

The Atlantic Charter of 1941: A Political Tool of Non-belligerent America

Yui HATCHO

INTRODUCTION

In August 1941, American President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill held a conference and agreed on a joint statement to be published simultaneously in Washington and London. The joint statement, which was soon to be known by the name of the Atlantic Charter, announced eight principles that provided the framework for their hopes for a better future world. This paper aims to shed light on the political aspects of the making of the Atlantic Charter, and also to bring out the original character of the bilateral statement, which is not well known now.

It is not too much to say that the Atlantic Charter is one of the most famous documents in the history of the Second World War. The common understanding of the statement is probably that it was similar in meaning to the war aims of the United States or the Allies, or that it represented an Anglo-American plan for the reconstruction of the postwar world. Yet, is it really so? If the Charter was a statement of U.S. war aims, why did non-belligerent America make such a statement without a declaration of war? If the Charter was a program for the postwar world, why did the two countries make it when Britain was on the edge of

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falling, after the French collapse and the opening of the German-Soviet front? Such an understanding is inconsistent with the international situation of the day.

It is this author's opinion that the Atlantic Charter has not been carefully studied so far as an independent subject, and that this has resulted in the Atlantic Charter of 1941 becoming confused with the principles of the Atlantic Charter which were incorporated in the Declaration of the United Nations in 1942. Although both statements endorsed the same eight points, there was a fundamental difference between them. The first was a bilateral statement made jointly by belligerent Britain and non-belligerent America, while the second was a multilateral statement made by belligerent countries including America. The political implications of the two were different. Unlike the Atlantic Charter, the declaration of the United Nations in 1942 may appropriately be regarded as a statement of war aims and a program for the future.

Then, what was the Atlantic Charter of 1941 intended to be? There have been few studies made on this topic. Theodore A. Wilson published *The First Summit* in 1969 and its revised edition in 1991, which is now the standard work on the Atlantic Conference. He narrates the scenes and discussions of the Conference with skill, and in so doing describes how the Atlantic Charter was drafted. Yet, the Charter is not his central interest. While Wilson characterizes the Charter as "the embodiment of a real yet informal alliance between Roosevelt and Churchill and their countries," he does not give it any further thought in the context of America's wartime diplomacy.¹

The Atlantic Charter is a related collection of essays published following an international conference held in 1991 at the Memorial University of Newfoundland to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Atlantic Conference. Eight scholars, from the United States, Britain and Canada, contributed papers to the book, completing the first study specifically focused upon the Atlantic Charter. The book is noteworthy in point of introducing studies on the British and Canadian views of the Charter, and also on the Charter's effect upon the future development of the post-war reconstruction. Yet, these essays do not fully discuss the creation of the Charter, either. Theodore A. Wilson expanded his earlier study in this collection, adding analysis of Roosevelt's awareness of public opinion, but his basic understanding of the Charter remains the same as in his earlier works. David Reynolds introduces an interesting study, trying to "establish the 'meaning'" of the Atlantic Charter. Yet, his analysis

is limited to the meaning for the British.² But for these books, there is not any satisfactory work giving more than a few pages to the discussion of the Atlantic Charter. So far, no Japanese scholar in the field of American Studies or International Relations has attempted to examine it.

It cannot be denied, however, that the Atlantic Charter is an important document, referred to by almost all books on the diplomatic history of the Second World War. This paper suggests keeping the Atlantic Charter of 1941 distinct from other references to the Charter made afterward, and evaluating the former in the context of Roosevelt's handling of the foreign policies since the opening of war.

I AMERICA'S INITIATIVE IN PEACE MAKING AS A LEADING NEUTRAL COUNTRY

America's immediate response to the outbreak of war in Europe was President Roosevelt's proclamation of neutrality. In his radio address on September 3, 1939, he stated, "Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields."³ His speech adhered to a series of Neutrality Acts legislated since 1935 under the initiative of Congress, intending to keep the nation out of foreign wars. Yet, his neutrality was not necessarily the same as Woodrow Wilson's neutrality, proclaimed a quarter century before. Wilson expected the U.S. to "exercise all the rights of neutrality under international law." He said he supported neutrality because "there is something so much greater to do than fight."⁴ Roosevelt, however, said "even a neutral has a right to take account of facts." When "peace has been broken anywhere, peace of all countries everywhere is in danger," he insisted. He did not ask the nation to remain neutral both in thought and deed. He himself was not.⁵

Roosevelt's position toward war was soon revealed in the State of the Union Message of 1940. He stated that his country should strive with other nations "to encourage the kind of peace that will lighten the troubles of the world," and expressed America's enthusiasm for taking the world leadership for "a renewal of world peace."⁶ His suggestion soon took shape in two diplomatic initiatives. One was a call for a conference of the neutrals, and the other was the Welles mission to the key countries in Europe. Since the Western front still remained in the state of a "phony war," it seemed to be a good time for the Roosevelt Administration to initiate peace moves as a neutral nation.

The plan of the conference developed from the study of the Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations, established within the State Department in preparation for the nation's role as envisaged by Roosevelt. In mid-January 1940, they conceived a plan for a conference to discuss postwar economic cooperation and disarmament. By the end of the same month, the Committee prepared a proposed agenda for the conference. Then, Secretary Hull, who was a passionate follower of free-trade policy, initiated diplomatic talks with the governments of forty-seven neutral countries, expressing the importance of exchanging views on "two basic problems" before any peace conference: "a sound international economic system" and "armament limitation and reduction."⁷ Those countries included twenty American republics, European countries such as the Baltic States, Italy, Spain, and Yugoslavia, and some Arab countries. Only Thailand was invited from Asia. Most countries that received Hull's invitation reacted favorably. By the end of May, thirty countries had expressed full approval of the conference. All the preparatory work for the conference was completed by April.

This proposal for the neutral conference revealed two important characteristics of the American initiative. First, it started as an attempt to organize neutral nations. Since the American people were cherishing neutrality as part of their national identity in those days, any American attempt to play a more positive international role had to start from this position, that is, as a neutral nation leading other neutral nations. Second, the American initiative was directed to the task of formulating basic principles for a future international order. The American policy makers were certain that the "only hope of constructive accomplishment" lay in the "firm prior acceptance of sound policies by as many nations as possible."⁸ How to realize the agreed principles in the world was a matter to be considered later. America would make her commitment to world affairs by way of committing herself to certain basic principles of the international order. This position was the result of the bitter experience that President Wilson had been through in the previous war. The Atlantic Charter came later as a part of the policy giving priority to an international statement of principles.⁹

About the same time, another attempt for peace had been undertaken on Roosevelt's initiative. This was a direct diplomatic approach to the belligerents. In February 1940, the President announced Welles' one-month tour to Germany, France, Britain, and Italy.¹⁰ The Welles mission in those countries was to "find out only what the views of the four gov-

ernments might be as to the present possibilities of concluding any just and permanent peace." The President did not empower Welles to make any proposals or enter into any commitments. Yet, if he "thought it wise," Welles was allowed to "discuss peace on the 'old basis of disarmament and an opening of trade,' or to revive the President's peace proposal to Hitler of April 1939." This instruction indicates that Roosevelt was, regardless of its real possibility, still interested in the chance of restoring peace in Europe on the status quo of April 1939. If anything had worked, he might have been able to delay a German offensive, give the Allies a chance to strengthen their defenses, or discourage Mussolini from entering the war.¹¹

Welles' tour started in mid-February and lasted for forty days. He first visited Rome and met Galeazzo Ciano, Foreign Minister, and Duce Benito Mussolini himself. Italy was Germany's ally but not at war. Welles had imagined that, only in Italy, "the policy of this government might have some concrete effect." Yet, the Italian response was disappointing. When Welles questioned Mussolini about the possibility for peace, Mussolini explained he saw hope for it only if the Allied government "would not prove completely intransigent" on the matter of German retention of her "lebensraum" in Central Europe. When Welles sounded out the Italian response to the planned conference of neutrals, Ciano expressed little hope. The Italians knew that "if a 'real war' broke out, there would be no possibility for a long time to come of any peace negotiation." And they recognized that the "real war" was not very far away.¹² During the meeting, the Italians did not hide their "anxiety" about Germany and her military power, but showed no "predilection" towards Britain or France, either.¹³

In Berlin, Welles met Adolf Hitler and several top German officials, such as Von Ribbentrop, Minister for Foreign Affairs. During the meeting with Hitler, Welles talked about Roosevelt's peace proposal, based on the limitation and reduction of armaments and sound international economic relationships. Hitler did not show any interest, however. Looking back over German foreign policy since 1935, he spoke of the conciliatory attitude that Germany had taken toward diplomatic talks, and insisted that German efforts had been repeatedly ignored. As for the idea of unrestricted international trade, he doubted its efficiency as the cure for all of the world's economic problems. It was "only too tragically plain," Welles learned, "that all decisions had already been made."¹⁴

In Britain and France, Welles met many present and former officials. They were no less determined and resolute than the Germans. French Prime Minister Edouard Daladier questioned the practicability of the idea of disarmament while his country was at war with Germany. He also insisted that “actual disarmament” would be impossible unless the most powerful neutrals were willing to take the responsibility of enforcing it if necessary. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who had been “deceived” and “lied to” by Germany, was certain that “Hitler did not desire a peaceful Europe founded upon justice, reason and security.” So long as the Nazi government existed, “there could be no hope of any real peace.” Welles also met future Prime Minister Churchill, and found him insisting on “outright and complete defeat of Germany.”¹⁵

Retuning to Washington, Welles reported to the President and the Secretary of State the difficulty of pursuing peace under the present circumstances. He indicated two major obstacles. First was the matter of “security.” He stated that the “basic problem I feel is the problem of security, inseparably linked to the problem of disarmament.” The other was the matter of “statesmanship” or “leadership.” He found no signs of statesmanship in the countries he visited, even though he felt it was imperatively required at the time. Listening to Welles’ report, Roosevelt issued a statement to the Press that there was “scant immediate prospect for the establishment of any just, stable, and lasting peace in Europe,” and, that the result of the Welles mission would be of “great value” when the time comes for the realization of such a peace.¹⁶

Welles’ talks with the leaders of the four powers in Europe revealed a great gap between the American approach to peace and the attitude of the European leaders. The Americans spoke of liberal trade and disarmament while the Europeans were preoccupied with war. Hitler might have been interested in discussing how to maintain balance of powers among the nations but not in the abstract principles of a peaceful world order. The American attitude was irritating to the British and the French, who had finally abandoned the policy of appeasement. They were not much interested in discussing principles for the postwar international order. Welles took this attitude for a lack of statesmanship. For him, statesmanship was a leader’s ability to envision the outline of a peaceful world.¹⁷

In April, Germany started the *blitzkrieg* in the West, invading Denmark, Norway, Holland, and Belgium. Italy declared war on Britain and France. On June 17, the French Government decided to seek an

armistice with Germany. In September, the two Axis countries in Europe and Japan concluded the Tripartite Alliance Pact, which was intended to deter America's entry to war in Asia or in Europe. The phony war period, when the United States might have been able to make her position effective upon the course of war as a neutral, was over.¹⁸

II CONTROVERSY OVER THE U.S. COMMITMENT

The German *blitzkrieg*, particularly the German victory over France, gave America a great shock in the summer of 1940, significantly altering its leaders' perception of war. Roosevelt had not felt any direct threat from Nazi Germany, as Britain and France had seemed to be able to counterbalance the German power. When Germany was victorious in Western Europe, however, he perceived Nazi Germany a great threat to the security of the United States. The United States should give active support to Britain to avoid the worst-case scenario of its defeat by the Germans.¹⁹

While embarking on a great military build-up program for national defense, the U.S. Government began to transfer military supplies to Britain, and made the Destroyers-for-Bases deal in September 1940.²⁰ In December, Roosevelt called for the nation to be "the great arsenal of democracy." Step by step, the President moved to strengthen an informal Anglo-American alliance against Nazi Germany. The enactment of the Lend-Lease bill in the spring of 1941 was his great legislative achievement in this direction.²¹

By this time, isolationist opinions in the United States had been considerably weakened. But their influence was still far from negligible. U.S. Senator Burton S. Wheeler, for example, known as an advocate of isolationism, delivered a speech in December 1940 warning the American public of a national emergency. In his understanding, the major dangers to democratic America were not foreign but domestic, that is, unresolved problems at home. He insisted on settling domestic problems "before we undertake to settle the problems of Asia, Africa, Australia, South America and Europe."²² Similar opinions came from Charles A. Lindbergh, as well, who was an active speaker for the isolationist group, the *America First Committee*. He believed that democracy could "be spread abroad by example, but never by force."²³ They did not differ much from Roosevelt in believing in the importance of democracy, but differed greatly in their understanding of how best to defend it.

Roosevelt is one of the first presidents to demonstrate an ability in public diplomacy. Unlike other presidents, he paid attention to the public acceptability of his policy. When he thought public support lacking, he attempted to increase it.²⁴ He used his public speeches as chances to “educate” the public towards a deeper involvement in world affairs. In January 1941, Roosevelt revealed the political principles that were to become “the basis for our consideration of a future world order”: the freedom of speech and expression, the freedom of worship, the freedom from want, and the freedom from fear—everywhere in the world. According to Roosevelt, the future world would guarantee these four essential human freedoms, and that world would be attainable in their time and generation.²⁵ In May 1941, Hull introduced America’s economic principles in a radio speech: no extreme nationalism in trade; non-discrimination in international commercial relations; guarantee of raw material to all nations; international agreements regulating the supply of commodities; and the institutions and arrangements of international finance. The world order Hull described was one in which independent nations would cooperate freely with each other for their mutual economic gain.²⁶

The Roosevelt Administration’s bright vision of a world enjoying the Four Freedoms and free trade stood in great contrast to the gloomy situation of the world at the beginning of 1941. It may seem to make no sense that the American leaders were speaking of the basic features or principles of the future world when the United States was still not at war in a world in which the forces of aggressive totalitarianism were rampant. But this advocacy of idealistic visions was probably the only way for them to lead the American people toward greater involvement in world affairs.²⁷ And so far as America involved itself in Roosevelt’s aid policies, they needed a British statement on war aims which was agreeable to the American public. Such a statement was a prerequisite to forging the Anglo-American relationship into a firm partnership.

The British Government had been without any blueprint for the future. The Cabinet thought that it would be premature to make any commitment to any future plan. As early as November 1939, the Prime Minister clearly stated that, in his mind, he made a “distinction between war aims and peace aims.”²⁸ He said that Britain’s war aims were “to defeat our enemy.” Yet, peace aims, he argued, would deal with “something to be achieved in conditions we cannot at present foresee.” In the circumstances under which nobody knew how long the war would last, in what

direction it would develop, and who would be by Britain's side, "it would be absolutely futile—indeed, it would be worse than futile, it would be mischievous—if we were to attempt to lay down to-day the conditions in which the new world is to be created."²⁹ Besides, there was "the history of the commitments" made in World War I, in the minds of the Cabinet members, "how undesirable it was to lay down in advance the conditions of a post-war settlement."³⁰

Gradually, though, the British Government began to recognize the importance of the politics of war aims in developing the Anglo-American partnership. In the early months of 1941, the Cabinet adopted a semi-official document of British war aims, and sent it to the State Department.³¹ Then, on May 29, in a way answering and supporting Roosevelt's "National Emergency" speech, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden made a public statement on war aims. It was the first and the only public statement made in Britain before the Atlantic Charter. Churchill only gave it "grudging acquiescence" when his advisers assured him that "it contained nothing sensitive."³² Americans considered this British statement to be "one of the authoritative indications of British war aims," though in fact it revealed, if anything, the difference in the future plans for the postwar world between the two countries.³³

From the spring of 1941, rumors of negotiated peace and territorial deals were often reported to the State Department. In June, it was said, "Hess had brought to Great Britain specific and concrete German peace proposals."³⁴ In July, N. N. Butler of the British Embassy came to Welles and passed on to him the information that there was a report that Hitler was going to end his campaign after he occupied Leningrad and Moscow, and that he would put forward a peace proposal to Great Britain as soon as the campaign ended. Such a proposal, if it came, would have been a heavy blow to the public morale. An American newspaper article asked, "Would a war-weary world clamor for peace—any kind of peace to stop the slaughter? Would a peace movement gain a foothold in England? Would a peace-at-any-price cause spread in the United States?"³⁵ There even existed rumors in July that Britain and the Soviet Union were making deals as to their future spheres of influence, and also, that the British had promised "to set up Yugoslavia again as it formerly existed." At a time when the British war aims were not certain, rumors of negotiated peace or secret agreements sounded more likely.³⁶

The U.S. Government could not leave these rumors unchecked. Assistant Secretary A. A. Berle, who had considerable interest in postwar

peace-making, suggested to Welles that “if we want to have anything to say about the post-war settlement, we had better start now. Otherwise, we shall find, as President Wilson did, that there were all kinds of commitments which we shall be invited to respect, and we shall not be able to break the solid front any more than we were at Versailles.”³⁷ Within a week, Welles, on behalf of the President, sent a cable to Churchill to inquire about this rumor. The cable began with an excuse for mentioning a matter “not in any way serious” but causing “unpleasant repercussions” in the United States, and asked the British to issue an overall statement that stated clearly the non-existence of “post war peace commitments as to territories, populations or economies” so that the President could back it up in strong terms. Although it was a request made in a polite manner, the American Government intended to remind the British not to make any commitment to the postwar settlement behind the scenes. Roosevelt warned that “it seems to me that it is much too early for any of us to make any commitments for the very good reason that both Britain and the United States want assurance of future peace by disarming all troublemakers and secondly by considering the possibility of reviving small states in the interest of harmony even if this has to be accomplished through plebiscite methods.”³⁸

After all, in spite of growing military cooperation between America and Britain, they had not reached agreement on the vision of the post-war world. While American principles were revealed, the British statements on war aims were, in Americans’ eye, reactive, obscure in their overall vision, and far from satisfying. The gap was becoming dangerous, especially when Germany overwhelmed the Soviet forces in the eastern front, and the opinions of the American isolationists sounded plausible to the American public.

III NEGOTIATED ALLIANCE FOR PEACE

A report came in from Washington and London simultaneously on August 14, 1941. In Washington, Press Secretary Stephen T. Early, and in London, the Lord Privy Seal Clement Attlee, read out the same statement announcing the Atlantic meeting of Roosevelt and Churchill, and their joint declaration. As Roosevelt expected, the news caught people’s attention, as many had been wondering about the whereabouts of the leaders of the two democracies. They had been “missing” for a week.

The joint statement enumerated eight points: no territorial aggran-

dizement; opposition to undemocratic territorial change; respect for sovereign rights for all peoples; access on equal terms to trade and raw materials; international collaboration for the improvement of labor standards; the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny and freedom from fear; freedom of the seas; and the abandonment of the use of force made along with the establishment of a permanent system of general security. These were introduced as the “common principles” on which Roosevelt and Churchill based their hopes for a better future for the world.”³⁹

The Atlantic Conference and the joint statement had originally been Roosevelt’s idea. About Christmas time, 1940, he had thought of meeting Churchill to discuss numerous issues between the two countries. Without using ordinary diplomatic channels, Harry S. Hopkins, Roosevelt’s most trusted advisor, arranged the meeting independently, setting an approximate meeting date of March or April. The pending legislation of the Lend-Lease Act and the aggravated war situation in Greece and Crete postponed the meeting until August. For the security of the two traveling leaders, but also in order to dramatize the news of their conference, the public was kept strictly in the dark in both nations. Most of the officials who attended the meeting were notified about their trip only a couple of days before departure.⁴⁰

Because of the unique setting of the meeting, Roosevelt seems to have broached to Churchill the idea of making a joint statement casually, just before the latter set out on his journey. Roosevelt, Churchill, Welles, and Sir Alexander Cadogan, the British Under Secretary, joined in drafting the joint declaration during the meeting. After redrafting it three times, the four participants reached agreement on the text of the declaration, and cabled it to their respective countries for delivery to the public on the 14th.⁴¹

The announcement of the Anglo-American joint statement was positively received by the media in both countries. The *New York Times*, for example, wrote: “No other act of Washington or London could notify the world so unmistakably that the two democracies are united by a common idea and are determined to pursue together to the end their common purpose.”⁴² The British Government and public also recognized the significance of that aspect, and later came to appreciate that the aims of the Charter “sustained British opinion throughout the terrible dangers of the months following the collapse of France.” Indeed, it was in Britain that the joint declaration was given the dignified name, “the Atlantic Charter.”⁴³

For those who participated in the meeting, the implications that the Charter came to hold were appreciated, because the two countries had not been without mutual misgivings regarding the other's intentions. For the United States, the Charter showed British commitment to the American idea of future world order, and denied Britain the possibility of making an armistice with Nazi Germany or of going back to the old order of power politics. Without such a British commitment, the American public could not have supported any further Roosevelt's policy of greater cooperation with Britain and of more active involvement in the war. Removal of American anxiety over the British vision for the future was "uppermost" in the President's mind when he came to the Conference.⁴⁴ Britain, which had become increasingly impatient of the American assistance "short of war," could now expect, at least, that the American commitment to war aims had moved a step closer to where the British stood at war.⁴⁵ Both sides realized the effect which these various interpretations on the agreement had on the other.

During the conference, the two sides disagreed with each other about certain principles, such as the fourth point, about free trade, and the eighth point, about the establishment of an international organization. For Americans, as shown, free trade policy was indispensable for the realization of peaceful world. The British, however, bound by the Ottawa Agreements, could not accede to such a policy without consulting other cabinet members and the Commonwealth. It was Roosevelt, on the other hand, who was opposed to the eighth point, dealing with the establishment of an international organization, reasoning that it would cause "suspicions and opposition" in America. The conference seemed to be at an impasse. After taking a break, however, the participants managed to work through the disagreement by reaching a compromise, or, in other words, by replacing the controversial phrases with ambiguous ones that would satisfy both sides.⁴⁶

While setting forth universal guidelines for peace, Roosevelt carefully calculated how much or how little he would make commitments in the joint statement. He enhanced the statement by making "the defeat of Nazi tyranny" their common purpose, but he deleted the greater part of the bellicose preamble from the draft the British proposed.⁴⁷ For him, it was important for the two nations to pursue the common purpose by different means, one by war and the other by means short of war. That was the most Roosevelt was able to offer Churchill, because of his domestic political context. Churchill and his Government accepted this as the best

obtainable from Roosevelt under those circumstances. Even though the United States could not become a party to a military alliance, it became Britain's ally on war aims. The British hoped that this would eventually make America a full-fledged participant in war.⁴⁸

The Anglo-American pledge of cooperation had considerable impact not only upon the British but also upon the Nazis. It brought psychological pressure to bear on Germany. Although the British had been aware of the psychological aspect of this war, they had not launched a counteroffensive against the Nazi's imperial world order. The British, therefore, made the most of this opportunity, publicizing the Conference and the joint statement in their international publicity. In addition, the joint declaration of the two leaders was intended to encourage the Soviet Union, which had been fighting Germany since June 1941. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed on the need of offering aid to that country.⁴⁹

The Nazis reaction was, naturally, hostile. They downgraded the importance of the Charter, and emphasized the Charter's unpopularity in Britain and the United States. Yet, their repeated coverage of the Charter in newspapers told its impact. The Hitler-Mussolini meeting held two weeks after the Atlantic meeting tried to imitate the publicity effect of the Atlantic Conference.⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

The Atlantic Charter was not only a symbolic statement of future vision of the world but also one of America's political tools in dealing with several problems simultaneously. America had been showing interest in the making of a new world order, and so it was probable that the Atlantic Charter came as a part of that policy. Yet, if such was the only purpose of making the Charter, Roosevelt could have expressed his program unilaterally, utilizing years of study made in the State Department. He could have demanded complete agreement to the American idea from the British, too. Yet, Roosevelt did not do so.

Instead, he made a joint statement on the basic principles, and gave priority to the encouragement of the British. As to the program of the postwar world, Roosevelt contented himself with the minimum agreement with the British, because it was useful in easing the public anxiety in the U.S. Public support was necessary to continue Roosevelt's policy aiding the British. After all, it was of the utmost importance for the non-belligerent U.S. to support the British morale for the moment and

maintain the possibility of being able to realize the American idea of future world order later. The Atlantic Charter was, above all, an American cheer for the British, and also Britain's agreement to the American program.

In conclusion, the diplomatic style seen in the making of the Atlantic Charter was typical of America's wartime diplomacy. In other words, the U.S. insisted on making a specific framework at conferences, but it showed a conciliatory attitude toward details and measures for the materialization of programs. This was the style taken not only at the negotiating table with Britain but also in the negotiations with the Soviet Union which were begun soon after the Atlantic Conference. In a way, owing to this style, Roosevelt was able to bring various countries together, and lead them toward the American goal. A major part of the significance of the Atlantic Charter was that it represented the first example of what was to become the characteristic style of American diplomacy.

NOTES

¹ Theodore A. Wilson, *The First Summit* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 227.

² Douglas Brinkley, *The Atlantic Charter* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 129.

³ Franklin D. Roosevelt, "This Nation Will Remain Neutral," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, September 15, 1939, 712-713.

⁴ Frank Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 53-55.

⁵ Franklin D. Roosevelt, *op. cit.*; and David Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 63. Ninkovich explains the difference between the conceptions of neutrality in the 1910s and 1930s, saying that "the object of the new neutrality (1930s-style) was to avoid war, even if that meant abandoning the allegiance to neutral rights." Ninkovich, *op. cit.*, 113. A turning point of Roosevelt's prewar foreign policy, Barbara Rearden Farnham explains, was the Munich crisis. Roosevelt concluded on that occasion that Hitler was "implacably aggressive and that a German-dominated Europe would pose a clear security threat to the United States." Barbara Rearden Farnham, *Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 5-8.

⁶ Franklin D. Roosevelt, "The State of the Union," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, January 15, 1940, 194-196.

⁷ Ninkovich, *op. cit.*, 113; Harley Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-1945* (Westport: Greenwood Publishers, 1949), 18-24; Memorandum on World Order, Box 191, Folder 7, Welles Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library (hereafter cited as FDRL); and "Area of Discussion as Regards Post-War Problems," Welles Papers, FDRL.

⁸ Memorandum by Berle, January 31, Box 191, Folder 7, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, 1940-43, Welles Papers, FDRL.

⁹ Memorandum, July 7, 1941, Book 4, Sherwood Collection, Harry L. Hopkins Papers, FDRL.

¹⁰ Though Italy was not yet a belligerent, Welles visited this country because it was "an Axis partner." As for the Soviet Union, Roosevelt did not think the visit would "serve any useful purpose," because the two had concluded the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact in August previous year. The pact guaranteed the other's neutrality while at war. Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1944), 73.

¹¹ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1940, General, Vol. 1, 12 (hereafter cited as *FRUS*); Welles, *op. cit.*, 73; and Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 216. David Reynolds adds Roosevelt's unspoken reason for this Welles mission: election politics. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, 74-75.

¹² Welles, *op. cit.*, 78, 85-88, 139-140. When Mussolini first met Welles, the former was to meet Hitler in a few days at the Brenner Pass, and the Duce suspected that Hitler would demand Italy's immediate entry into war. When Mussolini met Welles again after Welles' visit to Germany, Britain and France, Mussolini, having finished the meeting with Hitler on March 18, had found that Germany "would undertake an immediate offensive; that she would conquer France within three or four months, and that thereafter Great Britain would be forced to her knees."

¹³ *FRUS*, 1940, General, Vol. 1, 27.

¹⁴ Welles, *op. cit.*, 109.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 121-135.

¹⁶ *FRUS*, 1940, General, Vol. 1, 20, 116-117.

¹⁷ The British government received the impression that Welles was "affected to some extent by Mussolini and [had been] impressed in Berlin with the pretended invincibility of Germany." The British anticipated that Welles would suggest to the President to outline peace terms which would not eliminate Hitler's regime but would give security to the Allies. *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, I* (London: H.M.S.O., 1970), 164-170.

¹⁸ By this time, Britain and France were also accelerating their military plans to counter German offense. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, 74-75.

¹⁹ Reynolds claims that the "fall of France was the second" turning point in the evolution of Roosevelt's foreign policy. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, 174. Roosevelt came to recognize the direct threat of Germany as he received repeated warnings of German subversion in governments in Latin America. Soon he began to develop the military relationship further by approving secret military talks between U.S. and Latin American officers, and signing a congressional resolution authorizing the sales of guns and ships for cash. Robert Dallek, *op. cit.*, 233.

²⁰ For a British account of the Destroyers-Bases Deal, see *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, I*, 333-383. Churchill praised this American decision highly and appreciated its diplomatic importance as well as the material. *Ibid.*, 369.

²¹ The Lend-Lease Act passed with a Senate vote of 60 to 31 and a House vote of 317 to 71 by March 11. Dallek, *op. cit.*, 252-261. Wendell Willkie, Roosevelt's Republican opponent, did not make foreign affairs an election issue. Dallek, *op. cit.*, 247-251. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, 100.

²² Burton S. Wheeler was an U.S. Senator from Montana. "America's Present Emergency," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, January 15, 1941, 203-205.

²³ Charles A. Lindbergh, "Election Promises Should Be Kept," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, June 1, 1941, 482-483; and Lindbergh, "We Are Not Prepared for War," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, February 15, 1941, 266-267.

²⁴ Farnham, *op. cit.*, 85-86. Some people criticize Roosevelt for being too sensitive to public opinion. But Betty Houchin Winfield mentions the remark of Hadley Cantril's,

an editor of the Princeton American Institute of Public Opinion, that Roosevelt “never altered his goals because public opinion appeared against him or was uninformed.” Rather, he used information to “bring the public around more quickly or more effectively to the course of action he felt was best for the country.” Betty Houchin Winfield, *FDR and the News Media* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 214–225.

²⁵ Willard Range, *Franklin D. Roosevelt's World Order* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1959), 132–133; and Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), Vol. 2, 1630.

²⁶ Cordell Hull, “Aid to Britain Will Be Delivered,” *Vital Speeches of the Day*, June 1, 1941, 484–485.

²⁷ Henry Kissinger stated, “Americans could be moved to great deeds only through a vision coinciding with their perception of their country as exceptional,” and admitted that Wilson “knew how to move the American people.” Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 44.

²⁸ This time, the Prime Minister was Neville Chamberlain.

²⁹ Foreign Office Record, 371/24362, Public Record Office (hereafter cited as PRO).

³⁰ *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, II* (London: H.M.S.O., 1970), 198–199.

³¹ Wilson, *op. cit.*, 158–159.

³² David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance 1937–41* (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1981), 256.

³³ Wilson, *op. cit.*, 159.

³⁴ Memorandum, June 22, 1941, Folder 4, Europe Files, 1933–1943, Welles Papers, FDRL.

³⁵ Turner Catledge, “Dramatic Talks at Sea Spike a Hitler ‘Peace’,” *New York Times*, August 17, 1941; and “Conference at Sea Forms U.S.-British Front to Crush Axis and Shape Peace,” *Washington Post*, August 15, 1941.

³⁶ Memorandum, July 8, 1941, August 1 and 2, Diary July 41–March 42, Box 213, Berle Papers, FDRL; and *FRUS*, 1941, General, Vol. 1, 342.

³⁷ Memorandum, July 7, 1941, Book 4, Sherwood Collection, Harry L. Hopkins Papers, FDRL. Berle also suggested that “the President ought now, by personal word, to intimate to the British that he expects to be consulted about any peace settlement, and request that the British pledge that prior to the entering of any commitment they will so consult; and that no commitments which they consider binding have as yet been entered into.”

³⁸ *FRUS*, 1941, General, Vol. 1, 342. The British response was made during the Atlantic Conference. *Ibid.*, 351–352.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 367–369.

⁴⁰ Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), 230; Memorandum by the president, August 23, 1941, President’s Secretary File (Safe): Atlantic Charter Meeting (1), FDRP, FDRL; and Wilson, *op. cit.*, 30.

⁴¹ Sherwood, *op. cit.*, 350. There are no documents surviving that explain the linking of the meeting with the joint statement, except participants’ memoirs. Wilson sorts out the several sources of information on this matter well. Theodore A. Wilson, “The First Summit,” in *The Atlantic Charter*, 13.

⁴² “The Rendezvous with Destiny,” *New York Times*, August 15, 1941. The Department of Treasury summarized American reactions. “The aftermath of the conference,” August 22, 1941, Morgenthau, PSF, FDRP, FDRL.

⁴³ *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, II*, 202–204; and “London Expects More From Talks,” *New York Times*, August 15, 1941. Counselor of Embassy in London

reported British reactions to the statement. Herschel V. Johnson to the Secretary of State, August 22, 1941: (National Archives Microfilm Publication M973) Records of the Department of State, 740.0011 European War 1939/14527-8, Record Group 59, National Archives Building, Washington D.C. (NARS)

⁴⁴ Welles, *op. cit.*, 6.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ *FRUS*, 1941, General, Vol. 1, 361-363; and *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, II*, 198-200.

⁴⁷ Welles, *op. cit.*, 7-15.

⁴⁸ Churchill expected more at the conference. David Reynolds, 'The Atlantic "Flop": British Foreign Policy and the Churchill-Roosevelt Meeting of August 1941,' *The Atlantic Charter* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 136. But Churchill appreciated the Atlantic Charter, as well. FO 371/28903.

⁴⁹ *FRUS*, 1941, General, Vol. 1, 359, 367-369; *Washington Post*, August 19, August 28; War Office Records 193/326, PRO; and 'World-Wide Broadcast,' *Times* (London), August 15, 1941. Nicholas John Cull, *Selling War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 152-153, 162.

⁵⁰ Records of the Department of State, 740.0011 European war 1939/13993. Record Group 59, NARS.