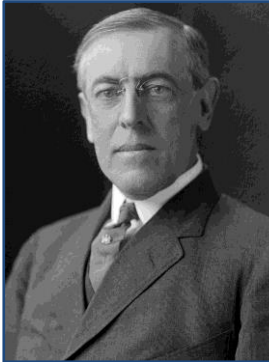


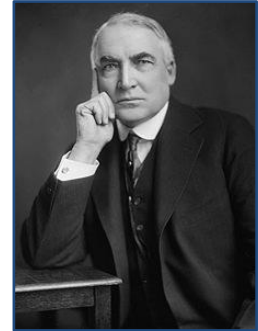
1. Define **isolationism** using a selection of relevant key words from the word bank below:

| | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|--------|
| separate | Europe | refused | lonely | policy |
| world affairs | League of Nations | Woodrow Wilson | independent | idea |



Woodrow Wilson, by Harris & Ewing [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

American politicians were divided on how to act after the end the Great War in 1918. Should they join the new League of Nations or stay out of foreign affairs? Some, like Woodrow Wilson took an **Internationalist** position, while others, such as Warren Harding, advocated **Isolationism**.



Warren Harding, by Harris & Ewing [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

2. Sort the views in the table below into two groups. For extra challenge you could also rank your two groups in terms of persuasiveness.

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| The USA made money while the rest of the world fought a war! The USA should join the League of Nations. | The USA had to come and save the rest of the world by joining the war effort they should not have to do this again. | 100,000 Americans died during the Great War. How many more would die if the US joined the League? |
| Without the USA the League would not be strong enough to be effective which may lead to a second world war. | The rest of Europe hates the USA because they took so long to enter the war. The USA should join the League and not be late for the next war. | Most Americans left the 'Old World' to avoid war, they should not be so eager to get involved with another conflict. |
| The League is designed to defend democracies like the USA. | Europe is filled problems like communism in Russia. The USA should stay clear! | The US government was elected to help the USA and not the whole world. |
| The USA is the only country that is rich enough to make the League work. | The whole idea of the League of Nations came from Wilson and his '14 Points'. It is only right that America joins! | The USA has captured new markets for their mass produced goods. Why should the USA share this wealth? |

These differences also extended to economic policies. Wilson advocated **free trade** whereas Harding supported **tariffs**.

Before the 1920 election President Wilson had applied a *laissez-faire* (a French term which literally means 'allow to do') approach to business. The Government would allow businesses to do whatever they wanted for example, set wages, organise working conditions, trade with whoever they wished, and produce whatever they wanted. This is free-trade. This was also known as 'rugged individualism': people did not expect the state to do anything for them.

When Harding won the 1920 Presidential election American policy shifted to reflect his isolationism. In 1922 the Fordney-McCumber tariff act was passed.

The 1922 Fordney-McCumber Tariff

The Tariff had two principles:

- a. '*Scientific tariff*': this linked tariffs to the wages in the country of export. This negated the effect of lower wages in competitor countries.
- b. '*American Selling Price*': this linked tariffs to the price of American goods, not to the cost of production. This meant that foreign imports were ALWAYS more expensive than American-produced goods, however cheaply they had been made.

The Fordney-McCumber Act established the highest tariffs in history, with some duties up to 400% and an average of 40%.

3. Which is the correct definition of a tariff?
 1. A tariff is like a Sheriff who patrols the US border to make sure foreign goods do not arrive in America.
 2. A tariff is a large fort that attacks any foreign traders who to arrive in America
 3. A tariff is a tax that is placed on any foreign goods that arrive in America. It is also known as a 'duty'.
 4. A tariff is a large dog that attacks any Americans who buy foreign goods.

There were many reasons for the popularity of tariffs:

Wartime boom: American business had boomed during the war - possibly because the countries involved in the war hadn't been able to sell goods to America - and American businessmen wanted this to continue.

American wages: American wages were rising, and American businessmen feared that low wages in Europe would allow European firms to undercut them. Thus Joseph Fordney claimed that tariffs would protect American workers' jobs.

Isolationism: American isolationists wanted America to be self-sufficient (be able to look after themselves).

Farm Bloc: Overproduction was causing a depression in farming. Farmers hoped that protection would help keep prices up.

4. Create your own simple diagram using the information above to explain the appeal of tariffs to many Americans.