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## Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.



**ABRAMS V. UNITED STATES, 250 U.S. 616 (1919)**

Russian immigrants who described themselves as “revolutionists” and “anarchists” distributed leaflets in English and Yiddish in New York City advocating a general strike and calling on workers in weapons factories to stop producing material used by American troops against Russia. They were convicted under the 1918 amendments to the Espionage Act of 1917 for language “intended to incite, provoke and encourage resistance” to the war effort and to “urge, incite and advocate curtailment” of production for the war effort. The Supreme Court ruled, in an opinion by Justice John Clarke, that their conviction did not violate the First Amendment’s guarantee of free speech.

In a majority opinion in an earlier case involving the Espionage Act, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. had defined the test for constitutionality to be whether the words used in the circumstances presented a “clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent,” *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47 (1919). In that opinion he wrote the famous aphorism, “the most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic.” In *Abrams*, Holmes famously dissented from the application of the clear and present danger test to the “poor and puny anonymities” who distributed the leaflets and established the “marketplace of ideas” as a basis for First Amendment cases.

250 U.S. 616 (1919)

**ABRAMS ET AL.**  
**v.**  
**UNITED STATES.**

No. 316.

**Supreme Court of United States.**

Argued October 21, 22, 1919.

Decided November 10, 1919.

ERROR TO THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

*Mr. Harry Weinberger* for plaintiffs in error.

*Mr. Assistant Attorney General Stewart*, with whom *Mr. W.C. Herron* was on the brief, for the United States.

MR. JUSTICE CLARKE delivered the opinion of the court.

On a single indictment, containing four counts, the five plaintiffs in error, hereinafter designated the defendants, were convicted of conspiring to violate provisions of the<sup>617</sup>\*<sup>617</sup> Espionage Act of Congress (§ 3, Title I, of Act approved June 15, 1917, as amended May 16, 1918, 40 Stat. 553).

Each of the first three counts charged the defendants with conspiring, when the United States was at war with the Imperial Government of Germany, to unlawfully utter, print, write and publish: In the first count, "disloyal, scurrilous and abusive language about the form of Government of the United States;" in the second count, language "intended to bring the form of Government of the United States into contempt, scorn, contumely and disrepute;" and in the third count, language "intended to incite, provoke and encourage resistance to the United States in said war." The charge in the fourth count was that the defendants conspired "when the United States was at war with the Imperial German Government, . . . unlawfully and wilfully, by utterance, writing, printing and publication, to urge, incite and advocate curtailment of production of things and products, to wit, ordnance and ammunition, necessary and essential to the prosecution of the war." The offenses were charged in the language of the act of Congress.

It was charged in each count of the indictment that it was a part of the conspiracy that the defendants would attempt to accomplish their unlawful purpose by printing, writing and distributing in the City of New York many copies of a leaflet or circular, printed in the English language, and of another printed in the Yiddish language, copies of which, properly identified, were attached to the indictment.

All of the five defendants were born in Russia. They were intelligent, had considerable schooling, and at the time they were arrested they had lived in the United States terms varying from five to ten years, but none of them had applied for naturalization. Four of them testified as witnesses in their own behalf and of these, three frankly avowed that they were "rebels," "revolutionists," "anarchists," that they did not believe in government in any form, and they declared that they had no interest whatever in the Government of the United States. The fourth defendant testified that he was a "socialist" and believed in "a proper kind of government, not capitalistic," but in his classification the Government of the United States was "capitalistic."

It was admitted on the trial that the defendants had united to print and distribute the described circulars and that five thousand of them had been printed and distributed about the 22d day of August, 1918. The group had a meeting place in New York City, in rooms rented by defendant Abrams, under an assumed name, and there the subject of printing the circulars was discussed about two weeks before the defendants were arrested. The defendant Abrams, although not a printer, on July 27, 1918, purchased the printing outfit with which the circulars were printed and installed it in a basement room where the work was done at night. The circulars were distributed some by throwing them from a window of a building where one of the defendants was employed and others secretly, in New York City.

The defendants pleaded "not guilty," and the case of the Government consisted in showing the facts we have stated, and in introducing in evidence copies of the two printed circulars attached to the indictment, a sheet entitled "Revolutionists Unite for Action," written by the defendant Lipman, and found on him when he was arrested, and another paper, found at the headquarters of the group, and for which Abrams assumed responsibility.

Thus the conspiracy and the doing of the overt acts charged were largely admitted and were fully established.

On the record thus described it is argued, somewhat faintly, that the acts charged against the defendants were not unlawful because within the protection of that freedom of speech and of the press which is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution of

the United States, and that the entire Espionage Act is unconstitutional because in conflict with that Amendment.

This contention is sufficiently discussed and is definitely negated in *Schenck v. United States* and *Baer v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47; and in *Frohwerk v. United States*, 249 U.S. 204.

The claim chiefly elaborated upon by the defendants in the oral argument and in their brief is that there is no substantial evidence in the record to support the judgment upon the verdict of guilty and that the motion of the defendants for an instructed verdict in their favor was erroneously denied. A question of law is thus presented, which calls for an examination of the record, not for the purpose of weighing conflicting testimony, but only to determine whether there was some evidence, competent and substantial, before the jury, fairly tending to sustain the verdict. *Troxell v. Delaware, Lackawanna & Western R.R. Co.*, 227 U.S. 434, 442; *Lancaster v. Collins*, 115 U.S. 222, 225; *Chicago & Northwestern Ry. Co. v. Ohle*, 117 U.S. 123, 129. We shall not need to consider the sufficiency, under the rule just stated, of the evidence introduced as to all of the counts of the indictment, for, since the sentence imposed did not exceed that which might lawfully have been imposed under any single count, the judgment upon the verdict of the jury must be affirmed if the evidence is sufficient to sustain any one of the counts. *Evans v. United States*, 153 U.S. 608; *Claassen v. United States*, 142 U.S. 140; *Debs v. United States*, 249 U.S. 211, 216.

The first of the two articles attached to the indictment is conspicuously headed, "The Hypocrisy of the United States and her Allies." After denouncing President Wilson as a hypocrite and a coward because troops were sent into Russia, it proceeds to assail our Government in general, saying:

620\*620 "His [the President's] shameful, cowardly silence about the intervention in Russia reveals the hypocrisy of the plutocratic gang in Washington and vicinity."

It continues:

"He [the President] is too much of a coward to come out openly and say: 'We capitalistic nations cannot afford to have a proletarian republic in Russia.'"

Among the capitalistic nations Abrams testified the United States was included.

Growing more inflammatory as it proceeds, the circular culminates in:

"The Russian Revolution cries: Workers of the World! Awake! Rise! Put down your enemy and mine!

"Yes! friends, there is only one enemy of the workers of the world and that is CAPITALISM."

This is clearly an appeal to the "workers" of this country to arise and put down by force the Government of the United States which they characterize as their "hypocritical," "cowardly" and "capitalistic" enemy.

It concludes:

"Awake! Awake, you Workers of the World!

"REVOLUTIONISTS."

The second of the articles was printed in the Yiddish language and in the translation is headed, "Workers — Wake up." After referring to "his Majesty, Mr. Wilson, and the rest of the gang; dogs of all colors!", it continues:

"Workers, Russian emigrants, you who had the least belief in the honesty of our Government," which defendants admitted referred to the United States Government, "must now throw away all confidence, must spit in the face the false, hypocritic, military propoganda which has fooled you so relentlessly, calling forth your sympathy, your help, to the prosecution of the war."

The purpose of this obviously was to persuade the persons to whom it was addressed to turn a deaf ear to patriotic <sup>621</sup>\*<sup>621</sup> appeals in behalf of the Government of the United States, and to cease to render it assistance in the prosecution of the war.

It goes on:

"With the money which you have loaned, or are going to loan them, they will make bullets not only for the Germans, but also for the Workers Soviets of Russia. *Workers in the ammunition factories, you are producing bullets, bayonets, cannon, to murder not only the Germans, but also your dearest, best, who are in Russia and are fighting for freedom.*"

It will not do to say, as is now argued, that the only intent of these defendants was to prevent injury to the Russian cause. Men must be held to have intended, and to be accountable for, the effects which their acts were likely to produce. Even if their primary purpose and intent was to aid the cause of the Russian Revolution, the plan of action which

they adopted necessarily involved, before it could be realized, defeat of the war program of the United States, for the obvious effect of this appeal, if it should become effective, as they hoped it might, would be to persuade persons of character such as those whom they regarded themselves as addressing, not to aid government loans and not to work in ammunition factories, where their work would produce "bullets, bayonets, cannon" and other munitions of war, the use of which would cause the "murder" of Germans and Russians.

Again, the spirit becomes more bitter as it proceeds to declare that —

"America and her Allies have betrayed (the Workers). Their robberish aims are clear to all men. The destruction of the Russian Revolution, that is the politics of the march to Russia.

*"Workers, our reply to the barbaric intervention has to be a general strike! An open challenge only will let the Government know that not only the Russian Worker fights for freedom, but also here in America lives the spirit of Revolution."*

This is not an attempt to bring about a change of administration by candid discussion, for no matter what may have incited the outbreak on the part of the defendant anarchists, the manifest purpose of such a publication was to create an attempt to defeat the war plans of the Government of the United States, by bringing upon the country the paralysis of a general strike, thereby arresting the production of all munitions and other things essential to the conduct of the war.

This purpose is emphasized in the next paragraph, which reads:

"Do not let the Government scare you with their wild punishment in prisons, hanging and shooting. We must not and will not betray the splendid fighters of Russia. *Workers, up to fight.*"

After more of the same kind, the circular concludes:

"Woe unto those who will be in the way of progress. Let solidarity live!"

It is signed, "The Rebels."

That the interpretation we have put upon these articles, circulated in the greatest port of our land, from which great numbers of soldiers were at the time taking ship daily, and in which great quantities of war supplies of every kind were at the time being manufactured for transportation overseas, is not only the fair interpretation of them, but that it is the meaning

which their authors consciously intended should be conveyed by them to others is further shown by the additional writings found in the meeting place of the defendant group and on the person of one of them. One of these circulars is headed: "Revolutionists! Unite for Action!"

After denouncing the President as "Our Kaiser" and the hypocrisy of the United States and her Allies, this article concludes:

623\*623 "Socialists, Anarchists, Industrial Workers of the World, Socialists, Labor party men and other revolutionary organizations *Unite for action* and let us save the Workers' Republic of Russia!

*"Know you lovers of freedom that in order to save the Russian revolution, we must keep the armies of the allied countries busy at home."*

Thus was again avowed the purpose to throw the country into a state of revolution if possible and to thereby frustrate the military program of the Government.

The remaining article, after denouncing the President for what is characterized as hostility to the Russian revolution, continues:

"We, the toilers of America, who believe in real liberty, shall *pledge ourselves*, in case the United States will participate in that bloody conspiracy against Russia, *to create so great a disturbance that the autocrats of America shall be compelled to keep their armies at home, and not be able to spare any for Russia.*"

It concludes with this definite threat of armed rebellion:

"If they will use arms against the Russian people to enforce their standard of order, *so will we use arms*, and they shall never see the ruin of the Russian Revolution."

These excerpts sufficiently show, that while the immediate occasion for this particular outbreak of lawlessness, on the part of the defendant alien anarchists, may have been resentment caused by our Government sending troops into Russia as a strategic operation against the Germans on the eastern battle front, yet the plain purpose of their propaganda was to excite, at the supreme crisis of the war, disaffection, sedition, riots, and, as they hoped, revolution, in this country for the purpose of embarrassing and if possible defeating the military plans of the Government in Europe. A technical distinction may perhaps be taken between disloyal and abusive language applied to the *form* of our government or



language intended to bring the *form* 624\*624 of our government into contempt and disrepute, and language of like character and intended to produce like results directed against the President and Congress, the agencies through which that form of government must function in time of war. But it is not necessary to a decision of this case to consider whether such distinction is vital or merely formal, for the language of these circulars was obviously intended to provoke and to encourage resistance to the United States in the war, as the third count runs, and, the defendants, in terms, plainly urged and advocated a resort to a general strike of workers in ammunition factories for the purpose of curtailing the production of ordnance and munitions necessary and essential to the prosecution of the war as is charged in the fourth count. Thus it is clear not only that some evidence but that much persuasive evidence was before the jury tending to prove that the defendants were guilty as charged in both the third and fourth counts of the indictment and under the long established rule of law hereinbefore stated the judgment of the District Court must be

*Affirmed.*

MR. JUSTICE HOLMES dissenting.

This indictment is founded wholly upon the publication of two leaflets which I shall describe in a moment. The first count charges a conspiracy pending the war with Germany to publish abusive language about the form of government of the United States, laying the preparation and publishing of the first leaflet as overt acts. The second count charges a conspiracy pending the war to publish language intended to bring the form of government into contempt, laying the preparation and publishing of the two leaflets as overt acts. The third count alleges a conspiracy to encourage resistance to the United States in the same war and to attempt to effectuate the purpose by publishing the same leaflets. The fourth count lays a conspiracy 625\*625 to incite curtailment of production of things necessary to the prosecution of the war and to attempt to accomplish it by publishing the second leaflet to which I have referred.

The first of these leaflets says that the President's cowardly silence about the intervention in Russia reveals the hypocrisy of the plutocratic gang in Washington. It intimates that "German militarism combined with allied capitalism to crush the Russian revolution" — goes on that the tyrants of the world fight each other until they see a common enemy — working class enlightenment, when they combine to crush it; and that now militarism and capitalism combined, though not openly, to crush the Russian revolution. It says that there is only one enemy of the workers of the world and that is capitalism; that it is a crime for workers of America, &c., to fight the workers' republic of Russia, and ends "Awake! Awake, you Workers of the World! Revolutionists." A note adds "It is absurd to call us pro-German. We



hate and despise German militarism more than do you hypocritical tyrants. We have more reasons for denouncing German militarism than has the coward of the White House."

The other leaflet, headed "Workers — Wake Up," with abusive language says that America together with the Allies will march for Russia to help the Czecho-Slovaks in their struggle against the Bolsheviki, and that this time the hypocrites shall not fool the Russian emigrants and friends of Russia in America. It tells the Russian emigrants that they now must spit in the face of the false military propaganda by which their sympathy and help to the prosecution of the war have been called forth and says that with the money they have lent or are going to lend "they will make bullets not only for the Germans but also for the Workers Soviets of Russia," and further, "Workers in the ammunition factories, you are producing bullets, bayonets, cannon, to murder not only the Germans, <sup>626</sup><sup>626</sup> but also your dearest, best, who are in Russia and are fighting for freedom." It then appeals to the same Russian emigrants at some length not to consent to the "inquisitionary expedition to Russia," and says that the destruction of the Russian revolution is "the politics of the march to Russia." The leaflet winds up by saying "Workers, our reply to this barbaric intervention has to be a general strike!," and after a few words on the spirit of revolution, exhortations not to be afraid, and some usual tall talk ends "Woe unto those who will be in the way of progress. Let solidarity live! The Rebels."

No argument seems to me necessary to show that these pronouncements in no way attack the form of government of the United States, or that they do not support either of the first two counts. What little I have to say about the third count may be postponed until I have considered the fourth. With regard to that it seems too plain to be denied that the suggestion to workers in the ammunition factories that they are producing bullets to murder their dearest, and the further advocacy of a general strike, both in the second leaflet, do urge curtailment of production of things necessary to the prosecution of the war within the meaning of the Act of May 16, 1918, c. 75, 40 Stat. 553, amending § 3 of the earlier Act of 1917. But to make the conduct criminal that statute requires that it should be "with intent by such curtailment to cripple or hinder the United States in the prosecution of the war." It seems to me that no such intent is proved.

I am aware of course that the word intent as vaguely used in ordinary legal discussion means no more than knowledge at the time of the act that the consequences said to be intended will ensue. Even less than that will satisfy the general principle of civil and criminal liability. A man may have to pay damages, may be sent to prison, at common law might be hanged, if at the time of his act <sup>627</sup><sup>627</sup> he knew facts from which common experience showed that the consequences would follow, whether he individually could foresee them or

not. But, when words are used exactly, a deed is not done with intent to produce a consequence unless that consequence is the aim of the deed. It may be obvious, and obvious to the actor, that the consequence will follow, and he may be liable for it even if he regrets it, but he does not do the act with intent to produce it unless the aim to produce it is the proximate motive of the specific act, although there may be some deeper motive behind.

It seems to me that this statute must be taken to use its words in a strict and accurate sense. They would be absurd in any other. A patriot might think that we were wasting money on aeroplanes, or making more cannon of a certain kind than we needed, and might advocate curtailment with success, yet even if it turned out that the curtailment hindered and was thought by other minds to have been obviously likely to hinder the United States in the prosecution of the war, no one would hold such conduct a crime. I admit that my illustration does not answer all that might be said but it is enough to show what I think and to let me pass to a more important aspect of the case. I refer to the First Amendment to the Constitution that Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech.

I never have seen any reason to doubt that the questions of law that alone were before this Court in the cases of *Schenck*, *Frohwerk* and *Debs*, 249 U.S. 47, 204, 211, were rightly decided. I do not doubt for a moment that by the same reasoning that would justify punishing persuasion to murder, the United States constitutionally may punish speech that produces or is intended to produce a clear and imminent danger that it will bring about forthwith certain substantive evils that the United States constitutionally may seek to prevent. The power undoubtedly is <sup>628</sup>~~628~~ greater in time of war than in time of peace because war opens dangers that do not exist at other times.

But as against dangers peculiar to war, as against others, the principle of the right to free speech is always the same. It is only the present danger of immediate evil or an intent to bring it about that warrants Congress in setting a limit to the expression of opinion where private rights are not concerned. Congress certainly cannot forbid all effort to change the mind of the country. Now nobody can suppose that the surreptitious publishing of a silly leaflet by an unknown man, without more, would present any immediate danger that its opinions would hinder the success of the government arms or have any appreciable tendency to do so. Publishing those opinions for the very purpose of obstructing however, might indicate a greater danger and at any rate would have the quality of an attempt. So I assume that the second leaflet if published for the purposes alleged in the fourth count might be punishable. But it seems pretty clear to me that nothing less than that would bring these papers within the scope of this law. An actual intent in the sense that I have explained is necessary to constitute an attempt, where a further act of the same individual is required

to complete the substantive crime, for reasons given in Swift & Co. v. United States, 196 U.S. 375, 396. It is necessary where the success of the attempt depends upon others because if that intent is not present the actor's aim may be accomplished without bringing about the evils sought to be checked. An intent to prevent interference with the revolution in Russia might have been satisfied without any hindrance to carrying on the war in which we were engaged.

I do not see how anyone can find the intent required by the statute in any of the defendants' words. The second leaflet is the only one that affords even a foundation for the charge, and there, without invoking the hatred of German militarism expressed in the former one, it is evident from the beginning to the end that the only object of the paper is to help Russia and stop American intervention there against the popular government — not to impede the United States in the war that it was carrying on. To say that two phrases taken literally might import a suggestion of conduct that would have interference with the war as an indirect and probably undesired effect seems to me by no means enough to show an attempt to produce that effect.

I return for a moment to the third count. That charges an intent to provoke resistance to the United States in its war with Germany. Taking the clause in the statute that deals with that in connection with the other elaborate provisions of the act, I think that resistance to the United States means some forcible act of opposition to some proceeding of the United States in pursuance of the war. I think the intent must be the specific intent that I have described and for the reasons that I have given I think that no such intent was proved or existed in fact. I also think that there is no hint at resistance to the United States as I construe the phrase.

In this case sentences of twenty years imprisonment have been imposed for the publishing of two leaflets that I believe the defendants had as much right to publish as the Government has to publish the Constitution of the United States now vainly invoked by them. Even if I am technically wrong and enough can be squeezed from these poor and puny anonymities to turn the color of legal litmus paper; I will add, even if what I think the necessary intent were shown; the most nominal punishment seems to me all that possibly could be inflicted, unless the defendants are to be made to suffer not for what the indictment alleges but for the creed that they avow — a creed that I believe to be the creed of ignorance and immaturity when honestly held, as I see no reason to doubt that it was held here, but which, although made the subject of examination at the trial, no one has a right even to consider in dealing with the charges before the Court.

Persecution for the expression of opinions seems to me perfectly logical. If you have no doubt of your premises or your power and want a certain result with all your heart you naturally express your wishes in law and sweep away all opposition. To allow opposition by speech seems to indicate that you think the speech impotent, as when a man says that he has squared the circle, or that you do not care whole-heartedly for the result, or that you doubt either your power or your premises. But when men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas — that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out. That at any rate is the theory of our Constitution. It is an experiment, as all life is an experiment. Every year if not every day we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based upon imperfect knowledge. While that experiment is part of our system I think that we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country. I wholly disagree with the argument of the Government that the First Amendment left the common law as to seditious libel in force. History seems to me against the notion. I had conceived that the United States through many years had shown its repentance for the Sedition Act of 1798, by repaying fines that it imposed. Only the emergency that makes it immediately dangerous to leave the correction of evil counsels to time warrants <sup>631</sup><sup>631</sup> making any exception to the sweeping command, "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech." Of course I am speaking only of expressions of opinion and exhortations, which were all that were uttered here, but I regret that I cannot put into more impressive words my belief that in their conviction upon this indictment the defendants were deprived of their rights under the Constitution of the United States.

MR. JUSTICE BRANDEIS concurs with the foregoing opinion.

1. List the charges against the defendants.
2. In their pamphlets, how did the defendants describe President Woodrow Wilson?
3. According to the U.S. Supreme Court, what was the result of the distribution of the pamphlets?
4. The defendants were convicted in a lower court. Did the Supreme Court uphold the conviction of the lower court or reversed the decision of the lower court?

## ***PEACE AND BREAD IN TIME OF WAR***

***Jane Addams***

Jane Addams was a nationally famous figure in the World War I era. A social reformer, she had founded Chicago's Hull House, a settlement house that aided impoverished immigrants. When World War I broke out in Europe, Addams traveled to Europe to meet with pacifists like herself. Considering herself a "moderate" on social issues, Addams found herself radicalized by the American press's attempts to paint pacifists as dangerous and misguided. After World War I, Addams wrote *Peace and Bread in Time of War* (1922), an effort to explain her pacifist beliefs and her experiences as a pacifist in a nation at war.

## CHAPTER VII.

### PERSONAL REACTIONS DURING WAR.

AFTER the United States had entered the war there began to appear great divergence among the many types of pacifists, from the extreme left, composed of non-resistants, through the middle-of-the-road groups, to the extreme right, who could barely be distinguished from mild militarists. There were those people, also, who although they felt keenly both the horror and the futility of war, yet hoped for certain beneficent results from the opportunities afforded by the administration of war; they were much pleased when the government took over the management of the railroads, insisting that governmental ownership had thus been pushed forward by decades; they were also sure that the War Labor Policies Board, the Coal Commission and similar war institutions would make an enormous difference in the development of the country, in short, that militarism might be used as an instrument for advanced social ends. Such justifications had their lure and one found old pacifist friends on all the war boards and even in the war department itself. Certainly we



were all eager to accept whatever progressive social changes came from the quick reorganization demanded by war, and doubtless prohibition was one of these, as the granting of woman suffrage in the majority of the belligerent nations, was another. But some of us had suspected that social advance depends as much upon the process through which it is secured as upon the result itself; if railroads are nationalized solely in order to secure rapid transit of ammunition and men to points of departure for Europe, when that governmental need no longer exists what more natural than that the railroads should no longer be managed by the government?

My temperament and habit had always kept me rather in the middle of the road; in politics as well as in social reform I had been for "the best possible." But now I was pushed far toward the left on the subject of the war and I became gradually convinced that in order to make the position of the pacifist clear it was perhaps necessary that at least a small number of us should be forced into an unequivocal position. If I sometimes regretted having gone to the Woman's Congress at The Hague in 1915, or having written a book on Newer Ideals of Peace in 1911 which had made my position so conspicuously clear, certainly far oftener I was devoutly grateful that I had used such unmistakable means of expression before the



time came when any spoken or written word in the interests of Peace was forbidden.

It was on my return from The Hague Congress in July, 1915, that I had my first experience of the determination on the part of the press to make pacifist activity or propaganda so absurd that it would be absolutely without influence and its authors so discredited that nothing they might say or do would be regarded as worthy of attention. I had been accustomed to newspaper men for many years and had come to regard them as a good natured fraternity, sometimes ignorant of the subject on which they asked an interview, but usually quite ready to report faithfully albeit somewhat sensationally. Hull-House had several times been the subject of sustained and inspired newspaper attacks, one, the indirect result of an exposure of the inefficient sanitary service in the Chicago Health Department had lasted for many months; I had of course known what it was to serve unpopular causes and throughout a period of campaigning for the Progressive Party I had naturally encountered the "opposition press" in various parts of the country, but this concerted and deliberate attempt at misrepresentation on the part of newspapers of all shades of opinion was quite new in my experience. After the United States entered the war, the press throughout the country systematically undertook to mis-

represent and malign pacifists as a recognized part of propaganda and as a patriotic duty. We came to regard this misrepresentation as part of the war technique and in fact an inevitable consequence of war itself, but we were slow in the very beginning to recognize the situation, and I found my first experience which came long before the United States entered the war rather overwhelming.

Upon our return from the Woman's International Congress at The Hague in 1915, our local organization in New York City with others, notably a group of enthusiastic college men, had arranged a large public meeting in Carnegie Hall. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw presided and the United States delegates made a public report of our impressions in "war stricken Europe" and of the moral resources in the various countries we visited that might possibly be brought to bear against a continuation of the war. We had been much impressed with the fact that it was an old man's war, that the various forms of doubt and opposition to war had no method of public expression and that many of the soldiers themselves were far from enthusiastic in regard to actual fighting as a method of settling international difficulties. War was to many of them much more anachronistic than to the elderly statesmen who were primarily responsible for the soldiers' presence in the trenches.

It was the latter statement which was my un-

doing, for in illustration of it I said that in practically every country we had visited, we had heard a certain type of young soldier say that it had been difficult for him to make the bayonet charge (enter into actual hand to hand fighting) unless he had been stimulated; that the English soldiers had been given rum before such a charge, the Germans ether and that the French were said to use absinthe. To those who heard the address it was quite clear that it was not because the young men flinched at the risk of death but because they had to be inflamed to do the brutal work of the bayonet, such as disembowelling, and were obliged to overcome all the inhibitions of civilization.

Dr. Hamilton and I had notes for each of these statements with the dates and names of the men who had made them, and it did not occur to me that the information was new or startling. I was, however, reported to have said that no soldier could go into a bayonet charge until he was made half drunk, and this in turn was immediately commented upon, notably in a scathing letter written to the New York Times by Richard Harding Davis, as a most choice specimen of a woman's sentimental nonsense. Mr. Davis himself had recently returned from Europe and at once became the defender of the heroic soldiers who were being traduced and belittled. He lent the weight of his name and his very able pen to the cause,

but it really needed neither, for the misstatement was repeated, usually with scathing comment, from one end of the country to the other.

I was conscious, of course, that the story had struck athwart the popular and long-cherished conception of the nobility and heroism of the soldier as such, and it seemed to me at the time that there was no possibility of making any explanation, at least until the sensation should have somewhat subsided. I might have repeated my more sober statements with the explanation that whomsoever the pacifist held responsible for war, it was certainly not the young soldiers themselves who were, in a sense, its most touching victims, "the heroic youth of the world whom a common ideal tragically pitted against each other." Youth's response to the appeal made to their self-sacrifice, to their patriotism, to their sense of duty, to their high-hearted hopes for the future, could only stir one's admiration, and we should have been dull indeed had we failed to be moved by this most moving spectacle in the world. That they had so responded to the higher appeals only confirms Ruskin's statement that "we admire the soldier not because he goes forth to slay but to be slain." The fact that many of them were obliged to make a great effort to bear themselves gallantly in the final tests of "war's brutalities" had nothing whatever to do with their courage

and sense of devotion. All this, of course, we had realized during our months in Europe.

After the meeting in Carnegie Hall and after an interview with President Wilson in Washington, I returned to Chicago to a public meeting arranged in the Auditorium; I was met at the train by a committee of aldermen appointed as a result of a resolution in the City Council. There was an indefinite feeling that the meeting at The Hague might turn out to be of significance, and that in such an event its chairman should have been honored by her fellow citizens. But the bayonet story had preceded me and every one was filled with great uneasiness. To be sure, a few war correspondents had come to my rescue—writing of the overpowering smell of ether preceding certain German attacks; the fact that English soldiers knew when a bayonet charge was about to be ordered because rations of rum were distributed along the trenches. Some people began to suspect that the story, exaggerated and grotesque as it had become, indicated not cowardice but merely an added sensitiveness which the modern soldier was obliged to overcome. Among the many letters on the subject which filled my mail for weeks, the bitter and abusive were from civilians or from the old men to whom war experiences had become a reminiscence, the larger



number and the most understanding ones came from soldiers in active service.

Only once did I try a public explanation. After an address in Chautauqua, New York, in which I had not mentioned bayonets, I tried to remake my original statement to a young man of the associated press only to find it once more so garbled that I gave up in despair, quite unmoved by the young man's letter of apology which followed hard upon the published report of his interview.

I will confess that the mass psychology of the situation interested me even then and continued to do so until I fell ill with a serious attack of pleuro-pneumonia, which was the beginning of three years of semi-invalidism. During weeks of feverish discomfort I experienced a bald sense of social opprobrium and wide-spread misunderstanding which brought me very near to self pity, perhaps the lowest pit into which human nature can sink. Indeed the pacifist in war time, with his precious cause in the keeping of those who control the sources of publicity and consider it a patriotic duty to make all types of peace propaganda obnoxious, constantly faces two dangers. Strangely enough he finds it possible to travel from the mire of self pity straight to the barren hills of self-righteousness and to hate himself equally in both places.

From the very beginning of the great war, as the members of our group gradually became defined from the rest of the community, each one felt increasingly the sense of isolation which rapidly developed after the United States entered the war into that destroying effect of "aloneness," if I may so describe the opposite of mass consciousness. We never ceased to miss the unquestioning comradeship experienced by our fellow citizens during the war, nor to feel curiously outside the enchantment given to any human emotion when it is shared by millions of others. The force of the majority was so overwhelming that it seemed not only impossible to hold one's own against it, but at moments absolutely unnatural, and one secretly yearned to participate in "the folly of all mankind." Our modern democratic teaching has brought us to regard popular impulses as possessing in their general tendency a valuable capacity for evolutionary development. In the hours of doubt and self-distrust the question again and again arises, has the individual or a very small group, the right to stand out against millions of his fellow countrymen? Is there not a great value in mass judgment and in instinctive mass enthusiasm, and even if one were right a thousand times over in conviction, was he not absolutely wrong in abstaining from this communion with his fellows? The misunderstanding on the part of

old friends and associates and the charge of lack of patriotism was far easier to bear than those dark periods of faint-heartedness. We gradually ceased to state our position as we became convinced that it served no practical purpose and, worse than that, often found that the immediate result was provocative.

We could not, however, lose the conviction that as all other forms of growth begin with a variation from the mass, so the moral changes in human affairs may also begin with a differing group or individual, sometimes with the one who at best is designated as a crank and a freak and in sterner moments is imprisoned as an atheist or a traitor. Just when the differing individual becomes the centro-egotist, the insane man, who must be thrown out by society for its own protection, it is impossible to state. The pacifist was constantly brought sharply up against a genuine human trait with its biological basis, a trait founded upon the instinct to dislike, to distrust and finally to destroy the individual who differs from the mass in time of danger. Regarding this trait as the basis of self-preservation it becomes perfectly natural for the mass to call such an individual a traitor and to insist that if he is not for the nation he is against it. To this an estimated nine million people can bear witness who have been burned as witches and heretics, not by mobs, for of the peo-



ple who have been "lynched" no record has been kept, but by order of ecclesiastical and civil courts.

There were moments when the pacifist yielded to the suggestion that keeping himself out of war, refusing to take part in its enthusiasms, was but pure quietism, an acute failure to adjust himself to the moral world. Certainly nothing was clearer than that the individual will was helpless and irrelevant. We were constantly told by our friends that to stand aside from the war mood of the country was to surrender all possibility of future influence, that we were committing intellectual suicide, and would never again be trusted as responsible people or judicious advisers. Who were we to differ with able statesmen, with men of sensitive conscience who also absolutely abhorred war, but were convinced that this war for the preservation of democracy would make all future wars impossible, that the priceless values of civilization which were at stake could at this moment be saved only by war? But these very dogmatic statements spurred one to alarm. Was not war in the interest of democracy for the salvation of civilization a contradiction of terms, whoever said it or however often it was repeated?

Then, too, we were always afraid of fanaticism, of preferring a consistency of theory to the conscientious recognition of the social situation, of a

failure to meet life in the temper of a practical person. Every student of our time had become more or less a disciple of pragmatism and its great teachers in the United States had come out for the war and defended their positions with skill and philosophic acumen. There were moments when one longed desperately for reconciliation with one's friends and fellow citizens; in the words of Amiel, "Not to remain at variance with existence but to reach that understanding of life which enables us at least to obtain forgiveness." Solitude has always had its demons, harder to withstand than the snares of the world, and the unnatural desert into which the pacifist was summarily cast out seemed to be peopled with them. We sorely missed the contagion of mental activity, for we are all much more dependent upon our social environment and daily newspaper than perhaps any of us realize. We also doubtless encountered, although subconsciously, the temptations described by John Stuart Mill: "In respect to the persons and affairs of their own day, men insensibly adopt the modes of feeling and judgment in which they can hope for sympathy from the company they keep."

The consciousness of spiritual alienation was lost only in moments of comradeship with the like minded, which may explain the tendency of the

pacifist in war time to seek his intellectual kin, his spiritual friends, wherever they might be found in his own country or abroad.

It was inevitable that in many respects the peace cause should suffer in public opinion from the efforts of groups of people who, early in the war, were convinced that the country as a whole was for peace and who tried again and again to discover a method for arousing and formulating the sentiment against war. I was ill and out of Chicago when the People's Council held a national convention there, which was protected by the city police but threatened with dispersion by the state troops, who, however, arrived from the capital several hours after the meeting had adjourned. The incident was most sensational and no one was more surprised than many of the members of the People's Council who thus early in the war had supposed that they were conducting a perfectly legitimate convention. The incident gave tremendous "copy" in a city needing rationalizing rather than sensationalizing at that moment. There is no doubt that the shock and terror of the "anarchist riots" occurring in Chicago years ago have left their traces upon the nervous system of the city somewhat as a nervous shock experienced in youth will long afterwards determine the action of a mature man under widely different circumstances.

On the whole, the New York groups were much more active and throughout the war were allowed much more freedom both of assembly and press, although later a severe reaction followed expressed through the Lusk Committee and other agencies. Certainly neither city approximated the freedom of London and nothing surprised me more in 1915 and again in 1919 than the freedom of speech permitted there.

We also read with a curious eagerness the steadily increasing number of books published from time to time during the war, which brought a renewal of one's faith or at least a touch of comfort. These books broke through that twisting and suppressing of awkward truths, which was encouraged and at times even ordered by the censorship. Such manipulation of news and motives was doubtless necessary in the interest of war propaganda if the people were to be kept in a fighting mood. Perhaps the most vivid books came from France, early from Romain Rolland, later from Barbusse, although it was interesting to see how many people took the latter's burning indictment of war merely as a further incitement against the enemy. On the scientific side were the frequent writings of David Starr Jordan and the remarkable book of Nicolai on "The Biology of War." The latter enabled one, at least in one's own mind, to refute the pseudo-scientific statement that war

was valuable in securing the survival of the fittest. Nicolai insisted that primitive man must necessarily have been a peaceful and social animal and that he developed his intelligence through the use of the tool, not through the use of the weapon; it was the primeval community which made the evolution of man possible, and coöperation among men is older and more primitive than mass combat which is an outgrowth of the much later property instinct. No other species save ants, who also possess property, fights in masses against other masses of its own kind. War is in fact not a natural process and not a struggle for existence in the evolutionary sense. He illustrated the evolutionary survival of the fittest by two tigers inhabiting the same jungle or feeding ground, the one who has the greater skill and strength as a hunter survives and the other starves, but the strong one does not go out to kill the weak one, as the war propagandist implied; or by two varieties of mice living in the same field or barn; in the biological struggle, the variety which grows a thicker coat survives the winter while the other variety freezes to extinction, but if one variety of mice should go forth to kill the other, it would be absolutely abnormal and quite outside the evolutionary survival which is based on the adjustment of the organism to its environment. George Nasmyth's book on Darwinism and the Social Order



was another clear statement of the mental confusion responsible for the insistence that even a biological progress is secured through war. Mr. Brailsford wrote constantly on the economic results of the war and we got much comfort from John Hobson's "Toward International Government," which gave an authoritative account of the enormous amount of human activity actually carried on through international organizations of all sorts, many of them under governmental control. Lowes Dickenson's books, especially the spirited challenge in "The Choice Before Us," left his readers with the distinct impression that "war is not inevitable but proceeds from definite and removable causes." From every such book the pacifist was forced to the conclusion that none save those interested in the realization of an idea are in a position to bring it about and that if one found himself the unhappy possessor of an unpopular conviction, there was nothing for it but to think as clearly as he was able and be in a position to serve his country as soon as it was possible for him to do so.

But with or without the help of good books a hideous sensitiveness remained, for the pacifist, like the rest of the world, has developed a high degree of suggestibility, sharing that consciousness of the feelings, the opinions and the customs of his own social group which is said to be an inheri-

tance from an almost pre-human past. An instinct which once enabled the man-pack to survive when it was a question of keeping together or of perishing off the face of the earth, is perhaps not underdeveloped in any of us. There is a distinct physical as well as moral strain when this instinct is steadily suppressed or at least ignored.

The large number of deaths among the older pacifists in all the warring nations can probably be traced in some measure to the peculiar strain which such maladjustment implies. More than the normal amount of nervous energy must be consumed in holding one's own in a hostile world. These older men, Kier Hardie and Lord Courtney in England, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Rauchenbusch, Washington Gladden in the United States, Lammasch and Fried in Austria, had been honored by their fellow citizens because of marked ability to interpret and understand them. Suddenly to find every public utterance wilfully misconstrued, every attempt at normal relationship repudiated, must react in a baffled suppression which is health-destroying even if we do not accept the mechanistic explanation of the human system. Certainly by the end of the war we were able to understand, although our group certainly did not endorse the statement of Cobden, one of the most convinced of all internationalists: "I made up my mind during the Crimean War that if ever I lived

in the time of another great war of a similar kind between England and another power, I would not as a public man open my mouth on the subject, so convinced am I that appeals to reason, conscience or interest have no force whatever on parties engaged in war, and that exhaustion on one or both sides can alone bring a contest of physical force to an end."

On the other hand there were many times when we stubbornly asked ourselves, what after all, has maintained the human race on this old globe despite all the calamities of nature and all the tragic failings of mankind, if not faith in new possibilities, and courage to advocate them. Doubtless many times these new possibilities were declared by a man who, quite unconscious of courage, bore the "sense of being an exile, a condemned criminal, a fugitive from mankind." Did every one so feel who, in order to travel on his own proper path had been obliged to leave the traditional highway? The pacifist, during the period of the war could answer none of these questions but he was sick at heart from causes which to him were hidden and impossible to analyze. He was at times devoured by a veritable dissatisfaction with life. Was he thus bearing his share of blood-guiltiness, the morbid sense of contradiction and inexplicable suicide which modern war implies? We certainly had none of the internal contentment



of the doctrinaire, the ineffable solace of the self-righteous which was imputed to us. No one knew better than we how feeble and futile we were against the impregnable weight of public opinion, the appalling imperviousness, the coagulation of motives, the universal confusion of a world at war. There was scant solace to be found in this type of statement: "The worth of every conviction consists precisely in the steadfastness with which it is held," perhaps because we suffered from the fact that we were no longer living in a period of dogma and were therefore in no position to announce our sense of security! We were well aware that the modern liberal having come to conceive truth of a kind which must vindicate itself in practice, finds it hard to hold even a sincere and mature opinion which from the very nature of things can have no justification in works. The pacifist in war time is literally starved of any gratification of that natural desire to have his own decisions justified by his fellows.

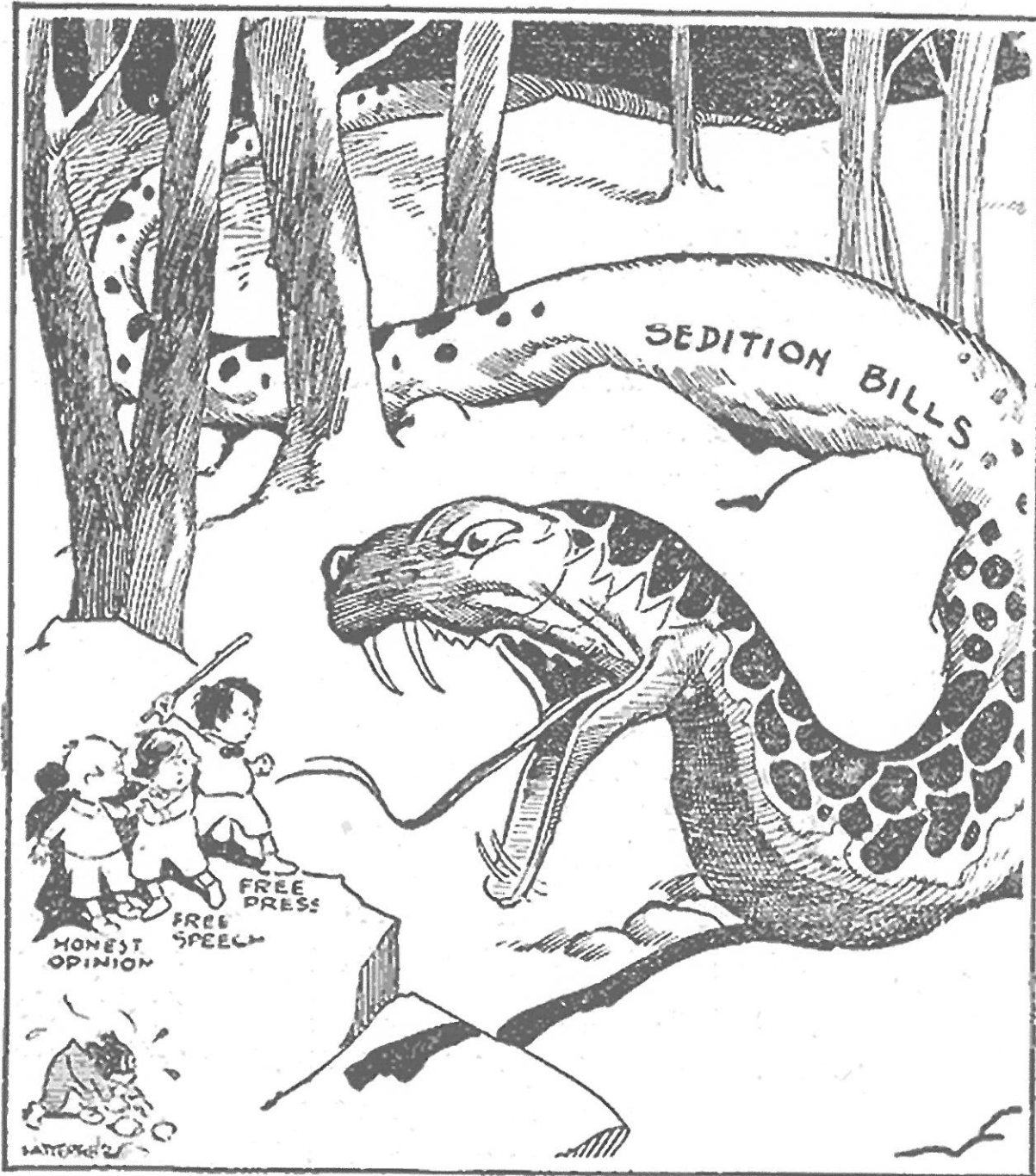
That, perhaps, was the crux of the situation. We slowly became aware that our affirmation was regarded as pure dogma. We were thrust into the position of the doctrinaire, and although, had we been permitted, we might have cited both historic and scientific tests of our so-called doctrine of Peace, for the moment any sanction even by way of illustration was impossible.

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It therefore came about that ability to hold out against mass suggestion, to honestly differ from the convictions and enthusiasms of one's best friends did in moments of crisis come to depend upon the categorical belief that a man's primary allegiance is to his vision of the truth and that he is under obligation to affirm it.

**“As Gag Rulers Would Have It.” *Literary Digest*, 1920.**

- 1. How does the cartoonist represent the Sedition Bills?**
- 2. What is the snake trying to devour?**
- 3. What do the children represent?**
- 4. What do you think is the cartoonist’s opinion of the government’s attempt to stifle civil liberties?**
- 5. How does this kind of expression compare with that of Charles T. Schenck?**
- 6. According to the Espionage Act, should this cartoonist have received the same punishment as Charles T. Schenck? Why, or why not?**



AS GAG-RULERS WOULD HAVE IT.

—Satterfield in the *Jersey City Journal*.

## **Randolph Bourne's *The State* (1918)**

Although he died young as a result of the worldwide influenza epidemic, Progressive-radical political theorist and writer, Randolph Silliman Bourne (1886-1918) indelibly impacted the course of both multiculturalism and anti-imperial activism in the twentieth century. Bourne had been a student of leading Progressive philosopher John Dewey at Columbia University who, echoing President Woodrow Wilson, supported military intervention as an instrument of a more progressive world. Sharply departing from Dewey, Bourne argued famously that “war is the health of the State.” In his posthumously published, unfinished work, *The State*, Bourne delineates the distinctions among the nation, government, and the State, and lays out the intellectual foundations for his enduring argument that militarism had become essential to the modern condition of State power.

## Randolph Bourne's *The State* (1918)

### I.

To most Americans of the classes which consider themselves significant the war brought a sense of the sanctity of the State which, if they had had time to think about it, would have seemed a sudden and surprising alteration in their habits of thought. In times of peace, we usually ignore the State in favour of partisan political controversies, or personal struggles for office, or the pursuit of party policies. It is the Government rather than the State with which the politically minded are concerned. The State is reduced to a shadowy emblem which comes to consciousness only on occasions of patriotic holiday.

Government is obviously composed of common and unsanctified men, and is thus a legitimate object of criticism and even contempt. If your own party is in power, things may be assumed to be moving safely enough; but if the opposition is in, then clearly all safety and honor have fled the State. Yet you do not put it to yourself in quite that way. What you think is only that there are rascals to be turned out of a very practical machinery of offices and functions which you take for granted. When we say that Americans are lawless, we usually mean that they are less conscious than other peoples of the august majesty of the institution of the State as it stands behind the objective government of men and laws which we see. In a republic the men who hold office are indistinguishable from the mass. Very few of them possess the slightest personal dignity with which they could endow their political role; even if they ever thought of such a thing. And they have no class distinction to give them glamour. In a republic the Government is obeyed grumblingly, because it has no bedazzlements or sanctities to gild it. If you are a good old-fashioned democrat, you rejoice at this fact, you glory in the plainness of a system where every citizen has become a king. If you are more sophisticated you bemoan the passing of dignity and honor from affairs of State. But in practice, the democrat does not in the least treat his elected citizen with the respect due to a king, nor does the sophisticated citizen pay tribute to the dignity even when he finds it. The republican State has almost no trappings to appeal to the common man's emotions. What it has are of military origin, and in an unmilitary era such as we have passed through since the Civil War, even military trappings have been scarcely seen. In such an era the sense of the State almost fades out of the consciousness of men.



With the shock of war, however, the State comes into its own again. The Government, with no mandate from the people, without consultation of the people, conducts all the negotiations, the backing and filling, the menaces and explanations, which slowly bring it into collision with some other Government, and gently and irresistibly slides the country into war. For the benefit of proud and haughty citizens, it is fortified with a list of the intolerable insults which have been hurled toward us by the other nations; for the benefit of the liberal and beneficent, it has a convincing set of moral purposes which our going to war will achieve; for the ambitious and aggressive classes, it can gently whisper of a bigger role in the destiny of the world. The result is that, even in those countries where the business of declaring war is theoretically in the hands of representatives of the people, no legislature has ever been known to decline the request of an Executive, which has conducted all foreign affairs in utter privacy and irresponsibility, that it order the nation into battle. Good democrats are wont to feel the crucial difference between a State in which the popular Parliament or Congress declares war, and the State in which an absolute monarch or ruling class declares war. But, put to the stern pragmatic test, the difference is not striking. In the freest of republics as well as in the most tyrannical of empires, all foreign policy, the diplomatic negotiations which produce or forestall war, are equally the private property of the Executive part of the Government, and are equally exposed to no check whatever from popular bodies, or the people voting as a mass themselves.

The moment war is declared, however, the mass of the people, through some spiritual alchemy, become convinced that they have willed and executed the deed themselves. They then, with the exception of a few malcontents, proceed to allow themselves to be regimented, coerced, deranged in all the environments of their lives, and turned into a solid manufactory of destruction toward whatever other people may have, in the appointed scheme of things, come within the range of the Government's disapprobation. The citizen throws off his contempt and indifference to Government, identifies himself with its purposes, revives all his military memories and symbols, and the State once more walks, an august presence, through the imaginations of men. Patriotism becomes the dominant feeling, and produces immediately that intense and hopeless confusion between the relations which the individual bears and should bear toward the society of which he is a part.

The patriot loses all sense of the distinction between State, nation, and government. In our quieter moments, the Nation or Country forms the basic idea of society. We think vaguely of a loose population spreading over a certain geographical portion of the earth's surface, speaking a common language, and living in a homogeneous

civilization. Our idea of Country concerns itself with the non-political aspects of a people, its ways of living, its personal traits, its literature and art, its characteristic attitudes toward life. We are Americans because we live in a certain bounded territory, because our ancestors have carried on a great enterprise of pioneering and colonization, because we live in certain kinds of communities which have a certain look and express their aspirations in certain ways. We can see that our civilization is different from contiguous civilizations like the Indian and Mexican. The institutions of our country form a certain network which affects us vitally and intrigues our thoughts in a way that these other civilizations do not. We are a part of Country, for better or for worse. We have arrived in it through the operation of physiological laws, and not in any way through our own choice. By the time we have reached what are called years of discretion, its influences have molded our habits, our values, our ways of thinking, so that however aware we may become, we never really lose the stamp of our civilization, or could be mistaken for the child of any other country. Our feeling for our fellow countrymen is one of similarity or of mere acquaintance. We may be intensely proud of and congenial to our particular network of civilization, or we may detest most of its qualities and rage at its defects. This does not alter the fact that we are inextricably bound up in it. The Country, as an inescapable group into which we are born, and which makes us its particular kind of a citizen of the world, seems to be a fundamental fact of our consciousness, an irreducible minimum of social feeling.

Now this feeling for country is essentially noncompetitive; we think of our own people merely as living on the earth's surface along with other groups, pleasant or objectionable as they may be, but fundamentally as sharing the earth with them. In our simple conception of country there is no more feeling of rivalry with other peoples than there is in our feeling for our family. Our interest turns within rather than without, is intensive and not belligerent. We grow up and our imaginations gradually stake out the world we live in, they need no greater conscious satisfaction for their gregarious impulses than this sense of a great mass of people to whom we are more or less attuned, and in whose institutions we are functioning. The feeling for country would be an uninflatable maximum were it not for the ideas of State and Government which are associated with it. Country is a concept of peace, of tolerance, of living and letting live. But State is essentially a concept of power, of competition: it signifies a group in its aggressive aspects. And we have the misfortune of being born not only into a country but into a State, and as we grow up we learn to mingle the two feelings into a hopeless confusion.

The State is the country acting as a political unit, it is the group acting as a repository of force, determiner of law, arbiter of justice. International politics is a power politics because it is a relation of States and that is what States infallibly and calamitously are, huge aggregations of human and industrial force that may be hurled against each other in war. When a country acts as a whole in relation to another country, or in imposing laws on its own inhabitants, or in coercing or punishing individuals or minorities, it is acting as a State. The history of America as a country is quite different from that of America as a State. In one case it is the drama of the pioneering conquest of the land, of the growth of wealth and the ways in which it was used, of the enterprise of education, and the carrying out of spiritual ideals, of the struggle of economic classes. But as a State, its history is that of playing a part in the world, making war, obstructing international trade, preventing itself from being split to pieces, punishing those citizens whom society agrees are offensive, and collecting money to pay for all.

Government on the other hand is synonymous with neither State nor Nation. It is the machinery by which the nation, organized as a State, carries out its State functions. Government is a framework of the administration of laws, and the carrying out of the public force. Government is the idea of the State put into practical operation in the hands of definite, concrete, fallible men. It is the visible sign of the invisible grace. It is the word made flesh. And it has necessarily the limitations inherent in all practicality. Government is the only form in which we can envisage the State, but it is by no means identical with it. That the State is a mystical conception is something that must never be forgotten. Its glamor and its significance linger behind the framework of Government and direct its activities.

Wartime brings the ideal of the State out into very clear relief, and reveals attitudes and tendencies that were hidden. In times of peace the sense of the State flags in a republic that is not militarized. For war is essentially the health of the State. The ideal of the State is that within its territory its power and influence should be universal. As the Church is the medium for the spiritual salvation of man, so the State is thought of as the medium for his political salvation. Its idealism is a rich blood flowing to all the members of the body politic. And it is precisely in war that the urgency for union seems greatest, and the necessity for universality seems most unquestioned. The State is the organization of the herd to act offensively or defensively against another herd similarly organized. The more terrifying the occasion for defense, the closer will become the organization and the more coercive the influence upon each member of the herd. War sends the current of purpose and activity flowing down to the lowest levels of the herd, and to its remote branches. All the activities of society are linked

together as fast as possible to this central purpose of making a military offensive or military defense, and the State becomes what in peacetimes it has vainly struggled to become—the inexorable arbiter and determinant of men's businesses and attitudes and opinions. The slack is taken up, the cross-currents fade out, and the nation moves lumberingly and slowly, but with ever accelerated speed and integration, towards the great end, towards that peacefulness of being at war, of which L. P. Jacks has spoken so unforgettably.

The classes which are able to play an active and not merely a passive role in the organization for war get a tremendous liberation of activity and energy. Individuals are jolted out of their old routine, many of them are given new positions of responsibility, new techniques must be learnt. Wearing home times are broken and women who would have remained attached with infantile bonds are liberated for service overseas. A vast sense of rejuvenescence pervades the significant classes, a sense of new importance in the world. Old national ideals are taken out, re-adapted to the purpose and used as the universal touchstones, or molds into which all thought is poured. Every individual citizen who in peacetimes had no living fragment of the State becomes an active amateur agent of the Government in reporting spies and disloyalists, in raising Government funds, or in propagating such measures as are considered necessary by officialdom. Minority opinion, which in times of peace was only irritating and could not be dealt with by law unless it was conjoined with actual crime, becomes with the outbreak of war, a case for outlawry. Criticism of the State, objections to war, lukewarm opinions concerning the necessity or the beauty of conscription, are made subject to ferocious penalties, far exceeding [in] severity those affixed to actual pragmatic crimes. Public opinion, as expressed in the newspapers, and the pulpits and the schools, becomes one solid block. Loyalty, or rather war orthodoxy, becomes the sole test for all professions, techniques, occupations. Particularly is this true in the sphere of the intellectual life. There the smallest taint is held to spread over the whole soul, so that a professor of physics is ipso facto disqualified to teach physics or hold honorable place in a university—the republic of learning—if he is at all unsound on the war. Even mere association with persons thus tainted is considered to disqualify a teacher. Anything pertaining to the enemy becomes taboo. His books are suppressed wherever possible, his language is forbidden. His artistic products are considered to convey in the subtlest spiritual way taints of vast poison to the soul that permits itself to enjoy them. So enemy music is suppressed, and energetic measures of opprobrium taken against those whose artistic consciences are not ready to perform such an act of self-sacrifice. The rage for loyal conformity works impartially, and often in diametric opposition to other orthodoxies



and traditional conformities or ideals. The triumphant orthodoxy of the State is shown at its apex perhaps when Christian preachers lose their pulpits for taking in more or less literal terms the Sermon on the Mount, and Christian zealots are sent to prison for twenty years for distributing tracts which argue that war is unscriptural.

War is the health of the State. It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate cooperation with the Government in coercing into obedience the minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense. The machinery of government sets and enforces the drastic penalties. The minorities are either intimidated into silence, or brought slowly around by subtle process of persuasion which may seem to them really to be converting them. Of course, the ideal of perfect loyalty, perfect uniformity is never really attained. The classes upon whom the amateur work of coercion falls are unwearied in their zeal, but often their agitation, instead of converting merely serves to stiffen their resistance. Minorities are rendered sullen, and some intellectual opinion bitter and satirical. But in general, the nation in wartime attains a uniformity of feeling, a hierarchy of values culminating at the undisputed apex of the State ideal, which could not possibly be produced through any other agency than war. Other values such as artistic creation, knowledge, reason, beauty, the enhancement of life, are instantly and almost unanimously sacrificed, and the significant classes who have constituted themselves the amateur agents of the State, are engaged not only in sacrificing these values for themselves but in coercing all other persons into sacrificing them.

War—or at least modern war waged by a democratic republic against a powerful enemy—seems to achieve for a nation almost all that the most inflamed political idealist could desire. Citizens are no longer indifferent to their Government, but each cell of the body politic is brimming with life and activity. We are at last on the way to full realization of that collective community in which each individual somehow contains the virtue of the whole. In a nation at war, every citizen identifies himself with the whole and feels immensely strengthened in that identification. The purpose and desire of the collective community live in each person who throws himself wholeheartedly into the cause of war. The impeding distinction between society and the individual is almost blotted out. At war, the individual becomes almost identical with his society. He achieves a superb self-assurance, an intuition of the rightness of all his ideas and emotions, so that in the suppression of opponents or heretics he is invincibly strong; he feels behind him all the power of the collective community. The individual as social being in war seems to have achieved almost his apotheosis. Not for any religious impulse could the American nation have been expected to show such

devotion en masse, such sacrifice and labor. Certainly not for any secular good, such as universal education or the subjugation of nature, would it have poured forth its treasure and its life, or would it have permitted such stern coercive measures to be taken against it, such as conscripting its money and its men. But for the sake of a war of offensive self-defense, undertaken to support a difficult cause to the slogan of democracy, it would reach the highest level ever known of collective effort.

For these secular goods, connected with the enhancement of life, the education of men and the use of the intelligence to realize reason and beauty in the nation's communal living, are alien to our traditional ideal of the State. The State is intimately connected with war, for it is the organization of the collective community when it acts in a political manner, and to act in a political manner towards a rival group has meant, throughout all history—war.

There is nothing invidious in the use of the term, herd, in connection with the State. It is merely an attempt to reduce closer to first principles the nature of this institution in the shadow of which we all live, move and have our being. Ethnologists are generally agreed that human society made its first appearance as the human pack and not as a collection of individuals or couples. The herd is in fact the original unit, and only as it was differentiated did personal individuality develop. All the most primitive tribes of men are shown to live in very complex but very rigid social organization where opportunity for individuation is scarcely given. These tribes remain strictly organized herds, and the difference between them and the modern State is one of degree of sophistication and variety of organization, and not of kind.

Psychologists recognize the gregarious impulse as one of the strongest primitive pulls which keeps together the herds of the different species of higher animals. Mankind is no exception. Our pugnacious evolutionary history has prevented the impulse from ever dying out. This gregarious impulse is the tendency to imitate, to conform to coalesce together, and is most powerful when the herd believes itself threatened with attack. Animals crowd together for protection, and men become most conscious of their collectivity at the threat of war. Consciousness of collectivity brings confidence and a feeling of massed strength, which in turn arouses pugnacity and the battle is on. In civilized man, the gregarious impulse acts not only to produce concerted action for defense, but also to produce identity of opinion. Since thought is a form of behavior, the gregarious impulse floods up into its realms and demands that sense of uniform thought which wartime produces so successfully. And it is in this flooding of the conscious life of society that gregariousness works its havoc.



For just as in modern societies the sex-instinct is enormously over-supplied for the requirements of human propagation, so the gregarious impulse is enormously over-supplied for the work of protection which it is called upon to perform. It would be quite enough if we were gregarious enough to enjoy the companionship of others, to be able to cooperate with them, and to feel a slight malaise at solitude. Unfortunately, however, this impulse is not content with those reasonable and healthful demands, but insists that like mindedness shall prevail everywhere, in all departments of life, so that all human progress, all novelty, and nonconformity must be carried against the resistance of this tyrannical herd-instinct which drives the individual into obedience and conformity with the majority. Even in the most modern and enlightened societies this impulse shows little sign of abating. As it is driven by inexorable economic demand out of the sphere of utility, it seems to fasten itself ever more fiercely in the realm of feeling and opinion, so that conformity comes to be a thing aggressively desired and demanded.

The gregarious impulse keeps its hold all the more virulently because when the group is in motion or is taking any positive action, this feeling of being with and supported by the collective herd very greatly feeds that will to power, the nourishment of which the individual organism so constantly demands. You feel powerful by conforming, and you feel forlorn and hopeless if you are out of the crowd. While even if you do not get any access to power by thinking and feeling just as everybody else in your group does, you get at least the warm feeling of obedience, the soothing irresponsibility of protection.

Joining as it does to these very vigorous tendencies of the individual—the pleasure in power and the pleasure of obedience—this gregarious impulse becomes irresistible in society. War stimulates it to the highest possible degree, sending the influence of its mysterious herd-current with its inflations of power and obedience to the farthest reaches of the society, to every individual and little group that can possibly be affected. And it is these impulses which the State—the organization of the entire herd, the entire collectivity—is founded on and makes use of.

There is, of course, in the feeling towards the State a large element of pure filial mysticism. The sense of insecurity, the desire for protection, sends one's desire back to the father and mother, with whom is associated the earliest feelings of protection. It is not for nothing that one's State is still thought of as Father or Motherland, that one's relation towards it is conceived in terms of family affection. The war has shown that nowhere under the shock of danger have these primitive childlike attitudes failed to assert themselves again, as much in this country as anywhere. If we have not the

intense Father-sense of the German who worships his Vaterland, at least in Uncle Sam we have a symbol of protecting, kindly authority, and in the many Mother-posters of the Red Cross, we see how easily in the more tender functions of war service, the ruling organization is conceived in family terms. A people at war have become in the most literal sense obedient, respectful, trustful children again, full of that naive faith in the all-wisdom and all-power of the adult who takes care of them, imposes his mild but necessary rule upon them and in whom they lose their responsibility and anxieties. In this recrudescence of the child, there is great comfort, and a certain influx of power. On most people the strain of being an independent adult weighs heavily, and upon none more than those members of the significant classes who have bequeathed to them or have assumed the responsibilities of governing. The State provides the convenientest of symbols under which those classes can retain all the actual pragmatic satisfaction of governing, but can rid themselves of the psychic burden of adulthood. They continue to direct industry and government and all the institutions of society pretty much as before, but in their own conscious eyes and in the eyes of the general public, they are turned from their selfish and predatory ways, and have become loyal servants of society, or something greater than they—the State. The man who moves from the direction of a large business in New York to a post in the war management industrial service in Washington does not apparently alter very much his power or his administrative technique. But psychically, what a transformation has occurred! He is not now only the power but the glory! And his sense of satisfaction is proportional not to the genuine amount of personal sacrifice that may be involved in the change but to the extent to which he retains the industrial prerogatives and sense of command.

From members of this class a certain insuperable indignation arises if the change from private enterprise to State service involves any real loss of power and personal privilege. If there is to be any pragmatic sacrifice, let it be, they feel, on the field of honor, in the traditionally acclaimed deaths by battle, in that detour to suicide, as Nietzsche calls war. The State in wartime supplies satisfaction for this very real craving, but its chief value is the opportunity it gives for this regression to infantile attitudes. In your reaction to an imagined attack on your country or an insult to its government, you draw closer to the herd for protection, you conform in word and deed, and you act together. And you fix your adoring gaze upon the State, with a truly filial look, as upon the Father of the flock, the quasi-personal symbol of the strength of the herd, and the leader and determinant of your definite action and ideas.

The members of the working-classes, that portion at least which does not identify itself with the significant classes and seek to imitate it and rise to it, are notoriously

less affected by the symbolism of the State, or, in other words, are less patriotic than the significant classes. For theirs is neither the power nor the glory. The State in wartime does not offer them the opportunity to regress, for, never having acquired social adulthood, they cannot lose it. If they have been drilled and regimented, as by the industrial regime of the last century, they go out docilely enough to do battle for their State, but they are almost entirely without that filial sense and even without that herd-intellect sense which operates so powerfully among their betters. They live habitually in an industrial serfdom, by which though nominally free, they are in practice as a class bound to a system of a machine-production, the implements of which they do not own, and in the distribution of whose product they have not the slightest voice, except what they can occasionally exert by a veiled intimidation which draws slightly more of the product in their direction. From such serfdom, military conscription is not so great a change. But into the military enterprise they go, not with those hurrahs of the significant classes whose instincts war so powerfully feeds, but with the same apathy with which they enter and continue in the industrial enterprise.

From this point of view, war can be called almost an upper-class sport. the novel interests and excitements it provides, the inflations of power, the satisfaction it gives to those very tenacious human impulses—gregariousness and parent-regression—endow it with all the qualities of a luxurious collective game which is felt intensely just in proportion to the sense of significant rule the person has in the class-division of society. A country at war—particularly our own country at war—does not act as a purely homogenous herd. The significant classes have all the herd-feeling in all its primitive intensity, so that this feeling does not flow freely without impediment throughout the entire nation. A modern country represents a long historical and social process of disaggregation of the herd. The nation at peace is not a group, it is a network of myriads of groups representing the cooperation and similar feeling of men on all sorts of planes and in all sorts of human interests and enterprises. In every modern industrial country, there are parallel planes of economic classes with divergent attitudes and institutions and interests—bourgeois and proletariat—with their many subdivisions according to power and function, and even their interweaving, such as those more highly skilled workers who habitually identify themselves with the owning and significant classes and strive to raise themselves to the bourgeois level, imitating their cultural standards and manners. Then there are religious groups with a certain definite, though weakening sense of kinship, and there are the powerful ethnic groups which behave almost as cultural colonies in the New World, clinging tenaciously to language and historical tradition, though their herdishness is usually founded on cultural rather than State symbols. There are certain

vague sectional groups. All these small sects, political parties, classes, levels, interests, may act as foci for herd-feelings. They intersect and interweave, and the same person may be a member of several different groups lying at different planes. Different occasions will set off his herd-feeling in one direction or another. In a religious crisis he will be intensely conscious of the necessity that his sect—or sub-herd—may prevail; in a political campaign, that his party shall triumph.

To the spread of herd-feeling, therefore, all these smaller herds offer resistance. To the spread of that herd-feeling which arises from the threat of war, and which would normally involve the entire nation, the only groups which make serious resistance are those, of course, which continue to identify themselves with the other nation from which they or their parents have come. In times of peace they are for all practical purposes citizens of their new country. They keep alive their ethnic traditions more as a luxury than anything. Indeed these traditions tend rapidly to die out except where they connect with some still unresolved nationalistic cause abroad, with some struggle for freedom, or some irredentism. If they are consciously opposed by a too invidious policy of Americanism, they tend to be strengthened. And in time of war, these ethnic elements which have any traditional connection with the enemy, even though most of the individuals may have little real sympathy with the enemy's cause, are naturally lukewarm to the herd-feeling of the nation which goes back to State traditions in which they have no share. But to the natives imbued with State-feeling, any such resistance or apathy is intolerable. This herd-feeling, this newly awakened consciousness of the State, demands universality. The leaders of the significant classes, who feel most intensely this State-compulsion, demand a one hundred per cent Americanism, among one hundred per cent of the population. The State is a jealous God and will brook no rivals. Its sovereignty must pervade everyone and all feeling must be run into the stereotyped forms of romantic patriotic militarism which is the traditional expression of the State herd-feeling.

Thus arises conflict within the State. War becomes almost a sport between the hunters and the hunted. The pursuit of enemies within outweighs in psychic attractiveness the assault on the enemy without. The whole terrific force of the State is brought to bear against the heretics. The nation boils with a slow insistent fever. A white terrorism is carried on by the Government against all pacifists, Socialists, enemy aliens, and a milder unofficial persecution against all persons or movements that can be imagined as connected with the enemy. War, which should be the health of the State, unifies all the bourgeois elements and the common people, and outlaws the rest. The revolutionary proletariat that shows more resistance to this unification is, as we have



seen, psychically out of the current. Its vanguard as the I.W.W. is remorselessly pursued, in spite of the proof that it is a symptom, not a cause, and its prosecution increases the disaffection of labor and intensifies the friction instead of lessening it.

But the emotions that play around the defense of the State do not take into consideration the pragmatic results. A nation at war, led by its significant classes, is engaged in liberating certain of its impulses which have had all too little exercise in the past. It is getting certain satisfactions and the actual conduct of the war or the condition of the country are really incidental to the enjoyment of new forms of virtue and power and aggressiveness. If it could be shown conclusively that the persecution of slightly disaffected elements actually increased enormously the difficulties of production and the organization of the war technique, it would be found that public policy would scarcely change. The significant classes must have their pleasure in hunting down and chastising everything that they feel instinctively to be not imbued with the current State-enthusiasm, though the State itself be actually impeded in its efforts to carry out those objects for which they are passionately contending. The best proof of this is that with a pursuit of plotters that has continued with ceaseless vigilance ever since the beginning of the war in Europe, the concrete crimes unearthed and punished have been fewer than those prosecutions for the mere crime of opinion or the expression of sentiments critical of the State or the national policy. The punishment for opinion has been far more ferocious and unintermittent than the punishment of pragmatic crime. Unimpeachable Anglo-Saxon-Americans who were freer of pacifist or socialist utterance than the State-obsessed ruling public opinion, received heavier penalties, and even greater opprobrium, in many instances, than the definitely hostile German plotter. A public opinion which, almost without protest, accepts as just, adequate, beautiful, deserved, and in fitting harmony with ideals of liberty and freedom of speech, a sentence of twenty years in prison for mere utterances, no matter what they may be, shows itself to be suffering from a kind of social derangement of values, a sort of social neurosis, that deserves analysis and comprehension. On our entrance into the war there were many persons who predicted exactly this derangement of values, who feared lest democracy suffer more at home from an America at war than could be gained for democracy abroad. That fear has been amply justified. The question whether the American nation would act like an enlightened democracy going to war for the sake of high ideals, or like a State-obsessed herd, has been decisively answered. The record is written and cannot be erased. History will decide whether the terrorization of opinion, and the regimentation of life was justified under the most idealistic of democratic administrations. It will see that when the American nation had ostensibly a chance to conduct a gallant war, with

scrupulous regard to the safety of democratic values at home, it chose rather to adopt all the most obnoxious and coercive techniques of the enemy and of the other countries at war, and to rival in intimidation and ferocity of punishment the worst governmental systems of the age. For its former unconsciousness and disrespect of the State ideal, the nation apparently paid the penalty in a violent swing to the other extreme. It acted so exactly like a herd in its irrational coercion of minorities that there is no artificiality in interpreting the progress of the war in terms of herd psychology. It unwittingly brought out into the strongest relief the true characteristics of the State and its intimate alliance with war. It provided for the enemies of war and the critics of the State the most telling arguments possible. The new passion for the State ideal unwittingly set in motion and encouraged forces that threaten very materially to reform the State. It has shown those who are really determined to end war that the problem is not the mere simple one of finishing a war that will end war.

For war is a complicated way in which a nation acts, and it acts so out of a spiritual compulsion which pushes it on perhaps against all its interests, all its real desires, and all its real sense of values. It is States that make wars and not nations, and the very thought and almost necessity of war is bound up with the ideal of the State. Not for centuries have nations made war; in fact the only historical example of nations making war is the great barbarian invasions into Southern Europe, invasions of Russia from the East, and perhaps the sweep of Islam through Northern Africa into Europe after Mohammed's death. And the motivations for such wars were either the restless expansion of migratory tribes or the flame of religious fanaticism. Perhaps these great movements could scarcely be called wars at all, for war implies an organized people drilled and led; in fact, it necessitates the State. Ever since Europe has had any such organization, such huge conflicts between nations—nations, that is, as cultural groups—have been unthinkable. It is preposterous to assume that for centuries in Europe there would have been any possibility of a people en masse—with their own leaders, and not with the leaders of their duly constituted State—rising up and overflowing their borders in a war raid upon a neighboring people. The wars of the Revolutionary armies of France were clearly in defense of an imperiled freedom, and moreover, they were clearly directed not against other peoples, but against the autocratic governments that were combining to crush the Revolution. There is no instance in history of genuinely national war. There are instances of national defenses, among primitive civilizations such as the Balkan peoples, against intolerable invasion by neighboring despots or oppression. But war, as such, cannot occur except in a system of competing States, which have relations with each other through the channels of diplomacy.



War is a function of this system of States, and could not occur except in such a system. Nations organized for internal administration, nations organized as a federation of free communities, nations organized in any way except that of a political centralization of a dynasty or the reformed descendant of a dynasty, could not possibly make war upon each other. They would not only have no motive for conflict, but they would be unable to muster the concentrated force to make war effective. There might be all sorts of amateur marauding, there might be guerrilla expeditions of group against group, but there could not be that terrible war en masse of the national state, that exploitation of the nation in the interests of the State, that abuse of the national life and resource in the frenzied mutual suicide which is modern war.

It cannot be too firmly realized that war is a function of States and not of nations, indeed that it is the chief function of States. War is a very artificial thing. It is not the naive spontaneous outburst of herd pugnacity; it is no more primary than is formal religion. War cannot exist without a military establishment, and a military establishment cannot exist without a State organization. War has an immemorial tradition and heredity only because the State has a long tradition and heredity. But they are inseparably and functionally joined. We cannot crusade against war without crusading implicitly against the State. And we cannot expect, or take measures to ensure, that this war is a war to end war, unless at the same time we take measures to end the State in its traditional form. The State is not the nation, and the State can be modified and even abolished in its present form, without harming the nation. On the contrary, with the passing of the dominance of the State, the genuine life-enhancing forces of the nation will be liberated. If the State's chief function is war, then the State must suck out of the nation a large part of its energy for purely sterile purposes of defense and aggression. It devotes to waste or to actual destruction as much as it can of the vitality of the nation. No one will deny that war is a vast complex of life-destroying and life-crippling forces. If the State's chief function is war, then it is chiefly concerned with coordinating and developing the powers and techniques which make for destruction. And this means not only the actual and potential destruction of the enemy, but of the nation at home as well. For the very existence of a State in a system of States means that the nation lies always under a risk of war and invasion, and the calling away of energy into military pursuits means a crippling of the productive and life-enhancing process of the national life.

All this organizing of death-dealing energy and technique is not a natural but a very sophisticated process. Particularly in modern nations, but also all through the course of modern European history, it could never exist without the State. For it meets the

demands of no other institution, it follows the desires of no religious, industrial, political group. If the demand for military organization and a military establishment seems to come not from the officers of the State but from the public, it is only that it comes from the State-obsessed portion of the public, those groups which feel most keenly the State ideal. And in this country we have had evidence all too indubitable about how powerless the pacifically minded officers of the State may be in the face of a State-obsession of the significant classes. If a powerful section of the significant classes feels more intensely the attitudes of the State, then they will most infallibly mold the Government in time to their wishes, bring it back to act as the embodiment of the State which it pretends to be. In every country we have seen groups that were more loyal than the King—more patriotic than the Government—the Ulsterites in Great Britain, the Junkers in Prussia, l'Action Francaise in France, our patrioteers in America. These groups exist to keep the steering wheel of the State straight, and they prevent the nation from ever veering very far from the State ideal.

Militarism expresses the desires and satisfies the major impulse only of this class. The other classes, left to themselves, have too many necessities and interests and ambitions, to concern themselves with so expensive and destructive a game. But the State-obsessed group is either able to get control of the machinery of the State or to intimidate those in control, so that it is able through the use of the collective force to regiment the other grudging and reluctant classes into a military programme. State idealism percolates down through the strata of society, capturing groups and individuals just in proportion to the prestige of this dominant class. So that we have the herd actually strung along between two extremes, the militaristic patriots at one end, who are scarcely distinguishable in attitude and animus from the most reactionary Bourbons of an Empire, and unskilled labor groups, which entirely lack the State sense. But the State acts as a whole, and the class that controls governmental machinery can swing the effective action of the herd as a whole. The herd is not actually a whole, emotionally. But by an ingenious mixture of cajolery, agitation, intimidation, the herd is licked into shape, into an effective mechanical unity, if not into a spiritual whole. Men are told simultaneously that they will enter the military establishment of their own volition, as their splendid sacrifice for their country's welfare, and that if they do not enter they will be hunted down and punished with the most horrid penalties; and under a most indescribable confusion of democratic pride and personal fear they submit to the destruction of their livelihood if not their lives, in a way that would formerly have seemed to them so obnoxious as to be incredible.

In this great herd-machinery, dissent is like sand in the bearings. The State ideal is primarily a sort of blind animal push towards military unity. Any interference with that unity turns the whole vast impulse towards crushing it. Dissent is speedily outlawed, and the Government, backed by the significant classes and those who in every locality, however small, identify themselves with them, proceeds against the outlaws, regardless of their value to other institutions of the nation, or of the effect that their persecution may have on public opinion. The herd becomes divided into the hunters and the hunted, and war-enterprise becomes not only a technical game but a sport as well.

It must never be forgotten that nations do not declare war on each other, nor in the strictest sense it nations that fight each other. Much has been said to the effect that modern wars are wars of whole peoples and not of dynasties. Because the entire nation is regimented and the whole resources of the country are levied on for war, this does not mean that it is the country, our country which is fighting, and only as a State would it possibly fight. So, literally, it is States which make war on each other and not peoples. Governments are the agents of States, and it is Governments which declare war on each other, acting truest to form in the interests of the great State ideal which they represent. There is no case known in modern times of the people being consulted in the initiation of a war. The present demand for democratic control of foreign policy indicates how completely, even in the most democratic of modern nations, foreign policy has been the secret private possession of the executive branch of Government.

However representative of the people Parliaments and Congresses may be in all that concerns the internal administration of a country's political affairs, in international relations it has never been possible to maintain that the popular body acted except as a wholly mechanical ratifier of the Executive's will. The formality by which Parliaments and Congresses declare war is the merest technicality. Before such a declaration can take place, the country will have been brought to the very brink of war by the foreign policy of the Executive. A long series of steps on the downward path, each one more fatally committing the unsuspecting country to a warlike course of action will have been taken without either the people or its representatives being consulted or expressing its feeling. When the declaration of war is finally demanded by the Executive, the Parliament or Congress could not refuse it without reversing the course of history, without repudiating what has been representing itself in the eyes of the other states as the symbol and interpreter of the nation's will and animus. To repudiate an Executive at that time would be to publish to the entire world the evidence that the country had been grossly deceived by its own Government, that the

country with an almost criminal carelessness had allowed its Government to commit it to gigantic national enterprises in which it had no heart. In such a crisis, even a Parliament which in the most democratic States represents the common man and not the significant classes who most strongly cherish the State ideal, will cheerfully sustain the foreign policy which it understands even less than it would care for if it understood, and will vote almost unanimously for an incalculable war, in which the nation may be brought well-nigh to ruin. That is why the referendum which was advocated by some people as a test of American sentiment in entering the war was considered even by thoughtful democrats to be something subtly improper. The die had been cast. Popular whim could derange and bungle monstrously the majestic march of State policy in its new crusade for the peace of the world. The irresistible State ideal got hold of the bowels of men. Whereas up to this time, it had been irreproachable to be neutral in word and deed, for the foreign policy of the State had so decided it, henceforth it became the most arrant crime to remain neutral. The Middle West, which had been soddenly pacifistic in our days of neutrality, became in a few months just as soddenly bellicose, and in its zeal for witch-burning and its scent for enemies within gave precedence to no section of the country. The herd-mind followed faithfully the State-mind and, the agitation for a referendum being soon forgotten, the country fell into the universal conclusion that, since its Congress had formally declared the war, the nation itself had in the most solemn and universal way devised and brought on the entire affair.

Oppression of minorities became justified on the plea that the latter were perversely resisting the rationally constructed and solemnly declared will of a majority of the nation. The herd coalescence of opinion which became inevitable the moment the State had set flowing the war attitudes became interpreted as a prewar popular decision, and disinclination to bow to the herd was treated as a monstrously antisocial act. So that the State, which had vigorously resisted the idea of a referendum and clung tenaciously and, of course, with entire success to its autocratic and absolute control of foreign policy, had the pleasure of seeing the country, within a few months, given over to the retrospective impression that a genuine referendum had taken place. When once a country has lapped up these State attitudes, its memory fades; it conceives itself not as merely accepting, but of having itself willed, the whole policy and technique of war. The significant classes, with their trailing satellites, identify themselves with the State, so that what the State, through the agency of the Government, has willed, this majority conceives itself to have willed.



All of which goes to show that the State represents all the autocratic, arbitrary, coercive, belligerent forces within a social group, it is a sort of complexus of everything most distasteful to the modern free creative spirit, the feeling for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. War is the health of the State. Only when the State is at war does the modern society function with that unity of sentiment, simple uncritical patriotic devotion, and cooperation of services, which have always been the ideal of the State lover. With the ravages of democratic ideas, however, the modern republic cannot go to war under the old conceptions of autocracy and death-dealing belligerency. If a successful animus for war requires a renaissance of State ideals, they can only come back under democratic forms, under this retrospective conviction of democratic control of foreign policy, democratic desire for war, and particularly of this identification of the democracy with the State. How unregenerate the ancient State may be, however, is indicated by the laws against sedition, and by the Government's unreformed attitude on foreign policy. One of the first demands of the more farseeing democrats in the democracies of the Alliance was that secret diplomacy must go. The war was seen to have been made possible by a web of secret agreements between States, alliances that were made by Governments without the shadow of popular support or even popular knowledge, and vague, half-understood commitments that scarcely reached the stage of a treaty or agreement, but which proved binding in the event. Certainly, said these democratic thinkers, war can scarcely be avoided unless this poisonous underground system of secret diplomacy is destroyed, this system by which a nation's power, wealth, and manhood may be signed away like a blank check to an allied nation to be cashed in at some future crisis. Agreements which are to affect the lives of whole peoples must be made between peoples and not by Governments, or at least by their representatives in the full glare of publicity and criticism.

Such a demand for democratic control of foreign policy seemed axiomatic. Even if the country had been swung into war by steps taken secretly and announced to the public only after they had been consummated, it was felt that the attitude of the American State toward foreign policy was only a relic of the bad old days and must be superseded in the new order. The American President himself, the liberal hope of the world, had demanded, in the eyes of the world, open diplomacy, agreements freely and openly arrived at. Did this mean a genuine transference of power in this most crucial of State functions from Government to people? Not at all. When the question recently came to a challenge in Congress, and the implications of open discussion were somewhat specifically discussed, and the desirabilities frankly commended, the President let his disapproval be known in no uncertain way. No one ever accused Mr.

Wilson of not being a State idealist, and whenever democratic aspirations swung ideals too far out of the State orbit, he could be counted on to react vigorously. Here was a clear case of conflict between democratic idealism and the very crux of the concept of the State. However unthinkingly he might have been led on to encourage open diplomacy in his liberalizing program, when its implication was made vivid to him, he betrayed how mere a tool the idea had been in his mind to accentuate America's redeeming role. Not in any sense as a serious pragmatic technique had he thought of a genuinely open diplomacy. And how could he? For the last stronghold of State power is foreign policy. It is in foreign policy that the State acts most concentratedly as the organized herd, acts with fullest sense of aggressive-power, acts with freest arbitrariness. In foreign policy, the State is most itself. States, with reference to each other, may be said to be in a continual state of latent war. The armed truce, a phrase so familiar before 1914, was an accurate description of the normal relation of States when they are not at war. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the normal relation of States is war. Diplomacy is a disguised war, in which States seek to gain by barter and intrigue, by the cleverness of wits, the objectives which they would have to gain more clumsily by means of war. Diplomacy is used while the States are recuperating from conflicts in which they have exhausted themselves. It is the wheedling and the bargaining of the worn-out bullies as they rise from the ground and slowly restore their strength to begin fighting again. If diplomacy had been a moral equivalent for war, a higher stage in human progress, an inestimable means of making words prevail instead of blows, militarism would have broken down and given place to it. But since it is a mere temporary substitute, a mere appearance of war's energy under another form, a surrogate effect is almost exactly proportioned to the armed force behind it. When it fails, the recourse is immediate to the military technique whose thinly veiled arm it has been. A diplomacy that was the agency of popular democratic forces in their non-State manifestations would be no diplomacy at all. It would be no better than the Railway or Education commissions that are sent from one country to another with rational constructive purpose. The State, acting as a diplomatic-military ideal, is eternally at war. Just as it must act arbitrarily and autocratically in time of war, it must act in time of peace in this particular role where it acts as a unit. Unified control is necessarily autocratic control.

Democratic control of foreign policy is therefore a contradiction in terms. Open discussion destroys swiftness and certainty of action. The giant State is paralyzed. Wilson retains his full ideal of the State at the same time that he desires to eliminate war. He wishes to make the world safe for democracy as well as safe for diplomacy. When the two are in conflict, his clear political insight, his idealism of the



State, tells him that it is the naiver democratic values that must be sacrificed. The world must primarily be made safe for diplomacy. The State must not be diminished.

What is the State essentially? The more closely we examine it, the more mystical and personal it becomes. On the Nation we can put our hand as a definite social group, with attitudes and qualities exact enough to mean something. On the Government we can put our hand as a certain organization of ruling functions, the machinery of lawmaking and law-enforcing. The Administration is a recognizable group of political functionaries, temporarily in charge of the government. But the State stands as an idea behind them all, eternal, sanctified, and from it Government and Administration conceive themselves to have the breath of life. Even the nation, especially in times of war—or at least, its significant classes—considers that it derives its authority and its purpose from the idea of the State. Nation and State are scarcely differentiated, and the concrete, practical, apparent facts are sunk in the symbol. We reverence not our country but the flag. We may criticize ever so severely our country, but we are disrespectful to the flag at our peril. It is the flag and the uniform that make men's heart beat high and fill them with noble emotions, not the thought of and pious hopes for America as a free and enlightened nation.

It cannot be said that the object of emotion is the same, because the flag is the symbol of the nation, so that in reverencing the American flag we are reverencing the nation. For the flag is not a symbol of the country as a cultural group, following certain ideals of life, but solely a symbol of the political State, inseparable from its prestige and expansion. The flag is most intimately connected with military achievement, military memory. It represents the country not in its intensive life, but in its far-flung challenge to the world. The flag is primarily the banner of war; it is allied with patriotic anthem and holiday. It recalls old martial memories. A nation's patriotic history is solely the history of its wars, that is, of the State in its health and glorious functioning. So in responding to the appeal of the flag, we are responding to the appeal of the State, to the symbol of the herd organized as an offensive and defensive body, conscious of its prowess and its mystical herd strength.

Even those authorities in the present Administration, to whom has been granted autocratic control over opinion, feel, though they are scarcely able to philosophize over, this distinction. It has been authoritatively declared that the horrid penalties against seditious opinion must not be construed as inhibiting legitimate, that is, partisan criticism of the Administration. A distinction is made between the Administration and the Government. It is quite accurately suggested by this attitude that the Administration is a temporary band of partisan politicians in charge of the

machinery of Government, carrying out the mystical policies of State. The manner in which they operate this machinery may be freely discussed and objected to by their political opponents. The Governmental machinery may also be legitimately altered, in case of necessity. What may not be discussed or criticized is the mystical policy itself or the motives of the State in inaugurating such a policy. The President, it is true, has made certain partisan distinctions between candidates for office on the ground of support or nonsupport of the Administration, but what he means was really support or nonsupport of the State policy as faithfully carried out by the Administration. Certain of the Administration measures were devised directly to increase the health of the State, such as the Conscription and the Espionage laws. Others were concerned merely with the machinery. To oppose the first was to oppose the State and was therefore not tolerable. To oppose the second was to oppose fallible human judgment, and was therefore, though to be depreciated, not to be wholly interpreted as political suicide.

The distinction between Government and State, however, has not been so carefully observed. In time of war it is natural that Government as the seat of authority should be confused with the State or the mystic source of authority. You cannot very well injure a mystical idea which is the State, but you can very well interfere with the processes of Government. So that the two become identified in the public mind, and any contempt for or opposition to the workings of the machinery of Government is considered equivalent to contempt for the sacred State. The State, it is felt, is being injured in its faithful surrogate, and public emotion rallies passionately to defend it. It even makes any criticism of the form of Government a crime.

The inextricable union of militarism and the State is beautifully shown by those laws which emphasize interference with the Army and Navy as the most culpable of seditious crimes. Pragmatically, a case of capitalistic sabotage, or a strike in war industry would seem to be far more dangerous to the successful prosecution of the war than the isolated and ineffectual efforts of an individual to prevent recruiting. But in the tradition of the State ideal, such industrial interference with national policy is not identified as a crime against the State. It may be grumbled against; it may be seen quite rationally as an impediment of the utmost gravity. But it is not felt in those obscure seats of the herd mind which dictate the identity of crime and fix their proportional punishments. Army and Navy, however, are the very arms of the State; in them flows its most precious lifeblood. To paralyze them is to touch the very State itself. And the majesty of the State is so sacred that even to attempt such a paralysis is a crime equal to a successful strike. The will is deemed sufficient. Even though the

individual in his effort to impede recruiting should utterly and lamentably fail, he shall be in no wise spared. Let the wrath of the State descend upon him for his impiety! Even if he does not try any overt action, but merely utters sentiments that may incidentally in the most indirect way cause someone to refrain from enlisting, he is guilty. The guardians of the State do not ask whether any pragmatic effect flowed out of this evil will or desire. It is enough that the will is present. Fifteen or twenty years in prison is not deemed too much for such sacrilege.

Such attitudes and such laws, which affront every principle of human reason, are no accident, nor are they the result of hysteria caused by the war. They are considered just, proper, beautiful by all the classes which have the State ideal, and they express only an extreme of health and vigor in the reaction of the State to its non-friends.

Such attitudes are inevitable as arising from the devotees of the State. For the State is a personal as well as a mystical symbol, and it can only be understood by tracing its historical origin. The modern State is not the rational and intelligent product of modern men desiring to live harmoniously together with security of life, property, and opinion. It is not an organization which has been devised as pragmatic means to a desired social end. All the idealism with which we have been instructed to endow the State is the fruit of our retrospective imaginations. What it does for us in the way of security and benefit of life, it does incidentally as a by-product and development of its original functions, and not because at any time men or classes in the full possession of their insight and intelligence have desired that it be so. It is very important that we should occasionally lift the incorrigible veil of that ex post facto idealism by which we throw a glamour of rationalization over what is, and pretend in the ecstasies of social conceit that we have personally invented and set up for the glory of God and man the hoary institutions which we see around us. Things are what they are, and come down to us with all their thick encrustations of error and malevolence. Political philosophy can delight us with fantasy and convince us who need illusion to live that the actual is a fair and approximate copy—full of failings, of course, but approximately sound and sincere—of that ideal society which we can imagine ourselves as creating. From this it is a step to the tacit assumption that we have somehow had a hand in its creation and are responsible for its maintenance and sanctity.

Nothing is more obvious, however, than that every one of us comes into society as into something in whose creation we had not the slightest hand. We have not even the advantage of consciousness before we take up our careers on earth. By the time we find ourselves here we are caught in a network of customs and attitudes, the major directions of our desires and interests have been stamped on our minds, and by the

time we have emerged from tutelage and reached the years of discretion when we might conceivably throw our influence to the reshaping of social institutions, most of us have been so molded into the society and class we live in that we are scarcely aware of any distinction between ourselves as judging, desiring individuals and our social environment. We have been kneaded so successfully that we approve of what our society approves, desire what our society desires, and add to the group our own passionate inertia against change, against the effort of reason, and the adventure of beauty.

Every one of us, without exception, is born into a society that is given, just as the fauna and flora of our environment are given. Society and its institutions are, to the individual who enters it, as much naturalistic phenomena as is the weather itself. There is, therefore, no natural sanctity in the State any more than there is in the weather. We may bow down before it, just as our ancestors bowed before the sun and moon, but it is only because something in us unregenerate finds satisfaction in such an attitude, not because there is anything inherently reverential in the institution worshiped. Once the State has begun to function, and a large class finds its interest and its expression of power in maintaining the State, this ruling class may compel obedience from any uninterested minority. The State thus becomes an instrument by which the power of the whole herd is wielded for the benefit of a class. The rulers soon learn to capitalize the reverence which the State produces in the majority, and turn it into a general resistance toward a lessening of their privileges. The sanctity of the State becomes identified with the sanctity of the ruling class, and the latter are permitted to remain in power under the impression that in obeying and serving them, we are obeying and serving society, the nation, the great collectivity of all of us.

## II.

An analysis of the State would take us back to the beginnings of society, to the complex of religious and personal and herd-impulses which has found expression in so many forms. What we are interested in is the American State as it behaves and as Americans behave towards it in this twentieth century, and to understand that we have to go no further back than the early English monarchy of which our American republic is the direct descendant. How straight and true is that line of descent almost nobody realizes. Those persons who believe in the sharpest distinction between democracy and monarchy can scarcely appreciate how a political institution may go through so many transformations and yet remain the same. Yet a swift glance must show us that in all the evolution of the English monarchy, with all its broadenings and



its revolutions, and even with its jump across the sea into a colony which became an independent nation and then a powerful State, the same State functions and attitudes have been preserved essentially unchanged. The changes have been changes of form and not of inner spirit, and the boasted extension of democracy has been not a process by which the State was essentially altered to meet the shifting of classes, the extension of knowledge, the needs of social organization, but a mere elastic expansion by which the old spirit of the State easily absorbed the new and adjusted itself successfully to its exigencies. Never once has it been seriously shaken. Only once or twice has it been seriously challenged, and each time it has speedily recovered its equilibrium and proceeded with all its attitudes and faiths reinforced by the disturbance.

The modern democratic state, in this light, is therefore no bright and rational creation of a new day, the political form under which great peoples are to live healthfully and freely in a modern world, but the last decrepit scion of an ancient and hoary stock, which has become so exhausted that it scarcely recognizes its own ancestor, does, in fact, repudiate him while it clings tenaciously to the archaic and irrelevant spirit that made that ancestor powerful, and resists the new bottles for the new wine that its health as a modern society so desperately needs. So sweeping a conclusion might have been doubted concerning the American State had it not been for the war, which has provided a long and beautiful series of examples of the tenacity of the State ideal and its hold on the significant classes of the American nation. War is the health of the State and it is during war that one best understands the nature of that institution. If the American democracy during wartime has acted with an almost incredible trueness to form, if it has resurrected with an almost joyful fury the somnolent State, we can only conclude that the tradition from the past has been unbroken, and that the American republic is the direct descendant of the English State.

And what was the nature of this early English State? It was first of all a medieval absolute monarchy, arising out of the feudal chaos, which had represented the first effort at order after the turbulent assimilation of the invading barbarians by the Christianizing Roman civilization. The feudal lord evolved out of the invading warrior who had seized or been granted land and held it, souls and usufruct thereof, as fief to some higher lord whom he aided in war. His own serfs and vassals were exchanging faithful service for the protection which the warrior with his organized band could give them. Where an invading chieftain retained his power over his lesser lieutenants a petty kingdom would arise, as in England, and a restless and ambitious king might extend his power over his neighbors and consolidate the petty kingdoms only to fall before the armed power of an invader like William the Conqueror, who would bring

the whole realm under his heel. The modern State begins when a prince secures almost undisputed sway over fairly homogeneous territory and people and strives to fortify his power and maintain the order that will conduce to the safety and influence of his heirs. The State in its inception is pure and undiluted monarchy; it is armed power, culminating in a single head, bent on one primary object, the reducing to subjection, to unconditional and unqualified loyalty of all the people of a certain territory. This is the primary striving of the State, and it is a striving that the State never loses, through all its myriad transformations.

When the subjugation was once acquired, the modern State had begun. In the King, the subjects found their protection and their sense of unity. From his side, he was a redoubtable, ambitious, and stiff-necked warrior, getting the supreme mastery which he craved. But from theirs, he was a symbol of the herd, the visible emblem of that security which they needed and for which they drew gregariously together. Serfs and villains, whose safety under their petty lords had been rudely shattered in the constant conflicts for supremacy, now drew a new breath under the supremacy that wiped out this local anarchy. King and people agreed in the thirst for order, and order became the first healing function of the State. But in the maintenance of order, the King needed officers of justice; the old crude group-rules for dispensing justice had to be codified, a system of formal law worked out. The King needed ministers, who would carry out his will, extensions of his own power, as a machine extends the power of a man's hand. So the State grew as a gradual differentiation of the King's absolute power, founded on the devotion of his subjects and his control of a military band, swift and sure to smite. Gratitude for protection and fear of the strong arm sufficed to produce the loyalty of the country to the State.

The history of the State, then, is the effort to maintain these personal prerogatives of power, the effort to convert more and more into stable law the rules of order, the conditions of public vengeance, the distinction between classes, the possession of privilege. It was an effort to convert what was at first arbitrary usurpation, a perfectly apparent use of unjustified force, into the taken for granted and the divinely established. The State moves inevitably along the line from military dictatorship to the divine right of Kings. What had to be at first rawly imposed becomes through social habit to seem the necessary, the inevitable. The modern unquestioning acceptance of the State comes out of long and turbulent centuries when the State was challenged and had to fight its way to prevail. The King's establishment of personal power—which was the early State—had to contend with the impudence of hostile barons, who saw too clearly the adventitious origin of the monarchy and felt no reason why they should



not themselves reign. Feuds between the King and his relatives, quarrels over inheritance, quarrels over the devolution of property, threatened constantly the existence of the new monarchical State. The King's will to power necessitated for its absolute satisfaction universality of political control in his dominions, just as the Roman Church claimed universality of spiritual control over the whole world. And just as rival popes were the inevitable product of such a pretension of sovereignty, rival kings and princes contended for that dazzling jewel of undisputed power.

Not until the Tudor regime was there in England an irresponsible personal monarchy on the lines of the early State ideal, governing a fairly well organized and prosperous nation. The Stuarts were not only too weak-minded to inherit the fruition of William the Conqueror's labors, but they made the fatal mistake of bringing out to public view and philosophy the idea of Divine Right implicit in the State, and this at a time when a new class of country gentry and burghers were attaining wealth and self-consciousness backed by the zeal of a theocratic and individualistic religion. Cromwell might certainly, if he had continued in power, revised the ideal of the State, perhaps utterly transformed it, destroying the concepts of personal power and universal sovereignty, substituting a sort of Government of Presbyterian Soviets under the tutelage of a celestial Czar. But the Restoration brought back the old State under a peculiarly frivolous form. The Revolution was the merest change of monarchs at the behest of a Protestant majority which insisted on guarantees against religious relapse. The intrinsic nature of the monarchy as the symbol of the State was not in the least altered. In place of the inept monarch who could not lead the State in person or concentrate in himself the royal prerogatives, a coterie of courtiers managed the State. But their direction was consistently in the interest of the monarch and of the traditional ideal, so that the current of the English State was not broken.

The boasted English Parliament of Lords and commoners possessed at no time any vitality which weakened or threatened to weaken the State ideal. Its original purpose was merely to facilitate the raising of the King's revenues. The nobles responded better when they seemed to be giving their consent. Their share in actual government was subjective, but the existence of Parliament served to appease any restiveness at the autocracy of the King. The significant classes could scarcely rebel when they had the privilege of giving consent to the King's measures. There was always outlet for the rebellious spirit of a powerful lord in private revolt against the King. The only Parliament that seriously tried to govern outside of and against the King's will precipitated a civil war that ended with the effectual submission of Parliament to a more careless and corrupt autocracy than had yet been known. By the time of George

III Parliament was moribund, utterly unrepresentative either of the new bourgeois classes or of peasants and laborers, a mere frivolous parody of a legislature, despised both by King and people. The King was most effectively the State and his ministers the Government, which was run in terms of his personal whim, by men whose only interest was personal intrigue. Government had been for long what it has never ceased to be—a series of berths and emoluments in Army, Navy and the different departments of State, for the representatives of the privileged classes.

The State of George III was an example of the most archaic ideal of the English State, the pure, personal monarchy. The great mass of the people had fallen into the age-long tradition of loyalty to the crown. The classes that might have been restive for political power were placated by a show of representative government and the lucrative supply of offices. Discontent showed itself only in those few enlightened elements which could not refrain from irony at the sheer irrationality of a State managed on the old heroic lines for so grotesque a sovereign and by so grotesque a succession of courtier-ministers. Such discontent could by no means muster sufficient force for a revolution, but the Revolution which was due came in America where even the very obviously shadowy pigment of Parliamentary representation was denied the colonists. All that was vital in the political thought of England supported the American colonists in their resistance to the obnoxious government of George III.

The American Revolution began with certain latent hopes that it might turn into a genuine break with the State ideal. The Declaration of Independence announced doctrines that were utterly incompatible not only with the century-old conception of the Divine Right of Kings, but also with the Divine Right of the State. If all governments derive their authority from the consent of the governed, and if a people is entitled, at any time that it becomes oppressive, to overthrow it and institute one more nearly conformable to their interests and ideals, the old idea of the sovereignty of the State is destroyed. The State is reduced to the homely work of an instrument for carrying out popular policies. If revolution is justifiable a State may even be criminal sometimes in resisting its own extinction. The sovereignty of the people is no mere phrase. It is a direct challenge to the historic tradition of the State. For it implies that the ultimate sanctity resides not in the State at all or in its agent, the government, but in the nation, that is, in the country viewed as a cultural group and not specifically as a king-dominated herd. The State then becomes a mere instrument, the servant of this popular will, or of the constructive needs of the cultural group. The Revolution had in it, therefore, the makings of a very daring modern experiment—the founding of a free nation which should use the State to effect its vast purposes of subduing a continent

just as the colonists' armies had used arms to detach their society from the irresponsible rule of an overseas king and his frivolous ministers. The history of the State might have ended in 1776 as far as the American colonies were concerned, and the modern nation which is still striving to materialize itself have been born.

For a while it seemed almost as if the State was dead. But men who are freed rarely know what to do with their liberty. In each colony that fatal seed of the State had been sown; it could not disappear. Rival prestige and interests began to make themselves felt. Fear of foreign States, economic distress, discord between classes, the inevitable physical exhaustion and prostration of idealism which follows a protracted war—all combined to put the responsible classes of the new States into the mood for a regression to the State ideal. Ostensibly there is no reason why the mere lack of a centralized State should have destroyed the possibility of progress in the new liberated America, provided the inter-state jealousy and rivalry could have been destroyed. But there were no leaders for this anti-State nationalism. The sentiments of the Declaration remained mere sentiments. No constructive political scheme was built on them. The State ideal, on the other hand, had ambitious leaders of the financial classes, who saw in the excessive decentralization of the Confederation too much opportunity for the control of society by the democratic lower-class elements. They were menaced by imperialistic powers without and by democracy within. Through their fear of the former they tended to exaggerate the impossibility of the latter. There was no inclination to make the State a school where democratic experiments could be worked out as they should be. They were unwilling to give reconstruction the term that might have been necessary to build up this truly democratic nationalism. Six short years is a short time to reconstruct an agricultural country devastated by a six years' war. The popular elements in the new States had only to show their turbulence; they were given no time to grow. The ambitious leaders of the financial classes got a convention called to discuss the controversies and maladjustments of the States, which were making them clamor for a revision of the Articles of Confederation, and then, by one of the most successful coups d'état in history, turned their assembly into the manufacture of a new government on the strongest lines of the old State ideal.

This new constitution, manufactured in secret session by the leaders of the propertied and ruling classes, was then submitted to an approval of the electors which only by the most expert manipulation was obtained, but which was sufficient to override the indignant undercurrent of protest from those popular elements who saw the fruits of the Revolution slipping away from them. Universal suffrage would have killed it forever. Had the liberated colonies had the advantage of the French experience before

them, the promulgation of the Constitution would undoubtedly have been followed by a new revolution, as very nearly happened later against Washington and the Federalists. But the ironical ineptitude of Fate put the machinery of the new Federalist constitutional government in operation just at the moment that the French Revolution began, and by the time those great waves of Jacobin feeling reached North America, the new Federalist State was firmly enough on its course to weather the gale and the turmoil.

The new State was therefore not the happy political symbol of a united people, who in order to form a more perfect union, etc., but the imposition of a State on a loose and growing nationalism, which was in a condition of unstable equilibrium and needed perhaps only to be fertilized from abroad to develop a genuine political experiment in democracy. The preamble to the Constitution, as was soon shown in the hostile popular vote and later in the revolt against the Federalists, was a pious hope rather than actuality, a blessedness to be realized when by the force of government pressure, the creation of idealism, and mere social habit, the population should be welded and kneaded into a State. That this is what has actually happened, is seen in the fact that the somewhat shockingly undemocratic origins of the American State have been almost completely glossed over and the unveiling is bitterly resented, by none so bitterly as the significant classes who have been most industrious in cultivating patriotic myth and legend. American history, as far as it has entered into the general popular emotion, runs along this line. The Colonies are freed by the Revolution from a tyrannous King and become free and independent States; there follow six years of impotent peace, during which the Colonies quarrel among themselves and reveal the hopeless weakness of the principle under which they are working together; in desperation the people then create a new instrument, and launch a free and democratic republic, which was and remains—especially since it withstood the shock of civil war—the most perfect form of democratic government known to man, perfectly adequate to be promulgated as an example in the twentieth century to all people, and to be spread by propaganda, and, if necessary, the sword, in all unregenerately Imperial regions. Modern historians reveal the avowedly undemocratic personnel and opinions of the Convention. They show that the members not only had an unconscious economic interest but a frank political interest in founding a State which should protect the propertied classes against the hostility of the people. They show how, from one point of view, the new government became almost a mechanism for overcoming the repudiation of debts, for putting back into their place a farmer and small trader class whom the unsettled times of reconstruction had threatened to liberate, for reestablishing on the securest basis of the sanctity of property and the State, their



class-supremacy menaced by a democracy that had drunk too deeply at the fount of Revolution. But all this makes little impression on the other legend of the popular mind, because it disturbs the sense of the sanctity of the State and it is this rock to which the herd-wish must cling.

Every little school boy is trained to recite the weaknesses and inefficiencies of the Articles of Confederation. It is taken as axiomatic that under them the new nation was falling into anarchy and was only saved by the wisdom and energy of the Convention. These hapless Articles have had to bear the infamy cast upon the untried by the radiantly successful. The nation had to be strong to repel invasion, strong to pay to the last loved copper penny the debts of the propertied and the provident ones, strong to keep the unpropertied and improvident from ever using the government to secure their own prosperity at the expense of moneyed capital. Under the Articles the new States were obviously trying to reconstruct themselves in an alarming tenderness for the common man impoverished by the war. No one suggests that the anxiety of the leaders of the heretofore unquestioned ruling classes desired the revision of the Articles and labored so weightily over a new instrument not because the nation was failing under the Articles, but because it was succeeding only too well. Without intervention from the leaders, reconstruction threatened in time to turn the new nation into an agrarian and proletarian democracy. It is impossible to predict what would have materialized into a form of society very much modified from the ancient State. All we know is that at a time when the current of political progress was in the direction of agrarian and proletarian democracy, a force hostile to it gripped the nation and imposed upon it a powerful form against which it was never to succeed in doing more than blindly struggle. The liberating virus of the Revolution was definitely expunged, and henceforth if it worked at all it had to work against the State, in opposition to the armed and respectable power of the nation.

The propertied classes, seated firmly in the saddle by their Constitutional coup d'état have, of course, never lost their ascendancy. The particular group of Federalists who engineered the new machinery and enjoyed the privilege of setting it in motion were turned out in a dozen years by the Jeffersonian democracy whom their manner had so deeply offended. But the Jeffersonian democracy never meant in practice any more than the substitution of the rule of the country gentlemen for the rule of the town capitalist. The true hostility between their interests was small as compared with the hostility of both towards the common man. When both were swept away by the irruption of the Western democracy under Andrew Jackson and the rule of the common man appeared for a while in its least desirable forms, it was comparatively



easy for the two propertied classes to form a tacit coalition against them. The new West achieved an extension of suffrage and a jovial sense of having come politically into its own, but the rule of the ancient classes was not seriously challenged. Their squabbles over a tariff were family affairs, for the tariff could not materially affect the common man of either East or West. The Eastern and Northern capitalists soon saw the advantage of supporting Southern country gentleman slave-power as against the free-soil pioneer. Bad generalship on the part of this coalition allowed a Western free-soil minority President to slip into office and brought on the Civil War, which smashed the slave power and left Northern capital in undisputed possession of a field against which the pioneer could make only sporadic and ineffective revolts.

From the Civil War to the death of Mark Hanna, the propertied capitalist industrial classes ran a triumphal career in possession of the State. At various times, as in 1896, the country had to be saved for them from disillusioned, rebellious hordes of small farmers and traders and democratic idealists, who had in the overflow of prosperity been squeezed down into the small end of the horn. But except for these occasional menaces, business, that is to say, aggressive expansionist capitalism, had nearly forty years in which to direct the American republic as a private preserve, or laboratory, experimenting, developing, wasting, subjugating, to its heart's content, in the midst of a vast somnolence of complacency such as has never been seen and contrast strangely with the spiritual dissent and constructive revolutionary thought which went on at the same time in England and the Continent.

That era ended in 1904 like the crack of doom, which woke a whole people into a modern day which they had overslept, and for which they had become acutely and painfully aware of the evils of the society in which they had slumbered and they snatched at one after the other idea, programme, movement, ideal, to uplift them out of the slough in which they had slept. The glory of those shining figures—captains of industry—went out in a sulphuric gloom. The head of the State, who made up in dogmatism what he lacked in philosophy, increased the confusion by reviving the Ten Commandments for political purposes, and belaboring the wicked with them. The American world tossed in a state of doubt, of reawakened social conscience, of pragmatic effort for the salvation of society. The ruling classes—annoyed, bewildered, harassed—pretended with much bemoaning that they were losing their grip on the State. Their inspired prophets uttered solemn warnings against political novelty and the abandonment of the tried and tested fruits of experience.

These classes actually had little to fear. A political system which had been founded in the interests of property by their own spiritual and economic ancestors, which had

become ingrained in the country's life through a function of 120 years, which was buttressed by a legal system which went back without a break to the early English monarchy was not likely to crumble before the anger of a few muck-rakers, the disillusionment of a few radical sociologists, or the assaults of proletarian minorities. Those who bided their time through the Taft interregnum, which merely continued the Presidency until there could be found a statesman to fill it, were rewarded by the appearance of the exigency of the war, in which business organization was imperatively needed. They were thus able to make a neat and almost noiseless coalition with the Government. The mass of the worried middle classes, riddled by the campaign against American failings, which at times extended almost to a skepticism of the American State itself, were only too glad to sink back to a glorification of the State ideal, to feel about them in war, the old protecting arms, to return to the old primitive robust sense of the omnipotence of the State, its matchless virtue, honor and beauty, driving away all the foul old doubts and dismays.

That the same class which imposed its constitution on the nascent proletarian and agrarian democracy has maintained itself to this day indicates how slight the real effect of the Revolution was. When that political change was consolidated in the new government, it was found that there had been a mere transfer of ruling-class power across the seas, or rather that a ruling commercial class in the colonies had been able to remove through a war fought largely by the masses a vexatious overlordship of the irresponsible coteries of ministers that surrounded George III. The colonies merely exchanged a system run in the interest of the overseas trade of English wealth for a system run in the interest of New England and Philadelphia merchanthood, and later of Southern slavocracy. The daring innovation of getting rid of a king and setting up a kingless State did not apparently impress the hard headed farmers and small traders with as much force as it has their patriotic defenders. The animus of the Convention was so obviously monarchial that any executive they devised could be only a very thinly disguised king. The compromise by which the presidency was created proved but to be the means by which very nearly the whole mass of traditional royal prerogatives was brought over and lodged in the new state.

The President is an elected king, but the fact that he is elected has proved to be of far less significance in the course of political evolution than the fact that he is pragmatically a king. It was the intention of the founders of the Constitution that he be elected by a small body of notables, representing the ruling propertied classes, who could check him up every four years in a new election. This was no innovation. Kings have often been selected this way in European history, and the Roman Emperor was

regularly chosen by election. That the American President's term was limited merely shows the confidence which the founders felt in the buttressing force of their instrument. His election would never pass out of the hands of the notables, and so the office would be guaranteed to be held by a faithful representative of upper-class demands. What he was most obviously to represent was the interests of that body which elected him, and not the mass of the people who were still disenfranchised. For the new State started with no Quixotic belief in universal suffrage. The property qualifications which were in effect in every colony were continued. Government was frankly a function of those who held a concrete interest in the public weal, in the shape of visible property. The responsibility for the security of property rights could safely lie only with those who had something to secure. The stake in the commonwealth which those who held office most possess was obviously larger.

One of the larger errors of political insight which the sage founders of the Constitution committed was to assume that the enfranchised watchdogs of property and the public order would remain a homogeneous class. Washington, acting strictly as the mouthpiece of the unified State ideal, deprecated the growth of parties and factions which horridly keep the State in turbulence or threaten to render it asunder. But the monarchial and repressive policies of Washington's own friends promptly generated an opposition Democratic Party representing the landed interests of the ruling classes, and the party system was fastened on the country. By the time the electorate had succeeded in reducing the electoral college to a mere recorder of the popular vote, or in other words, had broadened the class of notables to the whole property-holding electorate, the parties were firmly established to carry on the selective and refining and securing work of the electoral college. The party leadership then became, and has remained ever since, the nucleus of notables who determine the presidency. The electorate having won an apparently democratic victory in the destruction of the notables, finds itself reduced to the role of mere ratification or selection between two or three candidates, in whose choice they have only a nominal share. The Electoral College which stood between even the propertied electorate and the executive with the prerogatives of a king, gave place to a body which was just as genuinely a bar to democratic expression, and far less responsible for its acts. The nucleus of party councils which became, after the reduction of the Electoral College, the real choosers of the Presidents, were unofficial, quasi-anonymous, utterly unchecked by the populace whose rulers they chose. More or less self-chosen, or chosen by local groups whom they dominated, they provided a far more secure guarantee that the State should remain in the hands of the ruling classes than the old Electoral College. The party councils could be loosely organized entirely outside of the governmental organization,

without oversight by the State or check from the electorate. They could be composed of the leaders of the propertied classes themselves or their lieutenants, who could retain their power indefinitely, or at least until they were unseated by rivals within the same charmed domain. They were at least entirely safe from attack by the officially constituted electorate, who, as the party system became more and more firmly established, found they could vote only on slates set up for them by unknown councils behind an imposing and all-powerful Party.

As soon as this system was organized into a hierarchy extending from national down to state and county politics, it became perfectly safe to broaden the electorate. The clamors of the unpropertied or the less propertied to share in the selection of their democratic republican government could be graciously acceded to without endangering in the least the supremacy of those classes which the founders had meant to be supreme. The minority were now even more effectually protected from the majority than under the old system, however indirect the election might be. The electorate was now reduced to a ratifier of slates, both of which were pledged to upper-class domination; the electorate could have the freest, most universal suffrage, for any mass-desire for political change, any determined will to shift the class balance, would be obliged to register itself through the party machinery. It could make no frontal attack on the Government. And the party machinery was directly devised to absorb and neutralize this popular shock, handing out to the disgruntled electorate a disguised stone when it asked for political bread, and effectually smashing any third party which ever avariciously tried to reach government except through the regular two-party system.

The party system succeeded, of course, beyond the wildest dreams of its creators. It relegated the founders of the Constitution to the role of doctrinaire theorists, political amateurs. Just because it grew up slowly to meet the needs of ambitious politicians and was not imposed by ruling-class fiat, as was the Constitution, did it have a chance to become assimilated, worked into the political intelligence and instinct of the people, and be adopted gladly and universally as a genuine political form, expressive both of popular need and ruling-class demand. It satisfied the popular demand for democracy. The enormous sense of victory which followed the sweeping away of property qualifications of suffrage, the tangible evidence that now every citizen was participating in public affairs, and that the entire manhood democracy was now self-governing, created a mood of political complacency that lasted uninterruptedly into the twentieth century. The party system was thus the means of removing political grievance from the greater part of the populace, and of giving to the ruling classes the

hidden but genuine permanence of control which the Constitution had tried openly to give them. It supplemented and repaired the ineptitudes of the Constitution. It became the unofficial but real government, the instrument which used the Constitution as its instrument.

Only in two cases did the party system seem to lose its grip, was it thrown off base by the inception of a new party from without—in the elections of Jackson and Lincoln. Jackson came in as the representative of a new democratic west which had no tradition of suffrage qualifications, and Lincoln as a minority candidate in a time of factional sectional strife. But the discomfiture of the party politicians was short. The party system proved perfectly capable of assimilating both of these new movements. Jackson's insurrection was soon captured by the old machinery and fed the slavocracy, and Lincoln's party became the property of the new bonanza capitalism. Neither Jackson nor Lincoln made the slightest deflection in the triumphal march of the party-system. In practically no other contests has the electorate had for all practical purposes a choice except between two candidates, identical as far as their political role would be as representatives of the significant classes in the State. Campaigns such as Bryan's, where one of the parties is captured by an element which seeks a real transference of power from the significant to the less significant classes, split the party, and sporadic third party attacks merely throw the scale one way or the other between the big parties, or, if threatening enough, produce a virtual coalition against them.



ideals, they can only come back under democratic forms, under this retrospective conviction of democratic control of foreign policy, democratic desire for war, and particularly of this identification of the democracy with the State. How unregenerate the ancient State may be, however, is indicated by the laws against sedition, and by the Government's unreformed attitude on foreign policy. One of the first demands of the more farseeing democrats in the democracies of the Alliance was that secret diplomacy must go. The war was seen to have been made possible by a web of secret agreements between States, alliances that were made by Governments without the shadow of popular support or even popular knowledge, and vague, half-understood commitments that scarcely reached the stage of a treaty or agreement, but which proved binding in the event. Certainly, said these democratic thinkers, war can scarcely be avoided unless this poisonous underground system of secret diplomacy is destroyed, this system by which a nation's power, wealth, and manhood may be signed away like a blank check to an allied nation to be cashed in at some future crisis. Agreements which are to affect the lives of whole peoples must be made between peoples and not by Governments, or at least by their representatives in the full glare of publicity and criticism.

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On November 11, 1918, World War I ended. Ten million people were dead, including more than one hundred thousand Americans. Disillusionment quickly set in, and was reflected in a burst of anti-war literature, as in the poems of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, and Ford Maddox Ford's *No More Parades*. The rebellious and anti-authoritarian poet e. e. cummings, who served in an ambulance group in France in World War I, here writes of a conscientious objector to the war.

### e. e. cummings, "i sing of Olaf glad and big" (1931)\*

i sing of Olaf glad and big  
 whose warmest heart recoiled at war:  
 a conscientious object-or  
 his wellbeloved colonel(trig  
 westpointer most succinctly bred)  
 took erring Olaf soon in hand;  
 but—though an honest of overjoyed

noncoms(first knocking on the head  
 him)do through icy waters roll  
 that helplessness which others stroke  
 with brushes recently employed,  
 anent this muddy toiletbowl,  
 while kindred intellects evoke  
 allegiance per blunt instruments—  
 Olaf(being to all intents  
 a corpse and wanting any rag  
 upon what God unto him gave)  
 responds, without getting annoyed  
 "I will not kiss your fucking flag."

straightaway the silver bird looked grave  
 (departing hurriedly to shave)

but—though all kinds of officers  
 (a yearning nation's blueeyed pride)  
 their passive prey did kick and curse  
 until for wear their clarion  
 voices and boots were much the worse,  
 and egged the firstclassprivates on  
 his rectum wickedly to tease  
 by means of skilfully applied  
 bayonets roasted hot with heat—  
 Olaf(upon what were once knees)  
 does almost ceaselessly repeat  
 "there is some shit I will not eat"

our president, being of which  
 assertions duly notified  
 threw the yellowsonofabitch  
 into a dungeon, where he died

Christ(of His mercy infinite)  
 i pray to see;and Olaf,too.

preponderatingly because  
 unless statistics lie he was  
 more brave than me:more blond than you.

## **Anti-War Speech Delivered by Eugene V. Debs in Canton, Ohio, June 16, 1918**

In June 1918, with World War I in its final months, the great American labor leader, Socialist, and pacifist Eugene V. Debs (1855-1926) addressed the Ohio state meeting of the Socialist Party. In this speech that led to his celebrated arrest under the Sedition Act, Debs sounded familiar refrains of the anti-war cause and enjoined his audience to continue speaking out as a matter of patriotic duty and conscience, despite the repressive wartime atmosphere.

Debs was arguably the most famous of the many radicals who opposed America's participation in World War I. Unlike European socialists, who generally supported their government's entry into the war, Debs argued that the war was waged by capitalists for their own gain, pitting workers of one country against workers of another.

E. V. Debs

# The Canton, Ohio Speech, Anti-War Speech

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*June 16, 1918*

Comrades, friends and fellow-workers, for this very cordial greeting, this very hearty reception, I thank you all with the fullest appreciation of your interest in and your devotion to the cause for which I am to speak to you this afternoon.

To speak for labor; to plead the cause of the men and women and children who toil; to serve the working class, has always been to me a high privilege; a duty of love.

I have just returned from a visit over yonder, where three of our most loyal comrades are paying the penalty for their devotion to the cause of the working class. They have come to realize, as many of us have, that it is extremely dangerous to exercise the constitutional right of free speech in a country fighting to make democracy safe in the world.

I realize that, in speaking to you this afternoon, there are certain limitations placed upon the right of free speech. I must be exceedingly careful, prudent, as to what I say, and even more careful and prudent as to how I say it. I may not be able to say all I think; but I am not going to say anything that I do not think. I would rather a thousand times be a free soul in jail than to be a sycophant and coward in the streets. They may put those boys in jail—and some of the rest of us in jail—but they can not put the Socialist movement in jail. Those prison bars separate their bodies from ours, but their souls are here this afternoon. They are simply paying the penalty that all men have paid in all the ages of history for standing erect, and for seeking to pave the way to better conditions for mankind.

If it had not been for the men and women who, in the past, have had the moral courage to go to jail, we would still be in the jungles.

This assemblage is exceedingly good to look upon. I wish it were possible for me to give you what you are giving me this afternoon. What I say here amounts to but little; what I see here is exceedingly important. You workers in Ohio, enlisted in the greatest cause ever organized in the interest of your class, are making history today in the face of threatening opposition of all kinds—history that is going to be read with profound interest by coming generations.

There is but one thing you have to be concerned about, and that is that you keep foursquare with the principles of the international Socialist movement. It is only when you begin to compromise that trouble begins. So far as I am concerned, it does not matter what others may say, or think, or do, as long as I am sure that I am right with myself and the cause. There are so many who seek refuge in the popular side of a great question. As a Socialist, I have long since learned how to stand alone. For the last month I have been traveling over the Hoosier State; and, let me say to you, that, in all my connection with the Socialist movement, I have never seen such meetings, such enthusiasm, such unity of purpose; never have I seen such a promising outlook as there is today, notwithstanding the statement published repeatedly that our leaders have deserted us. Well, for myself, I never had much faith in leaders. I am willing to be charged with almost anything, rather than to be charged with being a leader. I am suspicious of leaders, and especially of the intellectual variety. Give me the rank and file every day in the week. If you go to the city of Washington, and you examine the pages of the Congressional Directory, you will find that almost all of those corporation lawyers and cowardly politicians, members of Congress, and misrepresentatives of the masses—you will find that almost all of them claim, in glowing terms, that they have risen from the ranks to places of eminence and distinction. I am very glad I cannot make that claim for myself. I would be ashamed to admit that I had risen from the ranks. When I rise it will be with the ranks, and not from the ranks.

When I came away from Indiana, the comrades said: “When you cross the line and get over into the Buckeye State, tell the comrades there that we are on duty and doing duty. Give them for us, a hearty greeting, and tell them that we are going to make a record this fall that will be read around the world.”

(The Socialists of Ohio, it appears, are very much alive this year. The party has been killed recently, which, no doubt, accounts for its extraordinary activity. There is nothing that helps the Socialist Party so much as receiving an occasional deathblow. The oftener it is killed the more active, the more energetic, the more powerful it becomes.

They who have been reading the capitalist newspapers realize what a capacity they have for lying. We have been reading them lately. They know all about the Socialist Party—the Socialist movement, except what is true. Only the other day they took an article that I had written—and most of you have read it—most of you members of the party, at least—and they made it appear that I had undergone a marvelous transformation. I had suddenly become changed—had in fact come to my senses; I had ceased to be a wicked Socialist, and had become a respectable Socialist, a patriotic Socialist—as if I had ever been anything else.

What was the purpose of this deliberate misrepresentation? It is so self-evident that it suggests itself. The purpose was to sow the seeds of dissension in our ranks; to have it appear that we were divided among ourselves; that we were pitted against each other, to our mutual undoing. But Socialists were not born yesterday. They know how to read capitalist newspapers ; and to believe exactly the opposite of what they read.

Why should a Socialist be discouraged on the eve of the greatest triumph in all the history of the Socialist movement? It is true that these are anxious, trying days for us all—testing days for the women and men who are upholding the banner of labor in the struggle of the working class of all the world against the exploiters of all the world; a time in which the weak and cowardly will falter and fail and desert. They lack the fiber to endure the revolutionary test; they fall away; they disappear as if they had never been. On the other hand, they who are animated by the unconquerable spirit of the social revolution; they who have the moral courage to stand erect and assert their convictions; stand by them; fight for them; go to jail or to hell for them, if need be — they are writing their names, in this crucial hour—they are writing their names in faceless letters in the history of mankind.

Those boys over yonder—those comrades of ours—and how I love them! Aye, they are my younger brothers ; their very names throb in my heart, thrill in my veins, and surge in my soul. I am proud of them; they are there for us; and we are here for them. Their lips, though temporarily mute, are more eloquent than ever before; and their voice, though silent, is heard around the world.

Are we opposed to Prussian militarism? Why, we have been fighting it since the day the Socialist movement was born; and we are going to continue to fight it, day and night, until it is wiped from the face of the earth. Between us there is no truce—no compromise.

But, before I proceed along this line, let me recall a little history, in which I think we are all interested.

In 1869 that grand old warrior of the social revolution, the elder Liebknecht, was arrested and sentenced to prison for three months, because of his war, as a Socialist, on the Kaiser and on the Junkers that rule Germany. In the meantime the Franco-Prussian war broke out. Liebknecht and Bebel were the Socialist members in the Reichstag. They were the only two who had the courage to protest against taking Alsace-Lorraine from France and annexing it to Germany. And for this they were sentenced two years to a prison fortress charged with high treason; because, even in that early day, almost fifty years ago, these leaders, these forerunners of the international Socialist movement were fighting the Kaiser and fighting the Junkers of Germany. They have continued to fight them from that day to this. Multiplied thousands of Socialists have languished in the jails of Germany because of their heroic warfare upon the despotic ruling class of that country.

Let us come down the line a little farther. You remember that, at the close of Theodore Roosevelt's second term as President, he went over to Africa to make war on some of his



ancestors. You remember that, at the close of his expedition, he visited the capitals of Europe; and that he was wined and dined, dignified and glorified by all the Kaisers and Czars and Emperors of the Old World. He visited Potsdam while the Kaiser was there; and, according to the accounts published in the American newspapers, he and the Kaiser were soon on the most familiar terms. They were hilariously intimate with each other, and slapped each other on the back. After Roosevelt had reviewed the Kaiser's troops, according to the same accounts, he became enthusiastic over the Kaiser's legions and said: "If I had that kind of an army, I could conquer the world." He knew the Kaiser then just as well as he knows him now. He knew that he was the Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin. And yet, he permitted himself to be entertained by that Beast of Berlin; had his feet under the mahogany of the Beast of Berlin; was cheek by jowl with the Beast of Berlin. And, while Roosevelt was being entertained royally by the German Kaiser, that same Kaiser was putting the leaders of the Socialist Party in jail for fighting the Kaiser and the Junkers of Germany. Roosevelt was the guest of honor in the white house of the Kaiser, while the Socialists were in the jails of the Kaiser for fighting the Kaiser. Who then was fighting for democracy? Roosevelt? Roosevelt, who was honored by the Kaiser, or the Socialists who were in jail by order of the Kaiser?

"Birds of a feather flock together."

When the newspapers reported that Kaiser Wilhelm and ax-President Theodore recognized each other at sight, were perfectly intimate with each other at the first touch, they made the admission that is fatal to the claim of Theodore Roosevelt, that he is the friend of the common people and the champion of democracy; they admitted that they were kith and kin; that they were very much alike; that their ideas and ideals were about the same. If Theodore Roosevelt is the great champion of democracy—the arch foe of autocracy, what business had he as the guest of honor of the Prussian Kaiser? And when he met the Kaiser, and did honor to the Kaiser, under the terms imputed to him, wasn't it pretty strong proof that he himself was a Kaiser at heart? Now, after being the guest of Emperor Wilhelm, the Beast of Berlin, he comes back to this country, and wants you to send ten million men over there to kill the Kaiser; to murder his former friend and pal. Rather queer, isn't it? And yet, he is the patriot, and we are the traitors. I challenge you to find a Socialist anywhere on the face of the earth who was ever the guest of the Beast of Berlin, except as an inmate of his prison—the elder Liebknecht and the younger Liebknecht, the heroic son of his immortal sire.

EA little more history along the same line. In 1902 Prince Henry paid a visit to this country. Do you remember him? I do, exceedingly well. Prince Henry is the brother of Emperor Wilhelm. Prince Henry is another Beast of Berlin, an autocrat, an aristocrat, a Junker of Junkers—very much despised by our American patriots. He came over here in 1902 as the representative of Kaiser Wilhelm; he was received by Congress and by several state legislatures—among others, by the state legislature of Massachusetts, then in session. He was invited there by the capitalist captains of that so-called commonwealth. And when Prince Henry arrived, there was one member of that body who kept his self-respect, put on his hat, and as Henry, the Prince, walked in, that member of the

body walked out. And that was James F. Carey, the Socialist member of that body. All the rest—all the rest of the representatives in the Massachusetts legislature—all, all of them—joined in doing honor, in the most servile spirit, to the high representative of the autocracy of Europe. And the only man who left that body, was a Socialist. And yet , and yet they have the hardihood to claim that they are fighting autocracy and that we are in the service of the German government.

A little more history along the same line. I have a distinct recollection of it. It occurred fifteen years ago when Prince Henry came here. All of our plutocracy, all of the wealthy representatives living along Fifth Avenue—all, all of them—threw their palace doors wide open and received Prince Henry with open arms. But they were not satisfied with this; they got down and grovelled in the dust at his feet. Our plutocracy—women and men alike—vied with each other to lick the boots of Prince Henry, the brother and representative of the “Beast of Berlin.” And still our plutocracy, our Junkers, would have us believe that all the Junkers are confined to Germany. It is precisely because we refuse to believe this that they brand us as disloyalists. They want our eyes focused on the Junkers in Berlin so that we will not see those within our own borders.

I hate, I loathe, I despise Junkers and junkerdom. I have no earthly use for the Junkers of Germany, and not one particle more use for the Junkers in the United States.

They tell us that we live in a great free republic; that our institutions are democratic; that we are a free and self-governing people. This is too much, even for a joke. But it is not a subject for levity; it is an exceedingly serious matter.

To whom do the Wall Street Junkers in our country marry their daughters? After they have wrung their countless millions from your sweat, your agony and your life’s blood, in a time of war as in a time of peace, they invest these untold millions in the purchase of titles of broken-down aristocrats, such as princes, dukes, counts and other parasites and no-accounts. Would they be satisfied to wed their daughters to honest workingmen? To real democrats? Oh, no! They scour the markets of Europe for vampires who are titled and nothing else. And they swap their millions for the titles, so that matrimony with them becomes literally a matter of money.

These are the gentry who are today wrapped up in the American flag, who shout their claim from the housetops that they are the only patriots, and who have their magnifying glasses in hand, scanning the country for evidence of disloyalty, eager to apply the brand of treason to the men who dare to even whisper their opposition to Junker rule in the United States. No wonder Sam Johnson declared that “patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.” He must have had this Wall Street gentry in mind, or at least their prototypes, for in every age it has been the tyrant, the oppressor and the exploiter who has wrapped himself in the cloak of patriotism, or religion, or both to deceive and overawe the people.

They would have you believe that the Socialist Party consists in the main of disloyalists and traitors. It is true in a sense not at all to their discredit. We frankly admit that we are disloyalists

and traitors to the real traitors of this nation; to the gang that on the Pacific coast are trying to hang Tom Mooney and Warren Billings in spite of their well-known innocence and the protest of practically the whole civilized world.

I know Tom Mooney intimately—as if he were my own brother. He is an absolutely honest man. He had no more to do with the crime with which he was charged and for which he was convicted than I had. And if he ought to go to the gallows, so ought I. If he is guilty every man who belongs to a labor organization or to the Socialist Party is likewise guilty.

What is Tom Mooney guilty of? I will tell you. I am familiar with his record. For years he has been fighting bravely and without compromise the battles of the working class out on the Pacific coast. He refused to be bribed and he could not be browbeaten. In spite of all attempts to intimidate him he continued loyally in the service of the organized workers, and for this he became a marked man. The henchmen of the powerful and corrupt corporations, concluding finally that he could not be bought or bribed or bullied, decided he must therefore be murdered. That is why Tom Mooney is today a life prisoner, and why he would have been hanged as a felon long ago but for the world-wide protest of the working class.

Let us review another bit of history. You remember Francis J. Heney, special investigator of the state of California, who was shot down in cold blood in the courtroom in San Francisco. You remember that dastardly crime, do you not? The United Railways, consisting of a lot of plutocrats and highbinders represented by the Chamber of Commerce, absolutely control the city of San Francisco. The city was and is their private reservation. Their will is the supreme law. Take your stand against them and question their authority, and you are doomed. They do not hesitate a moment to plot murder or any other crime to perpetuate their corrupt and enslaving regime. Tom Mooney was the chief representative of the working class they could not control. They own the railways; they control the great industries; they are the industrial masters and the political rulers of the people. From their decision there is no appeal. They are the autocrats of the Pacific coast—as cruel and infamous as any that ever ruled in Germany or any other country in the old world. When their rule became so corrupt that at last a grand jury indicted them and they were placed on trial, and Francis J. Heney was selected to assist in their prosecution, this gang, represented by the Chamber of Commerce; this gang of plutocrats, autocrats and highbinders, hired an assassin to shoot Heney down in the courtroom. Heney, however, happened to live through it. But that was not their fault. The same identical gang that hired the murderer to kill Heney also hired false witnesses to swear away the life of Tom Mooney and, foiled in that, they have kept him in a foul prisonhole ever since.

Every solitary one of these aristocratic conspirators and would-be murderers claims to be an arch-patriot; every one of them insists that the war is being waged to make the world safe for democracy. What humbug! What rot! What false pretense! These autocrats, these tyrants, these red-handed robbers and murderers, the “patriots,” while the men who have the courage to stand face to face with them, speak the truth, and fight for their exploited victims—they are the

disloyalists and traitors. If this be true, I want to take my place side by side with the traitors in this fight.

The other day they sentenced Kate Richards O'Hare to the penitentiary for five years. Think of sentencing a woman to the penitentiary simply for talking. The United States, under plutocratic rule, is the only country that would send a woman to prison for five years for exercising the right of free speech. If this be treason, let them make the most of it.

Let me review a bit of history in connection with this case. I have known Kate Richards O'Hare intimately for twenty years. I am familiar with her public record. Personally I know her as if she were my own sister. All who know Mrs. O'Hare know her to be a woman of unquestioned integrity.' And they also know that she is a woman of unimpeachable loyalty to the Socialist movement. When she went out into North Dakota to make her speech, followed by plain-clothes men in the service of the government intent upon effecting her arrest and securing her prosecution and conviction—when she went out there, it was with the full knowledge on her part that sooner or later these detectives would accomplish their purpose. She made her speech, and that speech was deliberately misrepresented for the purpose of securing her conviction. The only testimony against her was that of a hired witness. And when the farmers, the men and women who were in the audience she addressed—when they went to Bismarck where the trial was held to testify in her favor, to swear that she had not used the language she was charged with having used, the judge refused to allow them to go upon the stand. This would seem incredible to me if I had not had some experience of my own with federal courts.

Who appoints our federal judges? The people? In all the history of the country, the working class have never named a federal judge. There are 121 of these judges and every solitary one holds his position, his tenure, through the influence and power of corporate capital. The corporations and trusts dictate their appointment. And when they go to the bench, they go, not to serve, the people, but to serve the interests that place them and keep them where they are.

Why, the other day, by a vote of five to four—a kind of craps game—come seven, come 'leven—they declared the child labor law unconstitutional—a law secured after twenty years of education and agitation on the part of all kinds of people. And yet, by a majority of one, the Supreme Court a body of corporation lawyers, with just one exception, wiped that law from the statute books, and this in our so-called democracy, so that we may continue to grind the flesh and blood and bones of puny little children into profits for the Junkers of Wall Street. And this in a country that boasts of fighting to make the world safe for democracy! The history of this country is being written in the blood of the childhood the industrial lords have murdered.

These are not palatable truths to them. They do not like to hear them; and what is more they do not want you to hear them. And that is why they brand us as undesirable citizens, and as disloyalists and traitors. If we were actual traitors—traitors to the people and to their welfare and progress, we would be regarded as eminently respectable citizens of the republic; we would hold



high office, have princely incomes, and ride in limousines; and we would be pointed out as the elect who have succeeded in life in honorable pursuit, and worthy of emulation by the youth of the land. It is precisely because we are disloyal to the traitors that we are loyal to the people of this nation.

Scott Nearing! You have heard of Scott Nearing. He is the greatest teacher in the United States. He was in the University of Pennsylvania until the Board of Trustees, consisting of great capitalists, captains of industry, found that he was teaching sound economics to the students in his classes. This sealed his fate in that institution. They sneeringly charged—just as the same usurers, money-changers, pharisees, hypocrites charged the Judean Carpenter some twenty centuries ago—that he was a false teacher and that he was stirring up the people.

The Man of Galilee, the Carpenter, the workingman who became the revolutionary agitator of his day soon found himself to be an undesirable citizen in the eyes of the ruling knaves and they had him crucified. And now their lineal descendants say of Scott Nearing, “He is preaching false economics. We cannot crucify him as we did his elder brother but we can deprive him of employment and so cut off his income and starve him to death or into submission. We will not only discharge him but place his name upon the blacklist and make it impossible for him to earn a living. He is a dangerous man for he is teaching the truth and opening the eyes of the people.” And the truth, oh, the truth has always been unpalatable and intolerable to the class who live out of the sweat and misery of the working class.

Max Eastman has been indicted and his paper suppressed, just as the papers with which I have been connected have all been suppressed. What a wonderful compliment they pay us! They are afraid that we may mislead and contaminate you. You are their wards; they are your guardians and they know what is best for you to read and hear and know. They are bound to see to it that our vicious doctrines do not reach your ears. And so in our great democracy, under our free institutions, they flatter our press by suppression; and they ignorantly imagine that they have silenced revolutionary propaganda in the United States. What an awful mistake they make for our benefit! As a matter of justice to them we should respond with resolutions of thanks and gratitude. Thousands of people who had never before heard of our papers are now inquiring for and insisting upon seeing them. They have succeeded only in arousing curiosity in our literature and propaganda. And woe to him who reads Socialist literature from curiosity! He is surely a goner. I have known of a thousand experiments but never one that failed.

John M. Work! You know John, now on the editorial staff of the Milwaukee Leader! When I first knew him he was a lawyer out in Iowa. The capitalists out there became alarmed because of the rapid growth of the Socialist movement. So they said: “We have to find some able fellow to fight this menace.” They concluded that John Work was the man for the job and they said to him: “John, you are a bright young lawyer; you have a brilliant future before you. We want to engage you to find out all you can about socialism and then proceed to counteract its baneful effects and check its further growth.”



John at once provided himself with Socialist literature and began his study of the red menace, with the result that after he had read and digested a few volumes he was a full-fledged Socialist and has been fighting for socialism ever since.

How stupid and shortsighted the ruling class really is! Cupidity is stone blind. It has no vision. The greedy, profit-seeking exploiter cannot see beyond the end of his nose. He can see a chance for an "opening"; he is cunning enough to know what graft is and where it is, and how it can be secured, but vision he has none—not the slightest. He knows nothing of the great throbbing world that spreads out in all directions. He has no capacity for literature; no appreciation of art; no soul for beauty. That is the penalty the parasites pay for the violation of the laws of life. The Rockefellers are blind. Every move they make in their game of greed but hastens their own doom. Every blow they strike at the Socialist movement reacts upon themselves. Every time they strike at us they hit themselves. It never fails. Every time they strangle a Socialist paper they add a thousand voices proclaiming the truth of the principles of socialism and the ideals of the Socialist movement. They help us in spite of themselves.

Socialism is a growing idea; an expanding philosophy. It is spreading over the entire face of the earth: It is as vain to resist it as it would be to arrest the sunrise on the morrow. It is coming, coming, coming all along the line. Can you not see it? If not, I advise you to consult an oculist. There is certainly something the matter with your vision. It is the mightiest movement in the history of mankind. What a privilege to serve it! I have regretted a thousand times that I can do so little for the movement that has done so much for me. The little that I am, the little that I am hoping to be, I owe to the Socialist movement. It has given me my ideas and ideals; my principles and convictions, and I would not exchange one of them for all of Rockefeller's bloodstained dollars. It has taught me how to serve—a lesson to me of priceless value. It has taught me the ecstasy in the handclasp of a comrade. It has enabled me to hold high communion with you, and made it possible for me to take my place side by side with you in the great struggle for the better day; to multiply myself over and over again, to thrill with a fresh-born manhood; to feel life truly worthwhile; to open new avenues of vision; to spread out glorious vistas; to know that I am kin to all that throbs; to be class-conscious, and to realize that, regardless of nationality, race, creed, color or sex, every man, every woman who toils, who renders useful service, every member of the working class without an exception, is my comrade, my brother and sister—and that to serve them and their cause is the highest duty of my life.

And in their service I can feel myself expand; I can rise to the stature of a man and claim the right to a place on earth—a place where I can stand and strive to speed the day of industrial freedom and social justice.

Yes, my comrades, my heart is attuned to yours. Aye, all our hearts now throb as one great heart responsive to the battle cry of the social revolution. Here, in this alert and inspiring assemblage our hearts are with the Bolsheviki of Russia. Those heroic men and women, those unconquerable comrades have by their incomparable valor and sacrifice added fresh luster to the fame of the

international movement. Those Russian comrades of ours have made greater sacrifices, have suffered more, and have shed more heroic blood than any like number of men and women anywhere on earth; they have laid the foundation of the first real democracy that ever drew the breath of life in this world. And the very first act of the triumphant Russian revolution was to proclaim a state of peace with all mankind, coupled with a fervent moral appeal, not to kings, not to emperors, rulers or diplomats but to the people of all nations. Here we have the very breath of democracy, the quintessence of the dawning freedom. The Russian revolution proclaimed its glorious triumph in its ringing and inspiring appeal to the peoples of all the earth. In a humane and fraternal spirit new Russia, emancipated at last from the curse of the centuries, called upon all nations engaged in the frightful war, the Central Powers as well as the Allies, to send representatives to a conference to lay down terms of peace that should be just and lasting. Here was the supreme opportunity to strike the blow to make the world safe for democracy. Was there any response to that noble appeal that in some day to come will be written in letters of gold in the history of the world? Was there any response whatever to that appeal for universal peace? No, not the slightest attention was paid to it by the Christian nations engaged in the terrible slaughter.

It has been charged that Lenin and Trotsky and the leaders of the revolution were treacherous, that they made a traitorous peace with Germany. Let us consider that proposition briefly. At the time of the revolution Russia had been three years in the war. Under the Czar she had lost more than four million of her ill-clad, poorly-equipped, half-starved soldiers, slain outright or disabled on the field of battle. She was absolutely bankrupt. Her soldiers were mainly without arms. This was what was bequeathed to the revolution by the Czar and his regime; and for this condition Lenin and Trotsky were not responsible, nor the Bolsheviki. For this appalling state of affairs the Czar and his rotten bureaucracy were solely responsible. When the Bolsheviki came into power and went through the archives they found and exposed the secret treaties—the treaties that were made between the Czar and the French government, the British government and the Italian government, proposing, after the victory was achieved, to dismember the German Empire and destroy the Central Powers. These treaties have never been denied nor repudiated. Very little has been said about them in the American press. I have a copy of these treaties, showing that the purpose of the Allies is exactly the purpose of the Central Powers, and that is the conquest and spoilation of the weaker nations that has always been the purpose of war.

Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder. In the Middle Ages when the feudal lords who inhabited the castles whose towers may still be seen along the Rhine concluded to enlarge their domains, to increase their power, their prestige and their wealth they declared war upon one another. But they themselves did not go to war any more than the modern feudal lords, the barons of Wall Street go to war. The feudal barons of the Middle Ages, the economic predecessors of the capitalists of our day, declared all wars. And their miserable serfs fought all the battles. The poor, ignorant serfs had been taught to revere their masters; to believe that when their masters declared war upon one another, it was their patriotic duty to fall upon one another and to cut one another's throats for the profit and glory of the lords and barons who held

them in contempt. And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives.

They have always taught and trained you to believe it to be your patriotic duty to go to war and to have yourselves slaughtered at their command. But in all the history of the world you, the people, have never had a voice in declaring war, and strange as it certainly appears, no war by any nation in any age has ever been declared by the people.

And here let me emphasize the fact—and it cannot be repeated too often—that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war and they alone make peace.

Yours not to reason why;  
Yours but to do and die.

That is their motto and we object on the part of the awakening workers of this nation.

If war is right let it be declared by the people. You who have your lives to lose, you certainly above all others have the right to decide the momentous issue of war or peace.

Rose Pastor Stokes! And when I mention her name I take off my hat. Here we have another heroic and inspiring comrade. She had her millions of dollars at command. Did her wealth restrain her an instant? On the contrary her supreme devotion to the cause outweighed all considerations of a financial or social nature. She went out boldly to plead the cause of the working class and they rewarded her high courage with a ten years' sentence to the penitentiary. Think of it! Ten years! What atrocious crime had she committed? What frightful things had she said? Let me answer candidly. She said nothing more than I have said here this afternoon. I want to admit—I want to admit without reservation that if Rose Pastor Stokes is guilty of crime, so am I. If she is guilty for the brave part she has taken in this testing time of human souls I would not be cowardly enough to plead my innocence. And if she ought to be sent to the penitentiary for ten years, so ought I without a doubt.

What did Rose Pastor Stokes say? Why, she said that a government could not at the same time serve both the profiteers and the victims of the profiteers. Is it not true? Certainly it is and no one can successfully dispute it.

Roosevelt said a thousand times more in the very same paper, the Kansas City Star. Roosevelt said vauntingly the other day that he would be heard if he went to jail. He knows very well that he is taking no risk of going to jail. He is shrewdly laying his wires for the Republican nomination in 1920 and he is an adept in making the appeal of the demagogue. He would do anything to discredit

the Wilson administration that he may give himself and his party all credit. That is the only rivalry there is between the two old capitalist parties—the Republican Party and the Democratic Party—the political twins of the master class. They are not going to have any friction between them this fall. They are all patriots in this campaign, and they are going to combine to prevent the election of any disloyal Socialist. I have never heard anyone tell of any difference between these corrupt capitalist parties. Do you know of any? I certainly do not. The situation is that one is in and the other trying to break in, and that is substantially the only difference between them.

Rose Pastor Stokes never uttered a word she did not have a legal, constitutional right to utter. But her message to the people, the message that stirred their thoughts and opened their eyes—that must be suppressed; her voice must be silenced. And so she was promptly subjected to a mock trial and sentenced to the penitentiary for ten years. Her conviction was a foregone conclusion. The trial of a Socialist in a capitalist court is at best a farcical affair. What ghost of a chance had she in a court with a packed jury and a corporation tool on the bench? Not the least in the world. And so she goes to the penitentiary for ten years if they carry out their brutal and disgraceful graceful program. For my part I do not think they will. In fact I feel sure they will not. If the war were over tomorrow the prison doors would open to our people. They simply mean to silence the voice of protest during the war.

What a compliment it is to the Socialist movement to be thus persecuted for the sake of the truth! The truth alone will make the people free. And for this reason the truth must not be permitted to reach the people. The truth has always been dangerous to the rule of the rogue, the exploiter, the robber. So the truth must be ruthlessly suppressed. That is why they are trying to destroy the Socialist movement; and every time they strike a blow they add a thousand new voices to the hosts proclaiming that socialism is the hope of humanity and has come to emancipate the people from their final form of servitude.

How good this sip of cool water from the hand of a comrade! It is as refreshing as if it were out on the desert waste. And how good it is to look into your glowing faces this afternoon! You are really good looking to me, I assure you. And I am glad there are so many of you. Your tribe has increased amazingly since first I came here. You used to be so few and far between. A few years ago when you struck a town the first thing you had to do was to see if you could locate a Socialist; and you were pretty lucky if you struck the trail of one before you left town. If he happened to be the only one and he is still living, he is now regarded as a pioneer and pathfinder; he holds a place of honor in your esteem, and he has lodgment in the hearts of all who have come after him. It is far different now. You can hardly throw a stone in the dark without hitting a Socialist. They are everywhere in increasing numbers; and what marvelous changes are taking place in the people!

Some years ago I was to speak at Warren in this state. It happened to be at the time that President McKinley was assassinated. In common with all others I deplored that tragic event. There is not a Socialist who would have been guilty of that crime. We do not attack individuals. We do not seek to avenge ourselves upon those opposed to our faith. We have no fight with



individuals as such. We are capable of pitying those who hate us. We do not hate them; we know better; we would freely give them a cup of water if they needed it. There is no room in our hearts for hate, except for the system, the social system in which it is possible for one man to amass a stupendous fortune doing nothing, while millions of others suffer and struggle and agonize and die for the bare necessities of existence.

President McKinley, as I have said, had been assassinated. I was first to speak at Portsmouth, having been booked there some time before the assassination. Promptly the Christian ministers of Portsmouth met in special session and passed a resolution declaring that "Debs, more than any other person, was responsible for the assassination of our beloved President." It was due to the doctrine that Debs was preaching that this crime was committed, according to these patriotic parsons, and so this pious gentry, the followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, concluded that I must not be permitted to enter the city. And they had the mayor issue an order to that effect. I went there soon after, however. I was to speak at Warren, where President McKinley's double-cousin was postmaster. I went there and registered. I was soon afterward invited to leave the hotel. I was exceedingly undesirable that day. I was served with notice that the hall would not be opened and that I would not be permitted to speak. I sent back word to the mayor by the only Socialist left in town—and he only remained because they did not know he was there—I sent word to the mayor that I would speak in Warren that night, according to schedule, or I would leave there in a box for the return turn trip.

The Grand Army of the Republic called a special meeting and then marched to the hall in full uniform and occupied the front seats in order to silence me if my speech did not suit them. I went to the hall, however, found it open, and made my speech. There was no interruption. I told the audience frankly who was responsible for the President's assassination. I said: "As long as there is misery caused by robbery at the bottom there will be assassination at the top." I showed them, evidently to their satisfaction, that it was their own capitalist system that was responsible; the system that had impoverished and brutalized the ancestors of the poor witless boy who had murdered the President. Yes, I made my speech that night and it was well received but when I left there I was still an "undesirable citizen."

Some years later I returned to Warren. It seemed that the whole population was out for the occasion. I was received with open arms. I was no longer a demagogue; no longer a fanatic or an undesirable citizen. I had become exceedingly respectable simply because the Socialists had increased in numbers and socialism had grown in influence and power. If ever I become entirely respectable I shall be quite sure that I have outlived myself.

It is the minorities who have made the history of this world. It is the few who have had the courage to take their places at the front; who have been true enough to themselves to speak the truth that was in them; who have dared oppose the established order of things; who have espoused the cause of the suffering, struggling poor; who have upheld without regard to personal consequences the cause of freedom and righteousness. It is they, the heroic, self-sacrificing few



who have made the history of the race and who have paved the way from barbarism to civilization. The many prefer to remain upon the popular side. They lack the courage and vision to join a despised minority that stands for a principle; they have not the moral fiber that withstands, endures and finally conquers. They are to be pitied and not treated with contempt for they cannot help their cowardice. But, thank God, in every age and in every nation there have been the brave and self-reliant few, and they have been sufficient to their historic task; and we, who are here today, are under infinite obligations to them because they suffered, they sacrificed, they went to jail, they had their bones broken upon the wheel, they were burned at the stake and their ashes scattered to the winds by the hands of hate and revenge in their struggle to leave the world better for us than they found it for themselves. We are under eternal obligations to them because of what they did and what they suffered for us and the only way we can discharge that obligation is by doing the best we can for those who are to come after us. And this is the high purpose of every Socialist on earth. Everywhere they are animated by the same lofty principles; everywhere they have the same noble ideals; everywhere they are clasping hands across national boundary lines; everywhere they are calling one another Comrade, the blessed word that springs from the heart of unity and bursts into blossom upon the lips. Each passing day they are getting into closer touch all along the battle line, waging the holy war of the working class of the world against the ruling and exploiting class of the world. They make many mistakes and they profit by them all. They encounter numerous defeats, and grow stronger through them all. They never take a backward step. ☪

The heart of the international Socialist never beats a retreat.

They are pressing forward, here, there and everywhere, in all the zones that girdle the globe. Everywhere these awakening workers, these class-conscious proletarians, these hardy sons and daughters of honest toil are proclaiming the glad tidings of the coming emancipation, everywhere their hearts are attuned to the most sacred cause that ever challenged men and women to action in all the history of the world. Everywhere they are moving toward democracy and the dawn; marching toward the sunrise, their faces all aglow with the light of the coming day. These are the Socialists, the most zealous and enthusiastic crusaders the world has ever known. They are making history that will light up the horizon of coming generations, for their mission is the emancipation of the human race. They have been reviled; they have been ridiculed, persecuted, imprisoned and have suffered death, but they have been sufficient to themselves and their cause, and their final triumph is but a question of time.

Do you wish to hasten the day of victory? Join the Socialist Party! Don't wait for the morrow. Join now! Enroll your name without fear and take your place where you belong. You cannot do your duty by proxy. You have got to do it yourself and do it squarely and then as you look yourself in the face you will have no occasion to blush. You will know what it is to be a real man or woman. You will lose nothing; you will gain everything. Not only will you lose nothing but you will find something of infinite value, and that something will be yourself. And that is your supreme need—to find yourself—to really know yourself and your purpose in life.

You need at this time especially to know that you are fit for something better than slavery and cannon fodder. You need to know that you were not created to work and produce and impoverish yourself to enrich an idle exploiter. You need to know that you have a mind to improve, a soul to develop, and a manhood to sustain.

You need to know that it is your duty to rise above the animal plane of existence. You need to know that it is for you to know something about literature and science and art. You need to know that you are verging on the edge of a great new world. You need to get in touch with your comrades and fellow workers and to become conscious of your interests, your powers and your possibilities as a class. You need to know that you belong to the great majority of mankind. You need to know that as long as you are ignorant, as long as you are indifferent, as long as you are apathetic, unorganized and content, you will remain exactly where you are. You will be exploited; you will be degraded, and you will have to beg for a job. You will get just enough for your slavish toil to keep you in working order, and you will be looked down upon with scorn and contempt by the very parasites that live and luxuriate out of your sweat and unpaid labor.

If you would be respected you have got to begin by respecting yourself. Stand up squarely and look yourself in the face and see a man! Do not allow yourself to fall into the predicament of the poor fellow who, after he had heard a Socialist speech concluded that he too ought to be a Socialist. The argument he had heard was unanswerable. "Yes," he said to himself, "all the speaker said was true and I certainly ought to join the party." But after a while he allowed his ardor to cool and he soberly concluded that by joining the party he might anger his boss and lose his job. He then concluded: "I can't take the chance." That night he slept alone. There was something on his conscience and it resulted in a dreadful dream. Men always have such dreams when they betray themselves. A Socialist is free to go to bed with a clear conscience. He goes to sleep with his manhood and he awakens and walks forth in the morning with his self-respect. He is unafraid and he can look the whole world in the face, without a tremor and without a blush. But this poor weakling who lacked the courage to do the bidding of his reason and conscience was haunted by a startling dream and at midnight he awoke in terror, bounded from his bed and exclaimed: "My God, there is nobody in this room." He was absolutely right. There was nobody in that room.

How would you like to sleep in a room that had nobody in it? It is an awful thing to be nobody. That is certainly a state of mind to get out of, the sooner the better.

There is a great deal of hope for Baker, Ruthenberg and Wagenknecht who are in jail for their convictions; but for the fellow that is nobody there is no pardoning power. He is "in" for life. Anybody can be nobody; but it takes a man to be somebody.

To turn your back on the corrupt Republican Party and the still more corrupt Democratic Party—the gold-dust lackeys of the ruling class counts for still more after you have stepped out of those popular and corrupt capitalist parties to join a minority party that has an ideal, that stands for a principle, and fights for a cause. This will be the most important change you have ever made and

the time will come when you will thank me for having made the suggestion. It was the day of days for me. I remember it well. It was like passing from midnight darkness to the noontide light of day. It came almost like a flash and found me ready. It must have been in such a flash that great, seething, throbbing Russia, prepared by centuries of slavery and tears and martyrdom, was transformed from a dark continent to a land of living light.

There is something splendid, something sustaining and inspiring in the prompting of the heart to be true to yourself and to the best you know, especially in a crucial hour of your life. You are in the crucible today, my Socialist comrades! You are going to be tried by fire, to what extent no one knows. If you are weak-fibered and fainthearted you will be lost to the Socialist movement. We will have to bid you goodbye. You are not the stuff of which revolutions are made. We are sorry for you unless you chance to be an "intellectual." The "intellectuals," many of them, are already gone. No loss on our side nor gain on the other.

I am always amused in the discussion of the "intellectual" phase of this question. It is the same old standard under which the rank and file are judged. What would become of the sheep if they had no shepherd to lead them out of the wilderness into the land of milk and honey?

Oh, yes, "I am your shepherd and ye are my mutton."

They would have us believe that if we had no "intellectuals" we would have no movement. They would have our party, the rank and file, controlled by the "intellectual" bosses as the Republican and Democratic parties are controlled. These capitalist parties are managed by "intellectual" leaders and the rank and file are sheep that follow the bellwether to the shambles.

In the Republican and Democratic parties you of the common herd are not expected to think. That is not only unnecessary but might lead you astray. That is what the "intellectual" leaders are for. They do the thinking and you do the voting. They ride in carriages at the front where the band plays and you tramp in the mud, bringing up the rear with great enthusiasm.

The capitalist system affects to have great regard and reward for intellect, and the capitalists give themselves full credit for having superior brains. When we have ventured to say that the time would come when the working class would rule they have bluntly answered "Never! it requires brains to rule." The workers of course have none. And they certainly try hard to prove it by proudly supporting the political parties of their masters under whose administration they are kept in poverty and servitude.

The government is now operating its railroads for the more effective prosecution of the war. Private ownership has broken down utterly and the government has had to come to the rescue. We have always said that the people ought to own the railroads and operate them for the benefit of the people. We advocated that twenty years ago. But the capitalists and their henchmen emphatically objected. "You have got to have brains to run the railroads," they tauntingly retorted. Well, the other day McAdoo, the governor-general of the railroads under government operation; discharged

all the high-salaried presidents and other supernumeraries. In other words, he fired the “brains” bodily and yet all the trains have been coming and going on schedule time. Have you noticed any change for the worse since the “brains” are gone? It is a brainless system now, being operated by “hands.” But a good deal more efficiently than it had been operated by so-called “brains” before. And this determines infallibly the quality of their vaunted, high-priced capitalist “brains.” It is the kind you can get at a reasonable figure at the market place. They have always given themselves credit for having superior brains and given this as the reason for the supremacy of their class. It is true that they have the brains that indicates the cunning of the fox, the wolf, but as for brains denoting real intelligence and the measure of intellectual capacity they are the most woefully ignorant people on earth. Give me a hundred capitalists just as you find them here in Ohio and let me ask them a dozen simple questions about the history of their own country and I will prove to you that they are as ignorant and unlettered as any you may find in the so-called lower class. They know little of history; they are strangers to science; they are ignorant of sociology and blind to art but they know how to exploit, how to gouge, how to rob, and do it with legal sanction. They always proceed legally for the reason that the class which has the power to rob upon a large scale has also the power to control the government and legalize their robbery. I regret that lack of time prevents me from discussing this phase of the question more at length.

They are continually talking about your patriotic duty. It is not their but your patriotic duty that they are concerned about. There is a decided difference. Their patriotic duty never takes them to the firing line or chucks them into the trenches.

And now among other things they are urging you to “cultivate” war gardens, while at the same time a government war report just issued shows that practically 52 percent of the arable, tillable soil is held out of use by the landlords, speculators and profiteers. They themselves do not cultivate the soil. They could not if they would. Nor do they allow others to cultivate it. They keep it idle to enrich themselves, to pocket the millions of dollars of unearned increment. Who is it that makes this land valuable while it is fenced in and kept out of use? It is the people. Who pockets this tremendous accumulation of value? The landlords. And these landlords who toil not and spin not are supreme among American “patriots.”

In passing I suggest that we stop a moment to think about the term “landlord.” “LANDLORD!” Lord of the Land! The lord of the land is indeed a superpatriot. This lord who practically owns the earth tells you that we are fighting this war to make the world safe for democracy—he who shuts out all humanity from his private domain; he who profiteers at the expense of the people who have been slain and mutilated by multiplied thousands, under pretense of being the great American patriot. It is he, this identical patriot who is in fact the archenemy of the people; it is he that you need to wipe from power. It is he who is a far greater menace to your liberty and your well-being than the Prussian Junkers on the other side of the Atlantic ocean.

Fifty-two percent of the land kept out of use, according to their own figures! They tell you that there is an alarming shortage of flour and that you need to produce more. They tell you further that



you have got to save wheat so that more can be exported for the soldiers who are fighting on the other side, while half of your tillable soil is held out of use by the landlords and profiteers. What do you think of that?

Again, they tell you there is a coal famine now in the state of Ohio. The state of Indiana, where I live, is largely underlaid with coal. There is practically an inexhaustible supply. The coal is banked beneath our very feet. It is within touch all about us—all we can possibly use and more. And here are the miners, ready to enter the mines. Here is the machinery ready to be put into operation to increase the output to any desired capacity. And three weeks ago a national officer of the United Mine Workers issued and published a statement to the Labor Department of the United States government to the effect that the 600,000 coal miners in the United States at this time, when they talk about a coal famine, are not permitted to work more than half time. I have been around over Indiana for many years. I have often been in the coal fields; again and again I have seen the miners idle while at the same time there was a scarcity of coal.

They tell you that you ought to buy your coal right away; that you may freeze next winter if you do not. At the same time they charge you three prices for your coal. Oh, yes, this ought to suit you perfectly if you vote the Republican or Democratic ticket and believe in the private ownership of the coal mines and their operation for private profit.

The coal mines now being privately owned, the operators want a scarcity of coal so they can boost their prices and enrich themselves accordingly. If an abundance of coal were mined there would be lower prices and this would not suit the mine owners. Prices soar and profits increase when there is a scarcity of coal.

It is also apparent that there is collusion between the mine owners and the railroads. The mine owners declare there are no cars while the railroad men insist that there is no coal. And between them they delude, defraud and rob the people.

Let us illustrate a vital point. Here is the coal in great deposits all about us; here are the miners and the machinery of production. Why should there be a coal famine upon the one hand and an army of idle and hungry miners on the other hand? Is it not an incredibly stupid situation, an almost idiotic if not criminal state of affairs?

We Socialists say: "Take possession of the mines in the name of the people." Set the miners at work and give every miner the equivalent of all the coal he produces. Reduce the work day in proportion to the development of productive machinery. That would at once settle the matter of a coal famine and of idle miners. But that is too simple a proposition and the people will have none of it. The time will come, however, when the people will be driven to take such action for there is no other efficient and permanent solution of the problem.

In the present system the miner, a wage slave, gets down into a pit 300 or 400 feet deep. He works hard and produces a ton of coal. But he does not own an ounce of it. That coal belongs to



some mine-owning plutocrat who may be in New York or sailing the high seas in his private yacht; or he may be hobnobbing with royalty in the capitals of Europe, and that is where most of them were before the war was declared. The industrial captain, so-called, who lives in Paris, London, Vienna or some other center of gaiety does not have to work to revel in luxury. He owns the mines and he might as well own the miners.

That is where you workers are and where you will remain as long as you give your support to the political parties of your masters and exploiters. You vote these miners out of a job and reduce them to corporation vassals and paupers.

We Socialists say: "Take possession of the mines; call the miner to work and return to him the equivalent of the value of his product." He can then build himself a comfortable home; live in it; enjoy it with his family. He can provide himself and his wife and children with clothes—good clothes—not shoddy; wholesome food in abundance, education for the children, and the chance to live the lives of civilized human beings, while at the same time the people will get coal at just what it costs to mine it.

Of course that would be socialism as far as it goes. But you are not in favor of that program. It is too visionary because it is so simple and practical. So you will have to continue to wait until winter is upon you before you get your coal and then pay three prices for it because you insist upon voting a capitalist ticket and giving your support to the present wage-slave system. The trouble with you is that you are still in a capitalist state of mind.

Lincoln said: "If you want that thing that is the thing you want"; and you will get it to your heart's content. But some good day you will wake up and realize that a change is needed and wonder why you did not know it long before. Yes, a change is certainly needed, not merely a change of party but a change of system; a change from slavery to freedom and from despotism to democracy, wide as the world. When this change comes at last, we shall rise from brutehood to brotherhood, and to accomplish it we have to educate and organize the workers industrially and politically, but not along the zigzag craft lines laid down by Gompers, who through all of his career has favored the master class. You never hear the capitalist press speak of him nowadays except in praise and adulation. He has recently come into great prominence as a patriot. You never find him on the unpopular side of a great issue. He is always conservative, satisfied to leave the labor problem to be settled finally at the banqueting board with Elihu Root, Andrew Carnegie and the rest of the plutocratic civic federationists. When they drink wine and smoke scab cigars together the labor question is settled so far as they are concerned.

And while they are praising Gompers they are denouncing the I.W.W. There are few men who have the courage to say a word in favor of the I.W.W. I have. Let me say here that I have great respect for the I.W.W. Far greater than I have for their infamous detractors.

Listen! There has just been published a pamphlet called "The Truth About the I.W.W." It has

been issued after long and thorough investigation by five men of unquestioned standing in the capitalist world. At the head of these investigators was Professor John Graham Brooks of Harvard University, and next to him John A. Fish of the Survey of the Religious Organizations of Pittsburgh, and Mr. Bruere, the government investigator. Five of these prominent men conducted an impartial examination of the I.W.W. To quote their own words they "followed its trail." They examined into its doings beginning at Bisbee where the "patriots," the cowardly business men, the arch-criminals, made up the mob that deported 1,200 workingmen under the most brutal conditions, charging them with being members of the I.W.W. when they knew it to be false.

It is only necessary to label a man "I.W.W." to have him lynched as they did Praeger, an absolutely innocent man. He was a Socialist and bore a German name, and that was his crime. A rumor was started that he was disloyal and he was promptly seized and lynched by the cowardly mob of so-called "patriots."

War makes possible all such crimes and outrages. And war comes in spite of the people. When Wall Street says war the press says war and the pulpit promptly follows with its Amen. In every age the pulpit has been on the side of the rulers and not on the side of the people. That is one reason why the preachers so fiercely denounce the I.W.W.

Take the time to read this pamphlet about the I.W.W. Don't take the word of Wall Street and its press as final. Read this report by five impartial and highly reputable men who made their investigation to know the truth, and that they might tell the truth to the American people. They declare that the I.W.W. in all its career never committed as much violence against the ruling class as the ruling class has committed against the I.W.W.

You are not now reading any reports in the daily press about the trial at Chicago, are you? They used to publish extensive reports when the trial first began, and to prate about what they proposed to prove against the I.W.W. as a gigantic conspiracy against the government. The trial has continued until they have exhausted all their testimony and they have not yet proven violence in a single instance. No, not one! They are utterly without incriminating testimony and yet 112 men are in the dock after lying in jail for months without the shadow of a crime upon them save that of belonging to the I.W.W. That is enough it would seem to convict any man of any crime and send his body to prison and his soul to hell. Just whisper the name of the I.W.W. and you are branded as a disloyalist. And the reason for this is wholly to the credit of the I.W.W., for whatever may be charged against it the I.W.W. has always fought for the bottom dog. And that is why Haywood is despised and prosecuted while Gompers is lauded and glorified by the same gang.

Now what you workers need is to organize, not along craft lines but along revolutionary industrial lines. All of you workers in a given industry, regardless of your trade or occupation, should belong to one and the same union.

Political action and industrial action must supplement and sustain each other. You will never

vote the Socialist republic into existence. You will have to lay its foundations in industrial organization. The industrial union is the forerunner of industrial democracy. In the shop where the workers are associated is where industrial democracy has its beginning. Organize according to your industries! Get together in every department of industrial service! United and acting together for the common good your power is invincible.

When you have organized industrially you will soon learn that you can manage as well as operate industry. You will soon realize that you do not need the idle masters and exploiters. They are simply parasites. They do not employ you as you imagine but you employ them to take from you what you produce, and that is how they function in industry. You can certainly dispense with them in that capacity. You do not need them to depend upon for your jobs. You can never be free while you work and live by their sufferance. You must own your own tools and then you will control your own jobs, enjoy the products of your own labor and be free men instead of industrial slaves.

Organize industrially and make your organization complete. Then unite in the Socialist Party. Vote as you strike and strike as you vote.

Your union and your party embrace the working class. The Socialist Party expresses the interests, hopes and aspirations of the toilers of all the world.

Get your fellow workers into the industrial union and the political party to which they rightly belong, especially this year, this historic year in which the forces of labor will assert themselves as they never have before. This is the year that calls for men and women who have courage, the manhood and womanhood to do their duty.

Get into the Socialist Party and take your place in its ranks; help to inspire the weak and strengthen the faltering, and do your share to speed the coming of the brighter and better day for us all.

When we unite and act together on the industrial field and when we vote together on election day we shall develop the supreme power of the one class that can and will bring permanent peace to the world. We shall then have the intelligence, the courage and the power for our great task. In due time industry will be organized on a cooperative basis. We shall conquer the public power. We shall then transfer the title deeds of the railroads, the telegraph lines, the mines, mills and great industries to the people in their collective capacity; we shall take possession of all these social utilities in the name of the people. We shall then have industrial democracy. We shall be a free nation whose government is of and by and for the people.

And now for all of us to do our duty! The clarion call is ringing in our ears and we cannot falter without being convicted of treason to ourselves and to our great cause.

Do not worry over the charge of treason to your masters, but be concerned about the treason that

involves yourselves. Be true to yourself and you cannot be a traitor to any good cause on earth.

Yes, in good time we are going to sweep into power in this nation and throughout the world. We are going to destroy all enslaving and degrading capitalist institutions and re-create them as free and humanizing institutions. The world is daily changing before our eyes. The sun of capitalism is setting; the sun of socialism is rising. It is our duty to build the new nation and the free republic. We need industrial and social builders. We Socialists are the builders of the beautiful world that is to be. We are all pledged to do our part. We are inviting—aye challenging you this afternoon in the name of your own manhood and womanhood to join us and do your part.

In due time the hour will strike and this great cause triumphant—the greatest in history—will proclaim the emancipation of the working class and the brotherhood of all mankind.

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John Dos Passos wrote a trilogy, *USA*, which expressed a horror of war. Here is a section from a passage called "The Body of an American," from *Nineteen-Nineteen*, the second volume of *USA*, published in 1932.

### John Dos Passos, "The Body of an American" (1932)<sup>19</sup>

John Doe  
and Richard Roe and other person or persons unknown  
drilled hiked, manual of arms, ate slum, learned to salute, to loaf in  
the latrines, forbidden to smoke on deck, overseas guard duty, forty men and eight  
horses, shortarm inspection and the ping of shrapnel and the shrill bullets comb-  
ing the air and the sorehead woodpeckers the machineguns mud cooties gasmasks  
and the itch.

Say feller tell me how I can get back to my outfit.

John Doe had a head

for twentyodd years intensely the nerves of the eyes the ears the palate the  
tongue the fingers the toes the armpits, the nerves warmfeeling under the skin  
charged the coiled brain with hurt sweet warm cold mine must don't sayings print  
headlines:

Thou shalt not the multiplication table long division, Now is the time for all  
good men knocks but once at a young man's door, It's a great life if Ish gebibel,  
The first five years'll be the Safety First, Suppose a hun tried to rape you're my  
country right or wrong, Catch 'em young, What he don't know wont treat 'em  
rough, Tell 'm nothing, He got what was coming to him he got his, This is a  
white man's country, Kick the bucket, Gone west, If you don't like it you can  
croaked him

Say buddy cant you tell me how I can get back to my outfit?

Cant help jumpin when them things go off, give me the trots them things do. I  
lost my identification tag swimmin in the Marne, roughhousin with a guy while  
we was waitin to be deloused, in bed with a girl name Jeanne (Love moving pic-  
ture wet French postcard dream began with saltpeter in the coffee and ended at  
the propho station);—

Say soldier for chrissake cant you tell me how I can get back to my outfit?

John Doe's

heart pumped blood:

alive thudding silence of blood in your ears.

down in the clearing in the Oregon forest where the punkins were punk-  
inolor pouring into the blood through the eyes and the fallcolored trees and the  
bronze hoopers were hopping through the dry grass, where tiny striped snails  
hung on the underside of the blades and the flies hummed, wasps droned, bum-  
ble-bees buzzed, and the woods smelt of wine and mushrooms and apples, homey  
smell of fall pouring into the blood,

and I dropped the tin hat and the sweaty pack and lay flat with the dogday sun  
licking my throat and adamsapple and the tight skin over the breastbone.

The shell had his number on it.

The blood ran into the ground.

The service record dropped out of the filing cabinet when the quarter-  
master sergeant got blotto that time they had to pack up and leave the billers in  
a hurry.

The identification tag was in the bottom of the Marne.

The blood ran into the ground, the brains oozed out of the cracked skull  
and were licked up by the trenchrats, the belly swelled and raised a generation of  
blue-bottle flies.

and the incorruptible skeleton,

and the scraps of dried viscera and skin bundled in khaki

they took to Chalons-sur-Marne

and laid it out neat in a pine coffin

and took it home to God's Country on a battleship

and buried in a sarcophagus in the Memorial Amphitheatre in the  
Arlington National Cemetery

and draped the Old Glory over it

and the bugler played taps

and Mr. Harding prayed to God and the diplomats and the generals and  
the admirals and the brasshats and the politicians and the handsomely dressed  
ladies out of the society column of the Washington Post stood up solemn

and thought how beautiful sad Old Glory God's Country it was go have  
the bugler play taps and the three volleys made their ears ring.



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## The Espionage Act of 1917

Digital History ID 3904

Date: 1917

**Annotation:** America declared war with Germany in April 1917. Two months later, the U.S. Congress passed the Espionage Act, which defined espionage during wartime.

The Act was amended in May 1918.

In his war message to Congress, President Wilson had warned that the war would require a redefinition of national loyalty. There were "millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live amongst us," he said. "If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with a firm hand of repression."

In June 1917, Congress passed the Espionage Act. The piece of legislation gave postal officials the authority to ban newspapers and magazines from the mails and threatened individuals convicted of obstructing the draft with \$10,000 fines and 20 years in jail.

Congress passed the Sedition Act of 1918, which made it a federal offense to use "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" about the Constitution, the government, the American uniform, or the flag. The government prosecuted over 2,100 people under these acts.

### Document:

The Espionage Act of June 15, 1917

Espionage

Section 1

That: (a) whoever, for the purpose of obtaining information respecting the national defence with intent or reason to believe that the information to be obtained is to be used to the injury of the United States, or to the advantage of any foreign nation, goes upon, enters, flies over, or otherwise obtains information, concerning any vessel, aircraft, work of defence, navy yard, naval station, submarine base, coaling station, fort, battery, torpedo station, dockyard, canal, railroad, arsenal, camp, factory, mine, telegraph, telephone, wireless, or signal station, building, office, or other place connected with the national defence, owned or constructed, or in progress of construction by the United States or under the control of the United States, or of any of its officers or agents, or within the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States, or any place in which any vessel, aircraft, arms, munitions, or other materials or instruments for use in time of war are being made, prepared, repaired, or stored, under any contract or agreement with the United States, or with any person on behalf of the United States, or otherwise on behalf of the United States, or any prohibited place within the meaning of section six of this title; or

(b) whoever for the purpose aforesaid, and with like intent or reason to believe, copies, takes, makes, or obtains, or attempts, or induces or aids another to copy, take, make, or obtain, any sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, document, writing or note of anything connected with the national defence; or

(c) whoever, for the purpose aforesaid, receives or obtains or agrees or attempts or induces or aids another to receive or obtain from any other person, or from any source whatever, any document,

writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note, of anything connected with the national defence, knowing or having reason to believe, at the time he receives or obtains, or agrees or attempts or induces or aids another to receive or obtain it, that it has been or will be obtained, taken, made or disposed of by any person contrary to the provisions of this title; or

(d) whoever, lawfully or unlawfully having possession of, access to, control over, or being entrusted with any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note relating to the national defence, wilfully communicates or transmits or attempts to communicate or transmit the same and fails to deliver it on demand to the officer or employee of the United States entitled to receive it; or

(e) whoever, being entrusted with or having lawful possession or control of any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, note, or information, relating to the national defence, through gross negligence permits the same to be removed from its proper place of custody or delivered to anyone in violation of his trust, or to be lost, stolen, abstracted, or destroyed, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by imprisonment for not more than two years, or both.

## Section 2

Whoever, with intent or reason to believe that it is to be used to the injury or the advantage of a foreign nation, communicated, delivers, or transmits, or attempts to, or aids, or induces another to, communicate, deliver or transmit, to any foreign government, or to any faction or party or military or naval force within a foreign country, whether recognized or unrecognized by the United States, or to any representative, officer, agent, employee, subject, or citizen thereof, either directly or indirectly and document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, note, instrument, appliance, or information relating to the national defence, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than twenty years: Provided, That whoever shall violate the provisions of subsection:

(a) of this section in time of war shall be punished by death or by imprisonment for not more than thirty years; and

(b) whoever, in time of war, with intent that the same shall be communicated to the enemy, shall collect, record, publish or communicate, or attempt to elicit any information with respect to the movement, numbers, description, condition, or disposition of any of the armed forces, ships, aircraft, or war materials of the United States, or with respect to the plans or conduct, or supposed plans or conduct of any naval or military operations, or with respect to any works or measures undertaken for or connected with, or intended for the fortification of any place, or any other information relating to the public defence, which might be useful to the enemy, shall be punished by death or by imprisonment for not more than thirty years.

## Section 3

Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall wilfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies and whoever when the United States is at war, shall wilfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall wilfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or of the United States, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both.

## Section 4

If two or more persons conspire to violate the provisions of section two or three of this title, and one or more of such persons does any act to effect the object of the conspiracy, each of the parties to such conspiracy shall be punished as in said sections provided in the case of the doing of the act the accomplishment of which is the object of such conspiracy. Except as above provided conspiracies to commit offences under this title shall be punished as provided by section thirty-seven of the Act to codify, revise, and amend the penal laws of the United States approved March fourth, nineteen hundred and nine.

#### Section 5

Whoever harbours or conceals any person who he knows, or has reasonable grounds to believe or suspect, has committed, or is about to commit, an offence under this title shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or by imprisonment for not more than two years, or both.

#### Section 6

The President in time of war or in case of national emergency may by proclamation designate any place other than those set forth in subsection: (a) of section one hereof in which anything for the use of the Army or Navy is being prepared or constructed or stored as a prohibited place for the purpose of this title: Provided, That he shall determine that information with respect thereto would be prejudicial to the national defence.

#### Section 7

Nothing contained in this title shall be deemed to limit the jurisdiction of the general courts-martial, military commissions, or naval courts-martial under sections thirteen hundred and forty-two, thirteen hundred and forty-three, and sixteen hundred and twenty-four of the Revised Statutes as amended.

#### Section 8

The provisions of this title shall extend to all Territories, possessions, and places subject to the jurisdiction of the United States whether or not contiguous thereto, and offences under this title, when committed upon the high seas or elsewhere within the admiralty and maritime jurisdiction of the United States and outside the territorial limits thereof shall be punishable hereunder.

#### Section 9

The Act entitles "An Act to prevent the disclosure of national defence secrets," approved March third, nineteen hundred and eleven, is hereby repealed.



Emma Goldman

***Address to the Jury***



Delivered 9 July 1917, New York

Gentlemen of the Jury:

As in the case of my co-defendant, Alexander Berkman, this is also the first time in my life I have ever addressed a jury. I once had occasion to speak to three judges.

On the day after our arrest it was give out by the U. S. Marshal and the District Attorney's office that the "big fish" of the No-Conscription activities had been caught, and that there would be no more trouble-makers and disturbers to interfere with the highly democratic effort of the Government to conscript its young manhood for the European slaughter. What a pity that the faithful servants of the Government, personified in the U. S. Marsha land the District Attorney, should have used such a weak and flimsy net for their big catch. The moment the anglers pulled their heavily laden net ashore, it broke, and all the labor was so much wasted energy.

The methods employed by Marshal McCarthy and his hosts of heroic warriors were sensational enough to satisfy the famous circus men, Barnum & Baily. A dozen or more heroes dashing up two flights of stairs, prepared to stake their lives for their country, only to discover the two dangerous disturbers and trouble-makers Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, in their separate offices, quietly at work at their desks, wielding not a sword, nor a gun or a bomb, but merely their pens! Verily, it required courage to catch such big fish.



To be sure, tow officers equipped with a warrant would have sufficed to carry out the business of arresting the defendants Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman. Even the police know that neither of them is in the habit of running away or hiding under the bed. But the farce-comedy had to be properly staged if the Marshal and the District Attorney were to earn immortality. Hence the sensational arrest; hence, also, the raid upon the offices of THE BLAST, MOTHER EARTH and the No-Conscription League.

In their zeal to save the country from the trouble-makers, the Marshal and his helpers did not even consider it necessary to produce a search warrant. After all, what matters a mere scrap of paper when one is called upon to raid the offices of Anarchists! Of what consequence is the sanctity of property, the right of privacy, to officials in their dealings with Anarchists! In our day of military training for battle, and Anarchist office is an appropriate camping ground. Would the gentlemen who came with Marshal McCarthy have dared to go into the offices of Morgan, of Rockefeller, or of any of those men without a search warrant? They never showed us the search warrant, although we asked them for it. Nevertheless, they turned our office into a battlefield, so that when they were through with it, it looked like invaded Belgium, with the only difference that the invaders were not Prussian barbarians but good American patriots bent on making New York safe for democracy.

The stage having been appropriately set for the three-act comedy, and the first act successfully played by carrying off the villains in a madly dashing automobile -- which broke every traffic regulation and barely escaped crushing every one in its way--the second act proved even more ludicrous. Fifty thousand dollars bail was demanded, and real estate refused when offered by a man whose property is rated at three hundred thousand dollars, and that after the District Attorney had considered and, in fact, promised to accept the property for one of the defendants, Alexander Berkman, thus breaking every right guaranteed even to the most heinous criminal.

Finally the third act, played by the Government in this court during the last week. The pity of it is that the prosecution knows so little of dramatic construction, else it would have equipped itself with better dramatic material to sustain the continuity of the play. As it was, the third act fell flat, utterly, and presents the question, Why such a tempest in a teapot?

Gentlemen of the jury, my comrade and co-defendant having carefully and thoroughly gone into the evidence presented by the prosecution, and having demonstrated its entire failure to prove the charge of conspiracy or any overt acts to carry out that conspiracy, I shall not impose upon your patience by going over the same ground, except to emphasize a few points. To charge people with having conspired to do something which they have been engaged in doing most of their lives, namely their campaign against war, militarism and conscription as contrary to the best interests of humanity, is an insult to human intelligence.

And how was that charge proven?





By the fact that MOTHER EARTH and THE BLAST were printed by the same printer and bound in the same bindery. By the further evidence that the same expressman had delivered to two publications! An by the still more illuminating fact that on June 2<sup>nd</sup> MOTHER EARTH and THE BLAST were given to a reporter at his request, if your please, and gratis.

Gentlemen of the jury, you saw the reporter who testified to this overt act. Did any one of you receive the impression that the man was of conscriptable age, and if not in what possible way is the giving of MOTHER EARTH to a report for news purposes proof demonstrating the overt act?

It was brought out by our witnesses that the MOTHER EARTH magazine has been published for twelve years; that it was never held up, and that it has always gone through the U. S. mail as second-class mail matter. It was further proven that the magazine appeared each month about the first or second, and that it was sold or given away at the office to whoever wanted a copy. Where, then, is the overt act?

Just as the prosecution has utterly failed to prove the charge of conspiracy, so has it also failed to prove the overt act by the flimsy testimony that MOTHER EARTH was given to a reporter. The same holds good regarding THE BLAST.

Gentlemen of the jury, the District Attorney must have learned from the reporters the gist of the numerous interviews which they had with us. Why did he not examine them as to whether or not we had counseled young men not to register? That would have been a more direct way of getting at the facts. In the case of the reporter from the *New York Times*, there can be no doubt that the man would have been only too happy to accommodate the District Attorney with the required information. A man who disregards every principle of decency and ethics of his profession as a newspaper man, by turning material given him as news over to the District Attorney, would have been glad to oblige a friend. Why did Mr. Content neglect such a golden opportunity? Was it no because the reporter of the *Times*, like all the other reporters, must have told the District Attorney that the two defendants stated, on each and every occasion, they would not tell people not to register?

Perhaps the *Times* reporter refused to go to the extent of perjuring himself. Patrolmen and detectives are not so timid in such matters. Hence Mr. Randolph and Mr. Cadell, to rescue the situation. Imagine employing tenth-rate stenographers to report the very important speeches of dangerous trouble-makers! What lack of forethought and efficiency on the part of the District Attorney! But even these two members of the police department failed to prove by their notes that we advised people not to register. But since they had to produce something incriminating against Anarchists, they conveniently resorted to the old standby, always credited to us, "We believe in violence and we will use violence."

Assuming, gentlemen of the jury, that his sentence was really used at the meeting of May 18th, it would still fail to prove the indictment which charges conspiracy and overt acts to carry out the conspiracy. And that is all we are charged with.



The conscientious objector is impelled by what President Wilson in his speech of Feb. 3, 1917, called "the righteous passion for justice upon which all war, all structure of family, State and of mankind must rest as the ultimate base of our existence or our liberty." The righteous passion for justice which can never express itself in human slaughter -- that is the force which makes the conscientious objector. Poor indeed is the country which fails to recognize the importance of that new type of humanity as the "ultimate base of our existence and liberty." It will find itself barren of that which makes for character and quality in its people.

The meeting of May 18<sup>th</sup> was held before the Draft Bill had actually gone into effect. The President signed it late in the evening of the 18<sup>th</sup>. Whatever was said at the meeting, even if I had counseled young men not to register, that meeting cannot serve as proof of an overt act. Why, then, has the Prosecuting Attorney dwelt so much, at such length, and with such pains on that meeting, and so little on the other meetings held on the eve of registration and after? Is it not because the District Attorney knew that we had no stenographic notes of that meeting? He knew it because he was approached by Mr. Weinberger and other friends for a copy of the transcript, which request he refused. Evidently, the District Attorney felt safe to use the notes of a patrolman and a detective, knowing that they would swear to anything their superiors wanted. I never like to accuse anyone -- I wouldn't go so far as my co-defendant, Mr. Berkman, in saying that the District Attorney doctored the document; I don't know whether he did or not. But I do know that Patrolman Randolph and Detective Cadell doctored the notes, for the simple reason that I didn't say those things. But though we could not produce our own stenographic notes, we have been able to prove by men and women of unimpeachable character and high intelligence that the notes of Randolph are utterly false. We have also proven beyond a reasonable doubt, and Mr. Content did not dare question our proof, that at the Hunts' Point Palace, held on the eve of registration, I expressly stated that I cannot and will not tell people not to register. We have further proven that this was my definite stand, which was explained in my statement sent from Springfield and read at the meeting of May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

When we go through the entire testimony given on behalf of the prosecution, I insist that there is not one single point to sustain the indictment for conspiracy or to prove the overt acts we are supposed to have committed. But we were even compelled to bring a man eighty years of age to the witness stand in order to stop, if possible, and intention to drag in the question of German money. It is true, and I appreciate it, that Mr. Content said he had no knowledge of it. But, gentlemen of the jury, somebody from the District Attorney's office or someone from the Marshal's office must have given out the statement that a bank receipt for \$2,400 was found in my office and must have told the newspapers the fake story of German money. As if we would ever touch German money, or Russian money, or American money coming from the ruling class, to advance our ideas ! But in order to forestall any suspicion, any insinuation, in order to stand clear before you, we were compelled to bring an old man here to inform you that he has been a radical all his life, that he is interested in our ideas, and that he is the man who contributed the money for radical purposes and for the work of Miss Goldman.



Gentlemen of the jury, you will be told by the Court, I am sure, that when you render a verdict you must be convinced beyond a reasonable doubt; that you must not assume that we are guilty before we are proven guilty; and that it is your duty to assume that we are innocent. And yet, as a matter of fact, the burden of proof has been laid upon us. We had to bring witnesses. If we had had time we could have brought fifty more witnesses, each corroborating the others. Some of those people have no relation with us. Some are writers, poets, contributors to the most conventional magazines. Is it likely that they would swear to something in our favor if it were not the truth? Therefore I insist, as did my co-defendant Alexander Berkman, that the prosecution has made a very poor showing in proving the conspiracy or any overt act.

Gentlemen of the jury, we have been in public life for twenty-seven years. We have been haled into court, in and out of season -- we have never denied our position. Even the police know that Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman are not shirkers. You have had occasion during this trial to convince yourselves that we do not deny. We have gladly and proudly claimed responsibility, not only for what we ourselves have said and written, but even for things written by others and with which we did not agree. Is it plausible, then, that we would go through the ordeal, trouble and expense of a lengthy trial to escape responsibility in this instance? A thousand times no! But we refuse to be tried on a trumped-up charge, or to be convicted by perjured testimony, merely because we are Anarchists and hated by the class whom we have openly fought for many years.

Gentlemen, during our examination of talesmen, when we asked whether you would be prejudiced against us if it were proven that we propagated ideas and opinions contrary to those held by the majority, you were instructed by the Court to say, "If they are within the law." But what the Court did not tell you is, that no new faith -- not even the most humane and peaceable -- has ever been considered "within the law" by those who were in power. The history of human growth is at the same time the history of every new idea heralding the approach of a brighter dawn, and the brighter dawn has always been considered illegal, outside of the law.

Gentlemen of the jury, most of you, I take it, are believers in the teachings of Jesus. Bear in mind that he was put to death by those who considered his views as being against the law. I also take it that you are proud of you Americanism. Remember that those who fought and bled for your liberties were in their time considered as being against the law, as dangerous disturbers and trouble-makers. They not only preached violence, but they carried out their ideas by throwing tea into the Boston harbor. They said that "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God." They wrote a dangerous document called the Declaration of Independence. A document which continues to be dangerous to this day, and for the circulation of which a young man was sentenced to ninety days prison in a New Your Court, only the other day. They were the Anarchists of *their* time -- they were never within the law.

Your Government is allied with the French Republic. Need I call you attention to the historic fact that the great upheaval in France was brought about by extra-legal means? The Dantes, the Robespieres, the Marats, the Herberts, aye even the man who is responsible for the most



stirring revolutionary music, the Marseillaise (which unfortunately has deteriorated into a war tune) even Camille Desmoulins, were never within the law. But for those great pioneers and rebels, France would have continued under the yoke of the idle Louis XVI., to whom the sport of shooting jack rabbits was more important than the destiny of the people of France.

Ah, gentlemen, on the very day when we were being tried for conspiracy and overt acts, your city officials and representatives welcomed with music and festivities the Russian Commission. Are you aware of the fact that nearly all of the members of that Commission have only recently been released from exile? The ideas they propagated were never within the law. For nearly a hundred years, from 1825 to 1917, the Tree of Liberty in Russia was watered by the blood of her martyrs. No greater heroism, no nobler lives had ever been dedicated to humanity. Not one of them worked within the law. I could continue to enumerate almost endlessly the hosts of men and women in every land and in every period whose ideas and ideals redeemed the world because they were not within the law.

Never can a new idea move within the law. It matters not whether that idea pertains to political and social changes or to any other domain of human thought and expression -- to science, literature, music; in fact, everything that makes for freedom and joy and beauty must refuse to move within the law. How can it be otherwise? The law is stationary, fixed, mechanical, "a chariot wheel" which grinds all alike without regard to time, place and condition, without ever taking into account cause and effect, without ever going into the complexity of the human soul.

Progress knows nothing of fixity. It cannot be pressed into a definite mould. It cannot bow to the dictum, "I have ruled," "I am the regulating finger of God." Progress is ever renewing, ever becoming, ever changing -- *never is it within the law.*

If that be crime, we are criminals even like Jesus, Socrates, Galileo, Bruno, John Brown and scores of others. We are in good company, among those whom Havelock Ellis, the greatest living psychologist, describes as the political criminals recognized by the whole civilized world, except America, as men and women who out of deep love for humanity, out of a passionate reverence for liberty and an all-absorbing devotion to an ideal are ready to pay for their faith even with their blood. We cannot do otherwise if we are to be true to ourselves -- we know that the political criminal is the precursor of human progress -- the political criminal of today must needs be the hero, the martyr and the saint of the new age.

But, says the Prosecuting Attorney, the press and the unthinking rabble, in high and low station, "that is a dangerous doctrine and unpatriotic at this time." No doubt it is. But are we to be held responsible for something which is as unchangeable and unalienable as the very stars hanging in the heavens unto time and all eternity?

Gentlemen to the jury, we respect your patriotism. We would not, if we could, have you change its meaning for yourself. But may there not be different kinds of patriotism as there are different kinds of liberty? I for one cannot believe that love of one's country must needs





consist in blindness to its social faults, to deafness to its social discords, of inarticulation to its social wrongs. Neither can I believe that the mere accident of birth in a certain country or the mere scrap of a citizen's paper constitutes the love of country.

I know many people -- I am one of them -- who were not born here, nor have the applied for citizenship, and who yet love America with deeper passion and greater intensity than many natives whose patriotism manifests itself by pulling, kicking, and insulting those who do not rise when the national anthem is played. Our patriotism is that of the man who loves a woman with open eyes. He is enchanted by her beauty, yet he sees her faults. So we, too, who know America, love her beauty, her richness, her great possibilities; we love her mountains, her canyons, her forests, her Niagara, and her deserts -- above all do we love the people that have produced her wealth, her artists who have created beauty, her great apostles who dream and work for liberty -- but with the same passionate emotion we hate her superficiality, her cant, her corruption, her mad, unscrupulous worship at the altar of the Golden Calf.

We say that if America has entered the war to make the world safe for democracy, she must first make democracy safe in America. How else is the world to take America seriously, when democracy at home is daily being outraged, free speech suppressed, peaceable assemblies broken up by overbearing and brutal gangsters in uniform; when free press is curtailed and every independent opinion gagged. Verily, poor as we are in democracy, how can we give of it to the world? We further say that a democracy conceived in the military servitude of the masses, in their economic enslavement, and nurtured in their tears and blood, is not democracy at all. It is despotism -- the cumulative result of a chain of abuses which, according to the dangerous document, the Declaration of Independence, the people have the right to overthrow.

The District Attorney has dragged in our Manifesto, and he has emphasized the passage, "Resist conscription." Gentlemen of the jury, please remember that that is not the charge against us. But admitting that the Manifesto contains the expression, "Resist conscription," may I ask you, is there only *one kind* of resistance? Is there only the resistance which means the gun, the bayonet, the bomb or flying machine? Is there not another kind of resistance? May not the people simply fold their hands and declare, "We will not fight when we do not believe in the necessity of war"? May not the people who believe in the repeal of the Conscription Law, because it is unconstitutional, express their opposition in word and by pen, in meetings and in other ways? What right has the District Attorney to interpret that particular passage to suit himself? Moreover, gentlemen of the jury, I insist that the indictment against us does not refer to conscription. We are charged with a conspiracy against registration. And in no way or manner has the prosecution proven that we are guilty of conspiracy or that we have committed an overt act.

Gentlemen of the jury, you are not called upon to accept our views, to approve of them or to justify them. You are not even called upon to decide whether our views are within or against the law. You are called upon to decide whether the prosecution has proven that the





defendants Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman have conspired to urge people not to register. And whether their speeches and writings represent overt acts.

Whatever you verdict, gentlemen, it cannot possibly affect the rising tide of discontent in this country against war which, despite all boasts, is a war for conquest and military power. Neither can it affect the ever increasing opposition to conscription which is a military and industrial yoke placed upon the necks of the American people. Least of all will your verdict affect those to whom human life is sacred, and who will not become a party to the world slaughter. Your verdict can only add to the opinion of the world as to whether or not justice and liberty are a living force in this country or a mere shadow of the past.

Your verdict may, of course, affect us temporarily, in a physical sense -- it can have no effect whatever upon our spirit. For even if we were convicted and found guilty and the penalty were that we be placed against a wall and shot dead, I should nevertheless cry out with the great Luther: "Here I am and her I stand and I cannot do otherwise."

And gentlemen, in conclusion let me tell you that my co-defendant, Mr. Berkman, was right when he said the eyes of America are upon you. They are upon you not because of sympathy for us or agreement with Anarchism. They are upon you because it must be decided sooner or later whether we are justified in telling people that we will give the democracy in Europe, when we have no democracy here? Shall free speech and free assemblage, shall criticism and opinion -- which even the espionage bill did not include -- be destroyed? Shall it be a shadow of the past, the great historic American past? Shall it be trampled underfoot by any detective, or policeman, anyone who decides upon it? Or shall free speech and free press and free assemblage continue to be the heritage of the American people?

Gentlemen of the jury, whatever your verdict will be, as far as we are concerned, nothing will be changed. I have held ideas all my life. I have publicly held my ideas for twenty-seven years. Nothing on earth would ever make me change my ideas except one thing; and that is, if you will prove to me that our position is wrong, untenable, or lacking in historic fact. But never would I change my ideas because I am found guilty. I may remind you of two great Americans, undoubtedly not unknown to you, gentlemen of the jury; Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. When Thoreau was placed in prison for refusing to pay taxes, he was visited by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Emerson said: "David, what are you doing in jail?" and Thoreau replied: "Ralph, what are you doing outside, when honest people are in jail for their ideals?" Gentlemen of the jury, I do not wish to influence you. I do not wish to appeal to your passions. I do not wish to influence you by the fact that I am a woman. I have no such desires and no such designs. I take it that you are sincere enough and honest enough and brave enough to render a verdict according to your convictions, beyond the shadow of a reasonable doubt.

Please forget that we are Anarchists. Forget that it is claimed that we propagated violence. Forget that something appeared in MOTHER EARTH when I was thousands of miles away, three years ago. Forget all that, and merely consider the evidence. Have we been engaged in



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a conspiracy? has that conspiracy been proven? have we committed overt acts? have those overt acts been proven? We for the defense say they have not been proven. And therefore your verdict must be not guilty.

But whatever your decision, the struggle must go on. We are but the atoms in the incessant human struggle towards the light that shines in the darkness -- the Ideal of economic, political and spiritual liberation of mankind!

After the war, the assault on free speech by Wilson and his subordinates spun out of control. Fearing that the revolution might spread to America—in Russia, communists seized the country in the October 1917 Bolshevik uprising—federal officials and many Americans backed even more repressive measures to quell dissent. In January 1919, thirty-five thousand shipyard workers brought Seattle to a standstill when they went on strike to demand higher wages and shorter work hours. The city's mayor denounced the action as a communist plot to spark an American revolution. With emotions running high, in May 1919, some person or group mailed thirty bombs from New York to various government officials, armed to explode when opened. While only one bomb detonated (blowing off the hand a domestic employee of Georgia Senator Thomas Hardwick), federal officials identified the conspiracy as the work of an alliance between the Bolsheviks and the IWW. Near riots broke out across the country in response to the alleged plot, as mobs attacked those attending mass meetings and rallies of groups identified as radical.<sup>54</sup>

A month later, another bomb severely damaged the home of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. The attorney general was not injured, but was persuaded, despite a lack of evidence, that the culprits were foreign radicals dedicated to overthrowing the government. "If I had my way," popular evangelist Billy Sunday declared, "I'd fill the jails so full of them [Bolsheviks] that their feet would stick out the windows."<sup>55</sup>

Palmer persuaded Congress to appropriate money to investigate and suppress the nation's growing radical movement. In January 1920, with Palmer's permission and under the direction of his twenty-four-year-old aide J. Edgar Hoover, federal agents in thirty major cities stormed union offices and the headquarters of the American communist and socialist parties, arresting about four thousand radicals and aliens. Palmer vowed to deport more than 2,700 of those he arrested. Federal officials deported 591 aliens for their political beliefs and activities. "Out of the sly and crafty eyes of many of them," Palmer said, "leap cupidity, cruelty, insanity, and crime; from their lopsided faces, sloping brows, and misshapen features may be recognized the unmistakable criminal type."<sup>56</sup>

Palmer went too far. Instead of simply investigating and arresting those responsible for the bombings, the Justice Department declared war on much of the nation's radical movement. By the summer of 1920, court challenges ended the deportations and the public's fears of an alien-inspired revolution subsided. But the damage was done. It was one of the darkest chapters in American history. As former Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes told an audience at Harvard Law School in June 1920, "we may well wonder in view of the precedents now established whether constitutional government as heretofore maintained in this republic could survive another great war even victoriously waged."<sup>57</sup>

#### EMMA GOLDMAN (1869–1940)

A Lithuanian-born anarchist, Emma Goldman immigrated to the United States with her parents in 1885 and worked in the clothing factories in Rochester, New York. By 1889 she moved to New York City, where she met her eventual companion and political associate, Russian anarchist Alexander Berkman. In 1892, when Berkman threatened to be deported, she

executive of the Carnegie Steel company, Goldman avoided prison, although she had been part of the plot. The next year, however, authorities arrested her for urging unemployed people to steal food. Goldman's radical speeches often earned her scorn, particularly in 1901 when the assassin William McKinley claimed that her speeches had influenced his crime.

After Berkman's prison term, he and Goldman began collaborating on Goldman's periodical, Mother Earth, in which she and others advocated for civil liberties and women's rights. In 1917 her antiwar activities—she spent considerable time on the lecture circuit—earned her prosecution for allegedly obstructing the Conscription Act. A federal judge sentenced her and Berkman to two years in prison. In 1919 U.S. authorities stripped her of citizenship and deported her to Russia.<sup>58</sup>

#### PROMOTERS OF THE WAR MANIA

In Mother Earth, March 1917

At this most critical moment it becomes imperative for every liberty-loving person to voice a fiery protest against the participation of this country in the European mass murder. If the opponents of war, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, would immediately join their voices into a thunderous No!, then the horror that now menaces America might be yet averted. Unfortunately it is only too true that the people in our so-called Democracy are to a large extent a dumb, suffering herd rather than thinking beings who dare to give expression to a frank, earnest opinion.

Yet it is unthinkable that the American people should really want war. During the last thirty months they have had ample opportunity to watch the frightful carnage in the warring countries. They have seen universal murder, like a devastating pestilence, eat into the very heart of the peoples of Europe. They saw cities destroyed, entire countries wiped off the map, hosts of dead, millions of wounded and maimed. The American people could not help witnessing the spread of insane, motiveless hatred among the peoples of Europe. They must realize the extent of the famine, the suffering and anguish gripping the war-stricken countries. They know, too, that while the men were killed off like vermin, the women and children, the old and the decrepit remained behind in helpless and tragic despair. Why then, in the name of all that is reasonable and humane, should the American people desire the same horrors, the same destruction and devastation upon American soil?

We are told that the "freedom of the seas" is at stake and that "American honor" demands that we protect that precious freedom. What a farce! How much freedom of the seas can the masses of toilers or the disinherited and the unemployed ever enjoy? Would it not be well to look into this magic thing: "the freedom of the seas," before we sing patriotic songs and shout hurrah?

The only ones that have benefitted by the "freedom of the seas" are the exploiters, the dealers in munition and food supplies. The "freedom of the seas" has served these unscrupulous American robbers and monopolists as a pretext to pilfer the unfortunate people of both Europe and America. Out of international carnage they have made billions; out of the misery of the people and the agony of women and children

President Wilson and other officials of the administration assure us that they want peace. If that claim held even one grain of truth, the government would have long ago carried out the suggestion of many true lovers of people to put a stop to the export of munitions and food stuffs. Had this shameful trade with the implements of slaughter been stopped at the beginning of the war, the good results for peace would have been manifold.

First, the war in Europe would have been starved out through the stoppage of food exports. Indeed, it is no exaggeration when I say that the war would have been at an end long ago had the American financiers been prevented from investing billions in war loans and had the American munition clique and food speculators not been given the opportunity to supply warring Europe with the means to keep up the slaughter.

Second, an embargo on exports would have automatically taken out American ships from the war and submarine zones and would have thus eliminated the much discussed "reason" for war with Germany.

Third, and most important of all, the brazen, artificial increase in the cost of living, which condemns the toiling masses of America to semistarvation, would be an impossibility were not the great bulk of American products shipped to Europe to feed the fires of war. . . .

Militarism and reaction are now more rampant in Europe than ever before. . . . The same is bound to take place in America should the dogs of war be let loose here. Already the poisonous seed has been planted. All the reactionary riffraff, propagandists of jingoism and preparedness, all the beneficiaries of exploitation represented in the Merchants and Manufacturers' Association, the Chambers of Commerce, the munition cliques, etc., etc., have come to the fore with all sorts of plans and schemes to chain and gag labor; to make it more helpless and dumb than ever before. . . .

Hand in hand with this military preparedness and war mania goes the increased persecution of the workers and their organizations. Labor went wild with enthusiasm and gratitude to the President for his supposed humanity in proclaiming the eight-hour law before election, and now it develops that the law was merely a bait for votes and a shackle for labor. It denies the right to strike and introduces compulsory arbitration. Of course it is common knowledge that strikes have long since been made ineffective by antipicketing injunctions and the prosecution of strikers, but the federal eight-hour law is the worst parody on the right to organize and to strike, and it is going to prove an additional fetter on labor. In connection with this arbitrary measure goes the proposition to give the President full power in case of war to take control of the railroads and their employees, which would mean nothing less than absolute subserviency and industrial militarism for the workers. . . .

It is still time to stem the bloody tide of war by word of mouth and pen and action. The promoters of war realize that we have looked into their cards and that we know their crooked, criminal game. We know they want war to increase their profits. Very well, let them fight their own wars. We, the people of America, will not do it for them. Do you think war would then come or be kept up? Oh, I know it is difficult to arouse the workers, to make them see the truth back of the nationalistic, patriotic lie. Still we must do our share. At least we shall be free from blame should the terrible avalanche overtake us in spite of our efforts.<sup>29</sup>

### JOHN REED (1887-1920)

*A radical poet and war correspondent, John Reed had a passion for covering revolutions. In 1914, as a reporter for Metropolitan Magazine, Reed covered the Mexican Revolution and followed Pancho Villa's army for more than four months, so ingratiating himself with Villa and his soldiers that the Mexican revolutionary leader reportedly appointed Reed a staff officer with the honorary rank of brigadier general. Reed went next to Europe to cover a war he vehemently opposed, where he reported on the conflict from behind Allied and German lines.*

*In 1917 he completed his evolution from radical to revolutionary when he and his wife sailed to Russia to chronicle the Bolshevik Revolution. His friendship with Vladimir I. Lenin and the access that relationship provided resulted in his critically acclaimed account of the revolution, Ten Days that Shook the World. Reed's communist sympathies earned him a sedition charge in the United States and precluded his return home. Instead, he settled in Russia, where he died of typhus at the age of thirty-three, and was buried in the Kremlin wall, the only American ever accorded that honor.*

#### WHOSE WAR?

*In The Masses, April 1917*

I know what war means. I have been with the armies of all the belligerents except one, and I have seen men die, and go mad, and lie in hospitals suffering hell; but there is a worse thing than that. War means an ugly mob-madness, crucifying the truth-tellers, choking the artists, side-tracking reforms, revolutions, and the working of social forces. Already in America those citizens who oppose the entrance of their country into the European melee are called "traitors," and those who protest against the curtrailing of our meagre [sic] rights of free speech are spoken of as "dangerous lunatics." We have had a forecast of the censorship—when the naval authorities in charge of the Sayville wireless cut off American news from Germany, and only the wildest fictions reached Berlin via London, creating a perilous situation. . . . The press is howling for war. The church is howling for war. Lawyers, politicians, stock-brokers, social leaders are all howling for war. . . .

Whose war is this? Not mine. I know that hundreds of thousands of American workmen employed by our great financial "patriots" are not paid a living wage. I have seen poor men sent to jail for long terms without trial, and even without any charge. Peaceful strikers, and their wives and children, have been shot to death, burned to death, by private detectives and militiamen. The rich have steadily become richer, and the cost of living higher, and the workers proportionally poorer. These toilers don't want war—not even civil war. But the speculators, the employers, the plutocracy—they want it, just as they did in Germany and in England; and with lies and sophistries they will whip up our blood until we are savage—and then we'll fight and die for them.

I am one of a vast number of ordinary people who read the daily papers, and occasionally *The New Republic*, and want to be fair. We don't know much about international politics; but we want our country to leap off the necks of little nations

## **Helen Keller, “Strike against War” (January 5, 1916)**

One of the most important – and - earliest-voices against the war was Helen Keller. In our schools we teach about Helen Keller, the deaf and blind girl who became a famous writer, but we do not learn that she was a socialist and an agitator. Here is the text of a speech Keller delivered before America’s entry into World War I in April 1917.



## **Strike Against War**

by Helen Keller

American author and public speaker

Speech at Carnegie Hall, New York City, January 5, 1916, under the auspices of the Women's Peace Party and the Labor Forum.

To begin with, I have a word to say to my good friends, the editors, and others who are moved to pity me. Some people are grieved because they imagine I am in the hands of unscrupulous persons who lead me astray and persuade me to espouse unpopular causes and make me the mouthpiece of their propaganda. Now, let it be understood once and for all that I do not want their pity; I would not change places with one of them. I know what I am talking about. My sources of information are as good and reliable as anybody else's. I have papers and magazines from England, France, Germany and Austria that I can read myself. Not all the editors I have met can do that. Quite a number of them have to take their French and German second hand. No, I will not disparage the editors. They are an overworked, misunderstood class. Let them remember, though, that if I cannot see the fire at the end of their cigarettes, neither can they thread a needle in the dark. All I ask, gentlemen, is a fair field and no favor. I have entered the fight against preparedness and against the economic system under which we live. It is to be a fight to the finish, and I ask no quarter.

The future of the world rests in the hands of America. The future of America rests on the backs of 80,000,000 working men and women and their children. We are facing a grave crisis in our national life. The few who profit from the labor of the masses want to organize the workers into an army which will protect the interests of the capitalists. You are urged to add to the heavy burdens you already bear the burden of a larger army and many additional warships. It is in your power to refuse to carry the artillery and the dread-noughts and to shake off some of the burdens, too, such as limousines, steam yachts and country estates. You do not need to make a great noise about it. With the silence and dignity of creators you can end wars and the system of selfishness and exploitation that causes wars. All you need to do to bring about this stupendous revolution is to straighten up and fold your arms.

We are not preparing to defend our country. Even if we were as helpless as Congressman Gardner says we are, we have no enemies foolhardy enough to attempt to invade the United States. The talk about attack from Germany and Japan is absurd. Germany has its hands full and will be busy with its own affairs for some generations after the European war is over.

With full control of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, the allies failed to land enough men to defeat the Turks at Gallipoli; and then they failed again to land an army at Salonica in time to check the Bulgarian invasion of Serbia. The conquest of America by water is a nightmare confined exclusively to ignorant persons and members of the Navy League.

Yet, everywhere, we hear fear advanced as argument for armament. It reminds me of a fable I read. A certain man found a horseshoe. His neighbor began to weep and wail because, as he justly pointed out, the man who found the horseshoe might someday find a horse. Having found the shoe, he might shoe him. The neighbor's child might some day go so near the horse's heels as to be kicked, and die. Undoubtedly the two families would quarrel and fight, and several valuable lives would be lost through the finding of the horseshoe. You know the last war we had we quite accidentally picked up some islands in the Pacific Ocean which may some day be the cause of a quarrel between ourselves and Japan. I'd rather drop those islands right now and forget about them than go to war to keep them. Wouldn't you?

Congress is not preparing to defend the people of the United States. It is planning to protect the capital of American speculators and investors in Mexico, South America, China, and the Philippine Islands. Incidentally this preparation will benefit the manufacturers of munitions and war machines.

Until recently there were uses in the United States for the money taken from the workers. But American labor is exploited almost to the limit now, and our national resources have all been appropriated. Still the profits keep piling up new capital. Our flourishing industry in implements of murder is filling the vaults of New York's banks with gold. And a dollar that is not being used to make a slave of some human being is not fulfilling its purpose in the capitalistic scheme. That dollar must be invested in South America, Mexico, China, or the Philippines.

It was no accident that the Navy League came into prominence at the same time that the National City Bank of New York established a branch in Buenos Aires. It is not a mere coincidence that six business associates of J.P. Morgan are officials of defense leagues. And chance did not dictate that Mayor Mitchel could appoint to his Committee of Safety a thousand men that represent a fifth of the wealth of the United States. These men want their foreign investments protected.

Every modern war has had its root in exploitation. The Civil War was fought to decide whether to slaveholders of the South or the capitalists of the North should exploit the West. The Spanish-American War decided that the United States should exploit Cuba and the Philippines. The South African War decided that the British should exploit the diamond mines. The Russo-Japanese War decided that Japan should exploit Korea. The present war is to decide who shall exploit the Balkans, Turkey, Persia, Egypt, India, China, and Africa. And we are whetting our sword to scare the victors into sharing the spoils with us. Now, the workers are not interested in the spoils; they will not get any of them anyway.

The preparedness propagandists have still another object, and a very important one. They want to give the people something to think about besides their won unhappy condition. They know the cost of living is high, wages are low, employment is uncertain and will be much more so when the European call for munitions stops. No matter how

hard and incessantly the people work, they often cannot afford the comforts of life; many cannot obtain the necessities.

Every few days we are given a new war scare to lend realism to their propaganda. They have had us on the verge of war over the *Lusitania*, the *Gulflight*, the *Ancona*, and now they want the workingmen to become excited over the sinking of the *Persia*. The workingman has no interest in any of these ships. The Germans might sink every vessel on the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, and kill Americans with every one--the American workingman would still have no reason to go to war.

All the machinery of the system has been set in motion. Above the complaint and din of the protest from the workers is heard the voice of authority.

"Friends," it says, "fellow workmen, patriots; your country is in danger! There are foes on all sides of us. There is nothing between us and our enemies except the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. Look at what has happened to Belgium. Consider the fate of Serbia. Will you murmur about low wages when your country, your very liberties, are in jeopardy? What are the miseries you endure compared to the humiliation of having a victorious German army sail up the East River? Quit your whining, get busy and prepare to defend your firesides and your flag. Get an army, get a navy; be ready to meet the invaders like the loyal-hearted freemen you are."

Will the workers walk into this trap? Will they be fooled again? I am afraid so. The people have always been amenable to oratory of this sort. The workers know they have no enemies except their masters. They know that their citizenship papers are no warrant for the safety of themselves or their wives and children. They know that honest sweat, persistent toil and years of struggle bring them nothing worth holding on to, worth fighting for. Yet, deep down in their foolish hearts they believe they have a country. Oh blind vanity of slaves!

The clever ones, up in the high places know how childish and silly the workers are. They know that if the government dresses them up in khaki and gives them a rifle and starts them off with a brass band and waving banners, they will go forth to fight valiantly for their own enemies. They are taught that brave men die for their country's honor. What a price to pay for an abstraction--the lives of millions of young men; other millions crippled and blinded for life; existence made hideous for still more millions of human being; the achievement and inheritance of generations swept away in a moment--and nobody better off for all the misery! This terrible sacrifice would be comprehensible if the thing you die for and call country fed, clothed, housed and warmed you, educated and cherished your children. I think the workers are the most unselfish of the children of men; they toil and live and die for other people's country, other people's sentiments, other people's liberties and other people's happiness! The workers have no liberties of their own; they are not free when they are compelled to work twelve or ten or eight hours a day. They are not free when they are ill paid for their exhausting toil. They are not free when their children must labor in mines, mills and factories or starve, and when their women may be driven by poverty to lives of shame. They are not free when they

are clubbed and imprisoned because they go on strike for a raise of wages and for the elemental justice that is their right as human beings.

We are not free unless the men who frame and execute the laws represent the interests of the lives of the people and no other interest. The ballot does not make a free man out of a wage slave. There has never existed a truly free and democratic nation in the world. From time immemorial men have followed with blind loyalty the strong men who had the power of money and of armies. Even while battlefields were piled high with their own dead they have tilled the lands of the rulers and have been robbed of the fruits of their labor. They have built palaces and pyramids, temples and cathedrals that held no real shrine of liberty.

As civilization has grown more complex the workers have become more and more enslaved, until today they are little more than parts of the machines they operate. Daily they face the dangers of railroad, bridge, skyscraper, freight train, stokehold, stockyard, lumber raft and min. Panting and training at the docks, on the railroads and underground and on the seas, they move the traffic and pass from land to land the precious commodities that make it possible for us to live. And what is their reward? A scanty wage, often poverty, rents, taxes, tributes and war indemnities.

The kind of preparedness the workers want is reorganization and reconstruction of their whole life, such as has never been attempted by statesmen or governments. The Germans found out years ago that they could not raise good soldiers in the slums so they abolished the slums. They saw to it that all the people had at least a few of the essentials of civilization--decent lodging, clean streets, wholesome if scanty food, proper medical care and proper safeguards for the workers in their occupations. That is only a small part of what should be done, but what wonders that one step toward the right sort of preparedness has wrought for Germany! For eighteen months it has kept itself free from invasion while carrying on an extended war of conquest, and its armies are still pressing on with unabated vigor. It is your business to force these reforms on the Administration. Let there be no more talk about what a government can or cannot do. All these things have been done by all the belligerent nations in the hurly-burly of war. Every fundamental industry has been managed better by the governments than by private corporations.

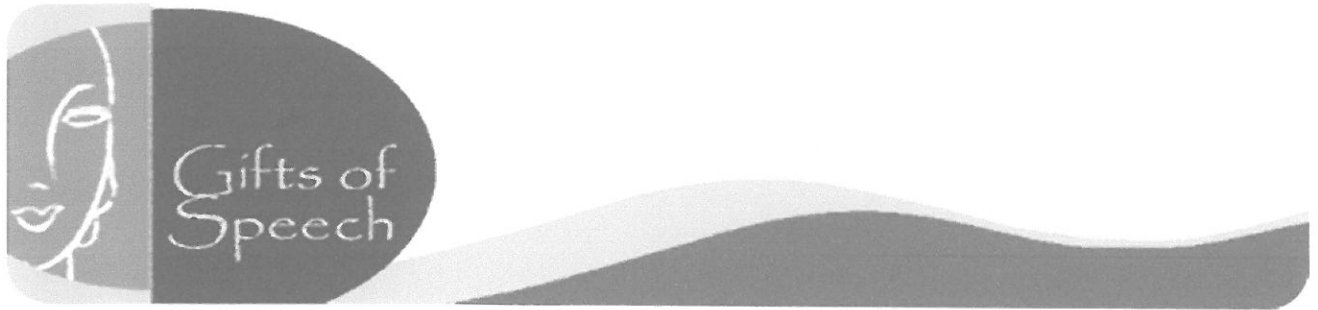
It is your duty to insist upon still more radical measure. It is your business to see that no child is employed in an industrial establishment or mine or store, and that no worker is needlessly exposed to accident or disease. It is your business to make them give you clean cities, free from smoke, dirt and congestion. It is your business to make them pay you a living wage. It is your business to see that this kind of preparedness is carried into every department on the nation, until everyone has a chance to be well born, well nourished, rightly educated, intelligent and serviceable to the country at all times.

Strike against all ordinances and laws and institutions that continue the slaughter of peace and the butcheries of war. Strike against war, for without you no battles can be fought. Strike against manufacturing shrapnel and gas bombs and all other tools of

murder. Strike against preparedness that means death and misery to millions of human being. Be not dumb, obedient slaves in an army of destruction. Be heroes in an army of construction.

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The war of the United States against Germany cannot be justified even on the plea that it is a war in defense of American rights or American "honor." Ruthless as the unrestricted submarine war policy of the German government was and is, it is not an invasion of the rights of the American people, as such, but only an interference with the opportunity of certain groups of American capitalists to coin cold profits out of the blood and sufferings of our fellow men in the warring countries of Europe.

It is not a war against the militarist regime of the Central Powers. Militarism can never be abolished by militarism.

It is not a war to advance the cause of democracy in Europe. Democracy can never be imposed upon any country by a foreign power by force of arms.

It is cant and hypocrisy to say that the war is not directed against the German people, but against the Imperial Government of Germany. If we send an armed force to the battlefields of Europe, its cannons will mow down the masses of the German people and not the Imperial German Government.

Our entrance into the European conflict at this time will serve only to multiply the horrors of the war, to increase the toll of death and destruction and to prolong the fiendish slaughter. It will bring death, suffering and destitution to the people of the United States and particularly to the working class. It will give the powers of reaction in this country the pretext for an attempt to throttle our rights and to crush our democratic institutions, and to fasten upon this country a permanent militarism.

The working class of the United States has no quarrel with the working class of Germany or of any other country. The people of the United States have no quarrel with the people of Germany or any other country. The American people did not want and do not want this war. They have not been consulted about the war and have had no part in declaring war. They have been plunged into this war by the trickery and treachery of the ruling class of the country through its representatives in the National Administration and National Congress, its demagogic agitators, its subsidized press, and other servile instruments of public expression.

We brand the declaration of war by our government as a crime against the people of the United States and against the nations of the world.

In all modern history there has been no war more unjustifiable than the war in which we are about to engage.

No greater dishonor has ever been forced upon a people than that which the capitalist class is forcing upon this nation against its will.

### A PROGRESSIVE OPPOSES THE DECLARATION OF WAR

*Robert La Follette*

MR. LA FOLLETTE. Mr. Chairman, when history records the truth about this awful act we are about to commit here, which means the maiming and dismembering of thousands of our noble boys and the deaths of thousands more, it will record that the Congress of the United States made this declaration of war under a misapprehension of the facts inexcusable in itself and that the people at large acquiesced in it on the theory that the

Congress should have taken by every rule of equity a country to all belligerent nations, despite our commerce and destroyed the

I say the people acquiescence of the facts. We have a degree of impartiality; but our obedience to our ideas at least one of the other belligerent all the civilized nations of many cases, with no protest

We surrendered to Germany. It is true, as far as we know and appropriated to her carriers in European trade

One of the underlying Germany had by her system of transportation line Britain's trade in South Africa prestige as well as attend

Mr. Chairman, this humanity, but a war of conditions within the sound of war, although there are no

The President of the the European war was brought people. For God's sake, we feel that the will of the American war? The people of Germany of the United States. He has later on he will hear the cry are not, sacrificed to make "O Liberty! Liberty! how I

Ours is the greatest had maintained a strict neutrality have upheld the tenets of asked to go into partnership have any weight with her which she held by right who desired to be free Revolutionary period, she and humanely blew them Boer Republic by intrigue on China. Christian England of arms, confiscated the estate as she has in a smaller de

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Congress should have the facts, and would not make a declaration of war not justified by every rule of equity and fair dealing between nations, impartially applied by this country to all belligerents, and that after our following that course one of these contesting nations, despite our impartial action, had wantonly destroyed our legitimate commerce and destroyed the lives of some of our people.

I say the people acquiesce in our actions here to-day on exactly that false assumption of the facts. We have not treated, as a Government, these belligerents with any degree of impartiality; but, on the contrary, have demanded of one of them absolute obedience to our ideas and interpretations of international law, and have allowed at least one of the other belligerents to override at will the established rules and practice of all the civilized nations of the world for a hundred years with but feeble protest, and, in many cases, with no protest at all.

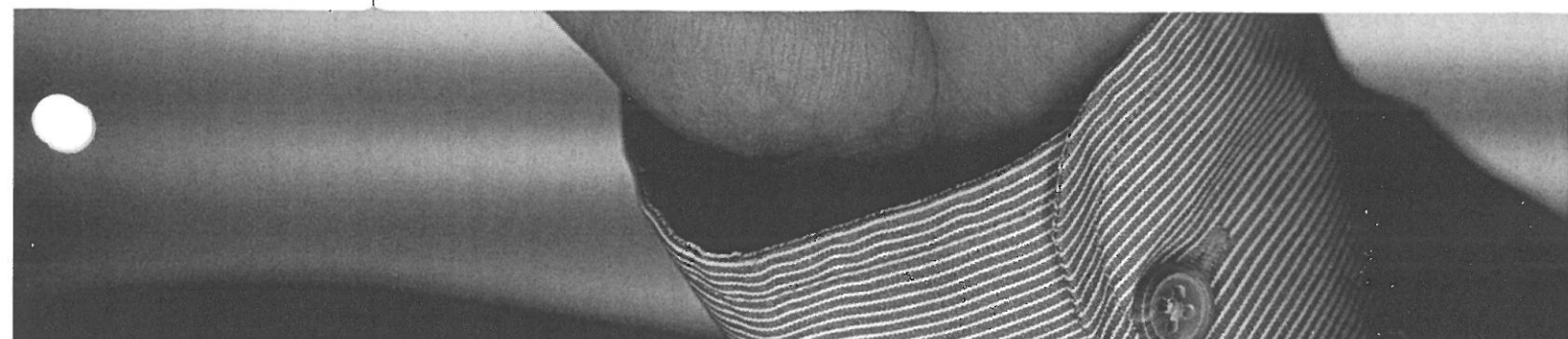
We surrendered to Great Britain practically all we contested for in the War of 1812. It is true, as far as we know, that she has not impressed our seamen, but she has seized and appropriated to her own use entire cargoes and the ships that carried them. Not carriers in European trade, but carriers to South America.

One of the underlying causes of the awful holocaust in Europe was because Germany had by her systematized reductions in cost of manufacturing, by subsidization of transportation lines and methods of credits made such serious inroads on Great Britain's trade in South America as to seriously disturb her equanimity and threaten her prestige as well as attendant profits.

Mr. Chairman, this war now devastating Europe so ruthlessly is not a war of humanity, but a war of commercialism, and there is not a student of economic conditions within the sound of my voice but knows that to be the fundamental cause of that war, although there are many primary and intermediate questions entering into it. . . .

The President of the United States in his message of the 2d of April [1917] said that the European war was brought on by Germany's rulers without the sanction or will of the people. For God's sake, what are we doing now? Does the President of the United States feel that the will of the American people is being consulted in regard to this declaration of war? The people of Germany surely had as much consideration as he has given the people of the United States. He has heard the cry of the Shylocks calling for their pound of flesh; later on he will hear the cry of Rachel weeping for her children and mourning because they are not, sacrificed to make good the pound of flesh in the name of liberty. The exclamation "O Liberty! Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!" was well made.

Ours is the greatest Nation on the face of the globe. We have had a chance, if we had maintained a strict neutrality, to have bound up the wounds of the oppressed and to have upheld the tenets of the highest civilization throughout the world. But, no; we are asked to go into partnership with the country that has never allowed justice and right to have any weight with her when conquest and gold were placed in the balance. In India, which she held by right of conquest, as a punishment to those natives of that country who desired to be free of England's yoke and rebelled, even as did we in our Revolutionary period, she mercifully tied many of the rebels to the mouths of her cannon and humanely blew them to atoms as a sample of English Christianity. She destroyed the Boer Republic by intrigue and force of arms; she forced, for love of gold, the opium trade on China. Christian England, our would-be partner! In the Napoleonic wars she, by force of arms, confiscated the entire shipping of small but neutral nations to her own use, just as she has in a smaller degree appropriated ships of our citizens to her own use within



the past two years. During the Civil War she fell over herself to recognize the Confederacy, and gave it every encouragement possible. Now we are asked to become her faithful ally against a country that, whatever her faults, surely has no blacker record than that of Christian England; to contribute our money and our people in the holy name of liberty to destroy one belligerent, which the President designates as Prussian militarism, a menace of the world; but English navalism, which is surely as great a menace, we enter into partnership with. George Washington said, "Avoid European entanglements," but we are recklessly entering a path to the end of which no man can foresee or comprehend, at the behest of, in many cases, a venal press and of a pacifist President.

God pity our country, gentlemen of the House of Representatives, if you desire that this cup be placed to our country's lips to quaff for crimes committed by a country for unneutral actions and that we enter into an alliance with another country which has been much less neutral. You may do so; I can not so vote at this time. . . .

Mr. Chairman, throughout the country patriotic meetings are being held to encourage enlistments of our young men and boys into the Army to engage in this war in advance of our declaration.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest a resolution, which should be passed and adhered to by the young men of our country and by our soldiers who are asked to enter the trenches of Europe:

"I hereby pledge myself to the service of my country and will guarantee to go and uphold its honor and its flag as soon as the sons of all the newspaper editors who have stood out for our entering the war, and who are of age for enlistment, have enlisted for the cause and the proprietors and editors themselves have patriotically enlisted, on the theory that they should feel it their duty to do so as instigators of the act."

Likewise, Mr. Chairman, the sons of manufacturers of ammunition and war supplies, and all stockholders making profits from such trade. They should freely offer their sons on the altar of their country and, in case of their being under military age, go themselves. Likewise, Mr. Chairman, the J. Pierpont Morgans and their associates, who have floated war loans running into millions which they now want the United States to guarantee by entering the European war; after they and all the holders of such securities have offered their sons and themselves, when of military age, on the altar of their country, and, Mr. Chairman, when the above-mentioned persons have no sons and are too old themselves to accept military service, then they shall, to make good their desire for the upholding of American honor and American rights, donate in lieu of such service of selves or sons one-half of all their worldly goods to make good their patriotic desire for our entering the European war in the name of liberty and patriotism.

Mr. Chairman, it will be fitting for those who have really nothing at stake in this war but death to enter into it and give their lives in the name of liberty and patriotism, after the persons covered by the above resolution have done their part as above suggested and many thousands of our citizens will see it that way ere long.

#### 7.4 MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY (1917, 1925)

*In asking Congress to declare war on Germany in 1917, Woodrow Wilson employed lofty rhetoric and invoked idealism to an unprecedented degree in the making of American foreign policy. Wilson informed Congress that the war was not merely over specific grievances, like the violation*

*of neutral rights and the use of Wilson claimed that the war of all, he believed that American democracy."*

*Wilson's democratic vision at home. Significantly, American ethnic hysteria and intolerance Island's immigration officer, these selections raise themes*

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I have called the Congress serious, choices of policy to nor constitutionally permissible. With a profound sense taking and of the grave respect to what I deem my constitutional course of the imperial German government and people ligious which has thus been put the country in a more terrible employ all its resources to kill end the war.

We have no quarrel with one of sympathy and friendship acted in entering this war. It is a war determined upon as well when peoples were nowhere waged in the interest of dynamited to use their fellow men.

We are accepting this challenge government, following such influence of its organized power, a pose, there can be no assured are now about to accept gauged essary, spend the whole force power. We are glad, now that to fight thus for the ultimate peace German peoples included: for men everywhere to choose the safe for democracy. Its peace is liberty. We have no selfish end

Woodrow Wilson, Address to C



### **“Defense of Free Speech in Wartime” Robert La Follette**

After protesting American entry in World War I, progressive Republican Senator Robert “Fightin’ Bob” La Follette of Wisconsin was attacked in Congress, in the press, and by members of the general public, with some going so far as to accuse him of treason and to call for his prosecution. In this mid-war speech before the Senate, La Follette argued that free speech must be especially protected during wartime.

**Regarding Opposition to America's Participation in World War I  
From a Speech by Senator Robert La Follette (R-Wisc.)**

**United States Senate, October 6, 1917**

Mr. President, I rise to a question of personal privilege.

I have no intention of taking the time of the Senate with a review of the events which led to our entrance into the war except in so far as they bear upon the question of personal privilege to which I am addressing myself.

Six Members of the Senate and 50 Members of the House voted against the declaration of war. Immediately there was let loose upon those Senators and Representatives a flood of invective and abuse from newspapers and individuals who had been clamoring for war, unequalled, I believe, in the history of civilized society. Prior to the declaration of war every man who had ventured to oppose our entrance into it had been condemned as a coward or worse, and even the President had by no means been immune from these attacks.

Since the declaration of war the triumphant war press has pursued those Senators and Representatives who voted against war with malicious falsehood and recklessly libelous attacks, going to the extreme limit of charging them with treason against their country. This campaign of libel and character assassination directed against the Members of Congress who opposed our entrance into the war has been continued down to the present hour ...

In this mass of newspaper clippings which I have here upon my desk, ... I find other Senators, as well as myself, accused of the highest crimes of which any man can be guilty--treason and disloyalty--and, sir, accused not only with no evidence to support the accusation, but without the suggestion that such evidence anywhere exists. It is not claimed that Senators who opposed the declaration of war have since that time acted with any concerted purpose either regarding war measured or any others. They have voted according to their individual opinions, have often been opposed to each other on bills which have come before the Senate since the declaration of war, and, according to my recollection, have never all voted together since that time upon any single proposition upon which the Senate has been divided. ...

If I alone had been made the victim of these attacks, I should not take one moment of the Senate's time for their consideration, and I believe that other Senators who have been unjustly and unfairly assailed, as I have been, hold the same attitude upon this that I do. Neither the clamor of the mob nor the voice of power will ever turn me by the breadth of a hair from the course I mark out for myself, guided by such knowledge as I can obtain and controlled and directed by a solemn conviction of right and duty.

But, sir, it is not alone Members of Congress that the war party in this country has sought to intimidate. The mandate seems to have gone forth to the sovereign people of this country that they must be silent while those things are being done by their



Government which most vitally concern their well-being, their happiness, and their lives. Today and for weeks past honest and law-abiding citizens of this country are being terrorized and outraged in their rights by those sworn to uphold the laws and protect the rights of the people. ... People are being unlawfully arrested, thrown into jail, held incommunicado for days, only to be eventually discharged without ever having been taken into court, because they have committed no crime. Private residences are being invaded, loyal citizens of undoubted integrity and probity arrested, cross-examined, and the most sacred constitutional rights guaranteed to every American citizen are being violated.

It appears to be the purpose of those conducting this campaign to throw the country into a state of terror, to coerce public opinion, to stifle criticism, and suppress discussion of the great issues involved in this war.

I think all men recognize that in time of war the citizen must surrender some rights for the common good which he is entitled to enjoy in time of peace. But sir, the right to control their own Government according to constitutional forms is not one of the rights that the citizens of this country are called upon to surrender in time of war.

More than all, the citizen and his representative in Congress in time of war must maintain his right of free speech. More than in time of war must maintain his right of free speech. More than in times of peace it is necessary that the channels for free public discussion of governmental policies shall be open and unclogged. I believe, Mr. President, that I am now touching upon the most important question in this country today—and that is the right of the citizens of this country and their representatives in Congress to discuss in an orderly way frankly and publicly and without fear, from the platform and through the press, every important phase of this war; its causes, the manner in which it should be conducted, and the terms upon which peace should be made. The belief which is becoming wide spread in this land that this most fundamental right is being denied to the citizens of this country is a fact the tremendous significance of which, those in authority have not yet begun to appreciate. I am contending, Mr. President, for the great fundamental right of the sovereign people of this country to make their voice heard and have that voice heeded upon the great questions arising out of this war, including not only how the war shall be prosecuted but the conditions upon which it may be terminated with a due regard for the rights and the honor of this Nation and the interests of humanity.

It is no answer to say that when the war is over the citizen may once more resume his rights and feel some security in his liberty and his person. As I have already tried to point out, now is precisely the time when the country needs the counsel of all its citizens. In time of war even more than in time of peace, whether citizens happen to agree with the ruling administration or not, these precious fundamental personal rights--free speech, free press, and right of assemblage so explicitly and emphatically guaranteed by the Constitution should be maintained inviolable. There is no rebellion in the land, no martial law, no courts are closed, no legal processes suspended, and there is no threat even of invasion.

**“A Progressive Opposes the Declaration of War” Robert M. La Follette**

**Speech by *Robert M. LaFollette***

to refuse to back up American beasts of prey who invest abroad and get their fingers burned, and to stay out of quarrels not our own. We've got an idea that international law is the crystallized common-sense of nations, distilled from their experiences with each other, and that it holds good for all of them, and can be understood by anybody.

We are simple folk. Prussian militarism seemed to us insufferable; we thought the invasion of Belgium a crime; German atrocities horrified us, and also the idea of German submarines exploding ships full of peaceful people without warning. But then we began to hear about England and France jailing, fining, exiling and even shooting men who refused to go out and kill; the Allied armies invaded and seized a part of neutral Greece, and a French admiral forced upon her an ultimatum as shameful as Austria's to Serbia; Russian atrocities were shown to be more dreadful than German; and hidden mines sown by England in the open sea exploded ships full of peaceful people without warning.

Other things disturbed us. For instance, why was it a violation of international law for the Germans to establish a "war-zone" around the British Isles, and perfectly legal for England to close the North Sea? Why is it we submitted to the British order forbidding the shipment of non-contraband to Germany, and insisted upon our right to ship contraband to the Allies? If our "national honor" was smirched by Germany's refusal to allow war materials to be shipped to the Allies, what happened to our national honor when England refused to let us ship non-contraband food and even *Red Cross hospital supplies to Germany*? Why is England allowed to attempt the avowed starvation of German civilians, in violation of international law, when the Germans cannot attempt the same thing without our horrified protest? How is it that the British can arbitrarily regulate our commerce with neutral nations, while we raise a howl whenever the Germans "threaten to restrict our merchant ships going about their business?" Why does our Government insist that Americans should not be molested while traveling on Allied ships armed against submarines? . . .

Those of us who voted for Woodrow Wilson did so because we felt his mind and his eyes were open, because he had kept us out of the mad-dogfight of Europe, and because the plutocracy opposed him. We had learned enough about the war to lose some of our illusions, and we wanted to be neutral. We grant that the President, considering the position he'd got himself into, couldn't do anything else but answer the German note [the Zimmerman telegram] as he did—but if we had been neutral, that note wouldn't have been sent. The President didn't ask us; he won't ask us if we want war or not. The fault is not ours. It is not our war.

#### ROBERT M. LA FOLLETTE (1855-1925)

*A Republican U.S. senator and former three-term governor of Wisconsin, Robert La Follette opposed the 1917 war declaration against Germany and attributed President Woodrow Wilson's support for war to "the glorious group of millionaires who are making such enormous profits" from the conflict. A fearless and visionary progressive—he proposed much of the reform legislation passed in the early years of Wilson's*

*presidency—La Follette endured vicious attacks for his dissent. Former President Theodore Roosevelt fumed that he was "an unbung traitor, and if the war should come, he ought to be hung."<sup>60</sup> In anger, one Senate colleague said La Follette was "pro-German, pretty nearly pro-Goth, and pro-Vandal." A cartoon in the Los Angeles Times in April 1917—captioned "For services rendered"—pictured the Kaiser awarding La Follette the Iron Cross.<sup>61</sup>*

*At the end of his Senate speech opposing the war, one observer wrote, La Follette "stood in silence, tears running down his face . . . the grief of this despairing man like that of a person who had failed to keep his child from doing itself irreparable harm." Later, after a reporter misquoted him as having said that "we had no grievance against Germany," two of his Senate colleagues filed petitions calling for his expulsion.<sup>62</sup>*

#### SPEECH TO THE U. S. SENATE

April 4, 1917

If we are to enter upon this war in the manner the President demands, let us throw pretense to the winds, let us be honest, let us admit that this is a ruthless war against not only Germany's Army and her Navy but against her civilian population as well, and frankly state that the purpose of Germany's hereditary European enemies has become our purpose.

Again, the President says "we are about to accept the gauge of battle with this natural foe of liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power." That much, at least, is clear; that program is definite. The whole force and power of this nation, if necessary, is to be used to bring victory to the Entente Allies,<sup>63</sup> and to us as their all in this war. Remember, that not yet has the "whole force" of one of the warring nations been used.

Countless millions are suffering from want and privation; countless other millions are dead and rotting on foreign battlefields; countless other millions are crippled and maimed, blinded, and dismembered; upon all and upon their children's children for generations to come has been laid a burden of debt which must be worked out in poverty and suffering, but the "whole force" of no one of the warring nations has yet been expended; but our "whole force" shall be expended, so says the President. We are pledged by the President, so far as he can pledge us, to make this fair, free, and happy land of ours the same shambles and bottomless pit of horror that we see in Europe today.

Just a word of comment more upon one of the points in the President's address. He says that this is a war "for the things which we have always carried nearest to our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government." In many places throughout the address is this exalted sentiment given expression.

It is a sentiment peculiarly calculated to appeal to American hearts and, when accompanied by acts consistent with it, is certain to receive our support; but in this same connection, and strangely enough, the President says that we have become convinced that the German government as it now exists—"Prussian autocracy" he calls it—can never again maintain friendly relations with us. His expression is that "Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend," and repeatedly throughout

the address the suggestion is made that if the German people would overturn their government, it would probably be the way to peace. So true is this that the dispatches from London all hailed the message of the President as sounding the death knell of Germany's government.

But the President proposes alliance with Great Britain, which, however liberty-loving its people, is a hereditary monarchy, with a hereditary ruler, with a hereditary House of Lords, with a hereditary landed system, with a limited and restricted suffrage for one class and a multiplied suffrage power for another, and with grinding industrial conditions for all the wageworkers. The President has not suggested that we make our support of Great Britain conditional to her granting home rule to Ireland, or Egypt, or India. We rejoice in the establishment of a democracy in Russia, but it will hardly be contended that if Russia was still an autocratic government, we would not be asked to enter this alliance with her just the same. . . .

Is it not a remarkable democracy which leagues itself with allies already far over-matching in strength the German nation and holds out to such beleaguered nation the hope of peace only at the price of giving up their Government? I am not talking now of the merits or demerits of any government, but I am speaking of a profession of democracy that is linked in action with the most brutal and domineering use of autocratic power. Are the people of this country being so well represented in this war movement that we need to go abroad to give other people control of their governments? Will the President and the supporters of this war bill submit it to a vote of the people before the declaration of war goes into effect? Until we are willing to do that, it ill becomes us to offer as an excuse for our entry into the war the unsupported claim that this war was forced upon the German people by their Government without their knowledge or approval."

Who has registered the knowledge or approval of the American people on the course this Congress is called upon in declaring war upon Germany? Submit the question to the people, you who support it. You who support it dare not do it, for you know that by a vote of more than ten to one the American people as a body would register their declaration against it.

In the sense that this war is being forced upon our people without their knowing why and without their approval, and that wars are usually forced upon all peoples in the same way, there is some truth in the statement; but I venture to say that the response which the German people have made to the demands of this war shows that it has a degree of popular support which the war upon which we are entering has not and never will have among our people. The espionage bills, the conscription bills, and other forcible military measures which we understand are being ground out of the war machine in this country is the complete proof that those responsible for this war fear that it has no popular support and that armies sufficient to satisfy the demand of the Entente Allies can not be recruited by voluntary enlistments.<sup>64</sup>

### EUGENE V. DEBS (1855-1926)

*A long-time union organizer and former president of the American Railway Union, Eugene Debs was one of the principal founders of the IWW and ran for president five times as the candidate of the Socialist Party of America. A charismatic leader and powerful speaker, Debs converted to socialism while serving a six-month prison term in 1895 for his role in a railway strike. "The issue is Socialism versus Capitalism," Debs said in 1897. "I am for Socialism because I am for humanity. We have been cursed with the reign of gold long enough. Money constitutes no proper basis of civilization." Debs went to prison again in 1919, at age sixty-four, for speaking out against the war in the following speech in Canton, Ohio. President Warren G. Harding ordered Debs and twenty-three other political prisoners released in December 1921.<sup>65</sup>*

THE CANTON, OHIO, ANTIWAR SPEECH

June 16, 1918

I have just returned from a visit over yonder, where three of our most loyal comrades are paying the penalty for their devotion to the cause of the working class. They have come to realize, as many of us have, that it is extremely dangerous to exercise the constitutional right of free speech in a country fighting to make democracy safe in the world.

I realize that, in speaking to you this afternoon, there are certain limitations placed upon the right of free speech. I must be exceedingly careful, prudent, as to what I say, and even more careful and prudent as to how I say it. I may not be able to say all I think; but I am not going to say anything that I do not think. I would rather a thousand times be a free soul in jail than to be a sycophant and coward in the streets. They may put those boys in jail—and some of the rest of us in jail—but they can not put the Socialist movement in jail. Those prison bars separate their bodies from ours, but their souls are here this afternoon. They are simply paying the penalty that all men have paid in all the ages of history for standing erect, and for seeking to pave the way to better conditions for mankind. . . .

They tell us that we live in a great free republic; that our institutions are democratic; that we are a free and self-governing people. This is too much, even for a joke. But it is not a subject for levity; it is an exceedingly serious matter.

To whom do the Wall Street Junkers in our country marry their daughters? After they have wrung their countless millions from your sweat, your agony and your life's blood, in a time of war as in a time of peace, they invest these untold millions in the purchase of titles of broken-down aristocrats, such as princes, dukes, counts and other parasites and no-accounts. Would they be satisfied to wed their daughters to honest workmen? To real democrats? Oh, no! They scour the markets of Europe for vampires who are titled and nothing else. And they swap their millions for the titles, so that matrimony with them becomes literally a matter of money.

These are the gentry who are today wrapped up in the American flag, who shout their claim from the house-tops that they are the only patriots, and who have their magnifying glasses in hand, scanning the country for evidence of disloyalty, eager to apply the brand of treason to the men who dare to even whisper their opposition to

***Masses Publishing Co. v. Patten, United States District Court, 1917***

[Speech is protected by the First Amendment if the speaker] stops short of urging upon others that it is their duty or their interest to resist the law...[D]irect incitement to violent resistance is to disregard the tolerance of all methods of political agitation which in normal times is a safeguard of free government.



**“Senator Norris Opposes U.S. Entry into the War”**

***Congressional Record*, 65<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess., Vol. LV, pt. I, pp. 212-213**

The Progressive Republican from Nebraska, Senator George William Norris (1861-1944) was among the handful of eminent politicians of the day to oppose American entry into the Great War. In the following document, his speech to the Senate, he made his reasons clear.

## **I. Speech by *George W. Norris***

While I am most emphatically and sincerely opposed to taking any step that will force our country into the useless and senseless war now being waged in Europe, yet, if this resolution passes, I shall not permit my feeling of opposition to its passage to interfere in any way with my duty either as a senator or as a citizen in bringing success and victory to American arms. I am bitterly opposed to my country entering the war, but if, notwithstanding my opposition, we do enter it, all of my energy and all of my power will be behind our flag in carrying it on to victory.

The resolution now before the Senate is a declaration of war. Before taking this momentous step, and while standing on the brink of this terrible vortex, we ought to pause and calmly and judiciously consider the terrible consequences of the step we are about to take. We ought to consider likewise the route we have recently traveled and ascertain whether we have reached our present position in a way that is compatible with the neutral position which we claimed to occupy at the beginning and through the various stages of this unholy and unrighteous war.

No close student of recent history will deny that both Great Britain and Germany have, on numerous occasions since the beginning of the war, flagrantly violated in the most serious manner the rights of neutral vessels and neutral nations under existing international law, as recognized up to the beginning of this war by the civilized world.

The reason given by the President in asking Congress to declare war against Germany is that the German government has declared certain war zones, within which, by the use of submarines, she sinks, without notice, American ships and destroys American lives. . . . The first war zone was declared by Great Britain. She gave us and the world notice of it on, the 4th day of November, 1914. The zone became effective Nov. 5, 1914. . . . This zone so declared by Great Britain covered the whole of the North Sea. . . . The first German war zone was declared on the 4th day of February, 1915, just three months after the British war zone was declared. Germany gave fifteen days' notice of the establishment of her zone, which became effective on the 18th day of February, 1915. The German war zone covered the English Channel and the high seawaters around the British Isles. . . .

It is unnecessary to cite authority to show that both of these orders declaring military zones were illegal and contrary to international law. It is sufficient to say that our government has officially declared both of them to be illegal and has officially protested against both of them. The only difference is that in the case of Germany we have persisted in our protest, while in the case of England we have submitted.

What was our duty as a government and what were our rights when we were confronted with these extraordinary orders declaring these military zones? First, we could have defied both of them and could have gone to war against both of these nations for this violation of international law and interference with our neutral rights. Second, we had the technical right to defy one and to acquiesce in the other. Third, we could, while denouncing them both as illegal, have acquiesced in them both and thus remained neutral with both sides, although not agreeing with either as to the righteousness of their respective orders. We could have said to American ship-owners that, while these orders are both contrary to international law and are both unjust, we do not believe that the provocation is sufficient to cause us to go to war for the defense of our rights as a neutral nation, and, therefore, American ships and American citizens will go into these zones at their own peril and risk.

Fourth, we might have declared an embargo against the shipping from American ports of any merchandise to either one of these governments that persisted in maintaining its military zone. We might have refused to permit the sailing of any ship from any American port to either of these military zones. In my judgment, if we had pursued this course, the zones would have been of short duration. England would have been compelled to take her mines out of the North Sea in order to get any supplies from our country. When her mines were taken out of the North Sea then the German ports upon the North Sea would have been accessible to American shipping and Germany would have been compelled to cease her submarine warfare in order to get any supplies from our nation into German North Sea ports.

There are a great many American citizens who feel that we owe it as a duty to humanity to take part in this war. Many instances of cruelty and inhumanity can be found on both sides. Men are often biased in their judgment on account of their sympathy and their interests. To my mind, what we ought to have maintained from the beginning was the strictest neutrality. If we had done this, I do not believe we would have been on the verge of war at the present time. We had a right as a nation, if we desired, to cease at any time to be neutral. We had a technical right to respect the English war zone and to disregard the German war zone, but we could not do that and be neutral.

I have no quarrel to find with the man who does not desire our country to remain neutral. While many such people are moved by selfish motives and hopes of gain, I have no doubt but that in a great many instances, through what I believe to be a misunderstanding of the real condition, there are many honest, patriotic citizens who think we ought to engage in this war and who are behind the President in his demand that we should declare war against Germany. I think such people err in judgment and to a great extent have been misled as to the real history and the true facts by the

almost unanimous demand of the great combination of wealth that has a direct financial interest in our participation in the war.

We have loaned many hundreds of millions of dollars to the Allies in this controversy. While such action was legal and countenanced by international law, there is no doubt in my mind but the enormous amount of money loaned to the Allies in this country has been instrumental in bringing about a public sentiment in favor of our country taking a course that would make every bond worth a hundred cents on the dollar and making the payment of every debt certain and sure. Through this instrumentality and also through the instrumentality of others who have not only made millions out of the war in the manufacture of munitions, etc., and who would expect to make millions more if our country can be drawn into the catastrophe, a large number of the great newspapers and news agencies of the country have been controlled and enlisted in the greatest propaganda that the world has ever known to manufacture sentiment in favor of war.

It is now demanded that the American citizens shall be used as insurance policies to guarantee the safe delivery of munitions of war to belligerent nations. The enormous profits of munition manufacturers, stockbrokers, and bond dealers must be still further increased by our entrance into the war. This has brought us to the present moment, when Congress, urged by the President and backed by the artificial sentiment, is about to declare war and engulf our country in the greatest holocaust that the world has ever known.

In showing the position of the bondholder and the stockbroker, I desire to read an extract from a letter written by a member of the New York Stock Exchange to his customers. This writer says:

*Regarding the war as inevitable, Wall Street believes that it would be preferable to this uncertainty about the actual date of its commencement. Canada and Japan are at war and are more prosperous than ever before. The popular view is that stocks would have a quick, clear, sharp reaction immediately upon outbreak of hostilities, and that then they would enjoy an old-fashioned bull market such as followed the outbreak of war with Spain in 1898. The advent of peace would force a readjustment of commodity prices and would probably mean a postponement of new enterprises. As peace negotiations would be long drawn out, the period of waiting and uncertainty for business would be long. If the United States does not go to war, it is nevertheless good opinion that the preparedness program will compensate in good measure for the loss of the stimulus of actual war.*

Here we have the Wall Street view. Here we have the man representing the class of people who will be made prosperous should we become entangled in the present war,

who have already made millions of dollars, and who will make many hundreds of millions more if we get into the war. Here we have the cold-blooded proposition that war brings prosperity to that class of people who are within the viewpoint of this writer.

He expresses the view, undoubtedly, of Wall Street, and of thousands of men elsewhere who see only dollars coming to them through the handling of stocks and bonds that will be necessary in case of war. "Canada and Japan," he says, "are at war, and are more prosperous than ever before."

To whom does war bring prosperity? Not to the soldier who for the munificent compensation of \$16 per month shoulders his musket and goes into the trench, there to shed his blood and to die if necessary; not to the brokenhearted widow who waits for the return of the mangled body of her husband; not to the mother who weeps at the death of her brave boy; not to the little children who shiver with cold; not to the babe who suffers from hunger; nor to the millions of mothers and daughters who carry broken hearts to their graves. War brings no prosperity to the great mass of common and patriotic citizens. It increases the cost of living of those who toil and those who already must strain every effort to keep soul and body together. War brings prosperity to the stock gambler on Wall Street--to those who are already in possession of more wealth than can be realized or enjoyed.

Again this writer says that if we cannot get war, "it is nevertheless good opinion that the preparedness program will compensate in good measure for the loss of the stimulus of actual war." That is, if we cannot get war, let us go as far in that direction as possible. If we cannot get war, let us cry for additional ships, additional guns, additional munitions, and everything else that will have a tendency to bring us as near as possible to the verge of war. And if war comes, do such men as these shoulder the musket and go into the trenches?

Their object in having war and in preparing for war is to make money. Human suffering and the sacrifice of human life are necessary, but Wall Street considers only the dollars and the cents. The men who do the fighting, the people who make the sacrifices are the ones who will not be counted in the measure of this great prosperity that he depicts. The stockbrokers would not, of course, go to war because the very object they have in bringing on the war is profit, and therefore they must remain in their Wall Street offices in order to share in that great prosperity which they say war will bring. The volunteer officer, even the drafting officer, will not find them. They will be concealed in their palatial offices on Wall Street, sitting behind mahogany desks, covered up with clipped coupons--coupons soiled with the sweat of honest toil, coupons stained with mothers' tears, coupons dyed in the lifeblood of their fellowmen.



We are taking a step today that is fraught with untold danger. We are going into war upon the command of gold. We are going to run the risk of sacrificing millions of our countrymen's lives in order that other countrymen may coin their lifeblood into money. And even if we do not cross the Atlantic and go into the trenches, we are going to pile up a debt that the tolling masses that shall come many generations after us will have to pay. Unborn millions will bend their backs in toil in order to pay for the terrible step we are now about to take.

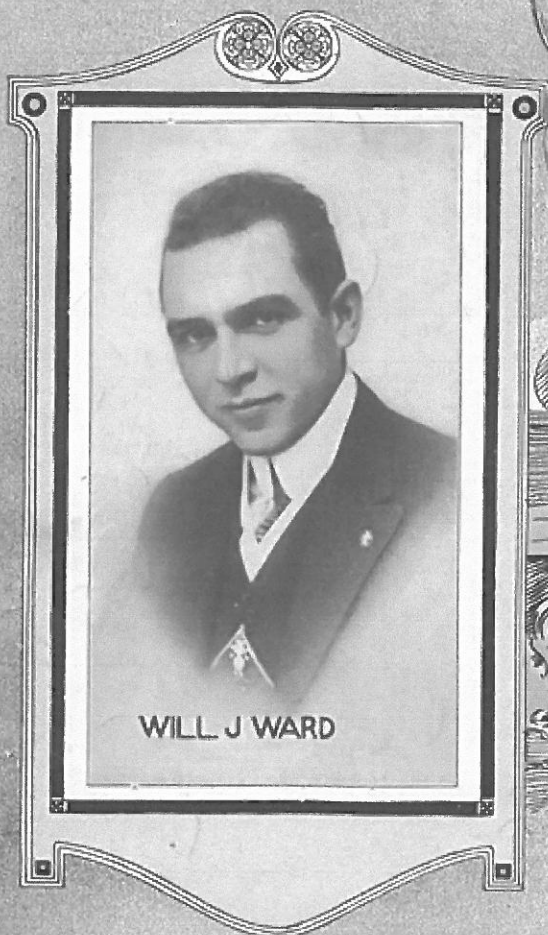
We are about to do the bidding of wealth's terrible mandate. By our act we will make millions of our countrymen suffer, and the consequences of it may well be that millions of our brethren must shed their lifeblood, millions of brokenhearted women must weep, millions of children must suffer with cold, and millions of babes must die from hunger, and all because we want to preserve the commercial right of American citizens to deliver munitions of war to belligerent nations.

### **Lyrics to the Song “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier” (1915)**

Written by lyricist Alfred Bryan and composer Al Piantadosi shortly after the outbreak of World War I in 1914, “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier” reflected and gave strength to rising pacifism in the United States. Resonating in the context of the anti-war and suffrage movements, the song’s lyrics call for a stronger women’s voice in the world in order to, presumably; prevent future wars. An enormously popular hit, the song galvanized the anti-war movement but also provoked great criticism from warlike voices like that of former president Theodore Roosevelt.

A MOTHER'S PLEA FOR PEACE

# I DIDN'T RAISE MY BOY TO BE A SOLDIER



WILL J WARD



LYRICS BY  
ALFRED BRYAN

MUSIC BY  
AL. PIANTADOSI



LEO FEIST NEW YORK

5

**Lyrics per original sheet music**

**Verse 1**

*Ten million soldiers to the war have gone,  
Who may never return again.  
Ten million mother's hearts must break  
For the ones who died in vain.  
Head bowed down in sorrow  
In her lonely years,  
I heard a mother murmur thru' her tears:*

**Chorus**

*I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier,  
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.  
Who dares to place a musket on his shoulder,  
To shoot some other mother's darling boy?  
Let nations arbitrate their future troubles,  
It's time to lay the sword and gun away.  
There'd be no war today,  
If mothers all would say,  
"I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier."*

**Verse 2**

*What victory can cheer a mother's heart,  
When she looks at her blighted home?  
What victory can bring her back  
All she cared to call her own?  
Let each mother answer  
In the years to be,  
Remember that my boy belongs to me!*

**Repeat Chorus 2x**

so they abolished the slums. They saw to it that all the people had at least a few of the essentials of civilization—decent lodging, clean streets, wholesome if scanty food, proper medical care and proper safeguards for the workers in their occupations. That is only a small part of what should be done, but what wonders that one step toward the right sort of preparedness has wrought for Germany! For eighteen months it has kept itself free from invasion while carrying on an extended war of conquest, and its armies are still pressing on with unabated vigor. It is your business to force these reforms on the Administration. Let there be no more talk about what a government can or cannot do. All these things have been done by all the belligerent nations in the hurly-burly of war. Every fundamental industry has been managed better by the governments than by private corporations.

It is your duty to insist upon still more radical measure. It is your business to see that no child is employed in an industrial establishment or mine or store, and that no worker in needlessly exposed to accident or disease. It is your business to make them give you clean cities, free from smoke, dirt and congestion. It is your business to make them pay you a living wage. It is your business to see that this kind of preparedness is carried into every department in the nation, until everyone has a chance to be well born, well nourished, rightly educated, intelligent and serviceable to the country at all times.

Strike against all ordinances and laws and institutions that continue the slaughter of peace and the butcheries of war. Strike against war, for without you no battles can be fought. Strike against manufacturing shrapnel and gas bombs and all other tools of murder. Strike against preparedness that means death and misery to millions of human beings. Be not dumb, obedient slaves in an army of destruction. Be heroes in an army of construction.

• • •

The radical journalist John Reed of Portland, Oregon, is best remembered for his detailed reportage of the Russian revolution in October 1917, *Ten Days That Shook the World*. But before then, in spring 1917, he wrote a series of articles describing World War I as an imperialist venture: "War means an ugly mob-madness, crucifying the truth-tellers, choking the artists, side-tracking reforms, revolutions, and the working of social forces."

### John Reed, "Whose War?" (April 1917)<sup>2</sup>

By the time this goes to press the United States may be at war. The day the German note arrived, Wall Street flung the American flag to the breeze, the bro-

kers on the floor of the Stock Exchange sang "The Star Spangled Banner" with tears rolling down their cheeks, and the stock market went up. In the theaters they are singing "patriotic" ballads of the George M. Cohan-Irving Berlin variety, playing the national anthem, and flashing the flag and the portrait of long-suffering Lincoln—while the tired suburbanite who has just been scalped by a ticket-speculator goes into hysterics. Exclusive ladies whose husbands own banks are rolling bandages for the wounded, just like they do in Europe; a million-dollar fund for ice in field-hospitals has been started; and the Boston Budget for Conveying Virgins Inland has grown enormously. The directors of the British, French and Belgian Permanent Blind Relief Fund have added "American" to the name of the organization, in gruesome anticipation. Our soldier boys, guarding the aqueducts and bridges, are shooting each other by mistake for Teutonic spies. There is talk of "conscription," "war-brides," and "On to Berlin." . . .

I know what war means. I have been with the armies of all the belligerents except one, and I have seen men die, and go mad, and lie in hospitals suffering hell; but there is a worse thing than that. War means an ugly mob-madness, crucifying the truth-tellers, choking the artists, side-tracking reforms, revolutions, and the working of social forces. Already in America those citizens who oppose the entrance of their country into the European melee are called "traitors," and those who protest against the curtailing of our meager rights of free speech are spoken of as "dangerous lunatics." We have had a forecast of the censorship—when the naval authorities in charge of the Sayville wireless cut off American news from Germany, and only the wildest fictions reached Berlin via London, creating a perilous situation. . . . The press is howling for war. The church is howling for war. Lawyers, politicians, stock-brokers, social leaders are all howling for war. Roosevelt is again recruiting his thrice-thwarted family regiment.

But whether it comes to actual hostilities or not, some damage has been done. The militarists have proved their point. I know of at least two valuable social movements that have suspended functioning because no one cares. For many years this country is going to be a worse place for free men to live in; less tolerant, less hospitable. Maybe it is too late, but I want to put down what I think about it all.

Whose war is this? Not mine. I know that hundreds of thousands of American workmen employed by our great financial "patriots" are not paid a living wage. I have seen poor men sent to jail for long terms without trial, and even without any charge. Peaceful strikers, and their wives and children, have been shot to death, burned to death, by private detectives and militiamen. The rich have steadily become richer, and the cost of living higher, and the workers proportionally poorer. These toilers don't want war—not even civil war. But the speculators, the employers, the plutocracy—they want it, just as they did in Germany and in



England; and with lies and sophistries they will whip up our blood until we are savage—and then we'll fight and die for them.

I am one of a vast number of ordinary people who read the daily papers, and occasionally *The New Republic*, and want to be fair. We don't know much about international politics; but we want our country to keep off the necks of little nations, to refuse to back up American beasts of prey who invest abroad and get their fingers burned, and to stay out of quarrels not our own. We've got an idea that international law is the crystallized common-sense of nations, distilled from their experiences with each other, and that it holds good for all of them, and can be understood by anybody.

We are simple folk. Prussian militarism seemed to us insufferable; we thought the invasion of Belgium a crime; German atrocities horrified us, and also the idea of German submarines exploding ships full of peaceful people without warning. But then we began to hear about England and France jailing, fining, exiling and even shooting men who refused to go out and kill; the Allied armies invaded and seized a part of neutral Greece, and a French admiral forced upon her an ultimatum as shameful as Austria's to Serbia; Russian atrocities were shown to be more dreadful than German; and hidden mines sown by England in the open sea exploded ships full of peaceful people without warning.

Other things disturbed us. For instance, why was it a violation of international law for the Germans to establish a "war-zone" around the British Isles, and perfectly legal for England to close the North Sea? Why is it we submitted to the British order forbidding the shipment of non-contraband to Germany, and insisted upon our right to ship contraband to the Allies? If our "national honor" was smirched by Germany's refusal to allow war materials to be shipped to the Allies, what happened to our national honor when England refused to let us ship non-contraband food and even *Red Cross hospital supplies* to Germany? Why is England allowed to attempt the avowed starvation of German civilians, in violation of international law, when the Germans cannot attempt the same thing without our horrified protest? How is it that the British can arbitrarily regulate our commerce with neutral nations, while we raise a howl whenever the Germans "threaten to restrict our merchant ships going about their business?" Why does our Government insist that Americans should not be molested while traveling on Allied ships armed against submarines?

We have shipped and are shipping vast quantities of war materials to the Allies, we have floated the Allied loans. We have been strictly neutral toward the Teutonic powers only. Hence the inevitable desperation of the last German note. Hence this war we are on the brink of.

Those of us who voted for Woodrow Wilson did so because we felt his mind and his eyes were open, because he had kept us out of the mad-dogfight of Europe,

and because the plutocracy opposed him. We had learned enough about the war to lose some of our illusions, and we wanted to be neutral. We grant that the President, considering the position he'd got himself into, couldn't do anything else but answer the German note as he did—but if we had been neutral, that note wouldn't have been sent. The President didn't ask us; he won't ask us if we want war or not. The fault is not ours. It is not our war.

• • •

From its founding in 1905, the IWW had organized workers around the country—in the mines and lumber camps, the textile mills, and ironworks—uniting them by their workplace, including the skilled, unskilled, black, white, native-born, and foreign-born, into "One Big Union." It was militant, fearless, and determinedly class-conscious, and although it had only 100,000 members at its peak, its influence went far beyond that. Its opposition to World War I gave the government an opportunity to put its leaders in prison. Here is one of its members addressing the court, pointing to the class character of the war the IWW was opposing.

### "Why the IWW Is Not Patriotic to the United States" (1918)<sup>3</sup>

You ask me why the IWW is not patriotic to the United States. If you were a bum without a blanket; if you had left your wife and kids when you went west for a job, and had never located them since; if your job had never kept you long enough in a place to qualify you to vote; if you slept in a lousy, sour bunkhouse, and ate food just as rotten as they could give you and get by with it; if deputy sheriffs shot your cooking cans full of holes and spilled your grub on the ground; if your wages were lowered on you when the bosses thought they had you down; if there was one law for [Herman] Ford, [Blackie] Suhr and [Tom] Mooney, and another for Harry Thaw; if every person who represented law and order and the nation beat you up, railroaded you to jail, and the good Christian people cheered and told them to go to it, how in hell do you expect a man to be patriotic? This war is a business man's war and we don't see why we should go out and get shot in order to save the lovely state of affairs which we now enjoy.

• • •

In 1917, after declaring war, President Woodrow Wilson imposed a draft to build up U.S. fighting forces. To openly advocate draft resistance was to risk immedi-

## DOCUMENT F

Schenck's Circular, 1917

# LONG LIVE THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

## Wake Up, America! Your Liberties Are in Danger!

The 13th Amendment, Section 1, of the Constitution of the United States says: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

The Constitution of the United States is one of the greatest bulwarks of political liberty. It was born after a long, stubborn battle between king-rule and democracy. (We see little or no difference between arbitrary power under the name of a king and under a few misnamed "representatives.") In this battle the people of the United States established the principle that freedom of the individual and personal liberty are the most sacred things in life. Without them we become slaves.

For this principle the fathers fought and died. The establishment of this principle they sealed with their own blood. Do you want to see this principle abolished? Do you want to see despotism substituted in its stead? Shall we prove degenerate sons of illustrious sires?

The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, quoted above, embodies this sacred idea. The Socialist Party says that this idea is violated by the Conscription Act. When you conscript a man and compel him to go abroad to fight against his will, you violate the most sacred right of personal liberty, and substitute for it what Daniel Webster called "despotism in its worst form."

A conscript is little better than a convict. He is deprived of his liberty and of his right to think and act as a free man. A conscripted citizen is forced to surrender his right as a citizen and become a subject. He is forced into involuntary servitude. He is deprived of the protection given him by the Constitution of the United States. He is deprived of all freedom of conscience in being forced to kill against his will.

Are you one who is opposed to war, and were you misled by the venal capitalist newspapers, or intimidated or deceived by gang politicians and registrars into believing that you would not be allowed to register your objection to conscription? Do you know that many citizens of Philadelphia insisted on their right to answer the famous question twelve, and went on record with their honest opinion of opposition to war, notwithstanding the deceitful efforts of our rulers and the newspaper press to prevent them from doing so? Shall it be said that the citizens of Philadelphia, the cradle of American liberty, are so lost to a sense of right and justice that they will let such monstrous wrongs against humanity go unchallenged?

In a democratic country each man must have the right to say whether he is willing to join the army. Only in countries where uncontrolled power rules can a despot force his subjects to fight. Such a man or men have no place in a democratic republic. This is tyrannical power in its worst form. It gives control over the life and death of the individual to a few men. There is no man good enough to be given such power.

Conscription laws belong to a bygone age. Even the people of Germany, long suffering under the yoke of militarism, are beginning to demand the abolition of conscription. Do you think it has a place in the United States? Do you want to see unlimited power handed over to Wall Street's chosen few in America? If you do not, join the Socialist Party in its campaign for the repeal of the Conscription Act. Write to your congressman and tell him you want the law repealed. Do not submit to intimidation. You have a right to demand the repeal of any law. Exercise your rights of free speech, peaceful assemblage and petitioning the government for a redress of grievances. Come to the headquarters of the Socialist Party, 1326 Arch street, and sign a petition to congress for the repeal of the Conscription Act. Help us wipe out this stain upon the Constitution!

Help us re-establish democracy in America.

Remember, "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

Down with autocracy!

Long live the Constitution of the United States! Long live the Republic!

Books on Socialism for Sale at

**SOCIALIST PARTY BOOK STORE AND HEADQUARTERS**

- ▶ Underline sections which may be in violation of the Espionage Act of 1917.
- ▶ How did Schenck describe the conscription process?

## ASSERT YOUR RIGHTS, 1917

Charles Schenck

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*Charles Schenck, a member of the Socialist Party, was convicted and sentenced under the 1917 Espionage Act for distributing fifteen thousand copies of the following flyer, calling for resistance to military conscription. The Espionage Act made it a crime to undermine the military effort of the United States. Arguing that he was merely exercising his First Amendment right to free speech, which the Espionage Act violated, Schenck took his case to the Supreme Court. The Court, however, ruled in favor of the act, declaring that free speech could be limited during wartime.*

The Socialist Party says that any individual or officers of the law intrusted with the administration of conscription regulations violate the provisions of the United States Constitution, the supreme law of the land, when they refuse to recognize your right to assert your opposition to the draft.

In exempting clergymen and members of the Society of Friends (popularly called Quakers) from active military service the examination boards have discriminated against you.

*If you do not assert and support your rights you are helping to "deny or disparage rights" which it is the solemn duty of all citizens and residents of the United States to retain.*

In lending tacit or silent consent to the conscription law, in neglecting to assert your rights,

you are (whether knowingly or not) helping to condone and support a most infamous and insidious conspiracy to abridge and destroy the sacred and cherished rights of a free people. You are a citizen: not a subject! You delegate your power to the officers of the law to be used for your good and welfare, not against you.

They are your servants; not your masters. Their wages come from the expenses of government which you pay. Will you allow them to unjustly rule you?

No power was delegated to send our citizens away to foreign shores to shoot up the people of other lands, no matter what may be their internal or international disputes.

To draw this country into the horrors of the present war in Europe, to force the youth of our land into the shambles and bloody trenches of war crazy nations, would be a crime the magnitude of which defies description. Words could not express the condemnation such cold-blooded ruthlessness deserves.

Will you stand idly by and see the Moloch of Militarism reach forth across the sea and fasten its tentacles upon this continent? Are you willing to submit to the degradation of having the Constitution of the United States treated as a "mere scrap of paper"?

No specious or plausible pleas about a "war

for democracy” can becloud the issue. Democracy can not be shot into a nation. It must come spontaneously and purely from within.

Democracy must come through liberal education. Upholders of military ideas are unfit teachers.

To advocate the persecution of other peoples through the prosecution of war is an insult to every good and wholesome American tradition.

You are responsible. You must do your share to maintain, support, and uphold the rights of the people of this country.

In this world crisis where do you stand? Are you with the forces of liberty and light or war and darkness?

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*Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47 (1919).



***Schenck v. United States, 249 U.S. 47 (1919).***

During World War I, Charles T. Schenck, a member of the Socialist Party, was sentenced to fifteen years in prison under the Espionage Act of 1917, a federal law that made it an offense “to bring the form of government ... or the Constitution ... or the military or naval forces ... or the flag ... of the United States into ... dispute.” Schenck had distributed anti-conscription flyers through the mail. In his opinion for the Supreme Court’s majority, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. upheld his conviction, arguing that free speech rights were limited in times of war.



speech, or of the press, and bringing the case here on that ground have argued some other points also of which we must dispose.

It is argued that the evidence, if admissible, was not sufficient to prove that the defendant Schenck was concerned in sending the documents. According to the testimony, Schenck said he was general secretary of the Socialist party, and had charge of the Socialist headquarters from which the documents were sent. He identified a book found there as the minutes of the Executive Committee of the party. The book showed a resolution of August 13, 1917, that 15,000 leaflets should be printed on the other side of one of them in use, to be mailed to men who had passed exemption boards, and for distribution. Schenck personally attended to the printing. On [50] August 20, the general secretary's report said "Obtained new leaflets from printer and started work addressing envelopes" &c., and there was a resolve that Comrade Schenck be allowed \$125 for sending leaflets through the mail. He said that he had about fifteen or sixteen thousand printed. There were files of the circular in question in the inner office which he said were printed on the other side of the one sided circular, and were there for distribution. Other copies were proved to have been sent through the mails to drafted men. Without going into confirmatory details that were proved, no reasonable man could doubt that the defendant Schenck was largely instrumental in sending the circulars about. As to the defendant Baer, there was evidence that she was a member of the Executive Board, and that the minutes of its transactions were hers. The argument as to the sufficiency of the evidence that the defendants conspired to send the documents only impairs the seriousness of the real defense.

It is objected that the documentary evidence was not admissible because obtained upon a search warrant, valid so far as appears. The contrary is established. *Adams v. New York*, 192 U.S. 585; *Weeks v. United States*, 232 U.S. 383, 395, 396. The search warrant did not issue against the defendant, but against the Socialist headquarters at 1326 Arch Street, and it would seem that the documents technically were not even in the defendants' possession. See *Johnson v. United States*, 228 U.S. 457. Notwithstanding some protest in argument, the notion that evidence even directly proceeding from the defendant in a criminal proceeding is excluded in all cases by the Fifth Amendment is plainly unsound. *Holt v. United States*, 218 U.S. 245, 252, 253.

The document in question, upon its first printed side, recited the first section of the Thirteenth Amendment, said that the idea embodied in it was violated by the Conscription Act, and that a conscript is little better than a convict. In impassioned language, it intimated that conscription was despotism in its worst form, and a monstrous wrong against humanity in the interest of Wall Street's chosen few. It said "Do not submit to intimidation," but in form, at least, confined itself to peaceful measures such as a petition for the repeal of the act. The other and later printed side of the sheet was headed "Assert Your Rights." It stated reasons for alleging that anyone violated the Constitution when he refused to recognize "your right to assert your opposition to the draft," and went on "If you do not assert and support your rights, you are helping to deny or disparage rights which it is the solemn duty of all citizens and residents of the United States to retain." It described the arguments on the other side as coming from cunning politicians and a mercenary capitalist press, and even silent consent to the conscription law as helping to support an infamous conspiracy. It denied the power to send our citizens away to foreign shores to shoot up the people of other lands, and added that words could not express the condemnation such cold-blooded ruthlessness deserves, &c., &c., winding up, "You must do your share to maintain, support and uphold the rights of the people of this country." Of course, the document would not have been sent unless it had been intended to have some effect, and we do not see what effect it could be expected to have upon persons subject to the draft except to influence them to obstruct the carrying of it out. The defendants do not deny that the jury might find against them on this point.

But it is said, suppose that that was the tendency of this circular, it is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. Two of the strongest expressions are said to be quoted respectively from well known public men. It well may be that the prohibition of laws abridging the freedom of speech is not confined to previous restraints, although to prevent them may have been the main purpose, as intimated in *Patterson v. Colorado*, 205 U.S. 454, 462. We admit that, in many places and in ordinary times, the defendants, in saying all that was said in the circular, would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. *Aikens v. Wisconsin*, 195 U.S. 194, 205, 206. The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic. It does not even protect a man from an injunction against uttering words that may have all the effect of force. *Gompers v. Bucks Stove & Range Co.*, 221 U.S. 418, 439. The question in every case is whether the

words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war, many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight, and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right. It seems to be admitted that, if an actual obstruction of the recruiting service were proved, liability for words that produced that effect might be enforced. The statute of 1917, in § 4, punishes conspiracies to obstruct, as well as actual obstruction. If the act (speaking, or circulating a paper), its tendency, and the intent with which it is done are the same, we perceive no ground for saying that success alone warrants making the act a crime. *Goldman v. United States*, 245 U.S. 474, 477. Indeed, that case might be said to dispose of the present contention if the precedent covers all media *concludendi*. But, as the right to free speech was not referred to specially, we have thought fit to add a few words.

It was not argued that a conspiracy to obstruct the draft was not within the words of the Act of 1917. The words are "obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service," and it might be suggested that they refer only to making it hard to get volunteers. Recruiting heretofore usually having been accomplished by getting volunteers, the word is apt to call up that method only in our minds. But recruiting is gaining fresh supplies for the forces, as well by draft as otherwise. It is put as an alternative to enlistment or voluntary enrollment in this act. The fact that the Act of 1917 was enlarged by the amending Act of May 16, 1918, c. 75, 40 Stat. 553, of course, does not affect the present indictment, and would not even if the former act had been repealed. *Rev.Stats.*, § 13.

Judgments affirmed.

## **The Sedition Act of 1918**

The Sedition Act was intended to punish people who made public comments that were deemed unpatriotic or statements that were deemed to help the enemy. Such broad and undefined restrictions allowed the government to go after even those who made such innocuous statements as suggesting that the war should be paid for with higher taxes rather than bonds. Ultimately, until its repeal in 1921, some one thousand people were prosecuted under the law.

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## The Sedition Act of 1918

Digital History ID 3903

Date: 1918

**Annotation:** The Sedition Act of 1918 was an amended piece of legislation that strengthened the terms of the Espionage Act of 1917. The Espionage Act targeted those individuals who interfered with the draft and who publicly criticized the government.

More than 2,000 people were prosecuted under the original and amended Espionage Act, including the Socialist spokesman and draft opponent, Eugene V. Debs, who was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Both the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act were repealed in 1921.

**Document:** A portion of the amendment to Section 3 of the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917.

The revised law provided in part:

Section 3.

Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States, or to promote the success of its enemies, or shall willfully make or convey false reports, or false statements, ...or incite insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct ...the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, or ...shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States ...or shall willfully display the flag of any foreign enemy, or shall willfully ...urge, incite, or advocate any curtailment of production ...or advocate, teach, defend, or suggest the doing of any of the acts or things in this section enumerated and whoever shall by word or act support or favor the cause of any country with which the United States is at war or by word or act oppose the cause of the United States therein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than 20 years, or both....

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*The antiwar forces were unable to keep the United States neutral, however. Soon after the German government announced resumption of unrestricted U-boat warfare in early 1917, the United States declared war on the Central Powers. The first selection that follows is a statement issued by the Socialist Party of America in early April, several days after the U.S. war declaration, expressing their opposition to the war. What were the bases of the Socialist position? Were they consistent with Socialist analyses of the nature of contemporary society? From this statement, can you deduce the Socialist attitude toward national loyalty and traditional patriotism?*

*The second selection is an excerpt from Wisconsin Senator Robert La Follette's remarks during the war-declaration debate in Congress. It is representative of the views of many mid-western Progressives. What is La Follette's analysis of the origins of the war? How does it differ from that of the Socialists? How does his analysis influence his view of the war's justice? Do his remarks betray national biases and prejudices? La Follette's own state, Wisconsin, was home to a very large German American population. Could the senator's views have been colored by that fact?*

### SOCIALIST PARTY CONVENTION: THE SOCIALISTS PROTEST THE WAR

#### The Socialist Party and the War<sup>1</sup>

The Socialist Party of the United States in the present grave crisis, solemnly reaffirms its allegiance to the principle of internationalism and working class solidarity the world over, and proclaims its unalterable opposition to the war just declared by the government of the United States.

Modern wars as a rule have been caused by the commercial and financial rivalry and intrigues of the capitalist interests in the different countries. Whether they have been frankly waged as wars of aggression or have been hypocritically represented as wars of "defense," they have always been made by the classes and fought by the masses. Wars bring wealth and power to the ruling classes, and suffering, death and demoralization to the workers.

They breed a sinister spirit of passion, unreason, race hatred and false patriotism. They obscure the struggles of the workers for life, liberty and social justice. They tend to sever the vital bonds of solidarity between them and their brothers in other countries, to destroy their organizations and to curtail their civic and political rights and liberties.

The Socialist Party of the United States is unalterably opposed to the system of exploitation and class rule which is upheld and strengthened by military power and sham national patriotism. We, therefore, call upon the workers of all countries to refuse support to their governments in their wars. The wars of the contending national groups of capitalists are not the concern of the workers. The only struggle which would justify the workers in taking up arms is the great struggle of the working class of the world to free itself from economic exploitation and political oppression, and we particularly warn the workers against the snare and delusion of so-called defensive warfare. As against the false doctrine of national patriotism we uphold the ideal of international working-class

<sup>1</sup>The American Labor Yearbook, vol. 2 (1917-18), pp. 50-52.

<sup>1</sup>Majority report adopted at the St. Louis Convention of the Socialist Party, April 7-14, 1917, and ratified by referendum.

solidarity. In support of the dollar; in support of the

The mad orgy of Europe was caused by the

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The acute competition distrusts of one another against them to arm to the teeth. outbreak of the present war with standing armies of millions

Capitalism, imperialism inevitable general conflict accidental event, nor by the outcome of the competition

The six million men the first thirty months of maimed, the vast treasure sufferings of Europe, had ideals, but wanton offerings

The forces of capitalism hideously transparent in

When Belgium was country the duty of reminding humanity," and the fate that did not concern it. Our government calls upon

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## PROTEST THE WAR

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solidarity. In support of capitalism, we will not willingly give a single life or a single dollar; in support of the struggle of the workers for freedom we pledge our all.

The mad orgy of death and destruction which is now convulsing unfortunate Europe was caused by the conflict of capitalist interests in the European countries.

In each of these countries, the workers were oppressed and exploited. They produced enormous wealth but the bulk of it was withheld from them by the owners of the industries. The workers were thus deprived of the means to repurchase the wealth which they themselves had created.

The capitalist class of each country was forced to look for foreign markets to dispose of the accumulated "surplus" wealth. The huge profits made by the capitalists could no longer be profitably reinvested in their own countries, hence, they were driven to look for foreign fields of investment. The geographical boundaries of each modern capitalist country thus became too narrow for the industrial and commercial operations of its capitalist class.

The efforts of the capitalists of all leading nations were therefore centered upon the domination of the world markets. Imperialism became the dominant note in the politics of Europe. The acquisition of colonial possessions and the extension of spheres of commercial and political influence became the object of diplomatic intrigues and the cause of constant clashes between nations.

The acute competition between the capitalist powers of the earth, their jealousies and distrusts of one another and the fear of the rising power of the working class forced each of them to arm to the teeth. This led to the mad rivalry of armament, which, years before the outbreak of the present war, had turned the leading countries of Europe into armed camps with standing armies of many millions, drilled and equipped for war in times of "peace."

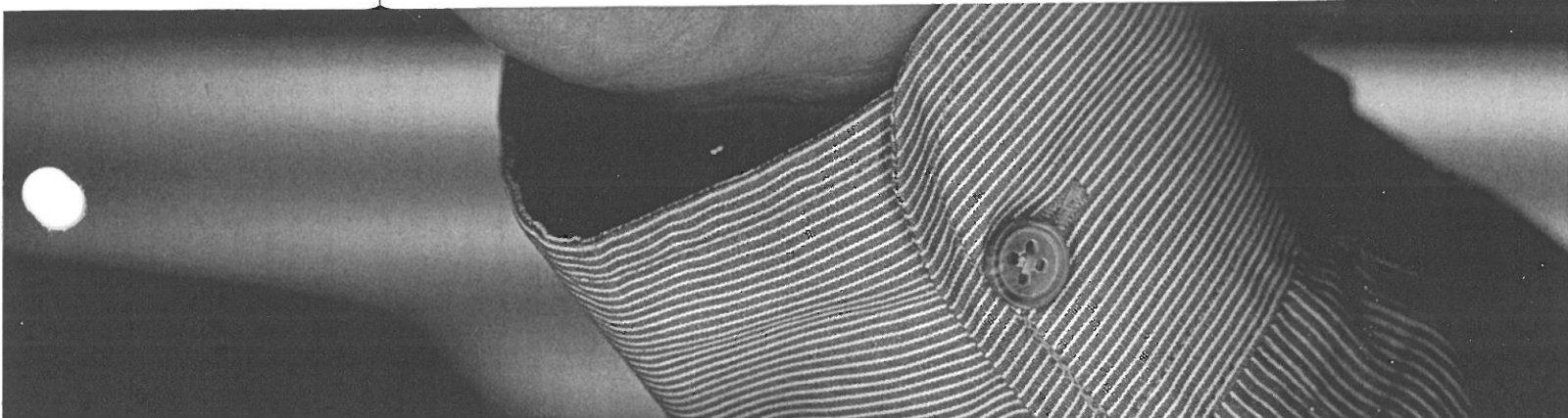
Capitalism, imperialism and militarism had thus laid the foundation of an inevitable general conflict in Europe. The ghastly war in Europe was not caused by an accidental event, nor by the policy or institutions of any single nation. It was the logical outcome of the competitive capitalist system.

The six million men of all countries and races who have been ruthlessly slain in the first thirty months of this war, the millions of others who have been crippled and maimed, the vast treasures of wealth that have been destroyed, the untold misery and sufferings of Europe, have not been sacrifices exacted in a struggle for principles or ideals, but wanton offerings upon the altar of private profit.

The forces of capitalism which have led to the war in Europe are even more hideously transparent in the war recently provoked by the ruling class of this country.

When Belgium was invaded, the government enjoined upon the people of this country the duty of remaining neutral, thus clearly demonstrating that the "dictates of humanity," and the fate of small nations and of democratic institutions were matters that did not concern it. But when our enormous war traffic was seriously threatened, our government calls upon us to rally to the "defense of democracy and civilization."

Our entrance into the European war was instigated by the predatory capitalists in the United States who boast of the enormous profit of seven billion dollars from the manufacture and sale of munitions and war supplies and from the exportation of American food stuffs and other necessities. They are also deeply interested in the continuance of war and the success of the allied arms through their huge loans to the governments of the allied powers and through other commercial ties. It is the same interests which strive for imperialistic domination of the Western Hemisphere.



Where his chest ought to have been they pinned the Congressional Medal, the D.S.C., the Medaille Militaire, the Belgian Croix de Guerre, the Italian gold medal, the Virtute Militara sent by Queen Marie of Rumania, the Czechoslovak war cross, the Virtuti Militari of the Poles, a wreath sent by Hamilton Fish, Jr., of New York, and a little wampum presented by a depiction of Arizona redskins in warpaint and feathers. All the Washingtonians brought flowers.

Woodrow Wilson brought a bouquet of poppies.

• • •

Two decades after the end of World War I, on the eve of yet another world war, one of the most damning indictments of the realities of war was written by the screenwriter Dalton Trumbo. A few years after the release of the book, which became an international bestseller, Trumbo was blacklisted as one of the Hollywood Ten. *Johnny Got His Gun* is written from the point of view of Joe Bonham, a World War I soldier found on the battlefield with all his limbs severed, blind—a torso and a brain all that was left of him.

### Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun* (1939)<sup>10</sup>

Take me along country roads and stop by every farmhouse and every field and ring a dinner gong so that the farmers and their wives and their children and their hired men and women can see me. Say to the farmers here is something I'll bet you haven't seen before. Here is something you can't plow under. Here is something that will never grow and flower. The manure you plow into your fields is filthy enough but here is something less than manure because it won't die and decay and nourish even a weed. Here is something so terrible that if it were born to a mare or a heifer or a sow or a ewe you would kill it on the spot but you can't kill this because it is a human being. It has a brain. It is thinking all the time. Believe it or not this thing thinks and it is alive and it goes against every rule of nature although nature didn't make it so. You know what made it so. Look at it medals real medals probably of solid gold. Lift up the top of the case and you'll know what made it so. It stinks of glory.

Take me into the places where men work and make things. Take me there and say boys here is a cheap way to get by. Maybe times are bad and your salaries are low. Don't worry boys because there is always a way to cure things like that. Have a war and then prices go up and wages go up and everybody makes a hell of a lot of money.

There'll be one along pretty soon boys so don't get impatient. It'll come and then you'll have your chance. Either way you win. If you don't have to fight why you stay at home and make sixteen bucks a day working in the shipyards. And if they draft you why you've got a good chance of coming back without so many needs. Maybe you'll need only one shoe instead of two that's saving money. Maybe you'll be blind and if you are why then you never need worry about the expense of glasses. Maybe you'll be lucky like me. Look at me close boys I don't need anything. A little broth or something three times a day and that's all. No shoes no socks no underwear no shirt no gloves no hat no necktie no collar-buttons no vest no coat no movies no vaudeville no football not even a shave. Look at me boys I have no expenses at all. You're suckers boys. Get on the gravy train. I know what I'm talking about. I used to need all the things that you need right now. I used to be a consumer. I've consumed a lot in my time. I've consumed more shrapnel and gunpowder than any living man. So don't get blue boys because you'll have your chance there'll be another war along pretty soon and then maybe you'll be lucky like me.

Take me into the schoolhouses all the school-houses in the world. Suffer little children to come unto me isn't that right? They may scream at first and have nightmares at night but they'll get used to it because they've got to get used to it and is best to start them young. Gather them around my case and say here little girl here little boy come and take a look at your daddy. Come and look at yourself. You'll be like that when you grow up to be great big strong men and women. You'll have a chance to die for your country. And you may not die you may come back like this. Not everybody dies little kiddies.

Closer please. You over there against the blackboard what's the matter with you? Quit crying you silly little girl come over here and look at the nice man the nice man who was a soldier boy. You remember him don't you? Don't you remember little crybaby how you waved flags and saved tinfoil and put your savings in thrift stamps? Of course you do you silly. Well here's the soldier you did it for.

Come on youngsters take a nice look and then we'll go into our nursery rhymes. New nursery rhymes for new times. Hickory dickory dock my daddy's nuts from shellscock. Humpry dumpry thought he was wise till gas came along and burned out his eyes. A diller a dollar a ten o'clock scholar blow off his legs and then watch him holler. Rockabye baby in the treetop don't stop a bomb or you'll probably flop. Now I lay me down to sleep my bombproof cellar's good and deep but if I'm killed before I wake remember god it's for your sake amen.

Take me into the colleges and universities and academies and convents. Call the girls together all the healthy beautiful young girls. Point down to me and say here girls is your father. Here is that boy who was strong last night. Here is your little son your baby son the fruit of your love the hope of your future. Look down on him girls so you won't forget him. See that red gash there with mucus hanging to

it? That was his face girls. Here girls touch it don't be afraid. Bend down and kiss it. You'll have to wipe your lips afterward because they will have a strange rotten stuff on them but that's all right because a lover is a lover and here is your lover.

Call all the young men together and say here is your brother here is your best friend here you are young men. This is a very interesting case young men because we know there is a mind buried down there. Technically this thing is living meat like that tissue we kept alive all last summer in the lab. But this is a different cut of meat because it also contains a brain. Now listen to me closely young gentlemen. That brain is thinking. Maybe it's thinking about music. Maybe it has a great symphony all thought out or a mathematical formula that would change the world or a book that would make people kinder or the germ of an idea that would save a hundred million people from cancer. This is a very interesting problem young gentlemen because if this brain does hold such secrets how in the world are we ever going to find out? In any event there you are young gentlemen breathing and thinking and dead like a frog under chloroform with its stomach laid open so that its heartbeat may be seen so quiet so helpless but yet alive. There is your future and your sweet wild dreams there is the thing your sweethearts loved and there is the thing your leaders urged it to be. Think well young gentlemen. Think sharply young gentlemen and then we will go back to our studies of the barbarians who sacked Rome.

Take me wherever there are parliaments and diets and congresses and chambers of statesmen. I want to be there when they talk about honor and justice and making the world safe for democracy and fourteen points and the self determination of peoples. I want to be there to remind them I haven't got a tongue to stick into the cheek I haven't got either. But the statesmen have tongues. The statesmen have cheek. Put my glass case upon the speaker's desk and every time the gavel descends let me feel its vibration through my little jewel case. Then let them speak of trade policies and embargoes and new colonies and old grudges. Let them debate the menace of the yellow race and the white man's burden and the course of empire and why should we take all this crap off Germany or whoever the next Germany is. Let them talk about the South American market and why so-and-so is beating us out of it and why our merchant marine can't compete and oh what the hell let's send a good stiff note. Let them talk more munitions and airplanes and battleships and tanks and gases why of course we've got to have them we can't get along without them how in the world could we protect the peace if we didn't have them? Let them form blocs and alliances and mutual assistance pacts and guarantees of neutrality. Let them draft notes and ultimatums and protests and accusations.

But before they vote on them before they give the order for all the little guys to start killing each other let the main guy rap his gavel on my case and point down at me and say here gentlemen is the only issue before this house and that is are you

for this thing here or are you against it. And if they are against it why goddam them let them stand up like men and vote. And if they are for it let them be hanged and drawn and quartered and paraded through the streets in small chopped up little bits and thrown out into the fields where no clean animal will touch them and let their chunks rot there and may no green thing ever grow where they rot.

Take me into your churches your great towering cathedrals that have to be rebuilt every fifty years—because they are destroyed by war. Carry me in my glass box down the aisles where kings and priests and brides and children at their confirmation have gone so many times before to kiss a splinter of wood from a true cross on which was nailed the body of a man who was lucky enough to die. Set me high on your altars and call on god to look down upon his murderous little children his dearly beloved little children. Wave over me the incense I can't smell. Swill down the sacramental wine I can't taste. Drone out the prayers I can't hear. Go through the old old holy gestures for which I have no legs and no arms. Chorus out the hallelujas I can't sing. Bring them out loud and strong for me your hallelujas all of them for me because I know the truth and you don't you fools. You fools you fools you fools. . . .



**Document A**  
**Woodrow Wilson's Flag Day Speech**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**April 14, 1917**

Two months after the declaration of war on Germany, President Wilson gave a speech on Flag Day, 1917. In the speech, Wilson stated the administration's position on the opposition to the war. Read the following excerpts from the president's speech and answer the following questions.

"My Fellow Citizens: We meet to celebrate Flag Day because this flag which we honour and under which we serve is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours. It floats in majestic silence above the hosts that execute those choices, whether in peace or in war. ...

It is plain enough how we were forced into the war. The extraordinary insults and aggressions of the Imperial German Government left us no self-respecting choice but to take up arms in defense of our rights as a free people and of our honour as a sovereign government.

... the masters of Germany do not hesitate to use any agency that promises to effect their purpose, the deceit of the nations? ... They are employing liberals in their enterprise. They are using men, in Germany and without, as their spokesmen whom they have hitherto despised and oppressed, using them for their own destruction,—socialists, the leaders of labour, the thinkers they have hitherto sought to silence. ... The sinister intrigue is being ... actively conducted in this country

But they will make no headway. The false betray themselves always in every accent. It is only friends and partisans of the German Government whom we have already identified who utter these thinly disguised disloyalties.

For us there is but one choice. We have made it. Woe be to the man or group of men that seeks to stand in our way in this day of high resolution when every principle we hold dearest is to be vindicated and made secure for the salvation of the nations. ...

1. According to President Wilson, who was responsible for the war?
2. Identify the groups which Wilson believes are either intentionally or unintentionally assisting the Germany war effort?
3. What threat does Wilson make to those individuals and groups that may be disloyal to the war effort?

## DOCUMENT A

### **The First Amendment, 1791**

Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

- ▶ **Restate the First Amendment in your own words.**

## DOCUMENT B

### **President Woodrow Wilson, State of the Union Address, 1915**

I am sorry to say that the gravest threats against our national peace and safety have been uttered within our own borders. There are citizens of the United States, I blush to admit, born under other flags but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to the full freedom and opportunity of America, who have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life passion. ...[T]he ugly and incredible thing has actually come about and we are without adequate federal laws to deal with it.

I urge [Congress] to enact such laws at the earliest possible moment and feel that in doing so I am urging you to do nothing less than save the honor and self-respect of the nation. Such creatures of passion, disloyalty, and anarchy must be crushed out....

There are some men among us, and many resident abroad who, though born and bred in the United States and calling themselves Americans, have so forgotten themselves and their honor as citizens as to put their passionate sympathy with one or the other side in the great European conflict above their regard for the peace and dignity of the United States. They also preach and practice disloyalty....

- ▶ **To what “European conflict” is President Wilson referring?**
- ▶ **What does President Wilson ask Congress to do in this speech?**