As President, I believed that American neutrality was essential to our national security and to our ability to promote peace and stability around the world. By remaining neutral in the face of global conflict, we were able to avoid being drawn into wars that were not of our making, while also maintaining our ability to negotiate with and influence the leaders of other nations. At the same time, I recognized that neutrality could not be an end in itself, and that we must always be prepared to defend our values and our interests if necessary. Through a combination of diplomacy, economic pressure, and military readiness, we were able to navigate the complex and dangerous geopolitical landscape of the time, and to protect the American people and our way of life.