

Cordell Hull

Essential Question: What was Cordell Hull's role in the founding of the United Nations?

Cordell Hull was born in a log cabin in 1871. He was the only son out of five boys who wanted an education. He attended a one room school and his father hired private tutors. Hull attended college and received a law degree in 1891 at the age of 20. He worked a short time as a lawyer and then served as a captain during the Spanish-American War. When he returned to Tennessee, he was appointed as a judge. In 1907, he ran and was elected to a seat in the U S House of Representatives. He remained in public service until 1944.

While in Congress, Cordell Hull strongly shared President Woodrow Wilson's idealistic vision of international diplomacy and was one of the first vigorous supporters of the League of Nations. Hull also supported lower tariffs. By supporting lower tariffs Hull sent a message to other countries he felt there should be open trade and nations should be able to work together in solving problems that separated them.

In 1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president and very soon Cordell Hull was nominated and confirmed to be the U S Secretary of State. On December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States entered into a state of war. After the outbreak of war, Cordell Hull proposed the formation of a new world organization to offer avenues for countries to solve their problems in a peaceful manner. He envisioned the United States having a major role in this international organization.

Hull formed an Advisory Council on Postwar Foreign Policy and asked Democrats and Republicans to contribute because he remembered Wilson's failure with the League of Nations. Hull worked very hard to keep all discussion on postwar policy nonpartisan. In 1943 the State Department drafted a document titled "Charter of the United Nations". Also in 1943 at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, Hull obtained a pledge from the Soviet Union to agree to help create a postwar world organization.

Cordell Hull gave the opening address at the Dumbarton Oaks conference in Washington, D.C. in 1944. Representatives from the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union were in attendance. The first important steps in the movement to establish a postwar international organization were made at the conference.

Because of health problems Cordell Hull resigned his position as Secretary of State but was a member of the U S delegation at the San Francisco Conference on April 25, 1945. With 50 nations present the United Nations was officially organized and became an instrument for international cooperation and peace. Cordell Hull worked so vigorously and championed the cause of the United Nations with such effort that he was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954. On July 23, 1955 Cordell Hull, Father of the United Nations, died after a lifetime of service to his country and mankind.

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Summarize the text to write an obituary for Cordell Hull.
