen since the days of the immortal Beveridge, the campaign is already worrying Dr. Larrabee.<sup>14</sup>

Composed of Hancock and Madison Counties and Perry, Warren, Franklin, Lawrence, and most of Center Township of Marion County, the Eleventh District historically voted Democratic and Dr. Larrabee had been active in Indiana politics long enough to be aware of that pattern.<sup>15</sup>

Campaign appearances by Dr. Larrabee were mentioned rarely by the newspapers while frequent mention was made of

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<sup>13</sup>Doerner and Francis, Indiana Votes, p. 47.

<sup>14</sup>Gary Post-Tribune, October 12, 1940, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup>Anderson Daily Bulletin, November 6, 1940, p. 1.

Robison's appearances. The young Republican attorney's efforts were nearly successful as he lost to Larrabee by the smallest margin in the congressional elections. Dr. Larrabee was returned to Washington with only 51.7% of the votes cast.<sup>16</sup> As he had not been a vocal anti-isolationist supporter of Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policies, the voters' disaffection with Larrabee cannot easily be tied to his support of neutrality revision and peacetime conscription.

The fourth Democrat to be re-elected, Louis Ludlow of Indianapolis, was the most outspoken and independent member of his party in Congress from Indiana. Supporting President Roosevelt's domestic program almost without deviation, Ludlow just as consistently opposed his foreign policy. In Hell or Heaven, Ludlow had stated,

If we could be assured that all of our Presidents through all the years to come would be imbued with the altruism and humanitarianism that motivate President Roosevelt, there would be no need to worry.<sup>17</sup>

However, because of the lack of any such assurance, he had again introduced his proposed constitutional amendment calling for a national referendum on the participation of the United States in a foreign war and continued to vehemently champion the isolationist cause.

On October 31 he made the only speech of his campaign. He declared the Atlantic seaboard was hysterical about the situation in Europe. He stated his willingness to do any-

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<sup>16</sup>Doerner and Francis, Indiana Votes, p. 48.

<sup>17</sup>Ludlow, Hell or Heaven, p. 187.

thing to defend America but pledged to vote against sending American boys to fight foreign wars,<sup>18</sup> The local newspapers made little mention of his Republican opponent, James A. Collins, who did not campaign against Ludlow's forthright isolationism as this was the foreign policy stand of many congressional Republicans. When Ludlow was re-elected, the Indianapolis Star commented that he had led his ticket in every election he had run.

He has never made a partisan speech in Congress or in his district. Ludlow who did practically no campaigning this time, arriving here from Washington less than a week before the election, believes his re-election expresses the people's strong feelings against the war.<sup>19</sup>

In the seven contests in which Republicans were re-elected, the closest race occurred in the Third District composed of Elkhart, LaPorte, and St. Joseph Counties. A Democratic landslide in St. Joseph County nearly elected county attorney George Sands over the first-term incumbent Robert Grant. The Gary Post-Tribune characterized Grant as a young man who was facing an older and more seasoned politician in the person of Sands, a former State Senator.<sup>20</sup> Sands spoke out against "a war of sympathy" and said, "We are not concerned in the quarrels of others."<sup>21</sup> Grant's comments on the subject were much the same as he accused the

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<sup>18</sup>Indianapolis News, November 1, 1940, p. 18.

<sup>19</sup>Indianapolis Star, November 7, 1940, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>Gary Post-Tribune, October 12, 1940, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup>South Bend Tribune, October 31, 1940, p. 7.

President of failing to pursue a policy for peace. Their essential differences were in the area of domestic policy, as a result of Sands' support of the economic programs of the New Deal. Because of the size of the vote cast in his favor in Elkhart and LaPorte Counties, Grant was able to offset the Democratic vote in St. Joseph County and win re-election.

Representatives Springer, Halleck, and Harness were returned to Congress by comfortable vote margins and without extensive campaigning. Newspaper accounts of the campaigns indicate all three men attacked President Roosevelt and warned against a possible dictatorship as a result of a third-term. Springer was a well-known Republican who had run for Governor in 1932 and 1936, then went to Washington following the election of 1938. Halleck had made the nominating speech for Wendell Wilkie at the Republican National Convention at Philadelphia, June 26, but had not mentioned Wilkie's foreign policy views which were very similar to Roosevelt's while Halleck's own views were in direct opposition to the President's.<sup>22</sup> In spite of their differences in this area, Halleck played a prominent national role in the Wilkie campaign. In the accounts appearing in Indiana newspapers, Halleck avoided the foreign policy question and instead emphasized the domestic policy differences between the two presidential contenders as he had in his nominating speech.

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<sup>22</sup>Charles A. Halleck, "A Man Big Enough to be President," Vital Speeches of the Day, Volume VI, No. 9, July 15, 1940, pp. 586-589.

Forest Harness, who was seeking his second term in Congress, was able to spend little more than one week campaigning in his Fifth District because he was a member of the Military Affairs Committee which had a heavy schedule of national defense legislation that fall. Nevertheless, he won by 13,491 votes and lost only Blackford County of the nine comprising his District.<sup>23</sup>

Congressmen Johnson and Landis had more closely contested and intensively waged campaigns. Noble Johnson, who had represented the Sixth District during the late 1920's, sat out four Congresses and was returned by the voters in 1938, was opposed by Lenhardt Bauer, a young Democratic attorney and former member of the Indiana House of Representatives from Terre Haute. Bauer made frequent appearances throughout the District and summarized the campaign with the question,

Are we to preserve the orderly processes of human relief that have become a part of this government, or are we to turn in despair and confusion to the misfit relations that we attempted before President Roosevelt?<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps then, the voters of the ten central Indiana counties of the District wished to register their displeasure with the policies of Roosevelt as they returned Johnson to Congress. Even traditionally liberal Vigo County went for Johnson who won with the largest majority the District had given any cand-

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<sup>23</sup>Doerner and Francis, Indiana Votes, p. 47.

<sup>24</sup>Terre Haute Tribune, October 16, 1940, p. 3.

idate in recent years,<sup>25</sup>

The Franklin Evening Star reported, "old age pensions are definitely the number one issue in the Seventh District Congressional contest" between the incumbent Gerald Landis and his opponent Charles Bedwell.<sup>26</sup> An attorney, Bedwell was widely known throughout the District as a result of a long political career which included a term as Speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives. However, Landis, supported by the Townsend Old Age Pension Clubs, was able to gain re-election in this usually Democratic southern Indiana District in spite of considerable newspaper editorial sentiment favoring Bedwell.

The only candidate who chose to make foreign policy his major campaign issue was George Gillie of Fort Wayne and the traditionally Republican Second District. Gillie campaigned against his Democratic opponent Frank Corbett, a Fort Wayne attorney, with the pledge never to send American soldiers to fight and die on European battlefields. Repeatedly stating that the primary issue facing the voters was the choice between war and peace, Gillie won his second term in Congress by a greater vote than that cast in his District for Wendell Wilkie.<sup>27</sup> Gillie was a popular candidate in a District normally dominated by his party.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., November 7, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Franklin Evening Star, October 19, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> (Fort Wayne) News-Sentinel, November 6, 1940, p. 1.

Thus, of the thirteen men seeking re-election only two were rejected by the voters. Both men, Sherman Minton and Eugene Crowe, emphasized during the campaign their allegiance to President Roosevelt and their records of total support of his programs, foreign as well as domestic. Given the considerable disillusionment with the New Deal which prevailed in Indiana by 1940, it is not surprising that two men so closely identified with it were defeated. Also to be considered are the two Republican opponents. Raymond Willis had run two years earlier and was already known to the electorate. Earl Wilson was endorsed by a strong pressure group in his District. All in all it would seem Minton and Crowe were defeated not because they had voted in favor of neutrality revision which would allow the United States to aid Great Britain or for peacetime conscription. Rather their support of Franklin D. Roosevelt's domestic policies with which the people of Indiana were growing disenchanted would appear the more immediate cause of the defeat of Minton and Crowe.

Of the eleven incumbent members of the House of Representatives re-elected, the war issue dominated the campaign of only the Democratic Ludlow and the Republican Gillie. The absence of any campaign involving men who held opposing views on the subject and who made foreign policy the principal issue makes it difficult to determine the nature and strength of the voters' opinions regarding international affairs. However, precisely because there was no campaign in which that



issue was clearly presented to the voters in alternative ways, it would be reasonable to conclude that the people of Indiana were primarily concerned with domestic matters. Newspaper articles tend to corroborate this conclusion. The election, then did not serve as a referendum on the foreign policy attitudes of the candidates for re-election. In a Republican year for Indiana politics, two Democratic incumbents were defeated and seven Republicans were re-elected.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### LEND-LEASE, FURTHER NEUTRALITY REVISION, EXTENSION OF SELECTIVE SERVICE, AND WAR 77TH CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION

By late 1940 the plight of Great Britain had become quite perilous. Following the fall of France, Hitler concentrated on defeating the British in order to have the western front under control so that he could turn to the east and devote full attention to the Russians. It was almost certain that Britain could never defeat Germany, and it was doubtful whether the British could withstand a German attack for any length of time without some kind of assistance. The destroyers for bases deal was finally worked out to fill Britain's desperate need for ships. However, as the year ended it was apparent that Great Britain had a critical need for massively increased aid from the United States, but at the same time was in the midst of a steadily worsening financial crisis which made the situation even more severe.

At a press conference on December 17, 1940, the President first mentioned that one of many possible methods of aiding the British would be to lease needed items, basing such action on the grounds that defending Great Britain was

in the best interests of the national security of the United States and the American people.<sup>1</sup> Public opinion polls taken at this same time indicate considerable popular support had developed for aid to Britain even at the risk of war, and about 70% favored revising the Neutrality Act in order to aid the British more effectively.<sup>2</sup>

In his annual message to Congress at the beginning of the First Session of the 77th Congress, the President emphasized that the fate of the United States was linked to the outcome of the European war, and he asked for authority and funds to manufacture war equipment of all kinds for opponents of the aggressor nations to be paid for at the end of the war in goods and services. The drafting of the bill which was to become the vehicle to allow Roosevelt to achieve his stated goal began on January 2, 1941, and was done by the legal staff of the Treasury Department under the guidance of Secretary Henry Morgenthau.<sup>3</sup> It was not a hastily contrived bill as it had resulted from months of careful thought of several within the Administration. The bill was introduced by the majority leaders in both houses January 10, 1941, and was assigned the number H.R. 1776 in the House.<sup>4</sup>

As originally proposed on the floor of Congress, the

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<sup>1</sup>Warren A. Kimball, The Most Unsordid Act: Lend-Lease 1939-1941 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>4</sup>DeConde, American Foreign Policy, p. 593.

principal features of the Lend-Lease Bill were the authorization for the President to manufacture or otherwise procure defense articles for any country whose defense he deemed vital to the defense of the United States and the permission for him to sell, transfer, exchange, lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of any defense article to such a government. Also permitted was the passing on of information needed for the use of any goods transferred leaving the terms of such transfers of goods and information completely to the discretion of the President. Another section of the bill forbade recipients of Lend-Lease to transfer such goods or information to another country without the President's permission.

The opposition to the bill from the isolationist minority centered around the major theme that the extensive grant of powers to the President made him a virtual dictator who could take America into the war. The traditional elements of isolationist thinking were present in the remarks made by members of the Indiana delegation regarding H.R. 1776. Early in the debate Congressman Ludlow delivered an impassioned speech against Lend-Lease. He charged that the

bill involves changes of the most fundamental, vital, and epochal character in American policy which in the public interest should be studied and debated before embarking on a policy which has in it the possibility of altering or even abolishing our democratic form of government.<sup>5</sup>

Representative Gillie pointed out that, in his opinion,

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<sup>5</sup> Congressional Record, 77th Congress, 1st Session (January 30, 1941), 422.

the danger in the bill lay in its "unwarranted delegation of vast war-making powers" to the Executive. According to its proponents the principal purpose of the bill was to provide aid to Great Britain which Gillie doubted could be accomplished without the weakening of the defenses of the United States. He voiced his conviction that passage of the bill would be another step in the "steady progress toward our active participation in this war."<sup>6</sup>

Congressman Johnson called H.R. 1776 "one of the most important issues ever before Congress," and stated that he had received much correspondence from his constituents who were overwhelmingly opposed to passage of the bill. He reiterated the objection expressed by the others that the bill gave the President the power to take the United States into war on the side of any country he chose and to run the entire war effort without consulting Congress.<sup>7</sup>

The inevitability of being drawn into the war if Lend-Lease passed was also the theme of Indiana Republican Gerald Landis. He further commented that the cost of a national defense program as well as an aid program for England would impose a heavy burden on the individual American citizen. Landis concluded his remarks with a statement containing the traditional isolationist dogma;

I believe the Administration has departed from the

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid. (February 5, 1941), 655.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 625.

established foreign policy made by the founders of our Nation and that it would be a grave mistake to involve us in European wars. We can preserve American democracy by entirely keeping out of the European war.

Representative Springer also questioned the financial aspects of the proposed bill and stated that the people should be made aware of what the costs would be. He deplored the great power the bill vested in the President and for these reasons said he could not lend his support to the bill.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps the most scathing comment came from Earl Wilson who stated that he firmly believed the Lend-Lease bill had as its hidden purpose the direct involvement of the United States in a foreign war.<sup>10</sup>

The only member from Indiana to speak out favorably about the bill in the House was Dr. William Larrabee, the veteran Democratic Representative from New Palestine. He saw the bill as the best means of protecting the interests of the United States by providing articles of defense to other nations already engaged in the hostilities. Rather than an abdication of power to the President, Larrabee viewed the bill as a means for Congress to assume its powers in an emergency by eliminating the necessity for future delays by placing authorization and responsibility of carrying out the desires of the Congress in the hands of the Chief Executive.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid. (February 4, 1941), 563.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. (February 5, 1941), 671.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 655.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. (February 18, 1941), App. 723.

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Lend-Lease faced several attempts at modification by the few but battling isolationists still in the House. The bill was reported out of the Foreign Affairs Committee on January 30 with only Administration-approved amendments.<sup>12</sup> Of the plethora of restrictive amendments proposed during floor debate on the bill the most sweeping was that of Hamilton Fish of New York. He proposed to strike out the heart of the bill and recommit it to the Foreign Affairs Committee with instructions to insert instead a provision authorizing the President to grant credits to Great Britain in an amount not to exceed two billion dollars to be used for purchase in the United States of defense articles. The amendment was defeated by a vote of 263 to 160 although only three Democratic members of the Indiana delegation opposed it.<sup>13</sup> Representatives Boehne, Larrabee, and Schulte voted against the Fish Amendment, while the entire Republican delegation, joined by the indefatigable isolationist Ludlow, voted for the proposal. This same pattern was repeated when the vote on final passage of the bill was taken. Again only the Democrats Boehne, Schulte, and Larrabee, voted with the majority to pass the bill 260 to 165 on February 8, 1941.<sup>14</sup> Ludlow was one of only twenty-five Democrats who defected from the party position to vote against Lend-Lease.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Kimball, Most Unsordid Act, p. 203.

<sup>13</sup>Congressional Record (February 8, 1941), 814.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 815.

<sup>15</sup>Kimball, Most Unsordid Act, p. 206.

Senate hearings began before H.R. 1776 was passed by the House, but the Foreign Relations Committee dropped its own version and worked with the House version after passage of the House bill. Although attempts were made to cripple the bill, it was reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee intact on February 13 and a long floor debate ensued.<sup>16</sup> On the Senate side of Capitol Hill, Lend-Lease did not receive from the Indiana delegation even such scant vocal support as it had enjoyed in the House from Dr. Larrabee. The newly-elected junior Senator Willis spoke out at length against the bill. Although he favored aid to Great Britain, Willis thought such an objective could better be accomplished by a measure allowing a grant of direct loans. He opposed using a means to reach the end of aid to Britain if use of that means resulted in the involvement of the United States in war. Upholding the traditional isolationist doctrine, Willis asked,

Have we grown so strong, so eager for a part in world affairs, so world-conscious that we cannot resist the wars that are not ours or the intrusions of our philosophy on the people of Europe who do not understand and cannot apply it?

He called the war a very logical one entirely explainable by conditions and policies of the Eastern Hemisphere, long-expected and surprising only in that its date or the strength of Germany or the direction of its aggression had been somewhat miscalculated. Probably because he realized the term

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>17</sup>Congressional Record (March 7, 1941), 1963.



isolationist had become one of opprobrium, Willis explained that opposed to the doctrine of the internationalists is the doctrine

not of isolation, but of loyalty to the nation, of realism that takes into account human nature and the divergent construction of people and philosophies that places value on loyalty to one home, one vow, and one nation.<sup>18</sup>

Several ill-fated attempts were made to amend Lend-Lease in the Senate so as to limit the authority and discretion of the President. The only significant amendment passed was a modified version of a proposal originally offered by Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana. As introduced on February 18, the Ellender Amendment inserted a clause stating that nothing in the act should be construed to give the President any additional powers to employ United States military forces outside the Western Hemisphere. However, it was a revision of this which was finally included. The modification, which Willis supported, stated that nothing in the act changed existing law regarding the use of American military forces.<sup>19</sup> When the final vote of 60 to 31 came in the Senate on March 8, all ninety-five Senators either voted or announced what their vote would have been.<sup>20</sup> The Indiana delegation divided along party lines. Republican Senator Willis voted nay and Democratic Senator Van Nuys announced as a yea vote had he been present. Senator Willis

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 1964-1965.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 1984.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. (March 8, 1941), 2097.

was a part of the group of staunch isolationists including Senators Arthur Vandenberg, Burton Wheeler, Gerald Nye, Robert Taft, and Bennett Clark who opposed the measure.

After passing the bill, the Senate insisted upon its amendments and appointed conferees to work with those from the House to reach a compromise. However, the House leadership proposed a resolution to agree to the Senate amendments. Following a two-hour debate on the resolution, the House accepted the bill as amended by the Senate by an overwhelming margin of 317 to 71.<sup>21</sup> Only three Representatives from Indiana, Democrats Boehne, Larrabee, and Schulte, were with the majority. The other nine congressmen were a part of the small group of die-hard non-interventionists who sought to force the bill into conference committee so that another vote could be taken on the bill in its entirety. That same day President Roosevelt signed the bill into law. He was authorized by the act to sell, lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of under such terms as he thought proper, arms, munitions, food and other defense articles to any country whose defense he deemed vital to the defense of the United States. The act forbade the Navy to convoy vessels carrying Lend-Lease equipment.

During the spring and summer of 1941 the tempo of the war increased greatly. Hitler extended the combat area of his submarines and surface raiders and tried to stop the flow of American supplies to Great Britain by sending

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid. (March 11, 1941), 2178.

his air force and u-boats into the battle of the Atlantic. In response, Roosevelt set up a system of patrol ships to serve, in fact, as escorts for ships carrying Lend-Lease equipment. Meanwhile, American policy toward Japan was becoming more restrictive, mainly by the application of economic sanctions.

The question of the future of the American army was becoming one of great importance and urgency by this time. In June of 1941 the Selective Service Act permitting the Army to conscript up to 900,000 men for the period of one year was nearly nine months old, and a modern force had not yet been built up.<sup>22</sup> It was evident that if in the autumn of that year the men conscripted were to be discharged, the army would disintegrate and an entirely new start would have to be made. In a period of mounting crisis, the country would have no army in the modern sense. On June 21, 1941, President Roosevelt gave the War Department permission to propose to Congress that the period of service be extended and that the provision of the current law forbidding the use of conscripted men outside the Western Hemisphere be removed.<sup>23</sup> This was in accordance with the Selective Service Act which had provided for extension of the service period whenever Congress might declare the national interest to be imperilled.

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<sup>22</sup>William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Undeclared War, 1940-1941 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 570.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 571.

The mere suggestion of such action evoked opposition in the Congress. Isolationist members of both houses protested, especially against lifting the restriction on the use of conscripted troops beyond the hemispheric limits. Two primary arguments were made against the proposed revision and extension of the act. Indiana's Representative Landis enunciated one of the principal objections when he declared,

It is important to morale at home and in camp that the Government should keep faith with the men whom it has conscripted. Congress made a contract with the selectees that they stay in service for only one year. Let us keep that contract and let us keep our promises to the American people.<sup>24</sup>

Representative Halleck raised the second objection and fear of those opposed to the proposal.

One thing that disturbs me is that the request for the draft extension was first coupled with a demand that the limitation against taking our men out of the Western Hemisphere be removed. That demand, at least for the moment, has been abandoned, but does the fact that it was made indicate the intentions of those who are seeking this extension? In other words, are they afraid of an attack here at home or in this hemisphere, or are they wanting this extension to get ready as quickly as possible to send another American Expeditionary Force to Europe?<sup>25</sup>

The President dropped the proposal to lift the restriction on the use of conscripted men overseas in return for a promise from Administration leaders in Congress to work out an acceptable solution to the problem of extending the term of service. Nevertheless, the fear had been aroused

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<sup>24</sup>Congressional Record (July 24, 1941), App. 3578.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid. (August 8, 1941), 6913.

among many that there was an intention to find an entering wedge for use of American troops overseas.

The Military Affairs Committee in the Senate finally accepted a declaration that the national security was imperilled and recommended the term of service be extended and the limit on the number of selectees be lifted. On August 7, 1941, the Senate approved a six-month extension of the term of service and provided for a pay raise as well as for the release so far as possible for men of age twenty-eight. The vote was 45 to 30 with Senator Van Nuys voting with the majority this time, reversing his position from the initial enactment of peacetime conscription.<sup>26</sup> A statement by Senator Willis was read explaining that he was unable to be present for the vote because he had suffered a broken arm earlier that day. However, had he been present he announced he would have voted against the measure. He objected because he considered the extension of service a breach of faith with the men conscripted. Also, Senator Willis stated he had not been convinced the national safety was indeed imperilled.<sup>27</sup>

In the House opposition to the bill was firm and widespread. When the vote was taken on August 12, the bill was passed by a majority of one, 203 to 202. Of the Indiana delegation, only Democrat William Larrabee supported the

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid, (August 7, 1941), 6881.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 6880.

measure as he had supported establishment of conscription one year earlier.<sup>28</sup> The other members of the delegation had opposed the original bill and reaffirmed their opposition. Thus, less than four months before Pearl Harbor, only two of the fourteen member Indiana contingent admitted the need for the United States to have a strong military force.

The situation in the North Atlantic worsened until Roosevelt finally gave the Navy orders to shoot on sight all German and Italian ships of war in the American patrol zone. This logically led to his next step which was to ask for revision of the Neutrality Act. Since the United States was, in reality, no longer neutral and the 1939 act prevented unrestricted aid to Great Britain, the President considered repeal or revision urgent. On October 9, Roosevelt asked Congress for revision to permit the arming of merchant ships and indirectly to abolish the war zones so that American ships could go into belligerent ports.

Even before the President appealed to Congress, Democratic Representative Larrabee told the Congress the time had come to consider either drastic revision or outright repeal of the Neutrality Act. "The Act has been rendered inoperative to a large extent by enactment of the Lend-Lease Act and the remaining provisions should be repealed."<sup>29</sup> Dr. Larrabee was the only member of the Indiana delegation

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid. (August 12, 1941), 7074,

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. (October 7, 1941), App. 4536.

to speak out in favor of further revision of the existing neutrality legislation. On October 16, Representative Gillie presented a petition protesting repeal of the Neutrality Act bearing signatures of several hundred Fort Wayne area residents. He expressed his accord with the views of the petitioners. In Gillie's opinion, participation of the United States as an active belligerent in the European war would inevitably follow repeal of the Neutrality Act. While Dr. Larrabee viewed the arming of American merchant ships as a measure to be taken for their own protection, Gillie looked at another aspect of the step. He asked,

Who is to doubt that if we arm our merchant ships, load them with munitions and send them into the Atlantic war zones, we will not be in the war in another year?<sup>30</sup>

The Fort Wayne Republican accused the Administration of seeking the destruction of the last safeguard for peace.

Representative Ludlow exhibited his customary vehemence against such measures in a speech made the day before the House voted on the resolution to repeal section six of the Neutrality Act of 1939 which would permit the arming of U.S. merchant ships. Ludlow was prescient in warning that the next request would be to allow armed ships to travel into war zones. Repeal of these neutrality measures, Ludlow predicted, would be equal to a declaration of war.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., (October 16, 1941), 8000.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 7986-7987.

On the following day, October 17, 1941, the House of Representatives voted 259 to 139 to pass House Resolution 237 which repealed section six of the 1939 act. Democrats Boehne, Larrabee, and Schulte were the only members from Indiana to vote with the majority in favor of arming United States merchant ships.<sup>32</sup>

When the bill reached the Senate, the Foreign Relation Committee recommended the repeal of sections two and three to permit armed U.S. ships to go into belligerent ports and to remove the provisions requiring the President to define the combat zones around warring nations into which ships could not travel. During final debate on the bill in the Senate, Indiana's Republican Senator Willis spoke out against it. Willis reiterated the opinion expressed by Indiana's members of the House that the arming of merchant ships would be a certain step into the war. Pursuit of a course of action which admittedly meant war assumed a cause existed for which to fight and Senator Willis took exception to that assumption "I am against the modification of the neutrality law because if we have any grievance with the Axis powers, we have not exhausted the means for peaceful settlement."<sup>33</sup>

Senator Van Nuys, who had voted against earlier efforts at neutrality revision, did not comment. However, examination of the roll call votes indicates his opposition to

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid. (October 17, 1941), 8041.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. (November 7, 1941), 8601.



repeal of further sections of the Act. An amendment was proposed to retain section three of the Act pertaining to the definition of combat zones. Both Indiana Senators voted to retain this section, but the amendment was defeated 50 to 38. When the vote on the committee amendment was taken the vote was identical except the yeas and nays were reversed so that the amendment was accepted. The bill then passed the Senate with sections two and three repealed as well as section six as provided for by the House. Neither Indiana Senator voted in favor of the bill.<sup>34</sup>

The bill was sent back to the House for concurrence with the Senate amendments. As could be expected, further weakening of the Neutrality Act did not gain support for the bill from the Indiana delegation in the House. Representative Landis credited the existing provisions of the Act with success in keeping the nation out of war and saw repeal as the final step toward active belligerency. Of even more importance, as he viewed the situation, it was not a war to defend his native land but a war in Europe, Asia, and Africa which would weaken the defensive abilities of the U.S. "I believe our participation in this war is a fatal mistake."<sup>35</sup> The exhortations of Congressman Landis were not sufficiently persuasive to his comrades as the House voted the next day, November 13, 1941, to concur in the Senate amendments to House Resolution 237. Again only the

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 8675-8680.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid. (November 12, 1941), 8802.

Democrats Boehne, Larrabee, and Schulte voted with the majority. The other Democrat, Ludlow, maintained his record of complete opposition to the foreign policy of his party's President.<sup>36</sup>

Roosevelt signed the resolution into law and from that time armed American merchant ships carrying any kind of cargo were free to sail for belligerent ports. With an undeclared naval war with Germany already underway, the possibility of future conflicts between the two countries was increased by permitting armed American vessels to sail into combat zones. The central objection of the isolationists that such activity would inevitably draw the United States into full-scale war was not given time to be proven right or wrong. Only eight days after the President signed the new law, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor occurred.<sup>37</sup>

President Roosevelt addressed a joint meeting of the Congress on December 8 and asked for a declaration of war against Japan. All eighty-two Senators present voted in favor of the Declaration. In the House of Representatives, only Jeanette Rankin of Montana cast a dissenting vote.<sup>38</sup> The isolationist-dominated Indiana delegation voted for a declaration of war with the exception of Dr. William Larrabee who was recorded as not voting. Three days later Roosevelt

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., (November 13, 1941), 8891.

<sup>37</sup>Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction (New York: The Free Press, 1957), p. 288.

<sup>38</sup>Congressional Record (December 8, 1941), 9506, 9536.

asked Congress to recognize the existence of a state of war between the United States and Germany and the United States and Italy following Germany's declaration of war against the United States. Once again all present Senators voted in favor of the resolution and only Miss Rankin in the House voted against the measure.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, the entry of the United States into another world war came in such a manner as to unite the isolationists in Congress behind a President whose foreign policy they had attacked only a few weeks earlier.

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid. (December 11, 1941), 9652-53, 9665-67.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

During the years between 1939 and 1941 many Americans, including President Roosevelt, became convinced that the conflict in Europe revolved around significant moral issues and that the United States had an interest in its outcome. Consequently, there were several measures brought before the Congress aimed at modifying U.S. foreign policy in order to provide greater assistance to Great Britain and the other victims of aggression. Also, the first peacetime conscription of men for military service was proposed to assure the United States an adequate armed force. At the same time, a resolute minority persisted in its isolationist convictions that America could remain aloof from the events in the Eastern Hemisphere. The controversy between those of opposing views was most vividly acted out on the floor of Congress where agreement did not occur until after Pearl Harbor.

The continuing effort to achieve revision of neutrality legislation, the passage and extension of peacetime conscription, and Lend-Lease are the most pertinent foreign policy issues of the years before the war. An examination of roll call votes taken on these issues reveals that the Middle Western section of the United States was somewhat out of line

with the rest of the country.<sup>1</sup> Sentiment against the major foreign policy questions was greater in that section than elsewhere. Though the factor of political party affiliation must be considered, sectional characteristics which transcended party lines appeared. One study has carefully separated sectionalism from party loyalty by first establishing a standard of nation-wide party support of particular issues and then developing a profile of deviation from the party mean to make sectional differences outstanding.<sup>2</sup>

A section by section breakdown reveals that the New England and North Atlantic states were the most internationalist during the years before the war. Their congressmen from both parties and in both houses voted most consistently for those measures which increased the United States' commitment to international participation. The Representatives and Senators from the South also greatly supported the President's foreign policy. However, because this was the most solidly Democratic bloc in Congress, it becomes more difficult to make a distinction between regional sentiment and party loyalty in the case of this section.

For the Border states, both Democrats and Republicans supported the major foreign policy programs more than did

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<sup>1</sup>William G. Carleton, "Isolationism and the Middle West," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXIII, (December, 1946), 385.

<sup>2</sup>George L. Grassmuck, Sectional Biases in Congress on Foreign Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1951), pp. 141-174.

their party contingents as a whole. The Pacific Coast House delegations favored internationalism more frequently than did the senatorial contingent from the area. The inclusion of the vocal isolationist Senator Hiram Johnson of California contributes to the difference between House and Senate attitudes for the Coast area.

Both the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains area delegations exhibited great reluctance to increase the participation of the United States in foreign affairs. However, the Lake States of Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio most consistently opposed such foreign policy measures. Legislators of both parties from this area supported the foreign affairs legislation of the President less than did the nation as a whole. The isolationist minority bloc in Congress was largely composed of the delegations from Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio even though some of the more vocal anti-interventionists were from outside the region. The Lake States provided the bulk of the votes against the major foreign policy measures to come before Congress, and the Indiana delegation in particular voted heavily against greater international participation of the United States.

The preceding detailed examination of the comments and recorded votes of the Representatives and Senators from Indiana regarding these issues reveals their minority position in the Congress. Only three Representatives, Boehne, Larrabee, and Schulte, all Democrats, consistently voted in favor of the President's foreign policy proposals. Congressman Crowe sup-

ported the Selective Service System but both Boehne and Schulte defected on that issue. Democratic Congressman Ludlow and Senator Van Nuys both opposed programs supported by their party's President. Ludlow's opposition was passionate and unrelenting. Thus, the attitudes of the Indiana delegation were more than a Republican reaction to Democratic foreign policy. Even the Republicans cannot easily be accused of mere partisanship as their comments were too frequent and too zealous to be discounted as tenacity to the party line. Nor can pressure from their constituents be given as the simple explanation for the voting records of the Indiana delegation. Certainly there was much anti-interventionist sentiment in Indiana and this was most likely a significant factor in shaping the attitudes of the elected representatives of the people. However, the absence of foreign policy as a dominant issue during the election campaigns waged in 1940 by the Representatives and Senator Minton indicates that the men in Congress held very strong convictions of their own. While the candidates assailed Roosevelt's foreign policy, newspaper accounts indicate they felt much more compelled to attack his domestic programs as a campaign issue.

Less than a month before the Pearl Harbor attack only three of the twelve members of the Indiana delegation were willing to admit that the national interests of the United States were linked to the success of Great Britain. The other nine members refused to vote in favor of repeal of three sections of the Neutrality Act which the President and

a majority in the Congress deemed an urgent demand.

Only after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor did a majority of the congressional delegation from Indiana admit that the United States was not unassailable and that a unilateral foreign policy was not possible. During the previous three years their comments during floor debate and their voting records on the pertinent issues were illustrative of the isolationist viewpoint. Therefore, the questions posed regarding the attitudes of the delegation are answered in the affirmative by this study. The majority of the Representatives and Senators representing Indiana in the United States Congress during the years immediately prior to the Second World War favored the isolationist approach to foreign policy. Further, their attitudes do support the proposition that isolationism was a sectional characteristic of the Middle Western states during those years, a characteristic which caused that region's elected representatives to be clearly out of line with a majority of those from the rest of the United States.



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