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"FROM SOMETHING LIKE DISASTER":
THE PASSAGE OF THE LEND-LEASE ACT

The Lend-Lease Bill did not sail through Congress unscathed. Even though Roosevelt had the votes at the very outset to pass the legislation, to obtain the unanimity he wanted would mean accepting some amending of the bill on Capitol Hill. Morgenthau had expected as much, for when he gave the initial instructions for the drafting of the bill he said to write it as broadly as possible “and let somebody else tighten it up.” Some Congressmen proposed to do just that. Many of the amendments that were proposed were honest attempts by supporters of the bill to clarify the wording or to enlist the votes of less enthusiastic representatives and senators. Such changes posed no problem for the Administration, and they were readily agreed to. More troublesome were the rash of amendments proposed by those whose aim was to change the essential nature of the bill. This became a particular problem once the opposition became aware that it could not muster enough votes to defeat the bill. Some of these amendments were actually substitutes, whereas other attempts to emasculate the legislation were far more subtle.

1 This is clear from the discussions recorded in the Morgenthau Diary. See also memo from Roosevelt for Code Room, Jan. 16, 1941, Roosevelt Papers, PSF, II Department Files, State Dept., 1940-41, 1943-44, box 28. Langer and Gleason, The Undeclared War, pp. 272-73, state that it was obvious to the Administration that if it was to get the bill passed by March 1, it would have to accept amendments. That is misleading. It was not speed that motivated Roosevelt to accept amendments, but the desire to obtain the maximum number of votes. In fact, if Sam Rayburn’s estimate was correct, the bill could not pass without certain amendments. See below, p. 197.

2 Morgenthau Diary, Jan. 3, 1941, 344:245.
As originally proposed on the floor of Congress, the Lend-Lease Bill contained nine sections. The first section merely named the bill and assigned a short title. Section two defined the terms "defense article" and "defense information" as they were used in the act. Both definitions closed with a catch-all statement that permitted virtually anything to fall under one of those two categories should the President wish it. Section three was the heart of the proposed legislation. It opened with a phrase that eliminated any possible conflict with the Neutrality or Johnson Debt-Default Acts, or any other legislation, by clearly indicating that this act took precedence. It then authorized the President to manufacture or otherwise procure defense articles for any country "whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States." He was also given permission to "sell, transfer, exchange, lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of" any defense article to such a government. Also included were the powers to repair the defense equipment of those countries and to transfer defense information to them. The terms for such transfers of goods and information were left completely to the discretion of the President. Section four forbade recipients of Lend-Lease to transfer such goods or information to another country without the President's permission. Section five required the respective Cabinet heads to report any transfers to a single executive agency, and section six was a routine authorization for an appropriation. A subparagraph of the sixth section established a revolving fund for any monies that came back to the United States in what was later called reverse lend-lease. The seventh section protected American patent holders and guaranteed their royalties, and section eight authorized the President to buy war materials in any country eligible for aid under section three. Section nine was a general clause authorizing the President to establish regulations needed to carry out the bill and permitting him to delegate his authority.

As with any major bill, a large number of changes were proposed by Congress. Almost as soon as the Lend-Lease Bill was introduced, sentiment grew for putting some kind of time limit on the powers the President could exercise. Wendell Willkie publicly endorsed such a move, though Cordell Hull refused to discuss such ideas and, as he did during his testimony before the Congressional committees, referred the reporters to the Treasury Department. Speaker Sam Rayburn announced on January 13 that he would not oppose such a time limit and from that point on the only option left to Congress was to recommend a specific duration.

3See Roosevelt Papers, OF, Lend-Lease Agreement, 1940-43, box 1-2 for a copy of the actual proposal that Roosevelt and his Cabinet initiated on January 7. There were no substantive changes made between that time and its introduction in Congress, although the title was modified to read "A bill further to promote the defense of the United States and for other purposes."

Some suggestions were sent directly to the two chairmen whose committees would handle the bill. One Congressman suggested to Sol Bloom that his committee consider a section that would delay the effective date of the act for thirty days after the President had certified to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate that a peace which would maintain American security could not be achieved by intercession or negotiation with the belligerents. Another Congressman proposed that regular reports on the operation of the act be sent to the Comptroller General instead of an executive agency, since that official was responsible to Congress. He also suggested giving the President the authority to assume custody of British assets in the Western Hemisphere should Germany be victorious. Nothing came of these and a multitude of other proposals, private and public.5

Roosevelt did not have a closed mind on the question of amendments, for on January 17 he sent Hull a memo asking for the Secretary's comments on a group of amendments which had been suggested to Roosevelt by an old political acquaintance. Hull answered the same day and endorsed two of the suggested changes. One limited Lend-Lease to those nations actively engaged in defending themselves against aggression, and the other set an expiration date for the act of December 31, 1942. Hull also recommended that Roosevelt announce a policy of making public every thirty days all data on Lend-Lease transfers.6

Within a week after the hearings on the bill had begun, Speaker Sam Rayburn concluded that amendments would be necessary. Rayburn was more pessimistic than the President about the bill's chances and flatly asserted that without amendments it would not pass the House of Representatives. The primary thrust of the changes Rayburn wanted was in the direction of protecting Congressional prerogatives. The Speaker's concern was much more than just a desire to see the Lend-Lease Bill become law, although there is no doubt that he was a staunch supporter of the measure. His regard for the rights and duties of Congress, and particularly the House of Representatives, was a consistent part of his political makeup. He had exhibited such sentiments earlier when, at his insistence that the precedents of the House be followed, the decision was made to send the bill to the Foreign Affairs Committee.7


6 Memoranda, Roosevelt to Hull and Hull to Roosevelt, Jan. 17, 1941, Hull Papers, box 48.

7 Rayburn's research assistant pictures the Speaker as a fervent defender of House prerogatives and traditions. Hardeman interviews, various times, 1966-67. The same sort of picture is drawn by a biographer, C. Dwight Dorough, Mr. Sam (New York: Random House, 1962).
Rayburn contacted Morgenthau, whose office was co-ordinating the legislative tactics, and called for a conference of the leadership to discuss the whole question of amendments. Hull, for reasons that are not clear, refused to attend such a strategy conference unless President Roosevelt instructed him to be present. Worried, Morgenthau called the President on January 25 and explained the situation. Roosevelt must have given Hull the necessary instructions, for on the following day Hull held the meeting Rayburn had wanted. All the Democratic Congressional leaders attended, as well as Hull, Morgenthau, and Edward Foley. Rayburn took the initiative and stated that in addition to an amendment putting a time limit on the extensive powers granted the President, the Administration would have to accept one calling for regular and frequent reports to Congress on the operation of the bill. Rayburn also surmised that it might be necessary to make some sort of concession to those Congressmen who feared the bill might be used to provide aid to the Soviet Union, and he wondered if some farm votes might not be garnered by a clause calling for cash payments for food and other raw materials transferred under the act. Sol Bloom, with the experience behind him of eight days of hearings on the bill, suggested an amendment forbidding American warships to convoy belligerent shipping.

After some discussion, the group decided to recommend four amendments to the President. They accepted the idea of a time restriction on the President’s powers but made it clear this did not apply any time limit on agreements made before the President’s authority under the bill expired. They proposed requiring reports to Congress on the operation of the act every ninety days, although the President should not be obliged to reveal anything prejudicial to the public interest. Hull and Morgenthau apparently explained to the Congressmen that Roosevelt, as Commander in Chief, had the authority to order the Navy to escort belligerent convoys, but in an obvious attempt to give impression that Roosevelt intended no such action they proposed an amendment that stated that nothing in the Lend-Lease Act gave the President any additional authority along those lines. Finally, as a concession to those who feared the bill might be used to give away the Navy or some other essential national defense equipment already owned by the military, the conferees suggested an amendment that would require the President to consult the Army Chief of Staff or the

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8The attendees were Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, House Majority Leader John McCormack, Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Sol Bloom and the number two Democrat on the committee, Luther Johnson, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Walter George, plus representatives of the State and Treasury Departments. Rayburn’s fears and the steps leading to the meeting of January 26 are described in ibid., pp. 308-9; Langer and Gleason, The Undeclared War, p. 273; Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 224.
Chief of Naval Operations before transferring such goods. By telephone, Roosevelt gave his assent to such changes.9

Rayburn again recommended to Roosevelt that he hold a bipartisan conference in the White House to discuss the bill. Although Stimson had been working hard to court the votes of Republican Senators like Warren Austin and Wallace White,10 Rayburn believed a gesture by Roosevelt was needed to make such efforts truly effective. Roosevelt agreed, and on the evening of January 26 the meeting was held. In attendance was the Democratic leadership plus two Republicans, House Minority Leader Joe Martin and Senator Charles McNary of Oregon, who had been his party's Vice-Presidential candidate in 1940.

Roosevelt followed the over-all strategy by downplaying his own influence and telling the Congressmen that he would be "perfectly willing to accept any amendments by Congress that were desirable." Senator Walter George gave his support to three amendments: the time limit, the one on convoying, and the requirement for periodic reports to Congress, and subsequently the New York Times quoted Sol Bloom as stating that the Administration would accept those same three changes plus one calling for the two service chiefs to certify any transfer of existing military equipment.11 Since most newspaper editors realized that the President had the votes to pass the bill anyway, his acceptance of amendments was generally greeted as a sign of his reasonableness and generosity. Clearly it was a shrewd political stroke as well, for as Henry Morgenthau commented later in February, it indicated bipartisan support for the bill as amended. Actually House Minority Leader Joe Martin voted against the Lend-Lease Act the first time it passed the House, but his presence at the White House meeting gave a different public impression.

At the same time, the opposition forces were attempting to drum up public support for a series of amendments that, in the eyes of the Administration, would have crippled the bill. Late in January, the New York Times summarized the minority position as demanding seven amendments. They rejected any notion of placing their trust in the President, and in spite of his facetious remarks about there being nothing in the bill to prevent him from standing on his head, they demanded that transfers of American naval vessels be prohibited. Minor as it may seem, this particular fear seems to have been respon-
sible for a fairly significant amount of sincere opposition to the bill. Although the minority approved of the idea of limiting the time during which the President could exercise this authority, they wanted more than that. Such further limitations on the powers granted the President called for a spending restriction of two billion dollars, a prohibition against convoying, elimination of the section permitting the use of American facilities for repairing belligerent ships and other equipment, and an amendment requiring Britain to post some kind of security until her own funds were completely exhausted.\textsuperscript{12}

In addition to the list of opposition proposals given by the \textit{New York Times}, substantial sentiment had developed for some sort of amendment that would prevent the Soviet Union from becoming a recipient of Lend-Lease aid. Although the proponents of such an amendment were generally more concerned with attacking the Lend-Lease Act than with the problem of Russia, it was, nevertheless, one of the stronger points in the isolationists' campaign. As early as January 13, Representative Kenneth Simpson of New York had proposed limiting Lend-Lease to Great Britain and Ireland and requiring the President to come to Congress in order to extend the act's provisions to any other nations. As time went on the bill's opponents became more direct, and finally George Tinkham of Massachusetts introduced an amendment specifically excluding the Soviet Union from the bill. Generally, the Administration's complaint about any amendment calling for Congressional approval of the specific countries to be aided was that any delay could be critically damaging because of the nature of modern warfare and that any specific exclusion of the Soviet Union was labelled unwise because it might encourage Japanese-Russian cooperation in the Far East. The strongest reason behind the Administration's opposition to any attempt to exclude the Soviet Union from Lend-Lease, its foreknowledge of German plans to invade Russia in 1941, could not be disclosed.\textsuperscript{13}

The first battle over amendments culminated in the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a series of votes during executive sessions held

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{New York Times}, Jan. 29, 1941.

\textsuperscript{13} Dawson, \textit{The Decision to Aid Russia}, pp. 22-41, considers the isolationist position in detail. For proposed amendments, see \textit{New York Times}, Jan. 14, 1941. CR, 77th Cong. 1st sess., LXXXVII, pt. 1, Feb. 7, 1941, p. 761. A memorandum on this problem prepared in the Treasury Department outlined the basic Administration approach. See undated memo, "Objection to Amendment . . . .," Treasury Dept. files, "The Lend-Lease Bill." An example of the portion of the argument concerning Far Eastern strategy is in \textit{CR}, 77th Cong., 1st sess., LXXXVII, pt. 1, Feb. 7, 1941, p. 763. It is difficult to find any clear evidence of Administration thoughts regarding aid to Russia prior to the passage of the Lend-Lease Act. Raymond Dawson, \textit{The Decision to Aid Russia}, pp. 23-25, examines the available evidence and concludes that although some thought was given to the probability of eventually applying Lend-Lease to Russia, Roosevelt thought in far more general terms and wanted the broadest possible discretion. This corresponds to the evidence I have uncovered.
on January 29 and 30. Generally speaking, the votes were along party lines, although party discipline was occasionally breached, particularly by Foster Stearns of New Hampshire, a Republican who ultimately voted with the Democrats for a favorable report.

The amendments that were sponsored by the Administration received approval with little trouble. Consultation with the service chiefs prior to the transfer of any goods not produced under the provisions of the Lend-Lease Act was approved by a vote of 20-5, and a time limit on the bill of July 1, 1943, was approved by 20-2, after two shorter time spans were rejected. Karl Mundt offered an amendment prohibiting convoying by American warships, but it was defeated 16-9, and instead the Administration's wording of "no additional powers" along those lines was adopted. The last of the Administration-approved amendments, one calling for reports to Congress every ninety days, was adopted by a voice vote. Three similar amendments, one specifying only the British Empire as eligible, one specifically excluding Russia, and an all-purpose one suggested by Hamilton Fish which prohibited aid to "aggressor states," were all rejected. The Tinkham amendment calling for the specific exclusion of Russia was rejected on a strict party-line vote, 14-10. An attempt to forbid the transfer of United States naval vessels was turned down by a vote of 14-11, with Democrat James Shanley of Connecticut joining the Republicans, and a prohibition against the use of American ports, except as provided for under international law, received only the votes of the Republicans. Karl Mundt offered a substitute calling for a two billion dollar loan to be repaid in goods, information, territory, and raw materials, but it lost by 15-9, with Stearns voting with the majority.

The next day, January 30, the committee again met to vote on other proposed changes and the bill itself. The figure two billion dollars seemed to hold some fascination for the Republicans, for they introduced three amendments that would have either substituted a two-billion-dollar loan or at least limited the appropriation to that sum. Each was rejected without any defections on the Democratic side. A relatively new idea, which later cropped up in more serious form in the Senate, was a proposal by Hamilton Fish which would have attached a clause stating that nothing in the act authorized the President to send American military forces outside the Western Hemisphere. Bloom ruled the amendment out of order, and his ruling was

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14 There were fifteen Democrats and ten Republicans on the Foreign Affairs Committee. The Democrats were Sol Bloom (N.Y.), Luther Johnson (Tex.), John Kee (W. Va.), James Richards (S.C.), James Shanley (Conn.), Joseph Pfeifer (N.Y.), Pete Jarman (Ala.), Laurence Arnold (Ill.), W. O. Burgin (N.C.), Wirt Courtney (Tenn.), Herman Eberharter (Penn.), Noble Gregory (Ky.), Thad Wasielewski (Wisc.), Robert Sikes (Fla.), and Jacob Davis (Ohio).

The Republicans were Hamilton Fish (N.Y.), Charles Eaton (N.J.), George Tinkham (Mass.), Edith Rogers (Mass.), Robert Chiperfield (Ill.), John Vorys (Ohio), Foster Stearns (N.H.), Karl Mundt (S.D.), Bartel Jonkman (Mich.), and Frances Bolton (Ohio).
sustained by a strict party vote of 15-10. Luther Johnson then moved for the adoption of a favorable report on the bill as amended, and his motion carried by 17-8. In addition to the expected fifteen Democratic votes plus Republican Foster Stearns, Edith Rogers of Massachusetts surprised everyone by voting for a favorable report. Since she later voted against the bill in the House, her reason for approving the bill in committee is difficult to understand, although she stated on the floor of the House that she had voted for the majority report in order to get it onto the House floor where she hoped it could be freely discussed. At the close of the session, Karl Mundt and Hamilton Fish both complimented Bloom for conducting what they considered fair and impartial hearings, though Fish commented that questioning Lindbergh about the Iron Cross he had received had been improper. The minority report submitted by the Republican members of the committee supported aid to England but asserted that the Lend-Lease Bill was too dangerous a way to go about it. It warned that passage of the bill could result in a complete change in both the domestic and foreign affairs of the United States. It was signed by eight of the ten Republicans on the committee, including Edith Rogers who had voted for a favorable report. Stearns signed the majority report, and the tenth Republican, George Tinkham, refused to sign either because he opposed all aid to Britain.15

The Administration's tactics were eminently successful in the Foreign Affairs Committee. Party discipline held firm and one Republican was converted. The only amendments adopted had been approved by Roosevelt and the Congressional leadership beforehand, and none of the opposition attempts to change the bill approached success. It was an impressive victory.

Karl Mundt, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in 1941, stated twenty-five years later that a two-billion-dollar loan would have been approved by the committee and the House in a secret ballot but that Roosevelt exerted very heavy pressure on the Democrats to vote down such a proposal. Factual evidence to support such a claim is difficult to find, but it is certain that the Administration kept close tabs on the bill during its journey through Congress. Oscar Cox of the Treasury Department worked hand in glove with Sol Bloom, bombarding the Congressman with memorandums refuting the various opposition attacks on the bill. In addition, the Majority Report on H.R. 1776 was written entirely in the Treasury, primarily by Cox and Stephen Spingarn. Though one suspects that the President and his lieutenants made some phone calls at the critical moments to insure a

favorable vote on certain amendments, in absence of hard evidence that can only be a guess and nothing more.16

Public attention was focused on the House of Representatives where the floor debate started after the bill was reported out of committee on January 30, even though the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had begun hearings on the bill on January 27. The isolationists made still further attempts to emasculate the legislation, but the Administration had spiked the opposition’s guns quite effectively when it put through its package of four amendments. In an attempt to eliminate one major fear that still troubled many of the Lend-Lease Bill’s supporters, the House leadership surprised everyone by supporting an amendment offered by Republican John Taber of New York which called for a limitation on the authority of the President to transfer goods already produced or purchased by other than Lend-Lease funds. In effect, the amendment would have limited transfers of existing stocks of war materials to $500 million. Sol Bloom immediately gained the floor and offered a substitute that set the limit a little higher by calling for restricting such expenditures to ten per cent of the total defense appropriation for fiscal year 1941. There is nothing to show that the House leadership consulted the White House before offering this amendment, although past performances indicate that in all likelihood Sam Rayburn contacted the President by phone before indicating his approval. Certainly the move had been planned ahead by the House leaders, for Rayburn had, at his fingertips, the figures needed to translate the 10 per cent into dollars. It came to roughly $1.2 to $1.3 billion. The following day, Minority Leader John McCormack proposed changing the wording of that amendment from 10 per cent of the 1941 fiscal year defense appropriation to a specific total of one billion three hundred million dollars’ worth of existing military goods procured by appropriations other than a Lend-Lease appropriation.17 This “billion three” amendment, as it was called, effectively ended the Anglo-American debate over the question of the United States assuming the so-called old commitments, that is, the items ordered by Britain through the American government before the passage of the Lend-Lease Act. Since those materials would not come out of any Lend-Lease appropriation, the maximum value the United States could fund was $1.3 billion.

16Mundt interview, April 29, 1967. There are numerous examples of Cox’s aid to Bloom in the Morgenthau Diary, the House Foreign Affairs Committee files, and the Cox Papers. For example, see memo from Cox to Bloom, Feb. 4, 1941, HFAC, “File on H.R. 1776.” The authorship of the majority report is from the Cox Diary, Jan. 29, 1941.

17CR, 77th Cong., 1st sess., LXXVII, pt. 1, Feb. 7-8, 1941, pp. 780-81, 787-91; New York Times, Feb. 8, 1941. Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner claimed in their syndicated column that Rayburn and the House leaders accepted amendments without checking with the President and generally made little effort to keep the bill intact. One has to suspect that the story may have been planted in an attempt to picture the Administration as a staunch respecter of Congressional prerogatives. See the New York Herald-Tribune, Feb. 12, 1941.
The Administration was saddled with one amendment largely as a result of a shrewd political move by Congressman Everett McKinley Dirksen. Waiting until sixty-seven Administration Democrats were out to lunch, he proposed an amendment that permitted Congress, by concurrent resolution, to terminate the powers granted by the bill. The Administration was unable to muster the votes to defeat the amendment, and it passed 148-141. The constitutionality of such a clause was immediately questioned, for such a repealer did not require the President’s signature as would have been the case in a regular bill of repeal, but the leadership decided not to fight it and no attempt was made to eliminate Dirksen’s amendment.18

The House leadership itself put through an amendment designed to head off a similar but more crippling change. On February 7, Sol Bloom proposed a clause stating that nothing in the act authorized the entry of American vessels into a combat zone in violation of the Neutrality Act of 1939. Since the President had the authority to modify that portion of the Neutrality Act anyway, the amendment was essentially just what Karl Mundt called it: “Charming language again but utterly meaningless.” It was designed to head off an amendment proposed by Republican John Vorys which would, in essence, have amended the Neutrality Act by requiring Congress to approve any modifications of the combat zone provisions. Again, there is no evidence of any contact between the White House and the House leadership prior to the time Bloom offered the amendment.19

Tempers flared as the House moved into the final day of deliberations on the bill. After Hamilton Fish offered an amendment to strike out the enacting clause of the bill, John McCormack referred to him as the man “leading the Republican Party in the policy of opportunism.”20 The Republicans protested that such words violated House rules, but Speaker Rayburn rejected their objection. The debate continued along highly disorganized patterns for a while, as the opposition introduced a rash of amendments. Most were repetitions of the ones rejected earlier by the Foreign Affairs Committee, but during the debate and the votes on each, the members became increasingly impatient and critical of each other.

The one truly significant amendment left unresolved on the final day had previously been bandied about in the press but was not officially proposed until February 8. Its sponsor was Republican Congressman James Wadsworth of New York. Wadsworth had supported

19 Ibid., Feb. 7, 1941, pp. 753-61. The amendment passed by unanimous consent. Mundt’s remarks are in ibid., Feb. 8, 1941, p. 800.
20 Ibid., p. 796.
the Lend-Lease Bill from the very beginning, and his amendment was, according to his own statement, designed to elicit the maximum possible support for the bill without significantly limiting the powers President Roosevelt believed he needed. It simply called for a limit on the total cost of the Lend-Lease Act to the government of seven billion dollars. The opposition, which supported every limiting change proposed, regardless of its effectiveness, spoke for the proposal as a means by which Congress would retain power over the purse strings, while the leadership briefly but strongly spoke against it. The Administration's basic argument was that it usurped the functions of the Appropriations Committee and obviated the necessity of an appropriation bill. Luther Johnson, John McCormack, and Sam Rayburn all argued against Wadsworth's amendment, and it was easily defeated 38-122. Interest in the amendment had been fanned by press reports that there had been an attempt by the leaders of both parties to pass the Lend-Lease Bill by the highest margin possible in order to warn Hitler and speculation that such a bipartisan move depended upon the passage of the Wadsworth amendment. True or not, the Administration refused to permit the bill to be so severely limited, particularly before it had a chance to present its case for an appropriation.21

From the plethora of amendments rejected during the last two days of debate in the House, three are of interest. First, there is the irony of the Republican leadership suggesting that the bill be amended to prevent President Roosevelt from suspending any of the New Deal labor laws. This sad and unsuccessful little attempt to enlist support from organized labor and gain at least a small moral victory was led by many of the same men who had so bitterly opposed virtually every one of those same New Deal labor laws. Second, there was the indomitable and consistent courage of Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana, a dedicated pacifist who had opposed the declaration of war against Germany in 1917, who opposed the Lend-Lease Bill as a warlike act, and who would ultimately become the only member of Congress to oppose a declaration of war against Japan after the Pearl Harbor attack. In deadly earnest, she proposed an amendment stating that nothing in the Lend-Lease Act could be construed to permit the President to order, lease, lend, or transfer any members of the armed forces outside the Western Hemisphere. Finally, a moment of comic relief. Vito Marcantonio, a member of the Communist-oriented American Labor Party, with tongue firmly planted in cheek, offered the following as section ten of the bill:

It is the declared policy of the United States that the original Thirteen Colonies are not obsolete or surplus. Any opinion of the Attorney General to the contrary

notwithstanding, nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize or to permit the President of the United States to lease, lend, or transfer the original Thirteen Colonies to King George of England.22

On February 8, 1941, nine days after the Lend-Lease Bill had been sent to the floor of the House by the Foreign Affairs Committee, it was passed by a vote of 260-165. In spite of Republican protestations to the contrary, the vote indicates that the bill was clearly a partisan measure. Only 24 Republicans, out of a total of 159 who voted, cast their ballot for the Lend-Lease Act. An even smaller percentage of Democrats, 25 out of 261, defected from the Administration position and voted against the bill. Since the Republicans controlled the majority of the Congressional seats in the Middle West,23 that section not surprisingly led the vote against the bill with 92 against, out of a total vote of 124. Of those nay votes 79 were Republicans. Only one Southern Democrat, Hugh Peterson of Georgia, went against the bill, with every other Southern Representative—68 Democrats in all—voting with the Administration. The Border states and the Southwest, predominately Democratic, followed strict party lines except for one Missouri Democrat, Joseph Shannon of Kansas City, who opposed the legislation. This meant a total for the two sections of 65 aye votes and only 8 against the bill. From a percentage standpoint, Democratic defections were highest in the Far West where 8 out of 24 Democrats voted against the bill, but it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from such a small sampling. Those Republican votes garnered by the Administration were primarily from the Northeast. Out of 56 Northeastern Republicans 20, or 37.7 per cent, voted for the bill. Although the cause and effect relationship is not certain, it would seem that the President’s attempt to court the Eastern Republicans paid off. At the same time, only 6 Democrats from that section opposed the act. It was an impressive victory for the President and his policy of aid to Britain. The number of Representatives voting, 425 plus 6 members paired out of a total of 435, was truly remarkable. Of

23 I have arbitrarily divided the country into the following sections for the purpose of analyzing the Lend-Lease vote in both the House and the Senate.

Border: Maryland, Delaware, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, Missouri.
Middle West: Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.
South: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas.
Southwest: Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona.
the 4 members who did not vote or announce as paired, one was Speaker Sam Rayburn, who voted only to make or break a tie, and the other 3 had died or were on their deathbeds at the time. The House membership clearly considered this a time to stand up and be counted.

| TABLE 1: HOUSE VOTE ON THE LEND-LEASE BILL |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Northeast | Border | Middle West | South | Southwest | Far West | Total |
| pro | 77 | 36 | 32 | 68 | 29 | 18 | 260 |
| con | 43 | 7 | 92 | 1 | 1 | 21 | 165b |
| total vote | 165b | 425 |

| Dems. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| pro | 57 | 36 | 30 | 68 | 29 | 16 | 236 |
| con | 6 | 1 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 25 |

| Reps. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| pro | 20 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 24 |
| con | 36 | 6 | 79 | 0 | 1 | 13 | 135 |


bFive votes from splinter parties were cast against the bill: three Progressives, one Farmer-Labor, and one American Labor Party.

Although the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Walter George of Georgia, had hoped to hold off the Senate hearings on the Lend-Lease Bill until the House voted on the legislation, the House Committee hearings took so long that he changed his mind and on January 27 the Foreign Relations Committee began to hear testimony. Senator George had been on President Roosevelt’s

24The three were Walter Bankhead of Alabama, Sam Massingale of Oklahoma, and Kenneth Simpson of New York. All three died before mid-April, 1941. The vote is broken down by sections in Table 1. Leroy N. Rieselbach, “The Demography of the Congressional Vote on Foreign Aid, 1939-1958,” American Political Science Review, LVIII, no. 3 (Sept., 1964), 577-88, includes a statistical analysis of the House vote on Lend-Lease which backs up my conclusions.

25There were sixteen Democrats, six Republicans, and one member of the Progressive Party on the Foreign Relations Committee. The Democrats were Walter George (Ga.), Pat Harrison (Miss.), Robert Wagner (N.Y.), Tom Connally (Tex.), Elbert Thomas (Utah), Frederick Van Nuys (Ind.), James Murray (Mont.), Claude Pepper (Fla.), Theodore Green (R.I.), Alben Barkley (Ky.), Robert Reynolds (N.C.), Joseph Guffey (Penna.), Guy Gillette (Iowa), Bennett Clark (Mo.), Carter Glass (Va.), and James Byrnes (S.C.).

The Republicans were Hiram Johnson (Calif.), Arthur Capper (Kans.), Arthur Vandenberg (Mich.), Wallace White (Me.), Henrik Shipstead (Minn.), and Gerald Nye (N.D.). Robert LaFollette, Jr., of Wisconsin was the Progressive.
"purge" list for the 1938 election because of his opposition to the Administration's reorganization plan for the Supreme Court, and his enthusiastic support for the Lend-Lease Bill was critically important to the Administration. Fortunately for Roosevelt, Senator George considered aid to Britain more important than intra-party squabbles and staunchly backed the Lend-Lease proposal. As in the House of Representatives, where the Lend-Lease Bill was the first major legislation put through by the team of Speaker Sam Rayburn and Majority Leader John McCormack, as well as being the first piece of major legislation considered by the House Foreign Affairs Committee in many years, so too in the Senate it was a first. Walter George had succeeded the late Key Pittman as Chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and this was his first piece of major legislation in that job.

Just as in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, it was evident from the start that the Lend-Lease Bill had the necessary votes in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Harold Hinton in the New York Times, on January 12, reported that Senator George believed the bill could be forced through but that the Administration would not use pressure since it wanted to create maximum national unity on the issue. An Associated Press poll of the Foreign Relations Committee on the same day listed eight in favor, four opposed, four undecided, and five unavailable. Of those not reached for comment, two, Senator Claude Pepper and Senator Robert Wagner, were known to favor the legislation, which gave it a minimum majority of thirteen out of twenty-one votes. In addition, the Administration had two vacancies to fill on the committee, and one of the appointees was expected to be Senator James Byrnes of South Carolina, another proponent of the bill. In the same article, Senator George was said to favor two amendments: a time limit on the powers granted the President and certification by the service chiefs before transferring any war materials already held by the military. By February 1, Senator George could predict to Vice-President Henry Wallace that the Lend-Lease Bill would be reported out of committee on February 12, which proved to be only one day off.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee dropped its own version of the bill once H.R. 1776 was passed by the House and instead worked with the House bill. This effectively eliminated any wide scale amending by the Senate committee. The opposition proposed seven amendments and made their views public in an open letter from Senator Robert Taft to Senator George. In general they paralleled the proposals of the House Republicans and called for specific language

forbidding convoying, the use of American ports as bases for British ships, any transfer of United States naval vessels or equipment, and entry of American merchant ships into war zones. Three new amending proposals called for elimination of the provision permitting the purchase of arms in foreign countries, elimination of the revolving fund, and specific approval from Congress for any foreign aid funds. In a memorandum apparently circulated among the members of the Foreign Relations Committee, Taft, who was not a member of that committee, defended his views. The limits on convoying, use of American ports, and the sending of merchant ships into war zones were all designed to keep the power to make war in the hands of Congress, since each of those acts was in essence an act of war. His concern for the Navy grew out of the knowledge that the naval forces could not be built up as rapidly as those of the Army and Army Air Force, and the amendment regarding specific Congressional approval of funds for any foreign aid eliminated what Taft considered a blanket power to transfer goods without any appropriation. He also noted that his part of the proposed bill would even let the President aid the Soviet Union. He claimed that the revolving fund violated the Constitutional prohibition against any military appropriation covering more than two years, and he defended the amendment limiting Lend-Lease to American goods by noting that he saw no need to finance the British war effort except with American exports. Taft also publicly supported the idea of a loan as a substitute for the Lend-Lease Act and introduced such an amendment on the Senate floor on January 23. This amendment, along with others submitted by various Senators, was referred to the Foreign Relations Committee.27

On February 12 and 13, all the Taft amendments were defeated by the Foreign Relations Committee, as was a proposed amendment by Senator Arthur Vandenberg which would have required certification by the service chiefs before transferring any existing military goods instead of the consultation clause inserted by the House committee. The closest the opposition came was a vote of 13-10 on the Vandenberg amendment. The appointment of Senator James Byrnes and Senator Carter Glass to the committee provided the necessary margin, but the vote was uncomfortably close and foreshadowed a stiff battle on the Senate floor. The other amendments that had been passed on to the committee, all of which suggested changes similar to those beaten in the House, were likewise defeated by wide margins in the Foreign Relations Committee.28

27New York Times, Feb. 10, 1941; unsigned, undated memorandum,Senate, “file on H.R. 1776 (S. 275).” From the nature of this memo it seems apparent it was prepared for or by Senator Taft.

28Senate, “file on H.R. 1776 (S. 275)” contains a list of the committee votes in executive session but does not give any names. Also see New York Times, Feb. 13, 1941.
One ambiguous addition made by the Foreign Relations Committee to the bill as passed by the House was the so-called Connally amendment to the Dirksen amendment. Instead of permitting Congress, by concurrent resolution, to terminate the powers conferred on the President for any reason it chose, the new wording stated that such a resolution had to declare that those powers were no longer necessary to promote the national defense. In other words, Congress could abrogate the authority granted by the bill only if the emergency were over. If Congress were merely dissatisfied with the President’s conduct, termination of the powers granted would require a normal repealer, which would be subject to a Presidential veto.29

The Foreign Relations Committee also approved an amendment supported by Senator James Byrnes. As originally passed, it required all activities under section three—the section that gave the President his powers to provide aid—to have either an appropriation or contract approved by Congress. Byrnes agreed with Senator Robert Taft’s argument that, as passed by the House, the Lend-Lease Bill permitted the President to transfer goods purchased out of Army and Navy appropriations. The “billion three” amendment limited such action for goods already owned by the military, but there was no restriction on the President’s power to do so in the future. Since Congress would have no choice but to pass another appropriation for the military in order to preserve the national defense, Byrnes and Taft believed Congress could maintain its legitimate power of the purse only if Lend-Lease transfers were limited to those items funded by a Lend-Lease appropriation. The Administration did not fight the change in the Foreign Relations Committee and the amendment was adopted unanimously, but it later became the cause of a major behind-the-scenes struggle during the floor debate.30

One change, proposed by Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana, called for a clause stating that nothing in the Lend-Lease Act authorized the use of United States armed forces outside the United States or its territories. In this form it was easily defeated by a com-

29New York Times, Feb. 13, 1941. See also “H.R. 1776 as amended to Mar. 6, 1941,” Calendar no. 51, 77th Cong., 1st sess., Report no. 45 (printed for the use of the Senate). This is a copy of the act as amended to March 6, showing the amendments made by the Foreign Relations Committee and by the Senate. I have a print in my possession and others may be seen in Senate, “file on H.R. 1776 (S. 275).”

Early in April, 1941, President Roosevelt sent a memo to the Attorney-General, Robert Jackson, in which he stated that, in his opinion, the clause was unconstitutional and that any attempt to end the powers granted by the Lend-Lease Bill would have to be in the form of a law that could be vetoed. It was published in the Harvard Law Review, LXVI, no. 8 (June, 1953), 1357-58. See also Eugene C. Gerhart, America’s Advocate: Robert H. Jackson (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1958), pp. 227-28.

mittee vote of 13-9, but it was to come back in a modified form and cause the Administration forces no end of trouble.

Unlike in the House of Representatives, where the major battle was in the Foreign Affairs Committee, in the Senate the opposition put forth its greatest effort during the floor fight. Initially some of those Senators most staunchly opposed to the bill claimed their intention was to defeat, not amend it, but they soon changed their minds as it became clear that the Administration had the votes to win any all-or-nothing contest. Even the President miscalculated the probable intensity of the Senate floor fight, for on February 12, the day before the bill was favorably reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee, he predicted that it would become law by March 1 or a little sooner. Nevertheless, there was never any question as to the ultimate fate of the bill. As early as February 18, Roosevelt informed the press that Averell Harriman would be leaving for England in ten days as “Defense Expediter,” obviously for the purpose of administering Lend-Lease from London. During the same press conference the detailed questions reporters put to Roosevelt about the nature of the act’s operations made it clear that they, as well as the President, assumed its passage was a foregone conclusion. An attempt by Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley to speed up the process brought on the spectre of a filibuster. When, on February 19, he suggested longer sessions, Senator Burton Wheeler bluntly threatened stalling tactics that amounted to a filibuster. Barkley backed off and sessions continued as before.

As the debate developed, it soon became apparent that the two amendments that stood the best chance of being adopted were the Byrnes amendment, which had been approved by the Foreign Relations Committee, and the Ellender amendment, which that committee had rejected. The Byrnes amendment, which limited Lend-Lease to those items purchased under a specific Lend-Lease appropriation or a Congressionally approved contract, also had vigorous support from Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia as well as the Republican opponents of the bill led by Senator Taft. As originally proposed and passed by the Foreign Relations Committee, the amendment would have required the President to get Congressional approval for any transfers.

31Senate, “file on H.R. 1776 (S. 275).”
even those falling under the "billion three" clause. Byrnes proposed applying the change only to future military purchases, but Senators Taft and Vandenberg immediately protested that it should apply to the "billion three" clause as well. In the debate that followed, it became clear that the Republicans hoped to use the amendment as a means of forcing the President to obtain Congressional approval for virtually every transfer, whereas Byrnes only intended to insure that military appropriations were spent on the American armed forces.33

The Administration's reaction was belated but strong. The Executive had planned to utilize the Lend-Lease Act freely to make legal transfers of new materials purchased out of military appropriations, and on February 28, Stimson, Morgenthau, and Acting Secretary of the Navy Forrestal criticized the amendment in a joint memorandum sent to the President with a copy to Harry Hopkins. They claimed that the change, which they said had been proposed by Byrd and Taft and approved in substance by Byrnes, cut "too close to the heart of the bill." By requiring such approval before transferring any articles purchased out of military appropriations, it would necessitate a virtually separate military and foreign aid program and eliminate joint procurement. Realizing that this was a political problem, they asked Roosevelt for suggestions. The President was then in bed with the grippe and in no mood to do battle with the Senate, while Cordell Hull, the Cabinet member with the greatest influence on Capitol Hill, found the protest vague and "a little hard ... to get my teeth into." He further complained that the financial aspects of the bill had been taken care of in the past by Morgenthau, Stimson, and the President. Morgenthau called Harry Hopkins and asked him to get Roosevelt to give Hull a push, while Stimson, on March 1, met with the President and Hull in the White House. Hull wanted no part of the matter, but the President, still in bed with a cold, insisted that he meet with Senators George, Barkley, and Byrnes and work things out.34

The next day, a Sunday, Morgenthau, Stimson, and the three Senators met in Hull's rooms. Stimson did most of the talking and reiterated the arguments he had used with the President. His major emphasis was on the unification of British and American defense efforts. He stated that the President, in his "arsenal of democracy" speech, had frankly set out the principles to be followed and that the Lend-Lease Bill was designed to put those principles into practice by authorizing the maximum in flexibility and unification. Stimson com-

33CR, 77th Cong., 1st sess., LXXXVII, pt. 2, Feb. 19, 1941, pp. 1167-71, and March 5, 1941, pp. 1800-06. Byrd's amendment was somewhat more limiting and would have required all foreign aid to come out of an appropriation specifically passed for that purpose.

34Memo to Roosevelt from Stimson, Morgenthau, and Forrestal, Feb. 28, 1941, Hopkins Papers, box 302, "Book III: Background of Lend-Lease"; Stimson Diary, Feb. 28, March 1, 1941; Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 226-27.
promised to the degree that Congress could make either over-all or specific appropriations, but he wanted no restrictions on switching between the two should a crisis arise. He plugged for central control over the entire defense program by claiming that putting it in the hands of American officers and advisers would result, not in "a loose, profligate spendthrift—but a skillful Yankee bargainer control in [sic] the direction of an intelligent guidance of war." Apparently their efforts had little effect, for that same evening Morgenthau called Hopkins and reported dejectedly that nothing had been accomplished. He bluntly surmised that the blame lay with the President, who had not given Cordell Hull the necessary push.35

On March 4, Stimson, Morgenthau, Forrestal, and Hull tried again, this time with the additional backing of Budget Director Harold Smith. John McCloy accompanied Stimson, and Edward Foley and Oscar Cox came with Morgenthau. When Senators Barkley, Byrnes, and George arrived, they were presented with a suggested counter-amendment drawn up by Foley and Smith. Senator George approved the idea and said that Senator Byrd would accept it; Barkley thought a substitute amendment was a bad idea and instead proposed just pointing out that Congress had all the control it needed over the purse strings via appropriation acts. Part way through the meeting, on arrangement by Secretary Stimson, General Marshall arrived and made a strong pitch for the fullest flexibility in the act. Stimson hoped that Marshall would be able to sway his old friend, Senator Byrnes.36

Byrnes had no problem living with the Foley-Smith amendment since it accomplished exactly what he had proposed back on February 19. Senator Byrd apparently found it palatable also, for he made no further attempt to push his more general requirement of a specific appropriation for any piece of foreign aid. The Republicans, who had obviously hoped to emasculate the President's authority under the bill, had no choice as their divide-and-conquer policy was circumvented. At any rate, on March 5, in a short series of votes, the Senate agreed to wording that clearly required the Administration to use only Lend-Lease funds to pay for any goods to be bought and transferred after the passage of the act. The pro-Lend-Lease forces, unable to muster the enthusiastic support of either the President or Secretary Hull, were able only to clarify the language of the restriction but

35 The quote is from handwritten notes on Stimson's talk to the senators in Hull's rooms, March 2, 1941, Stimson Papers; See also Stimson Diary, March 2, 1941; Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 226-27.

36 Memo of conference in Secretary Hull's office, March 4, 1941, Hopkins Papers, box 302, "Book III: Background of Lend-Lease"; Stimson Diary, March 4, 1941; Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 227; Langer and Gleason, The Undeclared War, pp. 282-83; Pogue, Marshall, p. 70.
could not retain the enormous discretion for the President which the original bill had granted.37

On February 18, Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana reintroduced his amendment, already defeated in the Foreign Relations Committee, calling for a clause stating that nothing in the Lend-Lease Act gave the President any additional powers to employ United States military forces outside the Western Hemisphere, except in American possessions including the Philippine Islands. The amendment placed no legal obstruction in the path of the President, but as Senator George told reporters, it weakened the "moral effect" of the bill and, as a sign of internal disunity and lack of faith in the President, could give particular encouragement to Japan. Roosevelt was concerned enough to break his rule of no comments on amendments and stated in a press conference on February 25 that he opposed any change that would hinder the policy of aid to Britain, though he noted that the Ellender proposal was not mandatory. When a reporter commented that the suggested change jibed with everything Roosevelt had previously promised, the President called it largely a problem of geography and went on to give an extremely expansive definition of what he considered the Western Hemisphere. Time and again the Administration made its objections to the Ellender amendment clear—although the government had no intention of sending troops abroad, the modification might be interpreted as forbidding the President from sending the military overseas at all. From inside the State Department, the senior Far Eastern adviser, Stanley Hornbeck, sent a memo to Hull and Senator George which strongly criticized the amendment as psychologically and politically objectionable and capable of interpretation by Japan as a go-ahead signal.38

As much as the Administration disliked the Ellender amendment, it was difficult to attack it head-on. The pro-Lend-Lease, though anti-Roosevelt, New York Herald-Tribune epitomized the problem in an editorial on March 4 when it stated that the length of the Senate debate was largely due to the unreasonable attitude of the Administra-

37Roosevelt had a high estimation of Senator Byrnes's skills and value to the Administra-

tion regarding amendments. It stated that so serious a decision as sending troops outside the Western Hemisphere or American possessions should properly be referred to Congress for approval, so why not write it into the bill. Besides, the editorial noted, the Ellender amendment did not change the existing powers of the President, and to top it off, Roosevelt had repeatedly denied any intention of sending American troops overseas. It closed by calling on the Democrats to avoid partisan politics. If the President and his cohorts flatly opposed the Ellender amendment without substituting something similar, they would be accused of planning to dispatch United States armed forces to fight in Europe, yet as Hull repeatedly told his friends on Capitol Hill, the over-all effect of the amendment was dangerous to American foreign policy. At the meeting in his office on March 4, Hull labelled the amendment a "fraud on the public," but Senator George noted that the opposition would argue that if the bill did not authorize the President to send troops outside the United States and the Western Hemisphere, why not say so.39

George, Barkley, Rayburn, and McCormack all agreed that the amendment was popular and met with Roosevelt and Vice-President Henry Wallace to work out a plan of action. Warned by John McCloy that Wendell Willkie might support the Ellender amendment, Stimson called his contact in the Willkie camp, Landon Thorne, and told him to tell Willkie that adoption of the proposal would probably start the Japanese toward Singapore. Willkie did not endorse the Ellender amendment, and the Administration came up with a substitute which legally said the same thing without mentioning any specific geographic areas. The new form of the amendment stated that nothing in the act changed existing law regarding the use of American military forces. On March 6, Senator Ellender himself introduced the new wording as a substitute for his original amendment. The opposition, led by Democratic Senators Bennett Clark of Missouri and Joseph O'Mahoney of Wyoming, attempted to change the wording so as to prohibit the use of any Lend-Lease goods to support American armed forces outside the United States, its possessions, or the Western Hemisphere except with the consent of Congress. After two days of long and tedious argument over a rash of amendments to the amendment and the like, their attack was defeated in a roll call vote, 63-28. Other attempts to beef up the revised Ellender amendment, including one by Senator Taft which was merely the original wording as proposed by Senator Ellender, were all beaten down by comparable margins, although the vote on Taft's reintroduction of the first Ellender amendment was a

relatively close 51-38. Finally, the tiring Senate approved the modified Ellender amendment by a vote of 65-24. 40

As in the House of Representatives, the last two days of debate were filled with the submission and defeat of a series of amendments. None was really new, and their defeat was certain, but the opponents of Lend-Lease seemed unable to give up the fight and let a vote come on the legislation. The closest vote came on an amendment proposed by Robert Reynolds of North Carolina, the only Southern Democrat in the Senate to oppose the bill. Reynolds was primarily concerned with the question of Communist and Fascist infiltration of the government, and his primary objection to the Lend-Lease proposal was that it could be extended to the Soviet Union. Like its companion amendment in the House, the Tinkham amendment, Senator Reynolds' proposal that the Soviet Union be specifically excluded from Lend-Lease was supported largely by those who supported any amendment that limited or crippled the bill. Of those who voted for it, only 5 were true supporters of the Lend-Lease concept. It was defeated by a vote of 56-35, and from there on it was just a matter of time before the Senate passed the Lend-Lease Act. 41

As the debate dragged on during March seventh and eighth, cries of "Vote! Vote!" were heard repeatedly from the floor, but the tide of repetitious amendments continued to flow. One of the few humorous interludes was provided by Senator Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri. He proposed as an amendment a portion of the Democratic Party platform of 1940 which flatly stated that the United States would not participate in any foreign wars. Laughter broke out as Senator Alva Adams of Colorado asked what the statute of limitations was on political platforms, and then the Senate easily defeated what was clearly a facetious amendment.42

The Senate rapidly lost interest in a Saturday debate over a bill whose passage was by then a foregone conclusion, and finally, after a speech by Senator Nye which bitterly criticized Roosevelt's foreign policy and, in particular, what he considered the President's lack of honesty in publicly stating his goals, the Senate cast its vote on the Lend-Lease Bill. All 95 Senators (one seat from West Virginia was vacant) either voted or announced what their vote would have been. The final count was 60 in favor and 31 opposed, with the 4 who did not vote splitting their announced positions, 2 in favor and 2 against.

The vote was again largely along partisan lines, although not surprisingly in the traditionally more independent Senate, the number of

defections from the party position was greater than in the House. Including the announced positions as if they were actual votes, 14 out of 65 Democrats voted against the bill, while 10 out of 28 Republicans supported it. The Senate’s 2 Independents split on the vote. Wisconsin’s Robert LaFollette, Jr., a Progressive, had opposed Lend-Lease from the beginning, while one of the Senate’s grand old men, George Norris of Nebraska, then seated as an Independent, asserted that England was fighting America’s war and voted for the bill. As in the House of Representatives, the defections occurred primarily in the Northeast and the Far West. Two Northeastern Democrats, Peter Gerry of Rhode Island and David Walsh of Massachusetts, opposed the bill, the latter largely out of the belief that it would interfere with American preparedness, primarily naval rearming. In the Far West, isolationism proved a stronger pull than party loyalty for seven of the fourteen Democrats from that area. Out of the Border, South, and Southwest areas, which sent only Democrats to the Senate, only one from each section voted against the bill: Robert Reynolds of North Carolina, Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri, who was a violent foe of Roosevelt’s entire foreign policy, and Dennis Chavez of New Mexico, who mouthed many of the standard isolationist arguments but seemed primarily afraid that Lend-Lease would destroy good American-Latin-American relations. The Middle West led in both Republicans and votes against the bill, though surprisingly, three Republicans from that section voted for the legislation. In spite of the intensity of the floor

| TABLE 2: SENATE VOTE ON THE LEND-LEASE BILL^a |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                 | Northeast       | Border^b        | Middle West     | South           | Southwest       | Far West        | Total           |
| pro             | 12              | 10              | 8^c             | 17              | 7               | 8              | 62              |
| con             | 6               | 1               | 14^d            | 1               | 1               | 10             | 33^e            |
| Dems.           |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| pro             | 6               | 10              | 4               | 17              | 7               | 7              | 51              |
| con             | 2               | 1               | 2               | 1               | 1               | 7              | 14              |
| Reps.           |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| pro             | 6               | 0               | 3               | 0               | 0               | 1              | 10              |
| con             | 4               | 0               | 11              | 0               | 0               | 3              | 18              |

^bOne seat for West Virginia was vacant.
^cIncludes the vote of Sen. George Norris, Independent from Nebraska.
^dIncludes the vote of Sen. Robert LaFollette, Jr., Progressive from Wisconsin.
^eThese statistics include the announced positions of four absent Senators as if they were actual votes. The number of votes actually cast on the floor of the Senate was 91.
debates in the Senate, the Administration garnered just short of a two to one margin for the bill, almost the same percentage as in the House. Again it was an impressive victory and one which created the atmosphere of unanimity which President Roosevelt so strongly desired.43

Again, determining what, if any, political pressure was applied by the President in the Senate is a difficult task. That such pressure was applied is indicated in two letters. One, from Senator James Byrnes to "Pa" Watson, noted that Senator Edwin Johnson of Colorado had changed his position after a conference at the White House. Byrnes said he could not account for the change but wrote: "I suspect a man named Roosevelt." The other indication was a request passed on to former Senator William H. King of Utah from the President asking King to tell "certain of his former colleagues" that he thought a filibuster would not be popular.44 Such evidence, however, hardly qualifies as proof of serious arm-twisting.

Looking back at the Administration’s handling of the Lend-Lease Bill in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and in the Senate itself, one is quickly impressed by the hard work, long hours, and wise counsel contributed by Oscar Cox of the Treasury Department and John J. McCloy of the War Department. The Foreign Relations Committee file on H.R. 1776 is filled with memorandums from Cox suggesting tactics and giving useful rebuttals on the opposition amendments. Cox had been assigned by Morgenthau to the job of shepherding the bill through, and he performed his task expertly. McCloy was given a similar assignment by Secretary Stimson. In addition to being co-author of many of the Administration amendments that so successfully took the initiative away from the bill’s opponents, he served as a liaison man between the War Department and the Senate leadership. During the Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the bill, McCloy went so far as to set up a cot in the Committee Office and sat with the page boys so as to be available at a moment’s notice.45 It is

43In his memoirs, Norris stated just that and further commented that whether the United States received compensation was of minor importance. George W. Norris, Fighting Liberal: The Autobiography of George W. Norris (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1945). Senator Gerry never stated to the Senate why he opposed the bill, but he voted down the line with the isolationists on every proposed amendment. The attitudes of Senators Clark and Reynolds show through clearly in the SFRC Hearings, since both were members of the Foreign Relations Committee. Senator Chavez’s concern for the Good Neighbor Policy was stated but never clearly explained. See CR, 77th Cong., 1st sess., LXXXVII, pt. 2, Feb. 27, 1941, pp. 1480-91. The vote is fully broken down in Table 2.

44Byrnes to Watson, Feb. 15, 1941, Roosevelt Papers, OF 4193, Lend-Lease Agreement, 1940-43, box 1-2. Ironically, Johnson changed his mind again and eventually voted against the Lend-Lease Bill. Memo by Roosevelt to Stephen Early for King, March 5, 1941, ibid.

relatively easy to determine which people deserve the credit or blame for the broadest aspects of policy, but all too frequently historians ignore the work of the Oscar Coxes and John McCloys whose contributions, though smaller in quantity, were often just as crucial.

It is more difficult to pass out the credit in the Senate itself. The floor leader, Senator Alben Barkley, was harshly castigated in the press by Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner for poor handling of the bill. They claimed that Senator Byrnes's efforts were the only thing that saved the bill from disaster and characterized Barkley as "well-liked and well-intentioned, . . . [but] unfortunately maladroit." Byrnes's amendment may have headed off the opposition, but the initial Administration reaction to it was very cold. On the other hand, Harold Ickes noted in his diary that John McCloy, who was in a position to know, told him that Barkley deserved much of the credit and was willing to stand up and oppose amendments that Byrnes was inclined to accept. Ickes, who was notoriously outspoken and partisan, criticized Byrnes for being so eager to get some sort of bill that he compromised unnecessarily. Nevertheless, as mentioned before, Roosevelt considered Byrnes's support in the Senate as critical, and contemporary press reports gave Byrnes the major share of the credit for getting the legislation through the Senate relatively unscathed.46

After passing the bill, the Senate routinely insisted upon its amendments and appointed a conference committee to work out a compromise with the House. The House leadership, so as to avoid reopening the debate as well as to hasten final passage of the bill, proposed a resolution agreeing to the Senate amendments. On Monday, March 10, the House, by unanimous consent, approved a two-hour debate on that resolution for the following day, with half the time controlled by Sol Bloom and the other half by Hamilton Fish.47

Bloom opened the debate on March 11 with a run-down of the meaning of each of the Senate amendments based on a memo probably given him by Oscar Cox. House Minority Leader Joe Martin set the tone for most of those who opposed the bill when he followed Bloom with a speech in which he called for speed in implementing the bill's provisions now that Congress had approved it, even though he was not fully convinced it was the best path to take. He then closed

46 Alsop and Kintner in the San Francisco Chronicle, March 29, 1941. There is remarkably little scholarly material available on Barkley. His work as Senate Majority Leader during those critical years certainly entitles him to be remembered as more than just Harry Truman's Vice-President and the affable fellow who married a pretty widow while in that office. Other comments on Byrnes are in Ickes, The Gathering Clouds, entry for March 13, 1941, p. 456; Alsop and Kintner in the San Francisco Chronicle, March 29, 1941; Arthur Krock in the New York Times, March 11, 1941; Langer and Gleason, The Undeclared War, pp. 283-84; Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 264.

with a strong plea for national unity which must have been most pleasing to President Roosevelt: "We live, thank God, in a great country where we can debate these great questions and divide as our convictions direct us. But, once the decision is reached, we accept the verdict of the majority." Ham Fish noted that the vote that would soon come was not on the bill itself but only on the Senate amendments, and he asked the press to make that clear to the public. Almost every opposition speaker who followed Fish re-emphasized that point since most of them planned to vote for the amendments but did not want such a vote to be taken as one in favor of the bill. A few die-hards, such as Kansas' William Lambertson, proposed voting against the resolution so that the bill would be forced into a conference committee and they could have another full-fledged vote on the entire piece of legislation, but such a plan received little support. When the two-hour debate period ended, the House overwhelmingly accepted the bill as amended by the Senate in a vote of 317 in favor and only 71 opposed.48

Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease Act into law at 3:50 that same afternoon. His famous grin, flashed at photographers during the signing ceremony, belied the long, hard struggle that had finally seen his promise of "all aid short of war" become a reality. The passing out of a number of pens used in signing the bill, a tradition that began with Roosevelt, not surprisingly was governed by political expediency. Instead of going to those members of the Administration who had played the key roles in developing the Lend-Lease Act, Roosevelt sent them to his Congressional allies. Senators Barkley, George, Byrnes, and Representatives Rayburn and McCormack received them, and one Republican, Senator Warren Austin of Vermont was similarly rewarded for supporting the bill.49

There were still some loose ends left to be tied. An Administrative organization had to be established to exercise the new authority the President had received, and Congress had to pass an appropriation, but Roosevelt had taken steps to handle those problems even while the Lend-Lease Bill was under debate.

Morgenthau had originally proposed to Roosevelt that the Treasury ought to keep in contact with the program, and the President had agreed, but by February 25, Roosevelt had changed his mind. In a

48 Martin's statement is in ibid., March 11, 1941, p. 2167. The debate follows on pp. 2168-78. The memo given Bloom is in HFAC, "file on H.R. 1776." It is unsigned and undated, but the style is that of Oscar Cox.

49 See memo in Roosevelt Papers, OF 4193, Lend-Lease Agreement, 1940-43, box 1-2. Senator Tom Connally claimed in his memoirs that he received a pen, though his name is not on the list in the Roosevelt Papers. Connally, My Name is Tom Connally, p. 244. One enterprising New England boat salesman, knowing of Roosevelt's love of sailboating, wrote to suggest that Lord Halifax be given a pen and used one of his company's brochures as stationery. See Roosevelt Papers, OF 4193, Lend-Lease Affairs, 1941-44, box 8.
letter to Morgenthau, Hull, Stimson, and Knox, the President informed them that they would comprise an Advisory Committee on Lend-Lease, of which Harry Hopkins would be Secretary. He asked each of the four Secretaries to assign someone to work with Hopkins in developing the details. Clearly, Harry Hopkins was to be the man in charge of Lend-Lease. Morgenthau was initially a little hurt and jealous, but his man on Hopkins’ staff, Philip Young, reassured him that Hopkins could handle the job. The Advisory Committee proved largely a figurehead, so that in essence, the passage of the Lend-Lease Bill signalled the end of Henry Morgenthau’s remarkable role as unofficial co-ordinator of the aid to Britain program. Arthur Purvis, his British co-worker, after learning of the change in leadership, paid Morgenthau a compliment which obviously came from the heart: “You have from the start been a consistent and persistent friend ‘in shade or shine’ and this also at a time when such friends were few and far between. The fact that your guiding skill was available to us in the time of trial is far from the least of the debts we owe to the President.”50

There was one small battle left to fight before the Administration could chalk up the Lend-Lease Act as a victory. Ironically, it was the one item that had started the entire chain of events—ready money. Purvis had given a working figure when he told Roosevelt on January fifth that Britain needed fifteen billion dollars as a start. Little more was done regarding the money problem until the Lend-Lease Bill cleared the House of Representatives. Then, on February 10, Morgenthau asked Purvis for detailed estimates on exactly what Britain needed and what it would cost. The British Supply Council in North America, which had replaced the old British Purchasing Commission, drew up the necessary statistics and came up with a grand total of $18,850,000,000 for 1941 and 1942. Two days later the War Department and representatives of the British Supply Council began drawing up a list of requirements, working on the assumption that the appropriation would have to be kept to a minimum so as to avoid problems with Congress.51

While the Army was compiling a co-ordinated set of requirements, Morgenthau held a meeting with one of his assistants, Dan Bell, who

50 As quoted in Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 234. The discussions regarding the initial Lend-Lease organization are treated in ibid., pp. 228-34. Roosevelt’s letter of Feb. 25 is in F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, II, 1128. Maj. Gen. J. H. Burns was assigned to Hopkins’ staff by the War Department. See Stimson to Hopkins, Feb. 27, 1941, Hopkins Papers, box 302, “Book III: Background of Lend-Lease.” There is a copy of Morgenthau’s original proposal for the Lend-Lease organization in the Hopkins Papers; see Morgenthau to Roosevelt, Feb. 10, 1941, ibid. There is also substantial data on such plans in the Cox Papers. Cox went so far as to propose a cabinet-level position (Secretary of Supply) to handle such aid programs.

had been Director of the Budget, and Harold Smith, then in that position. They decided to recommend a lump sum appropriation that could then be distributed to the various Executive departments as necessary. Stimson and McCloy strongly disagreed, believing that Congress would never accept a blank check of eight or nine billion dollars, and Morgenthau accepted their arguments for itemized appropriations, although he recommended a contingency fund of 15 per cent of the total in case of unforeseen events. On February 17, Roosevelt met with Morgenthau, Stimson, Knox, Hopkins, and Claude Wickard, the Secretary of Agriculture, to discuss the appropriation. Roosevelt told the group that the Congressional leadership had also pressed strongly for a specific rather than a general appropriation, which, combined with the arguments of Stimson and Knox, persuaded the President to follow their recommendations.52

Shortly after the meeting, Morgenthau suggested to Harry Hopkins that he ask Prime Minister Churchill for some sort of public statement referring to the heavy tax burden Britons had shouldered, with particular emphasis on the tax increases made since the start of the war. This would serve two purposes for Morgenthau. Not only would it impress Congress during its consideration of the Lend-Lease appropriation, but it would also help prepare the American public for similar tax boosts. On March 3 Churchill responded with a cable providing some statistics and suggesting that the information “might be put in the hands of some of our friends.” The figures were impressive. In addition to a wartime excess profits tax of 100 per cent for everything over a fixed prewar standard, personal income taxes had likewise been substantially raised. For a family with two children earning one thousand pounds a year, the prewar tax was one hundred twelve pounds, and the wartime tax almost doubled at two hundred eleven pounds. The increase was equally large all the way down the line.53

Morgenthau’s major tactical maneuver in support of the Lend-Lease appropriation came in connection with the old problem of sales of

52Wickard’s presence was probably designed to squelch talk among the opponents of Lend-Lease that agricultural products would not be included in the term “defense article.” Eventually, the Senate tacked on an amendment that specifically mentioned agricultural goods as a “defense article.” See CR, 77th Cong., 1st sess., LXXXVII, pt. 2, March 8, 1941, pp. 2050-52; transcript of the press conference of Feb. 4, 1941, Roosevelt Papers, PPF 1-P, vol. 17, p. 108; and the exchange of letters between Roosevelt and Rep. Cannon in ibid., OF 4193, Lend-Lease Agreement, 1940-43, box 1-2. The meeting is discussed in Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 230. Blum makes no mention of Knox being present, but when Morgenthau had requested the meeting, Knox’s name was included. See memo to the President of phone call from Morgenthau, Feb. 15, 1941, Roosevelt Papers, OF 21, Treasury, 1941.

British-owned direct investments in the United States. The question had arisen before the Lend-Lease Bill was even proposed, but the major significance of such sales was in connection with the first Lend-Lease appropriation. Though much of the pressure on the British government to force the sale of such investments grew out of the need to find cash for the "old commitments" and is thus integrally a part of the interim financing question discussed above, it was also part of the Administration's campaign to convince Congress and the public that Great Britain was doing the utmost to pay its own way. The nature of the opposition's attack on the Lend-Lease Bill made it essential to convince Americans that the wily British were not trying to fleece them.

Understandably reluctant to lose its profitable investments, the British government proved less than enthusiastic about effecting sales. By January, 1941, Purvis and Phillips began to feel that the Roosevelt Administration did not believe Britain was really trying to arrange sales of British-owned corporations in America, and they obtained permission from the British government to inform Morgenthau that negotiations were beginning immediately for the sale of over one hundred million dollars' worth of such assets. Purvis also agreed that Morgenthau should so inform Congress during the hearings on the Lend-Lease Bill. Even so, the British hoped to avoid the heavy losses caused by forcing the sale of investments that would lose a great portion of their earning power once ties with British parent corporations were broken. Some minor purchases of British-owned defense industries by the American government were made early in February, but no meaningful progress was made toward large-scale private sales.54

As it became increasingly clear, in mid-February, that the fight over Lend-Lease in the Senate would be a tough one, Morgenthau began to increase the pressure on Britain to divest some of the major British-owned investments. The British continued to view the scheme with a jaundiced eye. At a meeting between State and Treasury Department officials and members of the British Purchasing Commission, Phillips told the group that although it appeared Britain would run out of cash by the end of February, the liquidation of direct investments was proceeding slowly and should not be counted on as an immediate source of funds. Publicly, the British press complained that relatively little could be obtained by such sales of direct investments, and the Financial News commented that "there should certainly be other ways of putting up the necessary security, or at least of assuring that the

pledge of such assets as security for supplies does not involve an outright change of ownership.” Prime Minister Churchill was himself not convinced that Britain had much more to gain than it would lose by selling the direct investments, but he finally agreed to a British Embassy plan to have the sales supervised by a joint committee in which the American government would have a final say. At the same time, Lord Halifax expressed the hope that the United States would see that extensive sales would be both bad business and morally unjustifiable. He also reported to London that the real problem was not Britain or the Roosevelt Administration but low bids from potential American buyers. Morgenthau wanted no part of the unpleasant task and left it up to the British to set the terms. All the Secretary wanted was sales, and soon.55

German comments, both public and private, dwelled constantly on the gentle but unmistakable hints by the British press and public officials that such sales might be motivated by the desire to take advantage of Great Britain’s financial distress. The Germans were apparently convinced that the “leading Jewish intimates of the President” who authored the Lend-Lease Bill (unlike Congress, they had no doubts about the bill’s authors) not only intended to remove all restrictions from the President’s “all aid short of war” policy but would also demand significant concessions from England in the form of territory, oil, and the like, in return.56 The campaign for the sale of direct investments only added some credibility to the German line.

Early in March, as the Lend-Lease debate finally began to draw to a close in the Senate, Morgenthau, worried about getting a Lend-Lease appropriation bill through Congress, firmly laid down the law to the British. On March 4, at Morgenthau’s behest, Roosevelt sent a message to Churchill requesting some sort of spectacular sale so as to have something concrete to show Congress that Britain was doing her best. While awaiting a reply, Morgenthau bitterly complained about delaying tactics on the sale of direct investments and told his staff that he was “just boiling over.” After his promises to Congress, Morgen-


56 Thomsen and Bötticher to the Foreign Ministry, Feb. 26, 1941, DGFP, XII, no. 88, pp. 161-64. Bötticher was the military attache at Germany’s Embassy in Washington. The mind boggles at the thought of what the German propagandists would have done with a memo written by Archibald MacLeish, the Librarian of Congress, which suggested using Lend-Lease to obtain British books and noted that Roosevelt agreed and believed rare books and manuscripts might be in the ultimate trade agreement. Considering the intensity of British national pride, publication of such a memo probably would have caused more ill-feeling than any economic demand. See memo by Archibald MacLeish, Feb. 19, 1941, Roosevelt Papers, OF 4193, Lend-Lease Agreement, 1940-43, box 1-2; and Roosevelt’s favorable reply in a memo of March 17, 1941, Cox Papers, record group 90, box 85.
thau had to depend on Britain to be faithful to its commitments, and he angrily exclaimed: "I have reached the end of my rope. I have never been more outraged." On March 10, Morgenthau became sufficiently concerned to make an unannounced evening call on Ambassador Halifax at home. He told Halifax that something had to happen regarding sales of investments within the week or he would be put in an embarrassing position with Congress. The Secretary's New Deal beliefs showed through when, after he suggested replacing Sir Edward Peacock as Chief British negotiator for such sales, Lord Halifax warned that Peacock had powerful connections with the Bank of England and had strong political support. Morgenthau later noted that "they always think in terms of political affiliations."\(^{57}\) An amusing comment for someone so closely connected with Franklin Roosevelt but not surprising considering Morgenthau's dislike of bankers in general and British bankers in particular.

The British government concluded finally that the best choice for the "spectacular sale" the Americans demanded was the Viscose Corporation of America, a firm that was 97 per cent owned by a British corporation, Messrs. Courtalds. Although British experts admitted there was a market for such a sale, they warned that forcing a quick sale would depress the price well below what otherwise might be obtained. Predictably, political expediency prevailed over profit, and on March 15, Ambassador Halifax told Morgenthau that the sale had been arranged. Morgenthau was pleased, and the Congressional appropriations committees were satisfied. The Secretary's private remarks following the announcement of the sale indicated both his political concern as well as his personal beliefs: "[It was] the most difficult fight I think I have waged against the vested interests and also the most significant, because the tie-up between the so-called "City" in London and our own Wall Street is terribly close. I consider this a great New Deal victory."\(^{58}\)

The final conclusion of the direct investments question came long after the Lend-Lease Act became law. As the Manchester Guardian pointed out in March, the Viscose sale was a "sharp reminder that the Lease and Lend Bill has not solved our dollar problem." Eventually, largely under heavy pressure from Morgenthau, who wanted to redeem his earlier promise to Britain that America would assume the "old commitments," a loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was arranged which virtually ended the need for Britain to sell her direct investments in America. Even so, a promise made by Budget

\(^{57}\)Sayers, Financial Policy, p. 388. The quotations are from Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 236-37.

Director Harold Smith to Congress that the “old commitments” would be paid for in cash by Great Britain could not be ignored. Though Morgenthau still acknowledged his personal obligation in the matter of the United States assuming those liabilities, there was little he could do.59

Roosevelt took direct control of the appropriation measure during the Senate debate over the Lend-Lease Act itself, and on March 4, he told Budget Director Harold Smith that he wanted an estimate of the appropriation bill ready by the time he signed the Lend-Lease Act. Apparently the President left the drafting of the itemized appropriation up to Smith, Senator James Byrnes, and the Congressional leadership, for Smith complained to Roosevelt that he and Byrnes could not get together on a proposal and had decided to hold a conference with the leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. Stimson was displeased with the final product that came out of the Bureau of the Budget, and he and Hull redrafted the bill before it was sent to Congress. Although these two members of the Lend-Lease Advisory Committee put their touch on the legislation, the committee was never formally consulted nor did the President make any advance plans on how to handle the hearings that followed.60

As it turned out, Harold Smith and the military secretaries and chiefs provided the core of the testimony in the House hearings on the appropriation. Roosevelt had tried to get Morgenthau to testify, but the Treasury Secretary had demurred, saying that he did not want to talk about taxes for fear of shocking Congress nor did he want to give the opposition a chance to reopen the subject of Britain’s finances. Besides, he told the President, in a comment mildly reminiscent of Hull’s reaction to being eased out of the drafting of the Lend-Lease Bill, he could not explain the bill although Smith could and should. The House Committee agreed, and Morgenthau was excused from testifying.61

59 The Manchester Guardian is quoted in Butterworth to the Treasury Dept., March 18, 1941, State Dept., 841.5151/1784; Sayers, Financial Policy, pp. 390-91, 396n. Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 244-45. For additional data on this aspect of the direct investments question, see the two works just cited and also George Herring, “Experiment in Foreign Aid: Lend-Lease, 1941-1945” (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1965).

60 Smith Papers, “Conferences with the President, 1941-1942,” entry dated March 4, 1941; Burns to Hopkins, March 4, 1941, Hopkins Papers, box 302, “Book III: Background of Lend-Lease”; Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 242. Stimson Diary, March 12, 1941. It is possible that Stimson and Hull cut down the size of the Lend-Lease appropriation as proposed by Smith. There is an unaddressed and unsigned memo in the Hopkins Papers, box 302. “Book III: Background of Lend-Lease,” dated March 11, 1941, which shows that the seven-billion-dollar amount that was finally requested was originally 24 per cent higher. The memo also stated that seven billion dollars was the rock-bottom amount needed. The appropriation estimate and Roosevelt’s covering letter are in CR, 77th Cong., 1st sess., LXXXVII, pt. 2, March 12, 1941, pp. 2192-93. It was ultimately designated H.R. 4050.

61 Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 242.
Since the real battle had already been fought, little of interest occurred during the House Appropriations Committee hearings. Stimson labelled them as "rather of a perfunctory character." Harold Smith explained the bill, and Secretaries Stimson and Knox and their subordinates presented arguments worked out largely in the War Department by McCloy and Lt. Col. Aurand. Although the appropriation was itemized, the categories into which it was divided, such as ordnance, aircraft, and vessels, were quite general. Stimson defended this as necessary, not only because of the changing world situation which required that the government be able to adapt quickly, but also because to be more specific would provide the enemy with valuable information about American defense production plans. He informed the House Committee that the British had supplied the United States with confidential lists of requirements months ago and that the War Department had worked up the estimates on that basis. He also noted that only 5 per cent of the goods they planned to purchase were purely British-type weapons. The rest were interchangeable.62

Secretary of State Hull testified along the same lines as he had during the Lend-Lease hearings. He urged Congress to pass the appropriation with all possible speed because the world situation had become even more dangerous since he had testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Hull closed with his strongest statement of support to date for the Lend-Lease Act, saying it was "the most effective step possible in the circumstances, to keep war away from our hemisphere, from our nation."63

The Appropriations Committee's report on the bill repeated the pleas made by the witnesses for the utmost speed in passing the bill, informed Congress that it had been given detailed secret data on allocations, and gave no indication of any serious differences of opinion among its members. It did attach a clause that prohibited using any of the appropriated funds for paying the wages of any person who advocated the violent overthrow of the American Con-


63Copy of remarks made by Hull to the Deficiency Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, March 13, 1941, Hull Papers, box 95. It was during these hearings that Budget Director Smith promised Congress that Britain would pay all the "old commitments" in cash and none of the Lend-Lease appropriation would go toward paying them.
stitution but noted that this type of restriction had been attached to most of the appropriation measures passed by Congress during that session.\textsuperscript{64}

During the House debate over the bill, which was reported out of the committee after only three days of hearings, the unreconstructed opponents of Lend-Lease made some half-hearted attempts to gut or at least cut down the appropriation. William Lambertson of Kansas proposed cutting the total sum from seven to five billion dollars, and Edith Rogers of Massachusetts brought up the old argument that Britain should sign over her holdings in Latin America as collateral. Karl Mundt of South Dakota proposed that a tax increase to cover the new expenditure should accompany the appropriation but, like most of the opposition, felt bound to pass the appropriation after the majority had voted for the over-all policy. With the final outcome obvious to all, the House found it increasingly difficult to maintain a quorum during the debate, and the majority sharply restricted the amount of time given to discussing proposed amendments. In vote after vote the House rejected all attempts to cut the appropriation or to introduce new restrictions on the use of the money. Finally, in a sort of facetious frustration, Representative Robert Rich of Pennsylvania suggested that for five million dollars it would be easy to get someone to go over and “get Hitler,” without a war or the death of a million men. The House rejected all attempts at amendment from the floor and passed the Lend-Lease appropriation by a vote of 336-55.\textsuperscript{65}

The Senate Appropriations Committee went through the formality of holding hearings, and the Administration witnesses laboriously repeated the same things they had been saying since January when the Lend-Lease Bill was first proposed. The committee reported the bill out without change and then, acting with unusual dispatch, on the same day that the Senate received the bill, March 24, it passed it without amendment by a vote of 67-9. Senator Arthur Vandenberg, one of the program’s most vigorous opponents, spoke for the majority of those who had voted against Lend-Lease when he said:

When H.R. 1776 became the law of the land, this issue of foreign policy was settled. It was settled within the interpretations of H.R. 1776, as given us by its sponsors. Certainly it was settled so far as this proposed $7,000,000,000 appropriation is concerned. The appropriation became inevitable, unless it be conceived that a wobbly Congress would sabotage its own solemn judgments in less than 3


weeks, setting us before the world as contemptible vacillators whom none would respect and certainly none would fear. . . . It is this bill, or a spectacle of disunity which could easily jeopardize every aspiration of all our hearts and hopes, now that the die is cast.66

The speed with which the President moved to implement the Lend-Lease Act and its accompanying appropriation has been told elsewhere and is not part of this story.67 Historians can and have criticized both the Lend-Lease Act and the manner in which it was carried out, but no one can honestly challenge the fact that it fulfilled its major purpose—providing aid to Great Britain. As Harold Macmillan, later Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, wrote: "The provision of American aid in the shape of Lend-Lease saved us from something like disaster."68

66 The brief Senate debate and vote are in ibid., pt. 3, March 24, 1941, pp. 2499-2509. Senator Vandenberg's remarks are on pp. 2506-07. For the testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee, see U.S., Senate, Committee on Appropriations, 77th Cong., 1st sess., Hearings Before a Subcommittee on H.R. 4050: Making a Supplemental Appropriation for National Defense to Provide Aid to the Government of any Country Whose Defense the President Deems Vital to the Defense of the United States (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941). The committee report was strictly explanatory. See ibid., Defense Aid Supplemental Appropriation Act, Report no. 135, Calendar no. 144 (to accompany H.R. 4050; printed at the order of the Senate, 1941). The report was submitted on March 22, but the Senate did not meet to receive it until March 24. Stimson claimed that the only opposition in the Senate came from the scrambling of various Senators for military patronage and spending in their own states; Stimson Diary, March 20, 1941.

67 Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 264 ff., gives a good indication of the planning that had gone on even during the Lend-Lease debate so that the act could immediately be put into action. See also Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, II, 228-34, 248-55; and Herring, "Experiment in Foreign Aid: Lend-Lease, 1941-1945"; and the Stimson Diary. Fittingly, the first list of Lend-Lease goods to be transferred contained 900,000 feet of fire-hose. Rosenman, Working With Roosevelt, p. 272.