**Examine the application and effects of Franklin D Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy.**

The Good Neighbor Policy, instilled by President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR), in the peak of the Great Depression, was a response to the powerful backlash against U.S. military intervention in the Caribbean and Central America over the previous 35 years. From 1898 to 1933, the United States had intervened in domestic affairs with Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and elsewhere, creating an informal empire with the aim of creating order and stability; the United States wanted to assert U.S. economic and geopolitical domination of the region, to the exclusion of European powers. This openly interventionist policy had generated a whirlwind of protest throughout much of Latin America and Europe. The U.S. was particularly concerned with trade in Latin America due to the troubles created by the war between Japan and China, which commenced in 1937, then in the outbreak of World War II, and finally with the military and diplomatic efforts necessitated by the involvement of the United States into the war in 1941. This was a new effort led by Roosevelt, who acted by dismantling the Monroe Doctrine, and by dedicating the United States to healthy relations with Latin America with the influence of past presidencies.

The Monroe Doctrine was a foreign policy established by the United States in 1823 during the presidency of President James Monroe. The doctrine essentially stated that European powers did not belong in The Americas and the US would “back off” from dominating in foreign affairs. Though the Monroe Doctrine had put the United States on record as opposing European colonialism in the hemisphere, the United States had not always recognized the sovereignty of its neighbors. The extension of U.S. foreign trade was first stimulated by the organization of port banks in 1934 through which the government was to give loans to firms to increase their sales in foreign countries. Trade was also initiated by reciprocal trade agreements between the United States and foreign countries for the lowering of tariffs. This policy under the Roosevelt Administration, became known as the Good Neighbor Policy, where amicable relations with the countries of Latin America would result in the expansion of American trade. Roosevelt first gave up the Monroe Doctrine because it was necessary to proceed with the Good Neighbor Policy and to begin straying away from isolationism. With the implementation of the Good Neighbor Policy, the Platt Amendment was nullified in 1934, by which the United States since 1902 had exercised a measure of control in the international affairs of Cuba, and the ending of U.S. control over the customs system of the Dominican Republic. Due to this change in the federal government, the United States was able to address many issues developing that consisted of reciprocal trade, financial, and defense treaties between the U.S. and other nations, particularly of Latin America, thus straightening the relationship between the two nations.

Roosevelt’s main concern was to develop healthy connections with Latin America which led to the implement of the Good Neighbor Policy, and although this was his established idea, he was deeply influenced by former President, Herbert Hoover. One of Hoover’s main goals was to establish positive relations with Latin America, he wanted to persuade Latin American countries that the United States took their interests into consideration along with their own. Hoover prompted the removal of U.S. Marines from Haiti, and he withdrew them from Nicaragua. As the depression destroyed numerous regimes throughout Latin America, Hoover recognized the new regimes immediately. The beliefs that Hoover instilled in his presidency helped influence Roosevelt in his Good Neighbor Policy. Like Roosevelt, Hoover’s policies were conditioned by the Great Depression and its impact on the world.

Despite its popularity, the Good Neighbor Policy did not live up to its expectations and promised a lot but accomplished little. Rather than representing a departure from traditional U.S. policy, the Good Neighbor Policy was part of an ongoing effort to maintain U.S. dominance in Latin America. Instead of sending marines back into Latin America, it supported “friendly” dictators. Instead of issuing unilateral declarations, it lobbied the nations of Latin America to adopt its policies at world conferences. The United States had not totally let go of the idea of dominating their side of the world. Additionally, American involvement in the region began in part from economic and strategic interests. The U.S. government needed stable and friendly governments there so that American business could profit and so that Europe would have no excuse to deploy military forces close to the United States. Thus, the United States would be able to increase military intimidation, internationally. Although the Policy was presented as an aid to Latin America and other foreign regions, American interventionism persevered from a sense of cultural superiority instilled within Americans. For example, it was a popular opinion among Americans that because of the country’s stable political institutions, the U.S. had a moral responsibility to control the lawless and corrupt nations to the south and tutor them in the institution of democratic government. Despite this sense of entitlement among Americans, after World War I, U.S. presence in Latin America became very unpopular.

In conclusion, although there are many criticisms, the Good Neighbor Policy benefitted numerous countries in many ways. With the support of many countries, this policy aided in the achievement of new trade deals that the U.S needed. For example, in 1938 Roosevelt was accepting of Mexico’s confiscation of the petroleum installations of U.S. and British companies instead of retaliating, which could have led to warfare or tense interrelations. This patience was rewarding for the United States as Mexico gave support during World War II by sending an air force squadron to the Philippines. Roosevelt’s refusal was able to overturn decades of American tendencies regarding how they responded to its southern neighbors; instead of using the idea of the right to protect their people, the U.S. had finally broken the trend of using forceful military intervention. By overturning the Monroe Doctrine and establishing policy to redefine the relationships between the U.S and foreign countries, Franklin Roosevelt was able to improve trade and promote healthy, limited involvement with Latin America. Furthermore, the policy resulted in expanded cultural dimensions in the United States, this ranged from artistic influences to texts regarding resolutions at inter-American conferences promoting the unity of the nations in the Western part of the world. In the end, despite many criticisms, the Good Neighbor Policy prompted positive changes for the trajectory of American relationships.