

Document Based Question

Jamie Thomsen

Depoali Middle School

jthomsen@washoeschools.net



“The Nazis victimized some people for what they did, some for what they refused to do, some for what they were, and some for the fact that they were” – John Conway

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Write an essay explaining your answer to the statement above. Make sure you justify your response using specific evidence from the sources provided.

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Background Paragraph

It is hard to imagine that the world, the United States included, was unaware that Germany and the Nazi party were in the midst of exterminating the Jewish race in the 1930s and 1940s. And yet, when information began leaking out about Hitler's unspeakable actions, the U.S. failed to act and much of the world did little to spare the lives of many European Jews. There is much criticism on the lack of U.S. intervention and when exactly the United States became aware of Hitler's atrocious crimes. Unfortunately, the United States, a country known for providing sanctuary to the persecuted, closed its doors to those in desperate need of refuge. America's hesitation in rescuing the Jews and other victims of the Holocaust is contributed to many factors including limited information, anti-Semitism, and the economy.

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Document 1: Vienna's Synagogues Attacked

Vocabulary:

- *Synagogue*: A Jewish house of worship
- *Consulate*: An official appointed by the government to look after the welfare of its citizens in another country

Document Note: This article appeared in the New York Times on November 11, 1938. This was one of the few times the treatment regarding the persecution of the Jewish population in Europe made the front page of an American newspaper; most stories were buried within the newspaper pages. This article is referring to Kristallnacht, or Night of Broken Glass, which was a series of attacks against Jews throughout Nazi Germany and parts of Austria. Jewish homes and synagogues were ransacked, shops and villages were destroyed, and many Jews were killed or taken to concentration camps.

All Vienna's Synagogues Attacked; Fires and Bombs Wreck 18 of 21

Jews Are Beaten, Furniture and Goods Flung From Homes and Shops — 15,000 Are Jailed During Day—20 Are Suicides

Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

VIENNA, Nov. 10.—In a surge of revenge for the murder of a German diplomat in Paris by a young Polish Jew, all Vienna's twenty-one synagogues were attacked today and eighteen were wholly or partly destroyed by fires and bomb explosions.

Anti-Jewish activities under the direction of Storm Troopers and Nazi party members in uniform began early this morning. In the earlier stages Jews were attacked and beaten. Many Jews awaiting admittance to the British Consulate-General were arrested, and according to reliable reports others who stood in line before the United States Consulate were severely beaten and also arrested.

Apartments were raided and searched and gradually some 15,000 arrested Jews were assembled at police stations. Some were released during the day. Tonight arrests were continuing.

Many of those arrested were sent to prisons or concentration camps in buses. Mobs of raiders penetrated Jewish residences and shops, flinging furniture and merchandise from the windows and destroying wantonly.

In their panic and misery about fifty Jews, men and women, were

reported to have attempted suicide; about twenty succeeded.

Scores of bombs were placed in synagogues, blowing out windows and in many cases damaging walls. Floors that had been soaked with kerosene readily caught fire.

Fire brigades were summoned to fight fires in eighteen synagogues, and the fire engines remained in their neighborhood all day. Two of the synagogues were not being used for religious purposes.

Those wholly or partly destroyed were the synagogues in Schiffamts-gasse, Steingasse, Muellnergasse, Neue Welt-Gasse, Tempelgasse, Franz Hochedlinger-Gasse, Stumpergasse, Unter Viadukt-Gasse, Huber-Gasse, Schmalzhofgasse, Siebenbrunnengasse, Kluckegasse, Turnergasse, Neudeggergasse, Palnamitengasse, Schmelzgasse, Schopenhauerstrasse and Humboldt-platz.

At 9 A. M. the first fires broke out in the Hernalser and Hietzinger synagogues. The Hietzinger synagogue, which was in Moorish style and was the largest and finest synagogue in Vienna, was gutted.

At 11:30 A. M. several explosions took place in the Second District, and a number of synagogues were

Continued on Page Two

The New York Times

Published: November 11, 1938
Copyright © The New York Times

Source: New York Times article printed on November 11, 1938

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Please answer the following questions about Document 1

1. When was this document written?
2. According to article, how many of Vienna's synagogues were attacked?
3. According to the article, why were Vienna's synagogues attacked?
4. What is the purpose of this article?
5. How do you think the American people reacted to this document?
6. How effective do you think this article was with informing the public on the attacks?
7. Do you think the primary reason the United States did not intervene earlier was anti-Semitism?

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Document 2A: The Political Dr. Seuss

Vocabulary:

- *America First*: A movement during WWII that advocated isolationism and nonintervention in Europe

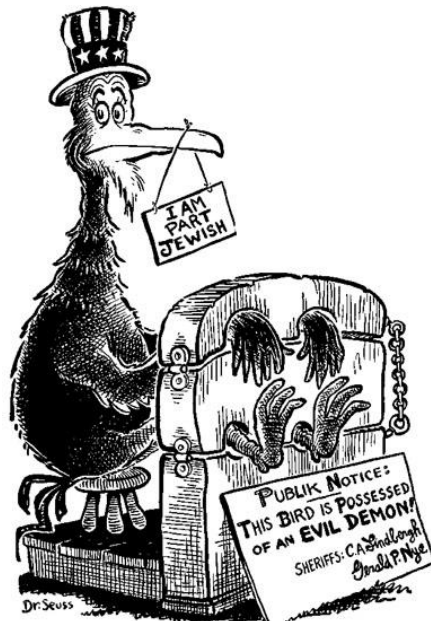
Document note: Dr. Seuss was known as a successful cartoonist that lampooned current events during WWII for a progressive newspaper.

... and the Wolf chewed up the children and spit out their bones ...
But those were Foreign Children and it really didn't matter."



Source: Dr. Seuss Goes to War

Document 2B:



Source: Dr. Seuss Goes to War

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Please answer the following questions about Documents 2A and 2B.

1. What words/phrases does the artist include in the cartoons?

2. What is meant by *America First*?

3. Why is this significant to Document 2A?

4. How does the artist portray Hitler?

5. What is the relationship between the two cartoons?

6. What message is Dr. Seuss trying to spread?

7. Was Dr. Seuss's message anti-Semitic?

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Document 3: Request to Bomb Crematoria at Auschwitz

Vocabulary:

- *Exhuming*: To dig
- *Efficacy*: Capacity for producing a desired result or effect

Document Note: The World Jewish Congress in New York asks the War Department to bomb the crematoria at Auschwitz on August 9, 1944. The War Department turns down the request on August 14, 1944.

August 9, 1944

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I beg to submit to your consideration the following excerpt from a message which we received under date of July 29 from Mr. Ernest Frischer of the Czechoslovak State Council through the War Refugee Board:

"I believe that destruction of gas chambers and crematoria in Oswiecim by bombing would have a certain effect now. Germans are now exhuming and burning corpses in an effort to conceal their crimes. This could be prevented by destruction of crematoria and then Germans might possibly stop further mass exterminations especially since so little time is left to them. Bombing of railway communications in this same area would also be of importance and of military interest."

Sincerely yours,
A. Leon Kubowitzki
Head, Rescue Department

14 August 1944

Dear Mr. Kubowitski:

I refer to your letter of August 9 in which you request consideration of a proposal made by Mr. Ernest Frischer that certain installations and railroad centers be bombed.

The War Department had been approached by the War Refugee Board, which raised the question of the practicability of this suggestion. After a study it became apparent that such an operation could be executed only by the diversion of considerable air support essential to the success of our forces now engaged in decisive operations elsewhere and would in any case be of such doubtful efficacy that it would not warrant the use of our resources. There has been considerable opinion to the effect that such an effort, even if practicable, might provoke even more vindictive action by the Germans.

The War Department fully appreciates the humanitarian motives which promoted the suggested operation, but for the reasons stated above it has not been felt that it can or should be undertaken, at least at this time.

Sincerely,
John J. McCloy
Assistant Secretary of War

Source: PBS.org

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Please answer the following questions about Document 3.

1. Who is the letter addressed to? Why might this be important?
2. When was the document written?
3. What reasons does John McCloy give for not bombing the crematoria at Auschwitz?
4. How might the bombing of the crematoria affect the Holocaust?
5. What message does this document send about the United States' reasons for not bombing the crematoria?
6. Predict the outcome of America's involvement had the United States accepted the request to bomb the crematoria?
7. Do you think the primary reason the United States did not bomb the crematoria was because of anti-Semitism?

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Document 4: Voyage of St. Louis- Refugees Denied

Vocabulary:

- *Refugee*: A person who flees for safety

Document Note: On May 13, 1939, the German transatlantic liner St. Louis sailed from Hamburg, Germany, for Havana, Cuba. On the voyage were 937 passengers. Almost all were Jews fleeing from the Third Reich. The German annexation of Austria in March 1938, the increase in personal assaults on Jews during the spring and summer, the nationwide Kristallnacht (“Night of Broken Glass”) pogrom in November, and the subsequent seizure of Jewish-owned property had caused a flood of visa applications. The refugees were first denied entry in Cuba then in the United States. The St. Louis was then forced to return to Europe on June 6, 1939. Following difficult negotiations initiated by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the ship was able to dock in Antwerp, Belgium; and the governments of Belgium, Holland, France, and the United Kingdom agreed to accept the refugees. By 1940, all of the passengers, except those who escaped to England, found themselves once again under Nazi rule. The plight of German Jewish refugees, persecuted at home and unwanted abroad...”



Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Please answer the following questions about Document 4.

1. How many refugees were aboard the St. Louis?
2. Why were the refugees fleeing Germany?
3. What happened after the St. Louis was denied entrance in Cuba?
4. What questions would you ask both the Cuban and the United States government regarding why they denied the refugees entrance?
5. Predict the outcome if the U.S. had allowed the refugees into the country?
6. When the refugees were denied, what impact do you think this had on anti-Semitism in the United States?
7. Do you think the reason the United States did not take in the refugees was because of anti-Semitism?

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Document 5: Executive Order 8233

Vocabulary:

- *Executive Order*: An order having the force of law issued by the President to the military or other part of the executive branch
- *Neutrality*: The policy of a nation that does not participate or get involved in a war between other nations

Document Note: President Roosevelt issued this executive order on September 5, 1939. This document is explaining the regulations governing the enforcement of neutrality of the United States.

September 5, 1939

WHEREAS, under the treaties of the United States and the law of nations it is the duty of the United States, in any war in which the United States is a neutral, not to permit the commission of unneutral acts within the jurisdiction of the United States;

AND WHEREAS, a proclamation was issued by me on the fifth day of September declaring the neutrality of the United States of America in the war now existing between Germany and France; Poland; and the United Kingdom, India, Australia, and New Zealand.

NOW, THEREFORE, ... in order to make more effective the enforcement of the provisions of said treaties, law of nations, and proclamation, I hereby prescribe that, during said war, the departments and independent offices and establishments of the United States Government shall have the following duties to perform in enforcing the neutrality of the United States...

1. War Department: Enforcement of the neutrality of the United States as prescribed in the above-mentioned proclamation so far as concerns the military land forces of neutral and belligerent powers...
2. Navy Department: Enforcement of the neutrality of the United States as prescribed in the above-mentioned proclamation, (a) so far as concerns vessels of the naval establishments of neutral and belligerent powers and other vessels operating for hostile or military purposes...
3. Treasury Department and Commerce Department: Enforcement of the neutrality of the United States as prescribed in the above-mentioned proclamation so far as concerns all vessels ...
5. Department of Justice: Enforcement of the neutrality of the United States as prescribed in the above-mentioned proclamation, not especially delegated to other departments, independent offices and establishments of the United States Government, and prosecution of violations of the neutrality of the United States.
6. All Departments and Independent Offices and Establishments of the United States: Enforcement of neutrality in connection with their own activities, furnishing information to, and assisting all other departments and independent offices and establishments of the United States Government in connection with the duties herein assigned; and issuing rules and regulations necessary for carrying out the duties herein assigned.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Source: The American Presidency Project

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Please answer the following questions about Document 5.

1. When was the document written?
2. Who wrote the document?
3. Why was the executive order written?
4. Make a list of the departments President Roosevelt includes in the executive order for helping enforce neutrality.
5. Justify President Roosevelt's reasons for enforcing neutrality.
6. What might be some pros and cons to President Roosevelt declaring neutrality?
7. Do you think the reason President Roosevelt declared neutrality was because of anti-Semitic feelings?

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Document 6: Charles Lindbergh Speech

Vocabulary:

- *Advocate*: In favor of, support
- *Subterfuge*: To hide something
- *Agitate*: To stir up or disturb

Document Note: Below is a speech given by pilot Charles Lindbergh campaigning against U.S. involvement in WWII. Lindbergh spoke out in favor of American isolationism during the war. This speech was delivered on September 11, 1941 in Des Moines, Iowa.

It is now two years since this latest European war began. From that day in September, 1939, until the present moment, there has been an over-increasing effort to force the United States into the conflict.

That effort has been carried on by foreign interests, and by a small minority of our own people; but it has been so successful that, today, our country stands on the verge of war ...

Here, I would like to point out to you a fundamental difference between the groups who advocate foreign war, and those who believe in an independent destiny for America.

If you will look back over the record, you will find that those of us who oppose intervention have constantly tried to clarify facts and issues; while the interventionists have tried to hide facts and confuse issues ...

The subterfuge and propaganda that exists in our country is obvious on every side. Tonight, I shall try to pierce through a portion of it, to the naked facts which lie beneath ...

National polls showed that when England and France declared war on Germany, in 1939, less than 10 percent of our population favored a similar course for America. But there were various groups of people, here and abroad, whose interests and beliefs necessitated the involvement of the United States in the war. I shall point out some of these groups tonight, and outline their methods of procedure. In doing this, I must speak with the utmost frankness, for in order to counteract their efforts, we must know exactly who they are.

The three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish and the Roosevelt administration ...

Let us consider these groups, one at a time.

First, the British ...

We know that England is spending great sums of money for propaganda in America during the present war. If we were Englishmen, we would do the same. But our interest is first in America; and as Americans, it is essential for us to realize the effort that British interests are making to draw us into their war.

The second major group I mentioned is the Jewish.

It is not difficult to understand why Jewish people desire the overthrow of Nazi Germany. The persecution they suffered in Germany would be sufficient to make bitter enemies of any race.

No person with a sense of the dignity of mankind can condone the persecution of the Jewish race in Germany. But no person of honesty and vision can look on their pro-war policy here today without seeing the dangers involved in such a policy both for us and for them. Instead of agitating for war, the Jewish groups in this country should be opposing it in every possible way for they will be among the first to feel its consequences ...

Their greatest danger to this country lies in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio and our government.

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

I am not attacking either the Jewish or the British people. Both races, I admire. But I am saying that the leaders of both the British and the Jewish races, for reasons which are as understandable from their viewpoint as they are inadvisable from ours, for reasons which are not American, wish to involve us in the war.

We cannot blame them for looking out for what they believe to be their own interests, but we also must look out for ours. We cannot allow the natural passions and prejudices of other peoples to lead our country to destruction.

The Roosevelt administration is the third powerful group which has been carrying this country toward war. Its members have used the war emergency to obtain a third presidential term for the first time in American history. They have used the war to add unlimited billions to a debt which was already the highest we have ever known. And they have just used the war to justify the restriction of congressional power, and the assumption of dictatorial procedures on the part of the president and his appointees ...

In selecting these three groups as the major agitators for war, I have included only those whose support is essential to the war party. If any one of these groups--the British, the Jewish, or the administration--stops agitating for war, I believe there will be little danger of our involvement ...

Our theaters soon became filled with plays portraying the glory of war. Newsreels lost all semblance of objectivity. Newspapers and magazines began to lose advertising if they carried anti-war articles. A smear campaign was instituted against individuals who opposed intervention. The terms "fifth columnist," "traitor," "Nazi," "anti-Semitic" were thrown ceaselessly at any one who dared to suggest that it was not to the best interests of the United States to enter the war. Men lost their jobs if they were frankly anti-war. Many others dared no longer speak ...

We are on the verge of war, but it is not yet too late to stay out. It is not too late to show that no amount of money, or propaganda, or patronage can force a free and independent people into war against its will. It is not yet too late to retrieve and to maintain the independent American destiny that our forefathers established in this new world.

The entire future rests upon our shoulders. It depends upon our action, our courage, and our intelligence. If you oppose our intervention in the war, now is the time to make your voice heard.

Help us to organize these meetings; and write to your representatives in Washington. I tell you that the last stronghold of democracy and representative government in this country is in our house of representatives and our senate.

There, we can still make our will known. And if we, the American people, do that, independence and freedom will continue to live among us, and there will be no foreign war

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Please answer the following questions about Document 6.

1. What are the three groups that Lindbergh includes in his speech that have been pressing the United States towards war?
2. What is the purpose of the speech?
3. What does Lindbergh mean by “We cannot allow the natural passions and prejudices of other people to lead to our destruction”?
4. What is your opinion of the speech?
5. Summarize the document in your own words.
6. What impact do you think this speech had on America?
7. Do you think the primary reason Charles Lindbergh did not want the United States to get involved was because of anti-Semitic feelings?

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Essay Outline

1. Develop a thesis statement that directly answers the document based question. State your position; you can agree or disagree with the statement.

Thesis Statement:

2. Outline your essay using the Chicken Foot guide to help you. You need to prove your thesis.
3. You must use at least 3 documents that you analyzed in your essay. The documents must support your thesis statement.
4. Write your essay. Remember to cite the documents in your essay to give credibility to what you are saying.

Evaluate the following statement: The primary reason that the U.S. did not get involved earlier in stopping the Holocaust in WWII was anti-Semitism.

Rubric

Requirement:	Points Possible:	Points Earned:
Clearly states thesis		
At least 3 documents were used in the essay		
Documents support thesis		
Essay is organized ~ 5 paragraphs		
Information in essay is relevant to the topic		
Minimal grammatical and spelling errors		

Total Points Earned: _____/