The United States remained neutral when France and Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939 because President Franklin D. Roosevelt believed that it was in the best interests of the country. Roosevelt believed that the United States should not become involved in another European war, especially since the country was still recovering from the Great Depression.

Roosevelt also believed that American intervention could make the situation worse and that the country should focus on building its own defenses. He believed that the United States should remain neutral, but that it should also provide assistance to the Allied powers by supplying them with materials and goods.

Roosevelt's policy of neutrality would be tested as the situation in Europe deteriorated and the United States found itself drawn into the conflict.