

“The Most Unsordid Act:” The Lend-Lease Program and the  
Wartime Goals of America

Senior Division

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As 1940 drew to a close, Europe teetered on the brink of total domination by German forces. France had recently fallen to the Nazis and Britain was facing financial crisis as Hitler threatened its shores. Up until this point, the United States had remained stubbornly neutral in this European war, insisting that its isolationist foreign policies would prevent German attack. President Franklin Roosevelt, however, felt that sending aid to Britain before it was overrun by Germany was critical to U.S. defense. Recognizing the dilemma, Roosevelt devised a program that would allow the United States to provide assistance to Britain while still maintaining the neutrality critical to its national identity. Implementing the Lend-Lease policy during World War II allowed the U.S to direct much needed aid to Britain and other Allied nations at a critical time in the conflict, giving this country the opportunity to indirectly enter and prepare for war while still remaining neutral. While the United States appeared to be coming to the aid of its ally, the Lend-Lease program was also an act of extreme self-interest. The bill had the effect of strengthening the United States' military and economy in the postwar world, in addition to preserving its neutrality as long as possible while others fought.

Following the conclusion of World War I, the American public became fearful of becoming involved in another foreign war. The country began moving towards an isolationist foreign policy in an effort to remain out of any conflict that took place abroad. In 1935, as tensions rose in Europe and war loomed on the horizon, the U.S. passed the first Neutrality Act in an attempt to remain out of any possible European conflict (“The Neutrality Acts, 1930s,” 2017). Three Neutrality Acts were passed between the years of 1935 and 1939, their main purpose to prevent financial deals between America and belligerent nations, as the public felt

that investment and trade ties with warring nations had drawn them into the first world war (Kimball, 2004). As described by the article “The Neutrality Acts, 1930s,” a rising wave of fascism in Europe coupled with the Spanish Civil War caused Congress to pass the Neutrality Act of 1937. Finally, in 1939, war officially broke out in Europe and the Neutrality Act of 1939 became law. President Roosevelt believed that Britain was essential to the United States’ defense and disagreed with these Neutrality Acts, although he did sign them. In an effort to allow America to dispatch supplies to Britain and France, Roosevelt created the cash-and-carry clause, which was added to the Neutrality Act of 1937. This clause originally permitted the exchange of goods between countries as long as the materials being traded were not arms. In 1939, Roosevelt persuaded Congress to extend the cash-and-carry clause to cover arms as well (“The Neutrality Acts, 1930s,” 2017). However, both Britain and France still had to pay cash for supplies, which became increasingly difficult as the two countries began verging on bankruptcy (Kimball, 2004).

The article “Lend-Lease and Military Aid to the Allies in the Early years of World War II” also described another attempt to send aid to Britain. In 1940, President Roosevelt signed the Destroyers for Bases deal with Winston Churchill, the recently elected British prime minister. In this agreement the United States gave Britain fifty destroyers in exchange for 99-year leases on territories in Newfoundland and the Caribbean, which could be used for U.S. air and naval bases. Churchill had hoped Roosevelt would confer the destroyers to Britain free of any charge, but the president knew that Congress and the public would oppose that arrangement. Roosevelt decided that access to British bases would assuage the military and public because these bases would contribute to the defense of the Western Hemisphere (“Lend-Lease and Military Aid to the Allies

in the Early years of World War II,” 2017). Roosevelt kept both America and Britain satisfied with the agreement.

As 1940 ended, Britain’s money was running out. “Britain’s broke,” declared British ambassador to the United States Lord Lothian (Seidl, 2016). Confirming this alarming statement, the prime minister himself sent a letter to Roosevelt, pleading for American assistance. Churchill warned Roosevelt that soon Britain would be unable to pay cash for supplies. He assured Roosevelt that the British were not afraid to continue fighting alone, however, he warned that “the voice and force of the United States may count for nothing if they are withheld too long” (Churchill, 1940). Churchill asked that Roosevelt proclaim “nonbelligerency,” meaning the United States would do everything in its power to aid Britain just short of sending armed troops (Churchill, 1940). FDR was well aware of the threat the Nazi’s posed, and was determined to send Britain aid. He was still hopeful, however, that Britain could win the war without U.S. assistance, and due to the strong isolationist sentiments in America, he wanted to avoid having to convince the public to get involved in an undesirable war (Encyclopedia of the Cold War, 2008). Roosevelt was also unsure of whether Britain was actually facing financial crisis and if Churchill was someone he wanted to work with to achieve an Allied victory (Parrish 2010). According to Thomas Parrish, author of *To Keep the British Isles Afloat: FDR’s Men in Churchill’s London*, in an effort to determine the validity of the financial claims, Roosevelt sent his associate, Harry Hopkins, to determine Churchill’s character. Upon receiving a report from Hopkins confirming Britain’s dire situation, Roosevelt was convinced of the need to become more involved (Parrish, 2010). Having just won re-election, Roosevelt immediately began working to convince Congress and the public of the importance of aiding Britain.

According to Mark Seidl, writing for the FDR Presidential Library and Museum, Roosevelt introduced the idea of the Lend-Lease program in a press conference on December 17, 1940. Likening the proposed plan of lending supplies to Great Britain to lending a neighbor a garden hose to put out a fire to prevent your own house from burning down, Roosevelt attempted to convince the public that the Lend-Lease program was merely an act of defense to keep the United States from further involvement in the war (Seidl, 2016). In his most successful fireside chat ever, delivered on December 29, 1940, the president aired the concept of Lend-Lease over the radio, calling the United States “the great arsenal of democracy” (The Penguin Book of Twentieth Century Speeches, 1999). As the 77th Congress prepared to formally convene, an article titled “Congress is Alert” described the “basic idea of aiding Britain” and the sense of urgency surrounding the proposed plan. On January 6, 1941, President Roosevelt went before Congress asking them to grant him the authority to supply arms to Britain and, if the need arose, to other nations (U.S. House of Representatives: History, Art, and Archives, 2017). H.R. 1776 (National Archives: Today’s Documents from the National Archives, 2017) would “lend-lease or otherwise dispose of arms” or other materials to countries whose defense was determined to be vital to the United States (www.ourdocuments.gov, 2017). Payment would be deferred until later, and it would not be expected in dollars, rather a “consideration” grant by Britain to the U.S. that would generally consist of actions being taken to create a “liberalized international economic order” after the war (U.S. House of Representatives: History, Art, and Archives, 2017). The supplies to be sent to Britain and other friendly nations typically took the form of ships, tanks, aircraft, shells, guns, medicines, food, and fuel (Encyclopedia of the Cold War, 2008).

The bill came under immediate scrutiny from isolationists who insisted that it would thrust the nation directly into war. Opposition also included those who worried that Lend-Lease would give Roosevelt too much power. This was not a baseless claim, for the bill gave the president “blank-check” powers, authority Roosevelt claimed was necessary so that he might act with speed and decisiveness (“President Calls for Swift Action,” 1941). Attempting to restrict this almost unlimited power, Congress required that funds for the Lend-Lease program be appropriated annually and that regular reports on it were mandatory (Kimball, 2004). The American Youth Congress protested the bill, stating that Lend-Lease would establish a military dictatorship under the guise of defending democracy (Mallon, 1941). However, others completely supported the act, such as former Senator Ernest W. Gibson, the chairman of the National Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, who told of his express approval of Roosevelt’s Lend-Lease bill as a “necessary step in preserving the peace of the nation” (“Gibson Approves ‘Lend-Lease’ Measure,” 1941). Press views varied widely on the topic, as evidenced in the article called “Press Views on British Aid Bill,” in which opinions on the Lend-Lease program from various newspapers ranged from “cautious approval to sharp questioning.” On March 11, after two months of fierce debate, Lend-Lease was signed into law.

Roosevelt wasted no time putting the bill to work. He swiftly dispatched supplies to Britain, and soon additional Allied countries were sent assistance. The program was large and difficult to manage (Seidl, 2016). Because the original seven billion dollars in appropriations did not sufficiently fund all of the required materials, a supplemental Lend-Lease bill was passed (Glass, 2017). Just as the first Lend-Lease bill was considered the “British bill,” the second was deemed “Russia’s bill,” and even though some disagreed with the transfer of Lend-Lease goods

to the Soviet Union, it was determined that only the Soviets had the power to defeat the Germans on the ground (Reston, 1941). By the war's end, nearly fifty billion dollars had been used for Lend-Lease, and only approximately eight billion of that amount was repaid through reverse Lend-Lease, in which the Allies provided U.S. troops with aid (The Editors of the Encyclopædia Britannica, 2018). The Lend-Lease program was ultimately a success, with its enormous shipments providing necessary assistance and motivation to keep fighting (Seidl, 2016). It also proved a massive success for the United States as it was incredibly useful in preparing them for war and increasing their military and economic powers during and after the war.

While most criticisms of Lend-Lease bill generally came from the those who attacked the act for pulling the country into an unwanted war, Lend-Lease had self interested motivations. According to the Roosevelt Institute, the “special relationship” between Great Britain and the United States which arose during World War II stemmed from President Roosevelt’s desire to form closer ties with Britain so that he might better defend the U.S. and at the same time strengthen America’s military and economy. As World War II drew nearer, Roosevelt worked to strengthen America’s relatively weak military through budget increases, attempts to convince an isolationist Congress to repeal the Neutrality Acts’ arms embargoes, and forming a closer relationship with Britain, a country which he saw as an excellent line of defense for the United States against the Axis forces. Even after the fall of France, when he was advised to concentrate on increasing America’s defenses and to focus less on Britain, Roosevelt continued to pursue closer ties with the nation (Roosevelt Institute, 2010). Eventually he enacted the Lend-Lease bill as a means of sending the U.K. the supplies it needed to defeat the Nazis, maintaining U.S. neutrality while still actively participating in the war on behalf of the Allies.

The Lend-Lease program also fulfilled some of the United States' wartime goals regarding reform of the economy and international system (Encyclopedia of the Cold War, 2008). Because the U.S. felt that Britain would continue to pose a substantial economic threat to it after the war, during the negotiations for the Master Lend-Lease program, it was decided that one condition would be for Britain to open itself up to free markets (Kimball). The U.S. wished to shift the world financial center from London to New York City, and finally penetrate international trade blocs (Encyclopedia of the Cold War, 2008). Britain and America worked together to create a system of economic order in the postwar world which would benefit America, as well as eliminating the concern of war debts owed to the U.S.

The arms transfers of the Lend-Lease program greatly enhanced the United States' defense by giving them time to prepare their industrial strength, which in turn took some time to reach its full potential (Kimball, 2004). The United States was allowed to prepare for the war, which many acknowledged as inevitable, while still remaining neutral ([www.ourdocuments.gov](http://www.ourdocuments.gov), 2017). While America was eventually forced into World War II following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, exchanging Lend-Lease goods allowed Britain and the Soviet Union to continue fighting against Germany for the two additional years it took before America provided its entire force, including troops (Klare, 2002). Roosevelt devised the act to allow him to send support to Britain, while giving America adequate time to prepare for the war.

Strangely enough, many of the most prominent criticisms of the Lend-Lease program claim that the United States sacrificed far too heavily in the war and contributed more than its fair share in support of the war effort (American Historical Association, 2017). The Lend-Lease bill not only kept the United States out of the war for an additional two years, saving countless



American lives in the process (American Historical Association, 2017), it also gave the country valuable time to reach its full industrial might before it needed to enter the war (Klare, 2002). The United States rose from the nineteenth largest army in the world, to the most sizable navy and airforce yet seen, allowing a once weak army to become a mighty one (Roosevelt Institute, 2010). Additionally, the bill acquired tremendous economic power for the United States, allowing the postwar world to be virtually debt free which simplified rebuilding efforts (Kimball, 2004).

A bill referred to by Winston Churchill as “the most unsordid act,” Lend-Lease was, at its roots, created almost entirely for the United States’ benefit. While it did supply the Allies with the means to defeat the Nazis, this program favored America far more than any of the nations it was meant to assist. The U.S. made enormous strides towards becoming a dominant world power through the Lend-Lease program, using it as a tool to significantly advance them economically after the war and as a means of gaining one of the most powerful armies in the world, in addition to helping them meet the postwar world debt free and ready for swift rebuilding and recovery. Not only did it secure the country’s defense sufficiently enough to keep American soldiers off the battlefields for two years, it also gave the country time to prepare for its inevitable entry into World War II. It was touted as a generous and benevolent act but Lend-Lease was designed for American advancement in a postwar world.

## Annotated Bibliography

### Primary Sources

#### Newspaper Articles

Associated Press. "Congress is Alert." *The New York Times*, January 2, 1941. ProQuest Historical Newspapers (85445005). Accessed November 3, 2017.

As the 77th Congress prepared to formally convene, the controversy surrounding the Lend-Lease program was in full swing. Roosevelt was soon to address the new Congress, giving them even more details of the plan than he had previously disclosed in his fireside chat on the issue. The article described the "basic idea of aiding Britain." This newspaper article emphasizes the sense of urgency that was felt. The president, Congress, and the country were prepared to launch the Lend-Lease program so that they might secure the defense of Britain and themselves. It also demonstrates the fact that defense was a critical issue at the time and that the Lend-Lease bill would be vital to the defense of the nation. This was an interesting perspective into the current mood of the United States at the time Lend-Lease was being debated and therefore served as a useful primary source.

Mallon, Winifred. "Aid Bill Attacked by Youth Congress." *The New York Times*, February 8, 1941. ProQuest Historical Newspapers (85343532). Accessed December 12, 2017.

This newspaper article helped me to understand the viewpoints of those who did not support the Lend-Lease bill and gave me an interesting insight into the reasoning behind their opinions. On Wednesday, February 7, the American Youth Congress opened three-day sessions and denounced the Lend-Lease bill and demanded that it be defeated. In a brief prepared to be presented to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the Youth Congress said that peace was "the best defense of American Democracy" and stated that the bill would establish a dictatorship in America in the name of destroying one in Europe. The group said they opposed the bill because it would create a military dictatorship in the U.S. under the guise of defeating Hitler. However, others made statements declared that the opinions expressed by opponents to the bill were not representative of the entire Youth Congress.

"Fights Lend-Lease Bill." *The New York Times*, January 21, 1941. ProQuest Historical Newspapers (85287708). Accessed November 29, 2017.

This newspaper clipping was published by the New York Times on January 21, 1941. Joseph Curran, the president of the National Maritime Union, and a C.I.O. affiliate, spoke at a five-day conference of the union's National Council asking the union members to oppose the passage of the Lend-Lease bill and encouraged the public to be informed of what he called the "inherent danger" of the program. He claimed that its passage would "plunge the country directly into the European War." Curran's argument was a powerful one that would appeal to much of the American public, as they felt that the country should stay out of all foreign affairs, especially World War II.

"Gibson Approves 'Lend-Lease' Measure." *The New York Times*, January 12, 1941. ProQuest Historical Newspapers (85266052). Accessed December 11, 2017.

On January 11, the former senator Ernest W. Gibson, the chairman of the National Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, told of his express approval of President Roosevelt's Lend-Lease bill to aid belligerent democracies as a "necessary step in preserving the peace of the nation." In the newspaper article, I felt that the senator made some compelling arguments in favor of the Lend-Lease bill that were helpful to my thesis.

Reston, James B. "Lease-Lend Bill is Sent to House." *The New York Times*, October 9, 1941. ProQuest Historical Newspapers (105163319). Accessed October 12, 2017.

In this primary source the House Appropriations Committee approved the \$5,985,000,000 second Lend-Lease bill, after a statement claimed that a turn in the war was imminent and that aid to the Allies must be sent out. The newspaper article helped me understand the pressure to approve the supplemental Lend-Lease bill and the American distaste for the Soviet Union as this second bill attempted to withhold aid from the Soviets.

Special to The New York Times. "President Calls for Swift Action." *The New York Times*, January 11, 1941. ProQuest Historical Newspapers (85446076). Accessed October 10, 2017.

In Washington on January 10, Roosevelt called for swift action on a bill that granted him "blank-check" powers to obtain and transfer war materials to Britain and other Allied countries fighting the Nazis. The president spent most of his time attempting to soothe public fears that the Lend-Lease bill would give him too much power. This article showed how strongly Roosevelt felt about the necessity of the bill and how he felt that he had to have the powers it gave him if the Allies were to win World War II and the country was to be kept safe. This primary source showed me one of the ways Roosevelt defended and advocated for the Lend-Lease bill.

The Times. "Press Views on British Aid Bill." *The New York Times*, January 11, 1941.

ProQuest Historical Newspapers (85446245). Accessed December 12, 2017.

This newspaper article compiles the wide range of press viewpoints, from pointedly questioning to cautiously approving, on the Lend-Lease Bill. The Times gathered together some viewpoints for the article from some of America's largest and most influential cities, from Boston and Baltimore to Cleveland and Dallas. Each newspaper had a different perspective to offer; some completely supported Lend-Lease, while others strongly warned against the bill. The variety of viewpoints was very useful to me as it allowed me to see the varying opinions on the Lend-Lease bill from newspapers across the country and to better understand the reasoning behind their opinions.

### **Photographs and Images**

56 Stat. 1500; Executive Agreement Series 253. "Lend-Lease." [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov). Accessed December 21, 2017.  
<https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/b-su-ust000011-1281.pdf>.

This primary document is a copy of the supplemental Lend-Lease Agreement. It states the terms and conditions of the bill, discussing the previous Lend-Lease bill and also how the rules of Lend-Lease will apply to the Soviet Union. The articles within cover everything from the supplying of materials to the Soviets to how the Soviets would be expected to repay the United States for the supplies that had been leased or lent. It was very useful to see the exact document and to read the articles and what the bill entailed.

"Document for January 10th: 'H.R. 1776 A Bill Further to promote the defense of the United States and for other purposes.'" National Archives: Today's Documents from the National Archives. Accessed December 12, 2017.  
<https://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/todays-doc/?dod-date=110>.

"H.R. 1776 A Bill Further to promote the defense of the United States and for other purposes." This document came from the Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, HR 77A-D13; Record Group 233; National Archives. The Lend-Lease Act met Britain's requirement for material aid and allowed the U.S. to begin preparation for war while still officially remaining neutral. The bill was defined as "An Act to Promote the Defense of the United States." This image allowed me to look at an actual copy of H.R. 1776 and to understand how it was presented to Congress and what specific terms it contained.

### **Historical Document**

Churchill, Winston "A Letter to Roosevelt, 1940." [www.rialto.k12.ca.us](http://www.rialto.k12.ca.us). Accessed

December 2, 2017.

<http://www.rialto.k12.ca.us/rhs/planetwhited/AP%20PDF%20Docs/Unit%2012/WorldWarII/CHURCH5.PDF>.

This letter, sent by Winston Churchill to President Roosevelt, is a plea for help. Britain was on the brink of bankruptcy, and the prime minister was warning Roosevelt that Great Britain would soon not be able to pay for supplies from the United States, and that he hoped that the president might continue to send them supplies without charge. The letter was vital to my project because it allowed me to read the actual letter that Churchill sent asking Roosevelt for help, which was in many ways the tipping point that persuaded the president to send complete aid to Britain.

"FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT 'The Arsenal of Democracy' (Washington, DC, 29 December 1940)." *The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches*, 1999, History Study Center. Accessed October 10, 2017.

[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&res\\_dat=xri:ho-us&rft\\_dat=xri:ho:sup\\_ref:pts00066](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:ho-us&rft_dat=xri:ho:sup_ref:pts00066).

In his most successful fireside chat ever, President Roosevelt spoke to the country about the need to send supplies to Britain. Roosevelt, in response to Britain's cry for help, used his signature fireside chat to attempt to convince the American public of the importance of aiding Britain. This source, taken from the *Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches*, gave me another look at the way President Roosevelt was attempting to convince the public and Congress to support the Lend-Lease bill.

## **Secondary Sources**

### **Websites**

"What Criticisms Have Been Made against Lend-Lease?" American Historical Association. Accessed December 13, 2017.

<https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/how-shall-lend-lease-accounts-be-settled/what-criticisms-have-been-made-against-lend-lease>.

There was constant criticisms against the Lend-Lease program and many rumors about how the materials it sent to other countries were misused, and this website discussed those issues and rumors in attempt to clarify what was fact and what was fiction. This source gave me an interesting perspective into counterarguments for my paper and gave me a wider understanding of my topic.

The Editors of the Encyclopædia Britannica. "Lend-lease." *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Accessed October 16, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/lend-lease>.

Encyclopædia Britannica summarized the Lend-Lease program and the events leading up to it. The United States used this system to aid the Allies in World War II by giving them important supplies and materials such as food, arms, trucks, airplanes, and other raw materials such as oil. This overview of the program was very helpful and condensed much of the important information into simple and straightforward terms.

“LEND-LEASE.” Encyclopedia of the Cold War, 2008, History Study Center. Accessed October 11, 2017.

[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&res\\_dat=xri:ho-us&rft\\_dat=xri:ho:sup\\_ref:col00237](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:ho-us&rft_dat=xri:ho:sup_ref:col00237).

This is a maps and reference article source that summarizes the Lend-Lease program and covers the significance of the bill. This was a useful source to my paper and it contained several interesting details that gave me a wide range of additional knowledge.

Glass, Andrew. “Senate approves supplemental Lend-Lease Act, Oct. 23, 1941.” Politico. Accessed December 7, 2017.

<https://www.politico.com/story/2017/10/23/senate-approves-supplemental-lend-lease-act-oct-23-1941-243990>.

Approximately six weeks before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Senate approved the supplemental Lend-Lease act. The date of the Senate’s approval of the act was the main topic for this website. It provided a more indepth account of the supplemental Lend-Lease act which was extremely useful to my paper.

Kimball, Warren F. “Lend-Lease Act (1941).” Encyclopedia.com Accessed November 28, 2017.

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/history/united-states-and-canada/us-history/lend-lease>.

This source from Encyclopedia.com gave an overview of the Lend-Lease bill and discussed the plan, its opposition, and its success. The discussion of the opposition and success was especially helpful to me, as it gave me perspective for possible counterclaims for my argument and showed me the success of the program.

Klare, Michael T. "Arms Transfers and Trade." *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*, edited by Richard Dean Burns, et al., 2nd ed., vol. 1, Charles Scribner's Sons, 2002. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Accessed December 30, 2017. <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/EJ3010308008/OVIC?u=westhsm&xid=df146179>.

Written by Michael T. Klar, this article covers the relevance of arms transfers and trade during World War II and how important the Lend-Lease program was to the war effort. This was a detailed and informative source that was very beneficial to my research and my paper.

"Lend-Lease Act (1941)." [www.ourdocuments.gov](http://www.ourdocuments.gov). Accessed November 27, 2017. <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=71>.

The Lend-Lease Act was passed on March 11, 1941, and set up a system to allow the United States to lease or lend war materials to any country that was deemed essential to the defense of the U.S. This website discussed the events that took place prior to the passage of the bill and concluded with H.R. 1776 becoming law. It was a beneficial source that provide useful additional information.

Roosevelt Institute. "The 'Special Relationship' between Great Britain and the United States Began with FDR." Roosevelt Institute. Accessed December 3, 2017. <http://rooseveltinstitute.org/special-relationship-between-great-britain-and-united-states-began-fdr/>.

The phrase "special relationship" signifies the strong bond between Great Britain and America. It is often used to describe the alliance formed by the two countries during World War II. The website, written by the Roosevelt Institute, gave me a detailed account of the relationship between Churchill and Roosevelt and Britain and the United States and was extremely informative.

Seidl, Mark. "The Lend-Lease Program, 1941-1945." FDR Presidential Library and Museum. Accessed December 3, 2017. <https://fdrlibrary.org/lend-lease>.

This secondary source is a website that talked about the beginnings of the Lend-Lease bill and continued to discuss the challenges and successes of the program. Lend-Lease eventually overcame all of these challenges and proved a highly successful and important program.

“The Lend-Lease Act of 1941.” US House of Representatives: History Art and Archives.  
Accessed December 10, 2017.

<http://history.house.gov/Historical-Highlights/1901-1950/The-Lend-Lease-Act-of-1941/>.

On March 11, 1941, the House of Representatives voted to approve the Lend-Lease Act (H.R. 1776), which authorized President Roosevelt to lease, sell, donate, or lend military goods to any country determined to be essential to American security. This particular secondary source website gives a brief summary of the Lend-Lease policy and the day it was passed. It gave me some specific names of people who opposed it and their reasons which proved useful, as well as informing me about the day the bill was signed.

“Lend-Lease and Military Aid to the Allies in the Early years of World War II.” United States Department of State: Office of the Historian. Accessed November 30, 2017.  
<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/lend-lease>.

This online website source gives an overview of the Lend-Lease act and also discussed the United States’ motivation and reasons for enacting the bill. The account of these acts was very helpful to my paper and I used this source a lot.

“The Neutrality Acts, 1930s.” United States Department of State: Office of the Historian.  
Accessed October 10, 2017.  
<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/neutrality-acts>.

The Neutrality Acts, passed as fear of entanglement in another European war increased, were meant to prevent the United States from having relations with any foreign country that might involve them in another war, and these acts are what this source describes. As the Neutrality Acts were major barriers in the Lend-Lease program, it was incredibly helpful to see what each individual act did, and why they were each passed.

## **Books**

Parrish, Thomas. *To Keep the British Isles Afloat: FDR’s Men in Churchill’s London*. New York: HarperCollins, 2010.



A detailed and intriguing novel, To Keep the British Isles Afloat offers an unusual perspective into the uncertain beginnings of the Lend-Lease act. President Roosevelt hoped that Britain could win the war with American financial assistance so that the United States would not have to officially enter the war. While President Roosevelt wanted to send assistance to Britain while maintaining his country's neutrality, he was unsure that the new British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was someone he wanted to work with. Roosevelt sent his associate Harry Hopkins to determine Churchill's character, and after Hopkins supported the prime minister and Roosevelt passed the Lend-Lease bill, the president sent Averell Harriman to London to keep Britain fighting. The book details the stories of Harriman and Hopkins, two individuals involved in one of the most significant partnerships between countries in history, and gave me insight into the events leading up to and during the Lend-Lease program.

## **Process Paper**

Choosing my topic for NHD was a somewhat difficult process for me. There were many topics I was interested in pursuing and it was challenging for me to determine which one I wanted to research and write about. I knew that I wanted to have a topic that was lesser known and that helped me to narrow down my possible options. I also was hoping to find a topic that I would enjoy working on that took place sometime during World War II, as that has always been a very intriguing period in history for me and one that I hoped to learn more about. I went on the NHD website to examine possible topics and eventually stumbled upon the Lend-Lease policy. Because Lend-Lease fell under the World War II category, included Franklin Roosevelt (a historical figure that I find extremely fascinating), and because I felt that it was not a well-known topic, I ended up selecting the Lend-Lease bill for my NHD project.

I conducted my research for this project over a period of several months. I used a wide range of online sources which were mostly found by googling the Lend-Lease bill or images related to the program. I was able to find numerous sources using this method, including the letter Winston Churchill wrote to Franklin Roosevelt asking for assistance, and several political cartoons by Dr. Seuss relating to American foreign policy and isolationism. I also found that databases offered in the West LMC weebly to be incredibly useful. I located a large portion of my primary sources in the form of newspapers in the ProQuest Historical Newspapers section. I also discovered many of my sources in History Study Center. I took notes on practically every

source I used and kept track of them in a document, including whether they were primary or secondary. I also found two great books, both on some of the important men behind the Lend-Lease program who worked to convince President Roosevelt that Great Britain and Winston Churchill were a good bet in which to invest supplies. In addition to these books, I was also able to locate a short video clip made at the time the Lend-Lease bill passed.

There were several reasons I chose to write a paper. I really enjoy writing papers and essays, especially about historical topics that interest me. I find that I am best able to convey my thoughts when I can write them out in the structure of a paper, and as I do not enjoy technology as much, this led me to opt not to create a documentary or website. I also do not like performing or acting so I also chose to avoid a performance. I felt that a paper was the best way to convey my meaning and that it would be the best option for me.

My NHD topic was an extremely controversial event in history and I was therefore able to find several counterclaims. I was also able to use my claim to refute them. Several of my sources provided multiple viewpoints on the subject of the Lend-Lease bill, and many offered compelling arguments for my claim, while the arguments for my counterclaim were less convincing.