

Activity 1: Competing Objectives

Student Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read the following document laying out Japan’s goals for East Asia. As you read, answer the questions that follow, citing specific evidence from the document:

Question	Answer
According to this document, which foreign country poses the greatest threat to Japan’s national interests, and why?	
What do the Japanese hope to accomplish in China? How do they plan to go about doing so?	
How, according to the document, is the United States likely to react to Japanese efforts in China? What should Japan do to allay U.S. concerns?	
What measures does this document recommend for Japan’s dealings with Great Britain and Germany?	
Why is the “Southern Region” so important for Japan?	

Fundamental Principles of National Policy, August 15, 1936:
<http://ibiblio.org/pha/monos/144/144app01.html>

This document was prepared by the Japanese Cabinet, then under the leadership of Prime Minister Koki Hirota, and submitted to the Emperor for his approval in August 1936. It carefully lays out Japan's goals for East Asia, and is a critical source for understanding Japanese foreign policy in the years leading up to Pearl Harbor.

I. Overall Policy

Our fundamental foreign policy aims at the establishment of the Empire as the stabilizing power in East Asia to secure lasting peace in this part of the world and to assure the existence and advancement of the Empire. To this end, the growth of Manchukuo will be promoted, our special and inseparable relations with that country will be further strengthened, our relations with the Soviet Union and China will be independently adjusted from a global standpoint, and our advancement to the South Seas area will be made peacefully. In recent years, the Soviet Union has strengthened sharply its national defense and international position. It has reinforced its forces in the Far East to an unwarranted degree, exerting increasing military and revolutionary pressure against this region. Moreover, the Soviet Union is planning the communization of all areas of this region, seeking to force the Empire into still more disadvantageous positions. This is a direct menace to the national security of the Empire and a serious obstacle to the execution of current East Asian policy. Therefore, emphasis will be laid for the present on the frustration of Soviet aggressive designs in the Far East. In particular, we should seek through diplomatic means to eliminate the menace of Soviet armament and halt its communization attempt, while working for the replenishment of national defense armament. Accordingly, it is necessary that the Empire, considering the overall current international situation, adjust her relations with major powers, and bring her diplomatic machinery into operation, thereby making the situation more favorable to us.

II. Outline of the Program

1. In view of the current domestic and international situation, extreme caution will be exercised to avoid causing trouble with the Soviet Union, and efforts will be exerted to settle problems entirely by peaceful means....

c. In the event the Soviet Union expresses a desire to conclude a non-aggression pact, the Empire will clearly signify its intention of agreeing, on the condition that both countries set the problems, including the problem of adjusting their military forces in the Far East, to bring about a balance of power.

d. Appropriate measures will be taken to prevent the Soviet Union from committing ideological infiltration into Japan, Manchukuo and China.

2. A dignified attitude and just measures will be adopted in dealing with Chinese central and local governments. Coupled with our economic measures for the Chinese masses, steps will be taken to guarantee correction of their attitude toward Japan. Thus, friendly cooperation between the two countries, based on the "live-and-let-live" principle, will surely materialize. In the North China area, measures will be taken to realize economic and cultural cooperation with Japan and Manchukuo, and efforts will be made to turn North China into a special area where Japan, Manchukuo and China will join in mutual defense against communistic inroads from the Soviet Union....

The above are the basic principles of our China policy, upon which all our practical measures will be based. In view of our present relationship with the Soviet Union, priority will be given in forming our China policy to making North China a special anti-Communist, pro-Japanese and pro-Manchukuo area, obtaining resources for our national defense program, and the expansion of communication facilities....

3. The improvement of friendly relations between our country and the United States might greatly contribute to offsetting British and Soviet influences. However, in view of the fact that the United States is engaged in rearming and views the development of our China policy with great concern in the light of her traditional Far Eastern policy, there is the danger that she may assist China, making that country dependent on the West. Moreover, it is feared that this would eventually create a situation exceedingly unfavorable to the execution of our policy against the Soviet Union. Therefore, we must seek the United States' understanding of our just attitude through respect for her commercial interests in China. At the same time, we should endeavor to improve friendly relations based on economic interdependence, thereby causing the United States to refrain from interfering with our Far Eastern policy.

4. Since the development of the political situation in Europe has an important bearing on East Asia, efforts must be exerted to turn it to our advantage, particularly to hold the Soviet Union in check.

a. Great Britain and Japan have many areas of conflicting interests. In view of the fact that Great Britain, among the western powers, has the greatest stake in the Far East and since the attitude of other European countries depends largely upon that of Great Britain, it is especially important for us to take the initiative at this time to improve relations with Great Britain. In this way Great Britain may side with us in our relations with the Soviet Union and act as a counterbalance against the Soviets, thereby lessening the obstacles lying in the way of our overseas expansion. Since the adjustment of Anglo-Japanese relations in China will have far-reaching results, we must endeavor to take appropriate measures for breaking the deadlock over China and for making an over-all adjustment in Anglo-Japanese relations. This is to be accomplished through efforts to get Great Britain to recognize and respect Japan's special and vital interest, especially in China, and also through respecting Great Britain's rights and interests there. We must, nevertheless, guard against Great Britain, lest she adopt a policy of applying pressure against Japan in concert with other powers, particularly the United States, the Soviet Union and China.

b. Germany, in her relations with the Soviet Union, is in much the same position as Japan. In view of the special relationship between France and the Soviet Union, it is deemed advantageous for Germany to act in concert with Japan in matters of national defense and anti-Communist policy. Therefore, our friendly relations with Germany are to be improved and measures are to be taken to realize Japanese-German collaboration as occasion demands. Moreover, this relationship is to be expanded to include such countries as Poland, with a view to checking the Soviet Union. In addition, efforts are to be made to enlighten Moslem nations and European and Asian countries neighboring the Soviet Union, with attention paid to the improvement of friendly relations with those nations.

5. Occupying an important position in our global trade relations and being an area indispensable for the industrial and national defense of the Empire, as well as a natural field for our racial development, the Southern Region [basically all of Southeast Asia, plus the Philippines and the Netherlands East Indies] must be studied as an area for our expansion. But our advance in that area must be conducted peacefully and gradually, with utmost efforts exerted to prevent provocation of other countries and to allay their misgivings against the Empire.

As for the Philippines, we will look forward to her complete independence and, if called upon, be ready to guarantee her neutrality.

For our expansion into the Netherlands East Indies, it is extremely important that we allay the misgivings of the people toward us and convert them into a pro-Japanese nation. Appropriate measures, therefore, will be taken for this purpose. If need be a non-aggression pact with Holland will be concluded....

6. Overseas trade is not only indispensable for the maintenance and betterment of the economic life of our nation but also contributes to the improvement of our finances and the state of our international obligations. It is particularly important, under the current domestic and international situation, that foreign trade be expanded to the utmost. Thus, we must develop our economic power...acquiring important natural resources through proper adjustment of our interests to those of other powers.

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Directions: Read the following document, imagining that you are a Japanese diplomat. As you read, consider how Hull's list of principles might conflict with your country's ambitions in East Asia. When you are finished, write a brief (five-paragraph) response (again, as a Japanese diplomat) to the statement.

Statement by Secretary of State Cordell Hull, July 16, 1937: <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/paw/086.html>

After a long career as a U.S. Congressman from Tennessee, Cordell Hull (1871-1955) was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1930. However, halfway through his Senate term, Franklin Roosevelt in 1933 appointed him Secretary of State, a position he would hold until poor health led him to resign in 1944 (making him the longest-serving Secretary of State in U.S. history). In this role he was a persistent advocate of international trade, which he saw as a powerful force for peace. Hull issued the following statement in response to renewed fighting between Japanese and Chinese troops outside Peking in July 1937.

Unquestionably there are in a number of regions tensions and strains which on their face involve only countries that are near neighbors but which in ultimate analysis are of inevitable concern to the whole world. Any situation in which armed hostilities are in progress or are threatened is a situation wherein rights and interests of all nations either are or may be seriously affected. There can be no serious hostilities anywhere in the world which will not one way or another affect interests or rights or obligations of this country. I therefore feel warranted in making—in fact, I feel it a duty to make—a statement of this Government's position in regard to international problems and situations with respect to which this country feels deep concern.

This country constantly and consistently advocates maintenance of peace. We advocate national and international self-restraint. We advocate abstinence by all nations from use of force in pursuit of policy and from interference in the internal affairs of other nations. We advocate adjustment of problems in international relations by processes of peaceful negotiation and agreement. We advocate faithful observance of international agreements. Upholding the principle of the sanctity of treaties, we believe in modification of provisions of treaties when need therefore arises, by orderly processes carried out in a spirit of mutual helpfulness and accommodation. We believe in respect by all nations for the rights of others and performance by all nations of established obligations. We stand for revitalizing and strengthening of international law. We advocate steps toward promotion of economic security and stability the world over. We advocate...removing of excessive barriers in international trade. We seek effective equality of commercial opportunity and we urge upon all nations application of the principle of equality of treatment. We believe in limitation and reduction of armament. Realizing the necessity for maintaining armed forces adequate for national security, we are prepared to reduce or to increase our own armed forces in proportion to reductions or increases made by other countries. We avoid entering into alliances or entangling commitments but we believe in cooperative effort by peaceful and practicable means in support of the principles hereinbefore stated.

Activity 2: Competing Policies

Student Name _____ Date _____

Directions: After using the interactive timeline “America on the Sidelines: The United States and World Affairs, 1931-1941” [<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/neutrality/>] to study the major events in Asia from 1931 to 1939, read the following documents. After you are finished, imagine that you are a member of the U.S. Congress. Based on the documents, as well as the information you have gleaned from the interactive, write a 4-5 paragraph letter to President Roosevelt in response to his policy toward East Asia.

Address delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in Chicago, October 5, 1937:
<http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/paw/093.html>

[...] The peace, the freedom, and the security of 90 percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining 10 percent, who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. Surely the 90 percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, can and must find some way to make their will prevail.

The situation is definitely of universal concern. The questions involved relate not merely to violations of specific provisions of particular treaties; they are questions of war and of peace, of international law, and especially of principles of humanity. It is true that they involve definite violations of agreements, and especially of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Briand-Kellogg Pact, and the Nine Power Treaty. But they also involve problems of world economy, world security, and world humanity.

It is true that the moral consciousness of the world must recognize the importance of removing injustices and well-founded grievances; but at the same time it must be aroused to the cardinal necessity of honoring sanctity of treaties, of respecting the rights and liberties of others, and of putting an end to acts of international aggression.

It seems to be unfortunately true that the epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading.

When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.

It is my determination to pursue a policy of peace and to adopt every practicable measure to avoid involvement in war. It ought to be inconceivable that in this modern era, and in the face of experience, any nation could be so foolish and ruthless as to run the risk of plunging the whole world into war by invading and violating in contravention of solemn treaties the territory of other nations that have done them no real harm and which are too weak to protect themselves adequately. Yet the peace of the world and the welfare and security of every nation is today being threatened by that very thing.

No nation which refuses to exercise forbearance and to respect the freedom and rights of others can long remain strong and retain the confidence and respect of other nations. No nation ever loses its dignity or good standing by conciliating its differences and by exercising great patience with and consideration for the rights of other nations.

War is a contagion, whether it be declared or undeclared. It engulfs states and peoples remote from the original scene of hostilities. We are determined to keep out of war, yet we cannot insure ourselves against the disastrous effects of war and the danger of involvement. We are adopting such measures as will minimize our risk of involvement, but we cannot have complete protection in a world of disorder in which confidence and security have broken down.

If civilization is to survive the principles of the Prince of Peace must be restored. Shattered trust between nations must be revived.

Most important of all, the will for peace on the part of peace-loving nations must express itself to the end that nations that may be tempted to violate their agreements and the rights of others will desist from such a cause. There must be positive endeavors to preserve peace.

America hates war. America hopes for peace. Therefore, America actively engages in the search for peace.

Ambassador Joseph C. Grew to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, October 1937:

<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=1503>

I have no right, as a representative of the Government, to criticize the Government's policy and actions, but that doesn't make me feel any less sorry about the way things have turned. An architect who has spent five years slowly building what he hoped was going to be a solid and permanent edifice and has then seen that edifice suddenly crumble about his ears might feel similarly. Or a doctor who has worked hard over a patient and then has lost his case. Our country came to a fork in the road and, paradoxical as it may seem to a peace-loving nation, chose the road which leads not to peace but potentially to war. Our primary and fundamental concept was to avoid involvement in the Far Eastern mess; we have chosen the road which might lead directly to involvement.

If this sudden turnabout in policy could possibly help the situation either now or in future, if our branding of Japan as an aggressor and our appeal to the Nine Power Treaty and the Kellogg Pact and our support of the League of Nations, could serve to stop the fighting in China or limit its sphere or prevent similar aggression in the world in future, my accord with this step would be complete and wholehearted. But, alas, history and experience have shown that *Real Politik* [that is, power politics, with little or no concern for questions of morality] and not ethereal idealism should govern our policy and our acts today. With Manchuria, Abyssinia [Ethiopia, which in 1936 had been conquered by Italy] and Spain [where a civil war had broken out earlier in 1937] written in big letters across the pages of history, how can we ignore the practical experience of those events and the hopelessness of deterring them *unless we are willing to fight*? Moral suasion is ineffective; economic or financial sanctions have been shown to be ineffective and dangerous to boot. Once again I fear that we shall crawl out on a limb—and be left there—to reap the odium and practical disadvantages of our course from which other countries will then hasten to profit. Such is internationalism today. Why, oh why, do we disregard the experience and facts of history which stare us in the face?