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Le titre de l'article, le nom de l'auteur, son adresse électronique ainsi que l'université de provenance de l'auteur sont indiqués en début de texte.
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En juin 2016

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THE AMERICAN INTERWAR FOREIGN POLICY AND A "NEW WORLD ORDER"

Ferdinand KPOHOUE*
E-mail : ferdinandkpo@yahoo.fr
Raoul S. AHOUANGANSI*
E-mail : peacemakersouls@yahoo.fr

ABSTRACT

This paper stands as an endeavor to examine and help grasp the very insights of the American foreign policy between the two world wars. Within the angle of a new world order, this policy clearly sets out the highly wished hope of a world of a more liberal and democratic place regulating interactions among nations. Requiring a global reach out of a suitable plan, an active personality behind it and a strong-willed framework of accurate visions, the foreign policy put in place met the challenges only partially and unsteadily. The American perception of world outside meaning, the fits and starts about what foreign policy should impulse to, the evidence of selfishness and missteps represent in one word, the lineaments of the interwar diplomatic policy in line with what the American historiography reveals from its in-depths.

KEY WORDS

Foreign policy, new world order, challenge, interwar, historiography.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article se projette dans l'effort d'examiner et de chercher à comprendre les véritables tréfonds de la politique étrangère d'entre-guerre des Etats Unis d'Amérique. Sous les auspices d' un nouvel ordre mondial, cette politique a clairement identifié l'espoir tant souhaité d'une interaction beaucoup plus libérale et démocratique dans un monde ou s'interfèrent les nations. De la nécessité d'une portée mondiale émanant d'un plan adéquat, d'une personnalité active derrière ce dernier et d'un cadre résolu de visions appropriées, cette politique étrangère mise sur pied n'a comblé les attentes que partiellement et sans suite logique. La perception Américaine de ce que le monde extérieur signifie, l'instabilité prospective de la politique étrangère, l'évidence d'autosuffisance et de faux pas représentent en un mot les caractéristiques de cette diplomatie d'entre-guerre et ce, en étroite relation avec ce que l'historiographie Américaine révèle aussi aisément.

MOTS CLÉS

Politique étrangère, nouvel ordre mondial, défi, l'entre guerre, Historiographie.

INTRODUCTION

Through the lens of time, the late 1980's and early 1990's apparently offer more space to be viewed as the period, best to significantly approach the American diplomatic interwar features. The rising of the idea of a 'New World Order', seen as an ultimate opportunity to dutifully rebuild a broken world into a more liberal and democratic place, was with no doubt the burning will of all the world greatest powers and mostly the one of Americans. Approaching the issue the

* Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Bénin.
* Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Bénin.

American-like way with a global perspective of world peace while booking a wide-range place for home interests, proves to be a hard nut to crack by American policy-makers. Some historians or people meant to make records of proceedings were at the very start backed up to look at earlier periods with the concept of remaking a more convivial world, nice in willing to understand and respect other people's behaviors and opinions, wanting or allowing a lot of political and economic freedom and supporting gradual social, political and religious change. The whole idea of an attempt to build a new world order has a very positive echo about such a concept. Framed out this way, it definitely seems to assume a well-thought plan, proffered and geared up by active personalities. It likewise assumes a global reach with a wide scope of suitable diplomatic negotiations, liable to meet the challenge of this precious interwar matter. If in one way or the other, these are any sense tangible requirements, the United States during the interwar period fulfilled them only partially and erratically.

The diplomatic targets set to be reached through this interwar period suffered a series of unclear prospects. If one looks foe the steady, general characteristics in American foreign policy during this period, the culmination of many smaller plans and patterns, there is one thing clearly stated: the drive to convince the world to adopt policies leading to an international economy fitted out by free trade, convertible currencies and open markets, and along with that, the drive to convince countries to disarm. From 1919 to 1939 and with regard to the emergency-cases to address, all American administrations should have agreed with these policy imperatives. Instead, what is undeniable is that they did vary in their emphases and the efforts which US governments made to get the policies accepted. Viewing the 'New World Order' prerogatives being duly addressed, digging deep in the inconsistencies of the American diplomatic measures of the period is an attempt[1] of this paper.

I- AT THE OUTSET OF THE AMERICAN INTERWAR FOREIGN POLICY

In this time of harsh need for world peace through political arrangements and economic settings of worldwide coherence, the US missed to appropriately address the issue early on. Viewpoints proved to be divergent at home and consequently the policy that could be judged suitable for the case didn't bee people for support. Still veiled in a variance of foreign undertakings, US governments didn't put priority on a commonly agreed upon plan. Only President Woodrow Wilson had a plan, and only he sought to involve the whole government constantly in the process[2].

I-1: EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN WORLD-VIEW PERCEPTIONS

Many smaller plans were put forward in view to meeting in short or long run the burning aim to be fulfilled. Early on, the policy imperatives proved not to suit the common interest of Americans themselves. They didn't either offer a soft landing for the urging political strategy nor did they win the support of outside policymakers. On the issue, Americans and Europeans suddenly came at loggerheads. Far from making sure they get their stories straight, they definitely hold some stands that could easily be seen as not alike **o** simply contradictory.

[1] In the Spring of 1992 Mr. J.P.D. Dunbabin, Professor Robert O'Neill and Dr. J.R.C. Wright organized a seminar series at Oxford University around the title, "The Attempt to build a New World Order 1919-1939".

[2] Kathleen,Burk – '*The Lineaments of Foreign Policy : the United States and a « New World Order* », 1919-1939. Journal of American Studies,Volume26.Dec 1992, p. 377.

In light of this, two points should be made at the very start. First of all, European and American policymakers viewed from very different perspectives, the context of interwar foreign policy, the issues that it raised and the possible way outs. Europeans clearly stated the outstanding stake that should come from Americans. From Europe, the assumption after the first World War was that the US should be involved in international matters, and a disinclination on the part of the US to become so involved was simply considered as an evidence of selfishness and immaturity. This could be justified by the fact that not only one nation was politically and economically powerful enough to turn alone the wind of time and failure to take worldwide scale but diplomatic initiatives could simply be interpreted as a sign of immature foreign policy. That was in any case, the way Europeans viewed American early interwar ability in solving out emergencies.

Yet, it is worth highlighting that during most of the interwar period and basing on most Americans inner will, there was no earthy reason why they, in the form of the US government, should become involved in what they considered to be the affairs of other nations. This seemingly isolationist character was undoubtedly in the air since they did not feel particularly threatened, thinking there were more important activities to which they strongly wanted to devote their time and money. Secondly as one could easily notice through official address and home matter managements, when Americans did look abroad, the country to which they turned their eyes most often was Britain: their mother country. History teaches more between the two countries related to their past in every field of cooperation. This was the case with Great Britain as a rival, either economically or with regard to the navy, or as ally and partner, whether in political or financial diplomacy to win friends abroad or form a block for tangible purposes.

In short, foreign policy has seldom interested many Americans, except in times of crisis, and the interwar period was with no doubt an exception. They also sided up with the general European sense of disillusionment with the war and its aftermath, but with the added influence that many believed in the fact that their involvement had been unnecessary. Wet to bones with such an aspect of the interwar regular perspectives from Europeans, they definitely proved dubious in undertakings and thus, were doubly certain that they did not wish to be involved in international affairs, their contrary but circumstance-oriented enthusiasm only being aroused by conferences to limit armaments or to outlaw war. In such a context, enthusiastic peace groups sometimes drove reluctant policymakers along with refraining from steady diplomatic initiatives – secretary of state Franck Kellogg in 1928 is one living example of the case[1].

I-2: FOCUS ON SOME US PRESIDENTS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE TIME

Throughout this span of time, viewpoints or personal regards significantly differed from policymakers, institutions and presidents as well. The lead for soft landing turned sour and risky for some and absolutely the one of no way out for others. Presidents were few to work at full capacity in setting up outstanding plans liable to bring the nation as a whole out of the dark. Some through the usual channels of resentment flew back any step meant to address the issue. The case then stood as meeting the impossible. It was a time when US Presidents didn't voice the part in unison but in a divergence whether by shying away from the main which was to take

[1] See Robert H. Ferrell, *Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg-Briand Pact*, New Haven, Yale University Press,1952.

steps in international affairs or by instigating world-scale diplomatic commitment sometimes with fleeting grass-root background or short-minded world perception.

Certain Presidents did share reluctance to foster foreign relations. Here, one thinks of Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge in their backward positions and perceptions which set everything except a go-ahead in such a field. It is worth noting that in America, Presidents are most of the time attracted to the conduct of foreign affairs mainly because in this field, the constitution grants them more independent power than in domestic affairs. Presidents like Woodrow Wilson, sometimes Herbert Hoover and almost certainly Franklin Roosevelt were internationalists. Yet, for the latter two, the suffocating episode of President Woodrow Wilson and the Versailles Treaty was an awful example of what could happen to a President in getting ahead of this public and particularly of his congress[1].

Institutions in America appear in certain circumstances as a rocky panacea to lead on, a Rubicon to pass or a controlling tour to respect and by the same token, the real instances from which foreign affairs are appreciated and international policies judged worth being implemented. In fact, while the executive leader of no western industrial nation, with a legislature take the possibility of its objectives lightly, in no country is the legislature as powerful, and as uncontrollable by the executive as in the United States. Therefore while Presidents have the leading responsibility for making and conducting foreign policy, they thoroughly need to work within the boundaries set by their abilities to cajole Congress to follow their lead. The American worldview perception is still at stake in such a context, as a barometer measuring air pressure to show when the weather will change. What did the world in fact mean for Americans in this interval of two world wars?

In limelight, Americans view the world outside in two main geographical areas: Latin America and everywhere else. The United States of America was much involved in Latin American affairs, mainly to ensure access to markets and raw materials, and to safeguard American land properties. Still, the situation here was more that of informal empire than political relations with perceived equals[2]. With regards to relations with European countries, involvement was kept to a minimum even a strict one since Great Britain was in one word, the only country that caught Americans' attention in Europe. In other words, when Americans thought at all about relations with other countries, they frequently thought in economic terms and spoke in categories of trade and finance. They held the stage that there was little need for political involvement with other countries, and thus a refusal to become so involved could not be considered as a shrinking of responsibility. They could at the same time profess to believe that questions of trade and finance and currencies belonged to private sector, not to the public and indeed, that admitting that they were political questions could seriously disadvantage the US, by opening up questions of American aid in, for example, reconstructing Europe[3]. This clumsy atmosphere committed the

[1] See Lloyd E., Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition : The Treaty Fight Perspective* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press,1987).

[2] See, for example, Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream :* American *Economic and Cultural Expansion,* 1890-1945 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982)

[3] See for example, Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Elusive Quest :America's Pursuit of European Stability and French Security,* 1919-1933 (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1979)

US, basically to nothing new until President Woodrow Wilson founded a diplomatic plan despite the Neutrality Acts in 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1939[1] ensured by the Congress.

I-3: WOODROW WILSON AND A 'NEW WORLD ORDER' PERSPECTIVES

The American isolationist character brought in the 1930's, urged the US state and Treasury Department to see the questions of trade and finance as political ones. Attempting to convince other countries to adopt certain policies which would transform the international economic system, these departments apprehended the issues both on high moral and low political ground. Under such considerations, one could foresee a new wind to blow some good in this American fits and starts foreign policy. The bridge to a diplomatic case- study is the one of President Woodrow Wilson.

The only President during the interwar period who had a plan for a New World Order was, of course, Woodrow Wilson. Indeed, he had been brought to it by war. In fact, Wilson didn't want the US to fight in the first World War, and kept the country out of it until driven to join by the German submarines[2] . Instead of fighting, Wilson's main target during the war was to bring the belligerents to the peace table and seize the opportunity to mediate a peace without winners or victors. In other words, his concern was with structures to impose and to keep the peace, not structures with which to fight wars such as alliances and he was so horrified by the war that he decided that it should not be wasted[3]. In such a vein, almost before Congress had decided that the US was definitely at war, Wilson had his cabinet at work, meant to design a new world order and a well structured organization to support it[4].

Behind a blaming character of his, Wilson believed that a major cause of war was with no doubt the 'Old Diplomacy' with its secret negotiations, alliances and arms runs. In the place of such an old fashioned diplomacy, he argued in, for example, his fourteen points address to a joint session of congress on January 8th, 1918 for the adoption of the "New Diplomacy" with its ideals of open diplomacy, absolute freedom of the seas in peace and war, general disarmament, the removal of barriers to trade between nations, an impartial settlement of colonial claims and the establishment of a League of nations[5]. Although the vast majority of these points were not brought to fruition, he steadily held on to the proposal for a League of Nations in some way, believing that with its establishment, there would be a forum for the consideration of other

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[1] Briefly, the Neutrality Act of 1935 placed a mandatory embargo on 'arms, ammunition, or implements of war, ' the last-named to be defined by the President; it prohibited US ships from carrying munitions to belligerent states; and it gave the President discretion to withhold protection from Americans travelling on belligerent ships. The Neutrality Act of 1936 extended parts of that of 1935, and in addition forbade loans to belligerents and made mandatory an arms embargo on states entering a war in progress. The Neutrality Act of 1937 gave the President discretion to withhold raw materials from belligerents and to apply the arms embargo to civil wars. Finally, the Neutrality Act of 1939 repealed the arms embargo and instituted the sale of goods on a cash-and-carry basis.

[2]Kathleen,Burk. '*The Lineaments of Foreign Policy : The United States and a New World Order* ' , 1919-1939. Journal of American Studies,Volume 26.Dec 1992.pg377

[3] Ibid

[4] See Lawrence E. Gelfand, *The Inquiry : American Preparations for Peace,1917-1919* New Haven :Yahe University Press,1963.

[5] Ibid

problems[1]. In a span of time, a League of Nations was duly set up, assigned the duty to enforce the collective security of the member nations. The League was indeed set up to for two fundamental reasons: first, it was supported by other belligerent countries, such as Britain and for sure it was first suggested to Wilson by Sir Edward Grey, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs, in a letter to Wilson's adviser, colonel E.M. House, on September 22nd, 1915, which House passed on to the President[2]. Secondly, Wilson made it clear that without the inclusion of such a League, he would not sign the treaty. And in such a drive, Wilson could not carry the US Senate with him, and by its refusal to approve the treaty, the Senate ensured that the US would join Germany and the URRS as non-members.

Yet, Wilson backed up liberal internationalists missed the point to ensure that institutional structures of a new world order enjoyed the active support of the US government. Meanwhile, the series of ideas motivating this world view remained highly influential during the period, gearing up active Americans involvement in the search for ways to limit armaments of wars. This political involvement drove the government to enjoy the backing of public opinion, which was apparently pro-peace an anti-war. It could be viewed as such as it is hard to apprehend how meticulously, public opinion can be assessed before the period of even rudimentary opinion polls. The public opinion was simply measured by a collection of pressure by interest groups, newspaper comments, reactions of publications, letters to the President, congressmen and senators, and electoral results. Thus, the following question deserves being put. How far was it possible for policymakers to meet their objectives in such restrictions?

II- AMERICAN POLICYMAKERS WITHIN THE CLAWS OF DIPLOMATIC CONSTRAINTS

Working out suitable plans to meet challenges cost an arm and a leg to the whole American diplomatic corps. From home matters and diverse interpretations to public opinions on breaking news, there is a huge range of divergences to cope with common-interest issues. President Wilson's foreign policy design gave birth to public stands, supported by some kinds of grass-root pressure from both outside and inside interest-groups. Formal talks, conferences, treaties were many but mostly crowned with no real commitment or obligation to implement the objectives to fulfill.

II-1: CONJUNCTURAL HANDICAPS AND ENDEAVORS FOR STEADY WAY OUTS

It is a commonly held opinion that the need for a steady diplomatic address undoubtedly stands as the lead to a world peace. Terrible like an army set in battle array, the prospects of American policymakers to fulfill the dream are essentially roused through hard strengths. Yet, seizing the right end of the stick was the breast of the times. How did they in fact work within limits?

Actually, they on the trot believed that the United States of America was a great power, and in judging from the opinions of some, the most important of the great powers. This was

[1] See Ambrosius, Pasim. ; George Egerton, *Great Britain and the Creation of the League of Nations : Strategy, Politics and International Organization, 1914- 1919* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978) and idem, 'Ideology, Diplomacy, and International Organization : Wilsonism and the League of Nations in Anglo-American Relations, 1918-1920,' in Brian McKercher, ed., *Anglo-American Relations in the 1920's: The Struggle for Supremacy* (London: Macmillan,1991), pg17-54.

[2] This section of the latter is printed in Charles Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*. *Volume II: From Neutrality to War 1915-1917*, London, Ernest Benn Limited, 1926, pp. 88-89.

essentially based on the US economic and industrial strength, rather than on her military strength, which showed to lag behind that of the European great powers. In any prospective consideration, the Republican presidents of the 1920's strongly wished the power to cut down on armaments, rather than build them up: the fact that this would quickly raise the United States of America closer to the level of European powers, since European powers had a greater store of armaments to cut, was not negligible to some[1]. Under such considerations and regarding as it was true, the US as a great power and to act like one, American naval officers favorably seized this wave of things in the strict perspective of putting a limit to the size of their great rival, the Royal Navy. Three conferences were held on the trot in order to thrash out the question but interests of each side of great powers could not meet to bill out the case.

The Washington Conference 1921-1922 mainly limited the number of capital ships which countries could be allowed to sail to a ratio, and in this ratio the US and the Royal Navy were to be equal.[2] This conference worked out with this strategy just because the US threatened to enter into an arms-race with Britain and bankrupt her if Britain did not agree to this clause. Britain bowed to the later one because unable to resist for fear of creating or raising other issues that could prove damaging to bilateral cooperation: US and European powers and mostly between the US and Britain. Called in 1927 by President Calvin Coolidge and held in Geneva, the second conference didn't succeed in sinking diplomatic differences and then didn't end so satisfactorily. Since divergences topped over the bill to any other matter in such circumstances, the two seemingly belligerents didn't once again miss the point.

The US wanted land armies on the European continent to be limited, but refused to give any security guarantees. Moreover, she wanted the number of cruisers to be limited. Britain responded negatively to this and openly expressed her harsh need of cruisers[3] in order to protect her trade routes. To justify this position as being an inflexible one, Britain argued that the US had not built up to her allowed ratio of capital ships after 1922, and decided to call it the Americans' bluff in 1927[4]. The conference, instead of leading the path to a wonderful diplomatic output, gave birth to a bone of contention, placing responsibilities on the shoulders of the two apparent rivals. The third conference, commonly known as the London Naval Conference of 1930, took place after a political or why not diplomatic change both of British prime minister, from Stanley Baldwin to Ramsay MacDonald and of President, from Calvin Collidge to Herbert Hoover. It was in such a drain there was question of better preparation for easier talks that could lead to arrangements of the kind of mutual satisfaction. The first common point was the armament ratio that was extended from capital ships to cruisers, which greatly satisfied the Americans. Britain apparently agreed that the US had the right to a navy as big as her own, even if this were not yet the case. A diplomatic bridge seemed to join both the US and Britain within the drive of this agreement.

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[1] Kathleen, Burk – *The Lineaments of Foreign Policy : The United States and a "New World Order*" , 1919-1939 – Journal of American Studies, Volume 26.Dec 1992,p. 382.

[2] Ibid,pg 382.

[3] One of a class, of fast warships of medium tonnage with a long cruising radius and less armor and firepower than a battleship. See *American Heritage dictionary*, Second college Edition, Houghton Mifflin company, Boston,pg 345.

[4] See for example John Ferris, ' The symbol and the Substance of Seapower: Great Britain, the United States and the One Power Standard,1919-1921' in McKercher,ed., pp. 55-80 ; Brian Mckercher,*The Second Baldwin Government and the United States, 1924-1929: Attitudes and Diplomacy* (Cambridge University Press,1984); *The Modernisation of Conservative Politics*: *The Diaries and Letters of William Bridgeman*, *1904-1935*,ed. Phillip Williamson(London: The Historians' Press), chapter7.

Nevertheless, Japan felt as being the aggrieved party. Feeling weighed down with discrimination, angry at the restrictions still imposed on her, and anxious to become a great power in her own right, she radically turned her attention to China.

The elimination of the need to use armaments, by outlawing war opened wide doors to other diplomatic but interest-oriented friendships. France wanted to entice the US into a kind of commitment to her existence, be it ever so serious and lasting. Then, Aristide Briand the French prime minister suggested a bilateral Franco-American cooperation in which the two countries would foreswear the use of war against each other. Judging the fact as being suspicious and sheltered by American pacifist groups who proved to be strong enough with their positions, the US secretary of state, Franck Kellogg therefore proposed instead, a multilateral pact among the powers, excluding the URSS. Above all and highly due to personal interests, the International Treaty for the Reconciliation of War known as the Kellogg-Briand Act, an instrument of national policy[1], and then not viewed as a gathering of great powers on a main set of unison. Qualified as an 'International Kiss[2]' because deprived of commitment or enforcement clauses, American policymakers welcomed it with great enthusiasm as it made it clear there were votes in peace and non-commitment. Other countries thought this would bring the US back to an active interest in world affairs, but this would not be the case because always accepting financial and economic affairs.

Anyone who is looking for an active foreign policy at the service of a coherent diplomatic framework during the interwar period, one should definitely lay emphasis on this opportunity for great powers to talk. Meanwhile, an important isolationist movement, as well as many ordinary Americans, strongly believed that military intervention in Europe had been a mistake, and that the way to diminish the chances of such a mistake again was to refuse to become involved in any negotiations or agreements which might jeopardize American freedom of action in the future. Such a position stood as the negative side of things as related to remove the causes against the first World War that was the attempt to remove the causes of war by eliminating barriers to trade and economic growth that was a common point on which virtually all American policymakers could agree. At the same time, the European context remained a case of great concern.

II-2: AMERICAN POLICYMAKERS AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE

The reconstruction of Europe was the top subject-matter during the 1920's, at least in common agreement talks gathering both Europeans and Americans. The major task was to revamp or reshape and set a prosperous economy in Europe where indicators didn't project a nice future to Europeans themselves as well as to the world outside mainly the United States of America. The economic living atmosphere that was prevailing in Europe couldn't help reach the target that was to put the European economy in orbit. In fact, most currencies were quite inconvertible, many countries had tariffs, and a number of states, mostly the newer ones, had to reconstruct their economies. This could not be possible with regards to the interwar context if any nation shows up as an isolationist one. None of the nations deeply involved in this tough process of high-rank interests was unaware or significantly naïve to vow not being able to negotiate; collaborate and proffer solutions. The case of the US was not of less diplomatic importance and

[1] Robert H.Ferrell, *Peace in their Time : The Origin of the Kellogg-Briand Pact*. New Haven: Yale University Press,1952, ps 264-265.

[2] Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace : International Relations in Europe 1918-1933*. London : Macmillan,1976, p. 100.

emergency since opportunities even few were definitely guided with ways for the mostly skilful of nations to pass the rubicon.

Within the American perspectives of possible answer to the issue, a Republican administration would chiefly be prone to respond to such challenge, since businessmen and business interest groups counted among their strongest supporters. In the eyes of Americans as it was with no doubt the case, the European continent as a whole was an increasingly important market, mainly in view of the fact that overproduction in the US was not sustained or matched by an increasing ability or knowhow of American consumers to buy in order to make the balance stand right. As matter of fact, large American businesses had their own means of getting around tariffs barriers. Consequently, this included buying up native companies as it was the case in 1927 with General Motors, buying Vauxhall Motors for example[1]. In the short run, most American businesses viewed this way not appropriate to respond to such an emergency case. Still, in the pursuit of meeting the challenge, many Republican policymakers wanted the Europeans to integrate their economies by means of convertible currencies and multilateral free trade because the result would hopefully be enhanced by opportunities for the American business[2].

Instead, there was an altruistic side to this as well. Many Americans firmly believed that economic conflict was a cause of war, and the hope was that removing barriers would surely conduce peoples to peace which was at stake to be settled. The intensive American pressure for disarmament fitted in very well in this context, viewing that if governments refrained from spending so much on arms, their economies would be in much better shape and their peoples enjoy a better living standard. In such a vein, they could also repay their war debts to the US, which would really make the Americans feel happier. Nevertheless, one reason American policy makers put forward for not forgiving the Europeans their war debts was the fear that they would just spend the money on armaments which would once again lead to war. They then judged worth giving that money to the US government. This constituted another equation to resolve.

For whatsoever might be the situation, the US became deeply involved in the reconstruction of Europe, but still the permanent process of interest yielding cooperations. For example, American money was instrumental in the stabilization of the German Mark, the British Pound, the Belgian Francs ad the Italian Lira, in the commercialization of the German reparations debt and in supplying funds to the vast majority of the old and new European states in order to rebuild railways, utilities, factories, housing and many other necessary business facilities. In the same way, were American facilitators instrumental in establishing the Bank for International settlements[3]. Yet, despite this interchangeable prospect of interest making while collaborating with Europeans or being part and parcel in the reconstruction of Europe, it is important to understand that the American government was not directly involved in any of this. This, because of the massive amount of war debts owned by the European nations to the US government, the US always stuck to the fear that if she became involved in negotiations over loans, debts, reconstruction or anything else of the same range, she would be bound to be dealing at the same

[1] See Burk, Schuker, Orde, William C. McNeil, *American Money and the Weimar Republic: Economics and Politics on the Eve of the Great Depression* (New York :Columbia University Press, 1986.pg 92-93

[2] Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Elusive Quest: America's Pursuit of European Stability and French Security, 1919-1933*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

[3] Franck C . Costigliola, *The Other Side of Isolation : The Establishment of the First World Bank, 1929-1930*. New York: Columbia University Press . pp 602-630

time with a large number of debtors. Therefore the US government refused to attend some of the various conferences called to discuss and possibly sort out the political and economic imbroglio, such as Brussels and Genoa[1].

At least, because not suiting her economic requirements, the US government refused to become officially involved in the negotiations necessary to help individual countries. Instead, money was needed and the only place where it could be found in large enough quantities was in the New York money market. This meant privet sector funding and so, the US government clearly stated that, private sector funding required private sector negotiators and decisions. From this American position, in all of the negotiations requiring expert advice, such as financial transactions where other countries sent Treasury or Finance Ministry officials, the US just sent private bankers or businessmen. The issue turned to be a geographical matter, coupled with war debts headache between Americans and some European countries. In one way or the other, Americans didn't succeed in coming to a common ground of understanding with regards to this serious matter, since both Republicans and Democrats handled the question with different perspectives.

III- DOMESTIC WORLD VIEW DIVERGENCES AND OTHER POSSIBLE ANALYTIC FRAMEWORKS

From one government to another one and depending on each political side, things change not necessarily in view of solving the problem but creating others or favoring controversies. It is a kind of instability with a facet of unexplored fields of better abilities to see the light at the end of the tunnel. In the interwar time, the American foreign policy proved a character of the kind of a series of inappropriate diplomatic approaches in fulfilling the main which was in this context to efficiently apprehend the need for the US to be involved in Europe reconstruction. Being fully committed or not was an equation with variables not yet handled by American policymakers. Foreign policy framers, the congress as well as the US government itself didn't hold the same stand about the issue for more successful diplomatic addresses and fit-outs. The American historical background on the study of writing about history provides a wide range of arguments on this critical period of time quite worth putting forward in pinpointing the gist to be grasped about the American diplomatic knowhow in the period in question.

III-1: DIVERGENCE ABOUT REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS

Within this period of time, the frequent use of private experts, notably bankers and big businessmen in all negotiations that require expert advice in financial transactions was a typical quality of Republican diplomacy, put forward to meet foreign policy emergencies. The foreign economic policy was not granted the power to direct American finance where it would support American goals within this diplomatic move in the reconstruction of Europe where Americans thought worth playing a role and at the same time didn't commit the government to it. The emergencies at stake, the economic perspectives to work out and the need to recover war debts, urged bankers to develop plans for European stabilization and for increased links, but under no circumstances was the US government to become really involved[2]. This poses a serious problem

[1] Carole Fink, Axel Frohn and Jurgen Heideking , eds., *Genoa , Rapallo, and European Reconstruction in* 1992 .Cambridge University Press, 1991.

[2] Melvin P. Leffler and Joseph Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy,* Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962.

of whether the US was pointing a new way out or judged not worth, taking the risk on venturing in political arrangements for economic matters.

In fact, it could be said that in face of such a diplomatic hardship, Republican administrations had a vision of the world as it should develop, but this was an economic world, not a political one. The Republican alternatives in solving out this economy based predicament have a double-facet explanations. Firstly, it was because they definitely believed that a world based on free trade, convertible currencies, and free markets would encourage the growth of private initiatives, which would lead to economic growth and a better standard of living, and this would in turn reduce the chances of war. Secondly, they also believed that the US was self-evidently more liberal, democratic and peaceful, and should stay apart from too close links with European powers, which might serve to pull into conflict. Solely basing on her economic power as the main weapon which the US possessed in the international arena and her isolationist character, the United States of America could not support foreign involvement. Her strong hold mainly rested on her money which was private, not public. In such a way, indicative guidance was above all, the only power available. Moreover, what gave the US government influence over this way of diplomatic strategy was the fact that on the whole, Americans agreed with the Republican analysis and approach.

Yet, things radically changed another way with democrats on power in 1933. On the one hand, US clearly became even more isolationist and quite nationalist: Franklin D. Roosevelt's smashing of the World Economic Conference made this crystal clear[1]. Since the foreign horizon seriously darkened during the 1930s, Congress if not the President furthered a series of neutrality acts which would serve to prevent the US from future conflict by ensuring that American businessmen and financiers could not do business with belligerents. Roosevelt's urging efforts to engage with Europe during the 1930's with his suggestion in January 1938 of a conference to discuss European problems, was promptly strangled at birth by Neville Chamberlain of Italy, who believed it would lead to nothing but talk, might disturb negotiations then in process in Italy, and would in any case lead to American demands[2]. Right after Chamberlain rejection of such a diplomatic trap, the President and the US government turned their attention back to domestic problems, with quite a nationalist approach toward the on-going affairs.

For, if the US still stood apart politically, the State Treasury Departments still had the vision of a multilateral and convertible world, and were steadily trying to do what they could to implement this vision. Cordell Hull, the secretary of state, shared the Wilsonian vision of a peaceful world without trade barriers since he openly voiced that they were a positive cause of war. Besides, with Britain's setting of the Ottawa agreements in 1932[3], with tariffs and imperial

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[1] Patricia Clavin, "The Fetishes of So-called International Bankers : Central Bank Co-operation for the World Economic Conference 1932-1933", *Contemporary European History*, 1992, pp. 278-307 and Robert Dallek, *Franklin and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press,1979, pp. 23-57.

[2] William Rock, *Chamberlain and Roosevelt : British Foreign Policy and the United States, 1937-1940*. Columbus: University of Ohio Press, pp. 58-76.

[3] A series of agreements on tariffs and trades, between Britain and its dominions. They were concluded at the Imperial Economic Conference, held at Ottawa, and constituted a system of imperial preference to counter the Impact of the Great Depression. They provided for quotas of meat, wheat, dairy goods, and fruit from the dominions to enter Britain free of duty. In return, tariff benefits would be granted by the dominions to imported British manufactured goods. The economic gains were helpful but not massive. After world war II, the benefits were steadily eroded and, the prospect of British entry into agreements became increasingly dispensable.

preference and the subsequent growth of a sterling block, especially angered him and he decided that one of his missions was to tear down these walls. Backed up by Henry Morgenthau, the secretary of the Treasury, they responded to French pleas of domestic political difficulty and negotiated the Tripartite Agreement with France and Britain[1]. At the same time, however, the European countries, including Britain, were setting up cartels[2], raising tariff barriers and controlling their currencies, the Hull and Morgenthau endeavor was definitely doomed to failure. This gave birth to another facet in the post- war world peaceful negotiations. The interwar period was indeed intended to a new order with fashionable approaches.

III-2: INTERWAR ANALYTIC FRAMEWORKS AND INSIGHT INTO THE RELATED AMERICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

In limelight, it might be worthwhile to consider at least briefly, possible analytic frameworks for the pivotal years of the interwar period. A consideration of, for example, a number of the books on economic diplomacy written by American historians pointed up a striking similarity: the lack of foreign sources utilized by some of these books[3]. It is unfortunate that until recently, American scholars have not made such use of the work of their non-American counterparts. This was a kind of natural omission, for who better Americans to write about their own history? – Much of the work at this time was based on the memoires and autobiographies, published by statesmen, diplomats, military men and others who were part of the foreign policymaking process in the interwar period, as well as on the few published papers and available archives. As matter of fact, there was a heavy concentration on personality and strategy, on the opposition between the executive and legislative to produce policy, and on external pressures and events influencing the formal process of foreign policymaking. It appeared that American historians would rather consult North Dakota Potato Growers' newsletters[4] than, for example, British Cabinet papers or French archives. This then seemed to be American isolationism of a different sort, or perhaps a far-fetched self-esteem.

Remote observers of the American historiography of the period are fully aware that there is, according to its practitioners, a new corporatist synthesis. Defined by historian Michael Hogan[5], the one who has pioneered this approach as "*an analysis founded on self-governing functional groups tied together by institutional coordinators and market mechanisms led by cooperating public and private elites and nourished by limited but possible government powers*"[6] it

[1] Ian Drummond, The *Floating Pound and the Sterling Area, 1931-1939*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, chapter 9 and Stephen V.O. Clarke, *Exchange-Rate Stabilization in the Mid-1930s: Negotiating the Tripartite Agreement* (Princeton: Princeton University Studies in International Finance No. 41, Sept. 1977).

[2] According to the American Heritage Dictionary, it is defined as A combination of independent business organizations formed to regulate production, pricing, and marketing of goods by the members or in some European countries, a political group united in a common cause or a bloc, p. 243

[3] Michael Dunne Isolationism of a kind: Two Generations of World Court Historiography in the United States, *Journal of American Studies*, Vol 21. 1987, pp. 328-351.

[4] The Northern Plains of North Dakota is the third largest potato growing region in the country. The region is the home of famous growers also good in the areas of research promotion and legislation.

[5] Michael Hogan, born in 1943 is an American academic who served in the administrations or on the faculty of many American universities, wrote or edited numerous books, contributed as an adviser to the US Department of state and several documentaries. He is currently distinguished as Professor of history at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

[6] Michael J. Hogan, *Corporatist: A Positive Appraisal*, Diplomatic History, vol10. 1986 .p368

definitely helps fuel the debate over the interwar diplomatic predicaments. Emphasizing governmental initiative beyond traditional interest group politics is one of the leading characteristics of this group. Government, these skilled politicians viewed, did not merely passively receive the pressure of these interest groups: officials went further and fostered the growth of groups and associations which would both give advice to and receive advice from government. This context-based diplomatic approach has not, however, gone unchallenged.

One critical American historian, John Lewis Gaddis[1], criticized it on the following grounds: since it was based upon the identification of shared interests during the 1920s, it relied upon consensus and therefore was most useful in analyzing periods when there was broad agreement on the foreign agenda, such as the 1920s[2]. The other criticism was that corporatists seem to ignore almost entirely the geopolitical dimension of American foreign policy: focusing on the internal roots and external effects of foreign policy means a neglect of external circumstances on the formulation of policy. John Lewis Gaddis has furthermore charged corporatism to downplay the role of ideals in American foreign policy, as well as the role of individuals, in light of Michael Hogan who has written that *"in the modern order……..power resides in the organizations and decision-making is bureaucratized"*[3].

On the issue, non-American historians have also criticized the corporatist synthesis for many of the same motivations. The same spring of thoughts, an alternative analytic model has been put forward by Brian Mckercher as follows:

> This is an approach which treats the evolution of foreign policy as the sum of a massive series of individual transactions executed and, to a certain extent planned, within a cluster of closely-linked, constitutionally definable, groups of definable individuals, forming a " foreign policymaking elite" with continuance of its membership over time, comparative freedom of debate and discussion with its ranks and the firm, though by no means entirely impermeable, barrier controlling the flow of information about these debates from within its ranks to the public[4].

In one way or the other, what ties this wave of approaches together is that they all see the strength of a state as a function not only of its economic strength, but its military, diplomatic abilities and its political will. Many authors view the definition of a great power by the means of the American historiography of the interwar period as a country which possesses both resources and a sustained will to use them, and by that definition, the US was still a potential rather than an actual great power during the 1920s: strong enough to exact compliance with its wishes in certain fields, but without the will for continuous involvement or responsibility. This meets my total adherence with regards to the whole development about the American interwar diplomatic attitudes of fits and starts approaches in meeting the challenge.

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[1] John Lewis Gaddis, born in 1941 is the Robert A. Lovett Professor of military and Navel history at Yale University. He is best known for his work on the Cold War and grand strategy and has been hailed as the « Dean of Cold War Historians ».

[2] John Lewis Gaddis 'The Corporatist Synthesis: A Skeptical View', Diplomatic History, vol10. 1986,pp357-362

[3] Mickael J. Hogan. 'Corporatism : A Positive Appraisal , Diplomatic History, vol12.1986, p. 368

[4] Brian Mckercher, '*Reaching for the Brass Ring: The Recent Historiography of Interwar American Foreign Relation*', Diplomatic History, vol15. 1991, pp. 584-585.

CONCLUSION

In the period of between 1918 and 1940, the years separating American involvement in the two World Wars of the century, the US emerged as the distinguished global power. This happened in the world arena in spite of the isolation of the US from international political affairs in this period of time. Sincere and deep-rooted involvement in international economic and financial affairs, nevertheless, was another matter of great importance. Meanwhile, the interwar period has hung on to a fascination for a sizeable group of scholars. Backed up by some efforts to address criticisms made by social and economic historians and many others, this fascination has hopefully led to the emergence of a more rigorous analysis of these pivotal years in the history of American foreign relations.

For, the American foreign relations in the interwar period can now be recognized as more complex than formerly protected or imagined, and as integral to a distant phase of the American historical development on a particular area of concern but the one of international history as a whole. In such a respect, the fact remains that non-Americans have produced artful analyses of US foreign relations, particularly in the interwar period. They definitely offered prospective dissections differing from American historians' and providing additional insight into the challenges to face. This helped to come to more complete understanding of their country and its place in the world. Thus, the essential focus to lay emphasis on is that the study of American foreign relations in the interwar period is no longer the exclusive province or private hunting ground of American scholars.

The American approach to the world during the interwar period was confused: when the Wilsonian idealism and internationalism that formerly characterized American foreign policy were replaced by the narrow nationalism and isolationism of some presidents, the new era in American foreign policy witnessed hard times , strewn with diplomatic impediments. Public opinions and Congress appeared to be predominantly isolationist and presidents and policymakers who wished to address the issue should simply take this into account. In assessing American power firstly with regards to economic questions as circumstances were related to at a given time, US historians can only celebrate little victories because financial power in such a context was of little avail because it addressed the wrong questions. The American diplomatic attempts to help build a new world order between 1919 and 1939 failed because the economic dimension, on which they focused so much, was not the main one. Next was the Marshall Plan[1] that was set up as a lesson to Americans as well as to the whole world with special reference to the interwar foreign policy that needed to be genuinely architected.

[1] The Marshall Plan was a limited investment that paid incalculable dividend. A situation favovable to American interests was established in Europe. The aid program raised western Europe from its knees, launched the American challenge to the Soviet union, and boostered the American economy. This last point runs counter to the conventional economic wisdom: how could massive government expenditures be a net plus to the domestic economy? – The experience of the Marshall Plan shows the answer. Investing to protect prosperity at home generated peace and prosperity abroad, which in turn let to still greater prosperity for the donor

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