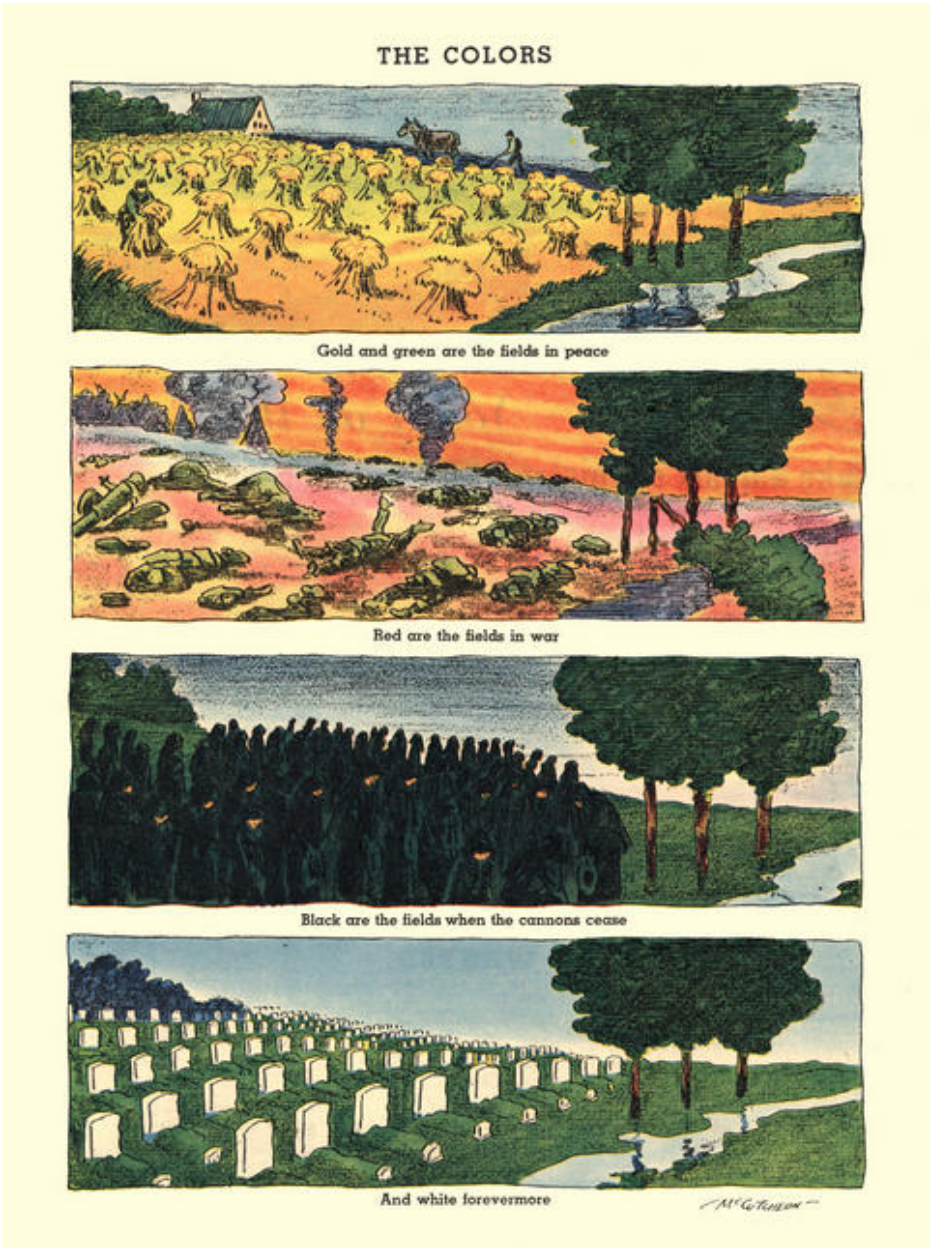
United States Participation in World War One

peacehistory-usfp.org/united-states-participation-in-world-war-one

Contents



John T. McCutcheon, *Chicago Tribune*, August 7, 1914: "Gold and green are the fields in peace. Red are the fields in war. Black are the fields when the cannons cease. And white forever more."

I. Introduction: The great reversal

II. The Great War in Europe and beyond

II. The Great War in Europe and beyond

- The war system and war guilt
- European peace activism

III. Origins of U.S. intervention in the Great War

- British connections
- Pseudo neutrality and secret intrigues
- On the path to war
- Economic interests and the “Merchants of Death”

IV. Wilsonian idealism and the new “Manifest Destiny”

V. Over There: War and peace in France

- The American Expeditionary Forces
- The Paris peace conference and Versailles Treaty

VI. The horrors of war

- Johnny Got His Gun
- Mechanized warfare: “All the fiendish elements of mass killing”

VII. Over Here: The nadir of American democracy

- Repression, vigilantism, and propaganda
- Academic unfreedom
- The responsibility of intellectuals
- Conscription and conscientious objection to war
- Racial discrimination

VIII. The peace persuasion in the United States

Douaumont memorial, Battle of Verdun site, France (photo by Matt Leonard)

- Peace reform in the early 20th century
- Peace activism during the neutrality period
- The war years: The peace movement under duress

IX. Lessons and legacies

Endnotes

About the authors

Recommended resources

Linked: **The Wilson administration's war on Russian Bolshevism**
Linked: **Historiography: Contested histories of the Great War**

Did you know?

1. For the first 32 months of the Great War, known as World War I today, the U.S. remained officially neutral. President Woodrow Wilson ran for re-election in 1916 on a campaign slogan, "He Kept Us Out of War."
2. In his war message to Congress on April 2, 1917, President Wilson declared that the "present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind." Senator George Norris of Nebraska suggested that U.S. ships not sail into war zones as an alternative to war.[1]

3. President Wilson framed the war as a fight for "the rights of mankind," but instituted policies at home that curtailed American Constitutional rights, including freedom of speech and freedom of the press.
4. The idea of the Great War as "the war to end all wars" originated with British fiction writer H. G. Wells in August 1914.
5. Upon entering the war, the U.S. government initiated a chemical weapons program that involved more than 1,900 scientists and technicians, making it the largest government research program in American history up to that time.[2]
6. More than two million U.S. soldiers were sent to France. Most arrived in the late spring and summer of 1918 and fought for less than six months.
7. American fatalities included 53,402 soldiers killed in combat or missing, and 63,114 deaths from disease. Of the latter, roughly 45,000 U.S. soldiers died from the influenza epidemic that swept the U.S. and Europe in 1918.[3]
8. All in all, the Great War took the lives of almost ten million soldiers. U.S. military deaths (116,516) constituted just over one percent.[4]
9. Contrary to the heroic image of warfighting in all countries, two-thirds of all deaths and injuries in battle resulted from artillery and mortar fire from afar. Another 90,000 soldiers died from poison gases.[5]
10. At least ten million civilians died as a result of the Great War. Food shortages in Germany, due to the British blockade, are estimated to have caused 763,000 deaths, according to the National Health Office in Berlin. This was about 50 times the number of British deaths caused by German submarine attacks on merchant vessels.[6]
11. The fighting ended on November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m. That date is commemorated today in the United States as Veterans Day, a national holiday.
12. According to a Gallup poll in 1937, 70% of Americans believed that U.S. participation in the Great War was "a mistake."[7]

I. Introduction: The great reversal

When the Great War erupted in Europe in August 1914, few Americans believed that the United States should become involved. There was a long tradition of avoiding "entangling alliances" with European powers, dating back to George Washington, and the United States itself was not threatened. The main concern expressed by some Americans was that the war could disrupt U.S. trade and cause an economic downturn. President Woodrow Wilson, speaking on August 3, advised Americans to remain calm. He expressed confidence that

President Woodrow Wilson, Sept. 10, 1913

the U.S. would be able to "meet the financial situation growing out of the European war."[8] Two weeks later, he appealed to Americans to avoid taking sides:

> The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name during these days that are to try men's souls. We must be impartial in thought as well as in action, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party to the struggle before another. The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name."[9]

The major antagonists in the Great War were the Central Powers of Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Ottoman Empire, and the Triple Entente or Allied Powers of Russia, France, and Great Britain, later joined by Italy. The immediate cause was an attempt by Austria-Hungary to take over Serbia, a small country on its southern border, following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne. The larger issue was which of the great powers would have dominant influence in Europe and the Middle East.

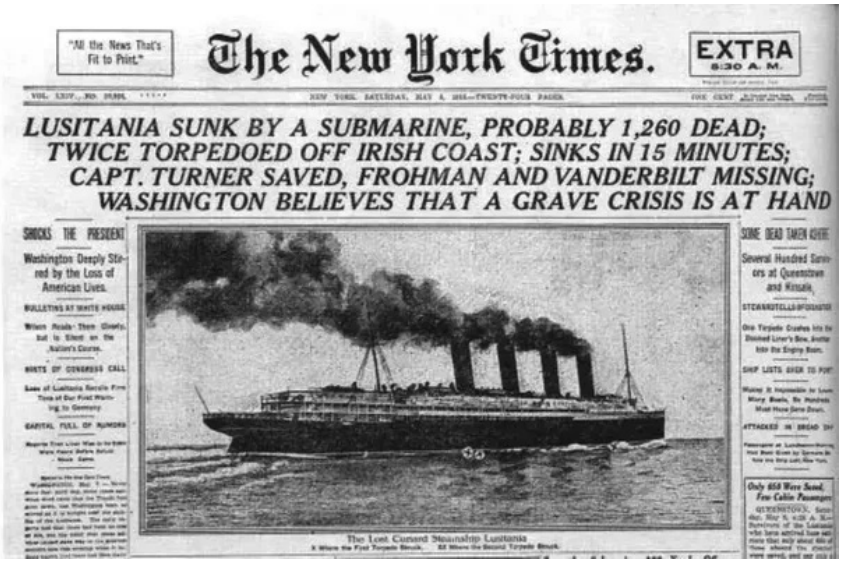
World War I alliances

During the first 32 months of the 51-month war, the U.S. remained officially neutral. Yet the U.S. was not neutral in practice. The Wilson administration forged ever closer ties with Great Britain, supplying the Allied nations with food, guns, ammunition, and huge loans to pay for it all. Much of that loan money was spent in the U.S., creating an economic boom and also linking American prosperity to an Allied victory.

At the outset of the war, the British set up a naval blockade of Germany, mining harbors and cutting off U.S. trade. The Wilson administration feebly protested this denial of "neutral trade

rights" but let it go on. In February 1915, Germany responded with a blockade of its own, a submarine cordon around the British Isles. Although Germany's intent was to sink *enemy* merchant ships, not *neutral* ships, the Wilson administration demanded that Germany abandon the policy.

Over the next two years, more than 98 percent of ships sent to the bottom by German U-boats (submarines) were British or French. To deceive their attackers, British merchant vessels sometimes hoisted American flags, thus encouraging mistakes.[10] German U-boats and raiders sank or damaged a total of eight U.S.-registered vessels prior to February 1, 1917, with total American casualties amounting to three dead and one wounded. In the one case where fatalities occurred, the attack on the steamship *Gulflight* on May 1, 1915, the German government apologized.[11]


"All the News That's Fit to Print."

The New York Times.

EXTRA 6:30 A.M.

LUSITANIA SUNK BY A SUBMARINE, PROBABLY 1,260 DEAD; TWICE TORPEDOED OFF IRISH COAST; SINKS IN 15 MINUTES; CAPT. TURNER SAVED, FROHMAN AND VANDERBILT MISSING; WASHINGTON BELIEVES THAT A GRAVE CRISIS IS AT HAND

SHOCKS THE PRESIDENT

Washington Deeply Stirred by the Loss of American Lives.

The Lost Cunard Steamship Lusitania

The main issue of contention between the U.S. and Germany during the U.S. neutrality period was not the sinking of a few U.S. merchant ships, but the Wilson administration's insistence that American citizens had the right of safe passage on *belligerent* ships in war zones, a transparent attempt to protect British and French vessels by placing Americans on board. The issue became acute when a German U-boat torpedoed the British luxury liner *Lusitania*, on May 7, 1915, resulting in the deaths of 1,198 crew members and passengers, including 128 Americans. Unbeknown to passengers aboard, the *Lusitania* was carrying a large cache of ammunition in its hull.[12]

Winston Churchill, first Lord of the Admiralty, hoped that the *Lusitania* crisis would push the U.S. into war on the side of the Allies, writing to another government official, "It is most important to attract neutral shipping to our shores in the hope especially of embroiling the United States with Germany. . . . For our part we want the traffic — the more the better; and if some of it gets into trouble, better still."[13]

The German government, for its part, attempted to appease the U.S. by restricting its submarine warfare. It issued the *Arabic* Pledge on September 1, 1915, promising advanced warning before sinking an enemy merchant or passenger ship, and the *Sussex* Pledge on May 4, 1916, promising to ensure the safety of passengers and crew if a ship was sunk. The latter

pledge contained an important caveat: Berlin reserved the right to abandon these restrictions if the United States did not compel Great Britain to end its blockade in conformity with international law.[14] The Wilson administration did not do this. Indeed, the British expanded their blockade to include neighboring neutral countries, preventing even food from reaching Germany and creating conditions of starvation.[15]

This was the context in which the German government decided to initiate unrestricted submarine warfare in the waters surrounding the British Isles, beginning on February 1, 1917. German leaders sought to deprive Great Britain of outside support by sinking *all* merchant ships in these waters, including those flying the American flag. Between February 1 and April 6, the day the U.S. declared war on Germany, German U-boats sank ten U.S.-registered ships, resulting in the deaths of 64 crewmen, 24 of them American.[16]

On April 2, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany, asserting that the "present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind."[17] Wilson presented the situation as if there was no other option. Yet there was a practical alternative: require that U.S. cargoes be delivered by *British* merchant vessels instead of American vessels. Senator George Norris of Nebraska, who voted against the war resolution, made this point on the Senate floor on April 4, saying, "We might have refused to permit the sailing of any ship from any American port to either of these military zones."[18]

The fact that the United States itself was not in any danger of attack meant that the most reliable justification for war, national self-defense, was lacking. The president thus chose to frame German attacks on U.S. merchant ships as an attack on America's "honor." He further embellished his justifications for war by stating that the U.S. would fight for "the rights of all mankind" and that "the world must be made safe for democracy." That the U.S. had no pressing national self-interest at stake was spun into a virtue by declaring that the U.S. had "no selfish ends to serve."[19]

Wilson also justified going to war by promising a more peaceful world order in its aftermath via a new League of Nations; hence the idea of "a war to end all wars." The League proposal did not originate with Wilson. It had been circulating for more than a decade, gaining support among both conservatives and liberals in the United States and Great Britain. Former president Theodore Roosevelt endorsed a "League of Peace" in 1910, and former president William Howard Taft became its leading advocate before Wilson adopted the idea in May 1916.[20] The British government developed a draft proposal in early 1918 and Prime Minister David Lloyd George arrived at the Paris peace negotiations with a proposal in hand.[21] The United States did not need to go to war to create the League of Nations. Rather, President Wilson needed the promise of a new world order to justify going to war.

First Lady Edith Wilson, with the president, lays a wreath at the American Military Cemetery at Suresnes, France, May 31, 1919

The U.S. sent over two million soldiers to France, although most did not arrive until the summer of 1918. The American Expeditionary Forces played an important role in the last battles of the war, buoying up British and French forces. The cost was 53,402 U.S. soldiers killed in combat or missing, and 204,002 wounded. Another 63,114 soldiers died from disease, half in military camps in the United States. The total number of U.S. military deaths (116,516) nevertheless constituted less than *two percent* of all Allied fatalities and slightly more than *one percent* of all combatant deaths.[22]

At the Paris peace conference, Wilson's idealistic pronouncements had little bearing on the negotiations. America's allies carved up the Ottoman Empire as spoils of war and imposed heavy reparation payments on Germany, sowing resentment that laid the groundwork for another world war. Wilson had initially suggested a less punitive treaty, but he was not displeased with the final outcome. Speaking to reporters after the conference, he described the Treaty of Versailles as "a wonderful success" and declared, "I am proud of it."[23]

Was it necessary, in the final analysis, for the U.S. to enter the Great War?

Had the U.S. maintained strict neutrality, not only would American lives have been saved, but the U.S. could have acted as a legitimate mediator of the conflict, working with other neutral nations to pressure the belligerents to end their slaughter short of annihilation and starvation. The war might well have ended sooner and on more balanced terms, thus removing one cause of the rise of Nazism and the Second World War.[24] Certainly, U.S. neutrality would have prevented one regrettable chapter in U.S. history: the suppression of First Amendment rights and freedoms. Wilson's imagined crusade to make the world "safe for democracy" was accompanied by repressive laws that made democracy *unsafe* in America. This essay synthesizes the work of many historians of the First World War. The next section provides an overview of the European war, including its complex origins and the efforts of peace advocates to prevent it. Sections III and IV discuss the origins of U.S. intervention in the

war between 1914 and 1917, examining the Wilson administration's moves toward war, underlying economic interests, and overarching ideological rationales. Sections V and VI discuss American experiences in the war, especially from the soldier's vantage point, and the lamentable peace settlement in Paris. Section VII, "The Nadir of American democracy," charts the U.S. government's repression and state propaganda along with vigilantism and intolerance on the home front during the war years. Section VIII surveys the efforts of peace advocates to keep the U.S. on a course of neutrality, identifying four phases of the peace movement.

*** * ***

II. The Great War in Europe and beyond

Had European leaders known what was to come when they declared war on each other in the summer of 1914, they might have paused to consider peaceful, diplomatic options. No one expected a long war at the outset. Indeed, German leaders predicted victory in 42 days. There had been six wars among the various belligerents in the previous forty years and all had been short: the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, Russo-Turkish War of 1878, Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, Italo-Turkish War of 1911-1912, and two Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913.[25]

The Great War went on for over four years and three months, partly because the two belligerent alliance systems were roughly equal in power (though not population and resources), partly because defensive weaponry and tactics trumped all offensive maneuvers on land until almost the end, and partly because the leaders of both sides were too proud and ambitious to negotiate a peace settlement despite massive casualties and suffering.

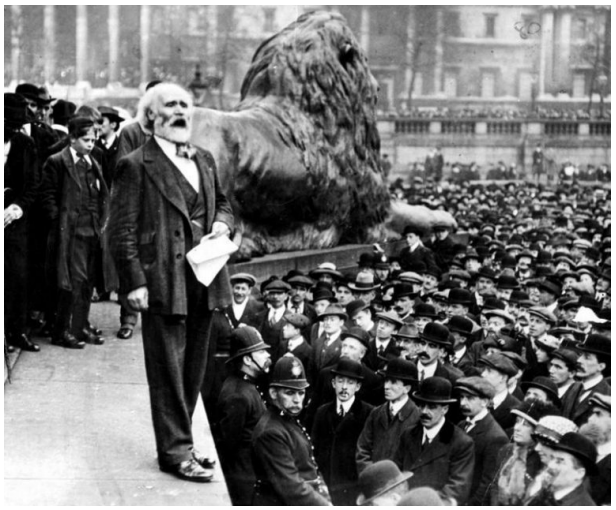
Gavrilo Princip fires at Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, in illustration in Italian newspaper, July 1914

The Great War, at root, was the product of empire-building. Three great states were vying for control of the Balkans: the Ottoman Empire, which formerly held the region, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. At the same time, small states such as Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece were seeking to expand their borders. The immediate catalyst to war was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, on June 28, 1914. The fatal bullets were fired by 19-year-old Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist, in the city of Sarajevo.[26] The plot was hatched with the support of Dragutin Dimitrijević, Chief of Serbian Military Intelligence, who led a secret group known as the Black Hand that was dedicated to liberating all Slavic peoples from Austro-Hungarian rule.

Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria-Hungary used the occasion to demand that Serbia suppress all popular agitation against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although the Serbian government largely *agreed* to Emperor Joseph's provocative demands, with the exception of a provision to allow Austrian investigators to investigate the archduke's assassination, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, its motive being to incorporate Serbia.[27]
It took one month for the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia to germinate but only one week for the conflict to metastasize into a world war involving the great powers of Russia,

Germany, France, and Great Britain. Czarist Russia, unwilling to allow Austria-Hungary to gain more territory in the Balkans, came to Serbia's defense and began mobilizing its military forces. Imperial Germany, Austria-Hungary's ally, viewed Russian mobilization as a grave and immediate danger to the German homeland and declared war on Russia on August 1. Two days later, Germany declared war on France, Russia's ally, and began preparations to invade France through Belgium.

As the world crisis unfolded, all eyes turned to Great Britain. Would the most powerful empire in the world enter the war? On Sunday, August 2, a large antiwar demonstration was held in Trafalgar Square, London. James Keir Hardie, a Scottish Labor Party leader, called for a general strike if Britain declared war. "You have no quarrel with Germany!" he told the crowd.[28] The following day, Foreign Affairs Secretary Sir Edward Grey addressed the House of Commons and solemnly declared that his government could not remain neutral due to an 1839 treaty commitment to defend Belgium and an unspecified "commitment to France," owing to the Anglo-French *entente* of 1904.[29]


James Keir Hardie speaking in Trafalgar Square

Grey nonetheless assured legislators that he would consult them in the event of a crisis. This he did not do. After receiving reports of German troops marching through Belgium, the British government of Herbert H. Asquith declared war on Germany on August 4, without a Parliamentary vote. Prime Minister Asquith stated that the British would fight "not for aggression or the advancement of its own interests, but for principles whose maintenance is vital to the civilized world." That same day, *Le Matin*, a major French newspaper, called the conflict a "holy war of civilization against barbarity."[30]

Italy, the weakest of the great powers in Europe, had been part of a Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary since 1882, but Italian leaders insisted that the alliance was solely for defensive purposes and thus they refused to support Austria-Hungary's gamble for Serbian territory. Italy remained neutral for ten months, then joined the Allied Powers after secretly being promised slices of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after victory. The Ottoman Empire, meanwhile, formally joined the Central Powers in late October 1914, being a traditional rival of Russia. Europe was not entirely divided by war, as Spain, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden remained neutral throughout.

The global war

Germany planned to first conquer France then join Austria-Hungary in defeating Russia whose vast

expanse of land and large population made it a daunting foe. The German invasion of Belgium and northeastern France proceeded quickly and brutally in August 1914. The German Army drove within 30 miles of Paris before stopping to allow its supply lines to catch up. French and British forces counterattacked in the Battle of the Marne, September 6-12, leading to a partial retreat by German forces.

German marching band rallying the nation to war, 1914

Allied soldiers on the Western Front

The Western Front then settled into a murderous stalemate for the next three and a half years. Both sides dug trenches in northern France that stretched from the English Channel to the Swiss border. The area between the trenches, dubbed “no man’s land,” became a graveyard for millions of men. Infantry soldiers charged headlong into barbed wire, machine guns, artillery barrages, and poison gas. Defensive strategies trumped all offensive maneuvers and the Western Front never moved more than a few miles in either direction. The major battles at Verdun and the Somme River produced immense casualties. On the first day of the Battle of the Somme, July 1, 1916, British casualties numbered 57,000, including 19,240 killed, making it the bloodiest day in British military history. The battle lasted five months and resulted in a total of 1.2 million casualties on all sides.[31]

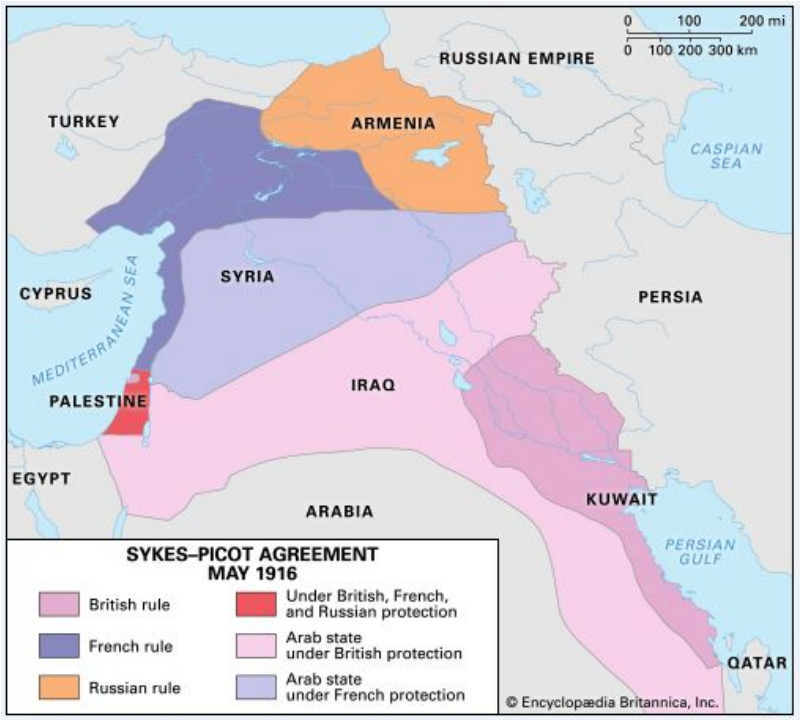
The belligerent armies were more mobile on the Eastern Front. Instead of trench warfare, there were sweeping movements, breakthroughs, and retreats. In the first year of the war, the Russian Army invaded eastern Germany (now Poland), ruthlessly burning villages as it advanced. It then suffered a series of crushing defeats, being short of ammunition, artillery, and food, and retreated. Austro-Hungarian forces, meanwhile, invaded Serbia but suffered heavy losses and withdrew. Russia temporarily regained the initiative from June to October 1916, breaking through Austro-Hungarian lines and forcing Germany to redirect some of its troops to the Eastern Front.[32]

Success in battle, however, did not ameliorate deprivation on the Russian home front. Food riots and demonstrations rocked Russian cities in February and March 1917, and whole military units refused orders to deploy to the front. Recognizing the dire situation, Russian

Army commanders asked Czar Nicholas to resign. He did so on March 15, leaving the shaky government in the hands of Alexander Kerensky, a moderate socialist. Kerensky continued the unpopular war, authorizing a new offensive in July 1917. When the Germans counterattacked, the Russian Army fell apart. In some units, soldiers shot their own officers and started walking home. By August, Russia had given up all the territory it had regained in 1916.

Vladimir Lenin, promising peace and bread, led the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in October 1917

The Kerensky government's determination to continue the war proved its undoing. The Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, promised "Peace, Bread, and Land." On November 7, 1917, the Bolsheviks overthrew the Kerensky government. The new government concluded an armistice with Germany on December 15, followed by a peace treaty on March 3, 1918. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk formally ended Russian participation in the war and ceded huge swaths of territory to Germany. The Allies were displeased with both Russia's withdrawal and the new Bolshevik government. Great Britain, France, and the U.S. subsequently dispatched troops to aid the overthrow of the new government – contrary to President Wilson's promise to respect Russian self-determination.[33]



The secret Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France set forth how the Ottoman Empire would be divided as spoils of war

The Great War extended beyond Europe. In the Middle East, the British moved quickly into Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) to establish control over oil fields against Ottoman resistance. Led by T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), the British also organized an Arab rebellion within the Ottoman Empire, promising independence after the war. This turned out to be a false promise. Following the war, the British took control of what is today modern Iraq, Israel and Jordan, and France reigned over Lebanon and Syria.

In Africa, the British attacked the German colonies of Togo, Cameroon, and German East Africa (Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania without Zanzibar today), while British-allied South Africa seized the German protectorate of South West Africa (Namibia) in 1915. In Asia, Japan declared war on Germany on August 23, 1914. With cooperation from the British Navy, Japanese troops took over the German-occupied port of Qingdao on China's Shandong Peninsula. China waited until August 1917 to declare war against Germany, mainly to earn a place at the post-war bargaining table and regain control of the Shandong Peninsula.

Australian and New Zealand medical corps examine carnage on Gallipoli battlefield during burial armistice, May 24, 1915 (Auckland War Memorial Museum)

The British and French drew upon their far-flung colonial empires for support and soldiers. Former and current colonies – later anointed the British Commonwealth – included about one-fourth of the world's population in 1914, some 450 million people. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand immediately joined the war effort. Australia and New Zealand together contributed 440,000 soldiers out of a combined population of six million. Of these "Anzac" soldiers, 95,000 were killed, including 8,000 in the Battle of Gallipoli. Their sacrifice continues to be commemorated annually on "Anzac Day," April 25. Almost 1.5 million Indians served in the Indian Expeditionary Forces as soldiers and laborers, being deployed in northern France, East Africa, and the Middle East.[34]

The United States entered the war on the side of the Allies in April 1917, but it took more than a year for significant numbers of troops to be trained and transported to France. Germany,

meanwhile, was able to move tens of thousands of troops from the Eastern Front to the Western Front after Russia withdrew from the war. Despite starvation on the home front, or perhaps because of it, Germany launched an all-out offensive on March 21, 1918, this time breaking through Allied lines. The German Army reached within forty miles of Paris before having to stop to allow its supply lines to catch up (again). The Allies, with the aid of the American Expeditionary Forces, counterattacked and by September, the German Army was in retreat. An armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, a date commemorated in the United States as Veterans Day.[35]

Casualties

Heavy artillery at the Battle of the Somme

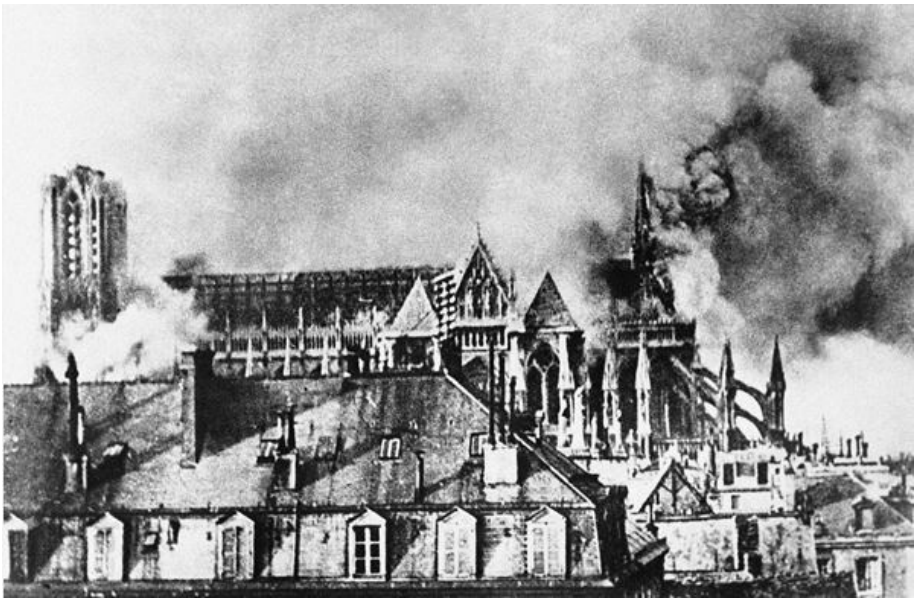
The total number of military and civilian casualties in the Great War is estimated at 40 million, about half being fatalities. Of the fatalities, 9.7 million were military personnel. The Allied (Entente) Powers lost about 5.7 million soldiers while the Central Powers lost about 4 million. Far from engaging in heroic combat, some two-thirds of the soldiers killed in battle were slaughtered by artillery and mortar fire from afar.[36] The wounded included those traumatized by "shell shock" from massive artillery bombardments. Poison gas killed some 90,000 soldiers, including 56,000 Russians, and wounded more than 1.1 million.

German horse artillery unit wearing gas masks (Imperial War Museum, London)

The Germans were the first to use poison (chlorine) gas in April 1915, although tear gas had previously been used by both sides. After deploring this "cowardly form of warfare," the British adopted it, first using poison gas in September 1915. By the end of the war, more than 124,000 tons of poison gases (chlorine, phosgene, and mustard) had been produced by all parties, with the United States taking a leading role in their production in 1917-18.[37]

Among civilians, famine and disease were the bigger killers. The German National Health Office reported in December 1918 that 763,000 civilians had died due to food shortages caused by the British blockade, which resulted in malnutrition and susceptibility to disease.

After four years of the blockade, women's mortality rate was up 51 percent and that of children under five, 50 percent. Another 100,000 Germans perished between the armistice on November 11, 1918, and the signing of the peace treaty on June 28, 1919, as the British maintained their blockade to keep pressure on German leaders to sign the peace treaty. Famine also stalked Russia and the Balkan states.[38]



Bombardment of the Cathedral of Reims, France, Sept. 1914 (AP photo)

Invading armies were prone to kill and abuse civilians when suppressing resistance. According to the historian Alan Kramer, the German Army intentionally executed 5,521 civilians in Belgium and 906 in France during its initial invasion. The victims included women and children, and especially men of military age. One German soldier who had participated in a massacre in the town of Dinant, Belgium, told his French captors, "We were given the order to kill all civilians shooting at us, but in reality the men of my regiment and I myself fired at all civilians we found in the houses from which we suspected there had been shots fired; in that way we killed women and even children."

The Russian Army, too, notes Kramer, "committed many acts of violence during its invasion of East Prussia in August/September 1914. Germany denounced the Russians for having devastated 39 towns and 1,900 villages and killed almost 1,500 civilians."[39] German artillery bombarded towns in northern France, including Paris, and both Germany and Great Britain employed aircraft to bomb each other's cities – a new terror of war.[40]
One atrocity that stands out was the Ottoman Empire's systematic assault on its Armenian minority. In response to Armenian agents aiding Allied forces in the Caucasus and Palestine, Ottoman authorities deemed the whole population a threat (there had been previous mass assaults on the Christian Armenians). Beginning in April 1915, the Ottoman military systematically killed thousands of Armenian men in cities such as Bitlis and Trebizond. Hundreds of thousands of women and children were marched south toward Syria without adequate food and water. An estimated 400,000 died from starvation, disease, and murder.

Twenty-eight countries, including the United States, have since recognized these actions as "genocide."[41]

Czar Nicholas on horseback blessing Russian troops

Total military and civilian deaths, country by country, in descending order, are estimated as follows: Russia, 3,311,000; Ottoman Empire 2,922,000; Germany 2,477,000; France 1,698,000; Austria-Hungary 1,567,000; Italy 1,240,000; Great Britain 995,000; Serbia 725,000; Romania 680,000; Bulgaria, 187,000; Greece 176,000; Belgium 121,000; United States 117,000; Portugal 89,000, India 74,000; Canada 67,000; Australia 62,000; New Zealand 18,000; South Africa 9,500; Newfoundland 1,200; and Japan 415. To these numbers may be added roughly four million people who died in conflicts attributable to the Great War between 1918 and 1923, including the civil wars in Russia, Hungary, and the collapsing Ottoman Empire.[42]

The memory of the Great War in the United States tends to highlight President Wilson's noble ideals and his inability to achieve them. In Europe and much of the rest of the world, it is the deadly horror of the war itself that is somberly recalled. "The magnitude of the slaughter in the war's entire span was beyond anything in European experience," writes Adam Hochschild:

> . . . more than 35 percent of all German men who were between the ages of 19 and 32 when the fighting broke out, for example, were killed in the next four and a half years, and many of the remainder grievously wounded. For France, the toll was proportionately even higher: one *half* of all Frenchmen aged 20 to 32 at the war's outbreak were dead when it was over. . . . Roughly 12 percent of all British soldiers who took part in the war were killed. . . . Even the victors were losers: Britain and France together suffered more than two million dead and ended the war deep in debt . . . The four-and-a-half year tsunami of destruction permanently darkened our worldview.[43]

Winston Churchill, appointed Minister of Munitions in 1917, mused that the war had left "a crippled, broken world." Lord Lansdowne (Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice), the former British foreign secretary, came to the realization in November 1917 that there was no goal or purpose that could justify continued slaughter. Writing to the *Daily Telegraph* on November 29, he cautioned British citizens that the war's "prolongation will spell ruin for the civilized world, and an infinite addition to the load of human suffering which already weights upon it." He predicted, "Just as this war has been more dreadful than any war in history, so we may be sure, would the next war be even more dreadful than this. The prostitution of science for purposes of pure destruction is not likely to stop short."[44]

Artistic rendering of two photos: a munitions train transporting shells to the front at the Somme and the Douaumont National Cemetery at the Verdun site (Erin Meisenzahl-Peace)

The war system and war guilt

Lord Lansdowne was right about the future. Sophisticated weaponry in the next world war obliterated whole cities, first by fire-bombing from the air, then by single nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the span of one lifetime, the character of warfare changed from cavalry charges on horseback to nuclear weapons delivered by aircraft. Of what benefit is science if its products destroy us?

British philosopher and Nobel Laureate Bertrand Russell likewise took note of the misdirection of science, writing in 1916, "Never before have so large a proportion of the population been engaged in fighting, and never before has the fighting been so murderous. All that science and organization have done to increase the efficiency of labour has been utilized to set free more men for the destructive work of the battlefield. . . . The degradation of science from its high function in ameliorating the lot of man is one of the most

painful aspects of the war." Russell also noted how fear and insecurity undermine peace, writing, "Militarists everywhere based their appeal upon fear: powerful neighbours, they say, are ready to attack us, and unless we are prepared we shall be overwhelmed."[45]


Lord Lansdowne

In the aftermath of the Great War, the victorious Allies were mainly concerned with dismantling German military power rather than reducing militarism *per se*. Allied leaders at the Paris Peace conference in 1919 pinned the sole blame for the outbreak of war on Germany. Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty, the "war guilt" clause, spelled it out: Germany was responsible "for causing all the loss and damage" suffered by the Allied nations "as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies." This admission of guilt, which the German government was forced to acknowledge, provided the legal basis for reparation payments from the vanquished to the victors. To be sure, Germany was not innocent of the charge of aggression, having initiated the attack on Belgium, but the exclusive focus on its role in causing the war allowed the victorious powers to avoid investigation into the deeper causes of war of which they were an integral part.[46] What were these deeper causes? The following factors provide a glimpse of the interconnected war system:


Bertrand Russell

International power politics

- imperial quests for territories, spheres of influence, and economic advantage;
- arms buildups, naval races, and the quest for military superiority;
- the use of diplomacy to gain advantage rather than settle differences;
- the absence, lack of enforcement, or abuse of international laws and norms against aggression;

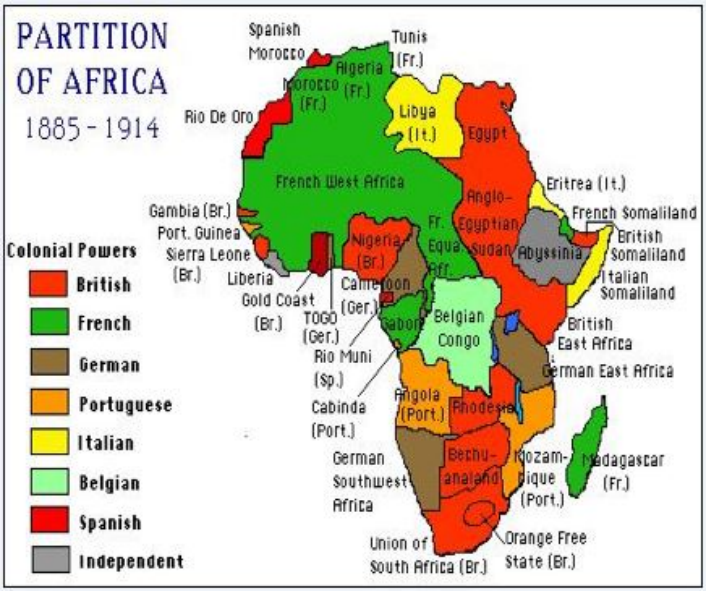
Domestic institutions and policies

- the use of war to foster militant nationalism and divert social reforms;
- authoritarian decision-making systems and the repression of dissent;
- military-industrial complexes that profit from arm sales and war;
- forced conscription of citizens to fight in wars;

Beliefs and propaganda

- state propaganda that blurs the line between aggression and defense, that dehumanizes the "enemy," and that indoctrinates citizens with myths of national righteousness;
- racist and pseudo-scientific beliefs that foster notions of racial and national superiority and assume the right to rule over others;
- cultural ideas about manhood, heroism, and war that lead men and boys to *want* to fight in order to prove themselves;
- military indoctrination that numbs the conscience of soldiers, giving rise to atrocities.

Imperial quests and great power rivalries



The imperial nations of Europe carved up Africa into colonies, with the democratic nations of Britain and France claiming the lion's share

Viewing the war from a broad perspective, it may be seen that Austria-Hungary's aggressive attempt to incorporate Serbia into its empire, which officially catalyzed the Great War, was not different in kind from actions taken by Great Britain to bring East Africa into its realm, or by France to establish its authority over Southeast Asia. The difference was that Serbia is located in southern Europe, an area of vital interest to both Russia and Austria-Hungary, whereas Africa and Asia were deemed peripheral interests. In all cases, nonetheless, imperial force was employed. The historian Jay Winter comments that "the violence Europeans normally practiced on African and Asian" peoples for centuries "came home to roost" in 1914. "What was tolerable when it was Africans, black men or yellow men, becomes intolerable when it has to do with white Europeans. The imperial system allowed for absolutely appalling behavior in the periphery."[47]

Allied leaders condemned German militarism and atrocities, and rightly so, yet Great Britain maintained the largest navy and the most expansive colonial empire; and British authorities were not hesitant to use force to maintain and expand their empire. In the Boer War of 1899-1902, in which the British fought Dutch Boers for control of mineral-rich regions in South Africa, British authorities instituted a "scorched earth" campaign aimed at destroying Boer farming communities and food stocks. Destitute Boers arrived at hastily-built internment camps surrounded by barbed wire where they died in droves from famine and disease. "When a final tally was made after the war," writes Adam Hochschild, "it would show that 27,927 Boers – almost all of them women and children – had died in the camps, more than

twice the number of Boer soldiers killed in combat."[48] British ruthlessness in South Africa may be compared to German brutality in Southwest Africa (modern day Namibia), where German troops violently suppressed a Herrero uprising between 1904 and 1907, then banned the indigenous people from their own country.[49]

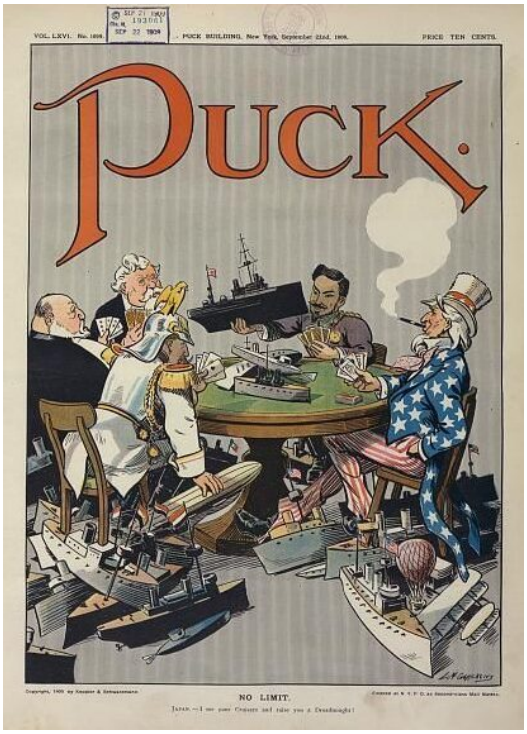
Germany congealed as a nation in January 1871, following the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Germany's industrial revolution proceeded rapidly thereafter, providing the economic basis for building a powerful army and navy. France, the loser in the Franco-Prussian War, greatly resented ceding the Alsace and Lorraine regions to Germany. Thereafter, French leaders embarked on a militarization program that conscripted all men between 20 and 40 years of age for five years of military service. "For the next 30 years," writes the historian Gordon Martel, "France consistently spent more money on its army than Germany did, and at least twice as much on its navy. By 1900, France's regular army was slightly larger than Germany's."[50]

Russia also sought to counter the military potential of Germany as well as that of Austria-Hungary. In November 1913, Czar Nicholas II adopted a "Great Military Programme" that called for a 40 percent increase in the size of the standing army over the next four years, and an expansion of the nation's railway network, made possible by French loans, in order to facilitate rapid mobilization of troops. "One ironic outcome of the Russian undertaking," notes Martel, "was to encourage those strategists in Germany who advocated a 'preventative' war."[51] Given the amount of time it took to organize, equip, and move troops to the front, the nation that mobilized its army first would gain great advantage in a war; hence, the German government's view of the Russian mobilization as an act of war in August 1914.

In the decade prior to the Great War, Great Britain and Germany engaged in a naval arms race. Kaiser Wilhelm II was a disciple of Alfred Thayer Mahan, the American author of *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (1890). Mahan identified sea power as the single most important ingredient of a nation's foreign policy, viewing Great Britain as the model naval power. The impetus for Germany's naval buildup came in 1897 when the British Foreign Office threatened to blockade the German coast if Germany provided assistance to the Dutch Boers in South Africa. The following year, Germany undertook an aggressive program to build a fleet matching that of Great Britain. The British government responded with a buildup of its own, in keeping with its "two-power standard" that required the Royal Navy to be at least the size of the next *two* largest navies combined.

HMS Dreadnought, 1906

Such arms races were stimulated by advances in weapons technology. Machine guns, first manufactured in the 1880s, became lighter and more lethal, their capacity increasing to 500 rounds per minute by 1914, then to over 1,000 rounds per minute by 1918. Long-range artillery was developed and produced, such as the French 75, that could fire shells some twenty miles in distance. The British construction of the *HMS Dreadnought* in 1906, a huge armored battleship, prompted Germany to follow suit. When war came in 1914, Britain had twenty Dreadnoughts and Germany had thirteen. Germany countered Britain's superiority on the high seas with torpedo-firing submarines, which fundamentally changed the nature and rules of naval warfare. A new terror emerged as the magnificent invention of the airplane was fitted with bombs and machine guns for assaults from the air. Most terrifying was the use of poison gas, despite agreement among the great powers at the Hague conference of 1907 to prohibit its use.



An irreverent view of the naval arms race, Puck magazine, Sept. 1909

Each nation had its geopolitical objectives prior to the Great War. Germany wanted to

expand its global economic influence and establish its "rightful" place in the sun as a great imperial power, expanding its colonies in Africa and Asia and possibly its European land mass. France wanted the return of the Alsace-Lorraine region from Germany and possibly the dismemberment of Germany in order to permanently end Germany's military threat. Great Britain wanted to end Germany's challenge to its naval supremacy, secure a stable balance of power on the European continent (no single dominant nation), and extend its empire in the Middle East. Russia wanted a warm water port on the Black Sea, possibly Constantinople, access to the Turkish straits, and more influence in the Balkans as the self-proclaimed protector of Slavic peoples. Austria-Hungary similarly wanted greater influence in the Balkans, including the incorporation of Serbia into its empire. Italy wanted parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Ottoman Empire wanted to keep what it had, especially against British and French encroachment.

Ideas and propaganda

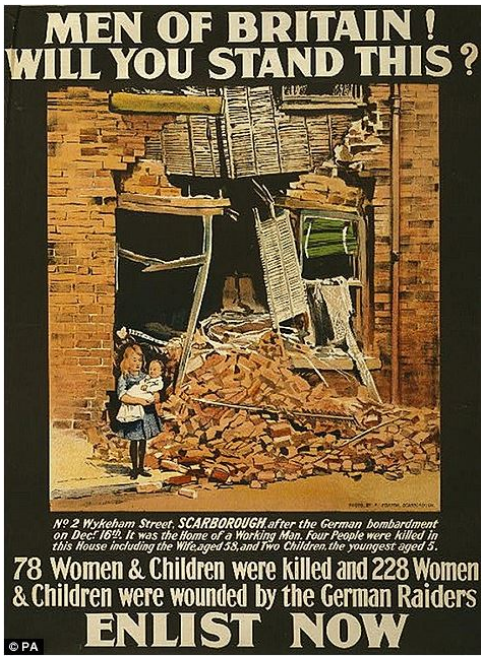
The quest for military superiority and empire was underpinned by Social Darwinist ideas that permeated European and American intellectual culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Charles Darwin's evolutionary concepts were applied, or misapplied, to human societies so as to justify racism, imperialism, militarism, and free market capitalism, all of which were said to conform to the "natural order" of life. The phrase "survival of the fittest" was coined by British philosopher Herbert Spencer in 1864.[52] Fifty years later, in December 1914, former American president Theodore Roosevelt delivered a paper to the American Sociological Congress, writing that "every expansion of a great civilized power means a victory for law, order, and righteousness," and that peace would come to the world only through "the warlike power of a civilized people."[53]

In Germany, General Friedrich von Berhhardi similarly viewed war as a necessary agent of civilized "progress." In his book, *Germany and the Next War* (1911), the 65-year-old general wrote, "War is not merely a necessary element in the life of nations, but an indispensable factor of culture, in which a true civilized nation finds its highest expression of strength and vitality. . . . Without war, inferior or decaying races would easily choke the growth of healthy budding elements, and a universal decadence would follow."[54]

Berhhardi's book turned out to be the perfect fodder for British propaganda, as the threat of German militarism was used to justify their own. Just 6,000 copies of Bernhardi's book were printed in Germany, notes the historian Justus D. Doenecke, and "they made little impression on ordinary Germans. In 1912, the British translated the volume and, when war erupted, circulated it widely" in both Britain and the United States in order to prove the malicious intentions of "the Huns."[55]

In the propaganda battles that accompanied the Great War, each side painted its own military policies as protective and noble in intent, whereas the rival power's military policies were denounced as aggressive and evil in design. While the Allied Powers stood on firmer ground as far as self-defense

justifications were concerned, all sought to advance their empires. Beyond defending one's nation, war was also touted in all nations as a proving ground for manhood and a pathway to heroism. The British were alone among the European powers in not establishing a system of conscription (until the spring of 1916); hence the government produced a prodigious amount of propaganda aimed at encouraging or shaming young men to join the British Expeditionary Forces. Attacks on the home front, such as the German bombardment of Scarborough on December 16, 1914, greatly aided recruitment efforts.



A recruiting campaign was mounted following the German bombing of the English seaside town of Scarborough

Another use of propaganda was to undermine the enemy's will to fight, whether by predicting the enemy's eventual loss or by encouraging rebellions by dissatisfied minorities. Great Britain encouraged Arabs in the Ottoman Empire to join British forces, playing up Turkish oppression and promising independent Arab states after the war. Germany, meanwhile, encouraged the Ottoman sultan to declare *jihad*, or holy war, against the "infidel" British who established a protectorate over Egypt in 1914.

Great power diplomacy and cooperation

Although the great powers avidly competed with one other for military advantage, colonies, resources, and markets, they also engaged in diplomatic negotiations and bargained with each other to forestall war. Wars, after all, were costly in terms of blood and treasure, and they incurred risks for rulers: citizens and subjects might find the costs intolerable and overthrow the regime (as happened in Russia in 1917); ethnic-national groups might seek independence in the throes of war (as Irish rebels did in Great Britain in 1916); and other empires might take territory or force submission if the war was lost (as happened to the Central Powers). Diplomacy, in many instances, was the safer bet. In 1911, Great Britain mediated a showdown between France and Germany over control of Morocco; in the end, France retained control of Morocco (the Moroccans had no say) and Germany received two slices of the French Congo (the Congolese similarly were given no voice).

"Hark, Hark, the dogs do bark," an English nursery rhyme transformed into a political cartoon

Diplomacy sometimes entailed forming alliances with other powers, whether for protection against attack or for mutual gain. In 1879, Germany and Austria-Hungary formed a Dual Alliance. Three years later, Italy joined the two, making it a Triple Alliance. In 1894, France and Russia established an alliance as a counterweight to the latter. Although Great Britain competed with France for colonies in Africa, and with Russia for spheres of influence in Asia, it nonetheless relied on these two states as counterweights to the Triple Alliance and thus signed an entente with France in 1904, and one with Russia in 1907. The competing alliances were designed to deter war, but instead they turned Europe into a powder keg waiting to ignite.

The underlying problem was not the balance-of-power alliance system *per se*, but rather the grasping states seeking territory or dominant influence in regions. Serbia, Greece, Romania, and especially Austria-Hungary all sought to expand their borders. In 1908, Russia reluctantly allowed Austria-Hungary to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina (located next to Serbia). In 1914, however, Russia refused to allow Austria-Hungary to take over Serbia. Mobilizations took place, the alliances kicked in, and world war erupted in a flash.
The period before the Great War also saw times when the great powers cooperated in their imperial pursuits. In the winter of 1884-85, representatives of twelve European states and the Ottoman Empire met in Berlin to jointly carve up the African continent into colonies. Clear territorial boundaries, it was understood, would serve to avoid conflicts between the colonizers, allowing them to concentrate on exploiting their assigned regions. Always seeking noble rationales to justify imperialism and aggression, the colonizers declared their intention to end Islamic and African slavery as part of their civilizing missions.

Imperial forces in Beijing following defeat Boxer Rebellion, 1900

Another point of cooperation was the Open Door policy toward China, first put forth by Great Britain in 1898.[56] This tenuous agreement stipulated that all of the major powers, including the United States, would have equal trading rights in China and that China itself would remain whole. The policy was designed to prevent one great power from dominating China and to prevent wars among the imperial powers. When, in 1900, Chinese nationalists pushed back against foreign domination in the Boxer Rebellion, the imperial powers (Great Britain, France, the United States, Germany, Russia, and Japan) organized a joint expeditionary force of 20,000 soldiers to suppress it.

Such manifestations of cooperative *Pax Imperium* encouraged some imperialists as well as some peacemakers to believe that a permanent alliance of great power interests could provide the basis for a stable peace. Andrew Carnegie, the American steel magnate and philanthropist, gave an address in 1905 in which he proposed a "League of Peace" that would establish arbitration mechanisms to curb "the crime of destroying human life by war." The fact that six great powers had "cooperated in quelling the recent Chinese disorders and rescuing their representatives in Peking" gave him hope that the great nations "could banish war."[57] One manifestation of this melding of power-elitism and peacemaking was The Hague Peace Convention of 1899, which established a Permanent Court of Arbitration. The court, notes the historian Robert E. Hannigan, "was principally designed to stabilize the status quo."[58] The idea of a permanent international association, the League of Nations, was similarly envisioned as a means of stabilizing the world order, perhaps modifying it but not overthrowing it.

Cousin monarchs of Britain, Germany, and Russia – German Emperor Wilhelm II's grandmother was Queen Victoria of England

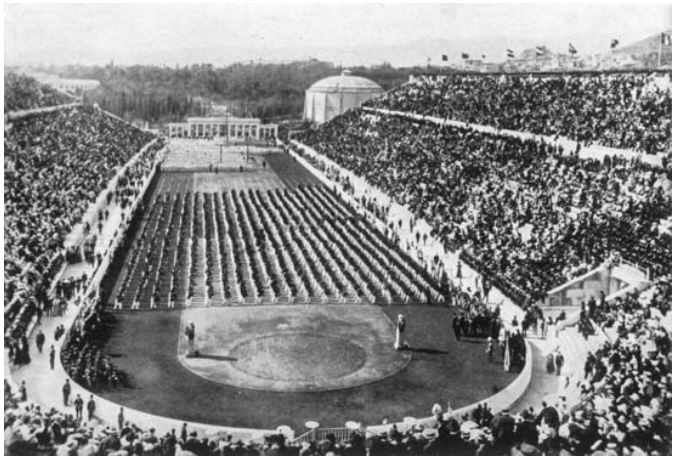
One of the great ironies of European power struggles was that the European royalty was connected by marriage and family. England's King George V was the first cousin of Czar Nicholas II of Russia on his mother's side, the two looking like twin brothers, and the first cousin of Kaiser Wilhelm II on his father's side. As children, the three future monarchs played together on holiday excursions. Czar Nicholas was married to a German-born princess, Alexandra Feodorovna. He named Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany as godfather to one of his children. Both Nicholas and Wilhelm were at the bedside of their grandmother, Queen Victoria of England, when she died. Royal etiquette and diplomacy continued as the crisis over Serbia unfolded in mid-1914. According to Adam Hochschild:

> In late June, a squadron of British battleships and cruisers were welcome guests at Germany's annual Elbe Regatta. Loving medals and epaulets as much as ever, the Kaiser proudly donned his gold braid as an honorary British admiral of the fleet, and British and German officers attended races and banquet together. When the Royal Navy warships weighed anchor and sailed for home, their commander signaled his German counterpart: "Friends in past, and friends forever." And why not?[59]

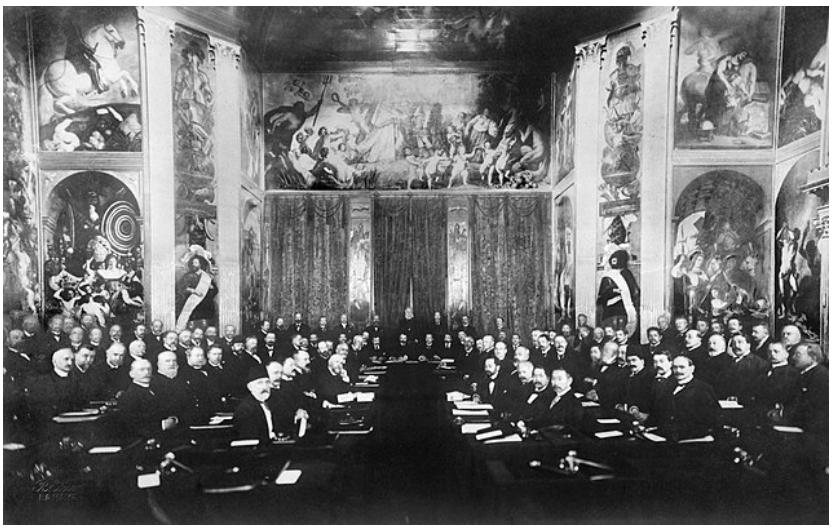
European peace activism

Why not peace? Despite the multiple factors that contributed to the outbreak of war in August 1914, the Great War was not fated. There had been no massive war in Europe since the Napoleonic wars ended in 1815. A cautious degree of optimism prevailed in many quarters that enlightened policies and education could keep major wars at bay. In the early 20th century, hundreds of local, regional, national, and international peace groups worked to diminish militarism and naval arms races; to build an international structure of laws and institutions that could resolve international conflicts; and to encourage friendship among peoples of different nations.

The International Peace Bureau, based in Berne, Switzerland, coordinated the activities of more than 100 national and regional peace societies. International arbitration and legal structures were promoted by the International Arbitration and Peace Association, based in London, and the International Council of Women, based in Washington, D.C. Universal Peace Congresses, held in different capitals of Europe, brought peace activists together from across the continent.[60] The spirit of peace extended to sports


Olympic games in Athens, 1896

On August 24, 1898, Czar Nicholas II issued an invitation to the nations of the world to assemble at The Hague (Netherlands) for a peace conference. He motives were not entirely idealistic. The Russian government, like other continental powers, had found expenditures for military equipment rising enormously each year. Unable to afford both new field-artillery pieces, such as the "French 75," and new battleships, the czar wished for a moratorium on land ordnance in order to build a modern navy. The czar's invitation nonetheless elicited great hopes for peace. From May 18 to July 29, 1899, some 96 delegates from 26 nations discussed disarmament and other measures.

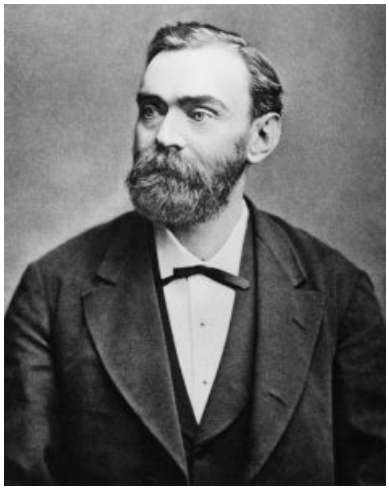

First International Peace Conference, The Hague, May-June 1899
(photo: Imperial War Museum)

The conference failed to achieve its primary objective of limiting the size of armed forces, but it did adopt conventions prohibiting the use of certain weapons, such as asphyxiating gases and expanding bullets; and it created a Permanent Court of Arbitration to adjudicate disputes between conflicting parties. According to the historian A. C. F. Beales, the conference

furthermore “established for every Government the right to offer mediation without the offer being open to interpretation as an unfriendly act,” and created a Commission of Inquiry, composed primarily of neutrals, to set up machinery to mediate disputes between conflicting parties. Following the creation of the court, fourteen cases were settled prior to the outbreak of the Great War.[61]

Women peace advocates of different nations played an important role in promoting the conference. They gathered more than one million signatures on a peace petition and presented it to delegates (all men); pressed legislators in eighteen countries to pass identical resolutions in support of peace prior to the opening of the conference; and organized the first worldwide Woman’s Peace Demonstration, coordinating gatherings in a number of cities.[62] At the Second Hague Peace Conference in 1907, representatives from forty-four nations agreed to resolutions prohibiting attacks on undefended “towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings,” and the use of “poisonous weapons,” establishing norms that were later broken — to the detriment of both sides in the Great War. The conference ended with a call for a third conference in 1915, which never materialized.[63]

Peace activists and organizations could be found in every European country before the war. Alfred Nobel, the Swedish-born scientist who invented dynamite and made other fundamental innovations in weapons technology, pondered whether the development of increasingly powerful explosives would create a war machine so terrible that countries would be deterred from engaging in war. He developed a strong interest in peacemaking, or making war obsolete, encouraged in part by his correspondence with Bertha von Suttner, a Czech-Austrian peace activist and author of the popular antiwar novel, *Lay Down Your Arms* (1889). Their letters continued for almost two decades. Nobel made his contribution to peace by creating in his will the annual Nobel Peace Prize, first awarded in 1901.[64]



Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel established the annual Nobel Peace Prize

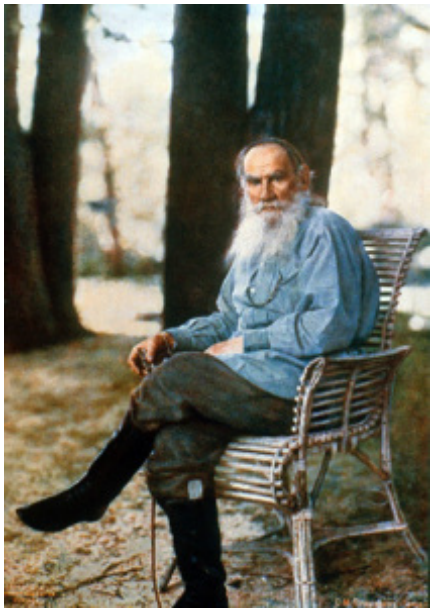
In France, the lawyer and writer Émile Arnaud coined the word “pacifism” in 1901, defining it as an active peacemaking orientation that embraces rational conflict resolution methods. The term would later be defined more narrowly as the absolute refusal to kill or participate in war. Arnaud prepared the *Code de las paix* (1910), a philosophical treatise designed to help delegates to the next Hague Conference agree on common precepts of international behavior.[65]

In the Scandinavian countries, peace advocates were most successful in pushing their governments to take concrete steps toward peace. The Danish Government, prodded by

legislator Frederic Bajer, negotiated arbitration treaties with the Netherlands (1904), Italy (1906), and Great Britain (1906), mandating the peaceful settlement of all disputes without qualification. Denmark and Sweden-Norway agreed to remain perpetually neutral in all wars (Sweden and Norway amicably separated in 1905).

In Czarist Russia, Count Leo Tolstoy appealed to conscience, calling on all Christians to renounce their participation in every facet of war, including military preparations, conscription, war taxes, and patriotic pomp. In *Christianity and Patriotism* (1894), he denounced patriotism as "nothing but an instrument for the attainment of the government's ambitious and mercenary aims, and a renunciation of human dignity, common sense, and conscience by the governed, and a slavish submission to those who hold power." The Russian Orthodox Church, in league with the czars, excommunicated him. Among those inspired by Tolstoy's ideas were the Dukhobors, a peasant sect from the Caucasus, which emigrated to Canada after one of its members, a village schoolteacher, was imprisoned for refusing military service.[66]

Austrian author and peace advocate Baroness Bertha von Suttner



Russian author and Christian pacifist Leo Tolstoy

Perhaps the most talked about critique of war in the pre-war era was Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion*, published in London in 1909. It was translated into eleven languages and became the subject of many public and academic discussions. His thesis was basically that a modern war among the great powers would prove so destructive that there would be no clear winners and losers, that all would lose. As such, war no longer served any useful political purpose. Going to war, he told the London *Daily Chronicle*, would be "the most stupendous folly any modern nation can commit." Still, Angell was not optimistic that the great powers would avoid war, as not until "the millions really perceive that truth" (of the destructiveness of modern warfare) would politicians devote "some of the money used for warlike preparations to the scientific business of improving humanity."[67]

In Great Britain, peace with Germany was encouraged by socialists, pacifists, and groups such as the Anglo-German Friendship Society and the Associated Councils of Churches for Fostering Friendly Relations between the British and German Peoples. At the socialist Second International conference in Copenhagen in 1910, James Keir Hardie, leader of the

Independent Labor Party, proposed that, in the event of war, workers in all countries affected should immediately strike in order to bring the war to a halt. French socialists supported the idea.[68]

The possibility of a European socialist *entente* emerged in 1912. In Germany, the socialist-oriented Social Democratic Party (SPD) became the largest single party in the national legislature (Reichstag) that year, an achievement celebrated by French socialists as "a victory of the proletariat as a whole" and "an expression of the universal desire for peace." Socialists also made political gains in France, Italy, and Belgium. Kaiser Wilhelm sought to blunt the "corrupting influence" of the socialists by banning SPD literature from army barracks and prohibiting SPD party members from serving in the officer corps. Austria-Hungary took similar steps to repress socialist antiwar influence.[69]

When Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914, Europe's socialist leaders held an emergency meeting in Brussels, Belgium. Attending were Kier Hardie from Great Britain, Jean Jaurés from France, Rosa Luxemburg and Hugo Haase from Germany, and other representatives. The delegates did not endorse a general strike but instead passed a general antiwar resolution – to no effect. In a last moment of international solidarity, Jaurés stood with his arm around Haase, co-chair of the German Social Democrats, before an antiwar rally of 7,000 people. The crowd sang "The Internationale" and chanted "*Guerre a la guerre!*" (War against war) as it marched through the streets.[70] Upon his return to Paris, Jaurés was assassinated by a militant nationalist.

French Socialist Party leader Jean Jaurés

In Berlin, the Kaiser had absolute power to declare war, but German legislators held the power of the purse and could choose not to fund war mobilization. On August 4, despite pleas from Haase, the SPD joined other German political parties in approving war credits, accepting the argument that Russia's mobilization threatened Germany. Socialist legislators in Belgium and France similarly joined national unity governments as German troops crossed their borders.[71]

When news of the outbreak of war reached an ecumenical Christian conference being held in Konstanz, Germany, two of the attendees, Henry Hodgkin, an English Quaker, and Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze, a German Lutheran, made a mutual commitment before parting. Though their countries would fight each other, they pledged, "We are one in Christ and can never be at war." Upon return to England, Hodgkin helped found the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, a transnational pacifist organization.[72]

Seven of the eight major combatants in the Great War had deep roots in Christianity (Austria-Hungary, Russia, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States), but national identities, loyalties, and power structures had the stronger pull. Neither socialist worker

solidarity nor Christian religious identity nor international peace activism would stop the guns of August. According to peace historian David Cortright:

> The international peace movement reached the apogee of its public influence and support in the years immediately preceding World War I. A survey of the international movement at the time counted 190 peace societies, some with thousands of members, in dozens of countries…. Yet for all the apparent strength of the peace movement, it was far too weak politically and ideologically to counter the vast historical forces that were propelling Europe toward disaster.[73]

Peace advocacy proved difficult during the war, as governments deemed it contrary to the patriotic war spirit, if not treasonous. Especially in the last two years of the war, prominent citizens were imprisoned, including the German socialist deputies Karl Liebknecht and Wilhelm Dittmann, the former French Minister of Finance Joseph Caillaux, the British philosopher Bertrand Russell, and the Italian socialist leader Costantino Lazzari.[74] Women peace activists made notable efforts to dilute national animosities, holding an international peace conference at The Hague in April 1915 (See section VIII). Many looked to the United States and President Woodrow Wilson to mediate a peace agreement, but the Wilson administration moved in the opposite direction. When the U.S. entered the war, it imprisoned Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs and hundreds of other peace advocates.

The unofficial truce, Christmas 1914

Why not peace? The question was no doubt on the minds of German, British, French, and Belgian soldiers on Christmas Day 1914, when they left their trenches and mingled amiably with each other in "no man's land." The story of this impromptu, unauthorized truce was told by numerous soldiers afterward. It is remembered today as an instance in which the men's sense of common humanity, aided by a common religious tradition, overrode their military training and nationalistic indoctrination that so dehumanized the enemy.

British and German soldiers fraternizing on the Western Front on Christmas Day 1914 (Imperial War Museum)

On Christmas eve, in various parts of the trench line, British soldiers noticed strange lights on the German side. Suspicious at first, they recognized the lights as decorated Christmas trees. Graham Williams, a rifleman in the London Rifle Brigade, recalled: "When we started up [singing] 'O Come All Ye Faithful,' the Germans immediately joined in singing the same hymn to the Latin words '*Adeste Fideles*,' and I thought, well, this was really a most extraordinary thing – two nations both singing the same carol in the middle of a war."

On Christmas morning, German soldiers approached the Allied trenches without arms. Cautiously, Allied soldiers went to meet them. Then, according to British Second Lieutenant Dougan Slater, "in about two minutes the ground between the two lines of trenches was swarming with men and officers of both sides, shaking hands and wishing each other a happy Christmas. . . . For the rest of the day, nobody fired a shot." Soldiers exchanged photos, uniform buttons, caps and badges, and shared liquor, tobacco, and various foods, such as chocolate, plum pudding, and sausages. As Corporal John Ferguson described it: "We shook hands, wished each other a Merry Christmas, and soon were conversing as if we had known each other for years . . . Here we were laughing and chatting to men whom only a few hours before we were trying to kill." The British Bedfordshire Regiment produced a soccer ball and a game was played until the ball got caught in barbed wire. "There was not an atom of hate on either side that day," wrote Bruce Bairnsfather afterward.
The following day, the army commands of both sides sternly condemned the unauthorized truce and fraternizing with the enemy. The killing resumed. The experience was not repeated on the Western Front until the end of the war.[75]
*** * ***

III. Origins of U.S. intervention in the Great War

On December 8, 1914, four months into the Great War, President Woodrow Wilson stood before Congress and delivered his Second Annual Message. He assured Americans that U.S. national security was *not* at stake. "We are at peace with all the world," he said. "No one . . . can say that there is reason to fear that from any quarter our independence or the integrity of our territory is threatened." And yet, in another part of his speech, the president called on Americans to begin mobilizing for war. The government, said Wilson, should "provide a system by which every citizen who will volunteer for the training may be made familiar with the use of modern arms, the rudiments of drill and maneuver, and the maintenance and sanitation of camps. We should encourage such training and make it a means of discipline which our young men will learn to value."[76] There was no larger explanation attached to this request, no speculation as to how or why the U.S. might need a sizable force of fighting men; only an inference that the United States must be militarily prepared for an unspecified future threat.

> "If our citizens are ever to fight effectively upon a sudden summons, they must know how modern fighting is done." -President Wilson, Dec. 7, 1915

The following year, on December 7, 1915, President Wilson inched further toward military preparations, warning, "If our citizens are ever to fight effectively upon a sudden summons, they must know how modern fighting is done . . . [and] must be fitted to play the great role in the world." He asked Congress to approve funds to increase the strength of the regular army from 102,985 to 134,707 enlisted men, and to prepare another 400,000 young men for military training, "raised in increments of 133,000 a year throughout a period of three years." To fund these and other military initiatives, Wilson asked for additional revenues of $93.8 million for fiscal year 1917.[77]

Popular American historical accounts have portrayed Woodrow Wilson as a reluctant warrior who tried but failed to keep the U.S. out of war; then once committed, pursued war to a successful conclusion. Such accounts generally cite as justifications for U.S. entry into the war Germany's adoption of unrestricted submarine warfare on February 1, 1917, and the Zimmerman note – a secret diplomatic communication from the German Foreign Office, revealed on March 1, that proposed a military alliance between Germany and Mexico if the U.S. declared war on Germany. Wilson's larger rationales for intervention – to protect "the rights of all mankind," to make the world "safe for democracy," to secure "peace without victory" – have been treated as sincere, if utopian ideals. Wilson has also been credited with the birth of the League of Nations, even though the Senate rejected U.S. participation in it. Robert Hannigan notes that the portrayal of the president as one driven by "disinterested altruism" and "an unwavering commitment to principle . . . first came broadly to be accepted in popular culture during his presidency. Perhaps this explains why it has been so easy for people to repeat it ever since." Hannigan takes issue with this self-serving view, arguing that "it should never have gained the kind of authority it has, above all because its origins lay precisely in how the president advertised himself":

> Too many scholars have also failed to explore the meaning of the terms and concepts Wilson employed in his writings and speeches. Wilson's rhetoric begs to be compared with his practice. Likewise, historians and biographers have no justification for saying that he was committed, for instance, to peace – which he most definitely thought he was – without exploring what Wilson implicitly meant by that. The same is true of his commitments to democracy and self-determination. [78]

There are, in fact, a number of scholars, including Hannigan, who have examined Wilson's policies in context, exposed the contradictions of his idealistic rhetoric, considered the arguments of his many critics, and contemplated the road not taken, that of remaining at peace. The historical account offered here builds on such works, from John Kenneth Turner's *Shall It Be Again?* (1922) to Thomas Fleming's *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I* (2003).[79] The main points of the story are as follows:

> Soon after the war began, the Wilson administration unofficially aligned the U.S. with the Allied Powers, providing Great Britain and France with arms, ammunition, food, manufactured goods, and large loans.

After initially offering to mediate the conflict, President Wilson took no action in this direction and furthermore rejected a number of opportunities to work in concert with neutral nations to promote mediated peace negotiations.

The administration selectively applied the principle of “neutral trade rights,” tolerating the British blockade that shut off U.S. trade with Germany while threatening war if Germany reciprocated, not merely against U.S. merchant ships (attacks were rare), but against British and French merchant and passenger ships.

Between September 1915 and March 1916, Wilson’s personal envoy, Edward House, engaged in secret negotiations with British Foreign Affairs Secretary Edward Grey to bring the U.S. into the war under the false pretense of holding a peace conference. Although the plan was never put into effect, it was approved by President Wilson, indicating his willingness to go to war.

The Wilson administration’s furtive movements toward war were reinforced by the growing U.S. economic stake in an Allied victory, including the repayment of billions of dollars in loans.

Once Wilson was re-elected in November 1916, having claimed credit for keeping the U.S. out of war, he refused to undertake measures to actually keep the nation out of war. He did not prevent or even warn U.S. passengers traveling on belligerent ships in war zones, knowing that the loss of American lives would arouse the American war spirit.

Germany’s turn to unrestricted submarine warfare on February 1, 1917, and the revelation of the Zimmerman note one month later did, in fact, arouse the American war spirit. Wilson presented the war option as if it were the only honorable alternative.

Once war was declared, the Wilson administration created an official propaganda agency to drown out contrary views; and enacted repressive laws to silence citizens who continued to advocate for peace.

It would appear that President Wilson had three essential goals as the Great War unfolded in Europe: (1) to assure that Great Britain and France would emerge as the victors; (2) to enable the United States to play a significant role in the construction of the postwar world order; and ultimately (3) to establish the U.S. as a major world power, equal to or greater than the imperial nations of Europe. According to Hannigan, "The grand prize he sought was not only the military defeat of Germany, but also leverage over his allies in arranging the peace.... His implicit model was in fact the *Pax Britannica* of the previous century, with the United States now playing a key role."[80] This larger goal of a U.S. dominated international order, or *Pax Americana*, did not necessitate U.S. entry into the war, but it did press constantly against the official policy of neutrality which offered insufficient leverage for Wilson's grand ambitions to remake the world order suitable to U.S. interests.

The administration's most immediate concern was to ensure that Great Britain and France defeated Germany. To this end, the U.S. provided the Allies with arms and goods, accepted the British blockade of Germany, and protested strongly when Germany instituted its submarine cordon around the British Isles. It may be that Wilson would have preferred to achieve his objectives without U.S. entry into the war, but his decisions and actions moved the country step-by-step toward war. He drew a line in the sand in demanding that Germany end its U-boat activity, and when Germany crossed it, he took the nation to war. There is no doubt that Wilson could have kept the U.S. out of war by prohibiting U.S. merchant ships and passengers from traveling in declared war zones. Moreover, he had the public mandate to do it, as he had won re-election in November 1916 in part on the campaign slogan, "He Kept Us Out of War."

British connections

One reason for the Wilson administration's bias toward Great Britain was that both President Wilson and his primary foreign policy adviser, Edward House, had family and cultural ties there. Wilson's mother and House's father were born in England. At age sixteen, young "Tommy" Woodrow Wilson hung a portrait of British Prime Minister William Gladstone over his desk and announced that he, too, would become a statesman.[81] Wilson regarded Great Britain as a natural ally of the U.S. in international relations, notwithstanding economic competition. As president of Princeton University in 1904,

he declared, “The Anglo-Saxon people have undertaken to reconstruct the affairs of the world, and it would be a shame upon them to withdraw their hand.”[82]


“Tommy” Woodrow Wilson, 1875

British leaders, for their part, determined that the benefits of their economic blockade of Germany were worth the tension it caused with the United States – as long as that tension could be kept within bounds. This task was left to British Foreign Secretary Edward Grey. Sir Grey managed the U.S.-British relationship with finesse, and consistently to the British advantage. As Grey wrote in his memoirs, “If we quarreled with the United States we could not get that supply [of arms and goods]. . . . The object of diplomacy, therefore, was to secure the maximum of blockade that could be enforced without a rupture with the United States.”[83]


British Foreign Affairs Secretary Sir Edward Grey

Grey’s long experience in diplomacy and foreign affairs stood in sharp contrast to that of President Wilson and his key advisers, including Walter Hines Page, a former editor who was appointed ambassador to Britain, and especially Edward House, a political consultant with whom Grey kept in constant contact. According to the historian H. W. Brands, Wilson’s “training for the presidency, such as it was, lay almost entirely on the domestic side of American politics. As an academic at Princeton and elsewhere, he had studied American government, with an emphasis on the operations of Congress. His only experience in public office was a two-year stint as governor of New Jersey. In his fifty-six years of life he hadn’t traveled much, nor was he fluent in foreign languages. Indeed, he had showed scant interest in the world beyond American borders. As a result, he was abysmally prepared to assume the responsibilities of American diplomacy.” On the eve of his inauguration in March 1913, Wilson commented, “It would be the irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs.” [84]

Apart from Wilson’s inexperience, on August 6, 1914, only days after the war broke out, the president lost his wife, Ellen Axson Wilson, mother of their three children, from Bright’s Disease, a kidney ailment. The president was traumatized for a time and came to rely on his personal confidante, Edward House, all the more strongly. (Wilson married Edith Bolling Galt in December 1915.)

White House adviser Edward House with President Wilson (right)

House had no diplomatic training or governmental experience whatsoever before being assigned by Wilson to negotiate the most important foreign policy issues of the day with the most important nations of the world. Heir to his father's commercial empire that included mercantile and banking interests, House grew up in Texas and became a political consultant to Texas governors. He was given the honorary title of "colonel" by Texas Governor James "Big Jim" Hogg after helping the latter win an election. House adopted the title as his own despite having no military experience.

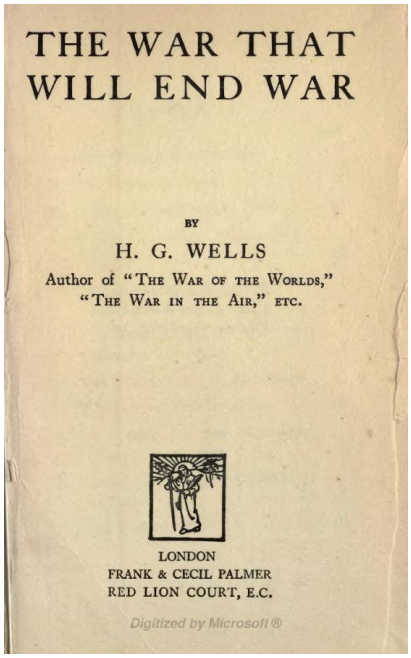
In 1912, House helped Wilson win the presidential election and thereafter became the president's most trusted adviser. That same year, House published a strange, dystopian novel, *Philip Dru: Administrator*, which featured a political genius who led a disorderly nation into an era of greatness by persuading people to make him their supreme autocrat.[85]
Sir Grey deciphered the psychology of the Wilson administration early on and appealed to the president's outsized desire to be the moral leader of the world. In February 1915, during House's first wartime visit to London, Grey wrote to House, thinking of Wilson, "The more I consider this war, the more I feel that your government must take a hand in the larger aspects of peace, if human ideals are to get and keep the ascendancy over material militarism and political ambition."[86] Such high-minded idealism appealed to Wilson, the son of a Presbyterian minister, whose missionary impulse was transferred to the nation. Similarly, in mid-July, Grey wrote to House that he doubted "whether anything short of being actually involved in the war" would stir the American people sufficiently to "enable the president to exercise on the terms of peace all the influence that is possible."[87] Grey encouraged Wilson to think of himself as the architect of a new moral world order, but he never let on that British and French leaders had no intention of allowing Wilson to determine the terms of the peace settlement.
In late fall 1914, Wilson's second most trusted adviser, Joseph Tumulty, recorded a conversation in which he and Wilson had discussed a letter from Ambassador Page reporting on Page's discussion with Sir Grey. Page had criticized the British blockade, to which Grey

had responded, “America must remember that we are fighting her fight, as well as our own, to save the civilization of the world. You dare not press us too far.” According to Tumulty:

> Turning to me, the President said: “He was right. England is fighting our fight and you may well understand that I shall not, in the present state of the world’s affairs, place obstacles in her way. . . . No matter what may happen to me personally in the next election, I will not take any action to embarrass England when she is fighting for her life and the life of the world. Let those who clamor for radical action against England understand this!”[88]

> The British, for their part, cultivated American public opinion like a well-tended English garden.

President Wilson not only followed the lead of Great Britain but also adopted much of the war rhetoric emanating from the British Isles, including the idea of saving civilization from German militarism. The British, for their part, cultivated American public opinion like a well-tended English garden. The British War Propaganda Board, established in secret at Wellington House in September 1914, compiled a list of 260,000 Americans to receive information from influential sources. With a staff of fifty, Wellington House commissioned books and pamphlets for mass distribution in Britain and the U.S.


THE WAR THAT WILL END WAR

BY

H. G. WELLS

Author of “The War of the Worlds,” “The War in the Air,” etc.

LONDON
FRANK & CECIL PALMER
RED LION COURT, E.C.

Among those working for the agency was science fiction writer H. G. Wells. In one of his pamphlets, Wells described Britain’s wartime goal as “disarmament and peace throughout the earth.” His pamphlet of August 14, 1914, was titled *The War That Will End War*. Wellington House also organized a public appeal signed by 53 influential writers, published in the *London Times* on September 19, 1914, that called on Englishmen to “defend the rights of small nations” against the “rule of Blood and Iron.” The famous British author Rudyard Kipling addressed a crowd of 10,000 in Southport, England, on June 21, 1915, declaring, “So long as an unbroken Germany exists, so long will life on this planet be intolerable, not only for us and for our allies, but for all humanity.” The historian Thomas Fleming notes that that many of “Wilson’s phrases, such as a war to make the world safe for democracy, were already clichés in the speeches of British politicians and the propaganda of Wellington House.”[89]

The German government also engaged in propaganda activities, but much less effectively. The German Information Service sponsored more than 1,500 books, pamphlets, and articles, encouraging Americans to remain neutral and to sympathize with Germany. Yet German aggression in Belgium and France was not easily justified, especially when translated through the British propaganda mill. The most intense British propaganda promoted lurid atrocity stories of German soldiers cutting off women’s breasts, raping nuns, chopping off the hands

of Belgian youth, and establishing factories for boiling down corpses. Irvin S. Cobb, an American war correspondent for the *Saturday Evening Post*, estimated that only about ten percent of the atrocity stories were genuine, while the Australian Associated Press correspondent on the German front in Belgium, Phillip Knightley, called the atrocity reports "indecent lies."[90]

Cobb and other American correspondents in Belgium nonetheless validated stories of German troops killing civilians and bombing towns. On the one hand, noted Cobb, there were areas of Belgium and France where "not a penny's worth of wanton destruction had been permitted to occur." Cobb even saw German soldiers sharing their rations with hungry Belgians. On the other hand, there were "areas where scarcely one stone had been left to stand upon another; where the fields were ravaged; where the male villagers had been shot in squads." The difference, reasoned Cobb, was that one commander had ordered his troops to spare the town and its people, while another had decreed that the town be destroyed and the residents killed. Journalist Arthur Gleason visited Wetteren Hospital and found, as he wrote, "eleven peasants with bayonet wounds upon them – men, woman and a child – who had been marched in front of the Germans at Alost as a cover for the troops, and cut with bayonets when they tried to dodge the firing." Gleason took down their statements and had them sign the documents. The invading Germans also shelled the library at Louvain and the cathedral at Rheims, cultural artifacts that engendered international opprobrium.[91]

New Jersey Black Tom Island, July 30, 1916 (Library of Congress)

Adding to Germany's public relations problem was sabotage within the United States. The most sensational undercover action took place on July 30, 1916, when German agents detonated more than one million pounds of ammunition sitting on the dock of Black Tom Island, New Jersey. The blast killed five people and sent shock waves that shattered windows in lower Manhattan. The island was the shipping point for 3/4 of ammunition bound for Britain and France.[92]

The British held another great advantage in the battle for American hearts and minds. They controlled the primary means of communication from Europe – undersea cables. At the very

outset of the war, British ships cut Germany's undersea cables, thus giving Britain a monopoly on the rapid transmission of news. The British government furthermore censored or doctored all news coming out of Europe routed through London. Frustrated American reporters in Berlin fired off a letter on August 2, 1916, complaining that their dispatches were "suppressed, mutilated, or delayed" by the London censor.[93]

Rejecting mediation

During the first month of the war, President Wilson offered his services as a mediator of the conflict. On September 18, 1914, Germany's ambassador in Washington, Count Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff, declared his willingness to open informal talks with his counterpart, British ambassador Sir Cecil Arthur Spring Rice. The British declined, however, judging that Germany would not be willing to give up the territories it was occupying. Former British ambassador James Bryce warned Wilson that if he pressed ahead with mediation, this would prejudice Britain against any future offer. The Wilson administration subsequently informed Ambassador Bernstorff that peace negotiations were not advisable at this moment. "With this decision," writes the historian Ross Kennedy, "Wilson chose to align his peace moves with the progress of the Allied military campaign against Germany, just as the Allies desired."[94]

The administration turned aside other opportunities to pursue mediation in the ensuing years. On February 8, 1915, Senator Robert La Follette introduced a resolution calling for a conference of neutral nations to offer joint mediation to the belligerents. The administration showed no interest.[95] On August 30, 1916, a delegation of peace activists visited Wilson to urge his support for the newly formed Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation. The president politely refused to endorse the effort. The idea that the U.S. was suddenly thrust into war by a swirl of events does not consider the fact that the administration failed to pursue other available alternatives. As Robert Tucker explains:

Senator Robert La Follette

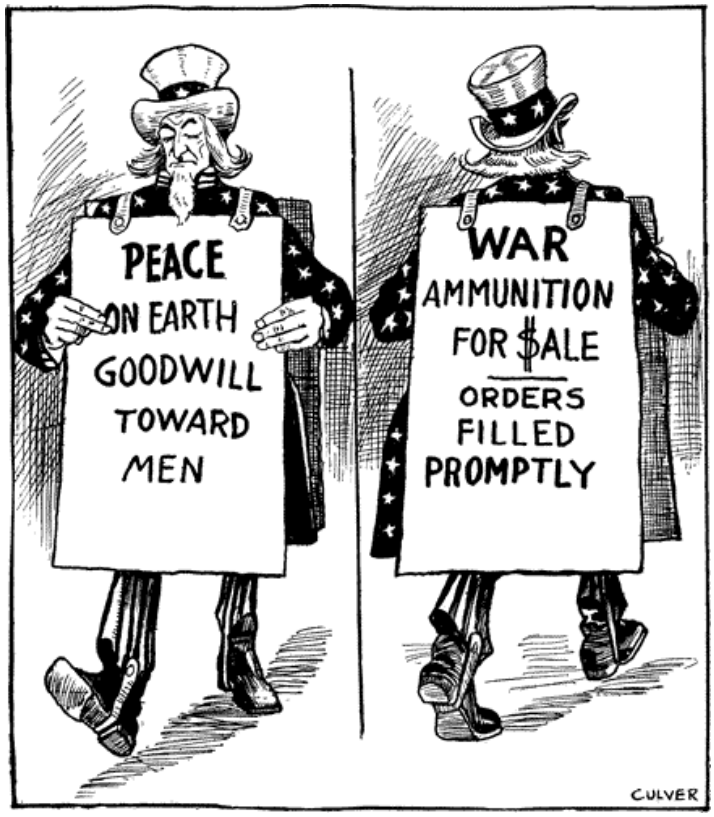
> However modest the prospects of bringing the war to an early end through mediation, they presupposed a course that Wilson did not take. The course he did take was one almost perfectly fashioned for American's intervention in the war. By acquiescing in fact in the Allied blockade and by opposing the only active response the Central powers could have made to the blockade, Wilson abandoned the impartiality required of a neutral. Once he had done so, there was but one possible outcome: war with Germany.[96]

The historian Manfred Berg, interpreting Tucker, adds: "Wilson should have made it clear to both the Allies and the Germans in the early phase of the war that he was determined to defend neutral rights against all infractions. Had he insisted on keeping American trade with

Germany open, the Germans would have had no excuses for waging unrestricted warfare and might have been more receptive to American mediation."[97]

Pseudo neutrality and secret intrigues

U.S. neutrality was effectively abandoned in the ample supply of food, goods, ammunition, and arms that flowed from the U.S. to the Allies. According to U.S. law, private industries had the right to sell munitions to any warring party. However, the British blockade ensured that U.S. companies could only export to the Allies. Although U.S. officials grumbled about the British infringement of "neutral trade rights," the inequality became standard procedure.



Cartoon published in *The Express*, Los Angeles, 1915 (Project Gutenberg)

As the U.S. arms trade took off, a number of citizen groups and legislators attempted stop it in the interest of true neutrality. In December 1914, Congressional bills were introduced designed to empower the president to prohibit munitions exports. President Wilson opposed the legislation, in part because he wanted to support the Allies and in part because he "was not about to risk much-needed economy recovery," according to Justus Doenecke.[98] Among the organizations backing the ban were the American Neutrality League, the American Humanity League, the Friends of Peace, the League of American Women for Strict Neutrality, and a number of German-American associations. They gathered some one million signatures on a petition and organized a lobby campaign that flooded members of Congress with letters and telegrams. They argued that arms exports undermined the spirit of U.S. neutrality and America's potential role as a neutral mediator. They pointed out that the U.S. had recently embargoed weapon shipments to warring factions in the Mexican revolution and urged Wilson to follow suit in the European war.

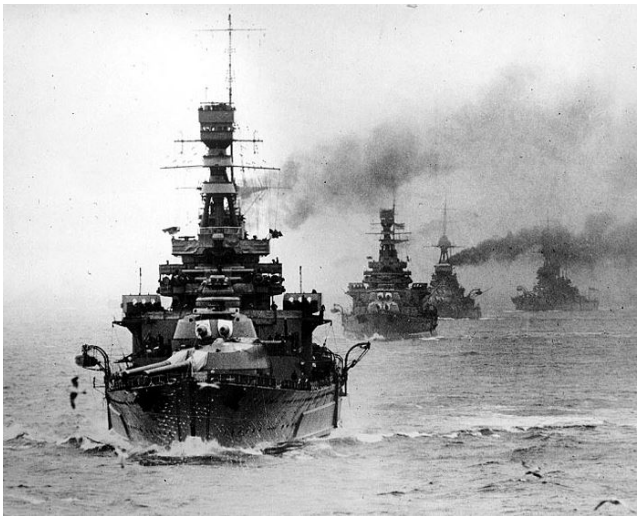
Rep. Henry Vollmer, Democrat of Iowa, who was also the president of a local German-American association, declared, "By permitting the export of arms and ammunition when we have the right and power to stop it, we are helping part of our dear friends kill other of our dear friends." Rep. Clyde H. Tavenner, Democrat of Illinois, denounced the "war trusts" –

companies such as J. P. Morgan, Britain's sole purchasing agent in the U.S. – for "fleecing taxpayers" and profiting from the death and destruction wrought by American munitions in the war.[99] State Department legal adviser Robert Lansing countered that Germany had sold "enormous quantities of arms and ammunition" to belligerents in the recent Russo-Japanese and Balkan wars, suggesting that the U.S. had the right to engage in similar arms transfers. Pro-Allied newspaper editors, writes Doenecke, acknowledged "that an embargo might stop the war, but found the price too high: German retention of Belgium and the richest part of France."

A *Literary Digest* poll of editors across the nation, published in early February 1915, found that out of 440 editors, 244 opposed a ban on munition transfers, 167 favored a ban, and 29 were noncommittal. On February 12, 1915, the Senate settled the matter by voting 51-36 to reject an arms embargo amendment introduced by Gilbert Hitchcock, Democrat of Nebraska. Thus ended the only serious effort to prevent the United States from becoming the arms supplier of the Allies. Exports of U.S. munitions jumped from $6 million in 1914 to $467 million in 1916.[100] Long after the war ended, U.S. Ambassador to Germany James Gerard wrote in his memoirs that "no German ever forgets" that the U.S. sold arms to the Allies and that "American supplies and munitions killed his brother, son or father."[101]

The British blockade and German submarine warfare

At the very outset of the Great War, Great Britain instituted a blockade of the Central Powers that sought to cut off neutral trade. Its purpose was not only to block war supplies but also to "starve the enemy," according to Doenecke. This was carried out in part by the mining of German harbors and in part by British warships patrolling the area. Neutral vessels were directed to British control stations, where they might linger for months. "If British authorities judged the goods contraband [war materials], they were subject to confiscation. If they were not so judged, they could still be snatched, though in this case Britain would pay for the cargo."[102]



British naval squadron (US Naval History photo)

Prior to the war, U.S. trade with the Central Powers was valued at about $500 million annually (imports and exports), roughly one-fourth the value of U.S. trade with the Allied nations.[103] The British blockade was particularly hard on American cotton-producers. Cotton, when treated with nitric acid and packed into munitions, increases explosive power. Hence, cotton was placed on the British contraband list. In January 1915, with the cotton crop having lost half its value and farmers struggling to survive, Governor Oscar B. Colquitt of Texas chastised the Wilson administration as "the greatest failure in the history of the Presidency," claiming

that “thousands of its people are starving.”[104] Recognizing the depth of the challenge, British Foreign Secretary Edward Grey pressed his government to remove cotton from the contraband list. Cotton prices soon picked up. Having declined from 10.6 to 6.6 cents per pound between August and November 1914, they rose to 16.2 cents per pound in 1916.[105] Overall, the cutoff of U.S. trade with the Central Powers was more than compensated by increased trade with the Allies. War materials and foodstuffs flowed across the Atlantic, pumping up the American economy, although the main beneficiaries were factory owners and financiers. “We profit by helping the Allies, declared the *Journal of Commerce* in November 1915, “and we can afford to sacrifice something even of our [neutral trade] rights in not hindering them.”[106]

The Wilson administration waited until December 26, 1914, to lodge an official protest against the British blockade. The diplomatic note highlighted the illegality of the blockade under international maritime law but contained no threat of retaliation nor any suggestion that the U.S. might limit the increasing flow of American arms and goods to Britain. Not surprisingly, the British government refused to budge. According to Doenecke, “Wilson placed the preservation of Anglo-American friendship above the defense of his nation’s legal rights.”[107]

German U-boat 14 (Library of Congress)

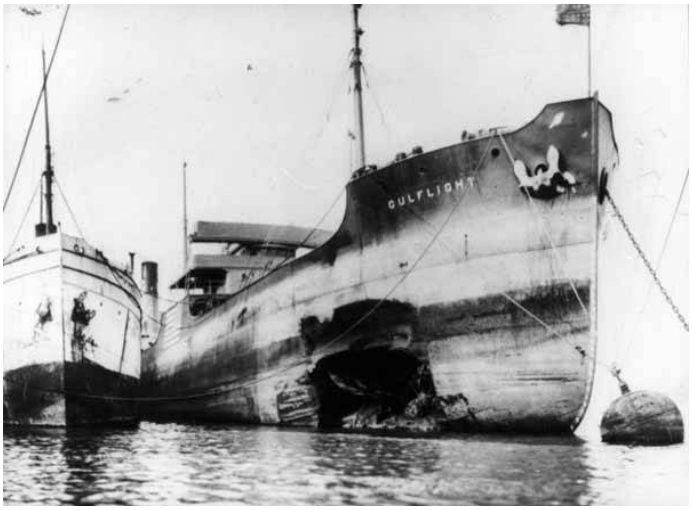
For the first six months of the war, German warships and U-boats conformed to international maritime rules, capturing or destroying only merchant ships carrying contraband. According to these 19th century rules, warships had the right to stop and search any nonmilitary vessel. If the vessel was found to be transporting contraband, the commanding officer had the option of either seizing the ship as a prize or sinking it; if the vessel was ordered sunk, passengers and crew had to be safely removed first. Such rules proved difficult for German U-boat commanders, as their submarines were highly vulnerable to gunfire when they surfaced and some Allied merchant ships were armed.[108]

Between August 1914 and February 1915, German naval forces sank only one U.S. merchant vessel, the *William P. Frye*. The vessel was transporting wheat, deemed conditional contraband, from Seattle to Great Britain’s Queenstown when it was captured by a German cruiser off the Brazilian coast on January 28, 1915. Before sinking the ship, the German commander took the *Frye*’s crew and passengers aboard. The German cruiser then

transported the Americans to Newport News, Virginia, where the ship obtained supplies and repairs. Although the Americans were treated well, the Wilson administration protested the incident and demanded compensation. Berlin reportedly paid $180,000 in damages.[109]

On February 4, 1915, after enduring six months of the British blockade, Berlin shifted gears and initiated a kind of blockade of its own. The Kaiser ordered German U-boat commanders to sink "every enemy merchant ship" in waters surrounding the British Isles, designated a war zone. Although the intention was not to harm *neutral* ships, neutral nations were warned not to send their vessels into the war zone due to the British practice of misusing neutral flags. The campaign was slated to begin at the end of the month.

News of the Kaiser's order came as an unwelcome surprise to President Wilson. On February 10, he issued a stern warning to Berlin that the U.S. would hold the German government "to a strict accountability" for any loss of American property and lives. Ten days later, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan appealed to both sides to honor international law and allow neutral commercial vessels to conduct non-contraband trade. He also advised Britain to stop the misuse of neutral flags and to allow food to reach the German civilian population. On March 14, Berlin proposed to London that food shipments and raw materials be exempted from the British blockade in exchange for an end to German U-boat attacks on Allied merchant ships. London rejected the proposal the very next day.[110]



Damaged U.S. merchant vessel, the *Gulflight*, May 1915

The German submarine cordon in the waters surrounding the British Isles was not nearly as effective as the British blockade. Germany had only 27 U-boats as of February 1915 and some remained in port. The submarines were small, slow, had limited underwater endurance, and were vulnerable to depth charges below and gunfire above. Yet they still made an impact. Between March 1 and September 30, 1915, German U-boats sank 480 vessels weighing a total of 790,000 tons. Only three of these vessels were American. One was the U.S. steamship, *Gulflight*, which was torpedoed in error on May 1, 1915, resulting in three deaths – the only American fatalities that occurred before 1917.[111] After investigating the incident, the German government apologized on June 1.[112]

Another steamship, the *Nebraskan*, was hit by a torpedo off the southern coast of Ireland on May 25 after it had hauled down its flag at night, as was the custom at sea, and was mistaken for an enemy vessel. The steamship *Leelenaw* was sunk intentionally on July 25 after being stopped by a German U-boat commander and found to be carrying a cargo of flax, deemed contraband. According to *The Literary Digest* of August 7, 1915, "All on board were taken off

and helped to safety and, as the captain of the *Leelenaw* said, 'They could not have treated us more courteously than they did.'"[113] For the remainder of 1915 and through 1916, no other U.S. merchant vessels were sunk in the waters surrounding the British Isles, although three were sunk in other parts of the world in 1916, all without casualties.

The British, meanwhile, increased their restrictions on neutral trade and communications. In December 1915, the British government began inspecting first-class mail between the U.S. and Europe's neutral ports. By the end of the month, hundreds of bags of U.S. mail had been seized. In July 1916, London released a "blacklist" of 85 U.S. and 350 Latin American firms suspected of trading with the Central Powers. British citizens and companies were prohibited from having any dealings or even communication with the alleged offenders. Both Congress and the White House protested these actions. In September, Congress gave the president the power to retaliate against British trade, but Wilson was reluctant to use this authority despite being "at about the end of my patience" with Britain, as he told House earlier.[114] British assaults on U.S. "neutral trade rights" continued. According to Justus Doenecke:

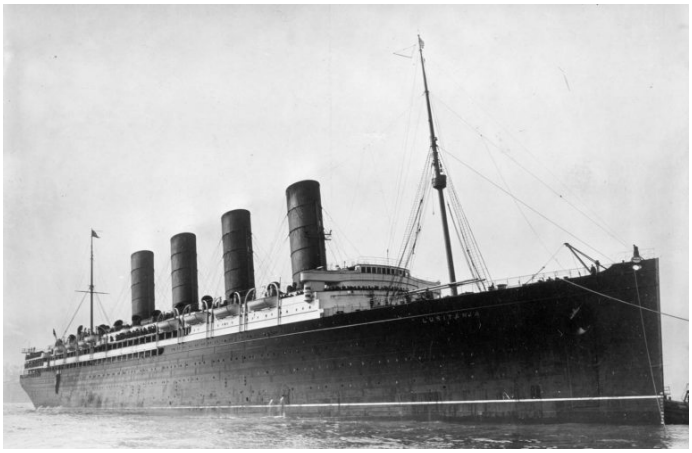
> Throughout 1916 other British actions angered Americans. Britain banned the export of hospital supplies to the Central Powers. It prevented a group of German Americans, led by former Harvard professor Edmund Von Mach, from shipping canned milk to German children. On February 18, officers from the British cruiser *Laurentic* boarded the American passenger ship *China* close to the entrance of the Yangtse River, forcibly removed thirty-eight subjects of the Central Powers, and detained them as prisoners.[115]

The British government was nevertheless unable to halt all neutral trade with its enemies. Goods flowed into Scandinavian countries that were transported to Germany and Austria-Hungary and sold for hefty profits. Rear Admiral Consett, the British naval attaché in Scandinavia, was upset to see not only foodstuffs transported but also vital goods such as coal, oil, and metals used for making weapons. He admonished the British government to put a stop to it, believing that the more Germans suffered and starved on the home front, the quicker the war would end.[116]

The *Lusitania* crisis

The main issue of contention between the U.S. and Germany was not the sinking of American ships, but the Wilson administration's insistence that Americans had the right to travel safely on Allied merchant and passenger ships in war zones. The administration's claim that international law upheld this "right" rested on "doubtful grounds," according to the historian Robert Tucker. "In claiming a right to protect American citizens taking passage on Allied merchant ships, the Wilson administration gave a near absolute character to what was a novel position."[117] No other neutral nation made this claim. The Wilson administration's unspoken goal was to force Germany to end its submarine warfare against Allied shipping, for the mere *possibility* of an American on board would serve to protect Allied ships from attack. German leaders recognized the stratagem and refused to accept U.S. claims, although they did make accommodations.[118]

Secretary of State Bryan foresaw a crisis. In a letter to Wilson on April 23, he took note of the fact that the president had not taken "any definite steps toward preventing American citizens from embarking upon armed merchants ships," implying that he should. The administration's current policies, he warned, were "likely to bring on a crisis."[119]


British ocean liner *RMS Lusitania* (Library of Congress)

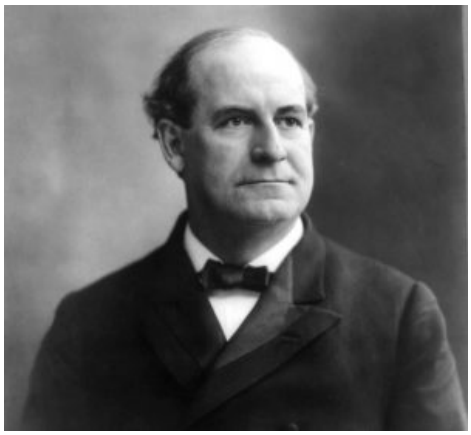
The calamity occurred on May 7, when a German U-boat sank the British luxury liner, *RMS Lusitania*, killing 128 Americans among others. The public outcry in the United States was instantaneous. The attack seemed to bring the war home to many Americans, though it occurred off the coast of Ireland. Before the *Lusitania* departed from New York City, the German Embassy placed notices in American newspapers warning of the danger of traveling on British ships. No warning, however, came from U.S. authorities. Promised a safe and fast voyage by Cunard Line officials, few passengers took the opportunity travel on a slower ship under the American flag scheduled to leave for Britain that same day.[120] In Berlin, the ship was known to have previously carried war materials. In this voyage, unbeknown to passengers, the ship carried in its storage area 4.2 million rounds of ammunition for Remington rifles, 1,250 cases of shrapnel artillery shells manufactured by Bethlehem Steel, and eighteen cases of nonexplosive fuses.

The day after the disaster, U.S. ambassador to Britain Walter Hines Page cabled Washington that Britain's senior officials were refraining from public comment but privately saying that the U.S. must declare war against Germany or lose the respect of the civilized world. Agreeing with this assessment, Page added, with Wilson in mind, if Washington failed to forcefully respond, "the United States will have no voice or influence in settling the war or in what follows for a long time to come." Wilson's top adviser Edward House agreed with Page, writing to Wilson on May 19 that the United States was now "bound up more or less in [the Allies'] success, and I do not think we should do anything that can possibly be avoided to alienate the good feeling that they now have for us. If we lose their goodwill we will not be able to figure at all in peace negotiations."[121]


U.S. ambassador to Great Britain Walter Hines Page

Secretary of State Bryan took a different view. He had been working from day one in office to mediate a peace agreement between the European antagonists. Bryan was the odd man out

in the administration. He had run for president on an anti-imperialist platform in 1900, visited the International Court of Justice at The Hague, and met with Russian pacifist Count Leo Tolstoy in 1903 to solidify his commitment to peacemaking. Bryan's peace orientation was rooted in his understanding of Christianity and found expression in arbitration treaties, thirty of which he negotiated as secretary of state, mainly between the U.S. and Latin American states. Wilson chose him for the office mainly because of his popularity, although the two did share a certain amount of idealism as to the need for peace. As the president drifted toward war, however, the two drifted apart.


William Jennings Bryan resigned as secretary of state

For the U.S. to remain at peace, Bryan believed that the administration must embrace "the true spirit of neutrality." In the aftermath of the *Lusitania* crisis, unlike other administration officials, he expressed outrage that Great Britain was using the presence of American passengers to protect its ammunition-laden ships. He declared the practice akin to "putting women and children in the front of an army." He insisted that the administration must warn Americans against traveling on belligerent ships. Otherwise there would be more deaths, more inflamed public opinion, and more likelihood of war. Wilson rejected the suggestion, saying it deflected from German responsibility and weakened Washington's protest. Wilson issued a series of warning notes to Berlin, the second of which demanded that Germany end its German submarine warfare without any compensating action on the part of Great Britain. Bryan resigned in protest on June 9, 1915.[122]

The following day, Bryan publicly aired the reasons for his resignation. "It is a very one-sided citizenship that compels a government to go to war over a citizen's rights, and yet relieves the citizen of all obligations to consider his nation's welfare," he wrote. "I do not know just how far the President can go legally in actually preventing Americans from traveling on belligerent ships, but I believe the Government should go as far as it can." To back up his point, Bryan related how President Taft had advised Americans to leave Mexico when an insurrection had occurred in 1910, suggesting that Wilson follow his example. Bryan also asserted that "American passenger ships should be prohibited from carrying ammunition. The lives of passengers ought not be endangered by cargoes of ammunition, whether that danger comes from possible explosions within or from possible attacks from without."[123]

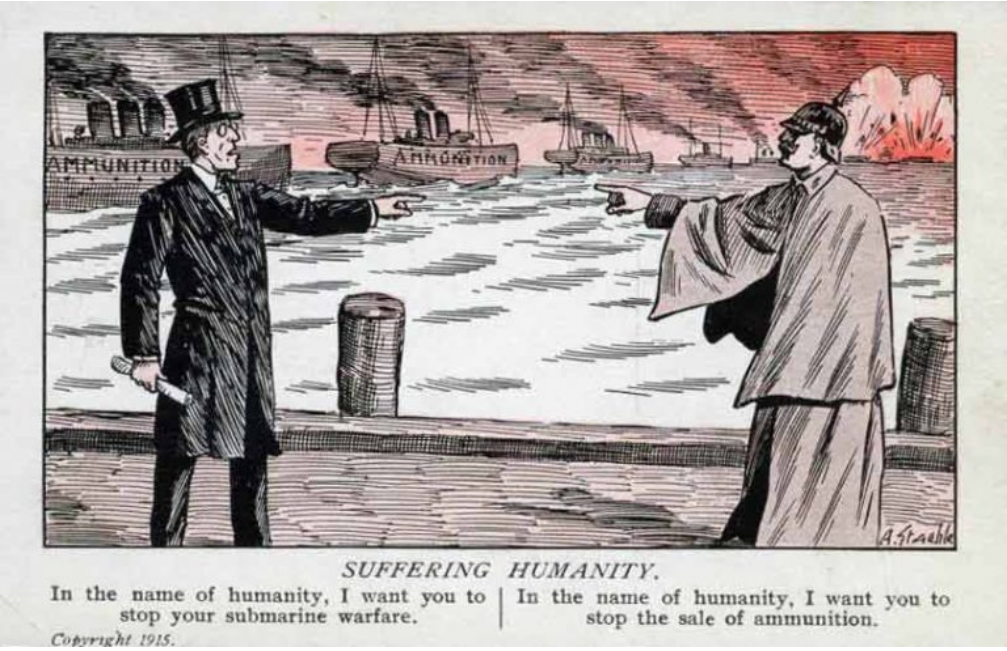
Bryan's replacement, Robert Lansing, joined House and Page in pushing the U.S. toward war with Germany. Soon after his appointment, on July 11, 1915, Lansing wrote in a private memo that "Germany must not be permitted to win this war [or even] to break

even, though to prevent it this country is forced to take an active part. . . . American public opinion must be prepared for the time, which may come, when we cast aside our neutrality and become one of the champions of democracy.[124]


Secretary of State Robert Lansing

Lansing hit on an ideological rationale that would become a central justification for U.S. entry into the war, promoting democracy (versus authoritarianism). This salient theme was later embraced by the president in his famous dictum, "the world must be made safe for democracy." Both Wilson and Lansing assumed, of course, that the U.S. was on the side of democracy. This was not necessarily true in practice, particularly in Latin America where the U.S. preferred "strongmen" and dictators who would do America's bidding. Unlike U.S. domestic institutions, U.S. foreign policy practices were not based on the principle of "consent of the governed." In July 1915, for example, as Lansing was musing on reasons to go to war against Germany, the Wilson administration dispatched troops to Haiti, utterly ignoring the "consent of the governed." The U.S. established a puppet regime under U.S. military command and shut down the Haitian national legislature – which remained shut for more than a decade.[125]

Although German leaders were within their legal rights to respond to the British blockade with a blockade of their own, they nonetheless attempted to accommodate U.S. demands in the hope of keeping the U.S. out of the war. Following the sinking of the British ocean liner *Arabic* in August 1915, in which two Americans were killed, Germany promised a 30-minute warning to allow safe exit. Berlin did not disavow the sinking, however, citing evidence that the British ship had tried to ram the U-boat. House believed that the British should be more grateful to the U.S. for all it was doing to help Britain. As he wrote to Ambassador Page on October 6: "We have given the Allies our sympathy and we have given them . . . an unrestricted amount of munitions and money. In addition to that, we have forced Germany to discontinue her submarine warfare."[126] The latter was an exaggeration but nonetheless expressed the intent of the administration. President Wilson's unspoken strategy was to keep the pressure on Germany to the point that either Berlin would end its submarine warfare completely or the U.S. would enter the war against Germany.



Political cartoon, 1915 (President Wilson and Kaiser Wilhelm)

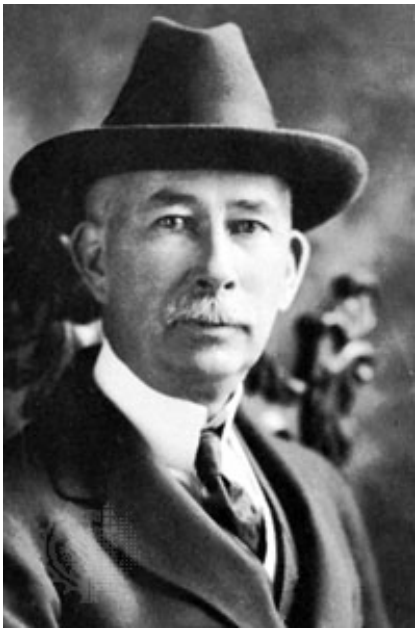
On March 24, 1916, the French steamer, *Sussex*, was damaged by a torpedo in the English Channel, resulting in 80 casualties, including two Americans wounded. The U.S. protested once again, and the German government responded by issuing the *Sussex* pledge on May 4, agreeing to ensure the safety of passengers and crew of any boats sunk. The pledge also contained a caveat that Germany reserved the right to abandon restrictions if the United States did not compel Britain to end its blockade in conformity with international law. The *Sussex* pledge, in other words, was a two-part agreement. The U.S. never carried out its part of the bargain.

German ambassador to the U.S. Johann von Bernstorff later wrote, "We Germans had hoped that the neutral States would vigorously claim their right to freedom of mutual trade, and would take effective measures, in conjunction with the leadership of the United States, to force the British Government to suspend the oppressive and extra-legal policy. This they failed to do, at any rate, in time to forestall the fateful decision on our part to undertake submarine warfare."[127]

The House-Grey secret intervention plan

Between September 1915 and March 1916, Wilson's diplomatic envoy Edward House engaged in a series of secret negotiations aimed at pushing the United States into war. It began with a letter from Sir Grey on September 22, 1915, cleverly asking House whether the United States would join a league of nations and how it might go about eliminating "militarism and navalism" (arms races). The president and House agreed that a response was needed and House soon came up with a plan, "for the sake of civilization," that went further, plotting U.S. involvement in the war: In the name of neutral nations, the U.S. would demand that a peace conference be held with all major belligerents attending. At the conference, the U.S. would offer a settlement, covertly approved by the Allies, for ending the war and establishing a new

league of nations. If Germany refused to either attend the conference or accept the settlement, the U.S. would enter the war on the side of the Allies. Reviewing the plan, Wilson approved it with the significant addition of the word "probably" in sentences pledging the U.S. "to join the Allies" in the war. Only Congress, after all, had the legal power to declare war. House wrote in his diary on October 14, "I was pleased to find the President cordially acquiescing in my views regarding intervention in Europe. And that it was only a question as to when and how it should be done. I now have the matter in my own hands and it will probably be left to my judgment as to when and how to act."[128] According to Robert Tucker:



Impromptu diplomat Edward House sought ways to bring the U.S. into the war

> House viewed his plan primarily as a way to get into the war. He had considered America's intervention on the Allied side as inevitable since the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Although quite prepared to intervene if necessary over the issue of the submarine, House had come to favor intervention for reasons he believed would better justify to the American people the assumption of a new role for the nation in the postwar world. It foreshadowed intervention from, in House's words, "the highest human motives."[129]

Before leaving to confer with leaders in London, Paris, and Berlin, House asked Wilson "what to say in London and what to say in Berlin and how far I shall go." The president replied in a letter on December 24 that House knew his thinking well and the only stipulation was that House not discuss territorial questions or reparations. House did, in fact, discuss territorial issues in London and Paris, but not in Berlin. The Allies had no intention of diluting their territorial aims in the war, which included the return of the Alsace-Lorraine region to France, the transfer of parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to Italy, and the acquisition of parts of the Ottoman Empire by Russia, Britain, and France, but these would not be mentioned in the House-Grey agreement.

In Berlin, House met with Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Arthur Zimmermann, and other dignitaries in late January. There he learned that the German Navy was strongly urging unrestricted undersea warfare against Britain. House estimated that this policy shift would likely take place. He thought that another crisis like the sinking of the *Lusitania* would surely rouse the American public to war more effectively than his plan,

but he continued nonetheless, uncertain as to when German policy might change.


German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg

In Paris, House met with Jules Cambon, the acting director of the French foreign office, on February 2, 1916. He bluntly told Cambon that, "inevitably America will enter the war, *before the end of the year*, and will align herself on the side of the Allies. However, for that to happen, it would be necessary for an incident to occur that would cause all the American people to rally behind the President." An astonished Cambon had House repeat the statement, which Cambon wrote down and read it back to House. "Exactly," House affirmed.[130]

In London, House shared his plan for the first time with Ambassador Page on February 11, 1916. Notwithstanding their mutual desire to see the U.S. enter the war, Page was appalled. The "fatal moral weakness of House's plan," Page wrote in his diary, "is that we should plunge into the war, not on the merits of the cause, but by a carefully sprung trick." House did not argue with Page but simply excluded him from future communications. On February 22, House and Grey drew up a memorandum, written by Grey, to present to the British War Cabinet that summarized the commitment of the United States:

> President Wilson was ready, on hearing from France and England that the moment was opportune, to propose that a conference should be summoned to put an end to the war. Should the Allies accept this proposal, and should Germany refuse it, the United States would [probably] enter the war against Germany.[131]

President Wilson approved the House-Grey memorandum with the "probably" insertion. House wrote to Grey and told him that the White House awaited the call from the Allies to initiate the process. The call never came, however. British and French leaders viewed it as a back-up plan, should they fall short of victory on the battlefield. As Tucker writes, "Grey had concluded the agreement with House largely because House had insisted. He looked upon it as an insurance policy of sorts, to be resorted to in the event the war went badly." British leaders also lacked confidence in Wilson's leadership; many resented his attempts to commandeer the peace process; and some thought it might be a "stunt for the president's reelection," designed for domestic consumption to confirm his image as a peacemaker.[132] In any case, it was the Allied governments, not the Wilson administration, that kept the House-Grey plan on the back burner.

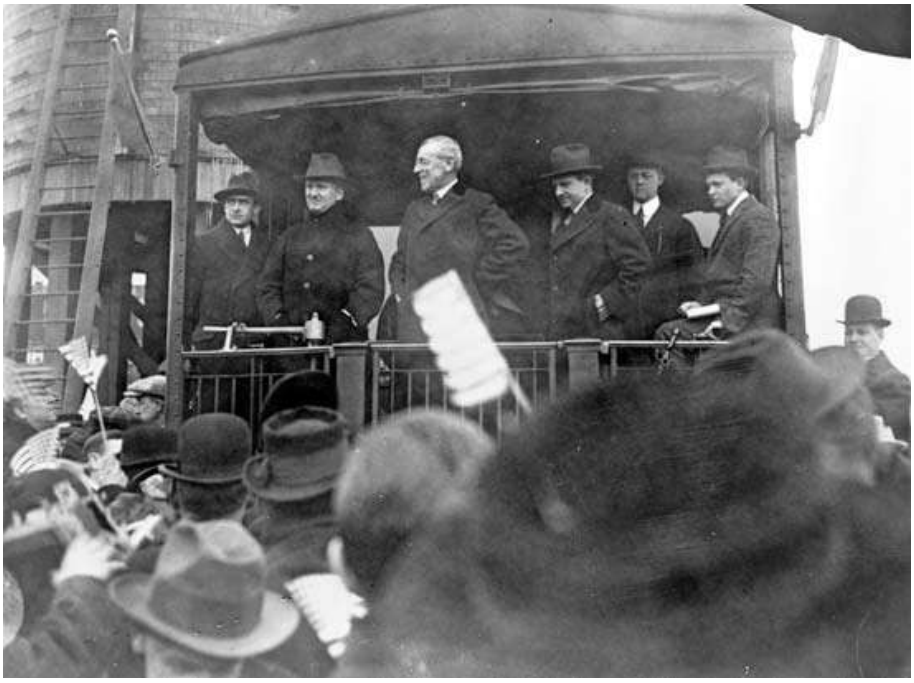
Following the U-boat attack on the *Sussex* on March 24, Wilson and House contacted Grey, suggesting that this would be a good time "to consult with your allies with a view to acting immediately" on the memorandum. In a follow-up letter, House wrote that there was "another reason" for moving ahead with the plan, "and that is that we are not so sure of the

support of the American people upon the submarine issues, while we are confident that they would respond to the higher and nobler issue of stopping the war." Sir Grey responded diplomatically that the time had not yet come.[133]

All in all, the secret House-Grey memorandum was an astounding ruse to entice the American public into war by holding a rigged peace conference. Its significance should not be underestimated: The Wilson administration connived to enter the war well before 1917, contradicting the president's claim that he had no choice but to enter the war due to German treachery on the high seas. In reality, the president and his top adviser conspired to bring the nation into the war.

On the path to war

As covert plans were being discussed in the White House over the winter of 1915-1916, President Wilson took steps to prepare the nation for war. From Congress, he requested "preparedness" funds for the War Department, and on January 27, 1916, he set off on an eight-day, nine-city speaking tour across the mid-West, pumping up his military preparedness program.



Wilson (without a hat) speaking from the back of a train during his nationwide preparedness tour, January 1916 (Library of Congress)

"From the rear platform of his train," writes the historian Patricia O'Toole, "the president assured the inhabitants of Racine [Wisconsin] that he was not acting at the behest of the arms-makers. In Milwaukee, he warned that war might prove impossible to avoid. By the time he reached Iowa City, he was no longer asking audiences to back his defense program, he was voicing his confidence in their support. In Des Moines he added a new thought, a dream of a day when the world's governments would work together, through an association

of nations, to guarantee the world's peace." More than 100,000 citizens heard the president speak on this tour. He advocated preparedness while still proclaiming his earnest desire for peace.[134]

In Washington, the issue raised by former Secretary of State Bryan had never been satisfactorily addressed. The administration had done nothing to warn Americans of the danger of traveling on British ships, let alone to prevent such travel; and yet the administration had promised to hold Germany to "strict accountability" for any harm done to Americans – which could mean war. The implication was clear to House Majority Leader Claude Kitchin, Democrat of North Carolina, who wrote to his advisor, "The President is anxious for war with Germany – his sympathies are so strong with the Allies."[135] Kitchin's assessment was shared by others.

On February 17, 1916, Rep. Jefferson McLemore, a freshman Democrat from Texas, introduced legislation requesting that the president warn citizens not to travel on armed vessels. In the Senate, Thomas P. Gore, a populist from Oklahoma, introduced a stronger bill that would have denied a passport to any American who wanted to book passage on a belligerent ship or on any neutral vessel carrying ammunition. President Wilson lobbied hard against these bills, falsely reassuring Senator William J. Stone, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that "I shall do everything in my power to keep the United States out of war."[136] On February 24, Senator Stone expressed his anxiety over this situation in a letter to the president:

> As much and deeply as I would hate to radically disagree with you, I find it difficult from my sense of duty and responsibility to consent to plunge the nation into the vortex of this world war because of the unreasonable obstinacy of any of the Powers, upon the one hand, or, on the other hand, of foolhardiness, amounting to a sort of moral treason against the Republic, of our people recklessly risking their lives on armed belligerent ships. I cannot escape the conviction that such would be so monstrous as to be indefensible.

To Stone, it was unbelievable that the president would risk drawing the whole nation into war for the sake of a handful of citizens wanting to travel to England or France. Such travel was neither essential nor a right. Wilson responded to the senator's letter that same day, stating that "if the clear rights of American citizens should ever unhappily be abridged or denied by any such action we should, it seems to me, have in honor no choice as to what our course should be. For my part, I cannot consent to any abridgment of the rights of American citizens in any respect." Rather than acknowledge the incipient danger of war, the president focused on the presumed threat to American "rights," adding that once a single right is compromised, others "would


Sen. William J. Stone

certainly follow, and the whole fine fabric of international law might crumble under our hands piece by piece." [137]

Although asserted strongly, Wilson's response rested on weak intellectual grounds. First, his administration had *already accepted* a clear violation of international rights by allowing Britain to maintain its illegal blockade. Secondly, the right to safe passage on belligerent ships in war zones was not clearly established in international law, but a subject of debate. Thirdly, the violation of one right does not mean that the whole fabric of international law must crumble (which is proven by the first point). Finally, the "right" of American citizens to safe passage on belligerent ships in war zones was nowhere established in American law. Wilson's depiction of the protection of this "right" as a matter of American "honor" was an attempt to buttress his case with an emotional appeal to patriotism, a dependable diversion from rigorous debate. Congress as a whole was nonetheless disposed to let the president run foreign policy. During the first week of March 1916, the Senate rejected the Gore bill by a vote of 68-14, and the House rejected the McLemore bill by a vote of 276-142.[138]

President Wilson was upping the pressure on Germany, knowing that a U-boat attack on an American vessel would likely rouse the nation to war. "In the absence of that [submarine] challenge," writes Robert Tucker, "the country would in all likelihood have remained a nonparticipant in the war."[139]

Most Americans in 1916 were not ready to abandon neutrality – and they believed that the president was committed to this policy, preparedness measures notwithstanding. The United States, after all, remained safe from foreign attacks and few citizens were of the mindset of a later time that it was the duty of the U.S. to police the world. Even if most favored the Allied nations, Americans were strongly attached to traditional neutrality toward Europe and furthermore put off by the immense number of casualties in the war. The peace persuasion was potent enough to keep both Wilson and the Republican presidential candidate, Charles Evans Hughes, from voicing support for U.S. intervention in the Great War, although both advocated military preparedness.

Wilson campaign vehicle, New York City, March 1916: "Who Keeps Us Out of War?"

Wilson ran on a party platform in 1916 that commended him as one "who has preserved the vital interests of our Government and its citizens, and kept us out of war." Publicists turned this into a campaign slogan, "He Kept Us Out of War." Wilson thus ran for re-election favoring both peace and preparedness, straddling the war issue in order to appeal to different constituencies. He would need all of their votes in the upcoming election, as he had won the last election with only 42 percent of the popular vote. Though Hughes did not advocate war, his number one campaigner, former president Theodore Roosevelt, pushed military preparedness to the brink of war, labeling Wilson's peace slogan "the phrase of a coward."[140]

Wilson's calculated ambivalence was on display on June 14, 1916. Anointed "Flag Day," Wilson led a parade of 60,000 down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington in support of preparedness. In St. Louis, meanwhile, the Democratic National Convention opened with a speech by Martin H. Glynn, former governor of New York, lauding Wilson as a wise peacemaker. "Neutrality may not satisfy the fire-eater or the swashbuckler," he proclaimed,


Holding the flag, Wilson leads the Preparedness Day parade in Washington, DC, June 14, 1916 (Library of Congress)

referring to Roosevelt. "But it
does satisfy those who worship at the altar of the God of Peace, and the mothers, fathers, and wives of the land." The crowd roared its approval and demanded that Gwynn repeat the sentence. He did so, adding that war "would mean the reversal of our traditional policy of government."[141]

Wilson kept his war plans under wraps during the election campaign. He met with peace leaders on a number of occasions and assured them of his sincere interest in their peace strategies. "He always took care to praise their motives while turning aside their appeals," writes the historian Michael Kazin. On May 8, 1916, "Wilson gave a masterly performance" when meeting with a dozen leaders of the American Union Against Militarism (AUAM). Wilson offered that "reasonable preparedness" was not the same as militarism and that he had "never dreamed for a moment that America" would embrace "any militaristic spirit." When Lillian Wald commented that "there is an obvious attempt to stampede the country" into militarism, Wilson replied, "Yes, but it's not working," and declared his support for an "international arrangement" to secure the peace. Only Rabbi Stephen Wise seemed unmoved by the President's arguments. "Are we to enter the armament gamble in which every nation loses and hell alone is victorious?" Wise asked the president. According to Kazin, "Most AUAM leaders came away feeling that the man in the White House might yet be won over to their point of view."[142] Wald came out of the meeting saying, "we know at heart he is an anti-militarist."


Lillian Wald, public health nurse, founder of Henry Street Settlement House, women's rights and peace activist

Wilson won re-election on November 7, 1916, scraping out a victory with 49.2% of the popular vote as compared to 46.1% for Hughes. The peace vote was crucial to his victory. Senator La Follette, being wary of the president's intentions, warned that Wilson "must accept the outcome of this election as a clear mandate from the American people to hold steadfastly to his course against war."[143]
In Europe, meanwhile, the belligerent nations had exhausted themselves in two massive military campaigns in 1916, the battles of Verdun and the Somme, which together produced roughly two million casualties. On December 12, the German government issued a call for a conference to discuss ending hostilities, although it was not clear on what basis. Berlin's peace bid, writes Hannigan, "had been launched against the backdrop of a generally frustrating year on the battlefield and, more importantly, out of the belief that Germany would face defeat in 1917 if things continued on as they were. The Allies could draw on more

resources and were thus better equipped for a war of attrition. Their blockade of the Central Powers was, meanwhile, having more of an effect."[144]

Independent of Germany's appeal, the Wilson administration sent a diplomatic note to all belligerent nations on December 18 asking for a statement of their war aims. "The President is not proposing peace; he is not even offering mediation," the note read. "He is merely proposing that soundings be taken in order that we may learn, the neutral nations with the belligerent, how near the haven of peace may be for which all mankind longs with an intense and increasing longing." Grasping for signs of hope, antiwarriors such as William Jennings Bryan praised the note as a step toward peace.[145]

Three days later, however, Secretary of State Lansing inadvertently revealed the administration's ulterior motives. Speaking at a press conference, he explained that the diplomatic note was not a probing for peace but rather a prelude to war. "I mean that we are drawing nearer the verge of war ourselves," he said, "and therefore we are entitled to know exactly what each belligerent seeks, in order that we may regulate our conduct in the future. . . . The sending of this note will indicate the possibility of our being forced into this war." Wilson was furious with Lansing, as his remarks undermined Wilson's carefully cultivated image as a peacemaker. Lansing was obliged to issue a follow-up statement to the effect that the Wilson administration was not "considering any change in its policy of neutrality."[146]

Neither the Allied Powers nor Central Powers were impressed with Wilson's diplomatic overture. The German government rightly viewed the U.S. as an ally of Britain and France, while the British and French governments had no intention of allowing Wilson to impose what David Lloyd George called "an inconclusive peace." The prime minister, speaking at the House of Commons, explained that the British had already made their war aims clear: German evacuation from occupied territories, reparation payments to the Allies, and a guarantee that acts of aggression would not be repeated. In Paris, Premier Georges Clemenceau was incensed that Wilson had lumped all the belligerent nations together, as if there were no moral distinction between the Allies and the Central powers.[147]

On January 10, 1917, Paris and London issued a joint statement declaring their desire for peace but regretting that peace could not be achieved under current conditions; which is to say, they were intent on defeating Germany. In a jibe at Wilson, the Allies stated that they were fighting not for "selfish interests," but to free Europe from "the brutal covetousness of Prussian militarism." British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour followed this up with an informal statement declaring that a return to "the *status quo ante bellum* would not be in the interests of the world."[148]

Freed from any obligation to pursue serious diplomatic negotiations, President Wilson used the occasion of his next speech to the U.S. Senate on January 22, 1917, to stamp his signature idealism on the war. Sounding as if the U.S. had an equal stake in the war with the Allied and Central powers who had suffered millions of casualties, he declared, "there is only one sort of peace that the peoples of America could join in guaranteeing. The elements of that peace must be elements that engage the confidence and satisfy the principles of the American governments, elements consistent with their political faith and with the practical convictions

which the peoples of America have once and for all embraced and undertaken to defend."[149] Why must the European war end in a peace settlement that conformed to American political ideals? And who asked the United States to guarantee the peace settlement? Wilson's statements only made sense if he were contemplating U.S. intervention in the war. Wilson had rejected opportunities for mediation and now appeared to be establishing an idealistic basis for intervention. Inserted in the middle of his speech was a call for "peace without victory," an enigmatic phrase that conflated the goal of diplomatic negotiations – peace – with the goal of war – victory. Which did Wilson intend to pursue? Wilson used the word "peace" forty-seven times in his short speech, but he seemed rather to be preparing the nation for war, in keeping with Lansing's earlier comments.[150]

America Faces a Break With Germany Which May Draw This Nation Into War

NOTIFICATION OF RENEWAL TODAY OF ILLEGAL SUBMARINE WARFARE BRINGS ON AN UNEXPECTED CRISIS

Ambassador von Bernstorff Quoted As Saying He Looks for His Passports Within 48 Hours.

U. S. ACTION TO BE PROMPT; STEPS TO PROTECT THE COAST

PROMPT AND FIRM ACTION EXPECTED IN GERMAN CRISIS

Bernstorff Expects Passports Within Next 48 Hours.

GERMANY ACCEPTS ENEMY CHALLENGE

ALLIED SHIP LINES AWAITING ORDERS

President Warned Germany U. S. Would Break Relations If She Did What Berlin Now Threatens to Do

Headline news, February 1. 1917. Center cartoon: Uncle Sam reads a note from Germany: "Ruthless war at sea; ships enter blockade zone at their risk; pledges as to warning canceled."

In Berlin, the Allies' rebuff of the German peace initiative strengthened the hand of military hardliners. Judging that the German war effort could not be sustained much longer, due in large part to a shortage of food on the home front, Berlin announced that unrestricted submarine warfare would commence on February 1, 1917, with the caveat that passenger ships would be allowed weekly travel to the port of Falmouth, England. Otherwise, any ship of any nationality sailing in or out of Allied ports would be sunk without warning.[151] This shift in policy was widely supported in Germany, by all accounts, as the home front was suffering from conditions of famine, a situation attributed to the Allied blockade.

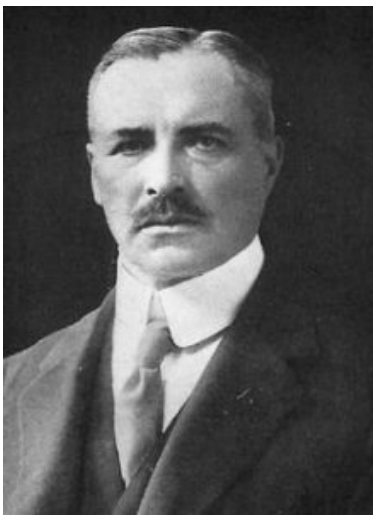
U.S. participation in the war was still not fated. William Jennings Bryan, shorn of official duties, urged that American vessels be kept out of the war zone. Speaking in New York City on February 2, he said that unless this was done, the United States would "drift into war." Bryan furthermore argued that the American public should be consulted via referendum as to whether the U.S. should participate in the Great War, a proposal also advanced by peace groups. Wilson rejected both suggestions. Instead, he asked Congress to approve legislation enabling him to arm American merchant ships.[152]

The House passed Wilson's Armed Ships bill on March 1, but a dozen senators led by La

Follette blocked the measure through a filibuster in the Senate. The legislation would have granted the president authority to place guns on merchant ships with orders to fire on German submarines at sight. La Follette argued that the bill was a surefire way to war and thus "contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, which expressly vests the war power in Congress." He pointed out that Germany's submarine warfare was aimed at interdicting U.S. aid to its enemies, not attacking the United States or its citizens.[153] Not to be deterred, President Wilson unilaterally authorized the arming of U.S. merchant ships.

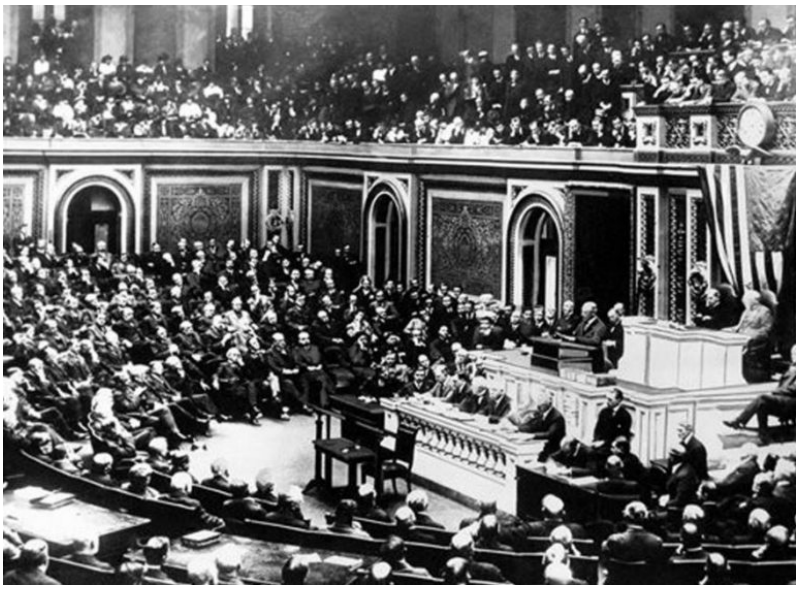
The Armed Ships bill, in any case, was a diversion from the more crucial issue of whether U.S. merchant ships should be allowed to travel in war zones at all. Once the parameters of debate were narrowed to the question of whether or not U.S. merchant ships should be armed, the Wilson administration could not lose. Allowing American ships, armed or not, to enter the declared war zone around the British Isles would most certainly lead to attacks on American ships, thus providing the requisite justification for war.

As the U.S. moved closer to war, German Foreign Affairs Secretary Arthur Zimmerman, newly promoted from Undersecretary in November 1916, made a diplomatic blunder that enraged many Americans. On January 19, 1917, he sent a coded telegram to Germany's minister in Mexico: "We shall endeavor to keep the United States of America neutral," the cable began, but if the U.S. declared war on Germany, then Mexico should be encouraged to ally with Germany. The minister was instructed to offer as incentives "generous financial support" and the possibility of regaining "the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona." The latter scheme was far-fetched, to say the least. British intelligence decoded this telegram and shared with the Wilson administration on February 24. The administration authorized its release on March 1. It was immediately blazoned in newspaper headlines across the United States.[154]



German Foreign Affairs Secretary Arthur Zimmermann

Combined with eight American merchant ships sunk between January 1 and April 1, 1917, the spirit of revenge was sufficiently aroused in the body politic for Wilson to ask Congress for a declaration of war. "In deciding for war," writes Justus Doenecke, "the chief executive rejected certain options. He could have adopted the 'cooling-off' solution of Bryan, that is, to wait until the conflict ended and claims were adjudicated. He might have promoted legislation similar to the Gore-McLemore resolutions, thereby saving the lives of some American passengers on the Atlantic."[155] These reasonable alternatives were dismissed in favor of calling for war.

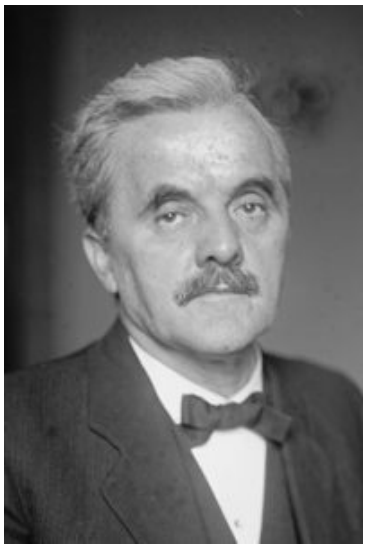


Wilson delivers his war message to Congress, April 2, 1917

Congressional debate on war

In the debate over the war resolution in early April, many members of Congress were troubled by Germany's actions but also hesitant to approve war as their constituents were not all on board. Senator James Vardaman, Democrat of Mississippi, expressed the view that the president should consult with the "plain honest people" of America, who would fight the battles and bear the burden of taxation, before taking the nation into war. Nor did it make sense, he said, for Americans to sacrifice their lives to "organize the parliament of man." Senator Stone, Democrat of Missouri, stated that U.S. entry into the war would be "the greatest national blunder in history."[156]

Senator George Norris, Republican of Nebraska, assailed Wilson for not telling the whole truth about Germany's actions. He chided the president for not protesting the British blockade. Why, he asked, had the U.S. kept its ships out of the war zone created by England but refused to keep its ships out of the war zone created by Germany? Norris also pointed out economic factors pushing the U.S. into war:



Sen. George Norris

> We have loaned many hundreds of millions of dollars to the Allies in this controversy. . . . 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.[157]

Senator La Follette spoke for 165 minutes on the afternoon of April 4, presenting his arguments as if prosecuting a legal case: the majority of U.S. citizens did not support war; the U.S. had failed to pressure Britain to end its blockade thereby inviting a German response; other neutral nations had not entered the war; and Britain had shown no inclination to extend democracy in any part of its empire, including Ireland. "The failure to treat the belligerent nations alike," he said, "to reject the illegal war zones of both Germany and Great Britain, is wholly accountable for our present dilemma." La Follette asserted that the president, rather than admitting his policy failures, was trying to "inflame the mind of our people into the frenzy of war."[158]

Pro-war members of Congress pushed aside these arguments in favor of righteous indignation at Germany. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge declared that any policy short of war amounted to "national degeneracy" and "cowardice." His son-in-law, Augustus Gardner, thundered, "Too long have we suffered other nations to bear our burden in this war for liberty. Now we must descend from the seat of rest into the blood and dust." With patriotic passion, Congress overwhelmingly approved Wilson's war resolution by votes of 82-6 in the Senate and 373-50 in the House. Jeanette Rankin, Republican of Montana and the first woman elected to Congress, voted "no," saying "I want to stand by my country – but I cannot vote for war."[159]


Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge

The United States formally declared war on Germany on April 6. President Wilson, having been re-elected as the leader who "kept us out of war" five months earlier, now became the war president.

It was not clear, however, what role U.S. military forces would play in the Great War. Beyond eloquent platitudes, Wilson had announced no war plans. The U.S. did not formally join the Allied Powers but became an Associate Power, reserving the right to decide what actions it would take. The idea that the U.S. would send more than two million soldiers to fight in France was a possibility but not an expectation. Indeed, some members of Congress voted for war believing that no more than a token American force would be sent abroad, if at all. According to David Kennedy, "Many Americans had at first believed that the nation would be spared altogether the ordeal of sending millions of its sons to join the Allied armies in the field.... Even among those who envisioned the creation of an American Expeditionary Force, many saw it actually taking shape only in the far distant future."[160]

Economic interests and the "Merchants of Death"

Economic motives were crucial in shaping the Wilson administration's decision to send U.S. troops into the Great War, though this was never mentioned in his speeches. Wilson had strong ties to Wall Street financial interests. His political career was supported from the beginning by his Princeton classmate, Cleveland H. Dodge, scion of the Dodge copper and

munitions fortune and a director of the National City Bank and Winchester Arms Company, who gave over $50,000 to Wilson's presidential campaign. In 1910, Dodge funneled $75,000 to James J. Smith Jr., the Democratic Party boss of New Jersey, to secure Wilson's nomination for governor. In return Wilson had to promise to make Smith a senator in 1912. Dodge also chaired the "Survivors of the Victims of the Lusitania Funds." Not coincidentally, Dodge had a financial stake in the Remington ammunition secretly stowed in the bowels of the doomed ship.[161] Wilson's "other half," Edward House, was similarly in league with the elite. He traveled to Europe with J. P. Morgan partner Thomas W. Lamont, with whom he was close.

Just days before the war broke out in Europe, U.S. Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan warned President Wilson against letting "powerful financial interests [get] involved in the war." On August 15, 1914, Bryan ordered U.S. bankers not to fund any of the combatants, stating that "loans by American bankers to any foreign nation which is at war" betray "the true spirit of neutrality." Five days earlier, he had written, "Money is the worst of contrabands – it commands everything else." During the debate over the Hitchcock bill to place an embargo on arms sales to European belligerents, which failed, Senator La Follette spoke for many peace progressives in finding but one purpose to the munitions trade: "to sacrifice human life for private gain."[162]

Political cartoon by John Sloan, 1914: "After the war a medal and maybe a job" (Library of Congress)

Around this same time, Robert Lansing, then a legal adviser to the State Department, exempted "credits" from the ban on loans laid down by Bryan and secretly conveyed this distinction to Roger L. Farnham of the National City Bank and Willard Straight of J. P. Morgan & Company. The president approved the exemption. Lansing told Wilson that trade with belligerents was legitimate and that it was desirable that "obstacles such as interference with an arrangement of credits or easy method of exchange should be removed." This was kept secret for the next five months.

When the credits ran out in the summer of 1915, a syndicate of bankers headed by Morgan extended larger loans to France and subsequently to Great Britain, totaling over $100 million.[163] A great deal of this money was recycled back into the U.S. economy through the purchase of munitions, which stimulated growth in the manufacturing of iron and steel. The United States, in turn, embarked on what one financial writer called "the most remarkable period of financial and industrial expansion that had been witnessed in history."[164] Full employment was achieved.

Lansing asked Wilson in March 1915 whether the United States could afford to "let a

declaration as to our conception of 'the true spirit of neutrality,' made in the first days of the war, stand in the way of our national interests." The answer, of course, was no. Treasury Secretary William McAdoo made it clear in September 1915, "To maintain our prosperity, we must finance it. Otherwise it may stop and that would be disastrous." The new secretary of state Lansing agreed, "The result would be restriction of outputs, industrial depression, idle capital, idle labor, numerous failures, financial demoralization and general unrest and suffering among the laboring classes."[165] According to the historian Niall Ferguson, American financial institutions, after being given the green light by Wilson, loaned a total of $2.16 billion to all belligerents by April 1917, of which only $35 million went to Germany.[166]

The larger goal went beyond sustaining prosperity at home to attaining preeminent economic power in the world. In April 1915, Thomas W. Lamont, the J. P. Morgan partner known as "the ambassador from Wall Street," gave a speech at the American Academy of Social and Political Science in which he enthused that the United States would "become a creditor instead of a debtor nation [as a result of the war], and such a development, sooner or later, would certainly tend to bring about the dollar, instead of the pound sterling, as the international basis of exchange." Intervention could thus ensure that the United States would supersede the British as the major economic power of the world.[167]

André Tardieu, the French High Commissioner in the U.S., stated that from the time "loans from the allies obtained from New York banks swept the gold of Europe into American coffers, whether desired or not, the victory of the Allies became essential to the United States."[168] Between August, 1914 and February 1917, more than $10.5 billion worth of goods were shipped from the United States, with Britain, France and Russia buying 40 percent of their war material from the U.S. Shipyards were running at capacity, as were machine tool manufacturers. Munitions exports increased to $1.29 billion, up from $40 million in 1915.[169] London even began stationing purchasing missions in America, their staffs numbering at least 1,600, with J. P. Morgan serving as an intermediary. William McAdoo, the U.S. Treasury Secretary, wrote Wilson that "high prices for food products have brought great prosperity to the farmers, while the purchases of war munitions have stimulated industry and have set factories going to full capacity."[170] American munitions exports alone jumped from "approximately $10,000,000 on June 30, 1914, to $189,000,000 on June 30, 1915, to $715,000,000 on June 30, 1916," according to a 1936 Congressional report.[171]

To head the Export Department, Thomas Lamont recruited one of Morgan's partners Edward Stettinius Sr., considered the "father of the military industrial complex," who presided over purchases equivalent to the world's gross national product a generation before.[172] The War Industries Board later coordinated a total industrial mobilization under Stettinius' continued direction along with that of Bernard Baruch, a speculator in copper stocks and backer of Wilson's presidential campaigns, who packed the Board with Wall Street financiers. They fixed prices on a cost-plus basis and saw to it that costs were grossly padded so as to yield hidden profits, as subsequent investigations revealed. The tax burden, meanwhile, was transferred to the general population while a relatively small number of giant corporations, some with interlocking directorates, monopolized the contracts.[173]

At least 21,000 new American millionaires were created as a result of the war. The stock of DuPont, a major manufacturer of gunpowder, went up from $20 to $1,000 per share, and J. P. Morgan claimed to have made more money in two years than the elder Morgan made in all his life.[174] His company had direct investment in at least 15 prime military contractors (including General Electric, International Harvester Company, United States Steel, and Midvale Steel and Ordinance) and many more subcontractors, and purchased three-year, five percent gold notes issued by Remington Arms Union Metallic Cartridge Company taking almost $1 million apiece. The Guggenheims reaped a fortune after Stettinius's Export Department bought up three-quarters of all electrolyte copper mined in the United States for the British (J. P. Morgan had helped the Guggenheims organize Kennecott Copper as a public company). Baldwin locomotives, a Morgan subsidiary, saw a 500 percent increase in profits, while the resources of fifty national banks in New York City increased by $98 million.[175]

U.S. government advertisement encouraging women to work in munitions factories (Library of Congress)


J. P. Morgan in Manhattan, 1917

Predictably, as America's booming manufacturing and banking sectors were growing increasingly dependent on sales and loans to the Allies, they grew increasingly fearful that an allied defeat, or even military reversal, would crush the boom and jeopardize loan repayments. This created a huge and expanding powerful interest group pushing Washington to help the Allies and promote long-term international economic dominance. The importance of the "economic link between the Allies and the United States…is almost impossible to

exaggerate," writes historian Ross Gregory. "For the allies, it came to be the difference between life and death, for the United States at least, between prosperity and depression." Hew Strachan concurs in an acclaimed multi-volume history of the war, arguing that by 1917 the United States could not afford an Entente defeat, as the "financial collapse of the Entente would have triggered economic crisis in the United States."[176]

In addition to pressuring the president to continue bankrolling the Allied war effort, certain business interests also sought to influence American citizens, turning public opinion away from neutrality and toward a clear position in favor of the Allies. On February 9, 1917, as the debate over war heated up in Congress, Rep. Oscar Calloway, a Democrat from Texas, charged that, as early as March 1915, the Morgan interests had organized and financed a huge propaganda machine involving twelve influential publishers and 197 newspapers for the purpose of "persuading" the American people to join the Allies. The Hearst-owned papers, whose "yellow journalism" had helped sell intervention in the Spanish-American War, did not participate because William Randolph Hearst loathed the bankers and believed the United States should stay out of the war.

Morgan financed, with the support of leading military figures like General Leonard Wood and hawkish politicians like Theodore Roosevelt, a military preparedness movement and military parades designed to rouse the war spirit.[177] The retired General Wood, who had managed the occupation of Cuba from 1898 to 1901, presided over the National Security League, a super-patriotic group formed in December 1914 with funding from Wall Street titans such as Cornelius Vanderbilt and Simon Guggenheim. At its first meeting in New York City, League members heard a U.S. Army major warn that Germany was planning to invade America as soon as it defeated Britain. The League's "preparedness" campaign fostered anti-German feeling and insinuated that peace advocacy was unpatriotic.

The League sponsored sensationalist books warning of the German menace and subsidized a 1915 silent movie, "The Battle Cry of Peace," in which American pacifists were used as dupes by foreign agents to successfully lobby against defense spending, after which America was invaded, the great cities of New York and Washington destroyed, and the American people enslaved. Admiral George Dewey and General Wood both played themselves in the film.[178] The *New York Times* wrote of the film, "it is designed to make many a person in each audience resolve to join the National Guard, the American Legion, the National Security League, and the Navy League, forthwith, and to write to his Congressman by the next mail."[179] The English-born producer, J. Stuart Blackton, advocated U.S. entry into the war.

In March 1917, the State Department was gravely concerned that there were only 114 million pounds of gold left in the Bank of England's vaults to cover further loans. Morgan began urging Britain to resort to various subsidiary forms of financing to relieve their indebtedness, including the selling of equities and ownership in overseas properties and shipping of more gold. Secretary of State Lansing relayed a warning to Wilson from Ambassador Page that "the collapse of world trade and of the whole of European finance was imminent," which would mean the cessation of all war orders in hundreds of U.S. factories and a catastrophic effect on the American economy. Page wrote that "perhaps our going to war is the only way in which our present preeminent trade position can be maintained and a panic averted."[180] It was in

this context that Wilson declared that Germany's submarine warfare left him with no choice but war.

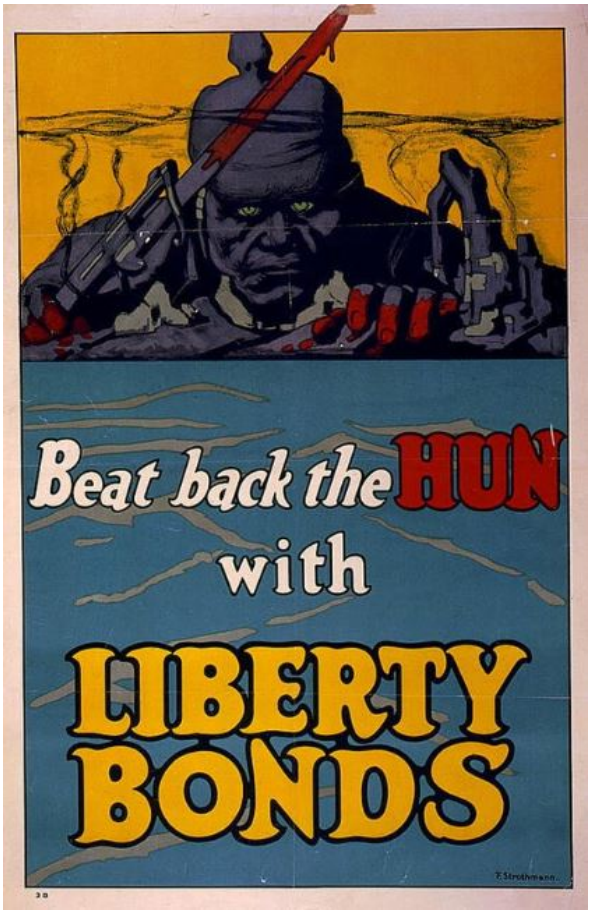
The economic reasoning behind U.S. intervention in the Great War was spelled out by the 1934 Nye committee investigating the munitions industry, which concluded that "if the United States did not enter the war, the Allies would have been defeated which would have led to a serious financial situation and widespread default on the [allied] loans. The entire financial structure of the allies would have collapsed, possibly carrying with them their American banking group."[181]

Once the war began, business profits soared. During nineteen months of war, from April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918, the U.S. spent $22.6 billion and advanced another $9 billion in loans to the Allies. General Smedley Butler, a decorated 34-year Marine Corps veteran, pointed out in his antiwar pamphlet, *War is a Racket* (1935), replete with the photos of hideously disfigured soldiers, that the DuPont Corporation, experienced a yearly profit of $58 million during the war, a 950 percent increase from before. Bethlehem Steel, which began producing munitions, averaged $49 million in profits per year during the war compared to $6 million before. U.S. Steel's profits topped $240 million as compared to $105 million before the war.[182] Expenditures on warplanes reached $1.21 billion, a hundredfold increase, with wartime employment in the industry and its subsidiaries like the Sperry Gyroscope Co. increasing to 175,000 employees. Senator George Norris noted in his speech on April 4, 1917, "War brings prosperity to the stock gambler on Wall Street.... The stock brokers would not, of course, go to war, because the very object they have in bringing on war is profit."[183]

The greatest stock gambler of them all, J. P. Morgan, was a key figure driving support for intervention as a means of securing repayment of his loans, some of which had been secured by selling public liberty bonds. Morgan had always held animus toward Germans, which he had inherited from his father. The company fortunes had been down because of involvement with the $400 million collapse of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad's financial structure.[184] Thomas W. Lamont, who acted as an official representative of the Treasury department at the Paris Peace conference, acknowledged that the Morgan Company "had never for a moment been neutral. We didn't know how to be. From the very start we did everything we could to contribute to the cause of the Allies." His colleague, Henry P. Davison, said in Paris in April 1919 that "some of us in America realized that this was our war from

the very start."[185]

From a strictly economic perspective, the United States was the war's primary victor, as its intervention "accelerated its replacement of Great Britain as the world's dominant economic power," according to the historian Paul A. C. Koistinen. "By the end of the war, the United States had become the world's largest creditor, with developed, semi-developed, and underdeveloped nations dependent on its wealth."[186]

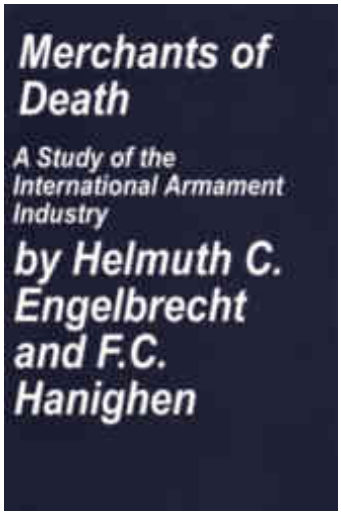


Government poster for Liberty Bonds, 1918 (Library of Congress)

This great power achievement came with significant domestic costs. The war put a halt to progressive economic reforms and fueled a climate of witch-hunting and hysteria in which draconian alien and sedition laws were passed and dissenters were rounded up and deported or jailed. The economic boom that Americans experienced during the war years was fueled by government debt that was passed on to future taxpayers. The national debt increased from $1 billion to nearly $25 billion. President Calvin Coolidge later estimated that the war cost the people of the United States at least $100 billion, counting outlays to come from pensions, bonuses and other war charges.[187]

Postwar reckoning

In September 1934, Republican Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota convened a Senate investigation to look into allegations that manufacturers of armaments had unduly influenced the American decision to go to war. According to committee reports, weapons suppliers had reaped enormous profits at the cost of over 53,000 American battlefield fatalities. According to Koistinen, this committee represented "among the most significant Congressional investigating agencies in American history" as it "uncovered and explicated the dynamics of an emerging military-industrial complex."[188]



During the 1930s, publicity regarding the role of munitions makers in the war was aroused by the publication of exposés such as Seymour Waldman's *Death and Profits* (1932), a Book-of-the Month club selection that portrayed a "world-wide munitions racket," and *Merchants of Death* (1934), by H.C. Englebrecht and F.C. Hanighen. The latter book, a best seller, detailed every facet of armament manufacturing while blaming managers in war industries for ignoring the social consequences of their work. Though the authors of both works stopped short of alleging a ruthless conspiracy to promote war for economic benefit, their studies painted a dark picture of the leaders who were in charge of the munitions industry during World War I.

Over a period of eighteen months, the Nye Committee held 93 hearings and questioned over 200 witnesses, including banker J. P. Morgan, Jr., and chemical manufacturer Pierre du Pont. Based on these hearings the Nye Committee charged that private armament interests worked contrary to arms embargoes and treaties, sold weapons to both sides in World War I, stimulated arms races between friendly nations, and benefited from excess profits with government blessings.

The inquiry was led by chief counsel Stephen Rauschenbusch, son of the noted progressive theologian Walter Rauschenbusch, and drew upon extended research in the files of the State, War, Navy, Commerce and Treasury departments, the Federal Reserve Board, the House of Morgan, the Wilson papers, Robert Lansing, Edward M. House, and subpoenaed key witnesses. J. P. Morgan's export department was found to have operated as a buying agent for the Allies and helped guide the massive growth of the U.S. munitions industry during the war. To keep the multibillion dollar operation going, the Morgan partners had led the way in providing American financial assistance to the Allies which totaled nearly $3 billion up to April 1917.

That investment, Nye and his colleagues concluded, was protected and partially paid off when the United States entered the First World War and took up the Allies' financial burden. In carrying out its responsibilities, J. P. Morgan and Company dealt regularly with political and economic elites on both sides of the Atlantic, including the British prime minister and the American president. The Nye committee ultimately confirmed many allegations about special interests and their role in dictating government policy and compromising U.S. democracy. Although the committee found little evidence of an

Peace demonstration, Massachusetts, July 1935

outright conspiracy, its disclosures aroused great public interest and added to the public's distrust for war.[189]

(Library of Congress)

With an eye to the future, the committee endorsed the adoption of stringent neutrality laws, including prohibitions on financial assistance and munition sales to belligerents (as William Jennings Bryan and Gilbert Hitchcock had advocated at the time). The committee also advocated strict regulation of the arms industry and specified that the U.S. should not allow a private banking house to act as principal financier and supplier of one side in a war. Senator Nye himself favored the nationalization of the arms industry in order to take the profit motive out of war. In January 1937, nearly a year after the conclusion of the Nye committee investigation, a Gallup poll revealed that 70 percent of Americans thought it was a mistake to enter the Great War and that 82 percent favored prohibition of the sale of munitions by private parties.[190]

*** * ***

IV. Wilsonian idealism and the new "Manifest Destiny"

When President Wilson called the nation to war on April 2, 1917, he wrapped his justifications in such a welter of noble principles that the national security reasons for entering the war were hardly recognizable. He ended his speech with an explosion of idealism, like the finale in a July 4th fireworks' display. America would fight, he said, "for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes."[191]

What exactly was this task for which Americans must fight and die?

Unwrapping Wilson's rhetorical packaging, the essential mission was to make the United States a great global power equal to or greater than European powers; and not just a great power, but a great *moral* power, one that would presumably wield its influence and sword for protection and justice. Wilson believed that the U.S. was ready to shoulder the responsibility of global leadership.[192] The endgame became clear in the aftermath of the Great War. Speaking to the Senate in July 1919, Wilson remarked:

> There can be no question of our ceasing to be a world power. The only question is whether we can refuse the moral leadership that is offered to us, whether we shall accept or reject the confidence of the world. . . . The stage is set, the destiny disclosed. It has come about by no plan of our conceiving, but by the hand of God who led us into this way. We cannot turn back. We can only go forward, with lifted eyes and freshened spirit, to follow the vision. It was of this that we dreamed at our birth. America shall in truth show the way. The light streams upon the path ahead, and nowhere else.[193]

The public rationales needed to justify this quest for global power and influence were still under construction when the Wilson administration contemplated entering the war in 1917. At a cabinet meeting on March 20, 1917, Secretary of State Robert Lansing suggested the theme of "Democracy versus Autocracy." To be sure, it was not intended as a plan of action but rather as a propagandistic justification for U.S. entry into the war. According to Robert Hannigan:

> . . . what probably most appealed to Wilson at this time was the potential Lansing's formulation offered for mobilizing Americans behind the war. The president was worried that much of the U.S. public continued to lack enthusiasm for military involvement and would not rally to the idea that Germany's "submarine blockade" merited that response. The idea of a final, titanic struggle between "democracy" and "autocracy," meanwhile, might both heighten the public's sense that America was itself in jeopardy and counter the criticisms he was likely to face. . . . A war for "democracy" might also advance Wilson's longer-term goals more effectively. The president had lately come to view belligerency as his ticket to participation in the peace conference . . . The country therefore needed to be prepared for a mission that went beyond the question of how Germany from this time forward would, or would not, use its U-boats.[194]

The idea of justifying U.S. entry into the war in the name of extending democracy across the globe was reinforced by the Kerensky Revolution in Russia, which set up a prototype democratic state in place of the old Czarist regime. Although the U.S. had nothing to do with the overthrow, the event nonetheless suggested that democratic governance was the wave of the future. With Great Britain, France, and Russia all having democratic governments, Imperial Germany could be condemned not only for aggression and militarism, but also for authoritarianism. In order to maintain the ideological duality, the Wilson administration had to ignore the fact that Germany had an elected legislative national body, the Reichstag, that shared power with the Kaiser.

The ideological dualism — democracy versus autocracy — had deep roots in U.S. history and American identity, and was therefore a salient propaganda theme. The rebel Patriots of 1776 framed their struggle for independence as a battle between tyranny (British rule) and freedom (American independence), notwithstanding the fact that American political institutions were modeled on British institutions and that one-sixth of Americans remained enslaved after the war. The idea that the United States *embodied* the principles of freedom and democracy nonetheless became embedded in American identity and ideology. During the 1840s, the "freedom and democracy" motif was incorporated into the quasi-religious doctrine of "manifest destiny" and employed to justify territorial expansionism. John O'Sullivan, who coined the term, claimed that America's democratic institutions placed it above selfish interests and aggression. The United States, he wrote, acts only "in defense of humanity, of the oppressed of all nations, of the rights of conscience," whereas Old World autocracies lead men on by the "hundreds of thousands to slay one another, dupes and

victims to emperors, kings, nobles," spreading "desolation far and wide, that a human being might be placed on a seat of supremacy."[195]

Notwithstanding O'Sullivan's Manichean duality, the U.S. acted in much the same manner as Old World empires in grabbing territory (northern Mexico and Native American lands); and in the late 19th century, joining the imperial race for colonies, protectorates, and spheres of influence abroad. This expansionist program was described in the 1892 Republican Party platform as "the achievement of the manifest destiny of the Republic in its broadest sense."[196] Once engaged in the imperial race, U.S. leaders reconciled with their old nemesis, Great Britain, and henceforth the British became a paragon of democracy (just as the British had always viewed themselves). U.S. leaders also adopted the common British and French rationale for empire-building, the "civilizing mission." This became handy when turning Cuba into a U.S. protectorate and the Philippines into a U.S. colony.

> At a critical time in the expansion of American power and influence in the world, Wilson imbued this expansion with a set of rationales deeply rooted in American identity and ideology.

With Europe having descended into an uncivilized state of warfare in 1914, Woodrow Wilson refashioned the "civilizing mission" rationale to encompass the civilizing of *Europe* along with the rest of the world, to the chagrin of British and French leaders. The guiding light of this "civilizing mission" would be "American" principles; and the agent of destiny, the moral leader of the world, would be the United States. The gruesome war, once the U.S. entered it, would thus be depicted as a crusade to make the world "safe for democracy," to secure "the freedom of nations," and to defend "the rights of mankind."

Once in the war, the administration's propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information, went to work promoting the theme of "Democracy versus Autocracy" far and wide. Lansing wrote a pamphlet for the agency titled, "America's Future at Stake," in which he argued, like O'Sullivan, that democracies are inherently peaceful while autocracies are inherently warlike:

> I do not know in the annals of history an instance where a people, with truly democratic institutions, permitted their government to wage a war of aggression, a war of conquest. Faithful to their treaties, sympathetic with others seeking self-development, real democracies, whether monarchical or republican in their forms of government, desire peace with their neighbors and with all mankind.

> Were every people on earth able to express their will, there would be no wars of aggression, and, if there were no wars of aggression, then there would be no wars, and lasting peace would come to this earth. The only way that a people can express their will is through democratic institutions. Therefore, when the world is made safe for democracy, when that great principle prevails, universal peace will be an accomplished fact.[197]

The theme of "Democracy versus Autocracy" captured the public imagination. On October 8, 1917, Wilson proclaimed that the United States was "fighting now for the same ideals of democracy and freedom that have always actuated the nation."[198] Except that the U.S. was not fighting for national independence, nor for control of North America, but to expand U.S. power and influence in the world. It was the beginning of a new "manifest destiny" for the United States. U.S. leaders would henceforth justify U.S. wars and interventions, and demand the right to determine the governments and policies of other nations in the name of advancing freedom and democracy. The American rhetorical crusade against autocratic and despotic regimes, the infidels of the modern era, would continue in various guises into the 21st century, ostensibly assuring American citizens that their government was doing good in the world.[199]

Words and deeds

> Investigation into President Wilson's record reveals a wide gap between stated ideals and actual practices.

Many U.S. historians infer positive intentions on the part of President Wilson based on his own rhetoric, but investigation into the record reveals a wide gap between stated ideals and actual practices. Wilson seems to have employed idealism in much the same way that politicians employ campaign promises, as a means of garnering popular support rather than as a guide for government policymaking.[200]

Wilson's application of "freedom and democracy" was deficient in a number of respects. Prior to entering the Great War, the Wilson administration sent U.S. troops to occupy the small nations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. In both cases, the U.S. established authoritarian governments under U.S. command, utterly disregarding the "consent of the governed."[201] At home, once the U.S. entered the Great War, the Wilson administration instituted repressive laws that abrogated citizens' Constitutional rights, suppressing free speech, censoring the press, and imprisoning peace advocates. More subtly, President Wilson never lifted a finger to secure democratic rights and freedoms for African American citizens. His administration, in fact, *re-segregated* federal government offices. Nor was the new League of Nations envisioned as a vehicle for democracy and freedom, as "self-determination" was meant only for a few European nationalities within the Central Power alliance, not for the great masses of Africans and Asians living under European colonial rule.

Granted that politics is rife with hypocrisy, and not just in Washington, Wilson seemed especially talented in explaining away contradictions. When confronted on the segregation issue by Oswald Garrison Villard in 1913, for example, Wilson explained that segregation ultimately benefited African Americans. "I sincerely believe it to be in their interest . . . . we are rendering them more safe in their possession of office and less likely to be discriminated against."[202] Wilson offered another contorted rationale in May 1917 when signing the Selective Service Act, which forcibly conscripted young men into the army. He disingenuously clothed the new law in the language of voluntarism:

> It is a new thing in our history and a landmark in our progress. It is a new manner of accepting and vitalizing our duty to give ourselves with thoughtful devotion to the common purpose of us all. It is in no sense a conscription of the unwilling. It is, rather, selection from a Nation which has volunteered in mass.[203]

At times, Wilson found it convenient to simply lie; for example, assuring Senator William Stone, "I shall do everything in my power to keep the United States out of war," while at the same time secretly conniving with the Allies to "probably" enter the war. In another case, Wilson publicly proclaimed in the first point of his famous "Fourteen Points" speech on January 8, 1918, that "diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view"; yet at that very time, he was colluding with the British and French to overturn the Russian Revolution. He also promised to respect Russian self-determination, saying, "Whether their present leaders believe it or not, it is our heartfelt desire and hope that some way may be opened whereby we may be privileged to assist the people of Russia to attain their utmost hope of liberty and ordered peace."[204] In practice, Wilson joined Britain and France in sending troops to abet the overthrow the new Bolshevik government.

Wilson also deceived peace advocates, leading them to believe that he was with them in spirit. After gaining most of their votes in the 1916 election with a campaign slogan, "He Kept Us Out of War," Wilson moved furtively toward entry into the war. Once involved, Wilson turned against peace advocates, silencing and imprisoning them. "In a Flag Day speech in June [1917]," writes David Patterson, "he lumped the entire peace movement with German traitors and schemers, and he branded pacifists and antimilitarists as 'the agents or dupes of the Imperial German Government.'"[205] The next day, Wilson signed the Espionage Act into law. Henceforth, as the historian David Kennedy writes, "to criticize the course of the war, or to question American or Allied peace aims, was to risk outright prosecution for treason."[206]

Official presidential portrait of Thomas Woodrow Wilson

Another subterfuge was the president's advocacy of "peace without victory" in his address to the Senate on January 22, 1917. The speech was designed in part to encourage Germany to give up based on the promise a lenient peace settlement. After the U.S. entered the war on April 6, Wilson abruptly discarded the "peace without victory" rationale like a worn-out campaign promise after an election. Theodore Roosevelt wrote in frustration, "What is perfectly impossible, what represents enormous hypocrisy, is to say that we have gone to war to make the world safe for democracy, in April, when sixty days previously we had been

announcing that we wished a 'peace without victory,' and had no concern with the 'causes or objects' of the war."[207] In fact, Wilson was concerned with the objects of war, but his "peace without victory" rhetoric was no longer useful in pursuit of those aims. As Robert Hannigan writes:

> From the spring of 1917 onward "Peace without Victory" was no longer seen as satisfactory. The administration wanted to see changes made in the structure of the German government. It also wanted to see Berlin thwarted from becoming a more formidable world power via formal or informal expansion in Europe and to the southeast. In the face of mounting exhaustion and international sentiment eager to see the conflict end, Wilson ironically became the most important voice pushing to keep it going.[208]

Once engaged in war, Wilson abandoned all pretense of seeking a peace agreement short of victory. "He brushed aside various peace feelers," writes David Patterson, and "rejected Pope Benedict XV's mediation appeal in August 1917, which called for the evacuation of occupied lands, no indemnities, disarmament, and territorial boundaries based as much as possible on the principle of self-determination. Wilson would not seriously consider any peace proposal until Germany had been defeated and the German militarists had been driven from power." British ambassador Cecil Spring Rice wryly pointed out that the president was doing "his utmost to kindle a warlike spirit throughout [the] states and to combat pacifists."[209] Indeed, Wilson employed his righteous idealism to beatify war, turning the slaughter into a crusade for freedom, democracy, "the rights of mankind," and even peace, rendering mute traditional American antipathy toward involvement in European wars. He twisted and monopolized the peace ideal to serve his martial ends.

Some historians have judged Wilson's peace and justice idealism to be sincere based on his mild opposition to the extension of British and French imperialism.[210] Such interpretations do not consider U.S. geopolitical strategy. A world order dominated by the British and French empires was disadvantageous to U.S. economic interests. The administration's goal was not anti-imperialism, but something akin to the Open Door Policy which allowed equal economic exploitation of China, or perhaps the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, which warned against the European recolonization of Latin America in deference to both U.S. and British economic interests (the British suggested the idea). Wilson's geopolitical aims were not different in kind from those of hawkish nationalists Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge. All three were intent on maintaining unchallenged U.S. dominance in Latin America and extending U.S. influence and hegemony in other parts of the world; and all thought English-speaking Anglo-Saxons were destined to rule. "The flesh-and-blood Wilson," writes Hannigan, "most certainly did not preside over a disinterested diplomacy."[211]

> Wilson's so-called "missionary diplomacy" did not depart from Roosevelt's "gunboat diplomacy" nor from Taft's "dollar diplomacy," but rather embraced both, adding a coat of idealistic gloss.

In terms of overall foreign policies, Wilson employed military force more often than his predecessors, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. Wilson's so-called "missionary diplomacy" did not depart from Roosevelt's "gunboat diplomacy" nor from Taft's "dollar diplomacy," but rather embraced both, adding a coat of idealistic gloss. Tough-talking President Roosevelt made a show of force in the U.S. occupation of Cuba (1906-1909) but deftly avoided military engagements and removed U.S. troops after a new Cuban government was formed. Wilson's interventions in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, in contrast, were conducted with cavalier disregard for the people, catalyzing rebellions and brutal counterinsurgency wars, and with no exit plan. Roosevelt, unable to stand Wilson's abstract moralizing, wrote in August 1918, "Our continuing action in Santo Domingo and Haiti makes it hypocritical for us to lay down any universal rules about self-determination for all nations.... We have with armed force invaded, made war upon, and conquered the two small republics, have upset their governments, have denied them the right of self-determination, and have made democracy within their limits not merely unsafe but nonexistent."[212]

Wilson's unnecessary military intervention in Mexico in 1914 was aimed at influencing the outcome of the Mexican Revolution. When several American sailors were arrested and released without harm by Mexican authorities in April, Wilson used this as a pretext for a nine-month military occupation of the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz, which included a naval blockade. In taking Vera Cruz, U.S. warships bombarded and invaded the town, resulting in the death of 126 Mexicans and 22 Americans.[213]

Part of Wilson's dubious legacy as a peacemaker centers on his advocacy of the League of Nations. The fact that conservatives such as Taft, nationalists such as Roosevelt, and leaders of Imperial Britain supported the League should indicate that power motives were not absent. The League was designed to keep the peace, to be sure, but Wilson also sought to extend U.S. influence through it. Robert Hannigan explains:

> Confronted by domestic American concern about the pitfalls of overseas involvement, the League was the president's principal way of trying to make U.S. power a factor in eastern hemisphere affairs. Its objectives were to put constraints on the activity of rivals that might threaten the international order that Washington desired and simultaneously to bring as many of the other major powers as possible into a collective effort to oversee and "reform" the "backward regions" of that part of the globe.[214]

Wilson embraced the idea of the league only after it had achieved a fair amount of popularity in the U.S., due in large part to the League to Enforce Peace, led by Taft, and to the Woman's Peace Party, which emphasized the league's conflict resolution aspects. The British, in any case, laid much of the groundwork for the League of Nations. On January 5, 1918, Prime Minister Lloyd George called for the "creation of some international organization to limit the burden of armaments and diminish the probability of war." Soon after, British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour appointed a Committee on the League of Nations to study the feasibility of creating such an institution. A draft outline in March suggested the establishment of a "Conference of Allied States" whose members would agree to submit their

disputes to arbitration and refrain from war. In December 1918, Lloyd George made a pledge to the British people to promote the establishment of the league at the upcoming Versailles peace conference. Voters, he said, would punish him "sooner rather than later" if he returned from Paris empty-handed.[215]

Wilson's misplaced legacy as a peacemaker also arises from his "Fourteen Points" speech in January 1918, which seemed to promote a lenient peace settlement with Germany along the lines of his "peace without victory" speech one year earlier. Wilson made a magnanimous statement in the prologue, declaring, "We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this program that impairs it." Yet not one of his fourteen points indicated any merciful intent or promised to prevent punitive measures after the war. To do so would have conflicted with Allied war aims as well as his own desire to break the back of German militarism.[216] On territorial issues, Wilson's points adhered closely to those of British Prime Minister Lloyd George who delivered a speech on "British War Aims" *three days earlier*. Both leaders sought to carve up the Central Powers after victory: Austria-Hungary would be dismantled completely; the Ottoman Empire, nearly so; and Germany would surrender the Alsace-Lorrain region in the west and a Polish corridor in the east. Lloyd George, no less than Wilson, ended his address by highlighting his desire for peace and self-determination (limited to regions controlled by the Central Powers), but he indicated no need for U.S. leadership to achieve these ends:

> If, then, we are asked what we are fighting for, we reply as we have often replied: we are fighting for a just and lasting peace, and we believe that before permanent peace can be hoped for three conditions must be fulfilled; firstly, the sanctity of treaties must be established; secondly, a territorial settlement must be secured, based on the right of self-determination or the consent of the governed, and, lastly, we must seek by the creation of some international organization to limit the burden of armaments and diminish the probability of war.[217]


British Prime Minister David Lloyd George (Imperial War Museum)

Wilson dismissed the idea of a lenient peace for Germany when it was no longer useful, just as he had dropped "peace without victory." After Germany had been forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles, inaugurating punitive reparation payments and other harsh measures, Wilson cabled Joseph Tumulty, describing it as "a severe treaty in the duties and penalties it imposes upon Germany, but it is severe only because great wrongs done by Germany are to be righted and repaired." He later went on a speaking tour, telling an audience in Columbus, Ohio, on September 4, 1919, that the Versailles Treaty "seeks to

punish one of the greatest wrongs ever done in history, the wrong which Germany sought to do to the world and to civilization; and there ought to be no weak purpose with regard to the application of the punishment. She attempted an intolerable thing, and she must be made to pay for the attempt. The terms of the treaty are severe, but they are not unjust."[218]
Many of the details of the First World War have been forgotten, but Wilson's idealistic justifications have remained a fixture in U.S. foreign policy. At a critical time in the expansion of American power and influence in the world, Wilson imbued this expansion with a set of rationales deeply rooted in American identity and ideology. Future U.S. leaders would return to this wellspring of idealism again and again to justify every kind of war and foreign policy adventurism.

* * *

V. Over There: War and peace in France

When the U.S. declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, the situation in Europe remained at a standstill, although the Allies held one distinct advantage. They had the United States to supply them with arms and food, whereas Germany was experiencing increasing shortages due to the British blockade. Indeed, the winter of 1916-17 is remembered in Germany as the "turnip winter."

Waiting for bread rations (German federal archives)

On the battlefield, defensive strategies continued to reign. During the previous year, Allied forces had defeated a major German offensive at Verdun, and the German Army had repelled a major Allied offensive at the River Somme, all at a huge cost in lives. The will to fight was beginning to wane in all of the belligerent countries, but no government was prepared to call for a peace settlement until military advantage had been secured. The British government inaugurated conscription in 1916 to refill its depleted ranks. In order to buoy up morale, Prime Minister Lloyd George declared on March 20, 1917, that the Allies were on the verge of a "victory in which the British Empire will lead. It will easily then be the first Power in the world."[219] In fact, the Allied outlook considerably darkened over the next fifteen months. In late April 1917, the French Army suffered an ignominious defeat in northern France, incurring 187,000 casualties. French General Robert-Georges Nivelle had assembled some 1,200,000

men, 5,000 guns, 200 tanks, 47 squadrons of artillery-spotting aircraft, 39 observation balloons, and 8 squadrons of fighter planes for the attack, but the Germans had captured his battle plan and effectively resisted.

A French soldier stands near the bodies of several soldiers near Souain, France, circa 1915 (National Library of France)

Nivelle's near-suicidal mission was the final straw for one French division, which mutinied on May 5. The mutiny spread quickly through the French lines. Some soldiers deserted and many refused orders to the front. On May 29, mutineers of the 36th and 129th infantry regiments met and issued a declaration: "We want peace . . . we have had enough of the war and we want the deputies [of the French parliament] to know it. . . . When we go into the trenches, we will plant a white flag on the parapet. The Germans will do the same, and we will not fight until the peace is signed."[220] There were indications of this remote possibility. On the walls of houses in a devastated village in occupied northern France, German soldiers scribbled on the walls: "Let us stop the killing ... we want peace... No heroic death for us!... Those who praise dying as a hero should go to the front themselves.... To hell with the officers, they are dogs and scoundrels."[221]

Fearful of losing its army, the French command took swift action. It sentenced 554 mutineers to death, although only 26 were actually executed, replaced Nivelle with General Philippe Pétain, and adopted a strictly defensive military posture, at least until American reinforcements could arrive. By the spring of 1917, nearly one million French soldiers had been killed in fighting – 306,000 in 1914, 334,000 in 1915, 217,000 in 1916, and 121,000 in early 1917 – out of a population of twenty million French males of all ages.[222] Americans could hardly contemplate this level of sacrifice.

Across the English Channel, Germany's unrestricted U-boat campaign was taking a toll on British merchant ships, resulting in shortages on the home front. Ship and cargo losses rose from 153,512 tons in January 1917 to 545,282 tons in April. Although there was no threat of starvation in Britain, there were shortages of staples, resulting in rationing and rising food prices. Food scarcity, in turn, led to public criticism of business profiteering and to waves of strikes in April and May 1917. A report prepared by the Ministry of Labour for the War Cabinet on May 24 noted widespread concern that "an unfair share of the sacrifices entailed by the War is being borne by the working classes" and that this was "undermining patriotic zeal."[223]

The American Expeditionary Forces

Both the British and French commands looked to the U.S. to supply the winning margin in the war, yet it was clear from the outset that it would take at least a year to conscript, train, arm, and transport sizable numbers of troops to the Western Front. Still, the anticipation of U.S. reinforcements was enough to boost Allied military morale and deter peace advocates from pursuing any agreement short of victory. The U.S. Navy played an immediate role in countering German U-boat activity. The U.S. dispatched warships to aid in convoy operations that protected merchant vessels and commissioned anti-submarine vessels with the ability to detect and drop depth charges on submarines. U.S. ships also laid more mines across the North Sea, reinforcing the long-standing British blockade.[224]


General John J. Pershing

To lead the U.S. armed forces in Europe, President Wilson chose General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing, a compatriot of Theodore Roosevelt who had earned his nickname because of his command of black "Buffalo soldiers" with the 10th Cavalry. Pershing looked and acted the part of the disciplined commander though he was still coping emotionally with the loss of his wife and three daughters in a tragic home fire in San Francisco on August 28, 1915.[225] He had participated in the army's final campaign against the Apaches in Arizona (to capture Geronimo), in the Spanish American War in Cuba, and in the occupation of the Philippines, where he helped put down an insurrection led by Moro Muslims. Most recently, he had led a punitive expedition into Mexico to capture the bandit Poncho Villa, which failed. None of these campaigns remotely resembled the Great War battles in Europe. Nor was the U.S. Army prepared for such a war.


General Pershing inspects French troops at Boulogne, France, June 13, 1917 (AP photo)

To assess the situation in Europe, Pershing and 190 officers and staff members disembarked from New York on May 28, 1917, traveling first to London, where Pershing met with Field Marshal Sir John French and various dignitaries, then to Paris, where Pershing was given a hero's welcome. In meetings with General Pétain and British Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Pershing learned first-hand of the exhaustion and declining morale in Allied units. The Allied commanders beseeched Pershing to place American troops at their disposal, but Pershing insisted on keeping

U.S. troops under U.S. command, partly to assure U.S. credit for any battle victories and partly to ensure that U.S. troops did not serve as replacements for British troops sent elsewhere to advance the British empire.

The first division of U.S. troops, some 14,500, arrived in France on June 28, 1917. One week later, the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) were formally established. The American "doughboys," as they were called, made their first appearance at the battlefront on October 21, manning the trenches at Nancy, France. By the end of 1917, 175,000 U.S. troops were in France, although many were still in training and those deployed at the front were generally in quieter sections.

U.S. Army soldiers conduct training with a Lewis machine gun at Camp Mills, New York, 1917. (Library of Congress)

In the United States, meanwhile, training and mobilization were hampered by a lack of provisions and by contagious diseases running rampant at training camps. Augustus P. Gardner, who gave up his Senate seat for an assignment as a major in the U.S. Army, arrived at Camp Wheeler, Georgia, in October 1917. In a letter to Wilson's adviser Joseph Tumulty, he complained that 7,000 of the 10,000 men at the camp lacked overcoats and none had any experience sleeping out of doors in tents. Many had come from farms and had not been exposed to measles; hence they succumbed to the disease in droves and some contracted pneumonia as well. Gardner himself died of pneumonia on January 14, 1918. Later that year, an influenza epidemic swept the U.S. and spread to Europe, taking the lives of some 45,000 U.S. soldiers at home and abroad.[226]

Chronic shortages also hindered the American mobilization in France, although General Pershing did his best to bury any negative reports. Westbrook Pegler, a United Press correspondent, was removed from his post after reporting that many U.S. soldiers lacked warm and dry clothing and some slept in barns that lacked heat, suggesting that these avoidable errors contributed to the American death toll (by disease) in the winter of 1917-1918. Pershing sent home three other American journalists as well – out of 12 accredited

reporters allowed to accompany the AEF – thus ensuring that Americans would remain in the dark about such problems. Journalist Heywood Broun waited until he returned from France before writing his exposé, "Supply Blunders Hamper First U.S. Units," which appeared in the *New York World* in early 1918. Broun detailed how tractors were delivered when motorcycles were needed, mules were dispatched without harnesses, trucks landed without motors, and urgently needed equipment was left behind on the docks. His article created a public uproar. The War Department responded by immediately withdrawing Broun's accreditation and fining the newspaper $10,000 for violating wartime censorship laws.[227]

Two developments in the latter part of 1917 boded ill for AEF and Allied military forces. In late October 1917, German and Austro-Hungarian forces won a major victory at Caporetto, in northeastern Italy, aided by the use of poison gas. Some 265,000 Italian troops were taken prisoner.

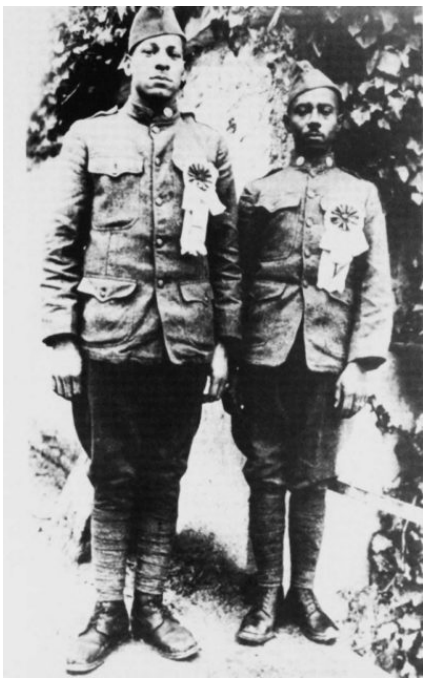
German and Russian delegations at Brest-Litovsk sign a peace treaty, March 3, 1918

On the Eastern Front, the new Bolshevik government in Russia signed an armistice with Germany on December 15, taking Russia out of the war. Lloyd George rightly expected that tens of thousands of German troops would soon be transferred to the Western Front. On December 2, 1917, he sent President Wilson an urgent plea to accelerate the deployment of U.S. troops in France: "We shall be hardpressed to hold our own and keep Italy standing during 1918. Our manpower is pretty well exhausted. . . . Even half-trained American companies or battalions would fight well if mixed with two or three years' veterans."[228]

German infantry attack in gas masks amid poison gas clouds (German federal archives)

Germany was in the odd position of gaining momentum on the battlefield but losing ground at home as deprivation set in. Seeking a quick victory, the German Army launched an all-out offensive on March 21, 1918. Using new weapons to break through barbed wire barriers, the German Army routed French defenders near Champagne, then marched to within forty miles of Paris. Dispensing with all pretense of "peace without victory," President Wilson declared on April 6 that there can be "but one response possible from us: Force, force to the utmost, force without stint or limit, the righteous and triumphant force which shall make right the law of the world and cast every selfish dominion down in the dust."[229]

The U.S. doubled its efforts to ship soldiers to France. General Pershing allowed some U.S. divisions to fight under overall British command and assigned four black U.S. infantry regiments of the 93rd Division to French Army divisions. The grateful French treated the African American soldiers with respect, having already fought alongside black French colonial troops from Senegal. The African American regiments saw more military action than any other AEF unit. The 369th Infantry, nicknamed the "Harlem Hellfighters," also produced two of the first American "war heroes," Needham Roberts and William Henry Johnson. While on guard duty on May 14, 1918, the two soldiers fought off a 24-man German patrol, suffering severe wounds. The French awarded both men the *Croix de Guerre*.[230]



William Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts with French Croix de Guerre medals, 1918

Germany also recognized its "war heroes," one of whom was Lance Corporal Adolf Hitler who was twice decorated for bravery. He received the Iron Cross Second Class in 1914 and the Iron Cross First Class in 1918, the latter

being recommended by Lieutenant Hugo Gutmann, a Jewish administrative officer. According to one account, in August 1918 Hitler had single handedly "captured a group of Frenchmen huddled in a shell hole. Cunningly, Hitler had crawled to the lip of their impromptu shelter and then shouted out to the men that they were surrounded and had better surrender. Duped by his ruse, the Frenchmen came along without a fight."[231]

American troops began arriving in force in the spring and summer of 1918: 245,000 men in May, 278,000 in June, and 306,000 in July. The American buildup allowed the Allies to move more of their reserves to the front. AEF divisions took the initiative in the Battle of Belleau Wood in June, and in the Battle of Château-Thierry in July, which some later American accounts described as the turning point in the war.[232]

Medics retrieve a body from the battlefront

There followed the Battle of Aisne-Marne beginning in late July, in which Americans suffered 40,353 casualties in 20 days. According to 38-year old General Douglas MacArthur, the battle "was savage and there was no quarter asked or given. Bitterly, brutally, the action seesawed back and forth… There was neither rest nor mercy." On August 2, after hearing reports that the enemy had withdrawn, MacArthur, who won seven Silver Stars and a Distinguished Service Cross after being gassed twice, went out to examine the battlefield. He later recalled:

> I will never forget that trip. The dead were so thick in spots we tumbled over them. There must have been at least 2,000 of those sprawled bodies. I identified the insignia of six of the best German divisions. The stench was suffocating. Not a tree was standing. The moans and cries of wounded men sounded everywhere.[233]

Allied forces, meanwhile, launched a renewed assault on German lines in the Flanders region of Belgium, known as the Third Battle of Ypres. By September, the German Army was in retreat but still fighting. Pershing, with nearly 550,000 men under his command and aided by 110,000 French soldiers, undertook a major offensive on September 12 to capture the fortified city of Metz. Known as the Battle of Saint-Mihiel, the AEF encountered surprisingly little resistance and completed its mission in just four days. The stunning victory, however, was due to a planned German evacuation, as intelligence reports later made known. The four-day battle nonetheless featured the most formidable air combat of the war, with nearly 1,500 Allied and U.S aircraft facing 500 German aircraft. The Allied squadrons, organized by U.S. Colonel William (Billy) Mitchell, secured dominance over the area.[234]

The next and last American offensive proved much more difficult. The Battle of Meuse-Argonne began on September 25 and continued in fits and starts until the armistice on November 11. Coordinated with Allied assaults from Flanders to Verdun, the key to driving the Germans out of the forest was artillery. The AEF fired an estimated four million shells, devastating the land. Historian Edward Lengel wrote, "no single battle in American military history, before or since, even approached the Meuse-Argonne in size and cost.... though within a few years of its end, nobody seemed to realize that it had taken place." U.S. casualties amounted to 26,777 killed and 95,786 wounded in this one offensive, the last battle of the war.[235]

By 1918, battles were fought with air support, breaking down defenses

The guns of August finally fell silent on November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m. The sacrifice of American lives in the Great War has been memorialized in ten cemeteries in France, maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission. On March 4, 1923, President Warren Harding signed legislation that established the commission and made the new agency responsible for the construction of monuments and memorial chapels honoring the American Expeditionary Forces. Of the 116,516 Americans who lost their lives during World War I, 30,973 are interred at overseas American military cemeteries and another 4,456 commemorated as missing in action, lost, or buried at sea.[236]

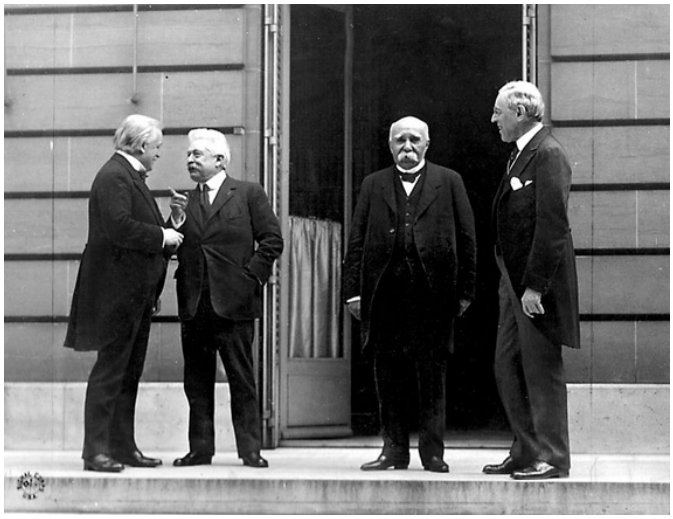
"No man's land"

Belleau Wood battle monuments in the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery, France

The Paris peace conference and Versailles Treaty

By early October 1918, the German government knew that defeat was at hand. On the night of October 4, Berlin sent a message to President Wilson requesting peace talks on the basis of his Fourteen Points speech in January 1918. The speech had conveyed a general attitude of respect toward Germany and made no mention of reparation payments. For the new chancellor of Germany, Max von Baden, this was an opening, as Britain, Italy, and especially France were certain to demand heavy reparation payments and perhaps significant territorial cessions beyond the Alsace-Lorraine region. Berlin thus handed the baton to the U.S. to begin negotiations in the *hope* of a lenient peace agreement.

It was a long-shot strategy. The U.S. was an Associate Power rather than part of the Allied coalition; Allied leaders had not signed on to the Fourteen Points; and the points themselves were silent on how Germany should be treated after the war. The Allies had suffered a great number of casualties and all three major leaders, Lloyd George of Great Britain, Georges Clemenceau of France, and Vittorio Orlando of Italy, had promised their electorates that Germany would pay for the war.



The Big Four at the Paris Peace conference: Lloyd George of Britain, Orlando of Italy, Clemenceau of France, and Wilson

President Wilson and his wife, Edith, arrived in Brest, France, on December 13, 1918, a month before negotiations were to begin. In a fitting display of pomp, their ship, the *George Washington*, was accompanied by a flotilla of nine American battleships and 20 Allied warships. The president anticipated a great welcome in Paris, indicated by the affectionate mobbing of General Pershing in Paris on November 11. No doubt, he was also relieved to escape the disappointment of the recent Congressional elections in which the Democrats lost six Senate seats and 30 House seats. The Senate losses were especially important, as any treaty signed by the president would require two-thirds ratification.[237]

In Paris, Wilson was greeted as a savior. Some two million people lined the streets on December 16 as Wilson and French President Raymond Poincare rode together in an open carriage, Wilson making sweeping gestures to the crowd with his tall silk hat. Parisians responded with shouts of "*Vive Wilson*!" and "*Vive l'Amérique*!" A huge

banner saluted "*Wilson le Juste*." What moved Parisians was not the Fourteen Points but the fact that American forces had come to the aid of France in her hour of need, preventing defeat at the hands of Germany.

Wilson rode with French President Raymond Poincaré (Library of Congress)

Wilson's reception in London on December 27 was less enthusiastic but still impressive. His visit to Rome in early January again drew adoring crowds. Pictures of him were pasted on shop windows and the streets were sprinkled with golden sand, a tradition that went back to the days of Rome's imperial glory. Prime Minister Orlando, however, was not about to let Wilson prevent Italy from reaping the spoils of war – territories on the Dalmatian coast promised to Italy in the secret Treaty of London of 1915. The old order would remain. An obscure newspaper editor in Milan named Benito Mussolini proclaimed on January 1, 1919, that "imperialism is the eternal, the immutable law of life."[238]

Wilson is greeted ecstatically in Paris, Dec. 14, 1918

In Germany, meanwhile, Berlin erupted in revolution on the night of January 5, 1919, owing in large part to the continuing Allied blockade that was causing starvation. Leftists led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg attempted to take over government buildings. The government called on the army to suppress the rebellion. Army units did so with brutal efficiency, using flamethrowers, machine guns, hand grenades, and artillery against their own people. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were killed.[239] The militant right, aiding the army, united under the banner of the German Worker's Party, which was renamed the National Socialist German Workers Party, or Nazis, the following year.

Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg

Formal negotiations of the Paris Peace

Conference began on January 18, 1919, and lasted for four months before a treaty was presented, or dictated, to Germany. During this time, the Allies, with U.S. support, continued the economic blockade, knowing that German leaders were unlikely to sign the treaty without this leverage. The Wilson administration, to its credit, attempted to persuade the Allies to allow food to go through, but British and French leaders refused.

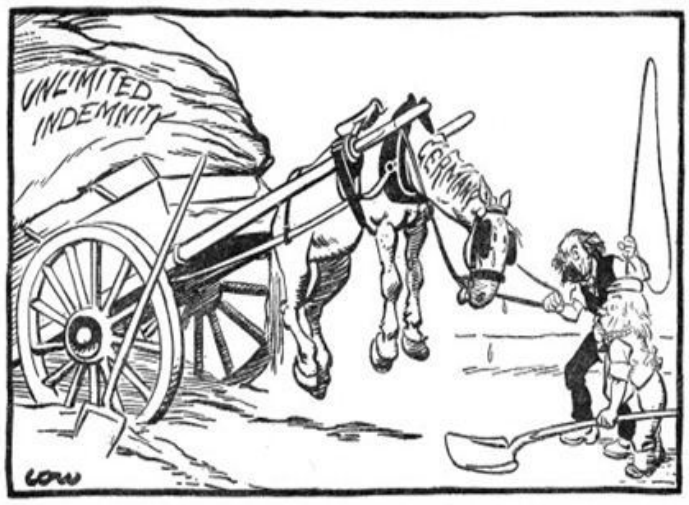

Paris Peace Conference, 1919

Wilson's popularity in Europe proved of little benefit in negotiating with Allied leaders. When Wilson met with Clemenceau, the latter insisted on "just punishments" for Germany. This included heavy reparation payments and the partial dismemberment of the German state. Both Wilson and Lloyd George agreed that Germany must be "punished," but they feared that, if taken too far, such measures could produce a violent reaction. The British envisioned Germany eventually regaining economic prosperity, although not military power, and becoming a trading partner.

Wilson advocated reparations within the ability of Germany to pay, but he nonetheless contributed to the harsh reparation payments that were ultimately imposed on Germany by refusing to write off British and French debts to the United States. Lloyd George urged Wilson to forgive the debts in consideration of the great sacrifice of British and French soldiers on the battlefield. Unlike U.S. dollars, those lives could never be paid back. Wilson's refusal on this point meant that the Britain and France would press Germany harder for more financial compensation. France also wanted reparation payments to rebuild its devastated areas, and Britain wanted money for soldier pensions, to which Wilson agreed.

After months of wrangling over the issue of reparation payments, the victors could not agree on a definite amount, so they left the matter to a Reparations Commission for future settlement. As such, notes Robert Hannigan, "Germany would essentially be asked to sign a blank check."[240] In 1921, the Reparations Commission set the amount of money due the Allies at 132 billion gold marks ($33 billion), which

covered civilian damages and pensions. Payments were set at $500 million annually, plus 26 per cent of the value of German exports. Perpetual austerity in Germany was assured. To this was added the "war guilt" clause in the Treaty of Versailles, ensuring perpetual humiliation.



"Perhaps it would gee-up better if we let it touch earth."

When presented with the treaty by Clemenceau on May 17, 1919, Count Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau, head of the German delegation, refused to stand and receive it. Instead he spoke of the continuing British blockade, reinforced by the Americans, that had caused the death of "hundreds of thousands" of German civilians since Armistice Day. Forced to sign the treaty under the threat of renewed warfare, Philipp Scheidemann, the German Republic's first chancellor, called Wilson a "hypocrite" and labeled the Versailles Treaty "the vilest crime in history."[241] He signed it on June 28, 1919, exactly five years after Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie had been assassinated, and resigned thereafter.

On other treaty matters, President Wilson's statements to the effect that small and large nations would be treated as equals and that all peoples had the right of "self-determination" were never seriously considered. Only a few national groupings within the defeated Central Powers, such as Poles and Czechs, were given the opportunity to form their own states. More than six million Germans – one-tenth of the population – were consigned to live under other governments. Parceling out territories based on ethnic-national identity was a messy business, as world geography was not neatly divided by ethnic populations. In keeping with the 1915 Treaty of London, Italy was awarded parts of the dissolved Austro-Hungarian

New nations and boundaries via the Treaty of Versailles

Empire (Trentino, Trieste, Tyrol and Istria), although not all it wanted. The French regained the Alsace-Lorraine region and took control of the German Saar Valley coal fields. France and Great Britain divided up the Arab territories of the Ottoman Empire, albeit under the formal oversight of the League of Nations.

Nor was there any "impartial adjustment of all colonial claims," as stated in Wilson's Fourteen Points. Germany's colonies in Africa were transferred to the new League of Nations which was controlled by the victorious powers. There was no reference in the treaty whatsoever to self-determination for colonized peoples living under British and French rule. Indeed, the 22nd Article of the Covenant of the League of Nations reinforced the imperial system, stating that "the tutelage of such [colonial] peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility . . . on behalf of the League." At one point in the negotiations, President Wilson suggested that Italy be compensated for not receiving all it wanted in the Balkans by being given more territory in East Africa, specifically in Somaililand.[242]
To the great disappointment of the Chinese, Wilson supported the British and French in their decision to transfer control of the Shandong Peninsula to Japan, formerly controlled by Germany. Wilson's statements in support of "self-determination" had generated great hope and excitement in China, especially as the U.S. Committee on Public Information had printed and distributed thousands of leaflets and posters bearing Wilson's image and his words upholding the equality of nations and the consent of the governed. One young nationalist student, Mao Zedong, wrote to a friend in early 1917 that "within twenty years, China would have to fight Japan, or go under," but that the U.S. and China would "draw close in friendship and cheerfully act as reciprocal economic and trade partners." The peace conference was supposed to inaugurate a new international order grounded in anti-imperialist ideas. It did nothing of the kind. Demonstrations broke out in Beijing and other cities over the transfer of the Shandong Peninsula to the Japanese imperialists.[243]
Others were disappointed as well: Korean nationalists who hoped to see their country freed from Japanese rule; Indian nationalists who sought to end British control over their country; Ho Chi Minh, who came to Paris with a petition seeking the independence of Vietnam from French rule; and Russians, not invited to the conference, who resented the military intervention of their country by their former allies.

The voices of Africans were among those neglected. African American civil rights leader W. E. B. DuBois traveled to France in December 1918 with the goal of assembling a Pan-African Congress alongside the peace conference. The meeting was held from February 19 to 21 at the Grand Hotel in Paris, with 58 delegates in attendance, but the big powers took

no interest. They were not about to endorse the "withdrawal of Europeans from Africa," as stated in one Congress resolution.[244]


Pan African Congress meeting in Paris (British Library)

Some objected to American imperialism. Representatives from the Dominican Republic showed up in Paris and talked to whomever they could about ending the U.S. military occupation of their country, then in its third year, on the grounds that it violated the principles of national self-determination and consent of the governed. Similar appeals were made by representatives from Haiti, also under U.S. military occupation, and the Philippines, a formal U.S. colony. President Wilson kept them all at arm's length, never acknowledging any contradiction between his idealistic rhetoric and American practices. The economist John Maynard Keynes, who was in Paris as part of the British delegation, described Wilson as being endowed with "the intellectual apparatus for self-deception."[245]
Keynes noted another oddity. Writing in *The New Republic* in December 1919, he expressed dismay at President Wilson's lack of planning and forethought in terms of achieving his idealistic goals:

> It was commonly believed at the commencement of the Paris Conference that the President had thought out, with the aid of a large body of advisers, a comprehensive scheme not only for the League of Nations but for the embodiment of the Fourteen Points in an actual Treaty of Peace. But in fact the President had thought out nothing; when it came to practice, his ideas were nebulous and incomplete. He had no plan, no scheme, no constructive ideas whatever for clothing with the flesh of life the commandments which he had thundered from the White House. He could have preached a sermon on any of them or have addressed a stately prayer to the Almighty for their fulfillment; but he could not frame their concrete application to the actual state of Europe. . . . He not only had no proposals in detail, but he was in many respects, perhaps inevitably, ill informed as to European conditions.[246]

Keynes critique lends support to the thesis that Wilson's main use of idealism was to sway the American public in favor of entering the war. The League proposal was part of a grab bag of rationales and slogans — "peace without victory," making the world "safe for democracy," and unselfishly fighting for the "rights of mankind" — allowing Wilson to claim that the war would be fought for noble purposes. Once these idealistic slogans were accepted by the public as credible reasons for entering the war, the president had arguably achieved his main goal.
The League might have been more carefully constructed at another time, without the stress of

concluding a war, but Wilson insisted that it must be attached to the peace treaty, lest he return to the U.S. without some tangible evidence that the war was worth fighting, that the loss of over 100,000 American lives was justified.

Debate in the U.S. over treaty ratification

Wilson's sojourn to Paris to ostensibly establish a new international order awkwardly coincided with one of the most turbulent times in American history. In 1919, Americans experienced a wave of economic instability. Unemployment surged due to the sudden ending of government expenditures for war and labor strikes erupted across the country; even Boston police officers went on strike demanding recognition of their union and higher wages. Competition for jobs and insistence on equal rights catalyzed violent white attacks on blacks in some 25 cities in 1919, including Washington, D.C. where a black veteran was killed. A series of bombings by militant anarchists sparked the first "Red Scare," a government-led inquisition against leftists. There were also conflicts over the enforcement of new prohibition laws. Given Wilson's poor management on the home front, some questioned whether he was fit to establish a new global order.

Wilson was nonetheless determined to see his work in Paris bear fruit with the Senate ratification of the Versailles Treaty and establishment of the League of Nations, which was part of the treaty. He returned to Washington in early July 1919 and immediately began lobbying senators. On July 10, Wilson spoke to the Senate, reasserting his idealistic justifications for the war and declaring that the League of Nations was "an indispensable instrumentality for the maintenance of the new order . . . of civilized men. . . . Dare we reject it and break the heart of the world?"[247]

British Punch magazine satirized Wilson's grand dreams of world peace through the League of Nations, March 26, 1919

Senator George Norris spoke five days later. He had long endorsed some sort of international organization to prevent war, but the organization outlined in the Versailles Treaty, in his view, would be little more than a tool for imperial "greed and avarice," citing the transfer of Shantung to Japan as an example. While most senators supported the harsh treatment of Germany, Philander Knox, Republican of Pennsylvania, predicted that the "hard and cruel peace" would force Germany to evade the terms and begin planning for another war. Irish Americans, a large voting bloc, were disgruntled that Wilson had made no reference to Ireland as a small nation deserving of independence.[248]

Senators were divided, more or less into four camps: supporters, mild reservationists, strong reservationists, and irreconcilables. Wilson needed the votes of the mild reservationists and some of the strong reservationists to obtain the requisite two-thirds vote to ratify the treaty. The reservationists were mainly concerned that the League would undermine American freedom of action abroad and Congressional powers related to war making. They wanted to add language to the treaty that would acknowledge the right of the U.S. to send troops where it wished, and to not send troops where it did not wish. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge introduced fourteen reservations to the League of Nations provision in the treaty. Wilson considered such amendments superfluous, given that the League's executive council could only advise nations on security matters. Article 10 of the Versailles Treaty stated:

> The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.[249]

Although Wilson essentially agreed with the reservationists as to the preservation of American freedom of action, he was nonetheless disposed to seeing the treaty ratified without reservations. Unable to reach a compromise, Wilson decided to appeal directly to the American people, as if treaty ratification were an election campaign. During the first 25 days of September, he made 40 speeches in cities across the United States.

It was during this oratorical offensive that Wilson advanced a dubious framework that still reverberates in historical accounts. He imagined the U.S. at a fork in the road, one direction pointing toward world leadership, the other toward isolationism. As Wilson put it, the choice was whether Americans were going to be "ostriches" or "eagles."[250] Opponents of the treaty, as such, were decried as "isolationists." In fact, few opponents of the treaty wanted to retreat from the world. Those of a conservative bent, such as Lodge, wanted to see the U.S. assert its national power and influence without the burden of asking the League of Nations for permission. Those of a progressive bent, such as La Follette, wanted to see the U.S. become the champion of anti-imperialism and justice for the downtrodden in the world. The reputed "isolationist" sentiment in the body politic was mainly focused on avoiding another European war, a reasonable caution, not on limiting American influence, trade, or travel abroad. Indeed, New York replaced London as the financial capital of the world during the war.

Wilson's rhetoric became harsher as he made his way west. Reverting to his wartime speeches in which he discredited peace advocates, Wilson began equating "opposition to the treaty with disloyalty and foreign interests," according to Robert Hannigan. "Willingly or not, he implied, his critics were doing the enemy's work.... This

theme – that his opponents were intentionally or unintentionally 'unAmerican' – was front and center in what would turn out to be his last speech of the trip, in Pueblo, Colorado, on September 25."[251] Wilson repeated a theme in this speech that he had made at the American cemetery at Suresnes, France, on May 31, when he told the crowd, "The league of nations is the covenant of government that these men shall not have died in vain." In Pueblo, he asked the audience rhetorically:

Wilson speaking in Pueblo, Sept. 25, 1919 (Library of Congress)

> Again and again, my fellow citizens, mothers who lost their sons in France have come to me and. taking my hand, have shed tears upon it not only, but they have added, "God bless you, Mr. President!" Why, my fellow citizens, should they pray God to bless me? I advised the Congress of the United States to create the situation that led to the death of their sons. I ordered their sons oversea. I consented to their sons being put in the most difficult parts of the battle line, where death was certain, as in the impenetrable difficulties of the forest of Argonne. Why should they weep upon my hand and call down the blessings of God upon me? Because they believe that their boys died for something that vastly transcends any of the immediate and palpable objects of the war. They believe, and they rightly believe, that their sons saved the liberty of the world. They believe that wrapped up with the liberty of the world is the continuous protection of that liberty by the concerted powers of all civilized people.

The agency for the continuous protection of "the liberty of the world" was, of course, the League of Nations. "Thus," writes communications professor J. Michael Hogan, "Wilson claimed, in effect, that [those] who died in the war died for the League of Nations. And to reject the League now would not only diminish their sacrifice but tarnish their memory."[252] It may be that Wilson was trying to convince himself that this was true, recognizing that he was responsible for the deaths of many young men. Having framed the creation of a League of Nations as a just cause for U.S. entry into the war, he was now obliged to explain the resulting American deaths as a justified sacrifice for this noble cause.

In the evening following his speech in Pueblo, Wilson suffered severe headaches and nausea. A week later, he had an ischemic stroke. After a period of rest, the president was able to function again, but his constitution was weak and he largely ceased speaking in public. Wilson nonetheless continued to oppose all modifications of the Treaty of Versailles. On November

19, 1919, the Senate voted twice on the treaty. The first version with Lodge's fourteen reservations fell short of two-thirds needed, with 55 ayes and 39 nays. A second vote, on the treaty without reservations, was similarly nixed by a 53-38 vote. Another attempt to ratify the treaty on March 19, 1920, failed by a 49-35 vote. The U.S. never joined the League of Nations. The U.S. concluded a separate peace treaty with Germany on August 25, 1921.

*** * ***

VI. The horrors of war

One of the popular songs that served to excite enthusiasm for the war was "Over There," written by the versatile actor and songwriter George Cohan after the U.S. entered the war. First sung at a Red Cross benefit in New York City in fall of 1917, over two million recordings were sold. In 1936, Cohan was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for writing the song.[253]

Johnny, get your gun, get your gun, get your gun.

Take it on the run, on the run, on the run.
Hear them calling you and me,
Every Son of Liberty.
Hurry right away, no delay, go today. . . .
(chorus)
Over there, over there,
Send the word, send the word over there
That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming
The drums rum-tumming everywhere. . . .
And we won't come back till it's over, over there.

"Over There" sheet music cover, 1917

The romance of war was sustained in part by the fact that few Americans were engaged in the fighting in Europe before June 1918 – fourteen months after the official declaration of war – and then only for five months. The sacrifice of lives and limbs had only begun to sink in when the war ended. According to the historian Steven Casey, "Not until after the guns fell silent in November 1918 did Americans slowly come to grips with the full horror of what had happened in the trenches." Sergeant William Langer, a Massachusetts school teacher and future Harvard professor and Office of Strategic Service agent, noted, "I can hardly remember a single instance of serious discussion of American policy or of larger war issues. We men, most of us young, were simply fascinated by the prospects of adventurism and heroism. Most of us, I think, had the feeling that life, if we survived, would run in the familiar routine channels. Here was our great chance for excitement and risk. We could not afford to pass it up."[254]

Johnny Got His Gun

In 1939, Dalton Trumbo published *Johnny Got His Gun*, a classic antiwar novel which spotlights the plight of Joe Bonham, a First World War American doughboy who marched off to war so innocently, like many others, and returned home as a mere stump of a man, with no legs or arms, blind and deaf, with no jaw, mouth or tongue (he was fed through a tube in his stomach). All that Bonham has left are the memories of the life that he once had and eons of time to contemplate the senselessness of the war for which he had sacrificed his body. Joe thinks back to the good times he had with his girl-friend, Kareen, about his hard-working father, then how he had become swept up in all the war propaganda drummed up about Germany and how everybody wanted "the tar kicked out of her." But now, in his incapacitated state, he recognized that:

> Joe, Joe . . . This was no war for you. This thing wasn't any of your business. What do you care about making the world safe for democracy? All you wanted to do Joe was to live. You were born and raised in the good healthy country of Colorado and you had no more to do with Germany or England or France or even Washington, D.C. than you had to do with the man on the moon. It wasn't your fight Joe. You never really knew what the fight was all about.[255]

These comments display the hollow shell underlying the idealistic rhetoric adopted by the Wilson administration to sell American intervention in the Great War, which cast the war as a great moral crusade. Trumbo suggests that the main consequence of the war was to ruin the lives of innocent youth like Bonham who were sacrificed for a pipe dream. Bonham's main wish is that the doctors allow him out of the hospital so he can demonstrate to others what war really does to people. Alas, the doctors won't allow him to leave – a metaphor for how the authorities repress the human costs and truth about war.

A British Red Cross hospital in France

Bonham reflects on the fact that there are "always people willing to sacrifice somebody else's life. They're plenty loud and they talk all the time. You can find them in churches and schools

and newspapers and legislatures and Congress. They sound wonderful. Death before dishonor. This ground sanctified by blood. These men who died so gloriously. They shall not have died in vain. Our noble dead." Bonham goes on to ask:

> But what do the dead say? Did anybody ever come back from the dead … and say by god I'm glad I'm dead because death is always better than dishonor? Did they say I'm glad I died to make the world safe for democracy?… And all the guys who died all the five million or seven million or ten million who went out and died to make the world safe for democracy to make the world safe for words without meaning, how did they feel as they watched the blood pump out into the mud? How did they feel when the gas hit their lungs and began eating them all away? How did they feel as they lay crazed in hospitals and looked death straight in the face and saw him come and take them?

Answering his own question, Bonham continues:

> If the thing they were fighting for was important enough to die for then it was also important enough for them to be thinking about it in the last minutes of their lives…. So did all those kids die thinking of democracy and freedom and liberty and honor and the safety of the home and the stars and stripes forever? You're goddam right they didn't…. They died yearning for the face of a friend. They died whimpering for the voice of a mother, a father, a wife, a child. They died with their hearts sick for one more look at the place where they were born; please god just one more look. They died moaning and sighing for life. They knew what was important. They knew that life was everything and they died with screams and sobs. They died with only one thought in their minds and that was I want to live, I want to live.[256]

Johnny Got His Gun testifies to the value of life and the corruption of this value in war. It provides a heartfelt antiwar statement that echoes the theme of disillusionment also found in other novels such as Erich Maria Remarque's 1928 book *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which described German soldiers' extreme physical and mental stress during the war.[257] The term "lost generation" was used as an epigraph in Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* (1926): "You are all a lost generation." The label attests to the emotional disorientation, moral disillusionment, and lack of purpose for those who grew up and lived through the horrific war, who were then in their twenties and thirties.

Many soldiers felt detached from civilian life upon their return. Having seen pointless death on such a huge scale, some lost faith in the established order and the presumed rationality underlying it. Lt. Curtis Kinney, a U.S. fighter pilot who was wounded while flying a Sopwith Camel on August 16, 1918, wrote in a poem, "We flew together in the tall blue sky. Many were killed. The world is no better.[258] Another reason for the disillusionment of Kinney and many of his contemporaries was that U.S. soldiers had seemingly been lied to about U.S. motives for entering the war. Senator Homer Bone (D-WA), who chaired the Nye committee investigation into war profiteering, stated in 1936 that "everyone has come to recognize that

the Great War was utter social insanity, and was a crazy war, and we had no business in it at all."[259]

Trumbo begins *Johnny Got his Gun* by noting that the "world war had begun like a summer festival – all billowing skirts and golden epaulets. Millions upon millions cheered from the sidewalks while plumed imperial highnesses, serenities, field marshals and other such fools paraded through the capital cities of Europe at the head of their shining legions. . . . One of the [Scottish] Highland regiments went over the top in its first battle behind forty kilted bagpipers, skirling away for all they were worth – at machine guns. Nine million corpses later, when the bands stopped and serenities started running, the wail of bagpipes would never again sound quite the same."[260]

These comments capture the painful contradiction between the initial enthusiasm and romance of war, and the devastation and death it brought. Although the mass of U.S. soldiers fought in only the last one-tenth of the war – from early June to early November 1918 – they suffered over 50,000 killed in combat and well over 100,000 disabled or psychologically damaged.

Mechanized warfare: "All the fiendish elements of mass killing"

U.S. entry into the Great War did not change the nature of the war. Whatever grand ideals were heaped upon it by President Wilson and the CPI, the war remained a gruesome display of industrial carnage.

French soldiers wearing gas masks, 1917 (National Library of France)

Vannevar Bush, a computer pioneer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and director of the office responsible for coordinating war production in World War II, pointed out in a 1949 book that World War I was a turning point in the history of military technology. In addition to the production of barbed wire, artillery, and the machine gun, the internal combustion engine using petroleum was adapted to create submarines, tanks, and aircraft. Chemical engineering was applied to the production of poison gas, including mustard gas, phosgene and lewisite, an oily liquid that blisters the skin, manufactured by the DuPont Company. The gases were contained in mortar shells lobbed over enemy lines. Submarines were equipped with torpedoes propelled by steam engines and controlled by gyroscopes that kept them in a straight line. Radio also appeared, primarily for communications at sea.[261]

After the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Secretary of the Navy Newton Baker asked Thomas Edison, the famed inventor, for his help in creating a coalition of the nation's "keenest and most inventive minds," which together with Edison's own "wonderful brain to aid us" would find a new technological means of combating the submarine.[262] Once the U.S. entered the war, Edison and others convinced Wilson adviser Edward House to form a National Research Council (NRC) headed by George Ellery Hale, the director of the Mt. Wilson Observatory in Pasadena. The NRC, in turn, would finance military research of contractors such as General Electric and Westinghouse, which had already begun war-related research on their own initiative, and it would invest in newly established university laboratories like those at Cal Tech and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), which were also subsidized by large corporate foundations (Rockefeller and Carnegie). The result was a fast-tracking of new technical innovations and techniques for mass producing weaponries and high explosives, a trend that paralleled war research and development in England, France, Russia, and Germany.[263]

Records at the U.S. National Archives show that the War Department received hundreds of proposals for new weapons, including aerial torpedoes loaded with gas and high explosives, anti-aircraft shells, night firing devices that could project a beam of light from five to 30 feet, and a light automatic machine rifle that could fire 180 to 300 shots per minute. Aerial bomb production was slow to get underway because of numerous difficulties in design and production. Eventually, companies such as Marlin-Rockwell, A. O. Smith, Lycoming Foundry & Machine, and Paige-Detroit Motor Car turned out thousands of demolition, fragmentation, and incendiary bombs weighing 50, 100, 250, 500, or 1,000 pounds.[264] The U.S. Army was transformed during the war from "a pitifully small constabulary force built on rifles, horses and a few field and coastal artillery pieces," the historian Richard S. Faulkner points out, to a "four-million man heavy weight possessing all the fiendish implements of mass killing." Field Marshal Douglas Haig extolled the virtues of mobilizing British scientists and industry in support of the war, proclaiming afterwards that "without science, the Allies could not have attained general superiority in the mechanical contrivances which contributed so powerfully to Germany's defeat."[265]


British munitions factories mainly employed women (Imperial War Museum)

The new scientific weapons, of course, accentuated the death toll and wide-scale suffering. Innovations conceived to break the stalemate of trench warfare gave birth to horrific devices like the flamethrower, thermite and gas bombs and high projector explosives, and more powerful

lethal projectiles that could blanket the battlefield at a markedly greater rate and volume than ever before. White phosphorus shells, invented by American naval officer Edward W. Very, were used primarily to create smoke screens, though they also were dropped as an incendiary weapon. When a white phosphorus shell explodes, the chemical inside reacts with the air, creating a thick white cloud. When it comes in contact with flesh, it can maim and kill by burning to the bone.[266]

According to historian Michael Freemantle, author of *The Chemists' War, 1914-1918*, millions of artillery shells filled with high explosives were fired in the war, including over 100,000 alone in the first hour of the Battle of Verdun. At Ypres, the British fired 3.5 million shells over a ten-day period, while the Germans unleashed 170 tons of chlorine gas from cylinders, killing as many as 6,000 French, Moroccan and Algerian troops. An eyewitness stated that the valleys down which the ghastly dew had descended "were as yellow as the Egyptian desert when the tops of the ridges remained in their spring green."[267]

Mountains of Allied shell cases on roadside near front lines, Battle of the Somme (National Library Scotland)

Historian Michael Howard determined that by 1914, a single regiment of field guns could deliver in one hour more firepower than had been unleashed by all the adversary powers in the Napoleonic Wars. Death was now delivered from distant machines as an industry of professionalized human slaughter grew up in which "soldiers were reduced to a pygmy man who huddles in little holes and caves," as George Duhamel, a French doctor put it. Duhamel further noted that "war has become an industry, a mechanical and methodical enterprise for killing. Some of the most brilliant minds of a civilization devoured by geometry had labored for generations to ensure that death could be dealt on a mass scale with exactitude, logarithmic detail, dial-times, millesimal, calculated velocity."[268]

British nurse Vera Brittain was among those to come face to face with the victims. She said that she treated "men without faces, without eyes, without limbs, men almost disemboweled, men with hideous truncated stumps of bodies." Shells that released mustard gas left their victims burnt and blistered all over…with blind eye…always sticky and stuck together and always fighting for breath."[269]

José de la Luz Sáenz, a Mexican American soldier who fought at the battles of St. Mihiel and Meusse-Argonne with the 360th Infantry

Regiment, wrote about enemy shells exploding in the forest, scattering into the air thousands of leaves of every color as “even the poor and defenseless trees that adorn Mother Nature suffered man’s barbarity.” Referring to the Germans as “barbaric Huns descendant of Attila” and “beasts,” Sáenz also noted that the men in his unit who were struck by gas “seemed resigned to die, and even welcome[d] it when a shell hit them and [could] not stop the hemorrhage. Dying slowly from the poison in our lungs and the loss of our minds is horrible,” he said. “Watching the wretched scene of victims agonizing, drooling, purplish and feverish is just as bad.”[270]


War on Nature (Library of Congress)

Private Rush Young described a macabre scene in which his platoon came across the lifeless bodies of mostly German soldiers in the Meuse-Argonne forest whose expressions showed they had been “gassed and died in agony. Many still had their masks on and had been mowed down with machine gun-fire. Their coat collars were torn open in their struggle for breath, and they had turned a dark purple from the effects of the gas. Some were burnt from the mustard gas, lying in shell holes as though scalded by boiling water.”[271]

These comments vividly capture the horrors of modern mechanized warfare, which could never achieve humanitarian ends. Responsibility for the methodical devastation lay with the celebrated scientists and technicians who had conceived and perfected so many instruments of death. Molded by elite academic institutions and their work for large corporations, scientists enjoyed prestige and access to power, and believed their creations would help win the war for their side. Historian Ernest Volkman points to the near total lack of unease in applying their skills “to perfect the art of killing.”[272]


Women served worldwide in Army Nurse Corps and the Red Cross, attending to the casualties (British Red Cross)

A paradigmatic example was Fritz Haber, a chemistry Nobel laureate and founding director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin who recruited a team of gas pioneers that developed nitrogen containing explosives, and carried out the first lethal chemical gas attacks on the

Allies (arguably the first use of a Weapon of Mass Destruction in history) in April 1915. This fueled a chemical weapons race extending to the United States, where the chemical warfare branch was set up under the direction of W. L. Sibert, an engineer who helped build the Panama Canal, and Captain James B. Conant, a chemistry professor and future President of Harvard University, who was impressed by the achievements of the German chemists. In memoirs published in 1970, Conant wrote that "the development of new and more gases seemed no more immoral than the manufacture of explosives and guns.... I did not see in 1917... why tearing a man's guts out by high explosives and shells is to be preferred to maiming him by attacking his lungs, or skin. All war is immoral."[273]

The U.S. military's research into chemical gases was first carried out by the Bureau of Mines, which was founded in 1910 to investigate poisonous and asphyxiating gases in mines. It offered its services to the Military Committee of the National Research Council (NRC) on February 8, 1917, and in May was authorized to accept help from laboratories at twenty-one universities, three companies, and three government agencies. Furthermore, in July 1917, a central laboratory was established at American University in Washington, D.C. The weapons development and testing facility would become known as the American University Experimental Station. The War Department suggested in September 1917 that the labs at American be militarized, and ten months later, in June 1918, President Woodrow Wilson agreed, transferring the extensive work at the university to a newly formed army subdivision, the Chemical Warfare Service. Eventually, more than 10 percent of all the chemists in the United States became directly involved with chemical warfare research during World War I, which evolved as the largest research program in American history to that point. It employed 5,500 technicians, many of whom worked at prestigious universities and medical schools including Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Johns Hopkins, Harvard and Yale.[274]

The AEF began using mustard gas offensively in June 1918 when U.S. mustard gas production was 30 tons per day. By the end of the war, James Conant and a team of scientists at a secret laboratory in Willoughby, Ohio, had succeeded in mass producing an even greater wonder-weapon, lewisite gas, an arsenic that caused instant blistering, was difficult to detect, and was lethal in minute quantities. General Amos Fries, commander of the AEF's Gas Service and later director of the Chemical Warfare Service, characterized lewisite as the "dew of death" because there were plans to spray it over the enemy from airplanes, and the gas was thought to be so deadly that ten planes armed with it could eliminate every trace of life in Berlin.[275]

James Conant (1921 photo, Harvard Univ. Archive)

Charles L. Parsons, Executive Secretary of the American Chemical Society, noted enthusiastically that "war the destroyer has been the incentive to marvelous chemical development with a speed of

accomplishment incomprehensible in normal times."[276] He considered the League of Nation's attempt to outlaw poison gases to be "born of hysteria and ignorance," a view similar to Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, the famous U.S. military theoretician who believed that poison gases would make war more humane by incapacitating soldiers rather than allowing them to die an agonizing death from horrible wounds. Winford Lee Lewis, the director of the Offensive Branch of the Chemical Warfare Service unit at Catholic University stated that 'Providence' would intervene and give the most advanced people the best gas, insisting that chemical battles are the most efficient and economical of all fights.[277]

Fritz Haber, known as the "father of chemical warfare," also considered the new gas weapons as capable of serving the interests of humanity by breaking through the stalemate and shortening the war, thus precluding the slaughter of even more young men in a protracted war. He stated that chemical warfare was "no more horrible than flying pieces of steel; the percentage of mortality from the gases was in fact smaller."[278]

Fritz' wife Clara, however, was opposed to chemical weapons and committed suicide in protest of the war in front of their thirteen-year-old son. A driven patriot, Haber went on to personally direct mustard gas attacks on the British at Ypres that killed hundreds of soldiers and wounded thousands more. He considered it a "spectacular success." His son, however, undertook a study which found the gas attacks to be a failure as they did not win any battles or lead the way to victory. In 1968, when the University of Karlsruhe, where Fritz had taught, held a special ceremony to commemorate the centenary of his birth, students unfurled a banner which read: "Ceremony for a Murderer."[279] It was a refreshing reaffirmation of conscience.

Haber went on to help develop Zyklon B gas, which was used to exterminate Jews in concentration camps. Ironically, he himself was Jewish and was removed from his position at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute and expelled from Germany when Hitler came to power in 1933.

Kindred in spirt to Haber was Winston Churchill, Britain's Minister of Munitions from 1917 to 1919, who was a keen advocate of chemical weapons because they could "spread terror" yet did not leave permanent effects.[280] Churchill's assessment was wrong, however, as there were 186,000 gas casualties in the British Expeditionary Force, 7,400 of which were fatal, and 130,000 French Army casualties, nearly 23,000 of which were fatal. Forty-five thousand Russians died from the "ghastly dew," while Germany had 107,000 casualties, five thousand of them fatal. Corporal Adolph Hitler was among those nearly blinded by mustard gas near Ypres, resulting in a lingering bitterness that fueled his desire for revenge.[281]

Sometimes the attacker could be afflicted by gas poisoning alongside the attacked. An Army report detailed how on May 31, 1918, American infantrymen sprayed three tons of chemical gas into a village in a raid on a German trench at 3 A.M; the gas drifted because of the wind and by 9 A.M. two hundred and thirty six out of the 300 member platoon showed symptoms of gas poisoning.[282] Nine percent of American combat deaths are estimated to have derived from poison gas overall and 70,000 doughboys were hospitalized from it. The majority of these casualties derived from phosgene, a pulmonary irritant that kills and injures by causing an inflammation in the respiratory passage and lungs; men exposed to phosgene died a painful death, their last minutes filled with futile and labored grasping for air like a fish

floundering after being removed from water. Mustard gas, meanwhile, caused large, painful and incapacitating blisters and could cause temporary or permanent blindness along with tuberculosis. G.I. Earl Seaton described two soldiers whose "private parts were like beefsteaks after being struck by mustard gas."[283]

Famed British soldier poet Wilfred Owen testified to the horrors of modern mechanized warfare in his epic poem, *Dulce et Decorum Est* (1918):


British 2nd Lt. Wilfred Owen

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime. –
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues.
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.[284]

These words capture the hell of modern mechanized war and one of the great lies used to perpetuate it – "It is sweet and proper to die for the fatherland" (translation). Owen was killed on Nov. 4, 1918, one week before the armistice.

An atrocity producing environment

One of the ironies of this war of mass destruction centered on the efforts of the Wilson administration to keep American soldiers pure, free from the traditional "vices" of drinking alcohol and consorting with prostitutes. The administration established agencies such as the Committee on Training Camp Activities to monitor off-camp fraternization with young women and to close down nearby red-light districts.

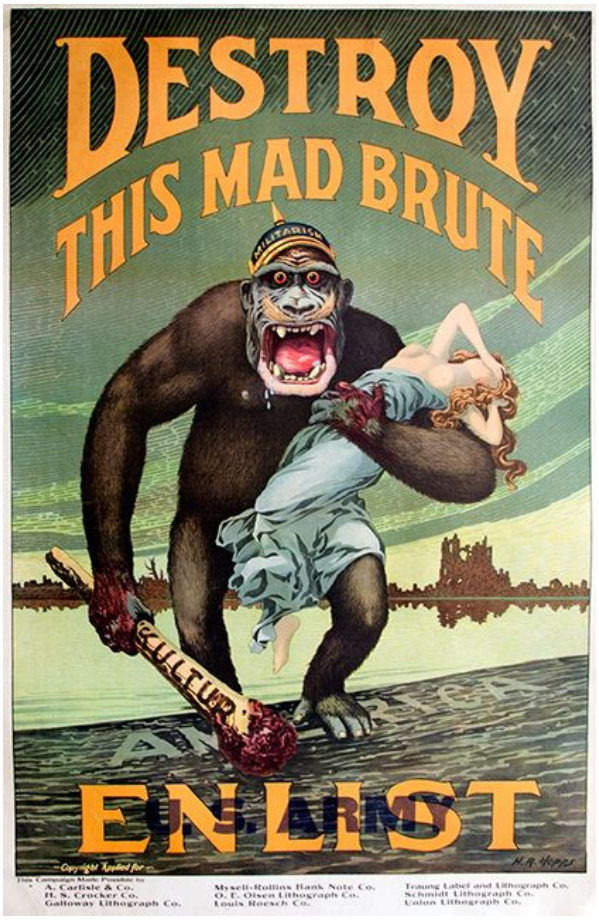
Alcohol was banned not only in training camps but also in surrounding areas. It became illegal to serve alcoholic drinks to soldiers even at home. President Wilson proudly wrote in April 1918, "I do not believe it is an exaggeration to say that no army ever before assembled has had more conscientious and painstaking thought given to the protection and stimulation of its mental, moral, and physical manhood."[285] That the men were being trained to participate in mass carnage seemed not to intrude upon the program of moral uplift.

Gillette razor ad: "clean-minded men fighting for clean ideals"

The Center for Public Information, meanwhile, along with compliant journalists whipped up anti-German propaganda that fostered dehumanizing stereotypes of Germans as brutal Huns and overly disciplined automatons. Major Hermann von Giehrl, chief of staff of the German 16th Army Corps, noted with much accuracy that all the "war propaganda" induced American soldiers to see Germans as "the personification of almost all the wickedness of humanity."[286] Dehumanization combined with the exigencies of war helped fuel what Robert Jay Lifton characterized as an "atrocity producing environment" in which violent excesses became the norm.[287] Reverend James R. Laughton, a pastor from rural Virginia who served with the 80th Division at Meuse-Argonne, reflected that "we ceased to be human, we became beasts lusting for blood and flesh."[288]

Oftentimes, bloodlust was driven by a desire for revenge. Private Joe Rizzi wrote that "the sight of mangled bodies [of his buddies] brought curses and prayers that we might get to the cause of the butchery. We vowed no more prisoners if those bastards wanted war in that fashion.... Our minds were becoming warped, not stopping to figure out that our artillery was doing the same to those poor unfortunate wretches.... I had become as vicious as the rest." One soldier told of an incident where a captured German soldier approached a group of Americans begging for water but was instead shot through the

temple; and another where a lieutenant was asked by his superior what he had done with the prisoners, and replied that rather than waste time escorting prisoners, he had killed them all.[289]



U.S. enlistment poster, 1917

One Georgia soldier wrote home that "all of you can cheer up and wear a smile for I'm a little hero now. I got two of the rascals and finished killing a wounded with my bayonet that might have gotten well had I not finished him.... How could I have mercy on such low life rascals as they are?"[290] Frank Town wrote to his sister in a similar spirit that "being over here for a while makes one care less about killing a Hun." Fay Neff, an infantryman, also admitted to his sister in a letter that he was "getting hardened to his life and the idea of one man killing another – as he was sailing for France, he 'hoped to get one Hun before he gets me.'" Some men were rather boastful of their killing. One bragged, for example, about throwing a German sniper he had caught 150 feet out of a building. Sergeant F. J. Hawke stated that "my motto was take no prisoners." He went on to recount an incident where two "miserable currs dropped on their knees to beg for their lives," and his response was to "use his hob nails [boots] on one of them."[291]


Dead horses buried after the Battle of Haelen, Belgium, Aug. 12, 1914 (Library of Congress)

Clarence Mahan noted that being shot changed his whole feeling about being able to kill someone. "We were scared but we had to develop a numbness and unfeeling attitude toward it all. Otherwise we would have lost our minds. War does something to a person. To see blood and carnage everywhere as men horses and mules are blown to bits developed in us a certain savagery and hate that pushed us on toward a terrible enemy with a willingness to see him destroyed." Eight million horses were killed in the Great War. Another combat veteran stated flatly that combat experience molded and stiffened his character and "lessened his sensitivity to

the value of human life. That rigidity was detrimental to my career in industry and in my personal life."[292]

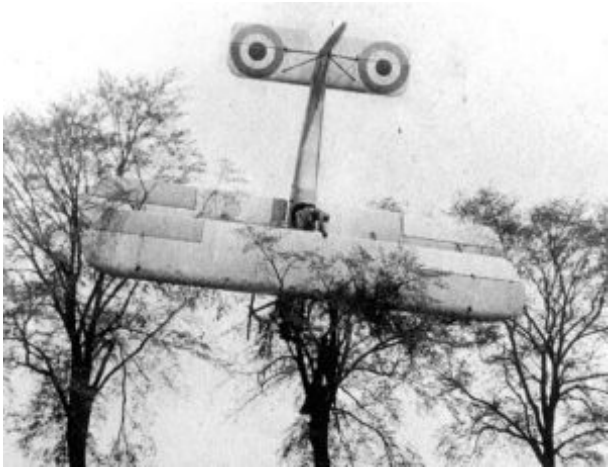
According to Leland Stevenson, a second staff Lieutenant who served most of the war in Vaux, France, "The American is always anxious to attack – he is not satisfied to merely hold a sector; he wants to be on the offensive. As a result of this attitude, many rash and daring things are attempted in the attack; he will rush the gun with utter disregard for the danger and usually capture it with the result that many are killed and wounded."[293] In their free time, U.S. soldiers did not always behave as model citizens. For example, a French newspaper reported on a drunken American GI who drew his gun and fired two shots at the 17-year-old son of a farmer whom he had asked for directions. In another incident, four U.S. soldiers went into a jewelry store in Paris, and stole lady's watches.[294]

Many soldiers remained haunted by what they saw and experienced long after the war ended. In addition to 204,000 Americans wounded in the war, 159,000 soldiers were withdrawn from action because of mental breakdown, leading to the discharge of 70,000 men.[295] Richard Faulkner writes that it was "the smell of battle that long disturbed their memories, and the stench of death that permeated the battlefield. It was an odor that presented the soldiers with an unavoidable reminder of what the future might hold for them." The sight of horribly mutilated dead and wounded men and the destruction caused by the war peppered some of their writings back home. Sergeant Major Paul Landis lingering memory of combat came from what he saw during the 3rd Division's defense at Chateau Thierry: "There was a broad meadow on the southern bank of the Marne . . . which the Germans had to cross on their attack on the night of the 14th-15th July 1918. We just fairly rained shells and machine gun bullets over this field and after the battle it resembled nothing more or less than wheat fields at home during harvest time, but instead of sheaves of wheat, the field contained hundreds of Germans and some Americans who fell in the battle."[296]

The American way of war was undistinguishable from that of other belligerents. In the Battle of Saint Mihiel, the combination of AEF artillery, tank brigades (one of which was commanded by George S. Patton), and fighter planes produced, in the words of one eyewitness, a "rain of explosives that left the kind of devastation usually associated with cyclones and tornados in Texas."[297] At the decisive Battle of Meuse Argonne from September 26 to November 11, 1918, the AEF responded to heavy German shelling, gassing, and aerial attacks with similar attacks of its own. Under the direction of Brigadier General Frank L. Winn, the AEF used thermite and white phosphorus smoke bombs and gas grenades. At least 5,000 gas shells were fired and thousand rounds of high explosives and phosgene and mustard gas were dropped from overhead planes.[298] On October 1, the 96th air squadron led by Bruce Hopper hammered the crossroads town of Bantheville with 1,240 kilos of bombs that caused "much damage to the town," according to the after-action report.[299]

The war in the skies was followed with excitement back on the home front. Citizens followed the exploits of "aces" such as Captain Eddie Rickenbacker who shot down

28 enemy planes during the war. Yet air combat took a heavy toll on the pilots. The planes they flew, adorned with elaborate nose art, including in one case the insignia of the head of a Sioux Indian in full war paint and feathers, were sometimes described as “flaming coffins” due to unprotected gas tanks that exploded when hit. The pilots were issued no parachutes. In the barracks, clubs, and cafes frequented by pilots during the evening hours, the refrain of a song was often heard:



A French pilot made an emergency landing near Brussels, 1915 (National Archives)

Stand to your glasses, steady!
The world is full of lies,
A cup to the dead already,
And here is to the next that dies.

At least 235 American pilots were killed in combat, 130 were wounded, and 125 were captured. Another 650 died in accidents or from illness. Among those killed was Quentin Roosevelt, the fourth son of former President Theodore Roosevelt, shot down by a German Fokker plane over the Marne River in France on July 14, 1918. German Zeppelins — motorized blimps — were even more likely to end up in a raging fireball and plunge to earth. Sent over Britain in the first strategic bombing campaign early in 1915, the combination of British defenses and accidents produced a 40 percent casualty rate.[300]

German Zeppelin, 1916

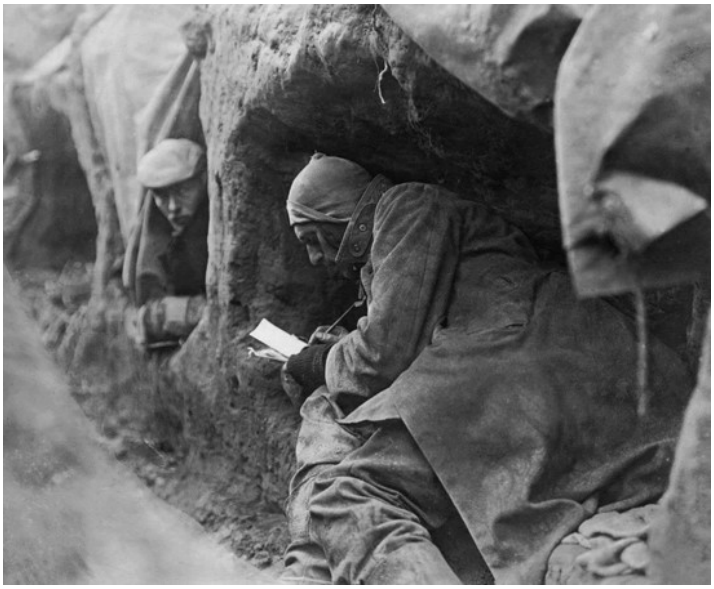
Historian Edward G. Lengel points out that in the Meuse-Argonne, “over a million American soldiers learned that modern war had nothing to do with waving banners and glorious cavalry charges that stocked the pages of books they had read in childhood. They saw thousands of comrades killed or disabled, they learned how artillery could blow a man to pieces, how machine guns could slash down dozens of soldiers at a time and how poison gas could dissolve lungs.”[301]

As in many other cases, the American public was not told the truth about the war. Press censorship and the Sedition Act, which circumscribed freedom of speech and freedom of the press, kept the public in the dark on the brutal conduct of the war.[302] In March 1918, Walter Shaw informed his mother: “I read some papers from the States, some of the junk they have in them is a shure joke. No one knows how it is until he gets here and sees it all.” An engineer further tried to caution his family: “If Addie [brother] thinks of trying this thing [military service] he’d better think well. There is no romance or heroics over here that I can

find. Its downright dirty work." Clarence Hackett wrote to a friend: "I hope you never have to come here, for this war sure is hell."[303]

Coping with war

Soldiers at the front faced perilous circumstances in the war. They had to contend with the fear of artillery, poison gas, air attacks and machine guns while living day-to-day in poorly ventilated dugout shelters and trenches infested with rats. The smoke from wood or coal burning stoves left some half asphyxiated. Some men contracted pneumonia from lying on the wet ground for long periods; other succumbed to diseases bred by filth. The rough living environment was often compounded by a lack of sleep, shortage of clean water, and harsh labor regimens under oppressive officers.[304]


Soldier writing a letter (Netherlands National Library)

Men coped with the perils of trench warfare in different ways. They sang, told stories and jokes, drank to excess, gambled, and even made trench art from spent shell casings. Some experienced neurosis and descended into a state of "loggish stupor." More than a few removed themselves from the battlefield by taking unauthorized leaves of absence, becoming "stragglers" in Army lexicon. Major General Hunter Liggett estimated that 100,000 U.S. soldiers left their units during the one-and-a-half-month Meuse-Argonne offensive, an astounding one-tenth of the doughboys involved in the campaign. Some did so for lack of food and water, a result of the difficulty of moving supplies to the front. Although few GIs later spoke about their motives, one infantryman cited commanders who "had forgotten that there is a limit to human endurance."[305] Less understanding officers called them cowards and drove them back to the front.

Some soldiers found their way out of the war by self-inflicting wounds, such as shooting themselves in the foot. A few simply deserted.[306] Records at the U.S. National Archives show that the Army investigated U.S. soldiers for noncompliance and desertion, some of whom were foreign-born. Private Alexander Alexandrandrovich, a Lithuanian drafted into the U.S. Army, told agents "that he did not believe in war, though he would fight if they sent him to the Lithuanian front, as there [at least] he would know what he was fighting for." Jacob Syznewsik, an American citizen with a German father and Polish mother, blurted, "to hell with war, who wants this war." Private Projosmosnic, an Austrian immigrant who was drafted, stated that the U.S. "had no business in this war" and that he "was not going to fight."[307] American commanders were no less reluctant to throw their men into harm's way than

French General Robert-Georges Nivelle or British Field Marshal Douglas Haig, who became known as "the butcher" after horrendous British losses at the Somme. In "The Battle of Booby's Bluffs," an account of the war published in *The Infantry Journal* in 1921 by an anonymous author, "Major Single List," the solder writes that "our Colonel was a good soldier but he had lost the milk of human kindness." The author laments the lack of appreciation for soldiers' sacrifices within the military and how his battalion was ruined capturing a useless hill. "We had captured Hill 407," he writes, "but at what price! On all sides, my brave boys were wounded and dying."[308] He might have been writing about U.S. soldiers in the Vietnam War fifty years later.

* * *

VII. Over Here: The nadir of American democracy

The decade of the 1910s is remembered as a time when women in the United States pressed for the right to vote and progressive laws were passed expanding democracy (for example, U.S. senators elected by the people instead of state legislatures). During the war years, however, political rights and freedoms were severely constricted, undermining the foundation of democracy. Many noted the duplicity of the president's claim that the war was being fought to make the world "safe for democracy" while the administration suppressed Constitutional rights at home.

On June 15, 1917, Congress passed, and President Wilson signed into law, the Espionage Act, empowering the federal government to censor newspapers, ban publications from the mail, and imprison anyone who "interfered" with conscription or the enlistment of soldiers. The penalties set forth were harsh, up to 20 years in prison and a $10,000 fine. Irritated that peace advocates were still making speeches, President Wilson requested additional legislation to silence dissent. Congress responded in May 1918 by amending the Espionage Act to include the Sedition Act which made it illegal to "utter, print, write or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States." Under these acts, the government prosecuted over 2,100 people.[309]

Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs (National Archives). Hear actor Mark Ruffalo read Debs's speech here.

Among those convicted was Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs who was sentenced to ten years in prison for telling a crowd in Canton, Ohio, on June 16, 1918:

> . . . 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 their 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.[310]

Repression, vigilantism, and propaganda

Leading the administration's offensive against the opponents of war were Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson and Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory, both Texans. Burleson zealously withdrew mailing privileges from any journal that "impugned the motives of the government," as Burleson explained, including any publication that claimed "the government is controlled by Wall Street or munitions manufacturers, or any other special interests." All foreign language newspapers had to be submitted to the Post Office Department in advance of publication in order to assure their loyalty to the American war effort. When Victor Berger wrote in his newspaper, the *Milwaukee Leader*, that Congress was "a rubber stamp of Woodrow Wilson and the Wall Street Clique," Burleson banned the socialist journal from the mails.[311]


Albert S. Burleson

Post Office agents visited the New York office of the Woman's Peace Party after two issues of *Four Lights* were judged to contain seditious material. The agents demanded to know how many of the editors were German citizens. Surveying their own group, the editors issued a press release stating that 14 of the 28 editors were eligible for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution, six had English heritage, and three had ancestors from the Central Powers.[312] Burleson's agency nonetheless continued to treat peace advocacy as traitorous pro-German propaganda.

Attorney General Gregory, meanwhile, initiated a nationwide surveillance system utilizing members of the newly formed American Protective League (APL). Claiming to be federal officers, and brandishing badges that said "American Protective League – Secret Service," APL members monitored the activities of anyone not considered "100% American," including citizens of German origin, pacifists, leftists, and independent intellectuals. Gregory boasted that his APL agents, which numbered 250,000 by the end of the war, assisted "the heavily overworked Federal authorities in keeping an eye on disloyal individuals and making reports of disloyal utterances." According to David Kennedy:


Thomas W. Gregory

> Though Gregory admiringly called the APL a "powerful patriotic organization," and claimed that it was "well-managed," the League in fact constituted a rambunctious, unruly *posse comitatus* on an unprecedented national scale. Its "agents" bugged, burglarized, slandered, and illegally arrested other Americans. They opened mail, intercepted telegrams, served as *agents provocateurs*, and were the chief commandos in a series of extralegal and often violent "slacker raids" against supposed draft evaders in 1918. They always operated behind a cloak of stealth and deception, frequently promoting reactionary social and economic views under the guise of patriotism.[313]

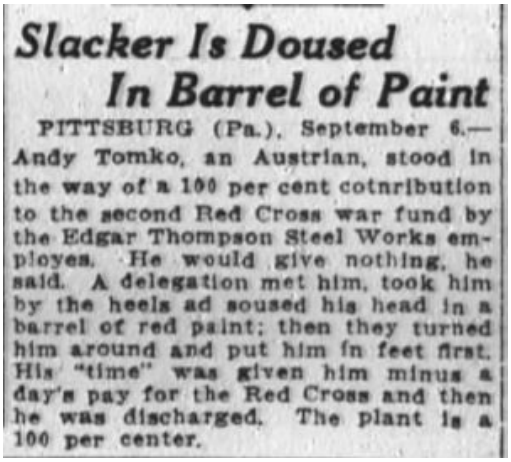
The American Protective League never caught even one spy. Other vigilante organizations also emerged in the repressive climate. According to Robert Hannigan:

APL operative badge, issued by U.S. Dept. of Justice

> With the blessing of state and local governments, tens of thousands of "councils of defense" were set up around the United States. Originally the idea was for them to help with the economic mobilization of the country. As that job came instead to be taken over by national agencies focused on different sectors of the economy, these local bodies of volunteers increasingly turned to other tasks, among which were promoting public enthusiasm for the war and suppressing dissent. People were investigated by them for "disloyalty," hauled before "slacker courts," encouraged to keep an eye on their neighbors, and warned that they were "under surveillance." Other, similar organizations had titles like the Minute Men, the knights of Liberty, the Sedition Slammers, and so on. Pacifists, pacifist religious sects (like the Mennonites), radicals, and above all, Americans of German ancestry were particular targets of such activity. In some cases, the federal government simply lost control of tendencies it had set in motion, but it was frequently also slow to condemn or rein in vigilantism.[314]

Before 1914, German immigrants and German-American citizens were considered by many to be the most esteemed ethnic group in the United States, deemed upright, hardworking citizens. With U.S. entry into the war, those of German ancestry became targets of suspicion, surveillance, repression, and violence. The governor of Iowa forbade the speaking of German in public. Familiar words like "hamburger" and "sauerkraut" were replaced by "liberty sandwich" and "liberty

cabbage." In one of the most infamous cases of vigilante violence, Robert Praeger, a young man born in Germany who had tried to enlist in the U.S. Navy but had been rejected for medical reasons, was lynched by a mob near St. Louis in April 1918 "to the lusty cheers of five hundred patriots," according to Kennedy:



Slacker Is Doused In Barrel of Paint

PITTSBURG (Pa.), September 6.—Andy Tomko, an Austrian, stood in the way of a 100 per cent cotnribution to the second Red Cross war fund by the Edgar Thompson Steel Works employes. He would give nothing, he said. A delegation met him, took him by the heels ad soused his head in a barrel of red paint; then they turned him around and put him fn feet first. His "time" was given him minus a day's pay for the Red Cross and then he was discharged. The plant is a 100 per center.

San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 6, 1918

> A trial of the mob's leaders followed, in which the defendants wore red, white, and blue ribbons to court, and the defense counsel called their deed "patriotic murder." The jury took twenty-five minutes to return a verdict of not guilty, accompanied by one jury member's shout, "Well, I guess nobody can say we aren't loyal now." The *Washington Post* commented: "In spite of excesses such as lynching, it is a healthful and wholesome awakening in the interior of the country."[315]

Raymond B. Fosdick, who later became the first Under-Secretary of the League of Nations, remembered attending a church meeting in New England where a speaker demanded that the Kaiser be boiled in oil and the entire audience stood to scream its hysterical approval. "This was the mood we were in," Fosdick wrote. "This was the kind of madness that had seized us."[316] According to Charles DeBenedetti, "Extending the country's long tradition of middle-class vigilante violence, local figures of respectability and power unleashed a veritable "reign of terror" across the nation against dissidents and in defense of conservative nationalism."[317]

In Butte, Montana, on August 1, 1917, self-styled enforcers of national unity lynched Frank Little, an organizer for the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) union, also known as the Wobblies. No one was charged with the murder. The following month, federal agents raided IWW headquarters in 33 different cities and also ransacked the Socialist Party national headquarters in Chicago. Fifteen IWW leaders received sentences of 20 years in prison under the terms of the recently passed Espionage Act.[318] In Oklahoma, where the IWW had recently organized an Oil Workers Union, the *Tulsa Daily World* gave voice to calls for vigilante violence after someone set off a bomb outside the home of a local oil man. Suggesting that the Wobblies were in the pay of the Kaiser, the lead editorial proclaimed on November 10: "The first step in the whipping of Germany is to strangle the IWW's. Kill them, just as you would kill any other kind of snake. Don't scorch 'em, kill em dead. It is no time to waste money on trials and continuance and things like that. All that is necessary is the evidence and a firing squad."[319]

Conservative groups and political reactionaries took advantage of the repressive climate to claim the patriotic high ground and discredit socialism as un-American. The party had been

building momentum since 1910, when Victor Berger became the first socialist elected to Congress (from Milwaukee). Two years later, party leader Eugene Debs ran for president and received over 900,000 votes, six percent of the national total. That same year, some 1,200 socialist candidates were elected to local offices in 337 towns and cities across the U.S. The party claimed 323 Socialist papers and periodicals, the most important being the *Appeal To Reason*, which reached a circulation of 600,000.[320]


STARS AND STRIPES: FRANCE, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1918.

PEACE PRELIMINARIES —By Charles Dana Gibson

A DOUGHBOY'S LETTER TO KAISER WILHELM

The official U.S. Army newsletter, "Stars and Stripes," fantasized lynching the Kaiser in traditional American vigilante style

With U.S. entry to war, the Socialist Party became a target of repression. The state secretary of the West Virginia chapter, for example, received a six-month jail sentence for writing a pamphlet warning that conscription foreshadowed a "militarized America." Debs remained in prison until well after the war ended. In 1920, he conducted his fifth presidential campaign while a federal prisoner, receiving 913,000 votes, or 3.41% of the popular vote. [321]

Court rulings

A noted free speech case that went to the Supreme Court involved Charles T. Schenck, the general secretary of the Socialist Party in Philadelphia. In August 1917, Schenck and some of his comrades planned to mail a leaflet to men whose names were published in the newspapers as having passed their draft board physicals. The printed leaflet had "Long Live the Constitution of the United States" on one side and "Assert Your Rights!" on the other. The key phrase in the leaflet stated: "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." The phrase was an indirect quote from Speaker of the House Champ Clark who declared on the House floor in April 1917, "in my estimation of Missourians there is precious little difference between a conscript and a convict."[322] Some 15,000 copies of the leaflet were printed, but a large number were not mailed. Schenck and four other Socialist Party members, including Dr. Elizabeth Baer, were subsequently charged with conspiring to obstruct the draft. In December 1917, Schenck and Baer were found guilty. Schenck received a six-month prison sentence and Baer three months. Both appealed their convictions.

In January 1919, the U.S. Supreme Court heard their appeal. On March 3, 1919, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., announced his "clear and present danger" test defining when speech warrants criminal punishment. His oft-quoted statement read: "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic…." The Supreme Court upheld Schenck's conviction on the grounds that his leaflet intended to cause harm to the government's effort to prosecute the war. The Schenck case

established a precedent to limit the First Amendment "right" of free speech in time of war.[323] Members of Congress were intimidated as well. Stalwart progressive reformer and outspoken peace advocate Robert La Follette had to fight for his political life after a newspaper misquoted his speech in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 19, 1917. The Associated Press reporter quoted the senator as saying, "We had no grievance against Germany," when in fact he had said, "I don't mean to say that we hadn't suffered grievances . . . at the hands of Germany; we had. Serious grievances. . . . They had interfered with the right of American citizens to travel on the high seas . . ." La Follette was dragged through a 14-month Senate investigation, which largely silenced him. In January 1919, he was finally cleared of all charges.[324]

The limits of dissent became apparent in a court case concerning the film, "The Spirit of '76," which opened in Chicago in the summer of 1917. Producer Robert Goldstein had sought to rouse the patriotic spirit by dramatizing the Revolutionary War, but his depiction of the 1778 Wyoming Valley massacre, in which the British burned an estimated 1,000 homes and killed women and children, was deemed suspect by censors. The U.S. Justice Department seized the film and took Goldstein to court. Prosecutors argued that the film was part of a pro-German conspiracy. Goldstein himself was a Jewish immigrant with German parents. District Judge Benjamin Bledsoe said that Goldstein's film exhibited "exaggerated scenes of British cruelty" that might make people "question the good faith of our ally, Great Britain." He ruled that the film was likely to sow disloyalty and insubordination in the armed forces and thus violated the Espionage Act. Goldstein was sentenced to ten years in the federal penitentiary. Attorney General Thomas Gregory personally congratulated the prosecutor, Robert O'Connor, on what was the first successful prosecution of an "unpatriotic" motion picture in U.S. history.[325]

Ad for silent movie, "The Spirit of 76," Los Angeles, April 1917

State propaganda

If not silenced by repressive laws and extralegal vigilantism, peace advocacy was drowned out by state propaganda. Just one week after war was declared, President Wilson issued an executive order creating the Committee on Public Information (CPI), an official propaganda agency. To lead the CPI, Wilson chose George Creel, a liberal on domestic issues and a journalist who utilized modern advertising techniques to sell the war. The agency produced and distributed pamphlets and posters,

made newsreels and feature-length films, issued press releases and published a daily newspaper, sponsored patriotic exhibitions in cities, organized "Loyalty Leagues" in immigrant communities, and recruited some 18,000 "Four-Minute Men" speakers to whip up enthusiasm in every town and city. The speakers, in turn, recruited young men for the U.S. Army, peddled Liberty Bonds, encouraged food conservation, and pressured citizens to become active in the war effort. Quipped one writer, "George Creel was so talented, he got Americans to support a war they had just voted against."[326]


CPI director George Creel

The CPI's most famous poster, an image of Uncle Sam pointing his finger and proclaiming, "I WANT YOU FOR U.S. ARMY," was modeled on a British poster showing Field Marshal H. H. Kitchener pointing his finger at British citizens. CPI's publication, the *Official Bulletin*, expanded from eight to 32 pages over the course of the war and contained all the news CPI saw fit to print. Subscriptions climbed to over 115,000 and many newspapers reprinted stories.[327] Creel also participated in Censorship Board, created in October 1917, which pressured newspapers to follow the administration's reporting guidelines.

CPI's film division, meanwhile, produced such films as "Pershing's Crusaders," "Under Four Flags," and "The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin," which emphasized the heroism of Americans and their allies and the barbarism of Germans. The CPI targeted factory workers in particular, seeking to convince them that "this is their war," as David Kennedy explains. Working with pro-war labor leaders such as Samuel Gompers, the CPI "flooded the nation's factories with posters, speakers, and slogans calculated to defuse the radical charge that his was a capitalists' war in which the workingman has no stake."[328]

CPI also worked with educators and professional associations such as the National Board for Historical Service. The latter distributed study guides for students at all age levels. According to Kennedy, the suggested themes for younger children were "patriotism, heroism, and sacrifice," and for older children, the "differences between the autocratic German form of government and the democratic American way." The Board rejected one curriculum because it raised doubts about "the positive values of nationalism" and did not sufficiently distinguish between the benevolent imperialism of Great Britain and the "predatory" imperialism of central European countries. These courses served as the prototype for future courses on "Western Civilization" taken by American students.[329]

Censorship board meeting, Creel seated at far right (Library of Congress)

Academic unfreedom

The push for absolute loyalty not only negated political rights but also undermined academic freedom. Most disconcerting was the fact that a number of prominent pre-war peace activists were in the forefront. Columbia University president Nicholas Murray Butler declared there was "no room for compromise or for equivocation" in regard to opinions about the war because the war effort "goes to the very bottom of human life and of human government. It must be prosecuted until the world can be made secure."[330]

And prosecute he did. During 1917 and 1918, Butler saw to it that no one at Columbia University dissented. In one of the worst violations in the history of academic freedom in higher education, some of the country's top scholars were told either to leave or be dismissed, while others resigned in protest because of Butler's patriotic highhandedness. For Butler, caught in the war fever, loyalty to the country was paramount. "Men who feel that their personal convictions require them to treat the mature opinion of the civilized world without respect or with contempt may well be given an opportunity to do so from private station and without the added influence and prestige of a university's name." Consequently, James McKeen Cattell, Leon Fraser, Henry R. Mussey, and Ellery C. Stowell were told to leave—while the eminent historian Charles Beard, who supported the war, resigned in protest over the dictatorial actions of the Columbia


Columbia University president Nicholas Murray Butler

Board of Trustees and its president.[331]

The Columbia University experience was repeated at the University of Nebraska. In 1918, the Nebraska State Council of Defense submitted to the University of Nebraska's Board of Regents a list of twelve professors accused of promoting indifference or opposition to the war. After an investigation, the Board disclosed that three of the professors believed in internationalism, refused to promote the sale of liberty bonds, and openly criticized some of their more patriotic colleagues. The three professors were given the "choice" of resigning or being dismissed.[332]

Similarly, at the University of Virginia, Leon R. Whipple, Director of the School of Journalism, was charged with disloyalty for a speech he made in which he declared that the war would not remove the specter of autocracy nor make the world safe for democracy. After a trial by the state's Board of Visitors, Whipple was fired. In another case, Scott Nearing, the noted antiwar socialist and author of the pamphlet, *The Great Madness*, was fired from his position at the University of Toledo in 1917 after criticizing preparedness efforts. He was subsequently indicted for treason and later acquitted at trial in 1919.

Other examples abound. The University of Minnesota's Board of Regents dismissed the chairman of its Political Science department, William A. Schaper, for stating that he did not wish to see the Hohenzollerns (Germany's ruling family) completely destroyed. In Maine, the Dean of the University's law school was removed by the Board of Trustees on the grounds that his lectures were tinged with pro-German sentiments. Cornell University granted Henry W. Edgerton, a young professor of law, an indefinite leave of absence because he had registered as a conscientious objector.[333] In these instances and others not recorded, university trustees attempted to cleanse their institutions of any professor deemed insufficiently patriotic.

Attacks against educators were not limited to professors. As H. C. Peterson and Glibert Fite have shown in their work, *Opponents of War, 1917-1918* (1957), every effort was made by federal and state governments to convert schools into "seminaries of patriotism." Led by the National Education Association and the Committee on Patriotism through Education, district after district banned the teaching of German and demanded loyalty oaths of school teachers and support personnel. Nationally, over 800,000 high school teachers and students were introduced to the National Board for Historical Service's war study plan prepared by Samuel B. Harding, a history professor at the University of Indiana. Clearly designed for propaganda purposes, Harding's work highlighted the view that Germany was a pervasively militarized society, which bluntly rejected the sincerity of the Allies' desire for peace.

> "We pledge ourselves actively to inculcate in our pupils by word and deed love of flag and unquestioning loyalty to the military policy of the government and to the measures and principles proclaimed by the President and Congress." — New York state loyalty oath, 1917

The New York State Legislature passed a 1917 law mandating that teachers would be subject to dismissal for "the utterance of any treasonable or seditious word" and even created a commission to hear and examine complaints about "seditious" textbooks in subjects like

civics, history, economics, and English literature. New York followed the recommendations of the National Board for Historical Service and required elementary school teachers to teach the themes of "patriotism, heroism, and sacrifice" and the differences between German autocracy and the American democratic way of life.[334]

Peterson and Fite point out a number of instances where teachers were fired for refusal to support the war. In New York City, one Board of Education member, General Thomas Wingate, proclaimed that "the teacher who teaches pacifism and that this country should not defend itself is a thousand times more dangerous than the teacher who gets drunk and lies in the gutter." Despite elaborate hearings, defense counsel and all the elaborate appearances of a trial, the decision to fire teachers had been largely predetermined by the hysteria of the men in charge of conducting the proceedings. Throughout the city's school system, teachers were suspended or dismissed for questioning American military involvement, refusing to teach patriotism in their classes, or not taking the recently-enacted loyalty oath. Thus, three teachers from De Witt Clinton's High School in Brooklyn were fired because of their socialist opposition to the war. A German-born elementary school teacher, Gertrude Pignol, was fired for wearing a locket engraved by her father with a picture of the Kaiser's grandfather on one side and a cornflower on the other.[335]

In Bucksport, Maine, veteran middle school teacher Lucina Hopkins was fired from her job because she took driving lessons from a German immigrant. Her husband had purchased a new car for her so that she could visit her ailing mother on the way home from work. Since she did not know how to drive, her husband hired a driving instructor, who was a German alien. Hopkins sued. The lower court ruled against her, but the Maine Court of Appeals overturned the decision and awarded her $400; she was reinstated in her teaching position.[336]

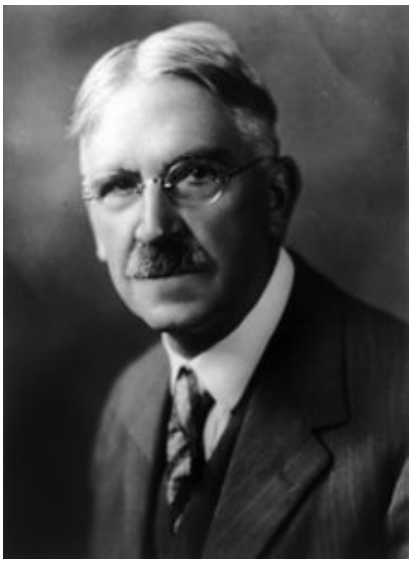
Perhaps nothing exemplified the height of patriotic intolerance in public schooling more than the dismissal of Phi Beta Kappa, Swarthmore College graduate, and Quaker Mary Stone McDowell from Brooklyn's Manual Training High School. When she refused to take the loyalty oath because of her Quaker faith, school officials promptly gave her a hearing and then fired her anyway. Little consideration was given to the historic protections of the Society of Friends' religious opposition to war. McDowell chose to challenge her dismissal in state court, but she lost. Her challenge was the first case in American legal history involving the issue of religious freedom in public education that went to a state court.[337]

The lesson pertaining to this experience is that World War I put tremendous stress on the tradition of academic freedom. Nationalism and ideological conformity overruled open debate and independent thinking. Over-zealous school boards regulated the vast majority of public school teachers, forcing loyalty oaths and other assurances of conformity. There were thousands of cases where fear of disciplinary measures silenced teachers so completely that they kept their opinions about the war to themselves. Nor was academic freedom fully restored after the war. Nationalists and militarists sought to keep educational institutions in their corner, fostering reverence for American military power, whitewashing much of U.S. history, and dismissing peace movements as impractical, at best, and unpatriotic, at worst.

The responsibility of intellectuals

Among the notable liberal thinkers in American society who supported the war, no one captured the public's attention more than John Dewey. Before American intervention, Dewey declared all forms of militarism "undemocratic, barbaric, and scholastically wholly unwise." Now, as a pragmatist widely recognized for his "child-centered" views on education and schooling, he reasoned that war might serve as a useful and efficient means for bringing about a democratically organized world order. Although war on the whole was undesirable, it might nonetheless be made useful and educative, or so he thought.[338]

Dewey and other progressive intellectual supporters of war underestimated the war's impact on the American psyche and the power of anti-democratic forces at work. If the war was being fought for social reform, in Dewey's estimation, he was totally unprepared for the scathing attack Randolph Bourne leveled against his overly optimistic and misguided reasoning. For Bourne, a literary critic and one of Dewey's most brilliant students, it was a time when innocence abruptly came to an end and idols who had trumpeted the virtues of progressive reform reached their twilight.[339]


John Dewey

In June, 1917, Bourne penned a critique of liberal intellectuals in *Seven Arts Magazine* entitled "The War and the Intellectuals." He wrote that to "those of us who still retain an irreconcilable animus against war, it has been a bitter experience to see the unanimity with which the American intellectuals have thrown their support to [it.]" Bourne said that the intellectuals "effectively willed [the war] against the hesitation and dim perceptions of the American democratic masses" because they saw it as a means of "securing the spread of liberal internationalist ideals and democracy." Their position showed them to be elitist and derisive of popular sentiment, and placed them in alliance with the "least democratic forces in American life," including corporate war-profiteers and nativist elements. By failing to "clear the public of the cant of war," they had squandered an opportunity to promote "a great wave of education" and "set our own house in spiritual order." Bourne concluded by noting: "The Jew often marvels that his race alone should have been chosen as the true people of the cosmic God. Are not our intellectuals equally fatuous when they tell us that our war of all wars is stainless and thrillingly achieving for good?"[340]

The answer to the question was, of course, yes. The claims of pro-war intellectuals would prove delusory. Bourne grew up in comfortable circumstances in New Jersey but always identified with the oppressed, owing to his small stature (he was only five feet) and experience living with a handicap. His first essay in the *Atlantic Monthly*, "The Handicapped," published in 1911, explored the inner life of disabled people, and the stigma and persecution that they faced. Bourne's subsequent writing promoted his progressive views on education and included ruminations on the "deadening subordination of workers to machines." According to historian Christopher Phelps, Bourne was an "elegant refuter of 'pragmatic' pretensions in those who believed that the state, even in a time of unleashed militarism, could be tamed simply by their own moral presence in the corridors of power."[341]


Randolph Bourne

Financed by subsidiaries of the J. P. Morgan Company, *The New Republic* stopped publishing Bourne's political pieces following U.S. entry into the Great War. *Seven Arts Magazine* later collapsed when its financial backer refused support because of Bourne's antiwar articles. "Even at the *Dial*, Bourne's last hope among literary magazines," Phelps wrote, "he was stripped from editorial power in 1918 – the result of an uncharacteristically underhanded intervention by his former mentor John Dewey, one of the objects of Bourne's disillusioned antiwar pen." Phelps quotes a letter Bourne sent to a friend shortly thereafter, in which he laments that "I feel very much secluded from the world, very much out of touch with my times.... The magazines I write for die violent deaths, and all my thoughts are unprintable."[342] In October 1917, Bourne wrote a follow-up to "The War and the Intellectuals" called "The Twilight of the Idols," in which he lamented how the country's best intellects were "caught in the political current and see only the hope that America will find her soul in the remaking of the world [through violence]." Bourne took specific aim at John Dewey, the great philosopher who was his mentor at Columbia University, who subscribed to the illusion that the war could be "molded" and "controlled" to achieve a liberal purpose:

> A philosopher who senses so little the sinister forces of war, who is more concerned over the excesses of the pacifists than over the excesses of military policy, who can feel only amusement at the idea that any one should try to conscript thought, who assumes that the war-technique could be used without trailing along with it the mob-fanaticism, the injustice and hatreds, that are organically bound up with it.

Bourne wrote of Dewey and his counterparts, "There seems to have been a peculiar congeniality between the war and these men. It is as if the war and they had been waiting for each other."[343]

One of the men to whom he was referring, Walter Lippmann, was a prominent progressive thinker, passionate in his belief that the world could be made over along liberal principles. As a young man, Lippmann considered war to have resulted from colonialism and imperialism and that America should not become enmeshed in Europe's quarrels. However, Lippmann was also an Anglophile who developed a distaste for Germany after hearing stories from his grandfather who had escaped Prussian oppression. Lippmann was convinced, in turn, that America had a great world role to fill and that "isolationism must be abandoned if we are to do anything effective for internationalism…The supreme task of world politics is not the prevention of war but a satisfactory organization of mankind."


Walter Lippmann

In fall 1915, Lippmann began trying to push fellow progressives Herbert Croly and Nathaniel Weyl away from "differential neutrality" and toward open help for the Allies, getting strong support from Norman Angell, the prominent British anti-imperialist who had become a member of the *New Republic*'s editorial Board. With Lippmann taking the lead, the *New Republic* began criticizing Wilson for his caution and pressing for military intervention to the delight of J.P. Morgan executives, one of whom wrote to Lippmann: "what you say is exactly right. It will do much good."

In Lippmann's view, the sinking of the *Lusitania* offered an opportunity to "unite Englishmen and Americans in common grief and indignation and unite them in a common war and conceivably a common destiny" to remake the world. In an April 1916 editorial after the *Sussex* incident, titled "An Appeal to the President," Lippmann went on to explain how the United States could use its power for moral ends, and subsequently expressed giddiness when Wilson endorsed U.S. participation in a forerunner to the League of Nations which he believed would "purify world politics" and "help bring America into the war." That same month, Lippmann told a gathering of academics and businessmen that America's own safety and the triumph of liberal principles throughout the world lay in the unity and supremacy of sea power in Anglo-American hands, an echo of the thesis of naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan.

According to historian Ronald Steel, Lippmann's radical friends, having long ago decided that the war was basically an imperialist squabble, were distressed by his growing enthusiasm for intervention. John Reed, the great chronicler of the Mexican and Russian revolutions, became so disgusted by Lippmann's attacks on the pacifists and on American "isolationism" that in February 1916 he accused his friend of playing the game of Wall Street financiers and warmongers like Theodore Roosevelt. By early 1916, Lippmann had broken with his old antiwar friends, saying that their passion had always seemed "excessive, their politics self-

promoting, their living habits unduly messy."[344]

During the 1916 election campaign, Lippmann wrote speeches for Woodrow Wilson and became Colonel Edward House's partner "in the effort to persuade Wilson and the nation that the United States must come into the war on the side of the Allies." He was greatly enthused by Wilson's April 1917 speech advocating intervention, writing that it put "the whole thing exactly where it needed to be and does it with real nobility of feeling.... Other men have led nations to war to increase their glory, wealth, their prestige. No other statesman has ever so clearly identified the glory of his country with the peace and liberty of the world." Subsequently he wrote a congratulatory note to Wilson saying, "Only a statesman who will be called great could have made American intervention mean so much to the generous forces of the world, could have lifted the inevitable horror of war into a deed so full of meaning." These comments epitomize the worldview of liberal internationalists in their promoting war as a noble humanitarian endeavor, filled with a meaning that would later appear hollow.

Following the overthrow of the Tsar in Russia, Lippmann gave the keynote address at the American political science association in Philadelphia where he enthused about how imperialist struggle had given way to a new people's war whose objective was nothing less than a "union of liberal peoples pledged to cooperate in the settlement of all outstanding questions, sworn to turn against the aggressor [Germany], determined to erect a larger, and more modern system of international law upon a federation of the world." In the summer of 1916, Lippmann took a leave of absence from the *New Republic* to work as an assistant to the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, and then went to work for Colonel House on a secret project in which he helped design blueprints for the postwar world in conjunction with 126 other academics that included Harvard historian Samuel Elliot Morrison. Afterwards, he enlisted with George Creel's Committee on Public Information (CPI) as a war propagandist. Lippmann would come to feel betrayed, though, by the Versailles peace treaty, writing to a friend that he couldn't see "anything in this treaty but endless trouble for Europe."[345] The Great War had thus not lived up to Wilson's idealistic rhetoric. Harold Stearns wrote in his 1919 book *Liberalism and America* that progressive intellectuals like Lippmann had been "seduced by the lure of power and had suspended their critical judgment."[346]

Historians for war

Historians voluntarily enlisted in the war effort and history became a vehicle for official views. In his essay "Historians Cut Loose" (August 1927), C. Hartley Grattan, a pioneering revisionist historian critical of U.S. intervention, pilloried the doyens of the profession who became swept up by Wilson's idealistic rhetoric and wrote pro-war tracts that helped shape public opinion. William Roscoe Thayer, the President of the American Historical Association (AHA) and a noted scholar of Italian unification from Harvard, had published an anti-German diatribe on the eve of the war that echoed American and British propaganda. Meanwhile, Thayer's Harvard colleague, Albert Bushnell Hart, author of a 28-volume history of the United States, attacked Wilson for being too timid. Grattan considered Hart, this "grand old man of American history," to be "the most violent of the warlocks," comparable to Lippmann in the zeal for which he supported the war.[347]

Upton Sinclair, in *The Goose Step* (1923), described the American system of higher education

as “not a public service, but an instrument of special privilege; its purpose is not to further the welfare of mankind, but merely to keep America capitalist.”[348] The history professoriate not only supported the war, but also impugned war dissenters with the treason label. Claude H. Van Tyne, the chairman of Michigan University’s history department, wrote in the *New York Times* that he “knew of none but Aaron Burr who seems to me to have been ready to betray democracy for his own selfish ends than the Little Badger Napoleon [Robert La Follette], the Senator from Wisconsin [who questioned the motives underlying the war].”[349]

In April, 1917, Professor James T. Shotwell of Columbia University with Frederick Jackson Turner, author of the famous frontier thesis, and J. Franklin Jameson, Wilson’s former professor at Princeton, had created the National Board for Historical Service (NBHS) which sanctioned a set of forged documents (the Sisson documents) that purported to prove that the Bolshevik regime in Russia was a puppet government controlled by the German General staff. The CPI’s educational and historical division meanwhile printed more than 330,000 pro-war pamphlets. One entitled “The Ideals of Our War” concluded that “the triumph of American ideals will mean . . . the death-knell of absolutism throughout the world.” Another written by Carl Becker, who later became renowned for his work on 18th century American intellectual history, characterized the war as a “clear-cut conflict between two ideals – the ideal of democracy and the rights of people to determine their own way of life, over against the German ideal of a world empire established by ruthless aggression.”[350]

Becker would come to disavow his wartime propaganda work, writing to a friend in 1920 that “a man of any intelligence should have known that in this war, as in all wars, men would profess to be fighting for justice and liberty but in the end would demand the spoils of victory.” He later wrote an essay, “Loving Peace and Waging War,” which proclaimed that America’s “much heralded attempt to make the world safe for democracy” had actually “made the world safe for dictators.”[351]


Historian Carl Becker

Harry Elmer Barnes, who had assisted in writing some pro-war pamphlets, was another historian ashamed by his pro-war involvement. He went on to become a leading revisionist with the publication of his 1926 book, *The Genesis of the World War*, which placed responsibility for the outbreak of the war fundamentally on Serbia, Russia, France and England and concluded that economic interests had driven the United States into the fray. The book was bitterly attacked by Professor Hart, a representative of the old guard, who said that if “Barnes was right, then Roosevelt was wrong, Wilson was wrong, Elihu Root was wrong, Ambassador Page was wrong, everybody was wrong.” Insofar as U.S. involvement in the war is concerned, this appears to be exactly the case.[352]

L. Mencken published a satirical essay in *The New Republic* in September 1920 entitled “Star Spangled Men” which ridiculed CPI historians for their “slavish support of Wilson’s war

policies" and their endorsement of the Sisson documents. He proposed as a prize for the most accomplished propagandists to enliven their academic garb with "the grand cross of the order . . . a gold badge in polychrome enamel and stained glass, a baldric of the national colors, a violet plug hat with a sunburst on the side" and "an annual pension to compensate them for prostituting their professional ethics."[353] Mencken's column effectively captured the false sanctimony of Americans professors who, like Lippmann, had betrayed their calling by helping to promote American intervention in a war that was driven by predatory economic interests, resulted in horrific carnage, and laid the seeds for even greater calamity.

Conscription and conscientious objection to war

The conscription law of May 1917 required men between the ages of 21 and 31 to register for the draft. The first mass registration date was set for June 5. This was the first draft since the Civil War and the last had catalyzed riots in the streets of New York. Seeking to sugarcoat the bitter pill, President Wilson disingenuously described the draft as a *voluntary* service to the country. Secretary of War Newton Baker furthermore urged local officials to turn registration day into a festive, patriotic occasion, a Fourth-of-July kind of celebration.

The strategy appeared to work as nine and a half million men registered on the appointed day. The first induction order came seven weeks later when 687,000 men received notices to join the U.S. Army. The penalty for refusing induction was up to one year in prison. By war's end, over 24 million men had registered and 2,810,296 had been drafted. Conscripts comprised 72% of U.S. forces.[354]

The blindfolded Secretary of War Newton Baker draws the first number of the draft lottery, July 20, 1917

It was up to local draft boards to decide who would be exempted from military service. Exemptions were granted for reasons of health, family, or essential employment such as railroad work. The process was uneven. Some local boards granted exemptions to most married men while others limited exemptions to men with dependent children. In December 1917, General Enoch H. Crowder, head of Selective Service, introduced a five-tiered classification system for the purpose of consistency. The new system, however, did not alter racial discrimination practices, which allowed more deferments for whites than blacks. Overall, 36% of black registrants were pronounced eligible for military service as compared to only 25% of whites.[355] Blacks and whites were registered and classified by the same local boards, but they served in separate units due to the Army policy of strict segregation.

The exact number of draft-age men who did *not* register is unknown, but a common estimate is around three million. There were also 337,000 men who registered for the draft but failed to appear for their physical examinations when called, about one in nine.[356] While there were no public burnings of draft cards, as happened in the Vietnam War fifty years later, defying conscription was widespread. The journalist-historian James Weinstein offers some examples:

John Sloan's graphic editorial, *New York Call*, April 28, 1917

> In Donora, Pennsylvania, 40 percent of the men who registered gave fictitious addresses, such as vacant lots…. One district in Chicago reported that of 345 men called, 139 did not appear. In the month of August alone 2,500 slackers were reported in Cleveland.… Even among those who did appear when called for their physical examinations large numbers were reluctant to serve. Seventy per cent of those appearing in New York City, a center of interventionist sentiment, filed exemption claims. In Philadelphia several draft boards exhausted ten times the number of exemption blanks originally provided; the government was unable to keep up with the demand for these forms.[357]

In Georgia, according to Senator Thomas Hardwick, "there was undoubtedly general and widespread opposition [to] . . . the draft law. Numerous and largely attended mass meetings held in every part of the state protested against it." In Indianapolis and New York, draft lists were stolen from local draft board offices.[358]

In central Oklahoma, draft opponents organized the Green Corn Rebellion in the summer of 1917. Some 500 debt-ridden tenant farmers, including American Indians and African Americans, resisted the government's efforts to force them to fight a war they did not support. Many were members of the Working Class Union (WCU), a socialist-oriented group in a state with the largest Socialist Party membership in the nation. Throughout the summer of 1917, the farmers denounced the war and many refused to register for the draft. Along country roads, they hung posters that read: "Now is the time to rebel against this war with German boys. Get together boys and don't go. Rich man's war. Poor man's fight. If you don't go, J. P. Morgan Co. is lost. Speculation is the only cause of the war. Rebel now."[359] When local authorities pursued the draft resisters, gunfights began. Three men were killed during the month of August. Some rebels talked of marching to Washington to spark a nationwide protest against the war and the draft, eating roasted green corn and barbecued beef along the way. The march never took place. Walter Strong, a Green Corn rebel leader, described the motives of his comrades:

> We decided we wasn't gonna fight somebody else's war for 'em and we refused to go. We didn't volunteer and we didn't answer the draft. Most of us had wives and kids and we didn't want to leave them here to do all the work of harvesting and have us go over to France to fight people we didn't have anything against. We didn't have any bands and uniforms and that stuff down there in the sandhills so that crap about the Germans comin' over here when they finished up the English and the French didn't go over with us.[360]

The suppression of the rebellion was swift and overly broad, owing to the fact that authorities wanted to suppress the WCU, the Socialist Party, and the IWW. Government agents rounded up revolting farmers and Socialist Party members alike, even though the Socialist Party had no part in the rebellion. Of the 450 detained, 150 were convicted or pleaded guilty to charges, and about half of those received jail terms ranging from 60 days to ten years. Five men remained in the federal prison in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, until February 1922.[361] Oscar Ameringer, a popular socialist speaker in the region who had advised the farmers against launching the rebellion, nonetheless vouched for their integrity. "There was a great deal of native intelligence and common sense among the people," he later wrote. "Their state of illiteracy protected them, partially at least, against the flood of lying propaganda with which their 'betters' of press pulpit and rostrum deluged the country while their native common sense allowed them to see through the pretensions of the warmongerers better than could many a Ph.D."[362]

IDAHO WOBBLIES PROVE SLACKERS; SENT INTO ARMY

Eight Are Found to Be Delinquent—Uncle Sam to Deport Others.

ST. MARIES, Idaho, March 23.—(Special.)—Eight of the I. W. W. arrested here during the recent disturbance have been definitely disposed of and investigation of the remaining men continues.

"Eight of the Wobblies were found to be delinquent under the draft law and will be inducted into the army service," said Captain H. H. Taylor of the Sandpoint state guard, who is in command of the state troops here. "They will be sent to American Lake Saturday.

"The federal government will take

Spokane Daily Chronicle, Mar. 25, 1918

"Slacker" raid, New York City, Sept. 4, 1918 (Library of Congress)

By mid-1918, the Justice Department had prosecuted some 10,000 draft evaders and resisters. Among them was civil libertarian Roger Baldwin, a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union. Baldwin spent one year in jail in New Jersey as a conscientious objector who refused to register for the draft. To capture more young men, the Justice Department initiated an aggressive tactic known as "slacker raids." In early September 1918, government agents aided by local police and members of the American Protective League conducted a series of raids in Pittsburgh, Chicago, Boston, New York, and other cities. Young men were apprehended at bayonet point in ball parks, restaurants, street corners, and other public places. More than 50,000 men of apparent draft age were detained.[363]

Opposition to conscription combined with the exigencies of the war led the Wilson administration to expand the draft pool in September 1918, requiring all men between the ages of 18 and 45 to register.

Legal challenges to the draft law proved futile. On June 8, 1917, Grahl Arver was indicted for refusing to register for the draft. The following month, he was tried before a U.S. District Court in Minnesota, found guilty, and sentenced to one year in prison. The ruling was appealed and the case was taken up by the Supreme Court, in part to prevent further legal challenges to the government's right to raise armies. On January 7, 1918, the court ruled that military duty was a "supreme and noble duty" which contributed "to the defense of the rights and honor of the nation." As the draft law was established "by the great representative body of the people," it cannot be said "to be the imposition of involuntary servitude in violation of the prohibitions of the Thirteenth Amendment."[364]

The Supreme Court took up two other cases in 1918. In *Goldman v. United States*, the court heard the appeals of noted anarchists Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman who had been found guilty of conspiring to counsel resistance to the draft law in New York City. In *Ruthenberg v. United States*, Charles E. Ruthenberg, Alfred Wagenknecht, and Charles Baker, prominent socialists in Ohio, had been convicted of encouraging young men not to register for the draft. The appeals in both cases were based on two principal arguments: "...that the thirteenth amendment's prohibition of involuntary servitude deprived Congress of any power to conscript; and that the draft conflicts with the militia clauses of the Constitution since the Federal government had effectively destroyed the state forces by drawing all the members of the state militia into federal service and shipping them overseas." The nation's highest court rejected these arguments and sustained the convictions. Both Goldman and Berkman, being resident aliens, were deported to Russia.[365]

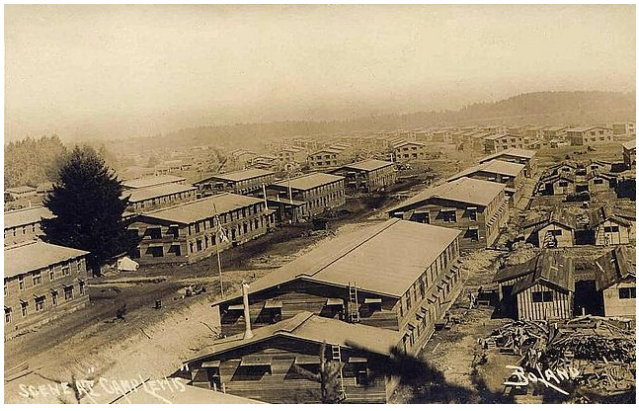
Treatment of conscientious objectors

The National Defense Act of June 3, 1916, defined the conscientious objector (C.O.) as one who conscientiously held religious beliefs prohibiting participation in war. During hearings on the 1917 Selective Service Act, however, Secretary Baker recommended, and Congress adopted, a stricter definition that limited C.O. status to members "of some well-recognized religious sect or organization whose existing creed or principles forbid" participation in war "in any form." There were only a few such sects – Mennonite, Quaker, Church of the Brethren, Amish, Hutterite, and Jehovah's Witnesses – but there were many principled objectors to war,

religious and secular alike. An estimated 65,000 men registered as conscientious objectors to war, although only 20,873 were granted this non-combatant status by their local draft boards. Pressured by peace leaders, President Wilson issued an executive order on March 20, 1918, that resumed the wider definition of conscientious objection in keeping with the National Defense Act of 1916.[366]

To be sure, the problem of conscientious objection was an old and difficult one. It raised the important question of the relationship between the state and an individual's conscience. Unfortunately, the military was unprepared to handle the issue with humanitarian compassion. C.O.s included various types of opponents of war: religious objectors who were not part of traditional peace churches but opposed all wars and human killing; humanitarian or liberal objectors who firmly believed that all men were brothers and that fraternal blood should not be shed; and political objectors, including socialists, anarchists, and syndicalists, who believed in the solidarity of the working class and objected to participating in a "capitalist" war.

The C.O. classification allowed draftees to do noncombatant work in lieu of participating in military training and fighting. For much of the war, such alternative work took place entirely within Army camps. For the great majority assigned to these camps, intense pressure was placed on them to give up their principles and participate in military training. The general practice was to get as many of them as possible to accept combatant duty by labeling them cowards and shirkers. Verbal abuse was often followed by physical abuse. Theodore Roosevelt set the tone by declaring that the majority of conscientious objectors were "slackers, pure and simple, or traitorous pro-Germans." General John J. Pershing, Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, compared them to "the dirt beneath his feet."[367]


Camp Lewis in Washington state

At various camps, C.O.s were jeered, hosed, beaten, starved, and placed in solitary confinement. Army officers often looked upon physical punishment and pressure as the best means of testing the genuineness and sincerity of a man's convictions. According to the historian Edward M. Coffman, "the objector was virtually at the mercy of his fellow recruits, noncoms, and officers. . . . At Camp Sheridan, Alabama, Lieutenant Scott Fitzgerald pulled out his pistol and forced one in his company to drill at gunpoint. Others who fell into the hands of sadists were beaten, jabbed with bayonets, and abused in various ways."

At Camp Funston, Kansas, where General Leonard Wood pronounced all conscientious objectors "enemies of the republic, fakers and active agents of the enemy," Private Otto Gottschalk, suffering from his German name and pacifist beliefs, was dragged from his tent, stripped, thrown in a ditch, forced to swallow mired water, and then badly beaten."[368]

Conscientious objectors at Camp Lewis, Nov. 18, 1918

The combination of humiliation and abuse resulted in more than 16,000 certified conscientious objectors renouncing their combat exemptions. Of the 3,989 men who held firm, two-thirds accepted some form of noncombatant work. Beginning in June 1918, conscientious objectors could be granted furloughs to work in agriculture, industry, and relief activities. Pacifists associated with the historic peace churches took it upon themselves to establish non-combatant relief work programs approved by the government. At least 88 C.O.s were assigned to work in the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) reconstruction program in France, rebuilding villages and growing crops.[369] Rufus Jones and the Philadelphia-area Society of Friends founded the AFSC in April 1917.

For the C.O.s who refused to serve the military in any capacity, 504 wound up facing a military court-martial board, charged with disobeying direct orders. The sentences meted out were harsh: seventeen received the death penalty (never carried out); 142, life imprisonment; 299, terms from 10-99 years; and the remainder, lesser prison terms. Only one person was acquitted. After the war, many had their sentences reduced and by the end of 1920 almost all were freed; but not until 1933 were the last prisoners of conscience pardoned by Franklin D. Roosevelt.[370] Of the 504 conscientious objectors who were court-martialed, 142 were believed to be Mennonite, Amish or Hutterite.

If life in army camps was bad, life in federal prisons was intolerable. At least seventeen conscientious objectors died in prison as a result of physical abuse or prison conditions; one committed suicide. At Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, 30 C.O.s were subjected to a disciplinary rule that kept prisoners who refused to work manacled in chains in a standing position,

their wrists bound to the top of a doorway, for nine hours a day.[371] Among those who suffered this torture were members of the Molokans, a Christian pacifist sect that had emigrated from Russia, who were sent to Ft. Leavenworth in October 1918. At the Alcatraz prison, some pacifists were placed in straitjackets and locked to a ball and chain in a damp and dreary dark cell for five consecutive days. Two Hutterite pacifists, Joseph and Michael Hofer, died from such abuse after being transferred to Fort Leavenworth.

Alcatraz dungeon where four COs were kept in solitary confinement for two-week stretches

The Hofers' saga is of relevant today as a story of principled and courageous antiwar dissent and the dangers of government oppression in a time of war. In fall 2017, the World War I museum in Kansas City unveiled a plaque honoring the Hofer brothers. Their deaths are commemorated within the Hutterite community, a Christian religious group that lives communally and adheres strictly to pacifism, believing that humans were not put on this earth to kill one another. Hutterites originally migrated from Russia after refusing conscription in the Czar's army.

Michael and Joseph Hofer lived in South Dakota. They were inducted on May 25, 1918. As Duane Stoltzfus recounts in his book *Pacifists in Chains,* when they arrived at Ft. Lewis for basic training, Michael and Joseph and others from the Hutterite community were heckled because they were known as German speakers and pacifists. After their beards and hair were shaved in violation of their religious code, the men refused to fill out their enlistment cards and were immediately charged with disobeying orders. At trial they said their goal in life was not to fight in any war but to work on their farm for the poor and needy ones of the United States.

At Alcatraz, the Hofers were placed in solitary confinement in the "hole" where they received only a half glass of water each day and no food for long periods. They refused to wear military uniforms and were not allowed proper clothing. Living day and night in darkness, they were chained to the bars, one hand crossed over the other. The chains were drawn up so only their toes touched the floor, a technique long familiar in the history of torture known as "high cuffing." A guard would come by periodically to beat them on their arms and back, causing heavy swelling. After arriving at Ft. Leavenworth, Michael and Joseph complained of sharp pains in their chests and soon afterwards their condition deteriorated. The Office of the Surgeon General listed pneumonia as the cause of death for both men, though the Hutterite Church concluded they had died in prison "as a result of cruel mistreatment by the United States military." To add insult to injury, when Joseph's wife, Maria, was taken to see her husband's body, he had been dressed up in a military uniform.[372]

The Wilson administration took little interest in the fate of imprisoned conscientious objectors, taking no action to prevent prison abuse and torture until the end of the war. The National Civil Liberties Bureau warned the administration in August 1918 that prisoners were being cruelly treated at Ft. Leavenworth, but to no avail. John Nevin Sayre, an Episcopal priest, member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and brother-in-law to one of President Wilson's daughters, provided the president with a list of abuses of C.O.s in prisons and urged him to intervene. Wilson finally met with Sayre, Francis Kelley, and Jane Addams on December 2, three weeks after the Armistice. As a result of the meeting, Secretary Baker announced on December 6 that the War Department had modified its disciplinary prison regulations: "Fastening of prisoners to the bars of cells will no longer be used as a mode of punishment. . . . The order is comprehensive. It applies not merely to political prisoners but to those of every type."[373]

Racial discrimination

World War I coincided with an acute period of racism in U.S. history. In the U.S. Army, entrenched bigotry touched nearly every aspect of the black soldier's life. Black soldiers were racially segregated in training camps and often received substandard clothing, shelter, and social services. White prejudice was reflected in the belief that black men were more suited for manual labor than combat duty, and that white officers were needed to lead black soldiers. Racist whites also feared that training black soldiers in the use of arms would undermine the culture of white superiority in the South. The War Department refused to allow more than 25,000 black soldiers to train in a single location out of fear of violence between black and white soldiers.[374]

The all-black 369th Infantry regiment of the 93rd division in France, wearing French helmets

Over 200,000 black soldiers served in France, but only one in five saw combat, in contrast to two-thirds of the American Expeditionary Forces as a whole. Most African Americans soldiers were assigned to labor and service units, unloading ships, digging ditches, cleaning latrines, transporting supplies, and burying corpses. Those in the fighting divisions, the 92nd and 93rd, suffered high levels of casualties, 1,647 and 3,534, respectively. The 92nd division was led by Lt. General Robert E. Lee Bullard, a man known for his hard drive, ruthless disregard for losses, and racist views. He deemed "Negroes as hopelessly inferior soldiers," as he wrote in his memoir.[375] This was markedly out of step with the view of the French, who awarded the entire 369th Infantry regiment the *Croix de Guerre* (War Cross medal) for its contribution in the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne. General Pershing nonetheless barred black soldiers from participating in the Victory Parade in Paris.[376]

Within the U.S., the migration of some 500,000 African Americans to northern and western cities during the war was accompanied by numerous racial conflicts. The most violent white attacks took place in East St. Louis in May and July 1917, resulting in more than 250 people killed. The NAACP responded by holding a Silent Protest Parade in New York City on July 28, 1917. Eight thousand men, women, and children marched down Fifth Avenue holding signs such as the one that read, "Mr. President, why not make America safe for democracy."[377] In August, the beating and jailing of a black soldier in Houston, Texas, prompted fellow soldiers stationed at Camp Logan to retaliate with an outburst of violence that left 20 whites, including four white soldiers and four white policemen, and four black soldiers dead. Court-martial proceedings followed in which 110 black soldiers were convicted, 63 received life sentences, and thirteen were hung to death without the benefit of judicial review. The army buried their bodies in unmarked graves.[378]

The all-black 369th Infantry regiment leads a homecoming parade in Harlem, Feb. 1919 (National Archives)

When the war ended, African American soldiers sought the same respect accorded to their white peers. On February 17, 1919, returning black soldiers of the 369th Infantry, the Harlem Hellfighters, marched up Fifth Avenue in Harlem before some 250,000 white and black onlookers. On the whole, however, "black soldiers received a rude awakening upon their return," according to the military journal editor Jami Bryan:

> Back home, many whites feared that African Americans would return demanding equality and would try to attain it by employing their military training…. During the summer and fall of 1919, anti-black race riots erupted in twenty-six cities across America. The lynching of blacks also increased from fifty-eight in 1918 to seventy-seven in 1919. At least ten of those victims were war veterans, and some were lynched while in uniform.[379]

Mexican Americans also faced discrimination in the military. José de la Luz Sáenz was a teacher and Mexican-American community leader from South Texas whose war diary includes discussion of this discrimination. He recorded witnessing unfair practices; for example, when his superiors at Camp Travis refused to grant the petition of an old and blind Mexican man who asked that one of his two sons be allowed to remain at home to care for him. Sáenz also noted his irritation with superiors who twice denied him admission to an officer training school – without explanation. He remained a private throughout his military service. After the war, Saenz was further disappointed by the lack of recognition of Mexican American veterans in Texas, epitomized by the failure to support a statue to recognize the sacrifices of Mexican Americans in the war.[380]

* * *

VIII. The peace persuasion in the United States

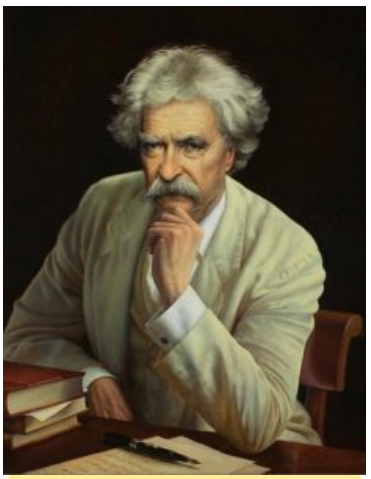
When the Great War broke out in Europe, Americans fully expected their nation to stay out of it, just as the United States had *always* stayed out of European wars. On August 2, 1914, one day after Germany declared war on Russia, an editorial in the *New York Times* captured the mood of the country. Titled "Kings Going Forth to War," the editors described the incipient war as "a frightful backsliding" and asked, rhetorically, whether the "fruits of a war of vengeance" were worth the losses that Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia would surely incur. As for England and France, not yet in the war:

> What can England and France gain that will reimburse them for the incalculable material and moral loss of a resort to war? The moral loss is greatest of all, for the friends of peace have counted upon the highly civilized nations like England, France, with the United States, to discountenance war, to make great wars impossible. . . . It is medieval, it is barbarous, it is horrible, that men should turn out at the behest of sovereigns and war councils to be shot to death for purposes wholly unrelated to their own welfare.[381]

France and Great Britain soon entered the war, but the sentiment that war constituted a regression from civilized progress remained strong in the U.S. and many citizens placed their hopes in the U.S. government to help the Europeans regain their senses. Although most Americans favored the Allied Powers, they were more intently committed to American neutrality, at least until early 1917. Wilson's declaration of U.S. neutrality on August 19th was endorsed by 878 of the 897 major newspapers in the nation.[382]

This section examines how neutrality and peace advocates struggled to keep the U.S. out of war.

The peace persuasion in the United States was rooted in a mixture of traditional, cultural, and reform orientations. The traditional orientation dates back to the Revolutionary era when antipathy toward centralized government and high taxes cast a shadow on maintaining large standing armies and navies. To this was added Thomas Jefferson's advice in 1801 to avoid "entangling alliances" with scheming European nations. The anti-imperialists of the late 19th century built upon these traditional concerns in challenging Henry Cabot Lodge's "large policy" of acquiring territories, protectorates, and spheres of influence in the Pacific and Latin America. Imperialist policies, they believed, would lead to unnecessary wars, large armies and navies, high taxes, entangling alliances, and undue executive power, such that democratic rights and freedoms at home would be jeopardized.[383]



Mark Twain, vice-pres. of the Anti-Imperialist League, 1900

The main cultural factor undergirding the peace persuasion was that the United States was a

land of immigrants with many ties to “old countries.” While the nation as a whole evinced English heritage, there were large blocs of German, Irish, and Russian immigrants and descendants of these immigrants who did not want the U.S. to take sides in the Great War. They pushed to keep the U.S. neutral and countered prejudicial stereotypes.

According to the 1910 Census, Germany was the country of origin of 8.2 million Americans and perhaps another 15 million had German roots. Thus, about one quarter of the U.S. population of 92 million had some affinity with Germany. There were thriving German-American communities in northern cities, German language newspapers and schools in the Midwest, and many social and political associations, including the German-American Alliance, with three million members.[384] Second only to German immigrants were the Irish, with 4.5 million checking Ireland as their country of origin in the 1910 Census.

Irish antipathy toward Great Britain had deep roots. During the Great Famine in the late 1840s, catalyzed by a potato blight, British authorities did very little to aid the starving population. Approximately 1.1 million Irish died and over a million emigrated between 1845 and 1855, many to the United States or Canada. By 1850, the Irish made up a quarter of the population in Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. The searing memory of the Great Famine was revived in the Irish rebellion that erupted in April 1916. The rebellion was swiftly and harshly put down by British troops. One Irish-American, James K. McGuire, a former mayor of Syracuse, wrote in 1915, “Liberty for Ireland can only be won through the triumphs of Germany-Austria.”[385] Most Irish-Americans, however, advocated American neutrality.


Memorial sculptures to the Great Famine, Dublin

There were also Polish, Finnish and Jewish immigrants in the United States who had suffered at the hands of Imperial Russia. Like the Irish-Americans who refused to support any U.S. alliance with Great Britain, these Americans could not support a U.S. alliance with Russia. Not least in seeking to keep the U.S. ship of state on a course of neutrality was the peace movement, a smorgasbord of reformers and organizations pursuing various strategies and reaching out to different constituencies. Among the pre-war organizations were the long-enduring American Peace Society, founded in 1828; the American School Peace League and the World Peace Foundation, two educational organizations; and the well-funded Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which provided funds for other groups and projects, especially legal-internationalist organizations dedicated to arbitration and peace through law.

New organizations formed after the war broke out in Europe included the Women's Peace Party, founded in January 1915 with a strong internationalist orientation, the American Union Against Militarism, established in early 1916 to counteract the preparedness movement, and the U.S. chapter of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, chartered in November 1915 by religious pacifists. Steady, if quiet support for peace also came from the traditional peace churches – Mennonite, Brethren, and Friends (Quaker).

Peace demonstration in New York City, Aug. 29, 1914 (Library of Congress)

The peace movement went through four overlapping phases during the period of the Great War (August 1914 to December 1918). First, being in sync with the official policy of neutrality, activists encouraged the Wilson administration to mediate the global conflict, which is to say, to take that extra step beyond neutrality and engage the great powers in negotiating a settlement.

The second phase was catalyzed by the sinking of the *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915, which prompted a surge of support for the "preparedness" movement. Peace activists responded by organizing a campaign against militarism under the aegis of the American Union Against Militarism.

The third phase was brief, from February to April 1917, when the possibility of war became palpable. Peace activists rallied against U.S. intervention, pushed for a public referendum on the war, and called for restrictions on U.S. ships and passengers traveling in war zones – all to no avail.

The last phase was the 19-month period in which the U.S. was at war, a time of state repression and internal divisions. Some peace organizations and leaders supported the war effort, some put their activities on hold, and some, mainly pacifists and socialists, continued to press for peace, now defined as a "radical" position. Those who refused to conform felt the brunt of state repression and vigilante intimidation and violence.

Clearly, once war was declared, the forces of nationalism proved more effective in mobilizing people than the weight of moral opinion against war. U.S. participation in the Great War placed American peace apostles in an untenable position, as citizens were mobilized to support their country's war effort.

Hardly a person in 1914 would have believed that the peace movement's role would shift in a mere three years from hopeful international peacemaking to desperate self-defense of political rights. Peace leaders did not see what was coming. They were assuaged by President Wilson's soothing words and heartened to have access to the president, an achievement in

itself. Most regarded as their major antagonists militant leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, and organizations such as the Navy League and the National Security League that pushed for military and naval build-ups. They counted as their allies, more or less, William Jennings Bryan, Robert La Follette, Andrew Carnegie, and many prominent academic and religious leaders.

Woodrow Wilson was an unknown quantity when he entered office. Peace leaders were greatly encouraged when he appointed Bryan as secretary of state, and yet they seemed not to be alarmed by Bryan's replacement, Robert Lansing, whose views were akin to Roosevelt's. Wilson strategically positioned himself between Roosevelt, whom he defeated in the 1912 election, and Bryan, a three-time presidential candidate, attempting to win the confidence and votes of both moderate hawks and doves. Peace leaders were forever hopeful that Wilson would truly represent their interests, and he encouraged this hope by rhetorically adopting, or co-opting, some of their ideals. They were blindsided by Wilson's Jekyll-and-Hyde turnabout, from being "too proud to fight" (May 10, 1915) to leading a "just and holy" war (December 4, 1917).[386]

Peace reform in the early 20th century

Peace became a popular cause in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an era of vibrant social activism. The Hague international peace conferences of 1899 and 1907 lent a measure of official legitimacy to peace reform and impelled efforts to educate Americans about the "new internationalism." Between 1901 and 1914, some forty-five new peace organizations appeared in the United States.[387]

Perhaps the most recognized peace movement leader in the pre-war era was Jane Addams, famous for her work with immigrants and urban reform at Hull House in Chicago. Her life-long, twin commitments to peace and justice were reflected in her writings. In *Newer Ideals of Peace* (1907), Addams called for a "genuine evolutionary democracy" that would expand to meet the growth of human needs and relationships. It was her constant belief that all national leaders had a moral obligation to resolve economic and territorial disputes without recourse to war. While average citizens were not responsible for starting wars, they were invariably called to fight them; hence citizens must take an active interest. Addams was a founding member of the Woman's Peace Party in 1915 and served as its president.[388]

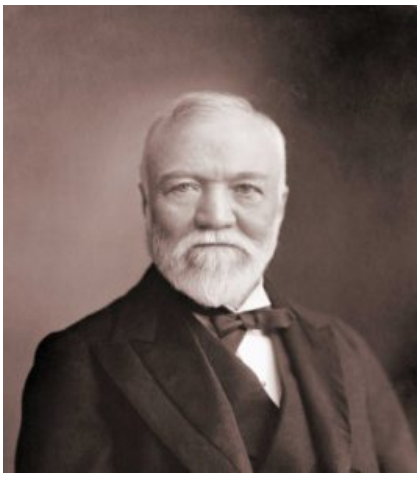
Jane Addams, circa 1915 (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

Women peace organizers such as Addams, Dorothy Detzer, Lillian Wald, and Emily Green Balch appropriated the traditional role of women as nurturers of human life, but rejected the traditional role of men as warriors. War was not an honorable calling for any person, they

argued.[389] Their experience as organizers in the woman's suffrage movement and other social justice causes enabled them to assume immediate leadership in the peace and neutrality movement.

The philosopher William James viewed the warrior mentality differently. In his famous essay, "The Moral Equivalent of War," first delivered as a speech at Stanford University in 1906, he argued that the war spirit was deeply rooted in human nature and that a substitute must be found for the excitement of battle and the camaraderie of war. James, a Harvard professor and pioneer in the field of pragmatism, believed the impulse for heroism through "individual sacrifice for the tribal good" was a basic instinct that guided men's behavior. He envisioned an alternative that would still call men to "the *strong* life" but without the violence of war (he did not concern himself with women). He suggested an industrial army that would require the same manliness and physical vigor demanded by war. Male youths would be drafted for several years to work in coal and iron mines, to build roads and tunnels, to construct the frames of sky-scrapers, among other chores. "The martial type of character can be bred without war," he wrote. James's essay became a popular topic of discussion in the 1910s, although James unfortunately died in August 1910.[390]

Steel magnate Andrew Carnegie made his contribution to peace by creating the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. In December 1910, he donated $10 million to the Endowment and instructed the trustees to use it "to hasten the abolition of international war, the foulest blot upon our civilization." (The amount translates to roughly $3.5 billion in 2018 dollars.)[391] Based in New York City, the Endowment developed programs of research and public education, and funded groups such as the World Peace Foundation. Seeking to establish "a veritable Faculty of Peace," the Endowment sponsored interchanges of American and foreign professors and built up an admirable research library, collecting all the scholarly works on the development of international law, the causes of war, and past records of peace efforts.[392]


Andrew Carnegie

The Carnegie Endowment especially supported the pursuit of peace through international law and institutions. Its first president was Elihu Root, a former secretary of war and secretary of state who oversaw U.S. occupations in the Philippines and Cuba but nonetheless received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1913.[393] Like other conservative internationalists, Root did not envision any diminution of American power or global interests in establishing peace through international law, nor did he challenge imperialism, which was at its height in the early 20th century. Carnegie's well-managed foundation typified the practical, elitist, establishment-oriented approach to peace. When the U.S. entered the war in April 1917, the Endowment ceased its peace activities and supported the war effort.

Socialists and peace progressives found little comfort in Carnegie's version of the "new

internationalism," which generally ignored economic injustice as well as imperialism. How, they asked, could a solid foundation for world peace be built on systematic oppression and exploitation? Socialist theorists linked capitalism to imperialism, and imperialism to war.[394] Most socialists believed that peace reform would follow on the heels of economic and political reforms that empowered workers and democratized economic decision-making. The Socialist Party of America, founded in 1901, was not particularly active in peace activities until the Great War erupted. Its peace activities increased during the next two and a half years and, unlike the socialist parties of Europe, the organization held fast to peace when the U.S. entered the war.

Among the well-known religious peace advocates was Unitarian minister John Haynes Holmes. A representative of the Social Gospel movement, Holmes urged every social worker to be "a peace fanatic." Peace workers, he wrote, "must join forces" with Labor and strike "at the things which make war – first militarism; second, political autocracy; and third, commercialism. The axe must be laid at the roots of the tree – which are armaments, dynasties, and exploitation." The Social Gospel movement was a predominantly Protestant reform movement that emerged in the late 19th century in response to the growing ills of the urban-industrial age.[395]


Rev . John Haynes Holmes

Peace advocates included teachers such as Fannie Fern Andrews who initiated the American School Peace League (ASPL) in 1908. The group promoted an annual "Peace Day" in schools, sponsored annual peace essay contests, and developed elementary and secondary school curricula designed to teach conflict resolution skills and encourage children to appreciate and respect other cultures, religions, races – known today as multicultural education.[396] Once the U.S. entered the war, however, ASPL board members deemed it unpatriotic to advocate for peace and thus closed down most of ASPL's operations for two years. When the organization resumed activities in 1919, it was renamed the American School Citizenship League, in line with a more conservative, nationalistic orientation.[397]


Fannie Fern Andrews, innovative peace educator

Peace activism during the neutrality period

The first peace demonstration in the United States after war broke out in Europe took place on August 29, 1914. Organized by women associated with the New

York Peace Society, including Fanny Villard and Lillian Wald, more than 1,200 women paraded down New York City's Fifth Avenue. Dressed in black or white, they marched silently to a muffled drum beat in *support* of the president's policy of neutrality.[398] They also sought to push the administration to take further action in mediating an end to the war. President Wilson had mildly offered his assistance in acting as a mediator but had not pressed the point.

Women's peace parade, Aug 29, 1914 (Library of Congress)

On January 9, 1915, the Woman's Peace Party (WPP) was formed to press for neutral mediation and an end to the war. At the founding conference in Washington, DC, 77 delegates adopted a platform of eleven planks, the first of which called for "continuous mediation" by an international commission of experts who would make proposals to the belligerent nations for peace terms.[399] Led by Jane Addams, Anna Garlin Spencer, Carrie Chapman Catt, Lucia Ames Mead, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the new organization adopted a plan called the "International Plan for Continuous Mediation Without Armistice," otherwise known as the Wisconsin Plan, and circulated it in the form of a 12-page pamphlet. The plan was endorsed by the Socialist Party, six state governors, the Wisconsin state legislature, and more than twenty members of Congress. Addams sought President Wilson's endorsement as well, but he refused.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN - THE HAGUE , HOLLAND, APRIL 1915

'We women ... assembled, protest against the madness and horror of war, involving as it does a reckless sacrifice of human life and the destruction of so much that humanity has laboured through centuries to build up. ... [We] oppose the assumption that women can be protected under the conditions of modern warfare ... [and] protest vehemently against the odious wrongs of which women are victims in time of war ... especially against the horrible violation of women which attends all war'.

[*Woman Voter*, 15 July, 1915, cited in Geraldine Robertson, *Prejudice and Reason: some Australian women's responses to war* (2013), Womens Web, www.womensweb.com.au]

International Congress of Women, The Hague, April 1915

With the Wisconsin plan in hand, WPP leaders joined European women peace activists in organizing an International Congress of Women at The Hague in late April 1915. One hundred international representatives, including 47 Americans, attended the meeting along

with some 1,000 Dutch women. They gathered in the Great Hall of Peace Palace to call upon the warring nations to declare a ceasefire and seek mediation.[400]

The conferees adopted resolutions urging the creation of an official mediation conference of neutral nations, the formation of a league of nations, and the organization of a third Hague Peace Conference that would "formulate and enforce those principles of justice, equity, and good-will" for great and small nations alike. Still other resolutions called for the enfranchisement of women and the education of children "directed towards the ideal of constructive peace." At the end of the conference, a resolution was adopted to send envoys to belligerent and neutral nations in the interest of stimulating the peace process.[401]
Between May and August 1915, thirteen women peace leaders, organized into two groups, visited statesmen in fourteen capitals: Berlin, Berne, Budapest, Christiana (now Oslo), Copenhagen, The Hague, Le Havre (seat of the deposed Belgian government), London, Paris, Petrograd (now St. Petersburg), Rome, Stockholm, Vienna, and Washington.[402] In all, they met with 25 premiers and foreign ministers. When visiting Vienna (Austria-Hungary), Jane Addams said to Prime Minister Count Karl von Stürgkh, "It perhaps seems to you very foolish that women should go about in this way; but after all, the world itself is so strange in this war situation that our mission may be no more strange or foolish than the rest." He replied, "Foolish? These are the first sensible words that have been uttered in this room for ten months."[403]
Though welcomed politely, the transnational activists found little receptivity to their message. French Foreign Secretary Theophile Delcassé told the visiting delegation that he wanted to see Germany vanquished "so that she would not come up for 100 years." British Foreign Secretary Edward Grey was more diplomatic, saying that he personally believed the war would be fought to the finish, but he saw no harm in neutral nations submitting propositions for peace talks. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov also expressed the view that the war would be fought until victory, but he doubted that a neutral conference would lead to any constructive results. German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg indicated support for a neutral conference but said that Germany's security would have to be guaranteed against rival powers. The diplomats of Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands were receptive to the idea of joint neutral mediation, but none was willing to take the lead.[404]
The timing of this remarkable effort in transnational citizen diplomacy was not auspicious. On May 7, a German U-boat sank the British *Lusitania*, inciting outrage in the United States. A week later the British government produced the Bryce report, named after James Bryce, a respected scholar-diplomat, which purportedly documented in chilling detail German atrocities and wanton destruction in Belgium. Also, Italy entered the war on the Allied side, diminishing the number and influence of neutral nations.
The failure of women's mediation effort did not deter the fiery Hungarian author and peace activist, Rosika Schwimmer, from trying again. Upon hearing of Henry Ford's declaration in August 1915 that he was prepared to devote his fortune to the cause of

peace, Schwimmer and Louis Lochner, Executive Secretary of the Chicago Peace Society, met with the Detroit car magnate and came up with a plan to charter a "peace ship" to the neutral countries of Europe to jump-start the mediation process. That fall, the activists made contacts with their European counterparts, chartered the *Oscar II* for the journey, and recruited some 50 peace activists, 40 journalists, and 25 college students for the voyage. The WPP did not officially endorse the endeavor, though it supported the goal. Ford met with President Woodrow Wilson and sought his endorsement but was turned down (again).

Hungarian peace activist Rosika Schwimmer

Just before the "peace ship" left New York Harbor on December 4, 1915, Ford foolishly predicted, "We're going to try to get the boys out of the trenches before Christmas." The boast made him the subject of ridicule in the press.[405] The journey across the Atlantic was plagued by sickness and arguments. Ford wanted all passengers to sign a statement condemning U.S. military preparations for war, but some refused, including Louis B. Hanna, the Republican governor of North Dakota. Upon arrival in Oslo, Norway, on December 18, the weather was frigid, and few people came out to welcome the peace ship. Schwimmer and Lochner began meeting with their European counterparts, but Ford, apparently sick, decided to sail home on a Norwegian liner on December 23. The U.S. media focused on Ford's "desertion," which he refuted, but the project nonetheless continued.

William J. Bryan and Henry Ford (right)

Henry Ford's "Peace Ship," Oscar II, leaving New York harbor, Dec. 4, 1915

The “peace ship” visited Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, where receptions were more encouraging. The organizers ultimately succeeded in establishing a new organization, the Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation, made up of delegates from several neutral countries. Ford continued to be part of the year-long project, making recommendations and providing funding, although he remained in the background. The first notable action of the Neutral Conference was an appeal to the neutral governments of Europe in March 1916, urging them to take the initiative in proposing mediation to the belligerent powers. Legislation to that effect was introduced in the parliaments of Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, but no action was taken.[406]

On August 30, 1916, a blue-ribbon panel of peace movement representatives met with President Wilson to urge U.S. participation in the Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation. The president talked around the issue, telling the group, “My hope is that we can get them [the belligerent governments] to talk to each other, and the minute that happens, the war is over.”[407]

Although President Woodrow Wilson had declared his intention to be a mediator immediately after the war broke out, he avoided taking concrete steps in that direction. To be sure, leaders of the belligerent nations on both sides were committed to victory, but, as the historian David Patterson notes, “As the drawn-out trench warfare continued unabated, many more citizens in belligerent countries began to yearn openly for peace initiatives that might somehow lead to a partial or complete end of the fighting.”[408] A conference of neutrals led by the United States was the best bet for bringing the belligerents to the negotiating table, but the Wilson administration was committed to an Allied victory.

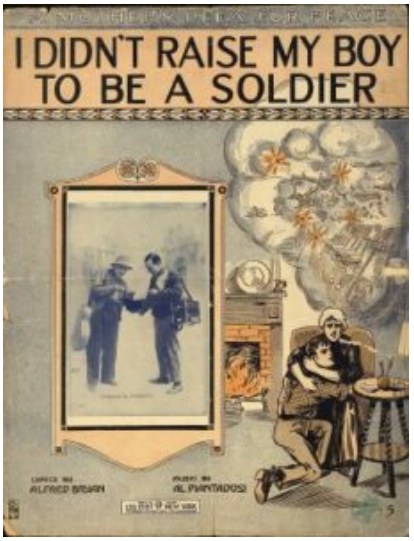
Against militarism

The peace movement’s assumption that the U.S. would remain neutral was increasingly tested as the war went on. President Wilson advocated a measured amount of military preparedness in his December 1914 message to Congress. That same month the National Security League was formed to promote the “preparedness” movement. At the time, public sentiment was clearly against any direct involvement in the war, although the U.S. was supplying arms and ammunition to the Allies. The public’s distaste for war could be seen in the popularity of an antiwar song released in early 1915, “I didn’t raise my boy to be a soldier.” Composed by Alfred Bryan and Al Piantadosi, it sold 650,000 copies before the end of the year. Accompanied by a lively tune, the song began: “Ten million soldiers to the war have gone, who may never return again. Ten million mothers’ hearts must break, for the ones who have died in vain.” Then the chorus:

I didn’t raise my boy to be a soldier,

I brought him up to be my pride and joy,
Who dares to put 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,

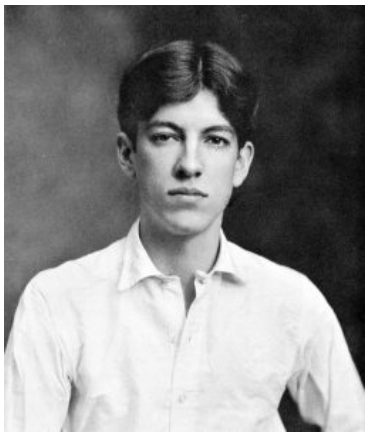
There'd be no war today,
If mothers all would say,
I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier.[409]



Sheet Music cover, 1915. Hear the original recording here.

Irked by the antiwar mood of the country, Theodore Roosevelt told a group of servicemen in San Francisco in July 1915 that "a mother who is not willing to raise her boy to be a soldier is not fit for citizenship," according to the *New York Times*.[410] For Roosevelt, war was a necessary and noble undertaking, and men must be prepared to brave the dangers of war.

There was perhaps no better representative of this view than Alan Seeger, a 1910 Harvard graduate who joined the French Foreign Legion in 1914 and served in France. With a flair for poetry and writing, Seeger sent letters and verses to the *New York Sun* and the *New Republic*, offering "uplifting descriptions of war, cast in the literary conventions of medieval romance," according to David Kennedy. His book of *Poems*, published after his death in July 1916, "spoke powerfully of war's ennobling glory." His book became a best seller in 1917, as did two other books romanticizing war, *The Glory of the Trenches* and *My Home in the Field of Honor*.[411]


Alan Seeger

On April 2, 1915, a public debate on the issue of "preparedness" took place at Carnegie Hall in Manhattan, pitting Augustus P. Gardner, a Republican congressman from Massachusetts and the son-in-law of Henry Cabot Lodge, against Morris Hillquit, a union lawyer who represented the U.S. Socialist Party at international conferences and was fluent in four languages. Gardner made the case that military force was the only way to secure peace and thus "preparedness" was essential. He added, "The nation which stifles its martial spirit breeds a race of vassals. It has always been so. It will always be so." Hillquit shot back that taxpayer dollars would better be spent on healing the wounds of "the frightful and inhuman industrial war" in the country. Like Jane Addams, Hillquit viewed militarism, even without war, as a waste of resources and contrary to social justice reform.[412]

The preparedness movement gained momentum following the sinking of the *Lusitania* in May 1915. The National Security League (NSL) worked overtime to magnify the alleged danger of Germany to the United States. By October, the organization boasted a membership of 50,000. Headed by retired General Leonard Wood, NSL established its first voluntary military training camp in Plattsburg, New York, on

August 8, 1915, with 1,200 enrollees. Camps soon sprang up around the country, what became known as the "Plattsburg movement." By the end of 1916, some 40,000 men had undergone training at the camps, including prominent young businessmen and professionals.[413] Military training, said Wood, "will bind together all classes of society into one common purpose."[414] Already, thousands of young men had responded to British and Canadian recruiters and voluntarily joined the fight in Europe. NSL leaders also lobbied Congress to approve *compulsory* military training, such that every physically capable young American male would be required to undergo six months of military training and afterwards serve in a reserve unit.

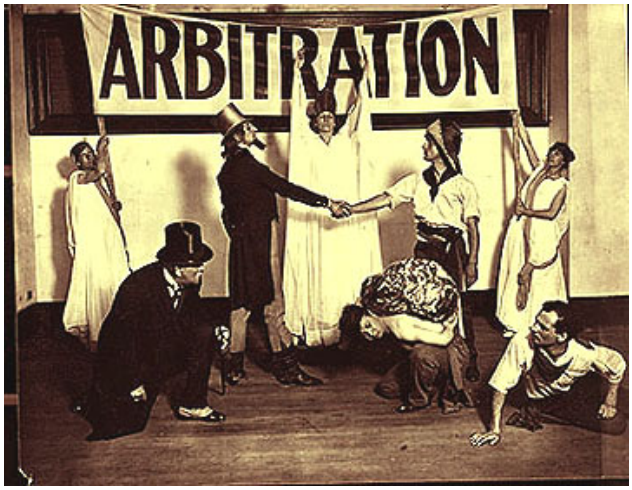
The Preparedness movement

The preparedness movement was boosted by the release of sensationalistic books such as John Bernard Walker's *America Fallen* (1915) and Hudson Maxim's *Defenseless America* (1915). Maxim was the inventor of smokeless powder and the brother of the inventor of the Maxim Machine Gun. His book paints a grim picture of how Americans would have to give up their wives, daughters, and sweethearts to the conquering German Army.[415] There followed a silent film based on the book, "The Battle Cry of Peace," promoted by Wood and the NSL. Magazine stories also began to appear with alarmist titles such as "The Invasion of America." According to the journalist-historian Burton Yale Pines, "The more the public heard from speeches and read in popular magazines and books and saw in gripping, action-filled (silent) movies arguments that America must become militarily stronger, the more accustomed and receptive did it become to arguments that America must fight."[416]

Peace groups met the challenge by organizing new groups and shifting their emphasis to opposing "militarism," their term for military "preparedness." Two new groups were formed in December 1914, the Emergency Federation of Peace in Chicago and the American League to Limit Armaments in New York City. The latter was led by Episcopal bishop David H. Greer and Columbia University president Nicholas Murray Butler. In the spring of 1915, pacifist-socialists Jessie Wallace Hughan and Frances Witherspoon (secretary of the WPP) along with Rev. Holmes organized the Anti-Enlistment League. Operating out of Hughan's home in Brooklyn, the group reached out to college students and signed up 3,500 young men over the next two years who pledged never to "volunteer for any military or naval service in international war, either offensive or defensive."[417]

Francis WItherspoon (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

The Woman's Peace Party continued its work for neutral mediation but changed its number one priority to "opposition to militarism in our own country." Although it did not challenge the transfer of arms to the Allied nations, it did call for the nationalization of the arms industry in order to take out the profit motive. Not all WPP chapters took part in the anti-militarism campaign. The conservative Massachusetts branch preferred to promote positive internationalism rather than challenge militarism. Crystal Eastman's New York City branch, in contrast, was out front with protests. Eastman, a graduate of Vassar College with a law degree from New York University Law School, became the leading figure in coordinating anti-preparedness activities. Her brother, Max Eastman, edited the socialist journal, *The Masses*. With financial assistance from the Carnegie Endowment, the WPP put on a lavish production of *The Trojan Women*, the Classical Greek play satirizing war, which toured major cities. In conjunction with Mother's Day in May 1915, WPP sponsored "Peace Day" in schools, featuring antiwar songs, poems, and parades.[418]



Woman's Peace Party play — arbitration won the day (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

On October 29, 1915, Addams wrote to President Wilson, encouraging him to maintain neutrality. "At this crisis of the world," she wrote, "to establish a 'citizen soldiery' and enormously to increase our fighting equipment would inevitably make all other nations fear instead of trust us." She insisted that the United States was in a unique position not only to help "the war-worn world to a lasting peace," but also to aid the "gradual and proportional lessening of that vast burden of armament which has crushed to poverty the people of the old world."[419]

In November 1915, some 80 men and women gathered in New York City to form the U.S. branch of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. The organization set forth no political strategy but rather sought to encourage pacifism and promote a vision of human brotherhood and sisterhood beyond national loyalties. One of the founding members, Norman Thomas, wrote, "I was a long while coming to it, but finally became convinced that so far as I could see war and Christianity are incompatible; that you cannot conquer war by war; cast out Satan by Satan; or do the enormous evil of war that good may come."[420]
By the fall of 1915, the American League to Limit Armaments had run short of funds. Lillian Wald, Crystal Eastman, and others organized the "Anti-Militarism Committee" to replace it. The organization was renamed the American Union Against Militarism (AUAM) in April 1916. Notable members included Paul Kellogg, editor of the social work periodical *The Survey*; Rev. John Haynes Holmes, Rabbi Stephen Wise, and Oswald Garrison Villard, publisher of the *New York Evening Post* and *The Nation*.[421] The AUAM worked in tandem with the Woman's Peace Party in lobbying politicians, testifying at congressional hearings, and opposing mandatory military training programs. Over the course of 1916, AUAM chapters were established in 22 cities and membership rose to over 1,000 supporters. The group raised $50,000 for a campaign against conscription, which included lobbying members of Congress and taking the issue to the public. Among the speakers touring the nation were David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University and director of the World Peace Foundation, journalist John Reed, and various farm union leaders. [422]
In February 1916, Frank Donnblazer, a farmer and officer of the National Farmers' Union, testified before the Senate Hearing on Military Preparedness. He came as a representative of the union, which encompassed 22 states. "Nebraska," he said, "has over 44,000 male members in the farmer's union, and at their State meeting just a week or two ago they unanimously and without a single solitary objection opposed preparedness, opposed going into this expensive preparedness and telling our boys to drill and get ready to fight." Donnblazer, whose ancestors came from Germany before the Revolutionary War and whose great uncle, grandfather, and father had fought, respectively, in the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Mexican War, read his union's resolution on military preparedness to the committee:

> We demand economy in all operations made by Congress, and we are especially opposed to any great increase in expenditure for the Army and Navy, but approve a reasonable outlay for coast defense by submarine or other weapons, proved by recent experience to be effective for that purpose. We are unalterably opposed to a large standing army and to any change in our military system tending to compulsory military service.[423]

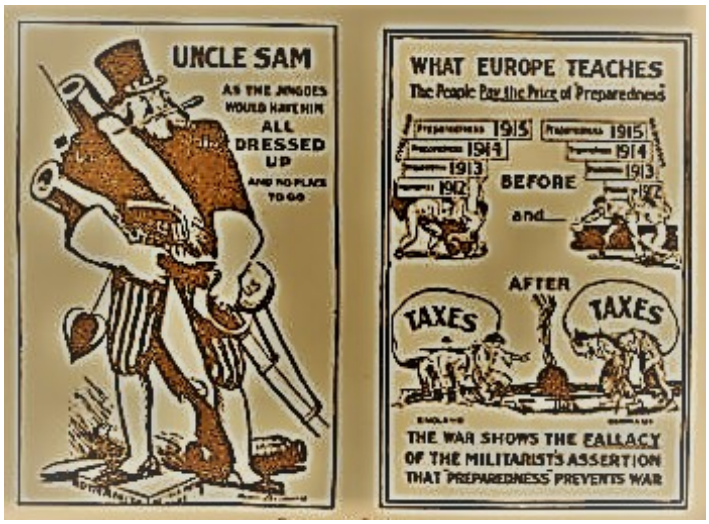
Although Congress voted to increase the size of the U.S. armed forces in 1916, it balked at enacting universal military training legislation, fearing a public backlash.

One of the AUAM's outreach projects was a speaking tour in April 1916 that followed the exact route of the president three months earlier. Speaking in St. Louis, Wilson had referred to opponents of preparedness as "hopelessly and contentedly provincial." He expressed confidence that the public would reject their message as "folly." AUAM leaders took up the challenge and assembled a group of speakers, including Amos Pinchot, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and Congregationalist minister A. A. Berle, to make the tour. The first event was held in New York's Carnegie Hall on April 6; then proceeded on to Chicago, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Des Moines, Minneapolis, and Detroit. The tour drew large, receptive audiences in each city.[424]

Another event was the opening of the "War Against War" exhibit in downtown Brooklyn in mid-April 1916, sponsored by the AUAM and the WPP. The exhibit consisted of 23 panels (3 feet by 5 feet) and seven cartoons (2 feet by 3 feet). One panel contrasted two images of Uncle Sam, one a "fighter" and one a "friend." It asked viewers to decide which Uncle Sam is more appealing: the one on the left standing for "preparedness" with cannon and hand grenade, or the one on the right standing up as "the world's greatest mediator," carrying a scroll calling for world federation, international courts of equity, international police, bonds of brotherhood, and warfare against social evils "of which militarism is the greatest."

War Against War advertisement
(Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

Also included in the exhibit was "Jingo," a huge papier-mâché dinosaur, or "military lizard," adorned with the inscription, "This is jingo, the armored dinosaur: All Armor Plate and No Brains. This animal believed in Huge Armaments – he is Now Extinct." Jingo's genus was identified as "Dinosaurus Theodorus Rooseveltus." After three weeks in Brooklyn, the exhibit moved to Manhattan. "In both venues," writes Michael Kazin, "it attracted an astonishing five to ten thousand visitors a day. That summer it moved on to Philadelphia, where the reception was just as warm, and then to nine other cities around the country," including Washington, DC. Both sponsoring organizations used the exhibit to enlist sympathetic supporters.[425]



War Against War exhibit panels

In the battle for the American soul between proponents of peace and preparedness, the preparedness movement had one distinct advantage: it could conjure up the robust spirit of patriotism and attached it to military preparedness without ever mentioning war, death, and sacrifice. As such, the grim possibility of war was magically transformed into a joyous celebration of patriotism and camaraderie, especially in the form of marching parades. In the spring of 1916, the National Security League organized a dozen large parades in major cities. More than 100,000 people marched in Chicago, where marchers were costumed and choreographed to look like a gigantic American flag moving down the street. The grandest was the Citizens' Preparedness Parade in Manhattan on May 13, 1916, which counted 135,000 marchers and 200 bands. "Fifth Avenue is aflutter with flags from end to end," wrote the *New York Times*, "while nearly every building has been decorated, in nearly every instance, with American flags exclusively."[426]

Preparedness parade in Schenectady, NY, 1916. The ugliness of war was obscured by the joyous celebration of patriotism.

The AUAM, meanwhile, played a useful role in calming tensions between the U.S. and Mexico in the summer of 1916, when General John Pershing's forces crossed into Mexico in an attempt to capture Mexican rebel Pancho Villa. When U.S. expeditionary forces mistakenly clashed with Mexican government forces in a town named Carrizal, the *New York Times* erroneously reported it as an ambush, thereby precipitating calls for war against Mexico. According to the historian John Whiteclay Chambers, the AUAM "obtained a firsthand account of the Carrizal battle from an American officer that showed that the U.S. cavalry, not the Mexican troops, had initiated the fighting… Encouraged by this new information and by a flood of antiwar telegrams, Wilson reversed his initial judgment and worked to avoid a major conflict, as did Venustiano Carranza, the Mexican chief of state."[427] President Wilson's decision to withdraw U.S. forces without achieving its goal of capturing Villa boosted his reputation in the eyes of peace movement leaders, but in reality, there was little need for war, as the U.S. and the Mexican government were on the same side in seeking to capture the bandit Villa.

In the 1916 presidential election, most peace leaders stuck with Wilson. According to Charles DeBenedetti:

> Incredibly, the progressives' long fight against the President's preparedness program did not move them to desert Wilson in the 1916 presidential election. Negatively, they felt little attraction to the Republican nominee, Charles Evans Hughes. Positively, they felt genuine enthusiasm for Wilson following his shift toward advanced reform. Beginning in January [1916] the President backed the Congress in concluding a series of landmark progressive legislative achievements, including laws regarding rural credits, workmen's compensation, child labor reforms, and fuller autonomy for the Philippines.[428]

Wilson campaign button 1916

Almost all of the leaders of the AUAM and WPP were progressives or socialists and thus Wilson's late moves to the left on domestic issues helped secure their support. On foreign policy issues, however, progressives (defined by domestic issues) were divided into three parts. Some, such as *New Republic* editor Herbert Croly, fully supported "preparedness" as a way to "advance the cause of social welfare policy" by deepening the role of government in the economy. Some opposed militarism but viewed Wilson as an ally; David Starr Jordan, for example, described Wilson as "the most precious asset of the cause of peace."[429] Others, particularly socialists, challenged Wilson's "preparedness" moves, even if some socialist leaders voted for Wilson as the lesser of two evils in 1916. The latter included Max Eastman and Meyer London, the only Socialist Party representative in Congress at the time.

The mainstream of the Socialist Party, however, rallied behind their presidential candidate in 1916, Allan Louis Benson, a newspaper editor and author of *A Way to Prevent War* (1915) and *Inviting War to America* (1916). Benson strongly criticized Wilson for promoting preparedness, arguing that it was drawing the U.S. into war. He was also critical of American industrialists and financiers who were profiting from the arms trade. In his 1916 book, he labeled the preparedness movement "the greatest attempt of its kind in all history to stampede a nation into committing an act of monumental folly." To set things right, the Socialist Party platform in 1916 endorsed mediation by neutral nations, the repeal of preparedness legislation, and a public referendum on war. Election results proved disappointing for the party that year. Benson garnered only 590,524 votes, or 3.19% of the popular vote.[430]

Socialist demonstration against "preparedness," New York City, May Day 1916

Last chance for peace

Germany's announcement on January 31, 1917, that it was ending all restraints on its submarine warfare caught the peace movement by surprise. Suddenly, only one week after President Wilson's "peace without victory" speech, which many peace leaders had hailed as a sign of hope, war seemed very likely. Peace activism went into overdrive.

On February 1, twenty-six prominent peace leaders signed an open telegram to the president that filled half a page in the next day's *New York Times*: "We recognize the perplexity of the problem before you, and we wish to express our confidence in your wisdom and your power of leadership," they wrote sympathetically. They beckoned the president to make "a final and personal offer of mediation" to the belligerent powers, urging them to state their terms of peace in anticipation of peace negotiations. William Jennings Bryan expressed similar misplaced confidence in the president on February 2, telling an audience of 5,000 at Madison Square Garden, "I have faith not only in the President's desire to keep us out of war, but in his ability to do so."[431]

Others were wary of the president or concerned that events were leading the U.S. into war unless a sharp turn was made. During the month of February, peace organizations held rallies, circulated petitions, and organized the Emergency Peace Federation in response to the impending crisis. The latter group placed a full-page appeal for help in the *New York Times* that netted $35,000 in contributions for organizing a large antiwar rally in Madison Square Garden that month.[432] The opponents of war proposed a public referendum on the war question, which presumably would be held before any Congressional vote. There was no guarantee that the outcome of a referendum would be peace, but the idea of giving the public a *choice* embodied the democratic principle and was thought to have a good chance of rallying public support. According to Michael Kazin:


KEEP COOL!
DON'T BE STAMPEDED INTO WAR
ATTEND THE
PEACE MASS MEETING
Tomorrow Night at 8 o'Clock
Convention Hall, 5th and L Sts. N.W.
Join the Peace Delegates
Who Are Coming From All Over the United States To Urge the President and Congress to
KEEP US OUT OF WAR
SPEAKERS
DR. DAVID STARR JORDAN, Chancellor Stanford University, Cal.
HERBERT S. BIGELOW, of Ohio
DANIEL KEEFER, of Ohio
RABBI JUDAH MAGNES, of New York
MRS. JULIA REINHARDT, of New York
And Others
Send Contributions to EMERGENCY PEACE FEDERATION, 648 Munsey Building, Washington, D. C.

Emergency Peace Federation meeting announcement. Washington, DC, April 1, 1917

> In February, most American peace activists and associations embraced a popular referendum as the best and, perhaps, last chance to halt the march to war. Bryan asked the crowd at Madison Square Garden to urge it on their congressmen and senators. The Woman's Peace Party and Emergency Peace Federation promoted it with public appeals and rallies. So did the Friends of Irish Freedom and the German-American Alliance, anxious as ever to show Wilson "that the vast majority of your countrymen and women want peace and abhor war." Two new groups, the Committee for Democratic Control and the Keep Out of War Committee, the latter led by union officials and Socialists, formed almost solely to lobby for the referendum. In Chicago, ingenious pacifists paid five local theater owners to run the slogan "Let the People Decide" across their screens and then asked moviegoers if they favored going to war.[433]

The AUAM conducted a mini-referendum on its own, sending 100,000 postcards to voters in five congressional districts. The resulting "votes" returned were overwhelmingly for peace. In the House of Representatives, nine different bills proposing referenda were introduced. However, all were quickly tabled and the House Foreign Affairs Committee debated only one proposal for forty minutes.

Taking stock of the peace movement, it may be seen that leading organizations had first put their energy into campaigns for neutral mediation, which went nowhere; then against militarism, which achieved some success in limiting military expenditures and preventing compulsory military training; and most recently for a war referendum, which fell flat. One other strategy that had been haltingly pursued was to press for a ban on American ships and passengers traveling in war zones, reminiscent of William Jennings Bryan's appeal in May 1915. In early 1916, peace groups had backed Congressional resolutions (Gore and McLemore) along these lines that had failed to pass. Some groups and leaders now picked up on the theme, as it was the simplest and most direct way to prevent war, or at least to negate President Wilson's most potent rationale for war. If no American ships and citizens were allowed to travel in war zones, there would be no American casualties and no cause for war. The Woman's Peace Party produced an educational flyer, "Eight Alternatives to War," of which four addressed the problem of Americans traveling on belligerent ships in war zones. Possible solutions were suggested:

- "We can keep American citizens off belligerent ships."
- "We can refuse clearance to ships of the United States and other neutral countries carrying contraband and passengers on the same ship."
- "We can repudiate responsibility for American citizens who are willing to jeopardize the nation's peace by traveling as seamen with contraband on American or neutral vessels."
- "We can, if necessary, keep all American vessels out of the danger zone for the present, just as the Mayor of a city keeps citizens in their homes when a mob is in possession of the street." [434]

Paul Kellogg, writing in *The Survey* on February 17, urged Congress and the president to "distinguish strongly" between the right of Americans to travel on U.S. ships and those who sail on "a foreign ship, carrying munitions and armed with a naval gun on deck." He called on American citizens to voluntarily refuse to travel on belligerent ships. The Socialist Party took a step further and called for an embargo on American shipments to every belligerent nation.[435]

In hindsight, peace leaders might have devoted more energy and resources early on to the effort to ban American travelers and ships in declared war zones. A precision scalpel applied to U.S. policy might have been more effective than hammering away at the massive wall of militarism or attempting to alter the nation's decision-making process.[436]

> The president indicated to Jane Addams that, as the head of a nation participating in the war, he "would have a seat at the Peace Table," whereas if the U.S. remained neutral, he would be limited to offering suggestions "through a crack in the door."

On February 28, 1917, Jane Addams and a small group of peace advocates met with President Wilson in the White House. In her memoir of 1922, Addams recalled that the president "announced the impossibility of any form of adjudication" and confessed "that war had become inevitable." He indicated "that, as head of a nation participating in the war, the President of the United States would have a seat at the Peace Table, but that if he remained the representative of a neutral country he could at best only 'call through a crack in the door.'" Addams reflectively asked herself "whether any man had the right to rate his moral leadership so high that he could consider the sacrifice of the lives of thousands of his young countrymen a necessity."[437]

The war years: The peace movement under duress

The peace movement fell apart when the U.S. entered the war in April 1917. Many of the most prestigious organizations along with a number of prominent individuals put their peace ideals on hold and joined the war effort, leaving peace advocacy to pacifists, socialists, and "radical" intellectuals, in the main. Charles DeBenedetti, in *The Peace Reform in American History*, describes the secession of the conservative wing of the pre-war peace movement:

> Legalist leaders of the ASIL [American Society of International Law] simply suspended their work, explaining that the world chaos made the study and extension of international law quite irrelevant. More aggressively, the CEIP [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace] set aside its low-keyed peace preachments and research in favor of the slogan, "Peace Through Victory," while the APS [American Peace Society] endorsed Wilson's campaign "to secure recognition of the claims of justice and humanity" through force of arms. The LEP [League to Enforce Peace] flung money, organizers, and pamphlets into a massive campaign to persuade the public that the war was being waged for the sake of a league that would protect the future peace against potential aggressors. Protestant peace spokesmen in the CPU [Church Peace Union], FCCCA [Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America], and WAIFTC [World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches] gravely blessed the U.S. intervention. Even more, church peace leaders joined LEP activists in forming the National Committee on the Churches and the Moral Aims of the War in a sustained attempt to give moral gloss to the American war machine.[438]

"More quietly," writes Michael Kazin, "the peace movement was also losing the support of prominent liberal intellectuals," among them the eminent Columbia philosopher John Dewey, suffragist leader Carrie Chapman Catt, peace movement leaders Lillian Wald and Rabbi Stephen Wise, and AUAM board member Paul Kellogg. Kellogg was swept up in Wilsonian idealism, stating that Wilson had "lifted the plane of our entrance into the war from that of neutral rights to an all-impressing fight for democracy."[439]

Each organization in the peace movement struggled with its response. The AUAM debated the issue for five months without resolution. Meeting in September 1917, the organization divided into two. Half the members chose to follow the young pacifist social worker, Roger Baldwin, in forming the Civil Liberties Bureau (forerunner of the American Civil Liberties Union). The organization set forth as its main task advising young men facing conscription and aiding those seeking conscientious objector status. The other half followed Paul Kellogg who later organized the League of Free Nations Association (forerunner of the Foreign Policy Association), which DeBenedetti describes as "a new strain of liberal internationalism that supported U.S. intervention as the quickest way toward major international reform."[440] The association attracted prominent intellectuals such as John Dewey, Herbert Croly, and Columbia historian Charles Beard.


Roger Baldwin

The Woman's Peace Party, unable to decide what to do at the national level, left the question to its state and local chapters. Some local branches disbanded, some took up war relief, and some continued to promote peace. Of the

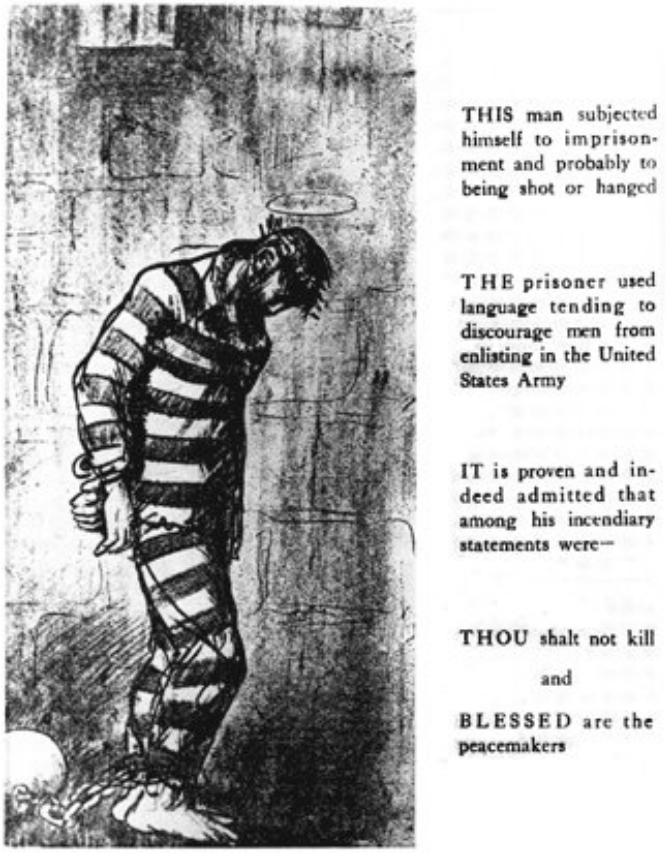
latter was Crystal Eastman's New York chapter which published the antiwar journal, *Four Lights*, despite periodic bans on distribution by government censors. The national WPP board, meanwhile, advanced placid proposals for a national referendum and for neutral mediation of the war, as though the U.S. were still neutral.[441] Jane Addams carved out a middle position. She did not abandon her antiwar position, but she muted her voice so as to avoid prosecution and persecution. She and others presented testimony before Congressional committees in opposition to conscription and in support of freedom of speech. She worked with Herbert Hoover's Food Administration in providing overseas relief and also opposed military training in schools.


Crystal Eastman (Library of Congress)

The Socialist Party held an emergency meeting in St. Louis, April 7-9, 1917, just after the U.S. declared war on Germany. Of nearly 200 delegates attending, 140 voted to oppose U.S. entry, while only five voted to support it. A resolution was subsequently passed that began, "The Socialist Party of the United States in the present grave crisis 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." The resolution branded the U.S. declaration of war "a crime against the people of the United States" and pledged "continuous, active opposition to the war" and to conscription.[442] The Socialist Party's major newspapers and periodicals adopted this antiwar stance as well. The party subsequently became a prime target of state repression and vigilante violence. Government agents raided local offices and postal authorities prevented the circulation of socialist publications.

Stalwart peace activists came together in New York City on May 2, 1917, to reformulate plans and establish a new organization, the People's Council of America for Democracy and the Terms of Peace, later shortened to the People's Council of America. The Organizing Committee in charge was populated by a who's who list of socialist and pacifist leaders: Emily Greene Balch, Roger Baldwin, Eugene Debs, Crystal Eastman, Max Eastman, Morris Hillquit, John Haynes Holmes, David Starr Jordan, Florence Kelley, Fola

La Follette, Louis P. Lochner, Tracy Mygatt, Scott Nearing, Rebecca Shelley, and Frances Witherspoon. Lochner served as executive secretary and Jordan as treasurer. The first conference, held on May 30, was chaired by Judas Magnes, a prominent reform rabbi, who also delivered the keynote address.



"Blessed are the peacemakers." The socialist journal, *The Masses* (July 1917), kept the fate of conscientious objectors in view (Tamiment Library, NYU)

The People's Council program called for an immediate ceasefire, a peace treaty without annexations or indemnities, the creation of "an international organization for the maintenance of world peace," the repeal of conscription laws, the safeguarding of labor standards, and the preservation of democracy and liberty within the United States.

Following the May conference, the Council opened an office in New York City and a legislative bureau in Washington. It published a bimonthly journal, *Bulletin of the People's Council*, and established communications with the Workingmen's and Soldiers' Councils in Russia and in England. Like the Socialist Party, the People's Council found it difficult to organize events and meetings. An attempt to hold a national conference in Hudson, Wisconsin, in August 1917, for example, was thwarted by a lawless mob, incited in part by the governor of the state and city council members, who drove Council delegates out of town. When the Council re-assembled in Chicago on September 1, 1917, the governor of Illinois, Frank Lowden, ordered the state militia to disperse the gathering. "Antiwar activists were flabbergasted," writes DeBenedetti. The People's Council kept up the fight for peace for the duration of the war, developing a network of 126 local councils, but its influence was hampered by repression and censorship.[443]

Among the few African Americans to publicly voice opposition to the war were Chandler Owen and A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, founders and editors of the socialist monthly publication, *The Messenger*. The journal urged blacks not to fight, enlist, or be drafted into the army. Embracing W. E. B. DuBois's analysis of imperialism, the editors argued that the European nations were

fighting over who would rule the non-white peoples of Africa and Asia. Randolph and Owen published a pamphlet in 1917, *Terms of Peace and the Darker Races*, urging a peace settlement that would end colonization and racial discrimination. "To maintain peace," they argued, "we must remove the conditions which create war. Democracy must be enthroned. White and black workingmen must recognize their common interest in industry, in politics, in society, in peace." To the president, they wrote, "Stop the disenfranchisement in the South which makes your cry of 'making the world safe for democracy' a sham, a mockery, a rape on decency and a travesty on common sense."[444]

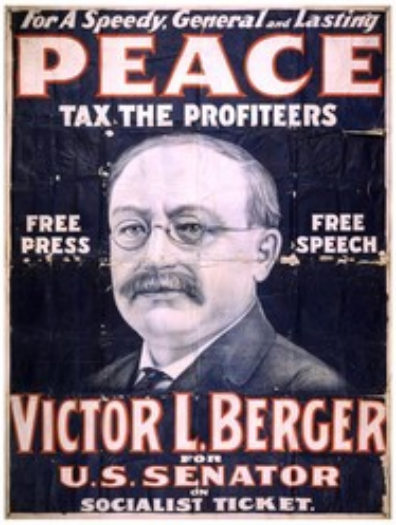

A. Philip Randolph

The war to make the world "safe for democracy" elicited hopes among African Americans that it would have a reciprocal effect in the United States, opening doors to racial equality. At the NAACP convention in Washington, DC, in May 1917, the organization pledged its support for the war but added a caveat that "absolute loyalty in arms and civil duties need not for a moment lead us to abate our just complaints and just demands." The convention called for the extension of the principle of the consent of the governed "not only for the smaller nations of Europe but among the natives of Asia and Africa, the Western Indies and the Negroes of the United States."[445] W. E. B. DuBois, writing in the first issue of *The Crisis* after Wilson's decision for war, declared, "War. It is an awful thing! It is hell. It is the end of civilization. Bad as it is, slavery is worse. German domination is worse, the rape of Belgium and France is worse. We fight shoulder to shoulder with the world against Germany, win a world where war shall be no more."[446] DuBois, like a number of other leading intellectuals, later came to regret his support for the war.

Considering the curtailment of political rights and constant harassment, the Socialist Party did surprisingly well for a third party in elections. The party made the war issue its central focus. As James Maurer, the Socialist President of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, told voters in November 1917, "On election day you have on one side a party which has plunged you into war . . . on the other hand you have the Socialist party which is opposed to the war and demands an immediate peace. Which are you going to choose?" The first indication of a boost in support came on August 14, 1917, when Socialist candidates won nine of twelve seats on the city commission of Dayton, Ohio, despite spending only $395 as compared to $28,058 by other candidates. In October, Buffalo Socialists increased their vote over the previous election from 13 percent to 32 percent. In the nationwide November elections, Socialist candidates polled 22% of the total municipal vote in fifteen cities in the Northeast. New York City voters elected ten Socialists to the state assembly, seven aldermen, and one municipal judge. In the race for mayor, Morris Hillquit placed third in a four-way race, ahead of the Republican candidate. The *New York Tribune* had attempted to discredit Hillquit by labeling him "a Jew, born at Riga, the Milwaukee of Russia"; and the *New York Herald* had run a

cartoon on page one showing a hook-nosed man named “Hillkowitz or Hillquitter” waving a flag which said “Peace at any price” at a smiling “Kaiser.”[447]

The following year, socialist Victor Berger of Milwaukee, Wisconsin won a seat in the House of Representatives. House members, however, refused to seat him. Berger had four strikes against him: he was born in Austria-Hungary; he spoke with a German accent; he was a leader of the Socialist Party in Milwaukee; and he opposed the war. Berger was charged with sedition under the Espionage Act for publicizing his anti-militarist views. He was convicted in 1919 and sentenced to a 20-year prison term, but the verdict was overturned by the Supreme Court. Berger was subsequently elected to three more successive terms in the 1920s.[448]



Campaign poster 1918

In the Congressional elections of November 1918, held just six days before the Armistice, President Wilson’s Democratic Party did poorly, losing four seats in the Senate and 22 in the House, becoming the minority party. Though victory on the battlefield was assured, the president reaped no political benefit. Republican leaders hailed the election as a repudiation of Wilson’s leadership. “The Republican victory,” said Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, “means a country-wide revolt against dictatorship and a desire to return to the constitutional limitations.” CPI director George Creel candidly suggested to the president that the administration had gone too far in silencing its former political allies on the liberal-left. In a letter to Wilson on November 8, Creel wrote, “All the radical or liberal friends of your anti-imperialist war policy were either silenced or intimidated. The Department of Justice and the Post-office were allowed to silence or intimidate them. There was no voice left to argue for your sort of peace.”[449]

* * *

IX. Lessons and legacies

There are many lessons that can be drawn from the Great War. One set focuses on military strategy, appraising U.S. battle plans, logistical support systems, and so forth in the interest of fighting the next war more effectively. Another set focuses on the Wilson administration’s political and diplomatic maneuvering, evaluating successes and failures and estimating the overall reputation of the administration. The most profound lessons, arguably, center on the question of how to put an end to wars, how to make the war system obsolete.

The Great War marked a turning point in human history. Modern weapons produced such high levels of destruction, death, impoverishment, and misery that war itself became an atrocity. The continuation of such wars, as Lord Lansdowne warned in November 1917, “spell ruin for the civilized world.”[450] The implication is that greater efforts are needed to prevent

wars and to limit their destructive effects. Moral and social intelligence must guide science and technology. A paradigm shift in our thinking about war is needed.

Many people in that era genuinely hoped that the Great War would be the "war to end all wars." President Calvin Coolidge declared in 1925 that "The people have had all the war, all the taxation, and all the military service they want."[451] Although this hope was dashed by World War II, which began only twenty years after the Versailles Treaty was signed, efforts were made during the interwar years to mitigate the causes and effects of war:

- In the winter of 1921-22, the Washington Naval Conference resulted in a Five-Power Agreement aimed at limiting the naval arms race, signed by Great Britain, the United States, Japan, France, and Italy.
- In 1925, a Geneva Protocol banned the use of poison gases and bacteriological methods of warfare, although not their production and stockpiling.
- In 1928, the Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawed offensive war; the pact was signed by 62 nations.[452]
- In 1933, the U.S. announced the "Good Neighbor Policy," foreswearing military interventions in the Western Hemisphere.
- Between 1935 and 1937, Congress passed three separate neutrality laws that placed an embargo on arms sales to belligerents, forbade American ships from entering war zones and prohibited them from being armed, and barred Americans from traveling on belligerent ships. Clearly, Congress was determined not to repeat what it regarded as the mistakes that had plunged the United States into World War I.

> War as an option to avoid, a problem to be solved, a disease to be cured.

While these initiatives were not enough to overcome the deeply rooted war system, progress continued after World War II. The United Nations was chartered in 1945 to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind." The advent of nuclear weapons made this task all the more urgent and a number of arms control treaties have been signed. The 30-year period following World War II saw the demise of European imperialism and the rise of human rights.

The Great War marked the *beginning* of a profound paradigm shift in which war is recognized war as an option to avoid, a problem to be solved, a disease to be cured. Ultimately, the goal is to remake social systems on the basis of cooperative and ecological principles, eschewing domination and aggression.

Piercing through the fog of war rhetoric

If war is to be contained and ultimately abolished, then citizens must become more adept at critically assessing the various rationales for war and countering patriotic indoctrination and intimidation. Much can be learned from the experience of the Great War on this account. Woodrow Wilson put up a smokescreen of idealistic motives that turned the protection of American shipping in British waters into the reputed defense of American honor and a noble crusade for freedom and democracy. Sadly, professional historians and notable intellectuals aided the administration's propaganda offensive.

Piercing through the fog of war rhetoric requires, first, education about the issues and, secondly, open discussion and public debate. Ignorance is easily manipulated by leaders. Thriving intellectual debates are the lifeblood of democracy and the bane of authoritarianism and dogmatism. Justifications for war should be subjected to the most penetrating cross-examinations, no less than justifications for murder in a court of law. Historians have a responsibility to provide context and multiple perspectives in the interest of increasing public understanding and critical evaluation skills.

One might ask, for example, how U.S. entry in the Great War would make the world "safe for democracy," a popular Wilsonian rationale still in vogue. Democracy is a nonviolent method for the transference of governmental power within a nation. Can it be imposed by a foreign power through violence? And if so, which nation has the "right" to institute regime change? If indeed such a right is assumed, can powerful nations impose other "good" institutions and ideologies, such as socialism, capitalism, Islam, or Christianity, on weaker states?

Such probing questions could hardly be discussed in the feverish atmosphere of patriotic loyalty conjured up during the war. Wilson proclaimed, rather than debated, his rationales for war. He won no intellectual contests on the merits of his ideas but rather employed propaganda to drown out contrary views and used state repression to silence critics. Wilson wrapped his views in the flag and demanded acquiescence in the name of loyalty to the nation. He furthermore beguiled Americans with the self-serving notion that America is uniquely qualified to be the moral leader of the world.

The latter illusion has persisted in part because many American historians have failed to analyze the fundamental flaws and contradictions of Wilsonian idealism. That Wilson is regarded today as an icon of the foreign policy establishment says much about the continuing subterfuge to convince Americans to support an outsized, militarized role in the world on the basis of inflated, self-serving idealism.[453] The profound disconnect between Wilson's ideals and practices has not been renounced but rather embraced and embedded in the American body politic.

While other presidents before and after have engaged in rhetorical obfuscations, Wilson's were more significant, as he laid the basis for America's future global role. His crusade for "freedom and democracy" has been adopted and adapted by subsequent presidents intent on expanding U.S. influence and power. The public should not be so easily seduced.

The bogeyman of "isolationism" has often been put forward as the only alternative to America's hegemonic role in the world. The real alternative is international cooperation and institution-building. The United States can and should play a positive role in helping to resolve ecological, economic, and political problems without recourse to violence. The militarist's solution to security threats is more military spending, troops, and armaments, which in turn are perceived by rival nations as a threat to their security, thus creating a vicious cycle of *insecurity*. The essential problem that led to the Great War can only be resolved by stepping out of this framework. The way forward is to nurture a cooperative, humanistic spirit and sense of global community, and extend our personal and domestic prohibitions against killing to the international sphere.

Agents of change

The envisioned replacement of the war system with a more cooperative world order requires agents of change. Slavery was part of civilization for at least 4,000 years until enough people recognized its fundamental injustice and worked to abolish it through law. That war should follow slavery into the dustbin of history is not an unreasonable hope. Swords may yet be beaten into plowshares. People can make a difference through their work in society, their votes, and their involvement in peace and justice projects and movements.

The U.S. peace movement sailed with the wind during the period of U.S. neutrality. When the war storm struck, the movement was battered and beaten, losing half its crew, but remained afloat. In the aftermath of war, amidst popular disillusionment, the peace movement resumed its voyage with new energy, surging forth with new projects and organizations.[454] A sizable section focused on advancing international cooperation and law, for example, gathering two million signatures on a petition in support of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928. While efforts to block a new U.S. intervention in Nicaragua in 1927 were unsuccessful, peace advocates helped to prevent a war with Mexico. During the Great Depression, some 150,000 college students participated in a nationwide Student Strike for Peace, and half a million signed pledges saying that they would refuse to serve in the event of war.[455]

At the heart of peace reform is the idea that the world would be a safer and more joyful place if nations created a friendly international neighborhood instead of arming themselves to the teeth and threatening each other. Wars break down our sense of common humanity as the people of one nation learn to fear and loath the people of another nation, and soldiers are directed to kill others whom they do not know and have nothing against. The lapse in army discipline in the unofficial Christmas Truce of 1914 testifies to the continuing desire for human connection and reconciliation. Again and again, we have seen former enemies become friends after wars. Following World War II, European nations that fought each other for centuries subdued their national militarism enough to form the European Economic Community and European Union, making wars between these nations virtually unthinkable today. Americans and Germans have also reconciled after two wars, their governments becoming the best of friends.

*** * * * * ***

ENDNOTES

[1] "Wilson's War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917," WWI Document Archive, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson's_War_Message_to_Congress; and Congressional Record, 65th Congress., 1st Session., Volume. LV, pt. I, pp. 212-13.

[2] Gerard J. Fitzgerald, "Chemical Warfare and Medical Response During World War I," *American Journal of Public Health*, 98/4 (April 2008): 611-25, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2376985.

[3] Peter C. Wever and Leo van Bergen, "Death from 1918 Pandemic Influenza during the First World War: A Perspective from Personal and Anecdotal Evidence," *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses* 8.5 (2014): 538–546.

[4] Carol R. Byerly, "War Losses (USA)," 1914-1918 International Encyclopedia of the First World War, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_losses_usa; and "America's Wars," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf.

[5] Stephen Bull, *A History of Trench Warfare on the Western Front* (United Kingdom: Osprey Publishing, 2014), 17; and Michael Duffy, "Weapons of War: Poison Gas," https://www.firstworldwar.com/weaponry/gas.htm.

[6] "The Blockade of Germany," British National Archives, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/spotlights/blockade.htm; and J. F. C. Fuller, *The Conduct of War, 1789–1961* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1961), 178.

[7] Stuart D. Brandes, *Warhogs: A History of War Profits in America* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 224.

[8] "President Advises Nation To Be Calm," *New York Times*, August 4, 1914. George Washington, in his 1796 Farewell Address, said, "It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world." Thomas Jefferson, in his Inaugural Address of 1801, stated, "Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none."

[9] Woodrow Wilson: "Message on Neutrality," August 19, 1914, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65382.

[10] On the number of vessels sunk by German U-boats, see Spencer C. Tucker, ed., *World War I: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection*, Vol. 1 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 1512. The Wilson administration issued a mild protest against the use of U.S. flags on British merchant ships only after the American press raised a fuss about it in February 1915; Britain responded that it would not prevent its merchant vessels from continuing the practice. See Ryan Floyd, *Abandoning American Neutrality: Woodrow Wilson and the Beginning of the Great War, August 1914 – December 1915* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 100-102.

[11] "U.S. Merchant Ships, Sailing Vessels, and Fishing Craft Lost from all Causes during World War I," American Merchant Marine at War website, http://www.usmm.org/ww1merchant.html; and Gottlieb Von Jagow, "German Government's Response to the Sinking of the Lusitania, 28 May 1914," http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/lusitania_germanresponse.htm.

[12] In the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the large number of drowning deaths was due to the fact that the ship sank in just 18 minutes, a very short period for such a large ship. Some analysts have reasoned that a secondary explosion of ammunition stored in the hull occurred, precipitating the rapid sinking. The German government, while apologetic for the loss of civilian lives, argued that the ship was a legitimate target and was known to transport significant amounts of war material.

[13] John Updike, "Remember the Lusitania," *The New Yorker*, July 1, 2002, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/07/01/remember-the-lusitania.

[14] Robert E. Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy, 1914-1924* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 63.

[15] See Charles Paul Vincent, *The Politics of Hunger: The Allied Blockade of Germany, 1915-1919* (Ohio University Press, 1985).

[16] Robert Carlisle, "The Attacks on U.S. Shipping that Precipitated American Entry into World War I," *The Northern Mariner*, XVII No. 3 (July 2007): 41-66, https://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern_mariner/vol17/tnm_17_3_41-66.pdf.

[17] "Wilson's War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917," WWI Document Archive, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson's_War_Message_to_Congress.

[18] Congressional Record, 65th Congress., 1st Session., Volume. LV, pt. I, pp. 212-13. By "either of these military zones," Senator Norris meant the areas of the North Sea laden with British mines and the waters surrounding the British Isles declared a war zone by Germany. The idea of placing restrictions on U.S. merchant ships in order to avoid war was not unprecedented. In 1807, when the British Navy was stopping U.S. ships and sometimes seizing U.S. sailors believed to be Englishmen, President Thomas Jefferson banned all oceanic trade for a period of time.

[19] "Wilson's War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917."

[20] See Theodore Roosevelt's 1910 statement in support of a League of Nations in Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy, 1914-1924*, 36. On June 17, 1915, some three hundred people gathered in Philadelphia's Independence Hall to established the League to Enforce Peace (LEP), led by former President Taft. President Wilson endorsed the League when addressing the LEP on May 27, 1916; see President Woodrow Wilson, "Address delivered at the First Annual Assemblage of the League to Enforce Peace: "American Principles, May 27, 1916," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65391.

[21] Charlie Laderman, "The United States and the League of Nations," Oxford Research Encyclopedias, http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-314. For an in-depth examination of the British role in supporting and establishing the League of Nations, see Peter Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace: The League of Nations in British Policy 1914-1925* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009). The idea of world government stretches back two centuries. The germ of the idea was suggested by Charles Castel, Abbé de Saint-Pierre (1658–1743), in his *Project for Making Peace Perpetual in Europe* (1713). In the U.S., the American Peace Society, the first national peace organization formed in 1828, advocated the creation of a Congress of Nations. In the late 19th century, many international associations formed and promoted the ideas of world law, federation, mediation, and war prevention. For brief background on European thinkers, see "World Government," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/world-government.

[22] Carol R. Byerly, "War Losses (USA)," 1914-1918 International Encyclopedia of the First World War, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_losses_usa; and "America's Wars," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf. The high number of fatalities from disease was due in large part to an influenza epidemic that struck the U.S. in 1918 and spread overseas.

[23] Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralist: Woodrow Wilson and the World He Made* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018), 400.

[24] There is no way to prove "what if" questions, or counterfactual arguments. What if the U.S. had not entered the war? Historians have considered alternate possibilities, some envisioning an Allied victory (especially in early 1917), others envisioning a German victory (especially in early 1918); some estimating that the war would have gone on even longer than it did, others estimating a sooner ending, facilitated perhaps by mutinies on all sides. John Milton Cooper Jr., in *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), assumes that, had the U.S. not intervened, the war would have gone on interminably, and thus he credits Wilson with shortening the war and saving "hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions" of lives (pp. 6-7).

[25] For an overview of wars, alliances, ententes, and great power politics preceding the Great War, see Gordon Martel, *Origins of the First World War* (New York: Routledge, 2017, 4th edition).

[26] Questions remain about whether Russia knew about or encouraged the assassination in conjunction with its allies, and whether it wanted to provoke war. See Harry E. Barnes, *The Genesis of the World War: An Introduction to the Problem of War Guilt*, rev ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929).

[27] See Martel, *Origins of the First World War*, documents 34, 36, 37, 38. In Document 38, "Germany's response to the Serbian Reply" (to Austria-Hungary's ultimatum), the Kaiser wrote to his foreign secretary: "I am convinced that on the whole the wishes of the Danube Monarchy have been acceded to. The few reservations that Serbia makes in regard to individual points could, according to my opinion, be settled by negotiation." Still seeking a way to enable Austria-Hungary to seize Serbia, he proposed "that we say to Austria: Serbia has been forced to retreat in a very humiliating manner, and we offer our congratulations. Naturally, as a result, every cause for war has vanished. But a guarantee that the promises will be carried out is unquestionably necessary. That could be secured by means of the temporary military occupation of a portion of Serbia, similar to the way we kept troops stationed in France in 1871 until the billions were paid." In this way, the Kaiser turned an act of appeasement by Serbia into a cause for military occupation of the country.

[28] Adam Hochschild, *To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914-1918* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 90-91.

[29] "Statement by Sir Edward Grey, 03 August 1914," United Kingdom API Parliament information, https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1914/aug/03/statement-by-sir-edward-grey. The Treaty of London of 1839 guaranteed the independence and neutrality of Belgium. Signed by Britain, France, Prussia, Russia, and Austria, it required the signatories to defend Belgium in case of attack. Thus, had France invaded Belgium before Germany, even as a preventative military operation, Britain would have been obliged by the treaty to declare war against France. It was Germany, however, that made the fateful transgression.

[30] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 90-92.

[31] "Ten Significant Battles of the First World War," Imperial War Museum, Great Britain, January 3, 2018, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/10-significant-battles-of-the-first-world-war.

[32] "Ten Significant Battles of the First World War," Imperial War Museum.

[33] Timothy C. Dowling, Virginia Military Institute, "Eastern Front," October 8, 2014, 1914-1918 International Encyclopedia of the First World War; and "President Wilson's Fourteen Points, Delivered in Joint Session, January 8, 1918, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President_Wilson's_Fourteen_Points. The promise to respect Russian self-determination was made by President Wilson in his Fourteen Points speech.

[34] "The Anzac Story," http://www.anzacs.net/AnzacStory.htm; and Anne Bostanci, "How was India involved in the First World War?" 30 October 2014, British Council, https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/how-was-india-involved-first-world-war.

[35] In 1938, Armistice Day, November 11, was recognized as a national holiday in the U.S. In 1954, following the Korean War, Congress changed the name to Veterans Day.

[36] Nadège Mougel, "World War I casualties," *Centre européen Robert Schuman*, http://www.centre-robert-schuman.org/userfiles/files/REPERES%20%E2%80%93%20module%201-1-1%20-%20explanatory%20notes%20%E2%80%93%20World%20War%20I%20casualties%20%E2%80%93%20EN.pdf; and Bull, *A History of Trench Warfare*, 17

[37] Tim Cook, *No Place to Run: The Canadian Corps and Gas Warfare in the First World War* (UBC Press, 1999), 37; Duffy, "Weapons of War – Poison Gas"; and Fitzgerald, "Chemical Warfare and Medical Response During World War I."

[38] "The Blockade of Germany," British National Archives, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/spotlights/blockade.htm; O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 159; and Holger H. Herwig, "Total Rhetoric, Limited War: Germany's U-Boat Campaign 1917-1918, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1998), https://jmss.org/jmss/index.php/jmss/article/view/19/18. The figure of 763,000 wartime deaths also does not include 150,000 German victims of the 1918 influenza pandemic.

[39] Alan Kramer, "Atrocities," *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, January 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/atrocities; Benoit Majerus, "War Losses (Belgium)," January 25, 2016, *1914-1918 International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_losses_belgium; and Sophie de Schaepdrijver, "The 'German Atrocities' of 1914," British Library (World War One), January 29, 2014, https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/civilian-atrocities-german-1914.

[40] Rodney Madison, "Air Warfare, Strategic Bombing," *The Encyclopedia of World War I: A Political, Social and Military History, Vol. 1* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 45–46. Air, sea, and artillery bombardments resulted in the deaths of 3,357 civilians in France, 1,260 in Great Britain, and 720 in Germany, the total of which was a very small proportion of all civilian deaths.

[41] "Countries that Recognize the Armenian Genocide," Armenian National Institute, http://www.armenian-genocide.org/recognition_countries.html.

[42] Nadège Mougel, "World War I casualties"; and Daniel Gorman, "H-Diplo Forum on 'Legacies of World War I Commemorative Issue,'" *Diplomatic History* 38:4 (September 2014), 793-94.

[43] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, xiii, xv. See also, Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[44] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 347, 302.

[45] Bertrand Russell, *Justice in War-Time* (London and Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1917; first pub. 1916), 16-17, 198.

[46] Julius W. Pratt, Vincent P. DeSantis, and Joseph M. Siracusa, *A History of United States Foreign Policy* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 259. Many historians and scholars who have studied the Great War have identified nationalism, militarism, and imperialism as underlying causes of the war. See, for example, Martel*, Origins of the First World War*, 6-8.

[47] Patt Morrison, "Historian Jay Winter: The five things Americans should know about the Great War" (interview), *Los Angeles Times*, June 24, 2014, http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-morrison-winter-20140625-column.html.

[48] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 35. The British also carried out massacres in Southern Rhodesia following resistance to their conquest by Shona King Lobengula.

[49] "History of Namibia," History World, http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad32.

[50] Martel, *Origins of the First World War*, 41.

[51] Ibid., 76.

[52] Spencer coined the term "survival of the fittest" in *Principles of Biology* (1864), after reading Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Charles Darwin's half-cousin, Sir Francis Galton, was the father of the eugenics movement, aimed at inhibiting the reproduction of "inferior" people.

[53] Frank Ninkovich, "Theodore Roosevelt: Civilization as Ideology." *Diplomatic History*, vol. 10, no. 3, 1986: 233–34.

[54] General Friedrich von Berhhardi, "Germany and the Next War (1914)," Document 40 in Martel, *Origins of the First World War*, 146-47.

[55] Justus D. Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War: A New History of America's Entry into World War I* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 25.

[56] In April 1898, the British government proposed a joint Anglo-American declaration calling for equal commercial opportunity in China. In September 1899, U.S. Secretary of State John Hay promoted an alternative version to the governments of Britain, Germany, Russia, Japan, Italy, and France, after which the U.S. became known as the champion of the Open Door policy. In most areas of the world, however, the great nations sought to maintain their "closed door" spheres of influence, as the U.S. did in Latin America and the Philippines. For a brief review, see "Open Door Policy – Laying down the policy," *Encyclopedia of the New American Nation*, http://www.americanforeignrelations.com/O-W/Open-Door-Policy-Laying-down-the-policy.html#ixzz5QABFI43V.

[57] "Andrew Carnegie Proposes a League of Peace (1905)," in John Whiteclay Chambers II, *The Eagle and the Dove: The American Peace Movement and United States Foreign Policy, 1900-1922* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 10-12.

[58] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 36.

[59] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 75.

[60] Martel, *Origins of the First World War*, 99; and Paul Laity, "1907-1914: The Pre-War Peace Movement," 2002, Oxford Scholarship Online, January 2010: DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199248353.001.0001. See also, Thomas Richard Davies, *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (New York: Oxford Press, 2014).

[61] A. C. F. Beales, *The History of Peace: A Short Account of the Organised Movement for International Peace* (New York: The Dial Press, 1931), 234, 237. On the European peace movement, see also Justin Quinn Olmstead, ed., *Reconsidering Peace and Patriotism during the First World War* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[62] Sandi Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism: Waging War on War in Europe, 1815-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 60-61.

[63] International Committee of the Red Cross, "Convention (IV) respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land. The Hague, 18 October 1907," http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/195?OpenDocument. Consult Calvin C. Davis, *The United States and the First Hague Conference of 1899* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University press, 1962); Davis, *The United States and the Second Hague Peace Conference: American Diplomacy and International Organization, 1899-1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976); and Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism*, 101-110.

[64] For a cogent summary of Nobel's views, see "Alfred Nobel's Thoughts About War and Peace," http://www.nobelprize.org/alfred_nobel/biographical/articles/tagil. On Suttner's role in Nobel's peace prize, see Heffermehl, *The Nobel Peace Prize: What Nobel Really Wanted* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), 25-28. On von Suttner's efforts to promote peace, see "Bertha von Suttner- Biographical," http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1905/suttner-bio.html.

[65] Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism*, 158.

[66] Leo Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God and Peace Essays* (translated by Alymer Maude; Oxford University Press, 1960), 517, cited in Sanderson Beck, "Tolstoy on the Law of Love," http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ18-Tolstoy.html#1; and Peter Brock, *Freedom from War: Nonsectarian Pacifism 1814-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 212-219. The village schoolteacher was named Evdokhim Nikitch Drozhzhin.

[67] Julius Moritzen, *The Peace Movement of America* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), 401.

[68] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 59; and David E. Sumler, "Opponents of War Preparedness in France, 1913-1914," in Solomon Wank, ed., *Doves and Diplomats: Foreign Offices and Peace Movements in Europe and America in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), 112. At the 1907 conference of the Second International in Stuttgart, Germany, some 900 socialist delegates from various nations passed a resolution calling for gradual disarmament through arbitration and the replacement of standing armies with popular militias. Michael Kazin, *War Against the War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018), 11. On the British peace movement, see Clive Barrett, *Subversive Peacemakers, War Resistance 1914–1918: An Anglican Perspective* (Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth Press, 2014).

[69] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 68, 63, 86; and Solomon Wank, "The Austrian Peace movement and the Habsburg Ruling Elite, 1906-1914," in Charles Chatfield and Peter van den Dungen, eds., *Peace Movements and Political Cultures* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 51.

[70] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 88.

[71] Ibid., 91-93.

[72] Michael Clinton, "Review of Justin Quinn Olmstead, ed., *Reconsidering Peace and Patriotism during the First World War*," *Peace & Change*, 43 (2), April 2018, 258-60; and "Fellowship of Reconciliation, Historical Introduction," Swarthmore College Peace Collection, https://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG001-025/DG013/dg13forhistintro.htm.

[73] David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (New York: Cambridge university Press, 2008), 43-44.

[74] Eberhard Demm, "Propaganda at Home and Abroad," 1914-1918 Online International Encyclopedia of the First World War, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/propaganda_at_home_and_abroad.

[75] John Simkin "Christmas Truce and the First World War," December 2014, Spartacus Educational website, http://spartacus-educational.com/FWWchristmas.htm. The website lists fourteen primary sources for the article, with quotes below from each. See also, Stanley Weintraub, *Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001).

[76] President Woodrow Wilson, "Second Annual Message to Congress," December 8, 1914, American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29555.

[77] President Woodrow Wilson, "Third Annual Message to Congress," December 7, 1915, American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29556.

[78] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Polic*y, xi-xii.

[79] John Kenneth Turner, *Shall It Be Again?* (New York: B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1922); and Thomas Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 2003). See linked Historiography essay.

[80] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Polic*y, 294.

[81] O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 1-3.

[82] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 1 (epigraph).

[83] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 45.

[84] H. W. Brands, "Woodrow Wilson and the Irony of Fate," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (September 2004), 503.

[85] Edward M. House, *Philip Dru, Administrator: A Story of Tomorrow* (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1912); Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 9, 10; Charles Neu, *Colonel House: A Biography of Woodrow Wilson's Silent Partner* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Godfrey Hodgson, *Woodrow Wilson's Right Hand: The Life of Colonel Edward M. House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 48-53.

[86] Robert Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War: Reconsidering America's Neutrality, 1914-1917* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015), 147.

[87] Esposito, *The Legacy of Woodrow Wilson*, 34.

[88] Joseph Patrick Tumulty, *Woodrow Wilson as I Know Him* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1921), 231.

[89] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*. 34-39; Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 113; Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 45. 81; and Rudyard Kipling, "Human Beings and Germans," June 21, 1915, The Project Gutenberg eBook, New York Times Current History; The European War, Vol. 2, No. 4, July, 1915, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/26377/26377-h/26377-h.htm. In July 1917, Parliament established an above-board propaganda agency, the National War Aims Committee, which took over and expanded the functions of Wellington House. See David Monter, *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012).

[90] Philip Knightly, *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Myth Maker* (London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 120; and Arthur Ponsonby, *Falsehood in Wartime* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1928), 130.

Significantly ignored in the American press were British and French atrocities, including the shooting of Prisoners of War (POWs) and unarmed shipwreck survivors and the use of poisonous gases (along with Germany), and Russian atrocities in East Prussia, where 866,000 people were driven from their homes, 34,000 buildings were burned and an estimated 1,620 civilians murdered. See Docherty and MacGregor, *Prolonging the Agony*, 48.

[91] Kenneth D. Rose, *The Great War and Americans in Europe, 1914-1917* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 75-76. Other Americans in Belgium reporting atrocities included Richard Harding Davis, E. Alexander Powell, Manly Whedbee, Robert Grant, Robert Herrick, James O'Donnell Bennett, and Will Irwin. United Press correspondent William Shepherd, in contrast, wrote in 1917 that he had spent a considerable amount of time in Belgium in late 1914 trying to find an authenticated atrocity story and had failed to do so (page 71). See also, Knightly, *First Casualty*.

[92] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 62. See also, Chad R. Fulwider, *German Propaganda and U.S. Neutrality in World War I* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2016). Larry Zuckerman indicts the Germans in *The Rape of Belgium: The Untold Story of World War I* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), as does Alan Kramer and John Horne in *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

[93] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 45.

[94] Kennedy, *The Will to Believe*, 68.

[95] Congressional Record, 63rd Cong., 3rd sess., LII, 3230, February 8, 1915; and Kazin, *War Against War*, 297.

[96] Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 86.

[97] Manfred Berg, "He Kept Us Out Of War!" A Counterfactual Look at American History without the First World War," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, Vol. 16, Issue 1 (January 2017): 2-23 (part II), published online: https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537781416000438.

[98] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 55.

[99] Ibid., 53-54; and Pratt, DeSantis, and Siracusa, *A History of United States Foreign Policy*, 234. Doenecke notes that later studies of the war by the historian Charles Callan Tansill and the journalist Walter Millis upheld the view of arms embargo proponents, insisting that the Wilson administration missed a valuable opportunity to bring the war to an early end by preventing arms sales, and that there was nothing whatsoever in international law to prohibit imposing such measures provided they applied equally to all belligerents.

[100] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 55-57.

[101] Burton Yale Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder: The Fateful Decision to Enter World War One* (New York: RSD Press, 2013), 107.

[102] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 47-48.

[103] Mark Jefferson, "Our Trade in the Great War," *Geographical Review* 3, no. 6 (1917): 474-80. In 1916, U.S. trade with the Central Powers amounted to only $8.8 million.

[104] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 43.

[105] "Cotton Prices in the World Wars," *Monthly Review*, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, March 1944, 2, https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/files/docs/publications/frbrichreview/pages/65097_1940-1944.pdf

[106] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 90-91. The article ran in the November 1915 issue.

[107] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 52.

[108] David M. Esposito, *The Legacy of Woodrow Wilson: American War Aims in World War* I (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1996), 28.

[109] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 52.

[110] Ibid., 29, 63; and Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Polic*y, 43. On January 25, 1915, Germany placed cereals and flours under government control to prevent hoarding and price-gouging. Two days later, Sir Edward Grey notified Ambassador Walter Page Hines that, since the German government had taken control of food rationing, all food cargoes to Germany would henceforth be subject to seizure. D. F. Fleming, *The Origins and Legacies of World War I* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1988), 204.

[111] Spencer Tucker, ed., *World War I*, 1512; and "U.S. Merchant Ships, Sailing Vessels, and Fishing Craft Lost from all Causes during World War I," American Merchant Marine at War, http://www.usmm.org/ww1merchant.html. See also, Paul E. Fontenoy, *Submarines: An Illustrated History of Their Impact* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2007), 15-17.

[112] Gottlieb Von Jagow, "The Germans Defend Their Submarine Policy," Berlin, May 28, 1915, p. 3, reprinted from *U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1915, Supplement: The World War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1928), 419-421, online: http://mark.levengood.people.cpcc.edu/HIS132/LessonDocs/WWIdocs.pdf.

[113] "August 7, 1915," *The Literary Digest*, Volume LI, July, 1915 – December, 1915 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company), 1915, page 235.

[114] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Polic*y, 65.

[115] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 176, 183, 186.

[116] Rear Admiral M.W.W. P. Consett, *The Triumph of Unarmed Forces (1914-1918): An Account of the Transactions by which Germany During the Great War Was Able to Obtain Supplies Prior to Her Collapse Under the Pressure of Economic Forces* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1923). Gerry Docherty and Jim McGregor, in *Prolonging the Agony: How the Anglo-American Establishment Deliberately Extended World War I for Three-and-a-Half Years* (Walterville, OR: Trine Day, 2018), cast further suspicion on the British government, or some agents within, for allowing trade to reach Germany. They describe an incident in November 1916 in which a German vessel, *The Deutschland*, unloaded 341 tons of nickel, a mineral essential for hardening steel for weapons production, in Baltimore harbor, and then returned with a full cargo which included 6.5 tons of silver bullion. They point out another incident involving the American *SS Llama*, which, after its capture by British authorities, was mysteriously released and allowed to break the blockade. The ship was carrying a large supply of oil derived from international conglomerates which was allegedly sold in Germany at a high price. The authors suspect that American and British companies may have been profiting from fueling the very same U-boats which were also sinking American and British ships, which leads them to their thesis that the "Anglo-American Establishment" was conspiratorially extending the war.

[117] Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 132-33.

[118] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 46.

[119] Brian to Wilson, April 23, 1915, reprinted in William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1971), 396-87.

[120] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Polic*y, 46-47.

[121] O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 155, 159.

[122] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 47-48.

[123] *The Resignation of William Jennings Bryan as Secretary of State and the Documents That Present the Issue* (brochure, n.d.), 4-7, in William Jennings Bryan Papers, series 5, box 3, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE.

[124] Robert Lansing, "Consideration and Outline of Policies," July 11, 1915, in Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 32.

[125] See Haiti section in Roger Peace, "'Yankee Imperialism,' 1901-1934," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2018, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/yankee-imperialism.

[126] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 55. For a complete list of ships sunk by German U-boats, month by month, see "Ships Hit during World War I," https://uboat.net/wwi/ships_hit/losses_year.html.

[127] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 63; and Count Johann von Bernstorff, *My Three Years in America*, 1920, 128, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/30865/30865-h/30865-h.htm#page_127.

[128] Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 148. See also, George Viereck, *Strangest Friendship: Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House* (New York: H. Liveright, 1932).

[129] Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 146.

[130] Ibid., 160-61.

[131] Ibid., 166, 168.

[132] Ibid., 173.

[133] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 63.

[134] O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 187-89; and William L. Genders, "Woodrow Wilson and the 'Preparedness Tour' of the Midwest, January-February 1916," *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1990: 75–81.

[135] Kazin, *War Against War*, 104.

[136] Ibid., 106.

[137] "The Agitation Concerning the Right of Americans to Travel on Armed Vessels" (reprinted letters of President Woodrow Wilson and Senator William J. Stone, February 24, 1916) *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, Vol. 102, Part One, p. 766.

[138] Kazin, *War Against War*, 299.

[139] Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 204. Wilson, the academic president, was no doubt familiar with President James Polk's subterfuge to embroil the United States in a war against Mexico in 1846 for the sake of obtaining Mexico's northern territories of Nuevo México and Alta California. Polk, never admitting to this objective, sent U.S. troops into a contested border area, prompting Mexican troops to fire on them, after which he claimed that "American blood has been shed on American soil." Although the ruse worked, it was too obvious and public opposition increased over the course of the war. In the 1848 elections, despite victories on the battlefield and a treaty transferring the desired territories to the United States, Polk's Democratic Party lost control of the White House and Congress. See Roger Peace, "The United States-Mexican War, 1846-1848," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2016, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/US-Mexican War.

[140] O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 213; and Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 212.

[141] O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 224-25, 210-13.

[142] David S. Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace: Women's Activism and Citizen Diplomacy in World War I* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 197-98; and Kazin, *War Against War*, 47, 109-10.

[143] Kazin, *War Against War*, 135.

[144] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 73.

[145] Kazin, *War Against War*, 137-38.

[146] Ibid., 143; and *Information Annual 1916: A Continuous Cyclopedia and Digest of Current Events* (New York: Cumulative Digest Corporation, 1917), 159.

[147] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 183; and O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 236. Lloyd made the statement on September 28, 1916.

[148] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 70-71; and "President Wilson's Peace Note, December 18, 1916," WWI Document Archive, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President_Wilson%27s_Peace_Note,_December_18,_1916.

[149] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to the Senate of the United States: 'A World League for Peace,' January 22, 1917," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65396; and Kazin, *War Against War*, 142.

[150] The historian Richard Striner views Wilson's phrase of "peace without victory" as a serious proposal, then notes that Wilson did not use the substantial economic leverage of the U.S. to force the issue on the Allies: "And if he had used this leverage to force an agreement on a non-vindictive peace before he went to Congress seeking the declaration of war, he might have succeeded in pre-committing the British and the French to 'peace without victory.' But he never even made the attempt – indeed, it appears that he never even thought of it. Instead, when the United States joined the allies, Wilson just gave them the financial assistance that they needed for free, no strings attached." Striner then criticizes Wilson for "inattention to power orchestration, neglect of strategy," and the like, but does not consider that Wilson's memorable phrase was *intended* as propaganda aimed at the American people, not strategic policymaking. Richard Stiner, "Woodrow Wilson's Blunders as a Wartime President," History News Network, June 8, 2014, https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/155786.

[151] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 74-75.

[152] Ibid., 74.

[153] Robert M. La Follette, "The Armed Ship Bill Meant War," March 27, 1917, New York City: Emergency Peace Federation (pamphlet), https://archive.org/details/armedshipbillmea00lafo. See also, Barnes, *The Genesis of the World War*, 600; and Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 35, 36.

[154] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 76-77. Some historians have argued that German submarine warfare forced Wilson's hand, that he was justified in retaliating for the pain inflicted on Americans by German U-boats. The esteemed U.S. diplomat George F. Kennan argued, contrarily, that a president may have the "privilege to defend the rights of our citizens to travel on belligerent vessels, but it is hardly a duty." George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), cited in Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 114. Wilson's biographer Arthur S. Link of Princeton University was among the historians to support Wilson's decision, claiming that Germany would have become a security threat to the United States if the United States hadn't confronted them (Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War and Peace*. New York: Wiley Blackwell, 1979, 306). However, Link, a deep admirer of Wilson, does not consider that Germany became more of a security threat *because* the United States supported British arms shipments and blockade; nor did Link compare the losses incurred by the U.S. during the war to the relatively minor losses during the period of neutrality. Political scientist Benjamin Fordham calculates that during the U.S. neutrality period from August 1914 to April 1917, 236 Americans were killed by U-boats, all except 14 being killed on ships flying the flags of belligerent states. Benjamin O. Fordham, "Revisionism Reconsidered: Exports and American Intervention in World War I," *International Organization*, 61 (02), April 2007: 277-310, cited in Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 114.

[155] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 285.

[156] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 31-32.

[157] "George William Norris Opposing U.S. Entry Into World War I, 4 April 1917," Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 1st Sess., Vol. LV, pt. I, pp. 212-13, http://americainclass.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/antiwar-speeches.pdf. See also, Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 32.

[158] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 33-36.

[159] Ibid., 31; and Kazin, *War Against War*, 181, 182-83.

[160] David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 168-69.

[161] Ferdinand Lundberg, *America's 60 Families* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1937). Cleveland Dodge had no love for Labor. In 1915, miners who struck for higher wages in Dodge's Arizona mines were violently beset by gunmen brought in from the city's underworld, an example of his ruthless attitude towards organized labor.

[162] C. Hartley Grattan, *Why We Fought* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), 142; and Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 57.

[163] *Munitions Industry, Report on Existing Legislation, Special Commission on Investigation of the Munitions Industry, U.S. Senate, Pursuant to S. Res 206*, Chapter 5: The Change in Loan Policy and Its Effect (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1936).

[164] Charles Callan Tansill, *America Goes to War* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1963), 114, 115; and Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 45.

[165] Lloyd C. Gardner, *Safe for Democracy: The Anglo-American Response to Revolution, 1913-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987),109.

[166] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 90; Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 69; Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 328; and *Munitions Industry, Report on Existing Legislation,* Chapter 5, page 66.

[167] See Lundberg, *America's 60 Families*, 133-148.

[168] *Munitions Industry, Report on Existing Legislation*, Chapter 5.

[169] H.C. Engelbrecht and F.C. Hanighen, *Merchants of Death*, with foreword by Harry Elmer Barnes (New York: Garden City: The Garden City Publishing Co., 1937), 173, 174, 177.

[170] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 86; and Tansill, *America Goes to War*, 114, 115, 116.

[171] *Munitions Industry Report, No. 944, 74th Cong., 2nd sess.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1936), pt. 5, 3: 25-26, 29-33.

[172] Ron Chernow, *House of Morgan: An American Banking Dynasty and the Rise of Modern Finance* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990), 188, 189. When the United States formally joined the war, Stettinius, the former president of the Diamond Match Company and a speculator in the Chicago wheat pits, was appointed surveyor general of supplies for the U.S. army. His son became a prominent State Department officer during the era of the early Cold War.

[173] Lundberg, *America's Sixty Families*, 133-148; Turner, *Shall It Be Again*?, 306; and Paul A.C. Koistinen, *Mobilizing for Modern War: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1865-1919* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 123. Some of the appointees to the War Industries Board were Julius Rosenwald, head of Sears, Roebuck and Company; Daniel Willard, president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; Walter S. Gifford, then vice-president of American Telephone and Telegraph; Howard E. Coffin, president of the Hudson Motor Car Company; Alexander Legge, of the International Harvester Company; J. Leonard Replogle, steel magnate; Herbert Bayard Swope, brother of General Electric's Gerard Swope; Clarence Dillon, of Dillon, Read and Company; Elbert H. Gary, chairman of United States Steel; James A.

Farrell, president of United States Steel and son-in-law of Anthony N. Brady; and John D. Ryan, president of Anaconda Copper (Amalgamated Copper), Assistant Secretary of War, and head of the copper-buying committee.

[174] Engelbrecht and Hanighen, *Merchants of Death*, 173, 174, 177; Turner, *Shall It Be Again*? 275.

[175] Chernow, *House of Morgan*, 190; Koistinen, *Mobilizing for Modern War*, 118, 119; and Turner, *Shall It Be Again*? 283. The Nye committee was not able to obtain complete information about this so the full scale of Morgan's war profiteering will likely never be known.

[176] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 88; Ross Gregory, *The Origins of American Intervention in the First World War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971); and Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 991.

[177] Engelbrecht and Hanighen, *Merchants of Death*, 176; W. A. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst: A Biography of William Randolph Hearst* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 350, 359; and Turner, *Shall It Be Again*? 260. Calloway was a radical agrarian populist who subsequently lost his seat and retired to Comanche, Texas, where he died in 1947. Some of his statements were expunged from the *Congressional Record*. The charges though were retaken up by Congressmen Alfred Michelson, a Republican from Illinois in 1921.

[178] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 95-96; and "National Security League," National Teaching History Clearinghouse, http://teachinghistory.org/category/keywords/national-security-league.

[179] "Review from the *New York Times*, August 7, 1915," The Norma Talmadge Website, https://web.stanford.edu/~gdegroat/NT/oldreviews/bcop.htm#nyt.

[180] *Munitions Industry, Report on Existing Legislation*, Chapter 5.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Smedley Butler, *War is a Racket: The Antiwar Classic by America's Most Decorated Soldier* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2003), 27, 28; Engelbrecht and Hanighen, *Merchants of Death*, 176, 177, 178; and Koistinen, *Mobilizing for Modern War*, 263. Utah and Anaconda Copper, the International Nickel Company, Central Leather and General Chemical Companies were also major war profiteers. In 1918, the real income of American farmers was 29 percent higher than it had been in 1915, a relatively prosperous year itself.

[183] Stuart Brandes, *Warhogs: A History of War Profits in America* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 140.

[184] Lundberg, *America's 60 Families*, 133-148; Chernow, *The House of Morgan*, 195.

[185] Grattan, *Why We Fought*, 131; and Chernow, *House of Morgan*, 189. The Morgan bank actually undertook intelligence work for the British in the United States, and the British exempted the company from mail censorship in and out of Britain and allowed it to retain a special code for communication.

[186] Koistinen, *Mobilizing for Modern War*, 119, 120.

[187] Will Irwin, *The Next War: An Appeal to Common Sense* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1921), 84. Coolidge quoted in Charles H. Beard, *The Devil Theory of War: An Inquiry Into the Nature of History and the Possibility of Keeping Out of War* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1936), 104. On the red scare, see Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States* (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000); and William K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (University of Minnesota Press, 1955).

[188] Paul A.C. Koistinen, *Planning War, Pursuing Peace: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1920-1939* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 254.

[189] See William H. Leuchtenberg, *The Perils of Prosperity 1914-1932*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); and Barnes, *The Genesis of the World War*, 698. Barnes characterized it as a "League of Victors" rather than a league of nations which was essentially in the beginning an "Anglo-French organization," although eventually it was "able to make a number of notable contributions to peace."

[190] Koistinen, *Planning War, Pursuing Peace*, 293, 294; and Stuart D. Brandes, *Warhogs: A History of War Profits in America* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 224. See also, John E. Wiltz, *In Search of Peace: The Senate Munitions Inquiry, 1934-1936* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), which reflects a cold warrior's view in its criticism of Nye.

[191] "Wilson's War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917," WWI Document Archive, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson's_War_Message_to_Congress.

[192] Nationalist histories have reinforced this view by describing U.S. entry into the war as a time when America "came of age," a kind of natural maturation into a full-fledged great power. See, for example, "The Great War: WWI…America Comes of Age," an Insignia Films production for American Experience, distributed by the Public Broadcasting System.

[193] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to the Senate on the Versailles Peace Treaty," July 10, 1919, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=110490.

[194] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 96.

[195] "John L. O'Sullivan on Manifest Destiny, 1839," excerpted from "The Great Nation of Futurity," *The United States Democratic Review*, Volume 6, Issue 23, pp. 426-430, https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/osulliva.htm. See also, Roger Peace, "The United States-Mexican War, 1846-1848," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2016, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/US-Mexican War.

[196] "Republican Party Platform of 1892," June 7, 1892, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29628.

[197] Full text of "A war of self-defense," by Robert Lansing, secretary of state, and Louis F. Post, assistant secretary of labor, published by the Committee on Public Information, Washington, D. C., https://archive.org/stream/warofselfdefense00inlans/warofselfdefense00inlans_djvu.txt.

[198] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 122.

[199] President Wilson used the term "manifest destiny" only one time, in a written submission of his State of the Union Address on December 7, 1920: "The Old World is just now suffering from a wanton rejection of the principle of democracy and a substitution of the principle of autocracy … This is the time of all others when Democracy should prove its purity and its spiritual power to prevail. It is surely the manifest destiny of the United States to lead in the attempt to make this spirit prevail." One can read this as a paean to democratic idealism or a testament to Wilson's belief that the United States must lead the world, whatever the beliefs espoused by U.S. leaders. "Woodrow Wilson, State of the Union, 1920," http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/woodrow-wilson/state-of-the-union-1920.php.

[200] Wilson also pushed the margins of executive power in the overall balance of power in the American government. Justus Doenecke writes, in *Nothing Less Than War* (page 5), "On crucial matters of foreign policy, Wilson often made major decisions alone. In his *Constitutional Government in the United States* (1908), he discerned the presidential initiative in foreign affairs as unlimited; the chief executive possessed 'virtually the power to control them absolutely.' Although acknowledging that the president could not conclude a treaty without senatorial consent, he believed that the chief executive could dominate every step of the diplomatic process."

[201] See Roger Peace, "'Yankee Imperialism,' 1901-1934," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2018, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/yankee-imperialism.

[202] O'Toole, *The Moralist*, 79.

[203] Kazin, *War Against War*, 203.

[204] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress on the Conditions of Peace, January 8, 1918," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65405.

[205] Kazin, *War Against War*, 190; Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 320; and Woodrow Wilson, "Address on Flag Day, June 14, 1917," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65400.

[206] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 89. Wilson's duplicitous character was a central theme of a 1921 book written by the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, William F. McCombs. In *Making Woodrow Wilson President* (New York: Fairview Publishing, 1921), McCombs writes in the Introduction that he was an admiring student of Professor Wilson at Princeton and later helped Wilson obtain the Democratic Party's presidential nomination in 1912. He writes of Wilson's character: "He was an opportunist. Suave in manner, he constantly strove to advance himself. . . . While President, he regarded himself not only as President, but Premier. . . . His juggernaut crushed those who dared oppose him."

[207] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to the Senate of the United States: 'A World League for Peace,' January 22, 1917"; and Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 197.

[208] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 132.

[209] Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 320; and Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 132. Ross Kennedy, author of *The Will to Believe: Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and America's Strategy for Peace and Security* (Kent State, 2009), similarly finds Wilson's actions contrary to his self-made image as peacemaker. Kennedy writes: "Indeed, Wilson did everything possible to sabotage talks with the Germans. He rejected the Petrograd Soviet's call for a peace of no annexations, no indemnities, and self-determination; denied passports to American socialists hoping to attend the Stockholm conference, a socialist initiative aimed in part at engaging the German left in peace talks; rebuffed Pope Benedict XV's proposal for negotiations essentially based on a return to the status quo ante bellum; urged the British not to pursue peace feelers from Germany in September 1917; and rejected the Bolshevik invitation to participate in peace talks with the Germans at Brest-Litovsk." Quoted from H-Diplo Roundtable Review, Vol. 20, No. 4 (24 September, 2018): "Review of Trygve Throntveit, *Power Without Victory: Woodrow Wilson and the American Internationalist Experiment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017)."

[210] Arthur S. Link, Wilson's noted biographer, for one, promoted this benefic view of Wilson's war aims and other historians have repeated it. See Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 320.

[211] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, xii. The debate over Wilson's conception of the League of Nations has not been settled among historians. There was indeed a difference in emphasis between the Republicans and Wilson, as the former rarely

talked about reducing armaments in concert with collective security arrangements, and some historians such as Ross Kennedy have viewed this as a major divide. Wilson, however, put forth no concrete proposals for disarmament. See Ross Kennedy, "Review of Robert E. Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy, 1914-24* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), published on H-Diplo, July 2017, https://networks.h-net.org/node/28443/reviews/186281/kennedy-hannigan-great-war-and-american-foreign-policy-1914-24.

[212] "Roosevelt Flouts League of Nations," *Washington Post*, August 4, 1918, cited in Emily S. Rosenberg, "World War I, Wilsonianism, and Challenges to U.S. Empire," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (September 2014), 852.

[213] See Roger Peace, "'Yankee Imperialism,' 1901-1934," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2018, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/yankee-imperialism.

[214] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, xii, 294-95.

[215] Charlie Laderman, "The United States and the League of Nations" Oxford Research Encyclopedias, American History section, http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-314; and Stephen Wertheim, "The League of Nations: A retreat from international law?" *Journal of Global History* (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012), 226-27, http://www.columbia.edu/~saw2156/TheLeagueAsARetreat.pdf. The Committee on the League of Nations was also known as the Phillimore Commission, after its chairman, Sir Walter Phillimore, a distinguished jurist.

[216] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress on the Conditions of Peace, January 8, 1918," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65405.

[217] "British War Aims Statement By the Right Honorable David Lloyd George," January 5, 1918 (Authorized Version Issued by the British Government), 3, https://ia800304.us.archive.org/11/items/britishwaraimsst00lloy_0/britishwaraimsst00lloy_0.pdf. Lloyd George's points differed from those of Wilson in establishing the sanctity of treaties (rather than the openness of treaties) as a condition of peace; this meant that secret treaties such as the Sykes-Picot Agreement (dividing up the Ottoman Empire) would be enforced. Secondly, the territorial settlement based on the right of self-determination was intended only for the lands of the Central Powers, not the colonial empires of Britain and France. Wilson's unspecified verbal commitment to "self-determination," in contrast, excited hopes among colonized people for liberation. This appealed to American idealism and could thus be used to justify going to war, but Wilson had no intention of abolishing British and French imperialism; nor did he have the power. Wilson thus set the stage for many to be bitterly disappointed at the Versailles peace conference. On the whole, Lloyd George was more careful in employing propaganda to promote his policies.

[218] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 387; and Woodrow Wilson, "Address at Memorial Hall in Columbus, Ohio, September 4, 1919," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=117361.

[219] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 109.

[220] "Mutiny on the Aisne," World War I Centenary, http://ww1centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk/war-as-revolution/mutiny-on-the-aisne; and Jay Winter and Blaine Baggett, *1914-18: The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century* (London: BBC Books, 1996), 241. See also, Richard M. Watt, *Dare Call It Treason: The True Story of the French Army Mutinies of 1917* (New York: Dorset Press, 1969).

[221] Tim Cook, "Anti-heroes of the Canadian Expeditionary Force," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, vol. 19, no. 2 (2008), pp. 171-193; Pauwels, *The Great Class War, 1914-1917*, 388; Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory: Verdun 1916* (Penguin, 1993), 318; and David Murphy, *Breaking Point of the French Army: The Nivelle Offensive of 1917* (Pen and Sword Military, 2015), 128.

[222] Winter and Baggett, *1914-18*, 241; and John Keegan, *The First World War* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 356-64.

[223] David Monter, *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 21-22.

[224] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 108.

[225] Knightly, *The First Casualty*, 127.

[226] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 155; and Peter C. Wever and Leo van Bergen, "Death from 1918 Pandemic Influenza during the First World War: A Perspective from Personal and Anecdotal Evidence," *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses* 8.5 (2014): 538–546.

[227] Knightly, *The First Casualty*, 130; and Michael S. Sweeney, *The Military and the Press: An Uneasy Truce* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2006), 57-58. See also, Brian Best, *Reporting from the Front: War Reporters During the Great War* (South Yorkshire, United Kingdom: Pen and Sword Books, 2014).

[228] *The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919*, Vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1988, https://history.army.mil/html/books/023/23-8/CMH_Pub_23-8.pdf, page 4.

[229] President Woodrow Wilson: "Speech at the Opening of the Third Liberty Loan Campaign, delivered in the Fifth Regiment Armory, Baltimore: 'Force to the Utmost'," April 6, 1918, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65406.

[230] Colin Fraser, "Henry Johnson, Known as the 'Black Death' – America's First World War Hero," War History Online, February 27, 2018, https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-i/black-death-henry-johnson-hero.html. Upon his return home, Henry Johnson was promoted to Sergeant but was denied medical benefits. Because of his injuries, he couldn't keep a job. Descending into alcoholism, he died at the age of 32. His son, Herman Johnson, served in the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II. Along with New York Senator Chuck Schumer and others, Herman worked to have his father's valor officially recognized. In the 1990s, a monument was erected in Albany in Johnson's honor and President Bill Clinton posthumously awarded him the Purple Heart. In 2002, the U.S. Army granted him the Distinguished Service Cross, the second-highest military honor. In 2015, President Barack Obama awarded Johnson the top honor, the Medal of Honor.

[231] "A Slow Fuse – Hitler's World War One Experience," firstworldwar.com, http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/aslowfuse.htm; and "Adolf Hitler wounded in British gas attack," October 14, 1918, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/adolf-hitler-wounded-in-british-gas-attack.

[232] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 177; and "The Battle of Chateau-Thierry," History on the Net website, https://www.historyonthenet.com/battle-of-chateau-thierry.

[233] William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964* (New York: Laurel, 1978), 111, 112; and Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences of General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur* (Annapolis: Bluejacket Books, 1964), 60. MacArthur wrote further of a German Lieutenant with shrapnel through his heart and Sergeant with his belly blown in his back.

[234] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 194; and Lt. Col. George M. Lauderbaugh, "The Air Battle of St. Mihiel," Air University Military History, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ww1/stmihiel/stmihiel.htm.

[235] Edward Lengel, *To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2008), 4; and "The Meuse-Argonne Offensive," Doughboy Center, The Story of the American Expeditionary Forces, http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/bigshow.htm. Participating in the battle were legendary figures like MacArthur, James Patton, George C. Marshall, "Wild Bill" Donovan, and Harry S. Truman as well as at least one notorious gangster, "Wild Bill" Lovett.

[236] American Battle Monuments Commission, "World War I Burials and Memorializations," https://www.abmc.gov/node/1273.

[237] Thomas J. Knock, "Wilsonian Concepts and International Realities at the End of the War," in Manfred F. Boemeke, Gerald D. Feldman, and Elisabeth Glaser, eds., *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment After 75 Years* (Washington, DC: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 127.

[238] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 318, 327.

[239] Ibid., 331.

[240] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 183.

[241] Howard Jones, *Crucible of Power: A History of American Foreign Relations from 1897* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2001), 102-103.

[242] Theodore S. Woolsey, "The Provisions of the Treaty of Peace Disposing of German Rights and Interests Outside Europe," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (October 1919), 742; and Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 222. On the reaction of Egyptian nationalists to Wilson's support for British rule in Egypt, see Erez Manela, "Woodrow Wilson and 'the Ugliest of Treacheries,'" *New York Times*, March 9, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/09/opinion/egypt-revolution-wilson.html.

[243] Adam Tooze, *The Great War, America, and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), 91; and Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 225.

[244] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 208-09, 214-15.

[245] Ibid., 213, 248.

[246] John Maynard Keynes. "When the Big Four Met," *The New Republic*, December 24, 1919, 106-107, cited in Kevin C. Murphy, "Uphill All the Way: The Fortunes of Progressivism, 1919-1929" (Dissertation, Columbia University, 2013), 40-41.

[247] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to the Senate on the Versailles Peace Treaty, July 10, 1919," The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=110490.

[248] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 401, 404.

[249] The Versailles Treaty June 28, 1919, Part I: The Covenant of the League of Nations, The Avalon Project, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/parti.asp.

[250] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 242.

[251] Ibid., 242-43; and "Wilson Eulogizes American Dead," *Brandon Times* (Brandon, Wisconsin), June 5, 1919, page one.

[252] President Wilson, "Address at the City Hall Auditorium in Pueblo, Colorado, September 25, 1919, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=117400; and J. Michael Hogan, "Woodrow Wilson, 'The Pueblo Speech' (25 September 1919)," *Voices of Democracy* 1 (2006), 73, http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/hogan-wilson.pdf.

[253] Jennifer Rosenberg, "'Over There' Song," April 19, 2018, https://www.thoughtco.com/over-there-song-1779207.

[254] Steven Casey, Review of Mary Dudziak. "'You didn't see him lying . . . beside the gravel road in France': Death, Distance, and War in American Politics," *Diplomatic History* 42:1 (2018): 1-16, published in H-Diplo, No. 781, July 10, 1918; and Lengel, *To Conquer Hell*, 31, 32.

[255] Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun* (New York: Bantam Books, 1939), 23, 24.

[256] Ibid., 116, 117.

[257] Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Boston: Little & Brown, 1929). The novel sold 2.5 million copies and was translated into 22 languages in its first 18 months, and was adapted into an Academy award winning film in the United States.

[258] Curtis Kinney, *I Flew a Camel* (Philadelphia: Dorrance, 1972).

[259] Quoted in Koistinen, *Planning War, Pursuing Peace*, 300. See F. Scott Fitzgerald et al., *The Lost Generation Reader: An Anthology and History of Lost Generation Writers* (Create Space Independent Publishing, 2012).

[260] Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*, 1.

[261] Vannevar Bush, *Modern Arms and Free Men: A Discussion of the Role of Science in Preserving Democracy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1949), 10.

[262] M. Anthony Mills and Mark P. Mills, "The Invention of the War Machine: Science, Technology, and the First World War," *The New Atlantis*, Spring 2014, http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/the-invention-of-the-war-machine.

[263] Guy Hartcup, *The War of Invention: Scientific Development 1914-1918* (London: Brassey's Defense Publications, 1988), 46.

[264] Inventions Section, War Plans Division, General Staff, Army War College, National Archives, College Park Maryland, Boxes 4-11; and James J. Hudson, *Hostile Skies: A Combat History of the American Air Service in World War I* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1968), 272, 273.

[265] Richard S. Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders: The American Soldier in World War* I (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2017), 2; and Michael Freemantle, *The Chemists' War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, UK: Royal Society of Chemists, 2005).

[266] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*; and Freemantle, *The Chemists' War, 1914-1918*, 4. A description of the effects of white phosphorus is found in Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "U.S.-led forces appear to be using white phosphorus in populated areas in Iraq and Syria," The *Washington Post,* June 9, 2017.

[267] Freemantle, *The Chemists' War, 1914-1918*, 4; and Hartcup, *The War of Invention*, 94.

[268] See Michael Howard, *The First World War (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[269] Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 370. Novelist Frederic Manning poignantly described the descent into a mechanized hell in his antiwar novel *Middle Parts of Fortune* (Vintage Classics, 2014): "The air was alive with the rush and flutter of wings, it was ripped by screaming shells, hissing like tons of molten metal plunging suddenly into water. There was a blast and concussion of the explosions; men smashed, obliterated in sudden eruption of earth-rent and strewn in bloody fragments, shells that were like hell-cats humped and spitting, little sounds, unpleasantly close, like the plucking of tense strings, and something tangling his feet, tearing at his trousers and puttees as he stumbled over it and then face a suddenly, an inconceivably distorted face which raved and sobbed at him as he fell with it into a shell-hole." Frederic Manning, *Middle Parts of Fortune* (Vintage Classics, 2014).

[270] *The World War I Diary of José de la Luz Sáenz*, ed. and with an introduction by Emilio Zamora, translated by Emilio Zamora with Ben Maya (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2014), 203, 228, 250.

[271] Lengel, *To Conquer Hell*, 204.

[272] Peter Kuznick, *Beyond the Laboratory: Scientists as Political Activists in 1930s America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 17; and Ernest Volckman, *Science Goes to War: The Search for the Ultimate Weapon–from Greek Fire to Star Wars* (New York: Wiley, 2002). Only one American chemist refused to support the government in war gas research.

[273] Freemantle, *The Chemists War*, 219; Hartcup, *The War of Invention*, 114; and James B. Conant, *My Several Lives: Memoirs of a Social Inventor* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 49. Conant was also one of the overseers of the Manhattan Project.

[274] Gerald J. Fitzgerald, "Chemical Warfare and Responses During World War I," *American Journal of Public Health*, 98, 4 (April 2008), 611-625.

[275] Ibid.; Joel A. Vilensky and Pandy R. Sinish, *Dew of Death: The Story of Lewisite, America's World War I Weapon of Mass Destruction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); "Weaponry: Lewisite – America's World War I Chemical Weapon," June 12, 2006, *History Net*, http://www.historynet.com/weaponry-lewisite-americas-world-war-i-chemical-weapon.htm. The war ended before these plans could be enacted. In World War II, the U.S. considered lewisite to be ineffective since they found that it was difficult to produce concentrated vapors of it and unless unconscious, subjects felt the pain of exposure and could gain protection. After discovering the formula, the Germans and Japanese carried out experiments on POWs

and death camp inmates using lewisite and deploying experiments with it in World War II. Secret unethical tests with it may have continuously been carried out in the U.S. and Soviet Union during the early Cold War as well.

[276] Hugh R. Slotten, "Humane Chemistry or Scientific Barbarism? American Responses to World War I Poison Gas, 1915-1930," *The Journal of American History*, 77, 2 (September 1990), 486.

[277] Vilensky and Sinish, *Dew of Death.*

[278] Freemantle, *The Chemists' War*, 159; and Slotten, "Humane Chemistry or Scientific Barbarism?" 478, 492.

[279] Freemantle, *The Chemists War,* 160.

[280] Ibid. Haber died a broken man in Switzerland and some of his own relatives were killed by Zyklon B in Hitler's concentration camps.

[281] Hartcup, *The War of Invention*, 114; and Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: Hubris, 1889-1936* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 96, 97.

[282] Chemical Section, U.S. Army Operational Division, 8th Army, RG 338, Records of U.S. Army Operations, Tactical and Support Organization, Headquarters, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, Box 1435.

[283] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders,* 464.

[284] See Guy Cuthberson, *Wilfred Owen* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

[285] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 111-12; and Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End all Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 76.

[286] Major Hermann von Giehrl, *Battle of the Meuse-Argonne From the German Perspective* (Silver Springs, Maryland: Dale Street Books, 2017), 51.

[287] Lifton was writing about Vietnam. See his *Vietnam Veterans Neither Victims Nor Executioners* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973).

[288] Lengel, *To Conquer Hell*, 68.

[289] Ibid., 140, 98, 99.

[290] Byron Farwell, *Over There: The United States in the Great War 1917-1918* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999), 174.

[291] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*, 457. Arthur Yansen observed another GI "stamping a dead German's face into a pulp," shouting out 'you dirty son of a bitch." Gary Mead, *The Doughboys: America and the First World War* (New York: Overlook Books, 2000), 345.

[292] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*.

[293] Leland Stevenson to Chief of Headquarters, 83rd Division, 2nd Depot, American Expeditionary Force, October 18, 1918, RG 120, Records of the American Expeditionary Force, World War I, National Archives, College park, Maryland, Box 1.

[294] Report French Journal de Bonne Table; Louest Éclair, Rennan, February 18, 1919, RG 120, Records of the American Expeditionary Forces, General Headquarters, World War I, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, Box 5808.

[295] "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder," Three Centuries of American Wars, http://www.history-of-american-wars.com/post-traumatic-stress-disorder.html.

[296] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*, 456.

[297] John Mikolsevek, "Patton in World War I," *Military History Magazine*, June 17, 2016, https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/daily/military-history/patton-in-wwi/; *The World War I Diary of José de la Luz Sanz*, 202. See also, Stanley P. Hishson, *General Patton: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002).

[298] Rexmond C. Cochrane, Ph.D., U.S. Army Chemical Corps Historical Studies, Gas Warfare in World War I, the 89th Division in the Bois de Bantheville, October, 1918, Washington, D.C.,: U.S. Army Chemical Corps, 1960, https://www.scribd.com/document/366750109/No-18-The-89th-Division-in-the-Bois-de-Bantheville-Oct-1918; "Report of the 29th Operations of the 1st Gas Regiment," RG 120, Records of the American Expeditionary Forces, World War I, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, Box 3295.

[299] Hudson, *Hostile Skies*, 272, 273.

[300] Ibid., 135, 172, 237; and Christoph Bergs, "The History of the U.S. Air Service in World War I," April 10, 2017, http://centenaire.org/en/autour-de-la-grande-guerre/aviation/history-us-air-service-world-war-i.

[301] Lengel, *To Conquer Hell*, 5.

[302] G.J. Meyer, "That Time in World War I America When Censorship Was Legal," *Signature*, March 6, 2017, http://www.signature-reads.com/2017/03/that-time-in-wwi-america-when-censorship-was-legal/. In July 1918, the War Department's Military Intelligence Division established the MI-10 Censorship Section within the Negative Branch.

[303] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*. On the memory of the Great War, see Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

[304] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*, 457; and Mead, *The Doughboys*, 192.

[305] Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*, 549; Hunter Liggett, *AEF: Ten Years Ago in France* (New York: Dodd, Meade and Company, 1927), p. 207; Richard S. Faulkner, "Disappearing Doughboys," *Army History*, Spring 2012, http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/pdf/stragglers.pdf.

[306] Mark Humphries, "Willfully and With Intent: Self-Inflicted Wounds and the Negotiation of Power in the Trenches," *Social History*, vol. XLVII, no 94 (June 2014), 369-397; Steven R. Welch, "Military Justice," 1914-1918 International Encyclopedia of the First World War, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/military_justice; and John Sweeney, "Lest we forget: the 306 'cowards' we executed in the first world war," *The Observer*, November 13, 1999, https://www.theguardian.com/world/1999/nov/14/firstworldwar.uk. They are commemorated by the Shot at Dawn Memorial in Staffordshire. The memorial was modeled on 17-year old British Private Herbert Burden, blindfolded and tied to a stake. No American soldiers were executed for desertion.

[307] "G-2 Operations Reports," MVS to Major Gentsch, September 12, 1918, RG 120, Records of the American Expeditionary Forces, World War I, National Archives, College Park Maryland, Box 6039.

[308] Major Single List, "The Battle of Booby's Bluffs," *The Infantry Journal*, 1921 (Washington: U.S. Infantry Association, 1922), 11, 27.

[309] "The Espionage and Sedition Acts," Digital History, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtid=2&psid=3479.

[310] E. V. Debs, "The Canton, Ohio Speech, Anti-War Speech," June 16, 1918, https://www.marxists.org/archive/debs/works/1918/canton.htm.

[311] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 76; and Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 191.

[312] Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, 81. For analysis of the links between overseas imperialism and the growth of a repressive surveillance state under Wilson, see Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The U.S., the Philippines and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

[313] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 82.

[314] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 102.

[315] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 67-68. On the lynching of Robert Praeger, see Peter Stehman, *Patriotic Murder: A World War I Hate Crime for Uncle Sam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018).

[316] Knightly, *The First Casualty*, 123.

[317] DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 105.

[318] "I.W.W. Strike Chief Lynched At Butte," *New York Times*, August 2, 1917; DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 102; and Jerald A. Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy from 1895*, 4th edition, (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2012), 91. The IWW had about 60,000 paid members in 1917, its twelfth year of its existence, and focused on organizing unskilled workers ignored by the American Federation of Labor. (Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 138.)

[319] James Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 371; and Janet Raye, "Night of Terror in Tulsa," *Hellraisers Journal*, November 12, 2017, org/hellraisers-journal-night-of-terror-in-tulsa-iwws-taken-from-jail-whipped-tarred-by-knights-of-liberty. The mob followed the *Tulsa World*'s recommendations and whipped and severely burned 11 Wobblies who had been blamed for the bombing. They carried out their atrocities, they said, "in the name of the outraged women and children of Belgium."

[320] Robert Cooney and Helen Michalowski, eds., *The Power of the People: Active Nonviolence in the United States* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1987, 51.

[321] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 107; and Brandon Weber, "Eugene Debs Got 1 Million Votes For President – As Convict Number 9653," *The Progressive*, November 2, 2016, http://progressive.org/dispatches/eugene-debs-got-1-million-votes-president-as-convict-number-9653. For a detailed view of Socialist Party support, see maps in "Socialist Party Votes, Membership, Newspapers, and Elected Officials by States and Counties," Mapping American Social Movements Through the 20th Century, http://depts.washington.edu/moves/SP_map-mix.shtml.

[322] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 18.

[323] *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47, 39 S. Ct 247 (1919); Charles F. Howlett, "The Courts and Peace Activism: Selected Legal Cases Related to Matters of Conscience and Civil Liberties," *Peace & Change*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (January 2013), 6-32.

[324] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 141-42.

[325] Ibid., 189-90; and Zach, Saltz, "The Espionage Act and Robert Goldstein's The Spirit of '76 (1917): A Historical and Legal Analysis," www.academia.edu.

[326] Gil Troy, “America’s First Minister of Propaganda,” *The Daily Beast*, March 27, 2016, https://www.thedailybeast.com/americas-first-minister-of-propaganda.

[327] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 118-19.

[328] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 72.

[329] Ibid., 55-57. As part of the propaganda offensive, Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, published ghost written memoirs which he acknowledged in a letter to Wilson, were written as an appeal to “the mass of Americans in small towns and country districts… to convince them of the necessity of carrying the Great War to a victorious conclusion.” In them, he fabricated a story, based on a mythic conversation with German ambassador Baron Hans Von Wagenheim of a meeting where the Kaiser allegedly gave German financiers two weeks to unload their Wall Street securities before a planned offensive against Britain and France, which was later introduced as evidence for imposing a punitive peace at the Versailles conference. See Jeremy Kuzmarov, “The Responsibility of Intellectuals Redux: Humanitarian Intervention and the Liberal Embrace of War in the Age of Clinton, Bush and Obama,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 24, No. 1, June 16, 2014. Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story* (New York: Doubleday, 1919), 86-87, online: https://archive.org/stream/ambassadormorgen00morguoft#page/n5/mode/2up.

[330] *Minutes of the Trustees of Columbia University*, XXXVII (March 5, 1917), Special Collections, Butler Library, Columbia University; and “German Zeppelins of World War I,” *Military History Monthly*, October 1, 2010, https://www.military-history.org/articles/german-zeppelins-of-wwi.htm. For a comprehensive account of “academic unfreedom” during the war years and after, see Charles F. Howlett and Patricia Howlett, “‘Undemocratic, Barbaric, and Scholastically Unwise:’ Conscientious Educators under Fire from the Great War through the Present,” *Peace & Change*, Vol. 44, No. 2, April 2019: 169-206.

[331] Nicholas Murray Butler, *Scholarship and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner’s & Sons, 1921), 115; Nicholas Murray Butler, “Commencement Day Address, June 6, 1917, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Special Collections, Butler Library, Columbia University; and Walter P. Metzger, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the University* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 221-32.

[332] “Trial of the Nebraska Professors, A Reflection,” *Educational Review* LVI (December 1918), 415-23.

[333] H.C. Peterson and Gilbert Fite, *Opponents of War, 1917-1918* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1957), 102-109; William E. Matsen, “Professor William S. Schaper, War Hysteria and the Price of Academic Freedom,” *Minnesota History* 51, no. 4 (Winter 1988), 131-137.

[334] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 57-58.

[335] Howard K. Beale, *Are American Teachers Free?* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1936), 32-39.

[336] Charles F. Howlett and Robbie Lieberman, *The American Peace Movement from Colonial Times to the Present* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 209-210. See also, *Hopkins v. Bucksport* III *Atlantic Reporter* 119 Me. 734 (1920); American Civil Liberty Union files, CIX, 166 ff.; see also, "Community News, Bucksport," September, 26, 1918, 18 Maine State Library; *Lucinia Heath Hopkins vs. Inhabitants of Bucksport, Appellate Decision, 1920,* Maine State Archives; "Remember This?" *Bucksport Free Press* (March 10, 1955), 5; "Obituary, Lucinia Hopkins," *Bucksport Free Press* (November 16, 1965), 18.

[337] Charles F. Howlett and Patricia Howlett, "A Silent Witness for Peace: The Case of Schoolteacher Mary Stone McDowell and America at War," *History of Education Quarterly* 48 (August 2008), 371-96.

[338] Charles F. Howlett and Audrey Cohan, *John Dewey: America's Peace-Minded Educator* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016), 99-100.

[339] Charles F. Howlett, *The American Peace and Justice Movement from the Early Twentieth Century to the Present* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Press, 2016), 60-62; Scott Bennett & Charles F. Howlett, *Antiwar Dissent and Peace Activism in World War 1 America* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 116-119.

[340] Randolph S. Bourne, "The Responsibility of Intellectuals," in Carl Resek, ed., *War and the Intellectuals: Collected Essays 1915-1919* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964; reprinted, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1999), 3 ,4 ,5, 7, 8.

[341] Randolph Bourne, "The Handicapped" *The Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1911; Christopher Reardon, "Randolph Bourne's 1911 Essay on Disability Shocked Society. But What's Changed Since," *The Guardian*, January 9, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2018/jan/09/randolph-bournes-1911-essay-on-disability-shocked-society-but-whats-changed-since; and Christopher Phelps, "The Radicalism of Randolph Bourne," *Socialism and Democracy*, 21, 1 (2007), 123-131.

[342] Phelps, "The Radicalism of Randolph Bourne," 123-131. Soon thereafter Bourne would be dead at age 32, a victim of the influenza epidemic. Phelps wrote that Bourne would "remain forever the intransigent, defiant outcast, forever young, forever the halfway revolutionary socialist with anarchist leanings."

[343] Randolph S. Bourne, "Twilight of the Idols," in *War and the Intellectuals: Collected Essays 1915-1919*, ed. Carl Resek (Indianapolis: Hacket Publishing, 1964),53, 54, 60.

[344] Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (Boston: Little & Brown, 1980), 88-92, 96, 97, 95.

[345] Ibid., 113, 158.

[346] Ibid., 165; and Harold Stearns, *Liberalism in America: Its Origins, Its Temporary Collapse, Its Future* (New York: Liveright, 1919).

[347] George Blakely, *Historians on the Homefront: Propagandists in the Great War* (University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 11, 12, 13, 138; C. Hartley Grattan, "Historians Cut Loose," *American Mercury* 11 (August 1927): 414-430; "Albert B. Hart of Harvard Dies," *New York Times*, June 17, 1943, 21. Hart was an authority on George Washington who headed a national commission commemorating the 200th year anniversary of his birth. He also wrote books on slavery and the civil war and though a believer in the racial inferiority of African-Americans, supervised the doctoral thesis of W.E.B DuBois at Harvard.

[348] Upton Sinclair, *The Goose Step: A Study of American Education* (Albert & Charles Boni, 1922, 1923), 18. See also Clyde Barrows, *Universities and the Capitalist State: Corporate Liberalism and the Reconstruction of American Higher Education, 1894-1928* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).

[349] Blakely*, Historians on the Homefront*, 38.

[350] Ibid., 37, 38, 98, 40, 41, 43, 47, 49. Another widely circulated pamphlet, "The War Message and the Facts Behind It," reproduced Wilson's April 2 pro-war speech with added information and comments. "The Tentacles of the German Octopus," by Earl E. Sperry of Princeton University, classified German American newspapers, clubs, schools and churches as dangerous appendages of the German government. "German War Practices," meanwhile, was a rather amateurish account of German war atrocities that drew largely on unverified secondary accounts.

[351] Blakely, *Historians on the Homefront*, 145, 146; Carl Becker, *New Liberties for Old* (New Haven, 1941), 66. Becker wrote that "We were only professors, but the world was still young and we wanted to do something to beat the Hun and make the world safe for democracy."

[352] Barnes, *The Genesis of the World War*; and Grattan, "Historians Cut Loose," 430. Historian Charles H. Beard, also initially supported the war, though he resigned from his position at Columbia to protest the firing of two anti-war professors.

[353] H.L. Mencken, "Star Spangled Men" *The New Republic,* 24 (September 29, 1920), 119.

[354] DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 103; Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 111; and Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 136-37.

[355] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 162.

[356] Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 110-11; and "World War I Draft Registration Cards," National Archives, Military Records, https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww1/draft-registration.

[357] James Weinstein, "Anti-War Sentiment and the Socialist Party, 1917-1918," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 2, 1959, 217-18.

[358] Ibid., 217.

[359] Kazin, *War Against the War*, 207.

[360] James Green, *Grass Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 364.

[361] Nigel Anthony Sellars. "Green Corn Rebellion," Oklahoma Historical Society, http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=GR022; and Chambers, *The Eagle and the Dove*, lx-lxi. A fictional account of the abortive rebellion can be found in William Cunningham's novel *The Green Corn Rebellion*. See also, Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz and John Womack, "Dreams of Revolution: Oklahoma 1917," *Monthly Review Magazine*, November, 2010; William Cunningham, *The Green Corn Rebellion*, introduction by Nigel A. Sellars (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010); and Nigel Sellars, *Oil, Wheat and Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World in Oklahoma, 1905-1930* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998).

[362] Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism*, 365.

[363] Ibid., 217; and Kennedy, *Over Here*, 166-67.

[364] *Arver v. United States*, 245 U.S. 390 (1918).

[365] *Goldman v. United States*, 245 U.S. 474 (1918); and *Ruthenberg v. United States*, 245 U.S. 480 (1918)].

[366] DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 103; Luke Schleif, "Conscientious Objectors," 1914-1918 International Encyclopedia of the First World War, October 8, 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/conscientious_objectors; and Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 68, 70-71. See also, "Life in the American Army Camps," a digital history project of Swarthmore College Peace Collection, http://cosandgreatwar.swarthmore.edu/exhibits/show/learning-more/army-camps.

[367] Coffman, *The War to End all Wars*, 74, 71; and Mead, *The Doughboys*, 363.

[368] Coffman, *The War to End all Wars*, 75; and Farwell, *Over There*, 53.

[369] Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 71-72; and DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 103.

[370] Coffman, *The War to End all Wars*, 76; and Farwell, *Over There*, 53.

[371] John Nevin Sayre, "Instrument for Peace." Unpublished memoir, pp. 64-68, In John Nevin Sayre Papers, DG 117, Swarthmore College Peace Collection.

[372] Duane Stoltzfus, *Pacifists in Chains: The Persecution of the Hutterites During the Great War* (John Hopkins University Press, 2013).

[373] Sayre, "Instrument for Peace."

[374] Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 81.

[375] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 162; and Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2001), 15. Robert Bullard wrote these words in his 1925 published memoir, but the same attitude was reflected in his journal entries in the fall of 1918. Bullard's discrediting of African American soldiers undermined the "optimistic reception" of reports of Negro soldiers fighting in the war and became a public controversy, according to Lee.

[376] Christopher Capozzola, "Review Essay: From Harlem to the Rhine: New Perspectives on African-American Military Service in the First World War," *New York History*, Fenimore Art Museum, Vol. 95, No. 4 (2010), 371.

[377] Chad Williams, "African Americans and World War I, Africana Age, https://web.archive.org/web/20140413185032/http://exhibitions.nypl.org/africanaage/essay-world-war-i.html.

[378] Ibid.; and C. Calvin Smith, "The Houston Riot of 1917, Revisited," *The Houston Review*, 13 (2): 85–95, https://houstonhistorymagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/houston-riot-1917-revisited.pdf.

[379] Jami Bryan, "Fighting for Respect: African-American Soldiers in WWI," *On Point* (an Army Historical Foundation publication), https://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwi/articles/fightingforrespect.aspx.

[380] *The World War I Diary of José de la Luz Sáenz*, ed. and with an introduction by Emilio Zamora, translated by Emilio Zamora with Ben Maya (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2014), 9-11.

[381] "Kings Going Forth to War," *New York Times*, April 2, 1914.

[382] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 30.

[383] Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The New Basic History of the United States* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1968) 128; and Brian D'Haeseleer and Roger Peace,

"The War of 1898 and the U.S.-Filipino War, 1899-1902," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2016, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/1898-1899.

[384] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 27-28; and Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 16.

[385] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 28; Brendan Daly, "Facts about Great Famine emigration out of Ireland revealed," January 24, 2017, Irish Central, https://www.irishcentral.com/news/new-facts-about-great-famine-emigration-out-of-ireland-revealed-139540423-23778842; and Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 17.

[386] President Woodrow Wilson, "Address to Naturalized Citizens at Convention Hall, Philadelphia, May 10, 1915," and "Fifth Annual Message, December 4, 1917," The American Presidency Project.

[387] Bennett and Howlett, eds., *Antiwar Dissent and Peace Activism in World War I America*, 3; and James L. Tyron, Introduction in Jules Moritzen, *The Peace Movement of America* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), xviii. The median years of completed schooling in 1910 for Americans age 25 and older was 8.1 years. School enrollment of 5-19 year-olds in 1910 was 61% for whites and 45% for blacks, with male and female in roughly equal proportion. Thomas D. Snyder, editor, National Center for Educational Statistics, "120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait" (U.S. Department of Education, 1993), https://nces.ed.gov/pubs93/93442.pdf.

[388] "Jane Addams and the Promotion of Peace and Social Justice among the Masses," in Charles F. Howlett and Ian Harris, *Books Not Bombs: Teaching Peace since the Dawn of the Republic* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2010), 56-62; and Jane Addams, *Newer Ideals of Peace* (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1907), 60-67 & *passim*. Following U.S. entry into the war, some government leaders questioned Addams's patriotism, while her worst detractors labeled her "the most dangerous woman in America." In 1931, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her life-long work for peace and justice.

[389] Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (Syracuse University Press, 1993), 8-14. The ideas and actions of these women peace activists helped define the meaning and content of the modern peace movement.

[390] William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War," http://engl099-marks.wikispaces.umb.edu/file/view/James+Moral+Equivalent.pdf. James' essay, originally a speech in 1906, was later published in an essay collection in *Representative Essays in Modern Thought*, edited by Harrison Ross Steeves, in 1913 (after James' death in 1910). His thesis laid part of the intellectual groundwork for the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression of the 1930s. For more on William James's developing views on war, see Paul Croce, "William James's Psychological Prelude to Politics: What Place for Moral Equivalents in American Polarization on the Potomac and the Jordan?" *William James Studies*,

Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 2018): 142-76, http://williamjamesstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/7.-Croce_James-Psychological-Prelude-to-Politics-Spring-2018-3-22-142-176.pdf.

[391] Peter van den Dungen, "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace," in Mitchell K. Hall, ed., *Opposition to War: An Encyclopedia of U.S. Peace and Antiwar Movements* by (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2018), 108-110. Though committed to peace, Carnegie's U.S. Steel company profited from selling armor plate to the U.S. Navy.

[392] David S. Patterson, *Toward a Warless World: The Travail of the American Peace Movement, 1887-1914* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 141-47; Howlett and Lieberman, *The American Peace Movement*, 172-75; and Michael Lutzker, "The 'Practical' Peace Advocates: An Interpretation of the American Peace Movement, 1898-1917 (Ph.D. diss. Rutgers University, 1969), *passim*.]

[393] See "Elihu Root, Biographical," Nobelprize.org, https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1912/root-bio.html.

[394] See John A. Hobson, Imperialism: A Study (1902), Online Library, http://files.libertyfund.org/files/127/0052_Bk.pdf. Hobson was a member of the British Fabian Society.

[395] John Haynes Holmes, "War and the Social Movement," *Survey*, September 26, 1914, 629-30, cited in Bennett and Howlett, *Antiwar Dissent and Peace Activism in World War I*, 11; and Howlett and Lieberman, *The American Peace Movement*, 184-86.

[396] Ella Lyman Cabot et al., *A Course in Citizenship* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1914); "Fannie Fern Andrews, The American School Peace League, and the First Peace Studies Curriculum." In Howlett and Harris, *Books Not Bombs*, 64-70; Susan Zeiger, "Teaching Peace: Lessons from a Peace Studies Curriculum of the Progressive Era," *Peace & Change* 25 (January 2000), 52-69.

[397] Threlkeld, "American School Peace League."

[398] Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 25-26.

[399] Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America, 1914-1941* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 18.

[400] Harriet H. Alonso, ed., *Women at The Hague: The International Congress of Women and Its Results* (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 76-77. Among the prominent individuals in attendance were Americans Jane Addams and Emily Greene Balch, both later recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize, Alice Hamilton and Aletta H. Jacobs of the Netherlands,

Chrystal Macmillan of Great Britain, Rosa Genoni of Italy, Rosika Schwimmer and Olga Misar of Austria-Hungary, Marguerite Sarten of Belgium, Dr. Anita Augspurg of Germany, Dr. Emily Arnesen of Norway, and Anna Kleman of Sweden.

[401] Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 75-81.

[402] "The Hague Conference 1915," The Peace Pledge Union, http://menwhosaidno.org/context/women/hague_1.html.

[403] Ibid.

[404] Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 82-103.

[405] Barbara S. Kraft, *The Peace Ship: Henry Ford's Pacifist Adventure in the First World War* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1978).

[406] Frank Ernest Hill and Allan Nevins, "Henry Ford and His Peace Ship," *American Heritage*, February 1958, Vol. 9, Issue 2, https://www.americanheritage.com/content/henry-ford-and-his-peace-ship.

[407] "President Wilson Speaks Privately about Mediation to the American Neutral Conference Committee (1916)," in Chambers, *The Eagle and the Dove*, 90.

[408] Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 232.

[409] Kazin, *War Against War*, 38. Al Pianadosi and Alfred Bryan, "I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be a Soldier." Recording: Edison Collection, Library of Congress. The song writer, Alfred Bryan, wrote a contrary sequel in 1917, "It's Time For Every Boy To Be a Soldier," an indication of how the mood of the country shifted once war was declared.

[410] Nancy Gentile Ford, *The Great War and America: Civil-military Relations during World War I* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008), 10.

[411] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 180-82, 179.

[412] Kazin, *War Against War*, 33-34, 17, 38.

[413] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 40; and "The Preparedness Movement," The United States World War One Centennial Commission, https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/illinois-in-wwi/934-illinois-in-wwi-article-2.html. See also, John Garry Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers: The Plattsburg Training Camp Movement, 1913-1920* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1972.

[414] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 102.

[415] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 106. Maxim had previously assisted in the writing of Roy Norton's 1907 novel *The Vanishing Fleets*, serialized in the Associated Sunday Magazine, which centered on a father-daughter genius team, Dr. William and Norma Roberts, who construct a fleet of gigantic anti-gravity radio-planes which bestow on the U.S. "the greatest engine of war that science has ever known." After America is subject to sneak attack by Japan, assisted by communist spies, and gives up its Philippines colony, the President feels he has a duty to use "this most deadly machine ever conceived – as a means of controlling and thereby ending wars for all time." The Japanese are vanquished, dying in vast numbers, as science brings "an end to brute force and barbarism." Roberts' inventions bestowed so much power the U.S. could now not only "conquer the world but destroy the inhabitants of other nations" though chooses to "utilize its strength for the benefit of all men." Roy Norton*, The Vanishing Fleets* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1908); H. Bruce Franklin*, War Stars: The Superweapon and the American Imagination*, rev ed. (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), 41-43.

[416] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 93-94, 97-98.

[417] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 39-40; and Cooney and Michalowski, eds., *The Power of the People*, 38-39.

[418] Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 21; and Kazin, *War Against War*, 45.

[419] and "Jane Addams writes to Woodrow Wilson about dangers of preparing for war," October 29, 1915, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/jane-addams-writes-to-woodrow-wilson-about-dangers-of-preparing-for-war.

[420] DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 95.

[421] C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 240. See also, "American Union Against Militarism Records, 1915-1922," Swarthmore College Peace Collection, DG004, https://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG001-025/DG004AUAM.htm.

[422] Barbara J. Steinson, "Woman's Peace Party (WPP), in Mitchell, *Opposition to War: An Encyclopedia of U.S. Peace and Antiwar Movements*, Vol. 2, 715-17; and DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 96.

[423] "Statement of Mr. Frank Donnblazer," in Senate Committee on Military Affairs, "Preparedness for National Defense," *Hearings*, 64th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1916), pt. 21, 8 February 1916, 1042-44, reprinted in Scott H. Bennett and Charles F. Howlett, eds., *Antiwar Dissent and Peace Activism in World War I America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 100-102.

[424] Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 192-93; and Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 23.

[425] Kazin, *War Against War*, 82.

[426] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 96-97.

[427] Chambers, *The Eagle and the Dove*, l-li.

[428] DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 96-97. Wilson's "New Freedom" platform promoted anti-trust legislation designed to break up big business monopolies, but he opposed the main thrust of progressive reform, which was government regulation of big business. The ideal of the "New Freedom" platform was a return to small-scale "free enterprise," which appealed to many voters but had no chance of succeeding in the big business corporate economy. Ironically, during the war years, the Wilson administration presided over the largest government takeover of the economy in U.S. history up to that time, which was oddly enticing to progressives who did not discriminate between the ends of war and peace.

[429] Pines, *America's Greatest Blunder*, 102; and Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace*, 193.

[430] Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War*, 214-15; and Tim Watts, "A. L. Benson," in James Ciment, ed., *The Home Front Encyclopedia: United States, Britain, and Canada in World Wars I and II*, Vol. 1 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2007), 22-23.

[431] Kazin, *War Against War*, 148-49.

[432] Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 26-27.

[433] Kazin, *War Against War*, 150.

[434] The Woman's Peace Party, "Eight Alternatives to War," reprinted in Bennett and Howlett, eds., *Antiwar Dissent and Peace Activism in World War I America*, 52-53.

[435] Kazin, *War Against War*, 151, 156. The Socialist Party issued the statement on February 2, 1917.

[436] The idea here follows the organizing strategies of Mohandas Gandhi in his campaign against British rule in India and of Martin Luther King, Jr. in his movement for civil rights. These leaders did not attack the whole injustice of imperialism or racism, respectively, but set out to change a specific policy, a single manifestation of the larger injustice, namely, the British ban on producing salt and the segregation of public buses in Montgomery, Alabama. The great energy of their movements was focused, like a magnifying glass concentrating light, on one particular objective at one particular place and time.

[437] "Jane Addams' Recollection of the February 28, 1917, Meeting with Wilson (1922)," in Chambers, *The Eagle and the Dove*, 107-108.

[438] Charles DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 98.

[439] Kazin, *War Against War*, 176; and Kennedy, *Over Here*, 35. On John Dewey, see Howlett and Cohan, *John Dewey*.

[440] DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 99. Kellogg organized the League of Free Nations Association in April 1918.

[441] Barbara J. Stinson, "Woman's Peace Party (WPP)," *Opposition to War: An Encyclopedia of U.S. Peace and Antiwar Movements*, ed. Mitchell K. Hall (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2018), 717.

[442] Cooney and Michalowski, eds., *The Power of the People*, 52; and Weinstein, "Anti-War Sentiment and the Socialist Party," 219.

[443] People's Council of America for Democracy and Peace Collected Records, 1917-1919 (historical summary)," Swarthmore College Peace Collection, https://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/CDGA.M-R/pcadp.htm; and DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 102.

[444] Bennett and Howlett, eds., *Antiwar Dissent*, 163-168.

[445] Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory*, 108. See also, Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land? World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006): The NAACP's 1917 annual report, entitled "Freeing America" expressed the hope that the "present horror of war" might lead to "a new birth of freedom," but also warned that the mission abroad would be hollow without a transformation of the caste system at home (page 39).

[446] Coffman, *The War to End all Wars*, 69; Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders*, 244; Chad Williams, "World War I in the Imagination of W.E.B DuBois," Modern American History, 1, 1 (March 2018), 3-22. DuBois wrote an essay, "The African Roots of War," published in the *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1915), in which he examined the imperial appetite of European nations for the plundered wealth and resources of sub-Saharan Africa. He called upon democratically minded leaders of the white race in Europe and the United States to end racism and exploitation of "colored" peoples throughout the world. In later years, DuBois adopted a radical socialist outlook, resigned from the NAACP in 1934, and opposed the Korean War (1950-53). See also, Howlett and Lieberman, *A History of the American Peace Movement*, 219-220.

[447] James Weinstein, “Anti-War Sentiment and the Socialist Party, 1917-1918,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 2, 1959, 230, 219-28; and Chambers, *The Eagle and the Dove*, lxi. Maurer spoke on November 4, 1917, in Reading, Pennsylvania. The *New York Tribune* article was published October 18, 1917. The *New York Herald* cartoon ran November 2, 1917.

[448] Edward J. Muzik, “Victor L. Berger: Congress and the Red Scare,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (summer 1964): 309-18.

[449] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 244; and George Creel, letter to Wilson, November 8, 1918, reprinted in George Creel, *The War, the World, and Wilson* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, June 1920, 145-46.

[450] Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, 302.

[451] “Isolationism” in Digital History, 2016, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtid=2&psid=3483.

[452] The pact was named after U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg and French Minister of Foreign Affairs Aristide Briand. See “The Kellogg-Briand Pace, 1928,” U.S. Office of the Historian, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/kellogg.

[453] The high regard for Wilson is noted in James Thornton Harris, “Review of Patricia O’Toole’s ‘The Moralist: Woodrow Wilson and the World He Made,’” History News Network, August 6, 2018, https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/169718.

[454] Among the active peace organizations in the 1920s were the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Women’s Peace Union, Women’s Peace Society, National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, National Council for Prevention of War, War Resisters League, Fellowship of Reconciliation, and American Friends Service Committee.

[455] “Isolationism,” Digital History, 2016, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtid=2&psid=3483.

About the authors

This essay is the collective work of Charles F. Howlett, Jeremy Kuzmarov, and Roger Peace, with editing contributions from readers Anne Meisenzahl, Tom Clark, and Robert E. Hannigan. Charles Howlett is Professor of Education Emeritus and recipient of the Distinguished Faculty Alumni Award at Molloy College. He is the author of numerous books on the history of American peace movements and co-author of the American Historical Association’s teaching pamphlet, “The American Peace Movement: History and Historiography” (1985). His most recent books are *Antiwar Dissent and Peace Activism in World War I* America (University of Nebraska Press, 2014) with Scott Bennett; and *John Dewey: America’s Peace-Minded Educator*

(University of Southern Illinois Press, 2016) with Audrey Cohan. He is a member of the Board of Editors for *Peace and Change*. He is also a veteran and served as an Additional Duty Air Force Academy Admissions Liaison Officer in the Civilian/Retired category as well as a Retired Commissioned Officer in the Department of Military and Naval Affairs of the New York Guard.
Jeremy Kuzmarov is the author of "The Korean War" essay and co-author of other essays on this website. His books include *The Myth of the Addicted Army: Vietnam and the Modern War on Drugs* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2009) and M*odernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation Building in the American Century* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2012). He is the co-author, with John Marciano, of *The Russians Are Coming, Again: The First Cold War as Tragedy, the Second as Farce* (Monthly Review Press, 2018). He is active in the Historians for Peace and Democracy and the Tulsa Peace fellowship, and is a blogger for The Huffington Post.
Roger Peace is a diplomatic historian, coordinator of this website, former community college instructor, and author of *A Call to Conscience: The Anti-Contra War Campaign* (2012).

Cite this article:

Bibliography: Howlett, Charles F., Jeremy Kuzmarov, and Roger Peace. "United States Participation in World War One." United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2018, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/ww1.
Endnotes or footnotes: Charles F. Howlett, Jeremy Kuzmarov, and Roger Peace, "United States Participation in World War One," United States Foreign Policy History and Resource Guide website, 2018, http://peacehistory-usfp.org/ww1.
* * *