

# Which Statement Best Describes The Effect Of President Warren Harding's foreign Policies? A. Harding's

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President Warren G. Harding's tenure from 1921 to 1923 was marked by a significant shift in American foreign policy, emphasizing a return to normalcy, reduced international engagement, and a focus on domestic prosperity. His foreign policies had lasting effects on the United States' position in the world, shaping the nation's diplomatic approach in the post-World War I era. This article explores the key aspects of Harding's foreign policy, its objectives, implementations, and long-term consequences, providing a comprehensive understanding of its impact.

## Introduction to Harding's Foreign Policy Philosophy

Harding inherited a nation weary of war and international entanglements following the devastation of World War I. His foreign policy was characterized by:

- A desire to reduce military expenditures
- An emphasis on diplomatic stability
- A focus on economic growth and trade
- A cautious approach to involvement in international conflicts

His administration aimed to restore America's global standing while prioritizing peace and stability. Understanding the core principles of Harding's foreign policy helps contextualize its effects on both U.S. foreign relations and global diplomacy.

## Major Components of Harding's Foreign Policy

### 1. The Washington Naval Conference (1921-1922)

One of Harding's most significant foreign policy initiatives was the Washington Naval Conference, which aimed to prevent a naval arms race among major powers.

- **Objectives:** Limit naval armaments and promote peace
- **Participants:** United States, United Kingdom, Japan, France, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, China
- **Key Agreements:**
  - Five-Power Treaty: Limits on battleship tonnage

- Four-Power Treaty: Respect for Pacific territories
- Nine-Power Treaty: Open Door policy in China

Impact:

- Significantly reduced the likelihood of a naval arms race in the 1920s.
- Demonstrated U.S. commitment to diplomacy over military confrontation.
- Set a precedent for future arms control agreements.

## 2. The Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928)

Although signed after Harding's presidency, the treaty was rooted in Harding's approach to promoting peace.

- **Purpose:** Outlaw war as an instrument of national policy
- **Signatories:** 15 nations initially signed, including the U.S.
- **Significance:** Symbolic gesture favoring diplomacy over conflict

Impact:

- Marked a shift towards international cooperation.
- However, lacked enforcement mechanisms, limiting its practical effect.

## 3. Isolationism and Reduced Military Engagement

Harding's policies reflected a broader trend of American isolationism after WWI.

- Reduced military expenditures and troop deployments
- Limited involvement in European affairs
- Focus on economic ties rather than military alliances

Impact:

- Fostered a period of relative peace and stability.
- Enabled the U.S. to rebuild its economy without the burdens of international conflicts.
- Laid the groundwork for future policies centered on economic interests.

## Economic and Diplomatic Focus of Harding's Foreign Policy

## **1. Promoting American Business Interests**

Harding believed that economic growth was essential for national prosperity and used foreign policy to support this goal.

- Encouraged American investments abroad
- Sought to open foreign markets for U.S. goods
- Negotiated treaties that favored American economic interests

Impact:

- Strengthened U.S. economic influence globally.
- Fostered international trade relations.

## **2. Maintaining Peace Through Diplomacy**

Harding emphasized diplomacy over military action to ensure peace.

- Engaged in negotiations and treaties rather than conflicts
- Supported international conferences aimed at disarmament

Impact:

- Contributed to a period of relative peace in the early 1920s.
- Demonstrated a diplomatic approach that influenced future policies.

## **Limitations and Criticisms of Harding's Foreign Policy**

### **1. Lack of Long-term Enforcement**

While agreements like the Kellogg-Briand Pact symbolized peace, they lacked enforcement mechanisms.

- Failed to prevent future conflicts such as World War II
- Relied heavily on goodwill rather than enforceable commitments

### **2. Limited Engagement with Emerging Powers**

Harding's policies did not adequately address the rise of new international powers, notably:

- Japan's expansionism in Asia
- Economic instability in Europe

### **3. Domestic Criticism and Political Limitations**

Some critics argued that Harding's focus on diplomacy and disarmament overlooked the need for a more assertive stance.

- Concerns over American security and influence
- Questions about the effectiveness of treaties in a changing global landscape

## **Long-Term Effects of Harding's Foreign Policies**

### **1. Set the Stage for Future International Agreements**

Harding's efforts in arms control influenced subsequent treaties and diplomatic efforts.

### **2. Reinforced the Policy of Isolationism**

While temporary agreements promoted peace, the overall approach contributed to an isolationist stance that persisted into the 1930s.

### **3. Impact on U.S. Global Leadership**

Although Harding sought to reduce U.S. involvement, his policies helped establish a foundation for American diplomacy based on multilateral agreements and economic influence.

## **Conclusion**

Which statement best describes the effect of President Warren Harding's foreign policies? A. Harding's approach emphasized diplomatic engagement, arms reduction, and economic growth, fostering a period of peace and stability in the early 1920s. His policies laid important groundwork for international agreements but also revealed limitations in enforcement and strategic foresight. While not entirely preventing future conflicts, Harding's foreign policy initiatives marked a significant shift in American diplomacy—favoring peace, diplomacy, and international cooperation over military confrontation. These policies reflected Harding's broader vision of restoring normalcy and stability, shaping the course of U.S. foreign relations in the subsequent decades.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What was the general impact of President Warren Harding's foreign policies during his administration?**

Harding's foreign policies aimed to promote peace and stability, leading to efforts like the Washington Naval Conference, but were often criticized for being too lenient or lacking in clear direction.

### **How did Harding's foreign policy approach differ from previous presidents?**

Harding favored a return to normalcy, emphasizing isolationism and less intervention abroad, contrasting with earlier presidents who engaged more actively in international affairs.

### **What was the significance of the Washington Naval Conference under Harding's foreign policy?**

The Washington Naval Conference was significant because it marked a major effort to limit naval arms and prevent an arms race, promoting peace among major powers.

### **Did Harding's foreign policies have a lasting impact on U.S. international relations?**

While some initiatives like arms reduction had short-term success, Harding's foreign policies were generally seen as limited in scope and did not lead to long-term changes in U.S. foreign relations.

### **Were Harding's foreign policies influenced by isolationist tendencies?**

Yes, Harding's foreign policies reflected strong isolationist tendencies, emphasizing non-intervention and focusing on domestic issues.

### **How did Harding's foreign policies address relations with Latin America and the Far East?**

Harding aimed to improve relations through diplomacy and non-intervention, but his policies were often cautious and aimed to avoid entanglements.

### **What role did Harding's foreign policies play in the context of the 1920s international climate?**

They contributed to a period of relative peace and reduced military tensions, aligning with the broader isolationist and disarmament trends of the 1920s.

### **What criticisms are associated with Harding's foreign**

## policy decisions?

Critics argue that Harding's foreign policies were too passive, lacked strategic clarity, and failed to address emerging global threats effectively.

## In what ways did Harding's foreign policies reflect the priorities of his administration?

They reflected a focus on peace, disarmament, and a desire to avoid international conflicts, aligning with Harding's overall campaign for stability and normalcy.

## Additional Resources

Which Statement Best Describes The Effect Of President Warren Harding's Foreign Policies?

When exploring the legacy of Warren Harding's presidency, one of the most debated aspects is his approach to foreign policy. Harding's foreign policies, often characterized by a desire to promote peace and stability while avoiding entanglements, have left a lasting imprint on America's international relations during the early 20th century. The question of which statement best describes the effect of Harding's foreign policies invites a nuanced analysis of his administration's actions, philosophies, and their broader consequences.

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Understanding Warren Harding's Foreign Policy: An Introduction

Warren G. Harding, the 29th President of the United States (1921-1923), assumed office in the aftermath of World War I—a time marked by global upheaval, economic instability, and shifting alliances. Harding's foreign policy was largely influenced by the desire to restore normalcy, reduce military expenditures, and foster peaceful international relations. Unlike his predecessors, Harding's approach was characterized by a cautious, isolationist stance, emphasizing diplomacy over military intervention. His administration sought to distance the United States from European conflicts and focus on domestic recovery, all while maintaining strategic interests abroad.

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Key Aspects of Harding's Foreign Policy

### 1. Emphasis on Peace and Disarmament

Harding's administration was committed to promoting peace through diplomatic agreements and disarmament treaties. Notable efforts included:

- The Washington Naval Conference (1921-1922): This landmark treaty involved major naval powers like the US, Britain, Japan, France, and Italy. It aimed to prevent an arms race by limiting naval armaments, especially battleships. The treaty established a ratio-based naval limitation and was seen as a significant step toward international disarmament.

- Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928): Though signed after Harding's presidency, the spirit of this pact—renouncing war as a tool of national policy—was aligned

with Harding's diplomatic philosophy. His administration laid groundwork for such agreements.

## 2. Isolationism and Limited Engagement

Harding believed that America's best interest lay in avoiding entanglements in European conflicts and political disputes. This was reflected in policies such as:

- **Withdrawal from European Affairs:** Harding's administration distanced itself from European diplomatic crises, emphasizing a focus on domestic issues and economic recovery.
- **Reduced Military Presence:** There was a significant reduction in military forces and naval power to cut costs and avoid unnecessary conflicts.

## 3. Economic and Diplomatic Engagements

While Harding favored a cautious approach, his administration also engaged in economic diplomacy:

- **Trade Relations:** Efforts were made to promote American exports and foster favorable trade agreements, though these were secondary to disarmament and peace initiatives.
- **Recognition of New Nations:** Harding's government recognized new nations emerging from the post-World War I restructuring, such as recognizing the Soviet Union in 1922, signaling a pragmatic approach to diplomacy.

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## The Effect of Harding's Foreign Policies: Analyzing the Outcomes

### A. Promotion of Peace and Stability

One of the most notable effects of Harding's foreign policies was the promotion of international peace through treaties and diplomatic agreements. The Washington Naval Conference's success in limiting naval arms was widely regarded as a positive step toward reducing the threat of future conflicts. Similarly, the Kellogg-Briand Pact, although signed after his presidency, echoed Harding's desire for peaceful resolutions and set a precedent for future diplomacy.

#### Impact:

- Reduced naval arms among major powers.
- Set a diplomatic tone favoring peace over conflict.
- Created a foundation for future disarmament efforts.

### B. Reinforcement of Isolationism

Harding's policies reinforced the United States' traditional preference for isolationism, avoiding military commitments and European political disputes. This stance had both positive and negative effects:

#### Positive:

- Allowed the U.S. to focus on domestic economic growth and recovery.
- Prevented involvement in European conflicts that could have been costly.

#### Negative:

- Limited America's influence in shaping postwar European stability.
- Missed opportunities to participate more actively in international security

arrangements.

### C. Limited Long-Term Impact and Challenges

While Harding's foreign policy achievements were significant, their long-term effects were mixed:

- Short-lived Disarmament Gains: The naval treaties had limitations and were eventually undermined by subsequent arms races and geopolitical shifts.
- Corruption and Scandal: Harding's administration was marred by scandals (e.g., Teapot Dome), which tainted perceptions of U.S. leadership abroad and affected diplomatic relations.
- Transition to More Active Diplomacy: His successor, Calvin Coolidge, continued similar policies, but the global landscape changed with the rise of totalitarian regimes and the approach of World War II.

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Which Statement Best Describes the Effect of Warren Harding's Foreign Policies?

Based on the above analysis, the statement that most accurately captures the effect of Harding's foreign policies is:

"Harding's foreign policies prioritized peace through disarmament and diplomacy, reinforcing American isolationism but laying groundwork for future international agreements."

This encapsulates the essence of Harding's approach: a cautious, peace-oriented strategy rooted in diplomacy, with limited engagement in European conflicts, and a focus on domestic recovery. While these policies had some success in promoting peace, their long-term influence was constrained by geopolitical realities and internal scandals.

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### Summary: The Legacy of Harding's Foreign Policy

- Harding aimed to promote peace and reduce military expenditures, exemplified by the Washington Naval Conference.
- His administration emphasized diplomacy over military intervention, aligning with isolationist tendencies.
- The treaties and agreements initiated during his presidency contributed to a temporary period of relative stability in the 1920s.
- Yet, his policies also reflected limitations, such as a lack of active engagement in global security issues, which became more pressing with the rise of aggressive powers later on.

In conclusion, Harding's foreign policies represent a cautious, peace-driven approach that sought to protect American interests while avoiding foreign entanglements—an approach that resonated with the American public at the time but faced challenges in a rapidly changing world.

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