**Document A: James B. Conant Response**

*James Bryant Conant, the president of Harvard University, strongly supported Roosevelt. From 1939 on, Conant was involved in the Office of Scientific Research and Development, where he chaired the National Defense Research Council and was central in the development of the atomic bomb. In 1940 he was asked to give his opinion about the world crisis confronting the United States.*

Let me ask you to visualize our future as a democratic free people in a world dominated by ruthless totalitarian [nations]. There are those who argue that Hitler’s war machine, when its task is done in Europe, will be converted to an instrument of peaceful industrial activity. I do not think so. There are those who imagine that a government which has broken promise after promise, which has scorned the Democratic countries and all they stand for, which mocks and laughs at free institutions as a basis for civilization – that such a government can live in a peaceful relationship with the United States. I do not think so. To my mind a complete Nazi victory over France and England would be, by necessity, but a prelude to Hitler’s attempt to dominate the world. If Germany were triumphant, at best there would result an armed truce. . . . Our way of life would be endangered for years to come. . . . At this moment, today, the war is in effect [turning] towards our shores. The issue before the United States is, I repeat, can we live as a free, peaceful, relatively unarmed people in a world dominated by the totalitarian [nations]? . . . . . . Action is the only answer, action which may help immediately, action which will be to the Allies an earnest and encouragement of help to come. . .

**Document B: America First Committee Response**

*The America First Committee opposed the entrance of the United States into World War II. It was frequently asked about the national interests of the American people. In 1941 the Committee gave the following response.*

It is difficult, of course, to define our national interests, but it is always safe to assume that our chief national interest is the maintenance of our democracy and the well-being of our own American people. It is true that we have a stake in the maintenance of democracy throughout the world. It is also true that many Americans have commercial interests abroad which they are naturally interested in protecting. It is far from certain, however, that this war or our involvement in it will protect any of those interests.

Our part should be first of all to protect our own democracy. Since experience has taught us that democracy vanishes in wartime, it would seem that the surest way to keep our form of government is to avoid involvement. We should also seek an adequate national defense to make sure that we can maintain our territorial integrity in the event we are attacked by a foreign power. If, after announcing their intention to stay out of the war, as they have repeatedly done, the American people wish to aid Great Britain, they should do so. But they should make certain to keep aid and direct participation separate.

**Document C: Charles A. Lindbergh Speech**

*Charles A. Lindbergh became an international hero in 1927 with the first transatlantic flight. When World War II broke out, he became an outspoken opponent of U.S. involvement. Lindbergh joined the America First Committee and toured the country, giving speeches such as this one reported in the April 24, 1941 New York Times.*

It is not only our right, but it is our obligation as American citizens to look at this war objectively and to weigh our chances for success if we should enter it. I have attempted to do this, especially from the standpoint of aviation; and I have been forced to the conclusion that we cannot win this war for England, regardless of how much assistance we send. I ask you to look at the map of Europe today and see if you can suggest any way in which we could win this war if we entered it. Suppose we had a large army in America, trained and equipped. Where would we send it to fight? The campaigns of the war show only too clearly how difficult it is to force a landing, or to maintain an army, on a hostile coast. . . . The United States is better situated from a military standpoint than any other nation in the world. Even in our present condition of unpreparedness no foreign power is in a position to invade us today. If we concentrate on our own defenses and build the strength that this nation should maintain, no foreign army will ever attempt to land on American shores. War is not inevitable for this country. Such a claim is defeatism in the true sense. No one can make us fight abroad unless we ourselves are willing to do so. No one will attempt to fight us here if we arm ourselves as a great nation should be armed. . . . The time has come when those of us who believe in an independent American destiny must band together and organize for strength. We have been led toward war by a minority of our people. This minority has power. It has influence. It has a loud voice. But it does not represent the American people.