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Jeremy Plumptre

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The Peacekeeper Who Went to War

Mémoire de recherche fin d'études de Jeremy Plumtre

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General Introduction

On April 6, 1917, Woodrow Wilson stood before the United States Congress and uttered the words that would define him and the Nation: “*We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend... It is a fearful thing to lead these great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts...*”¹ At the conclusion of his speech, the room filled with rapturous applause. The United States celebrated the declaration of war with a passion that matched that of Europe in 1914. All her industrial might and her unlimited manpower were channeled willingly into the “*War to Save Civilization.*” Wilson’s speech was not simply a declaration or a national promise, it was the embodiment of a new national Identity and duty proclaimed by God himself. For the nation's young citizens, whose pioneering days were barely over, a cause was offered to put aside one's own self-interests and go beyond one's border to safeguard the freedom of other nations.

This was the true birth of the modern American Peacekeeper Identity, the genesis of what would become the USA’s role on the world stage as a global law enforcement. Yet, to the rest of the world the United States decision to join the war was as big a shock as it was to the man who read the declaration. During his three years in office in the build-up to 1917, Wilson's opposition to American mobilization had been firm and uncompromising. More than that, he had described America's need to stay neutral as equivalent to a command from God himself: “*There will be no war, this country does not intend to become involved in war. It would be a crime against civilization for us to go into it.*”² His objections to conflict were based on logic and reason. He saw no moral obligation and deeply resented those who claimed the war to be a holy cause. For the wider majority, his views were well received by a population born and bred in the notion of safety and isolationism. America was by its very nature, a nation born out of the desire to be independent and separate from Europe. The very essence of the American identity was founded on the need to break away and create a new society, far from the interference and jealous rivalry of the 'Old World'. Most Americans had little love for the

¹ Woodrow Wilson, *War Message to Congress, Address delivered at Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress*, April 2, 1917: U.S. 65th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document 5. Website: Wilson's War Message to Congress - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

² Woodrow Wilson, *Speech to House, War: A Crime against Civilization* - Antiwar.com Blog

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land of their ancestors, having fled out of persecution or poverty. Even those whose foreign origins were long forgotten held feelings of distrust. The memory of The War of Independence to break away from British colonial authority in the 18th century, ran deep in the national consciousness.

How then could such a transition be possible? How could a nation, born out of immigration and bred in the firm ideals of isolationism, willingly sacrifice its own countrymen in a foreign war? Wilson was not the first leader to adopt the 'Peacekeeper Identity'. Others had tried and the nation had refused to follow, so why now? Was the old isolationist identity of the nation slowly eroded by foreign events? Or was this old identity itself the cause, a hidden desire to break away from its self-focused priorities, a desire that had been dormant, needing only to be triggered by an outside influence.

Furthermore, what were the long terms effects of this ideological change after the guns fell silent? In order for the nation to become the world power it proclaimed itself to be. The demands of Total War and national unity would demand the sacrifice of many traits and rights that had previously been considered fundamental to US identity. The ordinary citizen raised with the 'American Dream' of creating an independent and prosperous new life would volunteer to die in foreign fields, spend his savings on War Bonds to fund a government projects, and even sacrifice his rights of free speech and expression to guarantee a united and effective national cause. The War to Save Democracy, at the expense of US lives, freedoms, and resources, seemed to go against everything the founding fathers and even the president of the time had preached. And yet not only did the US choose this Peacekeeper Identity, but it has also cultivated it.

At the time of the writing of this work, the Speech given by Woodrow Wilson is more than a century old, and yet the US still proudly proclaims itself the Peacekeeper of democracy and just as in 1917, many other nations identify them accordingly.

What makes this continued legacy hard to understand is the US's century lengthy battle against its own identity. Following the end of the Great War, Wilson's polices were famously dismissed and the nation vowed to return to isolationism. This desire to put 'America first' as President Warren G. Hardin would put it, has continued to be at the forefront of foregone. relations despite the US becoming the nation with the greatest influence on the world stage. Is the Peacekeeper Identity then simply an image that the US continues to project without merit, or has it become an embedded need the nation cannot escape from?

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The focus of this memoir will be to understand how the nation transitioned itself from neutrality to combatant, to onlooker. Its ability to express equal devotion to all states of mind. This will be the neutral ground to observe the unconscious subtexts of the different identities, how a nation's identity is slowly transformed by a host of different forces, government ambitions, religious memory, and popular perception. How politicians, activists, artists, and historians viewed the US identity as it slowly evolved. To see with hindsight, what were the desires of the key players of this ideological metamorphosis and how their actions aided or hindered their causes.

Special focus will be on how a modern nation is capable of reinterpreting its embedded morals when confronted with an outside element. The Great War was a fate of history that the US had no part in creating, a purely outside provocation. Yet this external event would be adapted to fit into a domestic perception that the ordinary US citizen could identify.

The body of my work will be divided into four main sections. Firstly, the pre-war identity of the United States, looking into the social, political, economic, and national events that built the American identity of 1914 and the efforts made towards the first Peacekeeper Identity by Theodore Roosevelt. The Great War would be the

The second section will view how the different aspects of this identity reacted to the events of the World War, how they influenced the nation's slow integration into the conflict and the adoption of a new national and international identity that would never have been possible in the pre-war age.

The third part will be exploring how the US, both Government and Nation, had to be adapted to the needs of total war and the subsequent side effects on the US' National Identity. The final section will look at how Wilson's Peacekeeper Identity was finally received when the decisive moment came to make peace, and the impact it had on its identity going forward. The long-term aim being not to determine whether the Peacekeeper Identity is true, but why the US needs to believe it is true.

Part I: Roosevelt, The Soldier of Peace

19th century -1914

1: Introduction

Whilst Woodrow Wilson is remembered as the father of the modern US Peacekeeper Identity, he was not the first president to abdicate US foreign intervention with the agenda of preserving democracy abroad. Nor was he the first President to push the US's role as a Global mediator for peace without committing to mobilization. The very name of Peacekeeper used to identity US foregone intervention was first used long before Wilson's administration.

The 26th president of the USA, Theodore Roosevelt, left behind a cult of personality that has made him a mythological figure, yet many failed to remember the steps he took in pushing the US onto the world stage, turning the page of history, and associating the work to Wilson.

What makes this juxtaposition ever more storage is how Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt are viewed as two of the most polar-opposite presidents, proposing policies and agendas that the other would condemn. Theodore famously made no efforts to hide his disdain for Wilson's new administration and Wilson would return the favor by vowing to put an end to the imperialist nature of US foreign policy and focus on domestic affairs. Yet despite the lack of mutual agreement on what the US should be in world affairs; the fact remains that many of Roosevelt's policies and even arguments for mobilization would come back in the Wilson administration. Why then is Wilson remembered as the Peacekeeper President if so, many elements had already been implemented by another? Wilson was elected under the rallying cries for new isolationism measures, but was that truly the future the nation wanted? Moreover, if their policies were so similar, then why did Wilson succeed where Roosevelt had failed only a few years before?

The History of the US following the War of Independence can be best explained by a nation's search for an identity. A nation born out of a mix of European cultures and values that was also founded on the desire to divorce itself from the ways of the Old World. The 19th Century saw the constant revaluation of what it meant to be a US citizen and what new role that entailed. The dream of manifest destiny, The American Creed, the American Dream, and ultimately the American Peacekeeper were all attempt to find a cause the young pioneering nation could rally behind.

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This first section will be devoted to setting the stage of what the US national image had grown into leading up to The Great War. The slow evolution from the early pioneers to the pre-war progressive movement. The numerous elements that would come to embody the Peacekeeper identity, the desire for Purification, need for national protection, ambition for expansion and international recognition. We will see how all of these elements seemingly came together under Theodore Roosevelt, and how the 26th president did his utmost to use them according to his agendas and policies. Finally, we will then examine why this first peacekeeper failed to take its place in history and what this meant leading into the events of 1914.

2: The Need for Identity and Meaning

The first ligaments of America's Peacekeeper Identity, the duty of the nation to spread and safeguard democracy, can be traced back to before The Constitution itself. In his 1630 sermon *'Dreams of a City on a Hill'*³ the preacher, John Winthrop, delivered the following speech before his fellow settlers which would set the tone for the American identity: *"Thus stands the cause between God and us. We are entered into a covenant with Him for this work. We have taken out a commission. The Lord hath given us leave to draw our own articles."* His words showed the foundation of what would become part of US national identity, the belief that her might and good fortune was a gift from Heaven. That the people of the New World had a duty to create a new order and that all others were blessed to be a part of it. Yet it would be a long process for Winthrop's words to become of international relevance.

When news of the Great War reached the US press, it was of little concern to most of the population. One newspaper observer wrote *"It is coming to the form hardly physical at all, it came as newspaper dispatches from far away, far away in the distance and even further away in spirit. The dispatches were as if black flocks of birds, frightened from their familiar rookeries, came darting across the ocean."*⁴ The US's position in 1914 was clear, and to other nations, expected. The country had emerged from the Civil War in 1865 with the resources and potential to become a world power. Yet, for the next quarter of a century the United States did not assert itself or play any great role on the World stage. Foreign alliances and trade deals were not yet important as industrial output could be absorbed by internal demands. The focus of this young nation was self-purification which demanded a sense of separatism. Following the War of Independence, President George Washington had expressed the still relevant desire *"Why by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rival-ship, interest, humor and caprice."*⁵ Inside this isolationist bubble, kept apart from the 'Old World', a new post-Civil War national identity was forged.

To understand how a nation could adapt its image in such a way it is important to understand how the concept of US national identity was understood and how it differed from other nations.

³ John Winthrop, *Dreams of a City on a Hill' 1630*, in *A Library of American Literature: Early Colonial Literature, 1607-1675*, Edmund Clarence Stedman and Ellen Mackay Hutchinson, eds. (New York: 1892), 304-307

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *"Right Is More Precious Than Peace"* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁵ George Washington, *Farewell Address by George Washington*, National Archives, September 19, 1796, (archives.gov)

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The identity of a nation, in the classical sense, means the distinct subjective characteristics that define one's membership to a community. Generally, these characteristics are a common language, or religion, or ethical heritage. In the case of the US however, this topic becomes one of debate as the nation was founded with the national characteristics of other nation, chiefly Great Britain. The country has always been heavily reliant on the influx of immigration, resulting in the variety of differing national characteristics from a vast range of countries of origin making the US national identity very vague.

As a result of this, many early thinkers established the notion that the US was identified not by specific visual and audio features, such as language or religion, but by ideological values. The shared value of liberal politics in view of their new place. *'American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony'* was published in 1981 by Professor Samuel P. Huntington. He put forward the notion of "*The American Creed.*"⁶ A national set of ideals that all follow: Liberty, equality, democracy, individualism, and the rule of law under a constitution. This Utopian ideology is one that faces many major flaws when compared with American history. In an article appearing in the 'Belknap Press of Harvard University Press', in 1981, by historian Mary P. Nichols, a retired professor of political science, she wrote: "*The values of the American Creed are so idealistic that reality inevitably falls short. The major conflicts of American history have been attempts to reshape reality to conform to the ideal.*"⁷ Yet in spite of this, the US identity as a collection of shared values is a notion that many have cultivated. The English poet Israel Zangwill's 1909 work *'The Melting Pot'*⁸ is one play that explores the US's identity of shared values, heavily influenced by the *'Letters of an American Farmer'* by Hector Saint John of Crèvecoeur in 1782. Zangwill's play was dedicated to President Theodore Roosevelt after his triumphant victory in Washington. It depicted the rebirth of a new arrival on the American continent by a symbolic fusion of all the different cultures. "*Here shall they all unite to build the Republic of Man, and the kingdom of God.*" In his play, Zangwill compared The US to the great cities of Rome and Jerusalem, very much drawing from John Winthrop's vision of 'The City on the Hill'. In Zangwill's vision, each new migrant of different origin was a new servant towards a single goal, "*America, where all races and nations come to labor and take forward. Peace, peace to all ye unborn millions, fated to fill this giant continent-the God of our children give you peace.*" Roosevelt greatly admired the play and the ideology it stood by "*There should be*

⁶ Professor Samuel P. Huntington, *'American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony'*, Cambridge, Mass, 1981 : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, American politics : the promise of disharmony : Huntington, Samuel P : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁷ Mary P. Nichols, *Discord and the American Creed*, *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony* by Samuel P. Huntington, The Review of Politics, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Jan., 1983), pp. 149-152 (4 pages), [Discord and the American Creed on JSTOR](#)

⁸ Israel Zangwill, *'The Melting Pot'*, New York, The Macmillan company, 1909, act 4, page 199. The melting-pot, drama in four acts : Zangwill, Israel, 1864-1926 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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only one nationality here, and that is an American nationality."⁹

The notion of the shared identity and 'American Creed' is one that has continued to endure despite criticism from historians such as Mary P. Nicholas. During his time as Vice President, Al Gore had no hesitation as he translated the words of The United States motto '*E pluribus unum*' to '*From one, many.*' Yet this belief that the US identity is based purely on shared values, with no discrimination towards language, religion or cultural origins simply does not hold true. Charles Kesler, a Senior member of the Claremont Institute and editor of the Claremont Review of Books, wrote in 2005 an essay, '*The Crisis of American National Identity*', where he directly questions Huntington's Creed and its interpretation of cultural fluidity on the linguistic side, "*In fact, a country based on common principles would logically want a common language in which to express them.*"¹⁰ He also questions the concept of religious freedom, "*As for God, there is no reason to accept the ACLU's (American Civil Liberties Union) godless version of the creed as the correct one. The Declaration mentions Him four times, for example, and from the Declaration to the Gettysburg Address to the Pledge of Allegiance (a creed document if there ever was one), the creed has affirmed God's support for the rational political principles of this nation.*"

Despite the desired belief that the nation is culturally diverse, there is no hiding that Anglo-Protestantism has emerged, as not only the dominant cultural identity, but the one that is recognized by authority, "*This viewpoint, which goes beyond culture, is the political viewpoint.*" However, Kesler does not flatly dismiss Huntington's theory, confirming that traces of the American Creed are indeed real and can be seen as part of the cultural identity. But he mentions two important points: Firstly, that this is not unique to America, almost every nation had its own creed based on its own values that are not classical characteristics, such as religion or language, France being one example among many, *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*'. His second point is that even if the Creed may have merit, it is not one single grain from which a national identity may grow, it needs a solid foundation, an original identity "*the American republic needed a culture to help uphold its creed.*" The original culture of the founders of the nation, Anglo Protestant, was needed as a base from which a set of values could be constructed. Without it, the moral values would have no legitimacy or worth. The memory of what was fought for by the first settlers in their hope of religious freedom and later, in the War of Independence, the cultural heritage of those now legendary figures, are what gave the Creed meaning. Even Huntington was compelled to adapt his own view in his

⁹ *Roosevelt Boom Sweeps Saratoga: Lewis Yields to It, Attorney General, The New York Times, July 24, 1918*

¹⁰ Charles R. Kesler, '*The Crisis of American National Identity*', July 20, 2005, Heritage Lectures, No. 906/Published by The Heritage Foundation on November 8, 2005, The Crisis of American National Identity Charles R – DocsLib

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later years, writing "*America with only the creed as a basis for unity would soon evolve into a loose confederation of ethnic, racial, cultural and political groups.*"⁶ This is not to say that the America of 1914 was a carbon copy of the English Anglo-Puritan culture that founded Jamestown in 1607. Like every culture, the identity had evolved and changed to become one unique to its circumstances, but it remains nonetheless, a cultural identity, and as such, has its own right to refuse to adapt, "*No society has a standing natural duty to receive him or to take him in.*" Which brings us back to the identity crisis of the late 19th Century.

The US had cultivated the idealist dream of '*Manifest Destiny*' (coined by John O'Sullivan) in the firm belief that the expansion and exploitation of the nation's land and resources was ordained by God. This utopia was a far cry from Wilson's duty to safeguard global democracy, but the seeds were visible. This driving force, whilst Utopic at times, was nonetheless The US' own creation. The dream of founding a new Jerusalem, (the allure of the vision proclaimed by men like John Winthrop and Turner), drove the young nation to strive for ever greater national and economic aims. Canada did not have this same incentive, still attached, and supported by its links to the '*Old World*'.

At the heart of this movement was immigration. Since the 1840s, the Industrial Revolution and territorial expansion had triggered a rapid increase in immigration. By 1910, with the development of a new generation of fast transatlantic ocean liners, the flow of new arrivals had reached its apex. An American newspaper headline on the 15th of April read "*Census shows pop is up 21% in 21 years, now at 92 million.*"¹¹ Between 1890 and 1900, 8,795,386 migrants landed in American ports. Each newcomer had fought his own private war of independence, choosing to uproot himself from the land of his birth and sail to the new world, drawn by the lure of the '*City on the Hill*'. Yet, at the beginning of the Progressive Era, the dream was beginning to show its facades.

⁶ Professor Samuel P. Huntington, '*American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*', Cambridge, Mass, 1981 : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, American politics : the promise of disharmony : Huntington, Samuel P : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988, page 140

3: Manifest Destiny is Projected Outwards into Manifest Imperialist Destiny

The dream of Manifest Destiny had been embodied in America herself, the vast land stretching out offering endless resources. By the dawn of the 20th century, the Great Western Frontier had gone. The Pacific Coast had been reached and the great cause of Manifest Destiny, seemed to be at an end. The expansion of the pioneer nation across the vast empty land had become embedded in national identity and pride. It had given the American Man something unique, something that made him stand out from the other nations of the world, a sense of individualism. In the Words of Frederick Jackson Turner, in his work, *'The Significance of the Frontier in American History'* in 1893, “*The frontier has been in the promotion of democracy here and in Europe. As has been indicated, the frontier is productive of individualism.*”¹² Even other nations recognized this national feeling. The British author, Charles Dickens once remarked, that the typical American would hesitate to enter Heaven, unless assured that he could go further West.



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With the completion of the Union however, this feeling of individualism and pioneering seemed to belong to a bygone age. As the wild territories were converted into farmlands, and the last of the free native tribes forced into settlements, the resulting landscape became, like in any other modern nation, domesticated. In fact, as a response to her great resources, the once

¹² Frederick Jackson Turner, *'The Significance of the Frontier in American History'*, A paper read at the meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago during the World Columbian Exposition, 12 July 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History (nationalhumanitiescenter.org)

¹³ W. A. Raymond, *Wheat farm in Oregon Around 1910*, *Historic Photos of Oregon*, by William C. Stack, 2010, Book review [sort of]: Historic Photos of Oregon – Lost Oregon

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Wild American West, became one of the most mechanized agricultural areas in the world. A photograph by W. A. Raymond, taken around 1880 on the grounds of a wheat farm in Oregon, showed the change. This was the region that had inspired A. Rutgers van der Loeff's tale of heroism and endurance, *'The children on the Oregon Trail'*. Now it was gone.

The end of this period of Americas' life had always been expected, Tuner had written “*At the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history.*” Yet, whilst the untamed frontier had gone, Manifest Destiny did not fade away. For around this time, the void left by the nation's Union, was given a new cause. A different vision of American idealism had emerged. One that saw improvement, not by isolationism and neutrality, but expansion and foreign intervention. The age of America's foreign frontier, of Imperial Manifest Destiny, had arrived.

In the final decade of the 19th Century, as the European powers were fighting among themselves whilst carving up the African and Asian continents, America had asserted herself in the Pacific. She invaded the Spanish Empire, freeing Cuba, but also acquiring the rich Philippines Islands and Hawaii. The nation was pushing the 'Frontier' to new limits overseas. The American idealist dream of Manifest Destiny had been redirected to focus on the rest of the world, and in one of history's greatest ironies, the US, the very symbol of cultural freedom, became a notable imperialist power. The very thing her founders had fought so hard against.

One of the best illustrations of the rebirth of the 'Frontier' was by the poet Walt Whitman, who painted a new Manifest Destiny that America was to meet, just as John Winthrop had done 200 years prior. In his poem of 1860 (with revised editions up until 1881) 'Starting from Paumanok', Whitman describes an ordinary American, born and raised in the new world, “*STARTING from Paumanok where I was born.*”¹⁴ Right from the beginning there is an immediate link to both the geographical land and its already rich culture – Paumanok being a native American name for Long Island. But it is also symbolic in the sense that it is situated on the Atlantic coast where the first settlers would have landed. The individual is faced with this land of untapped potential, not yet polluted with European influence (in his opinion). “*Aware of the fresh free giver the flowing Missouri, aware of mighty Niagara, Aware of the buffalo herds grazing the plains, the hirsute and strong-breasted bull, of earth, rocks, Fifth-month flowers experienced, stars, rain, snow, my amaze.*” Whitman paints a picture of a new

¹⁴ Walt Whitman, 'Starting from Paumanok', 1860 (with revised editions up until 1881), The Walt Whitman Archive, Matt Cohen, Ed Folsom, and Kenneth M. Price, STARTING FROM PAUMANOK. (Leaves of Grass (1891–1892)) - The Walt Whitman Archive

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Garden of Eden, a new verging land and following this admiration he pronounces the immortal words: “*Solitary, singing in the West, I strive for a New World.*” This verse immediately brings to mind the Western Frontier and the need to create something better.

Whitman was drawing on something familiar to paint his vision, the feeling of holy approval had always been a major part in American lives going back to the first settlers, “*Underfoot the divine soil.*” He then puts emphasis on the need to see this holy mission to the end. If this land was “*Divine Soil,*” it became the duty of every citizen to see it purified to the full extent. Whitman describes the process of the slow transformation. “*See, vast trackless spaces, as in a dream they change, they swiftly fill, Countless masses debouch upon them, they are now covered with the foremost people, arts, institutions, known.*” The push by the new arrivals to claim the land leads to growth of the society and a need for ever more arrivals. In this sense, America was a self-fulfilling prophecy. Every new arrival dreamed of a new life, which the nation was willing to give him as it permitted the possibility for greater expansion.

This is what gave it the divine mythological aspect, the idea that it was a continuing way of life that Whitman perfectly illustrates, “*See, projected through time, for me an audience is interminable.*” We are seeing in this poem the chronology of the nation taking shape and its identity strengthening through this process. “*Successions of men, Americanos, a hundred million, one generation playing its part and passing on, another generation playing its part and passing on in its turn.*” All this is Whitman's (and therefore our) joy to witness, “*With faces turned sideways or backward towards me to listen, With eyes retrospective towards me.*” Whitman brings up the image of the US, the question of what other nations saw in her as up until this period, America's foreign policy had never been a focus, and many began to question the effect. In 1820, in the ‘*Edinburgh review*’, the Reverend Sydney Smith, had pondered the question: “*In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American Book? Or go to an American play? Or looks at an American picture or statue?*”¹⁵ Sydney's concerns painted a bleak picture of an independent America, yet still living in the shadow of Europe. A nation without its own artistic movement, without its own international image, without great influence on the world stage and most importantly, without a national identity. By the mid to late 19th Century however, the impact of the US had made itself felt. The words of men like Whitman had reached across the seas. This nation building process is nothing short of miraculous in the eyes of the poet and we sense Whitman's desire to immortalize the process, “*I will make a song for these States that no one State may under any circumstances*

¹⁵ *The Reverend Sydney Smith, The Edinburgh 1820, Review 33 (1820): 69-80, GREAT EPOCHS IN AMERICAN HISTORY (usgenet.org)*

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be subjected to another State." ¹⁴ The desire represents the Manifest Destiny through the writer's pen and shows the need, not only to keep the process going, but also to allow it to spread faster.

Up until now, Whitman has focused on the evolution of the US' domestic life inside her own land, but now the focus shifts. On page 27, he opens by describing the links between each State founded by the movement, "*Yet upon the plains west of the spinal river, yet in my house of dubiety returning eastward, yet in the Seaside State or in Maryland, Yet Kanadian cheerily braving the winter, the snow and ice well- come to me, Yet a true son either of Maine or of the Granite State, or the Narragansett Bay State, or the Empire State...*" There is a feeling of universal companionship, that this grand territory, while vast, is a closed community. But then in the next verse, our 'son' is "*Sailing to other shores to annex the same yet welcoming every new brother.*" The seemingly natural transition from fellow Americans to a distant shore where 'new brothers' are waiting, shows expansionism as a cosmic law. The leaves, implying the shared dreams of the American nation, are sent to spread the word among new lands, "*Hereby applying these leaves to the new ones from the hour they unite with the old ones.*" So even before the wars in Spain or the full completion of the Union, Whitman had a fixed vision of what The United States of America's role would be in foreign affairs and his reasoning would lay down the ideological groundwork for many Americans' perception. Whitman described a world that was in need of a new driving force, where the old powers had faded, "*A world primal again, vistas of glory incessant and branching.*" And, in this new era, there was no question as to who must take the throne "*A new race dominating previous ones and grander far, with new contests, New politics, new literature and religions, new inventions and arts.*" In his words, the US, the very symbol of cultural freedom, would become an imperialist power, the very thing her founders had fought so hard against.

When the age of imperialism did arrive many shared Whitman's perceptions and his arguments were used, defending the idea that imperialism was the natural next stage of the American cultural evolution, one that was entirely justified. Albert Beveridge, a Republican Senator of Indiana, during 1899 – 1911, campaigned for imperialism, "*Nothing is more natural as trade with one's neighbors.*" ¹⁶ The use of familiar terms to describe foreigners is similar to Whitman's language. Beveridge showed America's expanding empire as simple business transactions, where land and men were the products, "*The Philippines bring us*

¹⁴ Walt Whitman, '*Starting from Paumanok*', 1860 (with revised editions up until 1881), The Walt Whitman Archive, Matt Cohen, Ed Folsom, and Kenneth M. Price, STARTING FROM PAUMANOK. (Leaves of Grass (1891–1892)) - The Walt Whitman Archive

¹⁶ Albert Beveridge, '*Why we Must Keep the Philippines*', U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., January 9, 1900. U.S. Senator Albert J. Beveridge speaks on the Philippine Question, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., January 9, 1900 | US-China Institute (usc.edu)

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permanently face to face with the most sort-for customers of the world.” Once again, the argument of moral duty was utilized. Beveridge explains that American imperialism is justified, for if these lands were not acquired, other less noble nations would seize them. instead, *“No man on the spot can fail to see that this would be their fate if we retired.”* The imperialist ambitions are seen as a power race, one that America could not possibly lose since its objective was not to conquer - but to 'aide', *“We may tangle conditions by applying academic arrangement of self-government to crude situations: their failure will drive us to our duty in the end.”* Aid or invasion justified or criminal, the American Empire was now a fact that was visible on the world map for all to see.



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The principal spokesman of this new mood was Theodore Roosevelt. He had enjoyed two terms as a Republican President, but what gave him true influence in the age when, as Serge Richard put it, *“Presidential power is the power to persuade”*,¹⁸ was his cult of personality. *“An aristocrat, an author, a cowboy in the western badlands, a state assemblyman, a civil service commissioner, president of the New York Board of Police Commissioners, assistant secretary of the navy, hero of the Spanish fighting, governor of New York, Vice President and President, Roosevelt, an English visitor said, was second only to Niagara Falls among the country’s natural wonders.”* Roosevelt's bounding, titanic personality came to embody not only the imperialist movement, but the new US identity itself. All the optimism of this young, pioneering nation seemed to be represented in this one man. He became the first US President to leave the territory in 1906, taking leave to visit Panama and, *“See how the ditch is getting on.”*¹⁹ During his visit to the Canal, Roosevelt's personality was as imposing as ever. The

¹⁷ Author unknown, *Photo of President Theodore Roosevelt sitting on a steam shovel at the Panama Canal*. Appeared in The New York Times in November 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt in a giant steam shovel at the Culebra Cut during the digging of the Panama Canal, November 1906 (b/w photo) (bridgemanimages.com)

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 33. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

¹⁹ Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and his time shown in his own letters*, New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1920.

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President even took part in the project, operating a 95-ton steel shovel to dig part of his legacy.

Under his leadership, America had claimed territory from Spain and intervened in the war between Russia and Japan. She had obtained a place of respect among the great nations - even a place of intimidation. In 1901, Britain and America had agreed on terms to build a new shipping canal through Continental America, signed by US Secretary of State John Hay and British ambassador Lord Pauncefote. This treaty, modeled on the Suez Canal agreement, gave the US extensive rights over the new artificial waterway in return for a guarantee of neutrality towards Britain. Whilst this may seem a small detail of history, it showed the mindset of each nation. America's expansionist ambitions had evolved to the point that she was becoming a serious rival that needed to be kept in check by the older powers. As the Roosevelt Years continued, the World was constantly reminded of the United States growing Empire. On July 1, 1902, the papers read: "*Washington Passes the Philippine Government Act.*"¹¹

To many of the old nations, such as Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman empires, who were on the verge of collapse, this news came as a particular insult. On 22 January 1903, an even greater headline was unveiled "*US Signs Treaty for Panama Canal.*" This foreign venture to build a canal was a true victory, not only for its great strategic value, but also as a diplomatic win. It was impressive by the fact that the last great attempt at this venture by the French had ended in a disaster resulting with 20 000 workers dying of fever.

Roosevelt had pushed US ideals beyond the border and onto the world stage, "*In his aggressive nationalism, moralism, promotion of peace and progress, Roosevelt embodied the contradictory impulses that dominated American thinking about foreign policy in the Progressive Era*"¹⁸

On the 4 March 1905, Roosevelt gave an inaugural speech in Washington, and made clear where 'his' America stood, "*All this country desires is to see its neighboring countries stable, orderly and prosperous*"²⁰ He went on to confirm that "*Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count on our friendship.*" Yet this promise of peace and friendship was undercut by a follow up line, "*Chronic wrongdoing, or any impotence which results in a*

Theodore Roosevelt and his time shown in his own letters : Bishop, Joseph Bucklin, 1847-1928 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

¹¹ Dorling Kindersley, *Chronicle of the 20th century*, copyright: 1988, page 44

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 33. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

²⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, '*Annual Message*' Document found in '*Histoire de l'Amérique du Nord*', BREAL, written by J. Chandler, C. Collomp, B. Cottreer, R. Ledru, A. Savin, 1904-1905, chapter 5, page 289.

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general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by a civilized nation.” The Monroe Doctrine had been passed only one year before, which justified US intervention overseas to aid “*however reluctantly*” to struggling societies. Roosevelt time and again repeats that this doctrine is not invasion in disguise, “*Under no circumstances will the United States use the Monroe Doctrine as a cloak for territorial aggression*” Scientific study incorporating, the principles of Darwinism, were used to justify America's imperialism with the doctrine of '*Survival of the fittest*'.

Yet for those who cared to see, the message was clear, the US had not only become an imperialist power, but she had also become a global police nation. Her victories in Spain, her diplomatic wins with Britain and France, her influence with Russian and Japan... The nation Roosevelt had led beyond its borders had assumed the identity of Peacekeeper. It was the new Manifest Destiny to share with all America's dreams. The US could now be seen by all the world, and from its high perch, it would be keeping a watchful eye, “*No weak nation should have cause to fear us...no strong nation power can attack us.*”

This new world power was not only empirical. With territories that now stretched across the globe, came the need to patrol it. A leading theorist of expansionism, Captain Alfred T. Mahan, argued in his 1890 work '*The Influence of Sea Power upon History*', the need for a national navy. The government had already begun its program and by 1914, America's navy had grown to dwarf her own army. Other nations, in particular Great Britain, took anxious note.

The Manifest Imperialism, and Roosevelt's presidency, are often labelled as primarily part of foreign affairs. That their aim was to push American Influence, by foreign aid or intervention. In the case of Panama, he promoted the idea that the US had a moral obligation, a privilege even, to guide the uneducated nations. He advocated Panama independence, arguing to Congress that Colombia was utterly incapable of keeping order and that the US was its liberator. Roosevelt declared: “*The people of Panama had long been discontented with the Republic of Colombia, and they had been kept quiet only by the prospect of the conclusion of the treaty.*”¹⁸

Roosevelt went as far as to say the completion of the Panama Canal was an ordained mission, “*Bound not merely by treaty obligations, but by the interests of civilization to see that peaceful traffic of the world across the Isthmus of Panama shall no longer be disturbed by a constant succession of unnecessary and wasteful civil wars... this canal cannot be built*

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 33. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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by private enterprise, or by any other nation than our own; therefore, it must be built by the United States.”

But in reality, Roosevelt himself admitted that every one of his policies was guided by domestic affairs and the first guiding factor was by necessity, economical. By the birth of the early 20th Century, America's position as a leading economic power rested greatly on her ability to trade easily with other nations, *“The Panama Canal was, in keeping with the national identity and tradition, a foreign policy with a direct domestic justification: By making disorderly nations pay their debts, building a canal beneficial to world commerce, and promoting peace and industrial justice, TR imposed the kind of morality abroad that progressives were struggling to revive at home.”* Roosevelt's political vision gave the US a clear purpose, to forge the way towards a new economic future. For many Americans in the early 1900s, his foreign policies were justified, not only because they had an economic value, but more importantly, it implied America could stand as high as the European empires, *“If we intend to say, Hands Off to the powers of Europe, then sooner or later we must keep order ourselves.”* The vision of European influence, in particular British, reaching back across the Atlantic, was enough to win him support.

Roosevelt's dream was something real, something physical, that had a clear impact and result. The vision of this man digging a path through a continent, reminded everyone that even with the 'Frontier' gone, there was still work to be done. The desire of the first Manifest Destiny, which had been born out of the post-Civil War time of isolationism, was now inadequate in the eyes of Roosevelt. It was not enough now to be better than the Old World, it was a desire to be recognized as superior. To assert the Nation among the other world powers. Roosevelt summed up his feelings in the immortal words, *«Our Nation, whilst first seeing to its own domestic well being, must not shrink from playing its part among the great nations without, speak softly and carry a big stick.»*⁴ The vision seemed clear, the 'Village on the Hill' had been built, now it was time for the rest of the world to see and admire, willing or not. Under Roosevelt, the American population had been elevated, his ideas had carried them beyond their present understanding of themselves and yet, this image of America's role as moral Peacekeeper was an anachronism.

Ease of trade and a stable economy led to the second major domestic concern – national security. Roosevelt believed that the next great imperial battle would be fought at sea in the Pacific, reinforced by his view of the conflict in Asia during his term, *“Whatever happens in*

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *“Right Is More Precious Than Peace”* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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China must be of keenest national concern to us."¹⁸ Roosevelt understood that in this new age of industrial superpowers who were reliant on internationalism, rather than the older ideology of mercantilism, that only the strongest would survive. Following the Russo-Japanese war, he said "*Japan is playing our game.*" He believed a full Japanese victory would give her Empire such power as to be a potential danger to the USA. Roosevelt's desire to act as peace mediator was in no short part to avoid a full Japanese victory. Once again, an action seen as one of moral virtue had a domestic priority. Roosevelt not only succeeded with his mission for peace, but both parties came to the USA to sign the peace treaty, galvanizing America's Peacekeeper identity. Henry Cabot Lodge wrote "*we are the strongest moral force-also physical-now extant, and the peace of the world rests largely with us.*" The peace proved problematic as both sides felt cheated, Roosevelt recognized Tokyo's exclusive control and pulled USA from Seoul in November 1905, a violation of the Open-Door agreement, "*It was further evidence that the principle was more a projection of progressive concerns abroad than a national commitment to a particular policy for East Asia.*"

To a population bred in the ideal of cultural freedom and with a very negative view of Britain's past colonial control, many saw through Roosevelt's poetic phrases and criticized the Empire for what it was: an Empire. The Anti-Imperialist League, had much to say on Roosevelt's peacekeeper crusade, one member wrote "*We hold true that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and tends towards militarism, an evil from which it has been our glory to be free.*"²¹ The text condemns America's war in the Philippines, saying it was a crime and "*seeks to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those Islands.*" America is portrayed as the very thing that she herself fought against for her independence, a corrupt empirical nation. "*The United States cannot act upon the ancient heresy that might make right.*"

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 47-49-51-52. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

²¹ Written by anonymous member of the 'The Anti-Imperialist League'. Document found in 'Histoire de l'Amérique du Nord', written by J. Chandler, C. Collomp, B. Cottre, R. Ledru, A. Savin, chapter 5 page 283



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To many in the outside world, America's identity was changing with some seeing her as a liberator but others as a new form of tyranny. One cartoon caricature that depicted Roosevelt seemed to many at first to be a glorification, but it had a hidden message. The cartoonist implies that Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, a character larger than life, is doing the digging of the Panama Canal by himself (something that is true in a small way)! Behind him, a fleet of ships wait impatiently to use his new project. But we notice that he is shoveling dirt onto a town labelled 'Bogota' which is a reference to the fact that Panama seceded from Colombia with the help of the United States for the purpose of establishing the Panama Canal Zone. One figure has climbed up the side of a cliff from the Colombian side, but he is tiny in comparison to the colossus of Roosevelt. It was not only Americans who took offense at this new foreign diplomacy, there was also the matter of the countries invaded.

One voice of protest was the modernist poet, Rubén Darío, who was appalled at America's behavior in Spain. In response he attacked Roosevelt and the US where he knew the harm would be felt most, at their identity. By careful use of his pen and outright nerve, Darío used the artistic movement of his own nation to tear down America's sacred image of itself.

In his poem, *'To Roosevelt'*²³ the title of which implies a direct address to Roosevelt himself, Darío painted his vision of America's new peacekeeper identity. *"It is with the voice of the Bible, or verse of Walt Whitman, that we should reach you, Hunter!"* In the very first line, Darío references God and one of America's greatest poets, then implies his words of reproach run through them, using the US's own culture as it is the only culture the uninformed *"Hunter"* could possibly understand. He paints the US as a nation of paradoxes, *"Primitive and modern, simple and complicated."* But the image was not only one of disapproval. Darío

²² W. A. Rogers, cartoon *«Digging the Big Ditch, »* December 1903. Source: New York Herald, PANAMA CANAL CARTOON. /The News Reaches Bogota.' Cartoon, 1903, by W.A. Rogers from the New York 'Herald,' showing President

²³Rubén Darío, *'To Roosevelt'*, 1905, poets.org, [To Roosevelt by Rubén Darío - Poems | Academy of American Poets](https://poets.org/to-roosevelt-by-rubén-darío)

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was a well-travelled freelance journalist and admired above all, intercultural influence, and the sharing of artistic ideas. Having been to the USA several times he recognized that it was at its heart, a nation of value. The American Revolution had inspired the Southern Continent to stand up to the Spanish Empire. Dario painted a nation that still had traces of the original identity that it glorified, the one of freedom, revolution and 'Divine Destiny,' "*With a bit of Washington,*" but that this spark is overshadowed by new factors, "*and a bit of Nimrod.*" The tragic sense of irony and pity towards a great nation that had sunk to barbarism, yet this pity is soon replaced with anger. "*You are the future invader.*"

The second stanza is one that seems addressed directly to Roosevelt himself, as if he himself had dictated it, "*You are a proud and strong exemplar of your race; you are cultured, you are clever, you oppose Tolstoy.*" This image is one that matches Roosevelt's bounding personality and image. But it is followed by the image of a tyrant, "*And breaking horses, or murdering tigers, you are an Alejandro Nebuchadnezzar...You're a professor of energy, as today's madmen say.*" This is a description of the man from the other side of the trench. The same larger than life energy is depicted, the same greatness, but this time it is the reader who is on the receiving end of the '*Big stick*'. Roosevelt is depicted here as a mad man, who is blind to the damage he causes in his path to glory, "*You think life is fire, that progress is eruption; Where you put your bullet, you put the future.*" Roosevelt, and the nation he leads, see no fault to their actions, no way they can be in the wrong. The consequences of these actions are for others to endure and pay for, "*The United States is strong and big. When it shakes there is a deep tremor, Through the enormous vertebrae of the Andes*".

It is curious that this poem by a foreign onlooker, slowly picks apart every aspect, not only of the American Peacemaker Identity, but the American values and society. It questions what sort of people could ever believe such a ridiculous fantasy as that of the American Dream, "*Join Hercules' cult to Mammon's; and lighting the path to easy conquest, Liberty raises her torch in New York.*"

Having named the nation a predator, debunked and ridiculed the divine right of the Peacekeeper Identity and made evident the suffering caused by the US' foreign affairs, Dario had one last great insult to deliver. He turns to his own continent, South America, and proceeds to show its identity and power. "*But our America, which had poets, From the old days of Netzahualcoyotl... Who consulted the stars that knew Atlantis, whose name comes to resonate in Plato?*" South America also has a culture, an identity, but it is one that it has earned, not by invasion or foreign intervention, but by cultural influence and preserving one's

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values. “*Living light, fire, perfume, love.*” Dario shows that his nation has found its place in the world's society, that it has been accepted for what it is and does not hide behind false ideals “*The America where noble Cuauhtémoc said: “I’m not a bed of roses” that America.*” This is perhaps the greatest insult towards the US, a nation paranoid by the thought of compromising its identity and values, which according to Dario, are already long lost. In a last verse of defiance, Dario writes to Roosevelt, “*Order to keep us in your tight grip. And you may count it all, missing one thing: God!*” He admits the US has the power to make its will prevail, but to make no mistake the Divine Imperialist Destiny, preached by Roosevelt, will never have God's blessing. Dario's poem is one of the most important demonstrations of the American identity crisis and its growing lack of respect in the rest of the world.

When compared to Whitman, it is astonishing to see how similar the themes are, expansionism, cultural appropriation, technological advancement, and God's blessing. The poem ‘*O Roosevelt*’, like ‘*From Paunamouk*’, is not the illustration of a myth, but the continuation of it. It seeks to build upon what the myth is and take it to a new moral and ideological plain. But where Whitman uses the myth to push forward the idea of where it must evolve to, Dario shows how the fantasy has become meaningless and vain. And yet, even Dario admits that the American Imperialist Manifest Destiny will most likely come true. The question as to if it is a holy cause or a crime against humanity is another matter, but in both cases it will eventually win. The reason for this is not simply because of military might, it is in the power that the myth is able to project, and it is visible in the verses of Whitman just how impact-full and fundamental this ideology became. The identity The United States had forged for itself was one many found hard to resist. Dario himself admits he admired much of the idea; he simply drew the line when it was forced on other nations.

By combining the two poems we see a continuation of the vision of Whitman, the peaceful man from Paumanok, who later picked up a gun. Whether this was a violation of his former vows or not is irrelevant as it seems this outcome was always predicted and could not have been averted. It is this contradictory identity that the USA would eventually accept and glorify, a Peacekeeper, with righteous cause but with the strength to see his duty through to the end. The violent aspect was both accepted and justified, and, in this sense, the myth of Manifest Imperialism was a two-sided coin. Roosevelt’s foreign policies had changed the US identity, but the greater problem was the elements that had not changed enough.

Stabilizing the national economy and reinforcing national security were two ways in which the foreign policies had a domestic result. But there was another reason, one less chivalrous,

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to distract the nation of Roosevelt's other failings. "*Dominance in the Caribbean was a vicarious means of relieving frustrations over an unruly society at home.*"¹⁸

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 35. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

4: The Conflict of Imperial Aspirations and Domestic needs

As stated, cultivating the idealist dream of '*Manifest Destiny*' (coined by John O'Sullivan), the firm belief that the expansion and exploitation of the nation's land and resources was ordained by God. To every other continent, this new country embodied the identity of a haven and at the heart of this movement was immigration. Upon the base of the Statue of Liberty are written the words "*Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these to the homeless, tempest-lost to me.*"²⁴ This promise of a better life had reached far, since the 1840s, the Industrial Revolution and territorial expansion had triggered a rapid increase in immigration. By 1910, with the development of a new generation of fast transatlantic ocean liners, the flow of new arrivals had reached its apex. An American newspaper headline on April 15th read '*Census shows pop is up 21% in 21 years, now at 92 million.*'¹¹ Between 1890 and 1900, 8 7953 86 migrants landed in American ports. Each newcomer had fought his own private war of independence, choosing to uproot himself from the land of his birth and sail to the New World, drawn by the lure of the '*City on the Hill*'.

The US was a land of unrivaled potential, her natural resources and industrial capabilities were unprecedented. But one key component had been needed to exploit her wealth, the need for manpower. Every migrant who set foot on the soil was another pair of hands in the effort to expand and push forward the pioneering nation. During the Great Western expansion, over 400 000 people had been sent along the Oregon Trail to push towards the Pacific. Now, in the modern age of industrial world trade, the need for manpower in the growing industrial cities had encouraged a new wave of migrants. From the 1880's onward, newcomers from more remote parts of Europe arrived, drawn not towards agricultural expansion, but the higher wages of the factories, mines, and mills. These men and women had been a reply to the US's calls for ever more souls to sustain her growing industry.

Every new arrival dreamed of a new life, which the nation was willing to give him as the new arrival permitted ever greater expansion. He was a cog in an ever more complex industrial machine and as such he was placed in high importance. As the industrial cities grew in power, new residencies were built at breakneck speed to accommodate the influx of the new workforce. But being treated as a cog was a long way off from what the American dream had

²⁴ Emma Lazarus, '*The New Colossus*', Poetry Foundation, 1883, The New Colossus by Emma Lazarus | Poetry Foundation

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988, page 140

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promised.

The immigrants who arrived in America were channeled into whatever the nation required, and this in turn created a new dimension in the American Dream. The push across its frontier, had led to the concept of Manifest Destiny. Now, with industrial and urban growth, where every city was a potential gold mine of export and trade, came the dream of the 'American Self-Made Man.' Cities showed promise for entrepreneurial endeavors as fast and efficient machines made for quick and profitable manufacturing, thus turning opportunities for individual ambition into a collective enterprise of mass production. New technological developments, such as motion picture cameras or Henry Ford's affordable Model-T, signaled the possibility of a 'New America.' The new nation was one where the wealth was not reserved exclusively for the great and powerful, every man stood a chance of having his share.

To many migrants this idea of promised wealth was not a dream, but fact. With the new opportunities, poor men could grow rich overnight. This dream of finding richness in the cities echoed the 'Gold Rush' dream of the earlier pioneers and many did indeed find the source. The Progressive Era, thanks to the industrial takeover, was a "*Time of new hope and great effort to fulfil the traditional promise of American life.*"¹⁸ Without the burdens of the economic depressions of the late nineteenth century and the new economic opportunities, the nation's leaders promised to live up to the myth its founding fathers had promised. For many, the American Dream lived up to its promise. When Andrew Carnegie, an industrial entrepreneur (who had arrived in America at the age of 15 as a Scottish migrant), retired from his industrial empire, he gave away 350 million dollars. And yet, for every man who struck gold, millions went without.

Within The Dust Bowl, the spreading factories of Detroit and Chicago, were typical of the industrial cities that drew the new migrants like iron filings to a magnet. Faced with a fast-growing working-class population, the accommodation required became woefully inadequate and led to deprivation on a grand scale. The slums of the '*Promised Land*' were fast matching those of Europe. The new arrivals were, as basic cogs, important to the industrial needs and the ambitions of the great business tycoons. The slum areas had begun to expand as far back as the 1840s. To accommodate the immigrant influx into western seaport cities, enterprising landlords began to convert old mansions and warehouses into tenements, crowding makeshift buildings together to utilize every inch of potential living space. In 1879, the invention of the

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 32. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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'dumb bell tenement', so called because of the shape of the floor plan, "These grim, insanitary barracks, five or six story high, were honeycombed with dark, tiny rooms, many without direct light, air, or drainage,"²⁵ were the homes to which the new wave of industrial migrants was destined, and they were shocked by their new fortunes.

By the 1900's the situation in the deprived areas was worse than ever. Due to lawlessness and corrupt municipal policies, crime had escalated sharply earning some of the New York areas names such as 'Bandits Roost' and 'Murderers Alley'. This was the side of the American identity that the nation did not choose to accept but had been achieved in no short part by the Peacekeeper aspirations and Imperialist needs for industrial output. This fate of the victims of modern industry, for many, was easier to simply ignore treating this ever-growing population as a separate culture, or as a necessary evil in order to support the great American industrial expansion.

One voice who did not stay silent was the Danish born journalist, Jacob Riis. In his 1890 journalistic report, *'How the Other Half Lives'*, Riis exposed the terrible conditions of life in the slums, linking them directly to the cruel demands of industrialization. In his articles, he showed the different layers of corruption. 'Sweaters', those who exploited the new migrants, were depicted as only a side effect of the true problem, "The sweater is simply a middleman, the sub- contractor, a workman like his fellows, perhaps with the single distinction from the rest that he knows a little English"²⁶ Riis showed the unequal scramble of the migrant masses faced with an ever-steeper social ladder. He highlights the fact that many of the employees in the harsh factories were unable to speak English, but this was not required for them to perform the simple menial tasks needed. The 'Cog' of the American industrial machine was not required to be an intellectual, only available, "Every shipload from German ports brings them to his door in droves, clamoring for work." Like any other piece of an engine, the foreigner worker could be replaced without warning. Such was the volume of new migrants in the slums, all clamored for what employment was available to them. This was not a failure on the part of factory workers and business tycoons, it was a failure of government, one that was happy to sit back and ignore the human cost of the nation's progress "The bulk of the sweater's work is done in the tenements, which the law that regulates factory labor does not reach." He mocks the weak regulations put in place to safeguard child laborer's "Children under sixteen must not be employed unless they

²⁵ Maldwyn A. Jones, *The Limits of Liberty*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1983. The limits of liberty : American history, 1607-1980 : Jones, Maldwyn A. (Maldwyn Allen), 1922-2007 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

²⁶ Jacob Riis, 'How The Other Half Lives', 1890. Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives (1890) | The American Yawp Reader

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can read and write in English; none at all under the age of fourteen.” The very fact that such a law should stand on the status employment book shows how desperate the plight of these people was. The mention of the English language referring to the age-related working status, reminds us again of the competitive nature of finding a source of income. Riis shows true anger in his words, and not only at the government for letting this happen, but at the nation for turning a blind eye. The importance of the English language and “*The campaign for education,*” reminds us constantly that these poor individuals are first generation migrants who have no real grasp of the new nation they now serve. But Riis delivers a far more tragic final bomb shell. In the last line from the chapter named « *Sweater* », Riis recalls his encounter with a child laborer who asked him the question: « *When shall we find time to learn?* ” Riis writes “*I owe him the answer yet.*” The question of this young factory worker, living on a remuneration that was unlikely to cover his basic financial needs, asking when he will have time to learn how to be better, how to be worthy of a place in the great American society he has been brought up to believe in, is one that strikes home the tragic irony of the situation.

The world seen by Riis is a trap, a betrayal of the millions who came to the US under the promise that the nation would make space for them to thrive, but instead incorporated them into human mechanization “*From the day he is old enough to pull a thread.*” This article tears down the anachronism that was America's identity as the land of guaranteed wealth and success. Riis's words, combined with his photographs from the period appearing in magazines such as *McClure's*, brought America's forgotten population into public view, much to many people's discomfort.



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One photograph taken in 1890, showing a group of children sleeping in a street in New York,

²⁷ Jacob Riis, ‘Children sleeping in Mulberry Street’, Photo taken as part of the journalistic report *How the Other Half Lives* in 1890, Jacob A. Riis | lex.dk – Den Store Danske

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exposed to Americans all over the country the reality of the true living conditions of the urban poor. The harsh realization did not sit well with the image the US had crafted, yet the reality was uncompromising. For many immigrants and their descendants, it was a poor transition, exchanging servitude to Europe's nobles and elite classes to servitude to Wall Street's tycoons. *"The working class and the employment class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people "*²⁸ In 1892, 9 % of US families held 71% of the nation's wealth. In the US, as in Britain and Germany, the workers turned to socialism in a bid for equality.

Poverty, class division, labor unions and unrest at the lack of progressive reforms gave way to direct domestic consequences. These were the problems that Roosevelt's foreign affairs policies had tried to distract from whilst at the same time solving, and it was proving to be a mixed result. It was hard for many American to understand the effect the Panama Canal or Russian peace talks had in relation to themselves, they only read of faraway lands and were confused as to why America was obsessed with helping other nations when children were starving in slums in their own backyard.

It is here that the progressive movement became of chief concern. It had existed in the US since the Civil War, when the US had experienced widespread industrialization facing the new industrial age. *"Huge new corporations called trusts swallowed competitors and concentrated wealth and power in the hands of a few men: owners of banks and railroads, of oil and steel companies, of mines and textile factories"*²⁹ The movement looked to put an end to industrial monopolies and corruption in the political system. For the population of the new industrial giant, 'the progressives' promised to *"Fulfil the traditional promise of American life."*¹⁸

Theodore Roosevelt had been a firm advocate of the movement, campaigning for social reform, better labor conditions and most of all, better international relations, *"In his aggressive nationalism, moralism, promotion of peace and progress, Roosevelt embodied the contradictory impulses that dominated American thinking about foreign policy in the Progressive Era."* Roosevelt understood that in the new century, progressive reform would be more dependent on international relations than domestic. The US's economy was now tied to trade, her integrity protected by foreign treaties and reliant on Soft Power. *"The Panama Canal was, in keeping with the national identity and tradition, a foreign policy with a direct*

²⁸ *Industrial Workers of the World, Preamble*; Document found in 'Histoire de l'Amérique du Nord', written by J. Chandler, C. Collomp, B. Cottre, R. Ledru, A. Savin, chapter, page 249, 1905.

²⁹ Jonathan Menon, *The Progressive Collapse: 1917-1920*, December 3, 2012. Day 234 — The Progressives Collapse, 1917–1920 (239days.com)

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 32-34. : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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domestic justification: By making disorderly nations pay their debts, building a canal beneficial to world commerce, and promoting peace and industrial justice, TR imposed the kind of morality abroad that progressives were struggling to revive at home.” There is no question that Roosevelt saw himself as a progressive reformer, but that did not mean that he was addressing the problems people were most concerned about. The movement was primarily focused on domestic and not foreign policy. Although he had concerns on the foreign affairs, *“There was little interest in international questions, most progressives responded to them as extensions of the problems at home.”* In the late 19th Century, the domestic reforms had made little progress, *“their victories were often more symbolic than real... when particular problems proved beyond their ability to resolve or innate conservatism restrained them from seeking meaningful reform.”* The slums, poverty and lack of employment rights remained and despite Roosevelt’s foreign policies being mostly successful, many within the population could not see the direct link.

5: Woodrow Wilson and the Promises of a Return to Isolationism

Thanks to her war in Spain, by 1913, American corporations like the American Tobacco Company and Meyerbeer sugar interests dominated the Cuban economy. International treaties to protect America's interests had gone hand in hand with political control that tied it to other Nations. Roosevelt's peace negotiations with Russia and Japan had made her respected and her growing naval power and territory had resulted in a massive increase in world trade leading to economic superiority. America's influence and reputation had been made universal, the now so distant question of Reverend Sydney Smith: "*In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American Book? Or goes to an American play? Or looks at an American picture or statue?*"¹⁵ had been answered at last, everyone!

And yet, with this newfound power had come instability. Roosevelt's Canal had become a national pride but had also been the worst event to arouse distrust between the United States and South America since the Mexican War. The growth of America's navy had caused unrest for Great Britain, who's very cultural integrity relied on naval supremacy. The success of her new Empire had aroused jealousy and resentment among the nations who's might was failing.

Protest from its own people, greater internal conflict, the harming effect on America's international perception... The Peacekeeper Identity was, like it's industrial growth, economically viable but came at a welfare cost. However, the greatest failing of Roosevelt's Peacekeeper Identity was that it had failed to unite the home nation. While it gave many a sense of pride, it did not address national problems or the desires of the people as a whole. Roosevelt has pushed America's ambitions outwards, "*The increasing interdependence and complexity of international political and economic relations, render it incumbent on all civilized and orderly powers, to insist on the proper policing of the world.*"¹⁸ But to many, the power had come too fast. The President's foreign projects were too far removed from their own and had too little direct impact. They were not fully ready for this new Peacekeeper role.

By this point many accepted that the Utopic identity was an anachronism, but to the vast majority the myth stayed strong. All the while, tensions continued to grow, and public tolerance continued to deteriorate. Anger from new arrivals at the falsehood of the American Identity, anger at an economic structure that favored the rights of business owners over low

¹⁵ *The Reverend Sydney Smith*, The Edinburgh 1820, Review 33 (1820): 69-80, GREAT EPOCHS IN AMERICAN HISTORY (usgennet.org)

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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paid laborers and anger at a government that claimed to be addressing the nation's concerns but instead gave more fuel to the growing list of reasons for change and anger at new American society that was, depending on which side of the division you stood, a mere shadow of the country's past greatness.

This was the America that Woodrow Wilson inherited when he took office in 1912, under the rallying cheers of reform. He was the first Democrat to take the oath of President in 20 years. The task faced by his party was enormous. He was an idealist, but he was not an illusionist, recognizing that even with God's help, the mission of ending America's identity crisis and putting an end to social and economic injustice would be one to challenge a miracle maker. There were several key reasons. The first was that his country did not universally want to change at all. The growing division and tensions towards the end of the 1900s were evident but has led to a popular myth that the White House welcomed Wilson with open arms. In fact, he only won 42% of the popular vote and the only states where he achieved a majority were in the South. Many of the higher elite and wealthier classes did not see the need to address the concerns of the 'undesirable' members of the community.

Yet Wilson accepted it with hope, if not naive optimism, *“We have been proud of our industrial achievements, but we have not hitherto stop thoroughly to count the human cost. Our duty is to cleanse, to reconsider, to restore every process of our common life.”*³⁰ He understood the economic situation and the suffering of citizens. He said before the houses *“We must abolish everything that bears even the semblance of privilege.”*³¹ Few presidents could seem more in-tune with his country's fundamental needs. America's 28th President was a peaceful, deeply religious, intellectual son of a protestant clergyman, *“Wilson was bold, extremely sure of himself, but deeply stubborn, and he did see himself as an instrument of God's Will.”* He had spent most of his life in the seclusion of the academic world and his orderly mind often found it hard to grasp the dilemmas and needs of the world outside his own sphere. Yet despite his sometimes-overconfident nature, he was not delusive or short sighted. Wilson recognized the great national potential that lay in the American cultural identity, and was determined to see it flourish, *“Sometimes people call me an idealist. Well, that is the way I know I am an American. America is the only idealistic nation in the world.”* His views of the US' potential had a religious root, as he saw his nation as a moral force in

³⁰ *President Woodrow Wilson's Inauguration Address*, 4 March 1913. UVA/MILLER CENTER, March 4, 1913: First Inaugural Address | Miller Center

³¹ Woodrow Wilson, *Message Regarding Tariff Duties* April 8, 1913., UVA/MILLER CENTER, April 8, 1913: Message Regarding Tariff Duties | Miller Center

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foreign and domestic affairs. Despite his heavy religious background, Wilson was a man who championed religious and cultural exchange. He showed a liking to the 'American Creed' ideology that America was not defined by one cultural identity, even if Christianity had great personal importance to him. One thing was crucial to his plan and that was an era of self-purification, the nation had to focus on healing its own internal flaws, to enable it to create new values and ideals. Spurred on by a sense of duty, this 'Man of God' zealously attacked the work.

Wilson's view of foreign affairs was simple, the breaks had to be put on. Roosevelt's perception of Wilson was not one of appreciation, he despised the use of the word 'idealist' that was being used to describe him. Yet Wilson's election in 1912, defeating Roosevelt by 15% of the vote, meant the Republican's dreams were placed in check for now. It would have been hard to find a man more unlike Roosevelt than the new Democratic President. Wilson was strongly opposed to imperialism and had little to no interest in foreign policy. He expressed this feeling in, what is with hindsight, one of the most ironic quotations ever said by a world leader, "*It would be an ironic fate if my administration had to deal with foreign problems, for all my preparation has been in domestic matters.*"

Yet Wilson's own ambitions and desire for isolationism were also to be placed in check. Whether as a savior or a conqueror, by the time Wilson took office, the American Peacekeeper Identity had been firmly implanted. It was not fully accepted or realized, but nonetheless, had been added to the national consciousness. Wilson had stated in defiance to Roosevelt's ideals, that the US would "*Never again seek an additional foot of territory by conquest.*" In fact, Wilson's administration would intervene more in Latin America than both President Roosevelt and his successor, Taft, combined. The Panama Canal, like all America's imperial holdings, had become vital to security, but also to identity. Wilson fought a losing battle at trying to give autonomy to nations, but was constrained to keep an empirical hold, resulting in a long line of disappointment that brought political and social instability.

6: Conclusion

The slow transformation of the US from colony to colonizer over the course of the 19th century was unparalleled. In the desire to find its own identity and place in world affairs, the nation had reinvented its foregone policy, all the time claiming to hold true to the same values as its forefathers. Whilst it true that the crusader persona had always been a part of the US identity, going back to the Manifest Destiny and the takeover of native lands, the imperial age marked a noticeable shift. Men like Roosevelt saw this process as the natural and moral progression of the US, whilst others saw it as a going against everything the nation had once stood for. This internal dilemma had pushed the country to an ideological crisis in the early 20th century when Wilson took office. The president, and country as a hole, wanted to return to what was seen as a golden age of isolationism, to focus on the parts of the American dream that had been neglected under Roosevelt. Yet despite Wilson's intentions, it was now impossible to go back as that would mean dismantling the US's economic and political foundation.

The second Manifest Destiny visualized had forever pushed the nation onto the world stage, opening a Pandora's Box, from which there was no return. The nation's priorities of The Peacekeeper were entangled with every continent. Cultural and political isolationism and neutrality were impossible, leading directly into the looming disaster of 1914.

Part II: Wilson: The War Missionary 1914-1917

1: Introduction

When The Great War finally began, America, like every nation on Earth (except for the Austro-Hungarian Empire), was surprised. The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on the 28 July, was to a world on holiday, only a passing distraction. Few took any notice of yet another Balkans minor incident. One month later, when things had gone awry and war had become fact, it was still only a small affair far removed from national panic. All the nations involved shared a common illusion that the war would be over within a matter of weeks. His imperial majesty of Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II, had written a reassuring article in his country's national paper, promising that the troops would be home before the autumn leaves fell. But as the weeks turned into months and the months reached the conclusion of the year, the dream of quick victory was shattered. By 1915, there were no longer any illusions. The war in Europe had developed into a stalemate on both sides. Along the Great Western Front, from the Mediterranean to Switzerland, across the Italian Alps, through the Balkans leading to the Gallipoli Peninsula continuing up across hundreds of miles into the Russian Front to meet the sea once again, there was a giant immobile circle of conflict. At sea, the great navies of Britain and Germany had each other by the throat, in a struggle that was fought on every ocean in a desperate attempt to starve the home nations of food and war material.

In the Middle East, The Ottoman Empire's alliance with the Central Powers had spread the flames of war across the deserts to the borders of India and Egypt. In Africa, the colonial strongholds of each side, carved up by Europe in the late 1890s, were entangled in savage guerrilla warfare while in the Pacific, Japanese and Australian troops were shelling the German stronghold in China, as her colonial islands were taken over by Britain's Royal Navy. All the while, troops from every colonial nation allied to Britain (Canada, India, Africa, Australia, Burma...) were drawn to the zones of conflict in a global crisis whose deaths were already counted in millions. The World War had earned its name. Yet, in the early days it was not America's war. Most Americans were satisfied when Wilson declared the War was a subject "*with which we have nothing to do, whose cause cannot touch us.*"

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This statement was the perfect encapsulation of Wilson's promise to make the US into an isolated safe haven that could not be drawn into war, but in truth his plan was at least twenty years late. Roosevelt's administration had pushed US domestic life abroad and it would be impossible for the nation to ignore the conflict.

2: The US Moral, Economical and National Ties to the War

America's ties to the War can be divided into three main categories, each one drawing from a different part of her identity and national priorities. The first and most important was the 'moral cause'. These were based on a feeling of obligation, political treaties and foreign promises that would pull her in. It had been the initial moral and political treaties of Europe that had initially led to the War, The Triple Alliance, the promise of Belgian neutrality, the Central Power Fortress, the Russian-Serbian alliance... These had been the chains that had tied the nations together like prisoners shackled to a sinking ship, from which none were able to escape the inevitable involvement in a conflict that had no initial bearing on their own territory. In this respect, America was without ties. Whilst her Empire and trade had grown by the influence of Roosevelt, she had made no deals or promises that forced war upon her, George Washington's wish of separatism had been respected. The 'Peacekeeper' of the World would let the world agitation pass and whilst moral duty may become apparent later, in August 1914, America saw no obligation to interrupt or intervene with the affairs of others. The moral obligation for Wilson at this time was to put American lives and well being first.

It is here that the two presidential identities of Roosevelt and Wilson clashed, Wilson had championed the idea of Peacemaker and missionary, the nation that would guide the world back to neutrality, this meant staying out of the conflict. Roosevelt had championed the idea of Peace-Bringer, the notion that the US had to directly step in, get its hands dirty if need be and bring the conflict to an end as fast as possible. His reasoning was that Wilson's methods would prove ineffective and would eventually lead to intervention anyway if the war were left unchecked. Roosevelt saw the war, even from the early days as a threat to the democratic way of life, and by result directly concerned the US nation. German Success "*would mean the overthrow of democracy in the world, the suppression of individual liberty, the setting up of evil ambitions, the subordination of the principles of right and justice to physical might directed of the arbitrary will, and the turning back of the hands of human progress for two centuries.*" ³²

The second category was far less chivalrous, but far more complicated. It was a matter of

³² Arthur S. Link, *Wilson and The Progressive Era 1910-1917*, Harper and Brothers, chapter 6 page 165, Internet Archive, Woodrow Wilson And The Progressive Era 1910-1917 : Arthur S. Link : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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economics. This was a dilemma made even worse by Roosevelt's 'Imperialist Manifest Destiny', the capitalist economic structure made great by industrial might. America's new strength and power was greatly linked to foreign import and export. Steel, coal, manufactured goods, chemicals, and food stuff had been shipped all over the world and vice versa. Now, as her trading partners reluctantly became aligned with warring economies, American deals were being interrupted by opposing nations and free trade was at an end. This was the greatest challenge of diplomacy in which Wilson would spend four years treading carefully like a man on a tight rope.

Economic trade also involved competition with other nations over resources, trading rights, and potential future resources that could be devoted to other causes. The clarity of how important this category was to America's neutrality was made clear even before The Great War started. April 20, 1914, when the US marines intervened in the Mexico Crisis, they took measures to ensure security by confiscating cargo from German merchant ships. The newspapers of the next day read: "*President Wilson wanted to prevent German arms and munitions from being shipped to General Huerta, the Mexican President.*"¹¹ This was an action that would come back to haunt America in later years. Even before the conflict in Europe had started, America had been involvement in international affairs that would lead to her eventual participation. Added to this were also internal factors that depended on neutrality. The members of the Progressive Movement were concerned that the War would get in the way of social reforms and new economic developments.

The third and last category was the most influential, one that was unavoidable by even the best diplomatic efforts, the matter of national loyalty. This was perhaps the greatest failing of the American nation facing the War in 1914. Up to the mid to late 19th Century, the steady influx of migrants was primarily from North-West Europe. Crucially, these were people from cultures who could easily be integrated into the American cultural identity, the one that had been embedded into the nation slowly over the centuries. But from 1885 onward, a growing majority, (85 % by 1914), originated from Southern and Eastern Europe. Vast numbers of refugees from the crumbling empires and politically unstable states, the anachronistic Austro-Hungarian Empire, the nations of Italy and Portugal, the 'Sick man of Europe'(Ottoman Empire), and Russian Jews fleeing religious persecution in their homeland caused by autocratic Czarist programs. Poles, Czechs, Finns, Slaves and Croats were also fleeing the increasing turmoil in the Balkan states. Higher numbers of migrants were arriving from the

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988, page 140

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Pacific; Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos and to this was added ever more migration from the industrially inferior Canada and Mexico.

These 'New Migrants' had fled Eastern Europe for the same reasons their earlier counterparts had fled Western Europe. The expanding steamship companies took full advantage, as the competition for steerage traffic stimulated emigration by means of prepaid passage systems. In 1901, it was recorded that between 45 and 65 % of the new migrants traveled on tickets prepaid by friends and relatives. Agriculture held little appeal for these new migrants since many lacked the capital to invest in land, but by this point, the dream of territorial expansion was wearing thin. These were the migrants who had come to answer America's industrial call, flocking to the large cities by the promise of higher wages and better living conditions than the old world (or so they thought).

By 1910, one third of the population of the twelve largest cities was of foreign origin. New York had more Italians and Germans than Naples and Hamburg, and more Jews than the whole of Western Europe. Slowly but surely, this was becoming an ideological problem. Far away from the Utopian imagery of Zangwill's *'Melting Pot'*, and despite the president's bold claim that America was one united people, tribal hatred and segregation began to fester. Stigmatization of the different ethnic groups who each valued their native culture from the already settled Americans who saw these new migrants from distant exotic lands as a form of cultural corruption.

The identity of the United States, rendered mythical by the fight for independence and divine right, was a source of paranoia, the fear that this holy nation and its values may be compromised. With the wave of 'New Migrants', fear of the unknown was not hard to find. Prescott Hall, a far-right political spokesman and founder of the *'Immigration Restriction League'*, in 1894, soon became one of the leading voices in the battle to save the nation. In his 1912 work, *'The Future of American Ideals'*³³ Hall described a devastated nation, where an invasion of inferior races had decimated the foundation of America and robbed her of her future, "America is likely to be, not the cradle of a new, but the grave of an old race. Is there, indeed, a danger that the race which made our country great will pass away, and those ideals and institutions which it has cherished will be lost" This fear of social and ideological change, whilst exaggerated beyond reason, was grounded in reality (albeit a biased reality). Hall's passionate words were based on an ideal disturbingly similar to Huntington's 'American

³³ Prescott Hall, *'The Future of American Ideals'*, *The North American Review*, Jan 1912, Vol. 195, No. 674 (Jan., 1912), pp. 94- 102, Published by: University of Northern Iowa, *The Future of American Ideals* (jstor.org)

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Creed', believing America was a nation built on universal moral values, "*American type, which had defined itself, not so much in literature or art, as in politics and invention, and in certain social ideals.*" However, Hall then goes on to break down the clear cultural influences that played a part in founding the nation, "*The original settlers of this country were mainly Teutonic, belonging to what is now called the Baltic race, from northern Europe, which has always been distinguished for energy, initiative, and self-reliance.*" The image is painted of a great national effort, the slow "*amalgamation of the people into a fairly definite national type*" of which all present Americans were the worthy descendants.

It was this carefully built civilization that had to be protected at any cost, against all those who Hall described as undeserving. He sets the tragic scene, pointing out that the America of 1912 was not the same nation that had fought and vanquished the British in 1789, "*Today, less than one-half of our people are descendants of the original stock and of early settlers.*"

In this world, Hall claims that the fall has already begun, the nation is already weakened. Now was coming the killing blow, the great wave of migrants that would wash away the nation's true identity. Hall's words traced clear segregation lines between the "*desired races*" worthy of civilization, and the "*undesired races,*" who deserved no more pity than a 'mad dog'. Slavs, Africans, Mediterranean races, Hebrews, Greeks "*These races have entirely different mental make-up. they bring with them an inheritance of widely different political and social ideals, and training under social and political institutions very different from ours.*"

Hall explains that the reason this invasion has gone unnoticed by many was because it was done in discretion, the "*peaceful invasion,*" where the alien cultures slowly infiltrated normal American families like a plague, an "invading hostile army." The author goes deeper, comparing the integration of migrants to the barbarians that had caused the fall of the Roman Civilization, "it was the constant infiltration of into Roman citizenship of large numbers of "*barbarians*"- that is, of races alien in instincts and habits of thought and actions to the races which had built up the roman empire". Hall supports his predictions by pointing to European nations, stating the France was becoming ever more German in some regions (this reference is debatable in Hall's context, as Alsace and Lorraine had been annexed by Germany, but this was due to France's defeat in the war of 1870 and not immigration influence). Hall's opinions were supported by more than passionate words, men of supposed learning such as the author, Dr Alfred P Schultz, prophesied in his work 'Race of Mongrels', where he predicted a future US populated with half breed races, individuals who by way of cultural mixing had slowly become inferior to their parents "*Just as alloys of metal are not as valuable as the metal*

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themselves.” This image of the slow erosion of the American Society, a nation filled with paranoia of the prospect of losing their hard forged cultural identity, fanned the fear into hysteria. But there were some who resisted.

These obvious fear tactics and creation of stigmas were highly criticized by other public figures, in particular those of immigrant origins themselves. The Jewish author, Horace Kallen, was one of the great defenders of the cultural pluralism movement. In his 1915 work 'Democracy versus the Mixing pot', Kallen speaks of a “*symphony of civilization*”³⁴ comparing a multicultural society to an orchestra, where each individual of different origin plays a part in a grander picture, “*The range and variety of the harmonies may become wider and richer and more beautiful.*” But this was not enough.



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To the general public and the government, the fear of losing their cherished American identity was too much to put at risk. Through the work of men like Hall and those who had come before him, the mistrust of the 'new migrants' was firmly planted. The hysteria of an impending Papal conquest led to the birth of The American Protective Association in 1886, created to restrict Catholic political power and to defend the public school's system. Many 'New migrant' communities, in particular from Jewish origin, were banned from clubs, hotels,

³⁴ H. Kallen, 'Democracy versus the Mixing pot', 1915, document found in 'Histoire de l'Amérique du Nord', written by J. Chandler, C. Collomp, B. Cottler, R. Ledru, A. Savin, chapter 5, page 268.

³⁵ Frank Beard, "The Stranger at Our Gate," 1896: From The Ram's Horn,... | Download Scientific Diagram (researchgate.net)

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summer resorts and schools. These measures, along with increasing social hostilities, were seen by many as an act of duty due to the lack of real action by the authorities. Many authors and

public figures continued to call for more aggressive action toward the 'New Migrants', shaming the government for their lack of conviction to what they saw as a national threat. In 1896, a cartoon by Frank Beard, showed a new wave migrant, in all his fabled glory, arriving at the gates of America, guarded by a disgusted Uncle Sam. The caption underneath reads:

EMIGRANT: "*Can I come in?*"

UNCLE SAM: "*I suppose so, there is no law to keep you out.*"³⁵

Soon, even this was not allowed. On 3rd March 1903, Congress passed a bill seeking to (as one newspaper headline put it) "*slam the door on undesirables.*"¹¹ The aim was not to put an end to immigration, as industrial growth still depended on it, but to introduce selective controls to exclude indispensables, "*The new law will exclude from admission altogether, idiots, felons, anarchist, polygamists, the insane, and women of "bad repute."* The bill was aimed at the new wave of refugees and immigrants from non-protestant countries of Southern Eastern Europe, "*Mostly Roman Catholics or Jewish.*" Fear was spread by union leaders and social workers about *Their* "*willingness to work for low wages.*" The factory workers, those living in the teaming slums, who themselves were mostly of migrant origin, played a part in the mass alienation, fearing yet more migrants would cause them to lose their hard found employment.

The desire to end social segregation was made simple by simply not allowing the segregated in at all. Yet these measures did not put an end to the increase, far less the social divisions. More and more migrants, facing ever greater scrutiny, were pushed towards the city's slums. The cities themselves became more and more socially segregated. The desire to preserve one's identity, encouraged by social prosecution led to new neighborhoods such as '*Little Italy.*' The labor unions had still not obtained a considerable voice, despite ever more violent agitation and protest. The *AF of L*, American Federation of Labor, founded in 1881, had obtained by 1914, more than 2 million members, an impressive number. But this represented barely 11% of the nonagricultural workforce. Social division and feeble worker-protection-laws had prevented the union from growing faster. All the while, new laws and legislation were added to the list of excluded classes. By 1907, it included contract laborers and persons suffering from contagious diseases, a far cry away from the promise of 'Lady Liberty' towards the 'Huddled masses yearning to breathe free'.

The nation's frustration at the lack of reform was becoming obvious. The dawn of the 20th Century had brought with it the Progressive Era, a wave of new reforms aimed at healing the nation. This was the new movement that the 'muckrakers', a group of progressive journalists, such as Jacob Riis, and the author of 'Progress and poverty', Henry George, had sparked into public attention. While Riis and his comrades were able to bring the progressive movement to the public attention, convincing men of power to act alongside the movement was another matter. The problem was that whilst the movement was fueled by many problems that faced the public, these were not the primary concerns of the men in power. What was sought after was not reorganization of society, but greater popular participation in government by better-informed electorates. The historian, Maldwyn Allen Jones wrote that *Progressiveness was the product, not of economic depression, but of a period of fairly general prosperity*" and later clarified that the politicians in power saw themselves as "*guardians of the public interest.*" It did not help that the "*progressives generally were ambivalent towards trade unions, frequently hostile to migrants, indifferent to the plight of blacks.*"²⁵ As a result, most of the reforms, despite being praised then and now, did little to address the key identity crisis issues. Progressivism was a moral crusade, spurred on by such influences as the 'Social Gospel Movement', but simple moral virtues did not guarantee a clear mind set. President Theodore Roosevelt knew many of the investigative journalists behind the movement and considered himself a Progressive. Yet, unhappy with the way they forced agendas into national politics, he was the one who first gave them the disparaging nickname "muckrakers," invoking an ill-spirited character obsessed with filth, as depicted in 'The Pilgrim's Progress', a 1678 Christian allegory written by John Bunyan. In fact, many measures taken by Roosevelt were directly against the causes that the progressive journalists had fought for. It was Roosevelt who sent troops to 'calm' labor boycotts in Colorado, ending in disaster. One notable reform that did address many of the complaints by Riis himself, was towards child labor. In 1900, the 'National Child Labor Committee' was formed, which campaigned for restrictive and enforced legislation. But even though by 1910, twenty-five states had adopted such laws, these measures were "*not wholly effective*", according to Maldwyn A. Jones, The US of 1912 was a paradox of a country.

The reality that the USA Wilson inherited was one divided by social stigma and prejudice was a matter he had promised to address, despite the opposition by many who feared it would

²⁵ Maldwyn A. Jones, *The Limits of Liberty*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1983. The limits of liberty, *Chapter 17, page 327* : American history, 1607-1980 : Jones, Maldwyn A. (Maldwyn Allen), 1922-2007 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet_Archive

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threaten the nation's industrial output. On April 8th, 1913, Wilson made an attempt to reassert his presidential power, appearing before a special joint session of the two houses of Congress he said, "*We must abolish everything that bears even the semblance of privilege.*"⁴ However, by 1914, little progress had been made and the social division was still considerable. Social minorities of every origin and culture, Jews, Irish, Asians... facing poverty, scrutiny, and a lack of acceptance into society, had huddled together around their common cultures and values. Mini-community sized cultures, centered around the customs and beliefs of their old nations, dotted the Nation's great population.

Little Italy, the Chinese Block, The Irish Sector all these had become nations within the nation. Because of the need to hold on to their native origins to preserve a sense of identity, true neutrality towards the 'Old Nations' was easier to proclaim than to uphold. Whether it was a sense of loyalty, or, in some cases open hostility, almost every US citizen had some inner feeling or attachment to their origins. The War of Sympathy had begun. Many ex-patriots of British origin were torn two ways when war began. The memory of the struggle for Independence, discontent at the sight of the Union Flag just across the border in Canada, was contrasting with a hereditary hatred of aggression by another European power to the mother country.

On the whole, Anglophobia had mostly passed into history. Since 1900, a sense of genuine friendliness and solidarity had been cultivated, in particular along the Atlantic Coast. Pity towards France who had sided with the colonies during their revolution and then imitated them by becoming a democracy, also pushed sympathy towards the Allies.

Yet this pro Allied feeling was in no way universal. Across the nation there were over fifteen million Irish Americans who had been forced to emigrate to escape British colonial persecution. Their hatred for Britain ran deep and was easily reawakened. In 1901, the homelands *'Irish league'* had reached out to win US support and many former migrants were happy to oblige. One newspaper read, "*The United Irish League is sending two of its leaders on a tour of America to argue the cause of Irish home rule...The leagues chairman, John Redmond MP told the convention that the league was "growing like wildfire". With 1200 branches in Ireland, it is looking to set up branches among Irish emigrants in America.*"¹¹ Added to the discontented Irish were also millions of Russians, Poles, Slavs, Ukrainians, and Jews fleeing persecution, the 'undesired' migrants of the new wage. They hated the notion of a Czarist victory and were opposed to the Allied cause.

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988, page 144.

But perhaps most influential of all, were the immigrants of German origin. There were 11 million Americans of German descent, many of them powerful figures who were eager to put forward her defense and even justification, which to many was more reasonable than the cause of Britain or France. By the turn of the century, the US, and even Canada, had more in common with Germany than Britain. Under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck, Germany had emerged as a nation in 1871. Like its American counterpart, it was a young county, one that was still finding its foothold on the world stage and like America, it was a society born out of the collaboration of different cultures and identities. Her 39 separate states had put aside their regional differences to create this empire. This was a proud nation, unified under the common belief of social improvement and national ambition, something any enthusiast of the 'American Creed' or believer of 'Manifest Destiny' could admire.

But Germany was not only an example of co-existence but also of expansion. From 1871 to 1913, Germany's population had gone from 41 to 68 million. An incredible feat when compared to other nations like France, who had seen a declining birth rate and whose population numbers had stagnated at 38 million. But Germanic expansion was not only an expansion of population, by the early 20th century, more than half of Germans were living in urban areas. But the real revolution lay in its industry. In thirty years, her steel production had been multiplied by twelve, coal by five, manufacturing by four, exports by three, exports of chemicals by three and exports of machinery by five. By 1914, her share in world trade had risen by a third, making Germany the second greatest economic power after the US, and therefore, a great trading partner. Germany had become a parallel vision of America, a young nation that had defied the odds and overtaken the other world powers. These similarities facilitated a Germanic defense at the outbreak of war and even rallied people to her cause. One vocal German supporter recorded in an American newspaper exclaimed in 1914 *“what grudge had England against Germany, except that Germany has grown commercially, financially, and industrially to a position to crowd England into a second rank. Jealousy appears to control this English aptitude, and what is Germany fighting for, does she want anything from anybody? She wants to be left alone.”*⁴

As the passion mounted on both sides, Wilson remained firm. His desires for neutrality and defiance of Roosevelt's Peacekeeper Identity were based on the domestic logical points, but

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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there was a deeper importance for the President, the religious value of neutrality.

Faith had been a fundamental part of Wilson's upbringing and continued into his time in office. The English economist John Maynard Keynes wrote following the Paris Peace Conference that one could not understand Wilson or his policies without understanding his Presbyterian roots. Malcolm D. Magee wrote in his work, *'What the World Should Be,'* an analysis of Wilson's religious views and their impact on politics, "*His religion was inseparable from the other aspects of philosophy.*"³⁶ Wilson believed fully that God controlled the universe and by extension, that there was only one divine morality and plan. The world was experiencing difficulties and the USA was no exception, but God would intervene through the mediation of Christ. Many described Wilson as stubborn and hard-headed, even those who admired him. He rarely asked for advice on his opinions or considered the idea that he could be wrong, for if it were the will of God he followed, any opposing suggestions could only be evil. He went so far to compare the role of a preacher to that of a politician, evoking that "*The success of a great popular preacher contains a lesson for the students of politics.*" This ideology highlights one of the crucial aspects of Wilson's political career, the belief he only had to please one voter, God. Because of his merger of faith and politics, Wilson found the concept of factionalism hard to grapple with. The idea that his policies that were in accordance with his faith would not be welcome by others of the same following did not come easy to him. "*Wilson was often intellectually satisfied with mystery. His understanding of Calvinism antimony allowed him to move between disparate thoughts with confidence that they were not really inconsistent.*" The belief that he was a preacher, a simple spokesperson of a higher power was persistent, instead of the understanding that he was the key policy maker of a major power. "*One needed only to do one duty, be faithful, work hard for divine principles and all would work out as God Intended it.*"

Wilson's genuine belief that The Great War was a crime against humanity was integral to his world view and made his desire to keep America neutral all encompassing, "*We must be impartial, in thought as well as in action. Must put a curve upon our sentiments as well as every transaction that may be construed as a preference of one party towards the struggle before another.*"⁴ Yet this impartiality was not to last.

³⁶ Malcolm D. Magee, *'What the World Should Be,'* published by Ergodebooks, 2011, chapter 1.

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

3: The Sympathy War

The first major act in the Sympathy War was one of moral importance. In mid-1914 came news of the 'Rape of Belgium'. Germany's invasion and violence towards a neutral, militarily inferior country, enraged the population. A slew of atrocity stories flew across the Atlantic to shock the American public. Life Magazine wrote *"If we see anything right at all in all this matter, Belgium is a matter to civilization, sister to all those who love liberty or law! The great incomparable fact of the Great War is Belgium."*⁴ As the news came, week by week, real or not, the heroic struggle of a brave small nation against a cruel invader was firmly planted. The phrase 'Gallant little Belgium' was born. America applauded a real David who did not fear Goliath and the moral obligations could be seen and for many, it was all that was needed.



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Roosevelt wrote to Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister *"I have emphatically approved your action as a model for what should be done by those who believe that treaties should be observed in good faith and that there is such a thing as international morality...I*

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

³⁷ F.H. Townsend's 'Punch' cartoon, *BRAVO, BELGIUM!*, London Charivari, August 12 1911, Cartoons and the historian (original-political-cartoon.com)

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fervently hope that you may act firmly and courteously. Any moderate course you may take will meet with great support here."³⁸

Yet as passionate as this pro Allied support was, it was not enough to end neutrality. From this document at the very beginning of the war, the division between the moral obligation to fight versus the moral obligation to protect American lives was evident. However, some feelings were shared by both main political parties, towards the end of his letter, Roosevelt stated, *"Our trade, under existing circumstances, is of vastly more service to you and France than to Germany. I think I underestimate the case when I say it is ten times as valuable to the Allies as to Germany. There are circumstances under which it might become not merely valuable but vital."* A promise of support in the name of human decency, but also with a condition, Roosevelt stipulated that it depended on Britain keeping the moral high ground by respecting free trade. This moral high ground was soon lost.

This time it was the British who upset the peace of mind. Starting in 1914, the Allied navies had created a blockade around German ports in an attempt to interrupt contraband cargo from reaching the Central Powers, but this included naval interference with American merchant shipping bound for Germany. The crisis was of course, economic; interrupting American trade. But it also had a national effect as it brought to memory the intolerable acts of British colonialism and this flared up forgotten hatred. Yet, despite feeling a national violation, respect was preserved.

The president's passionate and public wish was to stay neutral, but away from direct public perception, Wilson's administration was strongly pro-ally. William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State for the US, was one exception who did not favor any of the belligerents. But the rest, for the most part, had little in the way of German sympathies. This made the issue of Britain's naval interference ever more complicated as it is easy to declare war, but much harder to strike a balance. In a correspondence between William Jennings Bryan, and Walter Hines Page, the US Ambassador to Great Britain, the tension was clear. Bryan wrote on December 26th, 1914, *"This Government cannot without protest permit American ships or American cargoes to be taken into British ports and there detained for the purpose of searching generally for evidence of contraband.... Not only is the situation a critical one to the commercial interests of the United States, but many of the great industries of this country are suffering."*³⁹ The Secretary of State's letter did not hold back and ended with a line that was

³⁸ Theodore Roosevelt to Sir Edward Grey, 22 January 1915, WWI Document Archive , Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Sir Edward Grey - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

³⁹ Correspondence between William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State and Walter Hines Page, US Ambassador to Great Britain. December 26th, 1914-January 7, 1915, U.S. Protests Against Maritime Warfare - World War I Document Archive

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almost a threat, *“If it does not improve, it may arouse a feeling contrary to that which has so long existed between the American and British peoples.”*

The contrast to the reaction of the 'Rape of Belgium' was fascinating, as all though this was not a moral crime, it was an economic and national burden which carried greater weight. Lloyd George, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, best explained the dilemma, *“Germany's chief power was on land, Britain's on the sea. Germany's invasion of Belgium, her devastation of France, might have arisen disinterested wrath in America, but it did not touch American pockets. On the other hand, Britain's firm measure to prevent contraband of war from reaching Germany, and her wide and constantly widening interpretation of contraband, caused serious inconvenience with American shipping and direct interference with American business.”*⁴ America's industrial might, and economic stability were too vital to put at risk. Walter Hines Page was also a pro-Allies politician, to such an extent that he purposely downplayed the protest he delivered and advised Sir Edward Grey how to answer. Yet there was little compromise. Page, wrote back to Bryan, on the 7th of January 1915, *“His Majesty's Government cordially concur in the principle enunciated by the Government of the United States that a belligerent, in dealing with trade between neutrals, should not interfere unless such interference is necessary to protect the belligerent's national safety.”*³⁹ And such was the case for Britain.

So, from the very beginning of the conflict Wilson most definitely had 'preference of one party towards the struggle than another'. He went as far as to remark to his private secretary in the autumn of 1914 that *“England is fighting our fight.”*¹⁸ Yet it was also clear from the very beginning that his diplomatic policies to stay in favor with the allied nations whilst keeping the home nation neutral, was not viable. Left to itself the diplomatic dispute of the British interventions at sea could easily have developed into a cause of conflict. But once again, the pendulum of sympathy swayed against Germany by her own fault.

The sinking of allied ships by German U-boats was more shocking than British contraband. News of vessel after vessel going down flooded the American press and tales of men being left to die in open boats became the norm. This overshadowed Britain's naval interference and

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *“Right Is More Precious Than Peace”* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

³⁹ *Correspondence between William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State and Walter Hines Page*, US Ambassador to Great Britain. December 26th, 1914-January 7, 1915, U.S. Protests Against Maritime Warfare - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 55. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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meant The Allies were dependent on American resources. Yet despite this, the War of Sympathy was far from won in the eyes of the President. On February 10th, Wilson expressed outrage at Germany's U-boat policies, but he also showed anger towards Britain for using American flags on its own ships to dupe the Central Powers, such as on the Lusitania. He went as far as to write to the German Parliament on the 10th of February 1915 to express his concerns. He warned Germany that her ever more violent measures at sea meant: *"The United States would be constrained to hold the Imperial Government of Germany to a strict accountability for such acts of their naval authorities, and to take any steps it might be necessary to take to safeguard American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas."*⁴⁰ But in the final line of his letter, Wilson repeated that America wanted no blame or part in the matter, *"It is stated for the information of the Imperial Government that representations have been made to his Britannic Majesty's Government in respect to the unwarranted use of the American flag for the protection of British ships."* The warning was empty words.

At this point, despite blows to both national pride and economics, few Americans felt concerned to do more than protest. The War remained none of their concern. This lack of worry was noticed in May of 1915, when the British ocean liner, Lusitania, set sail from New York harbor. The day before her departure, the German embassy in Washington had published an announcement in the American press. It stated that all ships, including passenger liners, were fair game to U-Boats. Few passengers took any notice. On 7th May, U-20 was waiting and sank the liner, killing 1153 passengers, including 114 American citizens. The response from America was a hurricane of anti-German feeling, vocal and violent. This was an attack on American citizens. The press exploded and the War of Sympathy seemed all but won. It was now not a question of which side America favored, but whether she would join the War herself. Theodore Roosevelt, who's feelings towards the war had been long kept in check, knew his time was now. He said *"This represents not merely piracy, but piracy on a vaster scale of murder than old times pirates ever practiced! Its warfare against innocent men, women, and children, travelling upon the ocean, and our own fellow countrymen and country women who are among the sufferers! It seems inconceivable that we can refrain from taking action, as we owe it not only to humanity, but to our own national self-respect!"*⁴¹

Yet, even faced with such an outburst of passion, Wilson's calm manner and voice of reason

⁴⁰ Woodrow Wilson, 'Wilson's First Warning to the Germans,' 10 February 1915. WWI Document Archives: Wilson's First Warning to the Germans - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

⁴¹ *Two Ex-President's Views, The New York Times Current History of the European War*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (JUNE, 1915), pp. 444, Published by: University of California Press, Two Ex-Presidents' Views on JSTOR

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prevailed, “*The example of America must be a special example. The example of America must be the example not merely of peace because it will not fight, but because peace is the healing and elevating influence of the world and strife is not. There is such a thing as a man being so right it does not need to convince others by force that it is right.... there is such a thing as being too proud to fight.*”⁴² Wilson still clung to his ideals of peace, yet despite his outward public appearance, he realized his dreams were slowly crumbling.

Despite the criticism Wilson faced, in her Work, ‘*The Moralists*,’ Patricia O’Toole defends the notion that Wilson was not “*motivated by in deference or self-interest*” but by sympathy for mankind. He believed America could still bring peace but only if she were a mediator, and not a participant. But this desire for peace was not only linked to faith, like Theodore Roosevelt during the Russo-Japanese war, Wilson had concerns over what the World would look like after the conflict, the fear that the US would lose its influence and authority, “*If the Allies won, he thought that Russia, not England or France would dominate the continent. And if the Central powers Won, German militarism would force the rest of the world to become an armed camp.*” This had been the same fear that had convinced Roosevelt to be the mediator between Russia and Japan, in that a full Japanese victory would give her Empire such power as to be a potential danger to the USA. His goal had been to end the conflict peacefully before escalation. There was also the national image factor. Roosevelt, not only succeeded with his mission for peace, but both parties came to the USA to sign the peace treaty, galvanizing America’s Peacekeeper Identity. Henry Cabot Lodge wrote, “*We are the strongest moral force-also physical-now existent, and the peace of the world rests largely with us.*”¹⁸ Wilson’s view of America as the moral missionary, or ‘Army of Christ’ as he would put it, had a similar need for global approval and legitimacy that would be achieved as a mediator.

But, even if both men had similar needs, their methods were less compatible. Roosevelt had believed in more direct interference, Wilson did not. On May 13th, 1915, he wrote again to the German government, “*The Government of the United States has been appraised that the Imperial German Government considered themselves to be obliged by the extraordinary circumstances of the present war and the measures adopted by their adversaries in seeking to cut Germany off from all commerce.*”⁴³ Later, on July 23rd, Wilson told Germany that the

⁴² *Address of the President of the United States, Mr. Woodrow Wilson*, Convention Hall at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 10, 1915. Wilson's "Too Proud to Fight" Speech - The Lusitania Resource (rmslusitania.info)

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 51. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁴³ *Wilson's First Lusitania Note to Germany, from Woodrow Wilson to Ambassador Gerard*, Washington, May 13, 1915,

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US stood for maritime freedom, “*without compromises, at any cost.*” Yet these were still mostly empty words. Two days later the 25th, Germans sank two US merchant ships off the coast of Ireland.

Across his country, Wilson was forced to see his nation slowly become more divided by its neutrality faced with the war. The pro-Allied and Pro-Central powers had split the nation, fueled by the nationalist segregation. The moralists on both sides, those who pushed for war and those who advocated neutrality, were becoming ever more violent. There was also the unrest that had nothing to do with national preference or even isolationism, the class struggle. The Labor Unions, so long overlooked in peace time, were also clamoring to be heard. John Metz, a member of the American Socialist Party, wrote in 1916, “*This frightful upheaval is but a symptom of the international readjustment which the underlying economic forces are bringing about, as well as the fundamental changes which are being wrought in our industrial and political institutions.*”⁴⁴ To these disgruntled workers, the War was the solution to the nightmare they had endured at the hands of the corrupt business tycoons, “*With bankruptcy and ruin such as the world never beheld staring them in the face, the lords of capitalist misrule are about ready to sue for peace... experience has demonstrated that capitalist nations have no honor and that the most solemn treaty is but a “scrap of paper” in their mad rivalry for conquest and plunder, such a program, even if adopted, might prove abortive and barren of results.*”

Wilson could see the harm of peace but knew that if war came, his dream of self-purification that he had so believed in, would be lost forever, “*Once lead this people into war, and they will forget there was ever such a thing as tolerance, and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fiber of our national life.*”⁴ This dying hope of Wilson's dream was embodied in the story of Edith Cavell, a 49-year-old British nurse who had helped as many as 100 Allied soldiers escape into neutral Holland. She was executed on the 13th of November 1915. Her last words before her death were: “*Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone.*”⁴⁵ Yet hatred was now unavoidable and becoming ever more one sided. In 1915, James Stuart Blackton had released his silent film, *THE BATTLE CRY*

WWI Document Archive , Wilson's First Lusitania Note to Germany - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

⁴⁴ John Metz *The Prospect for Peace*, for the American Socialist Party, February 19, 1916, Online Version: E.V. Debs Internet Archive, 2001, [TheProspectforPeace \(marxists.org\)](http://TheProspectforPeace.marxists.org)

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 “*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*” BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁴⁵ Pamela D. Toler, ‘*Edith Cavell: Patriotism Is Not Enough*’, WONDERS AND MARVELS, Edith Cavell: Patriotism Is Not Enough - Wonders & Marvels (wondersandmarvels.com)

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OF PEACE' an adaptation of the semi-fictional novel, 'Defenseless America' by Hudson Maxim. Blackton's film showed New York being attacked by ferocious men in German uniforms, who then proceed to rape the civilians. The main protagonist, John Harrison, is for prudence in foreign policy and is ultimately killed by the soldiers. His wife, Virginia Vandergriff, is for peace at any cost, and is shot by another to avoid a "*Fate worse than death.*" Blackton made no attempt to hide his film's message, which would go on to raise over One-hundred million dollars and be seen by over sixty million people in the USA and Great Britain. Theodore Roosevelt mockingly told one reporter: "*The Battle Cry for Peace has done more for the Allied Cause than twenty battalions of soldiers.*"⁴⁶

As 1915 continued, Wilson was pushed ever closer to ending neutrality. On the 15th of October, he approved expansion of the US army from 98 to 140 thousand men. This seemingly simple decision was major in its significance.

The USA had always had a polarizing relationship with its military, the First US army had overthrown the British Empire but also shown how fragile that nation was. Because of this "*The armed forces simultaneously represented both a threat to democracy and its ultimate protector.*"⁴⁷ As a result, effort was made by the founding father to create an army "*Capable of expanding in defense of the nation, but weak enough as to not usurp the power of the government.*" The choice to expand the army showed how much foreign affairs was influencing a still neutral nation; her armed force was now seen as a vital tool in the new age. Support for the allied cause was becoming more and more the moral obligation and tolerance for pro-German figures dwindled. U-boats were no longer sufficient to prevent supplies from reaching Britain. Out of desperation, Germany turned to sabotage. American factories and supply houses containing ammunition were infiltrated and burnt down by a massive underground spy network, funded by over 30 million dollars of German government money dispersed through the military and naval attaches. On the 16th of August 1915, Wilson initiated an inquiry into espionage activities in the US and insisted on the recall of all its members. The spy network, like the U-boat attacks, had failed. On the 9th of September, the Austrian ambassadors were recalled, out of fear of a plot to prevent manufacturing of munitions for Allies.

By 1916, the pro-British feeling was almost universal, in this sense at least Wilson had won. Whilst neutrality remained dominant, the moral obligation had slowly reared its head in favor of the Allies. The peacekeeper identity wanted to be seen. Yet the black and white painting of

⁴⁶ M. Paul Holsinger, *War and American Popular Culture*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999

⁴⁷ Nancy Gentile Ford, *The Great War and America/ Civil-Military Relations During World One*, by, 2009

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the war was mostly propaganda, in which the different nations did not have a fair playing field. At the outbreak of conflict, the Royal navy had ripped up the German transatlantic cables. Only the Allies possessed direct access to Americans' public ears. Whilst many felt relief at knowing the 'true enemy', others were disgusted.

The Americans of German origin realized that they were slowly becoming the face of the enemy within and were treated accordingly. One individual who refused to watch his culture be reduced to a propaganda tool was the writer of German origin, H.L. Mencken. He saw it as his responsibility in this time of war to present the German side to anyone who would listen. His pro-German essays in his 'Free-lance Column' were a source of reassurance for some, and of outrage to others. In 1914 he had written "*The German attitude towards the world is simple. He tells the world to go to the devil. This German arrogance, is an affront to Anglo Saxon pride.*"⁴⁸ Such words marked Mencken as a pro-German sympathizer, yet he stated that he was no more pro-German than he was pro-American. His anger was towards the government which claimed neutrality, but secretly had pro-Allied reservations and had forced them on the nation through deliberate propaganda. He harbored a particular discontent towards Wilson, who preached neutrality but showed unmistakable evidence of deep Allied support.

This was true of Wilson's support for the Allies, but also of the alienation of Germany. From 1915 onward, he increased his use of religious symbolism when describing America's Crusade. In one speech he depicted the war as if it were a passage from the Bible, evoking "*The mountain of the Lord's house,*" where all nations go for peace. "*He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his path... they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up swords against nations, neither shall they learn war anymore.*"³⁶ While it may not have been his initial intention, his crusader speeches contributed ever more to the image of the Central Powers as a source of evil, the very message he claimed to be fighting against.

Mencken systematically investigated stories that the Evening Sun newspaper reprinted from the London Globe, exposing numerous fabrications. He described his battle as one of heart and mind, a trap to catch the gullible American reader. The trap was made ever more dangerous by the fact that "*The suckers are numerous and eager to be caught.*"⁴⁹ The acceptance that the Allied cause had the moral high ground greatly simplified the life of most

⁴⁸ H. L. Mencken, "*The Free Lance,*" Baltimore Evening Sun, September 28, 1914, University of Ottawa Archives

³⁶ Malcolm D. Mage, '*What the World Should Be*', published by Ergodebooks, 2011.

⁴⁹ *Some Notes on Mencken in the First World War*, Article: Oleg Panczenko, 2015

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Americans. The nation wanted to believe they were participating towards the victory of the righteous. America's role as an arms dealer seemed to be a well-liked compromise, righteous sentiment and self-interest, an ideal situation for judicial propaganda. This was Mencken's opponent, he knew that if war reached America, the already strong hatred against Americans of German origin would become a nightmare. But, faced with the lack of direct information caused by the lack of German cables, and the ever more powerful press propaganda, he was fighting a losing battle.



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As the months went by, the purely Allied version of events was shown. Horrors of the 'Rape of Belgium,' U-boat attacks on innocent merchant ships and Zeppelin bombings of civilian cities. That is not to say that all these crimes were false, but they lacked context. The War Propaganda Bureau flooded the US with atrocity stories. Some of these were complete fabrication, a mental poison disseminated by the new wonders of the 20th Century, cinema films, wireless, even fake photography.

The British called upon the film industry to create unchecked stories which reached across the Atlantic. The world was told the German made candle grease out of human bodies taken from the battlefield to a 'Corpse Factory', a story that was widely accepted.

In the case of U-Boat attacks, there was little need to intensify the horror. Between January and April 1917 alone, over 1200 thousand tons of British shipping had been lost. A blow to Britain's lifeline that struck at every citizen. Britain, like Germany, was an industrial nation where agriculture had lost importance and as a result, the nation could not sustain itself without food imports. On 28th February 1918, compulsory rationing was introduced in

⁵⁰ Still from a propaganda Reel on *The German Corpse Factory*, exact author unknown, made 1916.

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London and the Home Counties and in April, it was extended to the entire nation.

This suffering was genuine and easily created British support from America, but it was only one side of the story. The U-Boat attacks had been countermeasures against Britain's naval blockade that had surrounded Germany since the outbreak of war. By 1916, the blockade was doing its deadly work. Germans were eating less than half the daily food needed for general health requirements and in the larger cities, many were eating domestic animals. The use of U-Boats against British naval ships was claimed to be a last act of desperation. The *Lusitania* herself had been carrying five thousand tons of ammunition, something Mencken did not fail to mention in his column of 'Free Lance' on May 10th, 1915. Yet, whether as an act of desperation or an act of piracy, it was not enough. In four years of war, over 700 thousand German civilians, mostly children and the elderly, died as a result of the Allied Blockade, more than twice the number of deaths sustained at Verdun. Yet of this, the Americans were mostly, if not totally, unaware.

But not all Allied crimes were hidden from view. On April 24th, 1916, came news of the Easter Rebellion, another moral blow against the Allies, but also of national interest. Britain's execution of 14 Irish rebel leaders had a significant impact on the Irish American community and led to a counter swing in American Sympathy. The British ambassador in Washington reported: "*The attitude towards England has been changed for the worse, our cause for the present among the Irish is a lost one.*"⁴⁸ Yet at this point, it was irrelevant as the pro-German feeling could never be reignited. On February 6th, 1916, Germany accepted full liability for loss of US lives on the *Lusitania* and gave the right for the US to claim indemnity, but the time had passed to try to rebuild the once neutral feeling of 1914. Wilson, for his part, did not even try. Despite his strong pro-Allied feeling he still clung to his hopes of American neutrality but had accepted that neutrality alone was not enough. Nor was it enough to simply be the arsenal of whichever side seemed most morally pleasing. It was clear to him that any hope his dreams had of surviving rested on three points.

The first was of course staying neutral (as far as actual fighting was concerned), a desire that, in mid-1916, was not yet a completely lost cause. The second was that when the War finally ended, the world would be willing to accept peace. Wilson's fear was that when the guns finally fell silent, the civilized world of 1914 would be a distant memory in which his nation would have no place. This highlighted the importance of the third point, ending the war as soon as possible.

⁴⁸H. L. Mencken, "*The Free Lance*", Baltimore Evening Sun, September 28, 1914, University of Ottawa Archives

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On 27th May 1916, he called for a 'League of Nations'. Wilson proposed the creation of an organization to keep peace in the world when the war was over. Such an organization would, according to Wilson, guarantee freedom of seas, protect small countries from aggression, and intervene to stop conflicts when necessary. The rule of force must be ended, as the president put it: "*The world had a right to live in peace.*"¹

To any American listening, it was not hard to see the irony, the great resemblance to the passionate words uttered by Roosevelt at his 1905 inauguration when he had justified imperialist expansion, "*All this country desires is to see its neighboring countries stable, orderly and prosperous.*"¹⁹

There was no mistaking that Wilson's idea was a 'Peacekeeper' mentality. The role of a guard, to protect the civilized world by intervention, all in the interest of humanity and righteousness. Yet there were alterations, unlike Roosevelt's Peacekeeper identity which had taken the form of imperialism, Wilson did not advocate interventions with motives of self-interest – at least not as directly. Wilson's 'Peacekeeper' identity was more based on soft power and foreign alliances, instead of cultural influence and foreign intervention. It was a long way from George Washington's desire of isolationism and purification, but it was a compromise that Wilson believed in. He knew that this was his last hope of maintaining his ambitions and poured all his energy into putting it in place. But ending the greatest conflict in history would not prove as easy as Wilson had hoped.

From 1915 onward the President had sent envoys on secret missions to explore peace possibilities, but despite the fact that Europe was already half devastated, none of the belligerents were eager to give way. His own country was also not completely convinced, like it had been for Roosevelt, many Americans were not ready to see their ambitions go overseas. But with the Sympathy War and the influence of outside events, the notion had slowly opened to more reflection.

By mid-1916, little to no progress had been made but it was clear that Wilson's ideas had potential. He needed more time; he needed another term!

¹ Woodrow Wilson, *War Message to Congress, Address delivered at Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress*, April 2, 1917: U.S. 65th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document 5. Website: Wilson's War Message to Congress - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

¹⁹ Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and his time shown in his own letters*, New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1920. Theodore Roosevelt and his time shown in his own letters : Bishop, Joseph Bucklin, 1847-1928 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

4: The shifting policies of Wilson Faced with the 1917 Elections

1916 was an election year and The War was the main issue. The two parties made the division crystal clear. Neutralism, the lingering wish to remain out of the conflict, still possessed a doughty champion in Wilson's Democrats. Support for his party was strong in the Midwest and Pacific States, where the conflict seemed more remote. Wilson toured the nation and where he went followed the slogan; *'He kept us out of the War'*⁴ Yet despite the obvious popular support for such a motto, Wilson himself did not use it, saying privately that he did not want to promote false hope or make a promise he could not keep. His proportions for a 'League of Nations' had made little progress during the last months of his first term in office, the world still was not ready for peace and Wilson recognized the danger. Nevertheless, he conveyed the impression that he would promote neutrality to the end. Peace was a constant theme in his speeches, and many were eager to listen.

The Republican candidate was Charles Hughes, a former governor of New York State, and a Supreme Court associate. He was strongly backed by Roosevelt. They advocated more decisive action, a larger army, universal military training and more aggressive foreign interventions. As expected, at the front of the party (and in front of the candidate himself), stood Roosevelt, carving a path by means of passionate words. He held no restraint and aimed directly for the still damaged nerves of the nation, with such public speeches, *"The shadows of men, women and children who have risen from the ooze of the ocean. The shadow of babies, gaping pitifully as they sank under the waves. The shadows of deeds that were never done. The shadows of lofty words that were followed by no action. The shadows of the tortured dead."*⁵¹ Whilst the pro-war members of the nation were a minority, they were a very vocal minority and held more influence than the average indifferent citizen. Wilson did not try to reason with the opposition and instead played to his advantage, openly calling his opponents 'the war party'. This name was not true, most of the Republicans did not want war any more than many of the Democrats, calling instead for *'a straight and honest neutrality.'*

So, Wilson's party did not promise peace and Hughes's party did not demand war. Nevertheless, in the public mind, the identities of both sides were set in stone, and neither party shied away from appealing to public demands. Hughes struggled, trying to avoid

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁵¹ Edmund Morris, *Colonel Roosevelt*, CHAPTER 24 Shadows of Lofty Words, page 26, 2011. Shadows of Lofty Words - Colonel Roosevelt (erenow.net)

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detailed discussions of the neutrality issues. His weak nerves under pressure and unwillingness to commit harmed the 'straight and honest' brand he was campaigning under, as many could not fathom where he stood. Yet, pushed forward by the hurricane that was Roosevelt's public influence and with the confidence that he had the majority party, Hughes fought with perseverance where he focused on national and moral elements. He wooed German Americans and the Irish communities, promising commitment to peace and less tolerance for social scrutiny all the while criticizing Wilson's failures in defending American rights. Once again, the nation was torn two ways.

To great surprise, despite being once again the minority party, the Democrats won, and Wilson was reinstated for a second term in office. How much of the victory was due to his image of 'Peacemaker' was unclear, the Historian Maldwyn A. Jones wrote in 'The Limits of Liberty', that "*It was his domestic reforms that enabled him to put together a new Democratic coalition.*"²⁵

Wilson had also focused on national and moral issues; but he did not fail to pay attention to economic aspects having endorsed the eight-hour day which gave him great support from the labor unions and industrial poorer areas who had been rising in influence. During this time of war, he had focused on what the American Identity truly held as a priority. The President and his supporters had fused together the notions of peace and the progressive movement. Such reforms were needed by the constant demands of war export. America was now the arsenal of the Allies, producing all the ammunition and war materiel they could buy and more. The slump once caused by Britain's contraband measures, had turned into an economic boom. Prices went up, so did wages and profits. Records were being set in all sectors of the economy and the labor unions were getting their victory. It is a strange irony that it took a world war to humanize industry, the very thing the Progressive Movement saw as a threat, yet such was the case. Most supported the allied cause and agreed it coincided with progressive ideals. In this respect, Wilson had accomplished a small part of his dream of 1912.

In this respect, Wilson had accomplished a small part of his dream of 1912. The war had proved fruitful, and Wilson knew it. The carnage had enabled him to bring God's order into play and push several policies that in peace time would have failed.

But on the whole, his re-election was a hollow victory as his support had fallen sharply. It

²⁵ Maldwyn A. Jones, *The Limits of Liberty*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1983, Chapter 17, page 327. The limits of liberty : American history, 1607-1980 : Jones, Maldwyn A. (Maldwyn Allen), 1922-2007 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet_Archive

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was, as one journalist put it, the “*Closest presidential election since 1888.*”¹¹ The pretext was becoming obvious, and Wilson knew it was now or never. In December of 1916, with the election barely over, he tried again. He sent notes to all the belligerent nations, asking them to state their war aims, praying to find common ground for a peace settlement (it also had the purpose of knowing where they all stood if America entered the War). His efforts were once again, unsympathetically received. Both sides suspected The US of siding with their enemy.

Wilson turned to his own government. On January 22nd, 1917, he outlined to the Senate his ideas of peace, passionately outlining the importance of his 'neutral peacekeeper' identity. A conquered peace, he declared, would breed hatred and future wars, the only option was '*Peace without victory.*' The prospect of a future where the US would maintain peace without sending his own countrymen to die in foreign fields sat well with many Americans. The old Peacekeeper Identity, the concept of Manifest Destiny and the American Creed, could be adapted to this new ideology. Moral virtues felt by Allied propaganda, real or not, had opened the nation to more direct action whilst still holding on to neutrality. But even as Wilson's Utopian ideals seemed within grasp, it was too late.

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988

6: The Peacekeeper Leads his Nation to War

On January 31st, 1917, Germany informed the US that she intended to carry out unrestricted submarine warfare. This meant that all ships, even neutral, carrying contraband or not, around the British Isles and the Eastern Mediterranean, would be sunk on sight by German U-Boats. This new threat highlighted yet another flaw of government policy based on faith. On top of his lack of ability to see multiple moral opinions in a politically grey world, there was also the problem of antimony, the belief that God's plan was at times incomprehensible to humans but still right. Because of this belief that one had to stay loyal to 'Divine Will,' Wilson would at times take decisions based purely on faith and then find logical and legal rationale later.

When the German telegram arrived, Wilson, putting as ever his faith in peace, resisted the evidence, *"I refuse to believe that it is the intention of the Germans to do in fact what they have warned us they will feel at liberty to do. Only actual overt acts on their part can make me believe it, even now."*⁴ Wilson was forced to believe the facts when in the first 3 weeks of February, 134 neutral vessels were sunk. Germany's threat lived up to its promise. Wilson tried in desperation to open diplomatic negotiations, but at this point it was intended so that history would note that when America had entered war, it was because every other alternative had tried and failed. In the last week of February, under intense pressure from his own party, Wilson's resolve snapped. The American ambassador was sent away, and diplomatic relations were broken off. On February 26th, 1917, the US passed a bill to arm its merchant ships, in order to maintain an '*Armed neutrality*'. The antiwar filibusters of the Senate tried to block the bill, but Wilson armed the ships without Congressional sanctions, calling the protesters *"A little group of willful men."*⁵²

Wilson's outburst and decision was perhaps one of the most unexpected of his career, yet it perfectly represented The American Identity. By early 1917, America was directly involved, neutral or not. Morality and economy were uncompromisingly joined and there was no question as to her righteous cause. And now, finally, the last identical aspect would be added to the War Cause. In 1917, four fifths of America's army was in action along the border with Mexico. Since the Roosevelt years (the years of the Imperialist Manifest Destiny), the relations between the two nations had decreased dramatically and turned into an armed

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, page 304

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conflict. This war on the American Continent was not lost on Germany. As the U-Boats and sabotage networks had failed to prevent US support for the Allies, Germany made Mexico a proposition of a new alliance. On January the 19th 1917, the Zimmerman Telegram was sent. It read *“We shall make war together and together make peace; we will give generous financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to reconquer her lost territory of New Mexico, Texas and Arizona... suggest that the President of Mexico shall on his own initiative communicate with Japan suggesting the latter adherence at once this plan, and at the same time offer to mediate between Germany and Japan.”*⁵³ Unaware of Arthur Zimmerman, Britain had cracked the German code and waited for the right moment to inform her American cousin. On 29th February, three days after the bill arming merchant ships was passed, the bomb was dropped. America erupted into fury! This was a plot to invade her own territory, to kill her citizens and dismantle her sacred territory.

Opinion crystallized; the Peace Party evaporated. The streets filled with angry mobs demanding direct and violent action to save the homeland, and at the front of the mob, true to tradition, stood Roosevelt, *“This man Wilson is enough to make the saint and the angels, YES and the Apostles swear! And I would not blame them! My god why doesn't he do something! If he doesn't go to war with Germany, I will skin him alive.”*⁴ Finally, after three years of war, three years of compromise, moral duty, economic safety, and national integrity were brought together under one banner. The American nation, from all its different identities (with the exception of some of German origin), united behind the desire to join the War and protect America for the Americans!

On April 2nd 1917, Wilson gave the address that he had done everything possible to avoid, *“I advise that congress declare, that it formerly accept the status of a belligerent that is forced upon it...With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragic character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves.”*¹ He cut the cord to the peaceful ideals of self-improvement via isolationism, that he had done so much to protect, *“We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances.”* Wilson knew the damage this conflict would have on his young nation. Nevertheless, he read his message to Congress with

⁵³ Arthur Zimmerman, *The Zimmerman Telegram*, Foreign Secretary, January the 19th. Zimmermann Telegram (1917) | National Archives

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *“Right Is More Precious Than Peace”* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

¹ Woodrow Wilson, *War Message to Congress, Address delivered at Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress*, April 2, 1917: U.S. 65th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document 5. Website: Wilson's War Message to Congress - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

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complete devotion and in the belief that his decision to send Americans to fight and die in foreign fields was the only action the country could take, "*To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes.*" Such is the strange character of Woodrow Wilson, that this man who had so feared the idea of American involvement in the war, understood that there was no longer any alternative and it was impossible to go back. Even when faced with opposition, "*Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world is against selfish and autocratic power.*" And from these principles, Wilson made the promise which would define the future American identity, "*The World must be made safe for democracy.*" This quotation would be engraved into American foreign policy and take American influence and respect to new highs on the world stage, which would overshadow even Theodore Roosevelt's visions of American intervention. At last, the American Nation and the World were ready to listen to Wilson's interpretation of the Peacekeeper Identity, but at the cost of America's innocence and purity.

As the news of war spread, the country erupted into celebration. Wilson remarked in his diary in sorrow, "*My message today was one of death for our young men, how strange it seems to applaud that.*"⁴ Yet applaud she did. Every aspect, every ounce of energy, and of ingenuity of the American Nation was channeled into the war. The great Broadway producer and songwriter, George M. Cohan, upon reading the morning headline that the US was at war, retreated to his office. Within two hours he had composed the soon to be national hit, '*Over There.*' J. Stuart Blackton, not looking to be left out of this universal enthusiasm, released the long-awaited sequel to his earlier film '*The Battle Cry for Peace.*' His new film, ever subtle in title, '*Womanhood, The Glory of a Nation,*' appeared directly after Wilson's declaration, just in time for the opening of the recruiting centers.

A flood created by volunteers raced to the enlisting offices, and the labor unions rallied to the cause as the industrial needs of war suddenly increased tenfold. The tycoons were called in to manage the nation's resources. New shipyards were built to prepare a new fleet that would transport men and war materials across the Atlantic. American women, taking note from the female workforce movements in Britain, did not let this opportunity pass and joined the war effort with enthusiasm. The press, magazines and propaganda industries created a tidal wave of patriotic fuel for the nation. The American Identity welcomed the new role of 'moral belligerent' with open arms.

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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The nation had adapted with a speed and passion that Wilson had so feared. Other fears had also come true. When Mencken returned from a trip to Berlin in 1917, having seen firsthand the devastation, it was too late. Not even his own personal testimonies of starving children could save the German cause in America now. As war was declared, anti-German feeling turned into hysteria. Wagner's music was banned, schools stopped teaching German to children and German owned shops and businesses were burnt down or looted. 'sauerkraut' was quickly renamed 'Liberty Cabbage'. One German American, Robert P. Prager, a 45-year-old coal miner, was lynched after being charged with making disloyal utterances against Wilson.

Some tried to use this hatred to their advantage. American leaflets from the 'Friends of German Democracy', were distributed in early 1918; they read "*BROTHERS! We are American citizens of German descent. We know you and trust you. We beg you to trust us. The great German nation is the barbarian and the breaker of trust in the eyes of the world. You can recover your good reputation only if you overthrow this government, which has made German intelligence and German industry a danger to the world...If you do this the world war will end...Arise for a struggle for a free Germany!*"⁵⁴ Alienation was seen by many as a necessary evil to unify the American nation under one cause.

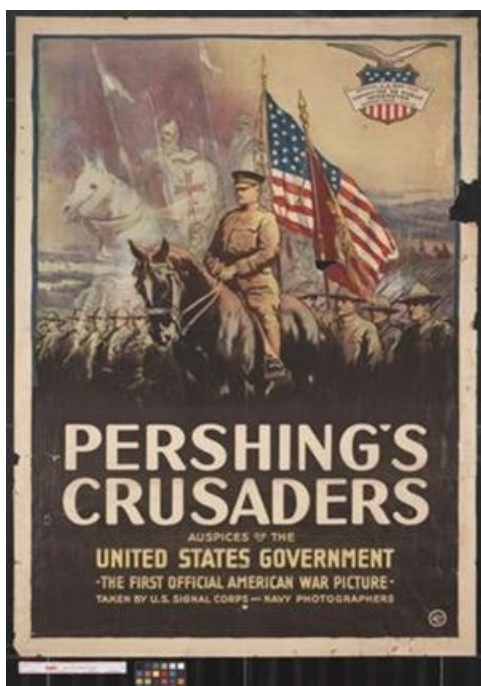
The cause of America in April 1917 was clear, she was involved in a moral crusade to save civilization, but it was also a national cause. Conflict arose between America's desire to prepare an independent fighting force, and the Allies' need for men. American national pride prevailed; her resolve was solid. She wanted to fight but under her own flag as a great national army with American leadership, not as a minor force integrated into another nation's arsenal. Because of this persistence it would not be until almost September of 1918 that American troops would begin fighting as an army in their own right. Until then, the Allies would have to make do. Wilson insisted that if he were to send men to fight, they would be adequately trained so as to not to make a repeat of the Somme with American lives. '*The Yanks are coming*' but would be coming in their own time, a clear demonstration that America's war was not out of pure altruism.

But as a token of good will to show what was coming, a small expeditionary force led by General Pershing set sail for The Front. The arrival of these troops in Europe crystallized America's new identity. One propaganda poster later commissioned, showed Pershing's

⁵⁴ UNION OF FRIENDS OF GERMAN DEMOCRACY, *American Leaflet from the Friends of German Democracy*: New York, March, 1918, WWI Document Archive, Propaganda Leaflets - World War I Document Archive (byu.edu)

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Crusaders, with their new identity in all its grandeur. In the foreground was General Pershing himself, leading his proud troops. Two soldiers behind him hold a US flag. Hovering in the background can be seen medieval crusaders on white horses, carrying heart-shaped shields with the image of the Holy Cross emblazoned on them. These were the men who had fought to retake Jerusalem from the Infidel, and this was the identity presented to Europe as America went to war 1917.



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This view of America was not only personal, the American 'Peacekeeper' as a force for truth and purity was widely accepted in the rest of the world. King George V of England said upon receiving Pershing *"It has always been my dream that the two English speaking nations should someday be united in a great cause, and today, my dream was realized. Together we are fighting for the greatest cause, for which peoples could fight. The Anglophone race must save civilization."*⁴

On the 27th of June 1917, the troops crossed into France, their arrival was welcomed as that of saviors. In the streets of Paris, the crowds swelled to a frenzy as the Americans marched

⁵⁵ H.C. Miner Litho. Co, *'Pershing's Crusaders,'* United States Army Signal Corps, poster, 1918. "Pershing's Crusaders," auspices of the United States Government, the first official American war picture taken by U.S. Signal Corps and Navy photographers. – Œuvres – Digital Collections (hoover.org)

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *"Right Is More Precious Than Peace"* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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down the boulevards. As of yet, the fighting potential of this small army of largely untrained, inexperienced soldiers, was next to nonexistent, but their moral effect was unparalleled. The Peacekeeper had arrived at the War, and the War embraced him.

7: Conclusion

In the three years of neutrality, and despite every effort made by Wilson's administration, the US's desire to stay independent had slowly given way to full mobilization under the pressure of a worldwide war. This view of a peaceful sleeping giant being woken had endured in popular memory, but when following the three years of unrest leading up to the declaration, it is clear that the nation was never truly neutral. Even before the first shots were fired, the US's economical domination and trading links had tied it to Europe's power dynamic.

It is impossible to know if the declaration in 1917 could have been avoided under a different administration. Wilson's choice to go to war rested in no small part on the moral obligation he had himself put forward to safeguard US integrity by not fighting. Wilson had pushed the responsibility to the limit and in doing so the popular outrage had mounted considerably when the final blow landed. Perhaps under the leadership of Charles Hughes, the compromise of more aggressive US foreign policy whilst remaining neutral, could have been achieved. What is certain is that the US peacekeeper identity that marched to war under Wilson's leadership would not have been possible without the crusader mentality that had been cultivated over the previous years. The crusader nature in US foreign policy had existed under Roosevelt's administration and even long before but had faced a lack of enthusiasm because many had seen it as too far removed from national needs. Now faced with total war and bred on the idea that the US culture would crumble with a Central Power victory, foreign intervention had a new more personal importance. It was now no longer a question of aiding Europe but saving the homeland from a new threat. The US mentality to foreign affairs had changed, and if the war was to be pursued as relentlessly as needed to gain a swift victory, this change had to be continuously nurtured.

Part III: Wilson: The Nation's Peacekeeper 1917-1918

1: Introduction

The Pershing Crusaders who debarked in France in 1917 were for the European onlookers, the embodiment of USA might, strength and ambition. A French officer who witnessed a parade of the AEF wrote, *"We all had the impression that we were about to see the wonderful transfusion of blood. Life arrived in floods to reanimate the dying body of France, bleed white by the innumerable woods of 4 years."*⁴ The US was the nation that came to redress the balance of the old, it was righteous, dedicated and all inspiring, but in truth the savior nation was also unprepared, unorganized, and worst of all, disunited. It is hard to express the level to which the US of mid 1917 was unfit for the harsh realities of total war.

It had been dragged into history's most horrific conflict with relatively little time to prepare itself mentally. What made the Great War such a shock was not the fact that the USA was sending men to fight and die in foreign fields, she had already fought several imperial wars. Those wars, while taking place abroad, had been for the US's own benefit and profit. Now the nation was embarking in a conflict that seemed to offer no great reward or recompense other than vengeance, at least as far as the average newspaper reader was concerned. For those who had been raised in an age of US isolationism, who had seen Theodore Roosevelt's foreign policy, this was a dramatic change.

All were aware that this was a pivotal moment in US history that would affect a century of US foreign relations. Senator Henry Fountain Ashurst was one who perceived the gravitas of the shift, he recorded in his diary *"The incredible has become the commonplace... From inability to respond to each new amazement, the human mind now accepts multitudinous world-staggering events as matters of course. One day news of these times will fill volumes for future investigators, historians, and poets. We are too near these stupendous destinies to catch their meaning."*⁵²

At the center of this change was Wilson himself, the man who had fought unwaveringly for neutrality would now lead the charge. When he finally gave his declaration speech, he had made it very clear that even though he now supported the war it caused him great pain to be

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, page 300

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the one declaring it. Wilson despised the people who congratulated him or glorified the conflict. This disgust seemed understandable since Wilson's aim during the entire conflict had been to bring the fight to an end without there being a losing side. His '*peace without victors*' had rested on the US remaining neutral and not taking sides. Why had the transition been needed so urgently, and policy dreams be sidelined? The shift was both dramatic and alarming.

For Wilson, and the men who knew the importance of an Allied Victory, the need was clear. This was a new kind of war that the US had never encountered. This was not a conflict that relied simply on armies to defend the nation, but the nation itself to rise to the fight. Every part of civilian life, which up to now had never seen war as its business, would have to be redirected to help the war effort. Public resources would have to be nationalized, to increase efficiency and civilian industry converted to producing war materials on an unprecedented scale. The vast economic wealth of the country that was privately owned under the capitalist mentality would have to be used to fuel the machines of war. Entire new agencies would need creating, for organizing work forces, redistribution resources to different military branches, and calculating the logistics of supplying an ever-increasing army fighting on the other side of the globe. Most important of all if any of this was to be achieved was the work of transforming the mindset of the nation. Wilson's administration had fought relentlessly under the holy banner of peace. Now the same administration had to convince a mostly isolationist population to willingly embrace a foreign war, all whilst seemingly still upholding the same values and morals as in neutrality. Wilson saw a nation in need of the guiding hand he had idealized in his father and himself, the role of a preacher. But could such a sermon be given? In 1917 the energy of declaration had yet to be turned into commitment of victory. Could the US truly rise to meet the challenge, or would Wilson's crusade for victory fair as well as his crusade for neutrality?

2: Saving Democracy and Safeguarding US Interest go Hand in Hand

In the early months of US participation there were many who questioned the choice. The unrestricted submarine warfare and Zimmermann Telegram had made neutrality unthinkable, but the US had never been truly neutral. Since the outbreak of the War Wilson himself had declared that the Allies were *'Fighting our war'* and by mid-1917, the nation had cut all ties with the German Government and become an arsenal for the Allies. Many argued that this course was the best option, continuing to fund the Allies and keep pressure on the Central Powers. This strategy of helping the moral cause without getting one's hand dirty seemed to fit Wilson's Peacekeeper Crusade, indeed it had been his exact strategy leading up to April. Even after the German Ambassador had warned of unrestricted submarine warfare, Wilson had made his statement: *"We are the sincere friends of the German people and earnestly desire to remain at peace with the Government which speaks for them. We shall not believe that they are hostile to us unless and until we are obliged to believe it."*⁵⁶ The question of whether the president truly meant this friendship or not was questionable but crucially it had allowed the US to keep the potential role of mediator. Yet within a matter of weeks Wilson came to refuse any notion of neutrality. When William I. Hull, a former student of Wilson's and a Quaker pacifist, came to him and suggested protecting American shipping through negotiation and appealing to the German people, the president responded, *"Dr. Hull, if you knew what I know at the present moment, and what you will see reported in tomorrow morning's newspapers, you would not ask me to attempt further peaceful dealings with the Germans."*⁵⁷ Why then was peace via diplomacy now impossible?

The deciding factors for war were still the same as those of the War of Sympathy, economical, moral, and political. As is often the case, the key issue was economical. Wilson had proudly boasted that his nation was going into the war purely out of moral virtue, *"We enter the war not for dollars, not for empire, not for conquest or hope of rewards... Could any nation enter a war so completely without selfishness and without guile?"* On paper this was true, the US did not hope to claim territory or wealth from the defeated foe, yet her intentions did have an economic motive. By April of 1917, ships were held up in US harbors since their fear

⁵⁶ Woodrow Wilson, *Address to a Joint Session of Congress on the Severance of Diplomatic Relations with Germany*, February 03, 1917, Address to a Joint Session of Congress on the Severance of Diplomatic Relations with Germany | The American Presidency Project (ucsb.edu)

⁵⁷ Erick Trickey, *How Woodrow Wilson's War Speech to Congress Changed Him – and the Nation*, April 3, 2017. How Woodrow Wilson's War Speech to Congress Changed Him – and the Nation | History | Smithsonian Magazine

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of German U-boats had risen. 128 ships had been sunk in the 3 weeks after February 1. Marine insurance rates had shot up and the US trade was paralyzed. Wilson himself admitted that arming merchant ships would mostly likely have no real effect. The crews of the ships had no experience or equipment, so real naval men were needed, as it would be treated as an act of war if non-military engaged with the Germans. Also, there was the question of being paid at all. The amount of money owed to the US by the Allies was astronomical since they had been bulk ordering all the munitions available. The war profits had turned the recession into an economic boom but if the US was ever to receive its yield, then the War had to go in favor of the Allies. Then came to the question of the Empire, the German ability to paralyze US trade and threaten the British Royal Navy had raised concerns about America's foreign territories and trading posts. So, the decision to take action was absolutely to do with the 'dollar empire,' but when it came to 'conquest' and 'reward,' her motivation was more complicated.

For 3 years Wilson had pushed forwards his agenda of the progressive crusade to end the suffering without spilling blood. He had done everything he could to try and bring peace without declaring war. For Wilson, the Crusader ideal of fighting to bring peace was not simply a political Agenda, it was the realization of life ambition. Wilson's faith was an integral part of the world picture, the President's surgeon, Cary T. Grayson, wrote after his encounters with the president, "*That firm faith was the foundation of his life and conduct, of his refusal ever to confuse right and wrong.*"⁵⁸ The Bible was his moral compass and he saw himself as a servant in a great cause. As far back as 1876, he had written an article titled: Christ's Army, in which he made clear how he believed each man had a real role to play in God's plan, "*For there is no middle ground course, no neutrality. Each one must enlist either with the followers of Christ or the Devil!*". Politics had been the vocation ordained to give him his platform from which he saw his role in politics as a reprehension of God. This was the factor that would both guide and hinder Wilson's career, he was a preacher first, and politician second. "*The success of a great popular preacher contains a lesson for the students of politics, what the world should be.*"

Because of this religious foundation, many of Wilson's political ambitions were more based on faith than fact, and while these made them somewhat superficial at times, but it also meant they could be easily reinterpreted to new factures. His progressive ideals based on social

⁵⁸ Grayson, Cary T. (Cary Travers), *1878-1938: The Religion of Woodrow Wilson*, 1924 February 3, Cary T. Grayson Papers, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, Staunton, Virginia. The Religion of Woodrow Wilson · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

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reform, purifying the American culture, trying to fix the broken social structure, had all been opposed to American intervention. When the war became inevitable, Wilson was able to adapt his views so that war now was an essential element.

It had long been apparent that Wilson could use the war as an argument to why his policies were so important. With the passage of time the conflict became increasingly integral to Wilson's narrative as the corrupt force to fight against. In his policy speeches he depicted the war as if it were a passage from the bible, evoking "*The mountain of the Lord's house,*" where all nations go for peace. "*He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his path... they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up swords against nations, nor shall they learn war anymore.*" This mountain climb was the path men had to take in order to regain peace and tranquility, a path he was happy to lead. Wilson's focus had been to rally the people against the war, convincing them that to join such an event would forever corrupt the US identity. He had openly described US mobilization for war as a crime against humanity, that if the nation fought, she would lose all purity.

One would have thought that as the US moved closer and closer to mobilization, Wilson's administration and policies would have lost credibility but in reality, it made his Crusade ever more relevant.

Wilson had been fighting his own war, a war for progressive reform, yet despite enthusiasm, during his first five years in office, his policies for social restructure had not advanced a great deal. His progressive reforms had done little to help the problems left by the last republican administration: "*For all the many and significant reforms the administration had instituted in the first term, it had come nowhere near settling the great economic and social problems of an industrial America.*"⁵⁹ His term had been overshadowed by the War, but instead harming his petition, it had offered a useful diversion. Many progressives, unhappy with domestic stagnation, channeled energy into foreign affairs. According to Richard Hofstadter, the central theme of the progressive movement was the revolt against industrial discipline; the war therefore became a new cause for many. Wilson's re-election victory in 1916, whilst slim, had been in no short part because of his supposed identity 'he kept us out of the war'. Even though Wilson had never made such a promise or used the slogan himself he had become the embodiment of the rational and moral leader who was leading the nation towards a brighter

⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, page 12, Oxford University Press. America in the Great War : the rise of the war welfare state : Schaffer, Ronald : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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future.

In this form, the war turned out to be the perfect platform for a new crusade, one to purify the American nation. Wilson understood from the beginning just how valuable the War was in his rhetoric, as early as November of 1914, the president had written that the war in the European world may have been a godsend. The carnage had enabled him to bring God's order into play and push several policies that in peace time would have failed. For all those who had lost hope in the American, the impoverished workers, the labor Unions, the war mongers, the progressives... a new cause had been offered to restore the US to its idealist standard.

Wilson had proclaimed that the US had a moral obligation to end the conflict and save the nations from themselves, something any US citizen could applaud. *"For most Americans including Wilson, the war never principally focused on foreign affairs; substantive questions about international relations or the details of how the world would look after the fighting were matters on which they did not care to dwell."* The war had given the US a new driving force, one that echoed that of the Manifest Destiny that had inspired the imperial expeditions, *"The crusade for reform and for democratic institutions, difficult as it was at home, was now to be projected to the world scene."* Now it was a question of ensuring that the crusade continued to the end and beyond, but to do that Wilson had to convince the nation that to actually fight was the moral choice. He had to completely re-brand his crusader image from onlooker to participant, therefore he had to somehow keep the same moral foundation that the war was still a crime that should not be encouraged or glorified.

The solution was to tie the main national priority of both neutrality and mobilization together. Wilson had framed his image of the US around the city on the hill image of old, that of a pure and uncorrupted nation that others could admire and follow. The key element was that this Utopian missionary nation had never been guilty of the crimes of the old world. Now it was necessary for the missionary to perform the hated task associated with the old world because if not her integrity would be compromised. When hearing Wilson preach his cause the 'City on the Hill' vibe was clear to all, *"We are glad to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples... for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and obedience."*

The president and his administration did everything to try ending the war to the US's moral cleansing, that going to fight was her duty and a way to prove her worth. It was Robert Lansing who advised Wilson to say, *"The world must be made safe for democracy,"* driving

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home the crusade nature. This detail made the war one that the US citizen associated directly with his own rights, as Robert Lansing put it, the cause would now “*Appeal to every liberty-loving man in the world.*”⁵² Much like the politicians had used the myth of Manifest Destiny to push the US ideal towards expansionism; Wilson used the same ideals of building a better society to justify spreading that gift of freedom across the globe, in a manner that echoed Roosevelt’s foreign policy. Because of this resemblance to the policies associated with imperialism and expansion, it became important to separate the different flavors of pro war sympathy.

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, page 309

3: Preparing a Peaceful Nation for the Needs of Total War

Despite now being pro-war, Wilson made it very clear that his choice was one he regretted, that he was opposed to the war as a form of glory. When a minister congratulated him on his speech, he told him most impatiently that he hated war and took no joy in sending his fellow countrymen to fight. He believed in his cause but saw it as a tragic duty and was disgusted by the wave of enthusiasm towards mobilization. The stance of the USA was now pro-war, but Wilson was determined to stamp out what he saw as the corrupted version of pro-war, that which glorified not only the cause, but the means. The poet Alan Seeger is a perfect example of the pro-war support that Wilson despised. In his 1916, poem, “*Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France*,”⁶⁰ Seeger depicts death on the battlefield as a time when men are being given the chance to prove their worth, “*Who, opening to them your glorious ranks, gave them that grand occasion to excel, that chance to live the life most free from stain...*”. The war is not simply a good cause, it is an honor in of itself and the death of a young man is no tragedy given the situation, “*And that rare privilege of dying well.*” This was the image of war Wilson had done so much to denounce, the idea that brute force was the moral way to do diplomacy.

This middle ground, of showing the war was a moral cause but that fighting was still a hateful crime also had support, less vocal but still had a voice. The poet Percy MacKaye had written the sonnet: “*American Neutrality*”⁶¹ where he both calls for joining the Allies but support’s Wilson’s stance on Neutrality.

*Peace! Do we cry? Peace is the godlike plan
We love and dedicate our children to.
Yet England’s cause is ours: The rights of man,
Which little Belgium battles for anew,
Shall we recant? No! — Being American,
our souls cannot keep neutral and keep true*

Despite being a pro war poem, the War is in no way glorified or romanticized in contrast to

⁶⁰ Alan Seeger ‘*Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France*’, 1916. Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France, ALAN SE EGER, Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen... | Poetry Foundation

⁶¹ Percy MacKaye’s sonnet, ‘*American Neutrality.*’ 1914, ALAN SEEGER , Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen... | Poetry Foundation

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Alan Seeger who created a romantic where the soldier is proud if not privileged to give his life for his country. Here, the pride is centered around America being a nation where peace is cornerstone of the US identity, something that is passed down to each generation. Then the topic transitions to the warring nations, those who have chosen war, but MacKaye makes it clear they are fighting for the same rights as the US. When he speaks of Belgium, special emphasis is placed on “*A new*,” the fact that the country has the same peace cry as a neutral nation but has been forced to forsake neutrality to get its rights back. MacKaye implies that the US ideals have no future if the war continues unchecked, evoking the children who will carry on the cry for peace. When he asks if we should “recant,” he is asking if America really does hold the human right to live in peace as a true American quality, if so, then to defend that right for other nations as well as for itself is a moral obligation. If the US was to stand by and do nothing faced with such injustice, then she would have to forsake any morality she claims to hold towards Peace.

For MacKaye, the pride is centered on being ready to risk all to safeguard human rights, the war is a necessary evil to achieve that goal. This was the pro-war mentality that Woodrow Wilson supported, that the war was a hateful and inglorious task that the US had to undergo if it were to stay true to its values. That does not mean one should be ashamed of fighting or do it half-heartedly, but it must be remembered that it is something sinful and must not be glorified. Unfortunately, this message was harder to sell than the idea that the more traditional and popular view of the war was not only the only way but the best way to prove the nation’s worth. Wilson’s primary fear was that out of this mentality, war would become the new default mentality and would corrupt the idea of peace after the fighting was over.

Because of this fear, the importance was not simply to win the war, but to win it right. Wilson had promised ‘*Peace without victory*,’ a war that was to bring back true neutrality and not simply to punish. This result would support his view that war itself was not the moral driving force and his own Peacekeeper Crusade could continue. Lansing had convinced Wilson to end neutrality, stating that there was now no way backwards and the sooner they joined the better, more influence, more chance for peace at the end when Germany would need “*A merciful and unselfish foe*.”⁵² This was the ultimate reason for going to war, Wilson needed a position of influence when it came to making peace.

In the three years of neutrality, Wilson had done everything he could in trying to mediate peace between the two opposing sides but to little result. The priority of his crusade for peace

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 24 page 317.

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was that the US herself not become involved, but as the war had grown into a world conflict, which had become increasingly difficult. However, as the US had been pushed closer to mobilization, her influence had increased.

The role of the US as an arsenal for the allies had given it greater leverage and influence since it was key to their survival. The threat of reprisals to Germany had (at least for a time), halted submarine attacks on American ships. Each new step had elevated the US to a new position of power. Now as an active member the chance had come for Wilson's peace proposals to finally be taken seriously since she was an integral part of victory. With declaration, Wilson was now the head of a warring nation and would have a seat at the peace table and could make demands that would be heard, as opposed to being the distant and unimportant voice of concern he had been during neutrality. This was the first time his Peacekeeper Crusade had actual real potential of having an impact and explains why it is a situation where Wilson willingly took a step towards escalation when others advocated neutrality. The historian of *The Moralists* would write "*Once past it, though, he was resolute and clear headed, determined to pour the full might of the United States into the war, and certain that he could avoid entanglement with the Allies.*" If the war did not end as the president had promised, in "Peace without Victors," the entire ideal would collapse and with it any hope Wilson had for his own national progressive ambitions.

Wilson's Crusade was then as much foreign policy as domestic, the victory in Europe would guarantee victory at home, provided it was how Wilson intended it. The promise to '*Make the world safe for democracy*' was a mental ideal, something Wilson himself admitted. But in order for this new ideology to be realized an actual crusade needed to take place, the US had to complete its role in ending the war. Only if the army had a true role in the conflict would Wilson's demands be taken seriously.

Upon her declaration of war, the question arose as to how the US army was to be integrated into the Allied forces. The two principal envoys were from France and Britain, Arthur Balford, the British foreign minister and the infamous General Joffre, the hero of the Marne and head of the French army during the opening stages of the war. Both men urged the US to send economic support and war materials. For the British, the focus was on ships and war time loans. The British economy was facing collapse having become the primary arsenal of the Allies. Congress passed the emergency Loan Act which gave 7 million to the allies The US navy was also put at the disposal of the Allied forces, for which the British Navy was most grateful.

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However, the primary need of the Allies was for the unlimited US manpower; the French were in a dire position as the New Offensive had resulted in 187, 000 casualties and the outbreak of mutiny throughout the army. Joffre, like Balford, pleaded for American soldiers; it was suggested that 500, 000 US soldiers be sent to the UK for training then be integrated into British divisions. Their training was estimated to be 9 weeks. The French had a similar suggestion, but Joffre knew in advance that the US would never accept. He went out on his own initiative and offered the US autonomy as well as training, equipment, and advisors. France had asked for a moral boost in nothing else. Joffre said, "*When the American flag flies besides the French flag and the English flag, the effect on morale will be considerable.*"⁵² The French option was more reasonable but untimely neither Britain nor France would get their vast US troops. Wilson had sent General Pershing ahead of the main army, but this was more of a moral support than an actual strategic aid. Pershing's American Expeditionary Force was unmanned, under equipped but worst of all, informed not to show too much cooperation. He was instructed by the president to keep boundaries in place between US forces and the Allied authority, "*You are directed to cooperate with the forces of the other countries... but in doing so the underlying idea must be kept that in view that the forces of the United States are a separate and distinct component of the combined forces, the identity of which must be preserved.*" As a result, most US soldiers who did make it to France spent more time in training centers and on leave than in the line.

The US was looking to create a grand national army, one that would stand on its own merit and fight under its own authority. Also, it was recognized that in the new age of modern industrial war, the US needed to have a competent fighting force of its own if it hoped to become a great nation. This was crucial if the US were to have any influence in peace, she could not be integrated into the British Army like a colonial force, such as Canada or Australia. Wilson gave his word that '*The yanks are coming,*' but that they would come when they were ready, as a unified fighting force. Despite the Allied disappointment at the refusal of US immediate support, they remained mostly optimistic that the aid would eventually arrive. However, there were others who saw Wilson's stance as a real concern, partly because the Allies did not believe the US army had the experience needed for modern warfare, but mostly because the US army was hopelessly behind the times.

By 1910, America's regular army comprised just 100,000 men and these were stretched throughout the US and several territories overseas including China, Puerto Rico, and the

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 24 page 322.

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Panama Canal. It was a focused and well-disciplined army, but it was also poorly trained and equipped for modern warfare. Despite having been increased in size in 1916, Wilson's army was still mostly the same one that had fought for Theodore Roosevelt 10 years before. The army was a small territorial force designed around national protection and small territorial wars. It had been forged in a similar fashion to the British Army, in imperialist campaigns abroad with smaller nations that generally only lasted a few months at a time, not global conflicts that could be expected to last for years on end. With the birth of the US Empire, the Navy had been given priority to safeguard the overseas territories. Even with this initial setback, there had been numerous occasions for the US army to modernize. When Russia was beaten by Japan in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, (the first time a major European power lost to an Asian nation in modern history), the concepts of modern warfare was put in question. Despite having been involved in the conclusion of the Russo- Japanese war and with even Theodore Roosevelt seeing the danger, the reforms he had called for had not been taken into consideration.

One of the fundamental problems was that the US army was designed for peace, not war. The volunteer system of private citizens as soldiers increased the ranks in time of war and did not drain the economy in peacetime. The major downside to this system was that the US had no army ready for unprovoked attack and the men who did form the ranks were mostly untrained and had next to no experience. Campaigns were held to expand the numbers of soldiers permitted, but this was not enough. Modern armies were not required to be large, but professionally organized, trained, and accustomed to the new technological side of war, the US was none of these things. On top of being unmanned and under trained the army also had limited technological resources. Modern armies were not required to be large, but should be professionally organized, trained, and accustomed to the new technological side of war, the US was none of these things.

Despite being the nation that had invented two of the most revolutionary weapons of the 19th and 20th Century, the machine gun, and the airplane, when the US joined the conflict in 1917, she had only 1,100 machine guns. In comparison, Germany had started with over 50, 000. The US's air power was also hopelessly behind the times, the lack of congressional funding and the military's failure to understand the importance of air power meant little development had been made. In May of 1917, the US had only 55 planes and these were already obsolete when compared to the new European designs such as the British SE5 and German Albatross.

However, the greatest obstacle for the US army was not its manpower shortage or

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technological shortcomings, it was its own national image. It had always had a paradoxical relationship with its nation. The first American army, under the leadership of George Washington, had fought and won freedom from the British Empire and it had proven itself an essential tool, but it was also a great danger. Even during the War of Independence, itself, before the first national constitutions were written, the US army had threatened to overthrow the government when the states refused to pay taxes to pay the soldier's wages. The Military historian Nancy Gentile Ford explained in her work, *The Great War and America, Civil- Military Relations During World War I*, that "*the armed forces simultaneously represented both a threat to democracy and its ultimate protector.*"⁶² The right of every citizen to bear arms was in no small part to defend oneself if the national army ever proved to be a threat to individual freedoms. Because of this fear, effort was made by the founding father to create an army "*Capable of expanding in defense of the nation, but weak enough as to not usurp the power of the government.*" Roosevelt had made efforts to change the nation's mentality towards its military, that the army was not a warden to the civilian population but a link with the rest of the world. His Imperialist Peacekeeper ideology had been that the US had a moral obligation to expand its influence to help the rest of the world, thereby making the army an essential part of the US integrity as a beacon to the world. However, the nation's desire to return to isolationist policies and Wilson's failed attempts to scale back internationalism had done little to change the public view.

The result was a fighting force few had wished to expand out of concern of repercussions, a constrained and underdeveloped force with no chance in modern warfare.

This was a long way from the glorious image of Pershing's Crusaders coming to save democracy. Because of her unpreparedness, in the early parts of the war the US army needed support from the Allies. US soldiers were instructed by allied veterans to bring them up to speed. Because of the lack of equipment and no means to produce it fast enough, the great United States army was forced to accept foreign weapons as if from a charity. Even equipment made in the US was usually based on an existing allied design to save time, such as the P14 Enfield rifle, converted to the US P17. Soldiers went into battle with British Broady helmets and British SBR gas masks. They used French light and heavy machine guns, including the hated Chauchat light machine gun. Tanks were mostly French Renault FT17, but the US also used British Mark 5. Even the US air force was not fit to fight on its own.

⁶² Nancy Gentile Ford, *The Great War and America/ Civil-Military Relations During World One*, Praeger Security International, 2009. *The Great War and America : civil-military relations during World War I* : Ford, Nancy Gentile, 1954- : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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After an order for 24, 000 airplanes were made, only half were produced. Once again, the army turned to France for resources.

The US had made a point of coming to the war in its own time as a grand national army, the fact that they were so dependent on technological support from the other nations did not help the image and many found it humiliating. The logistical needs were so great that the size of the US army reached a point where it was the Allies who could not provide enough war material.

On the surface, the US was in 1917, one of the nation's best suited to total warfare. It was the world's leading economic power with its industrial capabilities being greater than the entirety of the Central Powers. Added to this was an organized transport network, new national banking, great farm resources and good management. However, much like Britain in 1914, none of these resources were designed for total war. The War Department itself was not one department, but several independent systems that were semi-independent. As a result, they each had their own resource management that did not always co-exist including a medical department, ordinance department and so on. They were mostly privately run and were not accustomed to being mobilized to national demands. When the conflict began, several of the department offices found themselves competing or hoarding resources such as typewriters.

The lack of what were considered basic resources, from office equipment to aircraft stemmed from the US industrial crisis. As stated, the US was the world's leading industrial power and had been since the late 19th Century, but the difference between peacetime industrial output and war time demands could not be understated. The reasons for the logistical chaos of the US army had much to do with the war department, but that was only part of a far bigger problem. By the time the US entered the conflict, mechanized warfare was now the norm. Heavy artillery, motorized transport, modern infantry weapons and aircraft had become more important than superior numbers in men. A member of the ordinance department expressed, *“War is no longer Samson with his shield and spear and sword, or David with his sling. It is the conflict of smokestacks now. The combat of the driving-wheel and engine.”*⁴ For this industrial task to be achieved, the entire industrial structure had to be scaled up to meet war demands. It is here that the failed reforms of the last three administrations came back to curse the US. Despite her industrial might, the country's industrial structure was faulty and obsolete. Most of her industry was privatized and not designed to be scaled up in a time of

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *“Right Is More Precious Than Peace”* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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crisis. The communication networks, whilst efficient in peace time, could not handle the strain of war demands, including the underdeveloped rail network. The enormous size of the nation and the fact that the private industries were spread out, often with major gaps in transport links, made for a logistical nightmare. Soon after declaration, the transport networks fell apart, paralyzing industrial output. Also, part of the equation was the fact that the US did not even have the shipping capacity needed to transport the equipment to the war itself. The sheer size of the US industrial force became a victim of itself when war demands intensified, it could not fulfill its own needs.

The biggest unfixed problem from the pre-war era was the treatment of the workers themselves. The labor unions had been demanding reform in the factories for decades, but neither Roosevelt nor Wilson had made great headway. Eugene Debs, the 1st President of the Socialist Party of America, was present at every election from 1904 onward. In his 1908 appeal, he was quoted saying *“This is the only great party which has a claim to political respect.”*⁶³ But his efforts were not sufficient to sway the tide of electoral voters. The anger of the working class boiled over and on 31 March 1908, a newspaper headline read *“250 000 coal miners go on strike in Indianapolis demanding higher wages.”*¹¹ This was one of the largest mass protests in the US's history. The resentment and anger of the working classes was immortalized in other ways. As the number of strikes and street protests multiplied, the verses of a poem by Joe Hill, a Swedish-American labor activist and songwriter, could be heard on the lips of the protesters:

*“We want all the workers in the world to organize,
 Into a great big union...
 If the working class could only realize,
 what mighty power labor has?
 Then the exploiting master
 class, it would soon fade
 away... Come all ye toilers,
 Come from every land,
 Join the fighting band,
 In one union grand...”*

⁶³ Eugene V. Debs, *The Socialist party appeal*, Thursday, October 15, 1908. The Socialist Party's Appeal---1908 (marxists.org)

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988, page 150.

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These union members and disgruntled workers were the ones depicted by Jacob Riis in 'How the Other Half Lives, the disgruntled illiterate masses who had been forgotten by the progressive reforms. As the workers' unions, through their organized protests increased in influence, the test of nerves between the tycoons and the workers became a battle of wills and in some cases, physical conflict took place. Six years after the events at Indianapolis, during the Colorado Coal Strikes, 32 workers were killed by military forces that were sent to 'maintain peace'. Debt himself would be arrested and sentenced to two years imprisonment, following his pacifist speech at the dawn of the Great War.

During the 3 years of neutrality, the demand for industrial output to supply the Allies had increased dramatically, but since the demand was not to do with national security, Wilson's had not made much more progress than Roosevelt before him.

Now, with the war being the nation's own the workers realized they finally had a form of leverage. This was a particularly ironic blow since up to now the war had been an economic boost. As a result, due to the demands by the Allies the US, the unemployment rate dropped from 16.4% in 1914 to 6.3% in 1916. These figures were illusions though, as they had less to do with new jobs and more to do with dwindling labor due to the workforce going to fight. By the time war was declared, the great Second Wave of migrants to fuel the industrial growth had dried up. Between 1914 and 1916, the influx of new migrants had gone from 1.2 million to only 300,000, with a mere 140,000 in 1919. Added to this was the fact that because three million working aged men had left to join the armed forces, those who stayed had even more bargaining power with the employers. The workers clamored for the same rights as under Roosevelt, higher wages, better working conditions, more labor influence and control.

The industrial workers of the world IWW, the country's most radical labor union, were against the war and capitalism: it was an obstacle, but not because it was a program but because it opposed the government control on the industry. The Union had been involved in hundreds of strikes since its foundation and had created many enemies, mostly those who had connections to the industrial leaders. The war now offered the perfect excuse to deal with this 'threat to the war effort.'

Bad industrial management, poor transport networks, insufficient shipping, and a work force in revolution, all contributed to early US mobilization being a shambles. The Senate Committee on Military Affairs exposed the levels of confusion and under preparedness. From across the Atlantic, the Allies were fast to criticize the feeble American results, it was hard for them to understand the difficulty faced by the giant. Lloyd George wrote, "*The record of Britain's first*

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*10 months of blundering in the matter of equipment, robs us of the right to point the finger of scorn at America's effort, but it must be remembered that when America entered into the struggle her industry was already largely organized for war by the immense allied orders for war materials of every kind."*⁴

Whatever the reason for the delays, the explanation gave little comfort to the army in the field. The troops were frustrated because they were starved of supplies. US soldiers, like the British in 1914, trained with wooden rifles and hauled cannons made from logs, in what Theodore Roosevelt called 'Broomstick training'. The Generals were frustrated because they had next to no fully equipped divisions to form the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). By May of 1918, there were only 400, 000 US soldiers in France and only 1 division on an actual active front. Pershing himself expressed great discontent. He was pressured ever more by Allied generals to allow US troops to serve in foreign armies since manpower was badly needed and there was still no way for his soldiers to fight as an army in their own right. In November of 1917 he had written to Wilson explaining that with the fall of the Russian empire and the end of the Eastern Front, the German army could assemble a new striking force for the next spring. He pressured Wilson that the US military effort had to come soon *"And the longer the war continues the greater the demands on America become."*⁵²

Ultimately the Allies were frustrated, as spring of 1918 drew near it became clear that the great US army would not be arriving soon, and the early battles passed by without US help. The British historian S. S. Oliver summed up the mood of all the Allies, on 2 May 1918 he wrote *"When is it reasonable to think that the Americans will be able to put in that immense army of 3 million, fully equipped. Each man with an air mattress, a hot water bottle, a gramophone, and a medicine chest, which they tell us will get to Berlin and cook the goose of the Kaiser, when? If it came next year, it might produce the desired military result, but is there the slightest reason to imagine that it will come next year, or the year after, or even the year after that? From a purely military point of view, I don't see victory approaching."*⁴

This situation was unexpected, that the US army was being propped up logistically by her allies. More serious, was the prospect that the image of the great savior was slowly eroding, and the other nations grew weary of false promises. The army needed proper support,

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 27 page 364

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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mentally, financially, and logistically and this would mean a complete restructure of the US domestic policy.

The ruling classes responded to problems bluntly and often ineffectively at first. The department of labor helped fill the gaps in the essential occupations by offering draft exemptions, but this was not enough. To many, the key problem with the industry was that the employees did not work hard enough, and the labor unions interfered too much.

Measures were taken to limit the power of the unions, at first these mostly included trying to dissuade men from joining them. John R Commons drew up *'Why workingmen support the war'*⁵⁹ where he claimed that the profits were being controlled and the union leaders served on boards that set wages and hours. More than 300 000 copies were published by the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy and distributed. Usually, the unions were dealt with peacefully, aided by pro-war labor leaders on the national War Labor Board. Pay was raised and employees encouraged to meet demand, but if these methods proved unproductive, so other solutions were found. On 12 July 1917, a group of two thousand armed vigilantes, aided by Federal agents, surrounded 1, 186 strikers at the Bisbee, Arizona mines, loaded them into boxcars and sent them to New Mexico. The strikers were left in the desert with no wood or water and were only saved by the National Guard. Wilson deplored the incident but did little to punish the man responsible, the Attorney General of the United States, Thomas Watt Gregory. The persecution went on, to the point where the Republican Senator Hiram W. Johnson asked, "*Good God, Mr. President, when did it become a war upon the American people?*" Despite such protest, on May 16th, 1918, the Senate ruled that it was a crime to even voice opposition to the war in any way.

Labor union harassment was bad enough, but now faced with the demands of war; he doubled down on several laws already passed. In the run up to the war there had been several victories in social justice reforms, including securing minimum wage, maximum hour laws, restrictions on child labor, workers compensation and protection for female workers. These victories had been won during peace when the primary concern for the nation was domestic policy. Now with declaration and the focus on foreign policy, the fear for many was that the reforms would be revoked if they possessed problems to stop the war effort. Mobilization called for greater armament production that the US industry was not prepared for. In order to meet the new demands employers tried to reduce labor standards.

The National Association of Manufacturers asked congress to suspend the eight-hour

⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, page 7, Oxford University Press.
America in the Great War : the rise of the war welfare state : Schaffer, Ronald : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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workday on government contracts. Laws to improve labor health and working conditions in factories were opposed on the pretext that they slowed down output. On the 20 of September 1917 the situation for the workers was becoming even worse as Executive Order No. 2705 was passed. It decreed, *"That in case of national emergency the President is authorized to suspend provisions of law prohibiting more than eight hours labor in any one day of persons engaged upon work covered by contracts with the United States: Provided further, That the wages of persons employed upon such contracts shall be computed on a basic day rate of eight hours work with overtime rates to be paid for at not less than time and one-half for all hours work in excess of eight hours ;"*⁶⁴

Even the regulations protecting women and children were requested to be suspended. The California Legislation relaxed its requirement for compulsory education as the argument was made that more children would be needed to help on the farms now that the men had left to fight. In 1918, it would be taken to new heights as the Supreme Court declared the Federal Child Labor law unconstitutional. These had been the reforms that had been pushed for following Roosevelt's administration. Now they were deemed obstacles for the needs of the War. To many, these changes to reforms creating human right violations where necessary evils since US industry simply was not in a position to meet the extreme demands. Army contracts for uniforms were given to sweatshops, Liberty Bonds were printed by women paid so little they were forced to work from thirteen to fifteen-hour day shifts, with no rest period or overtime.

It was believed that these new conditions would increase productivity, but in reality, had the opposite effect. The long hours and poor working conditions resulted in manufacturing errors, poor quality, damaged ordinance and ultimately, delays in supply. Many of the shells delivered were faulty and failed to explode. Decisions were made to cut corners on manufacturing techniques that meant much mechanical work had to be done again. As Britain had learnt in 1915 and 1916, increasing productivity meant nothing if the standards diminished. For those who were paying attention the new measures to boost the industry had failed, it was clear that simply forcing the employees to work faster would not make up shortages. Slowly, but grudgingly, the industrial tycoons and ministers turned to less easy options such as cooperating with the Unions.

As the arguments were being made for cutting worker's rights in the name of productivity, the reformers argued that the key was "efficiency," that improving the working conditions of the

⁶⁴ Woodrow Wilson, *Executive Order No. 2705: The White House*, On the 20 of September 1917. Executive Order No. 2705 (conservativeusa.net)

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factories would augment output and lower cost. The argument that better conditions resulted in a higher yield and that poverty contributed to inefficiency, had been pushed long before 1917, but now the reformers had hard evidence.

At the start of the War, Germany had been the only combatant nation capable of total war, having the world's second leading economy. Britain in comparison, the nation that called itself *'The workshop of the world,'* had faced an industrial and logistical crisis that had heavily hindered the early battles. Like the US, the initial response had been to increase work hours but that had resulted in ordinance disaster. At the battle of the Somme, one in three shells failed to detonate on impact. Slowly, the Ministry of Munitions, headed by the future prime-minister Lloyd George, had completely redesigned Britain's domestic industry to meet the demands of total war. A large part of this transformation had been thanks to progressive reforms that had already existed but like in the US, never had political support. Under national control of industry, the individual had become a cog, but in this time of need he was better looked after as a cog in the war machine than a private citizen. The government had instigated an 8-hour workday for women in state factories and abolished the 7-day work week. Factory canteens became the norm to increase work-time efficiency, as opposed to showpieces. Nationally funded restaurants were created, and medical centers erected to guarantee the workers stayed in good health. New housing was created near the factories and higher wages were given. More importance was placed on mechanization to allow workers rest time. Lloyd George wrote in early 1918, *"It is a strange irony, but no small compensation, that the making of weapons of destruction should afford the condition to humanize industry, yet such is the case. Old prejudices have vanished, new ideas are abroad. This opportunity must not be allowed to slip."*⁴ Now it was the US' time for new ideas, and they too could not afford to slip. At the head of this crusade was Florence Kelly of the National Consumers League. Her fight for better labor conditions, of women and children, dated back to the late 19th Century, *"In Georgia there is no restriction whatsoever! A girl of six or seven years, just tall enough to reach the bobbins, may work eleven hours by day or by night. And they will do so tonight, while we sleep."*⁶⁵ She used the British industrial failures turned successful to illustrate her argument. To fill the gap left by the men going to war, over 1 million women had taken up work in factories, giving them an importance as part of the war effort that they had previously never received. Faced with the evidence of foreign productivity going up and US productivity still declining, the Army Chief of Ordnance issued the general order for the

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 *"Right Is More Precious Than Peace"* BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁶⁵ Florence Kelley *Child Labor & Women's Suffrage*, July 22, 1905. *Child Labor & Women's Suffrage – July 22, 1905* | Archives of Women's Political Communication (iastate.edu)

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protection of munitions workers. It stated: “*Industrial history proves that reasonable hours, fair working conditions, and a proper wage scale are essential to high production. During the war, every attempt should be made to conserve in every way all our achievements in the way of social betterment.*”⁵⁹ Progressive movement during the war had pushed the idea that the US had to strengthen internally if it were to win. Labor unions were now vital tools to keeping the industrial system working without fault and the leaders did not miss the opportunity. The leader of the American Federal League, Samuel Gompers, supported mobilization and called the war “*The most wonderful crusade ever entered upon by men in the whole world*”⁵²

⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, page 12, Oxford University Press.
America in the Great War : the rise of the war welfare state : Schaffer, Ronald : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018

4: Creating an Image of Victory Worthy of the Peacekeeper

The new reforms were targeted directly at war needs, but often also took a symbolic approach. The government announced that every company making uniforms for the army had to pay minimum wages under the 8-hour work limit. They also had to comply with the federal child labor act and state labor legislation. Munition's manufacture contracted to the Ordnance Department had to give a five-and-a-half-day working week, pay the employees for overtime and ensure ventilation in the factories as well as installing sanitary facilities. Women received greater benefits than could have been expected, special conditions such as seats with backs, longer rest periods, more time for meals and no lifting of weights greater than twenty-five pounds. There was also no work allowed after sundown. There were businesses that chose to ignore the new terms since they were not heavily enforced, but most followed the official lines as they did not want to take risks of being reported.

In all, the war had a mixed result when it came to working standards but there can be no denying that it helped many progressive reforms that had struggled in peace time. Working conditions improved, at least as far as their value to the war effort was concerned. Between 1917 and 1920, the memberships in unions increased by 70% and their influence had also augmented spectacularly. Men like Gompers and Wilson had turned the crusade to save democracy, into one to save America itself. Total war had pushed the US to achieve what had been so long overlooked in peace time.

The US' perception of domestic and foreign affairs had shifted, but this led to the two being, at times, merged together. The progressive reforms had come as a consequence of war and, as a result, many had come to accept notions that would have seemed progressive in 1913. Total war had begun to fundamentally change the US, it was beginning to live up to its own promise. Industrial production management was to be expected of war and most citizens did not notice the difference, however there were some aspects of total war that went into every home and were impossible to ignore. One was the management of food. Wilson appointed Herbert Hoover to oversee its administration, a man who had helped with the evacuation of US citizens at the start of the war and had seen firsthand, the danger of food shortages. Having paid close attention to the British struggle for food supplies from imports through facing the German U-boat attacks on shipping, the US movement knew to take precautions. Whilst the danger of outright starvation was not a concern, the US had sold large quantities of food to the Allies and as demand went up and more resources were now being devoted to their

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own army, precautions were still needed. An added concern was that 1916 had provided a lean wheat harvest and also, that many farmers were leaving their work to enlist.

Hoover instigated several principal measures to combat food shortages. The first was to set the price of wheat, the risk being that privatized firms would use the shortages to make profits. Another move of Hoover's was to oppose monopolization of the wheat trade through a government owned grain corn portion, this measure was to avoid hoarding. Both measures were reforms that did not impose limitations on the individual as Hoover did not want to directly interfere with domestic life. Similarly, he did not want to impose rationing, instead he chose to encourage the nation to ration itself by changing their eating habits. Life magazine published an article, "*Do not permit your child to take a bite or two from an apple and throw the rest away. Nowadays even children must be taught to be patriotic to the cause*"⁴ This approach was indicative of the propaganda industry of the US. Instead of setting rules or limitations, the nation was encouraged, or shamed by guilt, into limiting itself. Hoover's policies and tactics reached into every kitchen in such a way that the public did not notice. Restaurants were asked to become members of the food administration, again voluntarily.

The voluntary aspect was crucial. If the government had set legal obligations that the population had to meet, then it would have lost its image of charitable missionary. By convincing the average citizen that he had chosen to help the cause, the image of the crusader was made a reality. Taking this political agenda into consideration, the Life Magazine comment on even a child being part of the cause takes on an entirely new meaning and explains why children are often featured in propaganda material. The idea that even children were fighting in their own way for the cause.

Progressive reforms in the industrial sectors, women's rights, unprovoked charity and most important of all, unity. Wilson's crusade was one for the purification of the nation and that was the image he had cultivated. The national image of the US in the autumn of 1917 was that of a nation that was the embodiment of democracy and moral virtue. This was the pure and noble nation that would bring peace and it was crucial that none forget it. Wilson's crusade to save the world from the barbarism of war rested on the image of the US as the model civilization. It was essentially a return to the 'City on the Hill' image used during the Great Western push across the frontier.

In order for this national perception to be believed by its own population, Wilson had made a point of keeping true to the image. The new reforms put in place to safeguard workers had

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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been a great win for the progressive movement and the president had made a point of shining light on them. The same was the case with the new reforms concerning women's rights, the war and the demand for workforce had given the suffrage movement the influence and authority needed to finally have political value. On 9 January, the resolution was passed to give universal suffrage, which was in Wilson's words "*An act of right and justice to the women of the country and of the world.*"⁵² Yet this fundamental right was not accepted easily. As with the reforms helping the working class in the factories, there were many who did side with the progressives. The resolution received 274 votes in favor against 136, the exact minimum amount needed to be passed. This was a slim victory, not one that reflected a nation that was the pinnacle of progressive reforms. When the suffrage resolution was introduced on September 26, it was followed by a 5-hour debate. The issue was that the new progressive reforms had not been passed simply out of faith in human equality, or even belief in the president's progressive crusade, it had been passed because it was expected of the US.

Wilson had placed the US on a pedestal for the world to see but, as many recognized, the utopic image was premature in many respects, if not an outright lie. McAdoo had voiced the reality that the US was supposedly fighting for democracy whilst denying fundamental democratic rights. This issue needed to be resolved if the country were to keep any credibility when it came to enforcing its morality on others. Wilson made the case bluntly that if the US were to lead the world it had to behave according to its own standard, or the world would lose faith in its promise to bring peace.

The reforms in the factories and for female rights had been steps taken by the US to live up to its own image but were at times more propaganda than reform. In the case of the workers' rights, the maximum work hour day limitation was not mandatory, or enforced, and many chose to ignore it. Women had received new employment rights and standards, but these new conditions also meant they were less likely to be hired after the war. In both cases, the priority had been to take the actions that would have both the most immediate effect on the war effort and generate public support, even if the intentions were not as progressive as claimed. Nevertheless, these reforms were generally supported, but there were other areas that went completely against the crusader message while claiming to support it.

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018



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Alongside the demand for female suffrage had come the demand for equality among races. One of the chief topics during the 5-hour debate on the 26 September was the insistence that the word ‘white’ be inserted before ‘citizen’. The argument had been made that, if not made clear, the reform would open up a new debate that would threaten US integrity. Tomas W. Hardwick of Georgia stated that the ‘Negro vote’ would lead to more problems than before, *“I predict that after this war the Negro question in this country is going to be one of the most difficult ones. You will have colored soldiers coming home from France, where they have been fighting and you will want them to vote... It is in this hysteria of war that this suffrage amendment has been forced upon us. In the other times it would be quickly voted down. Now men are afraid to do it.”*⁵²

The ‘Negro Vote’ was a progressive topic that had the potential to derail the entire crusader ideology. The identity was reliant on unity, and it became of great importance to show that the cause was shared not only by every class, but every race.

Many black soldiers were eager to do their duty to their country; provided that, in the words of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) member James Weldon Johnson, that their country did its duty to them after the war. Wilson had on several occasions compared the Great War to the American War of Independence, where the conflict had given birth to new human freedom.

Now, the image of black Americans fighting against oppression recalled the cause of the

⁶⁶ *Official Ordnance: Documents from Ordnance Department, 1917*

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 28 page 391.

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Civil War, the fight to end human injustice based on color. Much like with other reforms, the image was exploited, Black Americans were encouraged to enlist and fight for the country that had liberated them. It was an inspiring image that was true to the progressive crusader cause, but once again, proved to not live up to reality. Over 370, 000 black soldiers served in the US army during the campaign, but they were not given any more rights than they had had as civilians during peacetime. The vast majority were put to work as stevedores and laborers behind the lines. A camp was formed for the training of black officers but came under mass public scrutiny. After one riot between black soldiers and the Houston police department, 13 of the soldiers were arrested and later hanged. In July of 1918, Wilson issued a public denunciation of lynching, but this had little effect. He initially declined to receive a group of black editors and when he did finally receive a group on the October 1st, 1918, he asked them to temper their expectation of the new progressive demands, explaining that “*Human nature doesn’t make giant strides forward in a single generation.*” This was a sharp contrast to the divine nature Wilson had given to past causes under his administration. He also showed restraint in his usual preacher role, instead of making promises on faith, he chose to downplay his own impact, “*I have a very modest estimate of my own power to hasten the process, but you may be sure that everything I can do will be accomplished.*” Whilst it was true that Wilson had lost the support of the Senate and his power as a politician was far less than he had presented in earlier years, there is no question he could have done more than promised.

W.E.B. DuBois had made the call in 1918 where he stated that “*That which the German power represents today spells death to the aspirations of Negroes and all darker races for equality, freedom and democracy. Let us not hesitate.*”⁶⁷ He encouraged African Americans to “*Forget our special grievances and close our ranks shoulder to shoulder with our own white fellow citizens and the allied nations that are fighting for democracy.*” The extent to which the black soldiers felt betrayed by their nation, after having put forward such effort, was expressed by the thousands of service men who returned to be once again, harassed, and seen as second-rate citizens. Langston Hughes’ poem, “*The Colored Soldier*”, was a direct and poignant response to the promise made by DuBois. The poem depicts a man speaking to his dead brother who went to France, fighting for the promise of equality. The poem has an almost sarcastic theme as the dead brother is told that his crusade was a success:

*The World’s Been Made Safe for Democracy,
And no longer do we know the dark misery,*

⁶⁷ W.E.B. DuBois, “Close Ranks”, 16 July 1918, DuBois - Close Ranks excerpt (1918) (trumanlibrary.gov)

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Of being held back, of having no chance,

It is then revealed that the brother died and never came home to see that nothing had improved at all.

For what could I tell him, except,

“It’s a lie!” It’s a lie! It’s a lie!

Every word they said,

*And it’s better a thousand times you’re in France
dead.*

*For here in the South there’s no votes and no right,
And I’m still just a “nigger” in America tonight.*

The poem ends with the brother showing gratitude that his brother died and never had to face the fact that he had fought and suffered for nothing.

*And it’s a good thing all the black boys lying dead over
There Can’t see! And they don’t know! And won’t ever care!*

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The black Americans who fought in WW1 can be seen as perhaps one of the greatest hypocrisies concerning Wilson’s crusade. The bulk of the US army did not reach the front until the start of the 100-day advance in October, however one of the divisions that did see early action was the 369 Infantry, more commonly known as ‘The Harlem Hell Fighters’. The reason for this was they were a part of a regiment of black soldiers and placed under the authority of the 16 Division of the French army because of US army segregation. The 369 would enter the front lines in May of 1918 and would spend 191 days in combat areas, more than any other US regiment. The fact that the longest fighting US regiment fought under the French flag was the opposite of what the nation had demanded for its troops, the need to fight as a national US army in its own right. It is a startling reminder that the insistence to create a grand national US army was more for prestige and influence than actual strategic reasoning. It also showed how the US regarded its black servicemen and how it had refused to let white soldiers be integrated into other armies, although it was happy to donate any other troops that

⁶⁸ Langston Hughes, *The Colored Soldier*, in: ‘*The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*,’ pp. 147-48, 1919. (A. Rampersad ed. 1995), [No Comment]Hughes’s ‘The Colored Soldier’ | Harper’s Magazine (harpers.org)

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did not fit its national image.

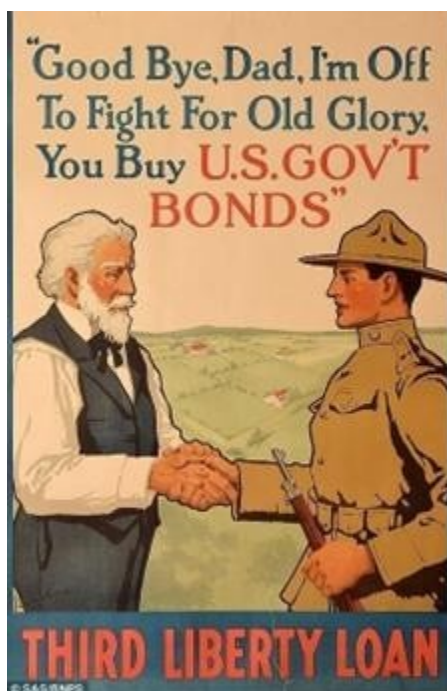
The two different social causes, for women's suffrage and Black American rights show the reality behind Wilson's domestic crusade. The president was ready to fight for his progressive reforms, but only if he knew victory was aided his cause, if the reform jeopardized what stability he needed for his other policies however he was content to leave it be. The different reforms and their coverage had shown another key element of total war, the importance of controlling the public view. The treatment of the black soldiers had been atrocious, but the image projected had proven of great use. It was not important if the way the war was shown was incorrect, what mattered was that the image shown connected to the general audience. Yet these episodes had also shown how fragile the national image of the war was, the treatment of workers, women and black soldiers had caused rifts in the public perception. The government needed a way of uniting the nation under one mindset in a way that did not feel manipulative, it needed to control the public perception.

Wilson had expressed, *"It is not an army that we must shape and train for war, it is a nation."* Observation of the European and Middle Eastern theatre had given the US a demonstration of what was needed. This was a new kind of war, where a strong army meant nothing without a strong and organized nation behind it. The nation needed a powerful army and navy, which rested on a firm economy and management of resources. All of these rested on national support, the desire to contribute to the war by any means. By volunteering, by economic donation, by contributing harder to industrial output... Total war demanded not a conflict of men, but of nations, where every aspect of domestic life is redirected towards victory. If the US was to be effective, then the army mentality had to become universal. This was exactly what Wilson had feared, the idea that under his administration, Marshall law would need to be considered. The prospect of achieving war readiness by force, using conscription, putting legal limitations on public spending, raising taxes and censoring those who spoke out. This would not do, another way of preparing the nation for total war had to be found.

If Wilson's ambitions for the war had simply been a strategic victory, then it is likely that not so much effort would have been placed on public opinion of the war. The public had to support the conflict of course, but that was only a fraction of the desired result. It was the son in law of Wilson, William Gibbs McAdoo, who best explained the nation's need *"Any great war must necessarily be a popular movement. It is a kind of crusade; and like all crusades, it*

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sweeps along on a powerful stream of romanticism.” McAdoo understood that supporting the war was not enough, it had to be a personal commitment. As the head of economic management on funding the war effort, his aim was that ordinary citizens buy war bonds, not just the rich. McAdoo was described by his colleagues as more of a salesman than a politician, coining the term ‘liberty loan’ for the war bonds. He envisioned *“A financial front which would rest on the same inspiration as the military front of the army... A man who could not serve in the trenches in France might nevertheless serve in the financial trenches at home.”* Great effort was made to separate bonds and stock, again focusing on making the buyer believe he was making a donation and not a personal investment. In all these commitments the US population, for the most part, cooperated. Hoover himself wrote, *“They made their sacrifices voluntarily, every day for more than a year.”*⁵² As important as this was for the war effort itself, there was another reason, the conflict had to be one that the average US citizen believed he was winning himself. Wilson’s grand crusade was that of the American people, all striving towards one, shared, national goal.



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In the early part of the war, donations proved to be the ultimate ‘proof’ of loyalty. In every US town one could barely walk half a street without seeing the inspiring work of the propaganda department. The wide variety of posters and banners showed the heroic crusade of

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 24 page 336.

⁶⁹ ‘Goodbye Dad’, commissioned in 1917, Pin on History: WW1 Posters and Propaganda. (pinterest.fr)

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the soldiers overseas and how the ordinary civilian could help back home. One poster depicted a soldier leaving for the front, shaking the hand of a father, and informing him to “*Buy US government bonds.*” This showed the act of buying bonds as the civilians' duty, parallel to the soldiers. That economic support was every man and woman's way of doing their national service. The feeling of patriotic pride, of the father sending his son and the son asking his father to help him however he can, is evident and typical of many liberty bonds posters that ask onlookers to “*Help the boys*” or “*Send us ammo.*” This was the image of the war needed, that of a single people railing behind their leader, but, like many of the other images projected onto Wilson's crusade, it was an illusion.

Wilson's crusade was one that saw the United States as the moral savior and this image had been the center of his campaign. Yet despite claims the US was unified behind Wilson's crusade, the reality was that the split mentality of the neutral years still lingered on. While the majority agreed that the war was of immense importance and the cause was justified, the great wave of enthusiasm that followed the declaration to go to war had died down.

In April of 1917, the people of the US had been shocked by Germany's crimes that included plotting invasion and killing Americans at sea. But as time moved on, many had come to accept the danger as past. By late 1917, it was clear that the German plot to unite with Mexico and invade the US mainland was not going to happen. The number of U boat attacks was also dwindling, and public fear was winding down. The different posters show how support by patriotism alone was not enough, the nation had to be convinced that there was a real threat and that if they stood back and did nothing, they were part of the problem. The president's ambitions to unite in the desire for total victory demanded that the nation believe that it truly was their own future at risk. This need for unity, to steer the nation towards one mentality was the true role of the propaganda industry under George Creel. If the nation was not taking the threat of Germany seriously enough, then fear needed to be manufactured.

Wilson's Crusade needed a driving force The challenge was to create a new national mindset, one that could be regulated and controlled by the US government, but in such a way that the public would not suspect that they were being manipulated. The first and most obvious step was to determine the objective of this crusade, the victory over the central powers. Wilson's administration did not have to make the country believe victory was possible, that fact was already widely accepted, they had to make them believe victory was important, that the

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danger was real.

The battle for the hearts and minds of the American people, was a battle fought with the Justice Department and the Post Office. But the main arsenal was the CPI, (the Committee of Public Information) and community militias. Led by George Creel, this newly formed department was tasked with propaganda and censorship of the nation's media concerning the war. Despite the monumental task, it was in reality a relatively small force, composed of a small number of paid staff and 150,000 volunteers. From the public's knowledge, the CPI was merely a provider of information, mostly focused on the celebration of US ideals to drum up support. Its primary role was to support the image of the USA as the progressive and noble nation whose morality was beyond question. More important was the need to keep the created image in check, Wilson feared the prospect of not having influence over the media, leading to a divided nation. He based his predictions on his studies of the American Civil War, if precautions were not taken it would lead to "moral exhaustion" as he put it. It was clear to him that the national view of the war had to therefore be nurtured and that meant censorship.

However, it was hard to retain the image of a righteous and democratic fighting force if it used censorship on its own people. The population was being led to believe their war was a holy crusade and therefore it was important for them to believe their media sources. The CIP took great care to create a national image, not only agreeable, but trustworthy. Britain and Germany had also poured enormous resources into propaganda material, like the US, focusing mainly on patriotic glorification. However, this method had proven counterproductive as in times of crisis, the media did not reflect the reality. The outcomes of lost battles and military mishaps had been censored, as well as information deemed dangerous to be shared. The British war office expressed that the media was to make no mention of ships using neutral flags, or the offensives by merchant ships. The fact that the British public was fully aware of censorship meant their confidence in the media dwindled. When the news came of the great victory on 8 August when the British had broken the main German defenses at Amiens, many refused to believe the official press release since they were so accustomed to being misled.

This direct method of forbidding public speech could not be permitted in the US, or at least not without more subtlety. Much like with other domains of the home front war support, the US was encouraged to censor itself. The methods used by the CIP were described as "*Simultaneously manipulative,*"⁵⁹ the implementation of self-censorship, by creating such

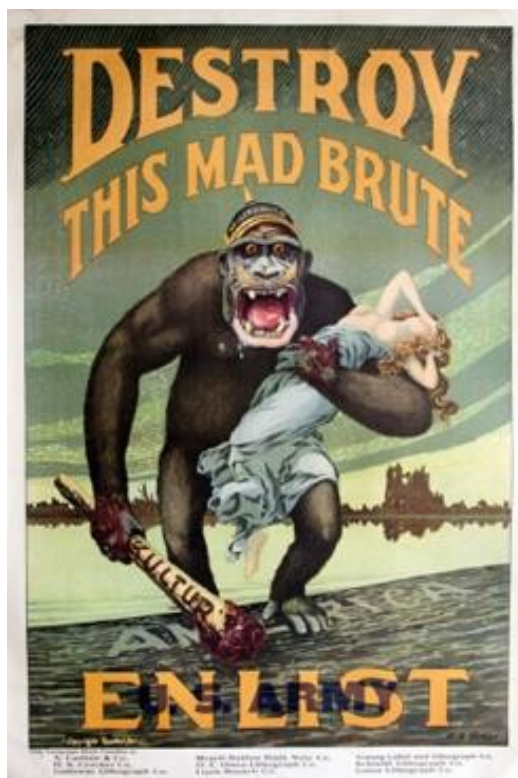
⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, page 5, Oxford University Press.
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enthusiasm for the war in such a way that people would not question the information missing from public knowledge. Creel Himself described his work as turning the US into a “White hot mass.”

In many cases the media were not given specific censorship guidelines on what it could, or could not print, but knew better than to publish certain materials and risk being ‘turned into’ the Department of Justice. The CPI would however, at times, directly intervene. George Creel demanded that the anti-war book “War-What For?” be removed from public distribution and those who had sent for copies denounced. Again, there was no legal reason why this material could not be pushed, other than it did not coexist with the moral crusade the Wilson administration was calling for. In the case of motion pictures, studios needed a permit from the committee before shooting film footage at army camps. The CIP would keep any footage it deemed unfavorable for general audiences. All these measures meant that the home population was fed a steady stream of media that had been approved by the CIP, crucially, there was no need to publicly condemn or censor the media because it had already been filtered.

Unchecked and stripped of anything that went against the desired image, atrocity stories of German acts on civilians became one of the primary sources of propaganda material to increase support for the war as, during the later years of neutrality, German soldiers were made out to be savages who had vowed to destroy all hopes of civilization. When spring of 1918 arrived and the first US soldiers received casualties, the hatred increased. The horror stories, already popular, gained new heights of absurdity. It was widely believed that German soldiers lynched and crucified their enemies, and these stories were greatly encouraged by the CIP.



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Initially when Wilson gave his speech, he made it clear that neither he nor the nation had any personal hatred towards the German people, but only towards the German autocracy. Wilson stated that no such government could be trusted to honor the principles of democracy, a discord that perfectly coincided with the Russian Revolution. At first the people of Germany are seen as victims but over time the image of a barbaric people set in with the idea that the entire German race had to be uprooted. The most iconic image of this new view of Germany was the Mad Brute poster. A giant monstrous ape with the facial features of the Kaiser is presented walking away from a devastated city that is implied as Europe. The monster now sets foot on land, marked 'America,' his hands red with blood and a civilian woman struggling in his arms. As a final message, the club held by the ape has 'culture' written on it in German. The message was clear, that the Germans were coming towards the US and their culture was the weapon that would do away with all purity and freedom.

This image of the entire German culture being an evil that had to be destroyed, clearly went against Wilson's initial ambition to bring the war to an end without victors. However, even if he privately deplored such actions, he declined to protest until the war was almost over. Whether he agreed with the sentiment or not did not change the fact that the view of Germany as an abomination was of great use to his religious image. The greater the war crime, the more the US cause seemed justified, as total hate justification enough to satisfy the

⁷⁰ *Mad Brute*, 1917. Destroy this mad brute (1917): Propaganda Posters (reddit.com)

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need for total war. German was now viewed by many as beyond help and “*Deserves no more consideration than a mad dog or a venomous snake, and it is our duty to humanity to carry death and devastation into the Heart of their country. We are out for war, let it be war to the death.*”⁴ As one leading headline put it. The image of a nation guided by the Devil himself was a major part of the ‘Crusader’ image that Wilson had created, even if he himself did not truly believe it.



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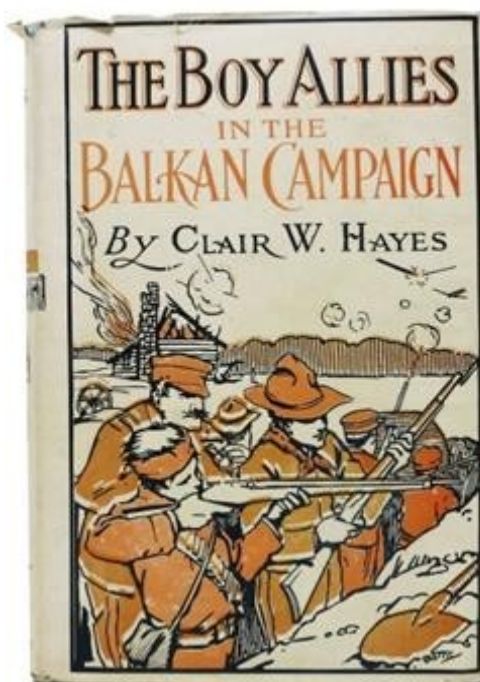
Relentlessly the enemy was portrayed as an ever-greater evil. A US propaganda film, *The Prussian Cure* (1918), produced by the Fox Film Corporation, included scenes of an Allied soldier's crucifixion. The film's director, Raoul Walsh, called it his "rottenest picture ever" for its anti-German sentiment, while its star Miriam Cooper (Walsh's wife) called it the worst film in which she had ever appeared! The stories of German soldiers crucifying men were based on no hard evidence, but that made little importance as the public widely believed them. If Peace was the Jerusalem of Wilson's crusade, then the German race was now the devil, the ultimate evil that had to be vanquished. It was not enough to kill this brute, his entire culture had to be

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "Right Is More Precious Than Peace" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

⁷¹ *Crucified Soldier*, 1917-1918, The Crucified Soldier {Unfounded but Used as USA Propaganda} {WW I} | American propaganda, Propaganda posters, Ww1 propaganda posters (pinterest.fr)

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uprooted. German food names were replaced, and music banned, but the desire to rid the nation of this evil went deeper. The very notion of German culture had to be eradicated from US life. By 1918, more than half the states had banned German lessons in school. In May of 1918, Mrs. Emil Peterson of the town of Hiller, wrote to her counsel of her school's great war effort, *"Last year we "weeded" out all the German texts that were in our library, clipped out all German songs in our book of national songs, blotted out the coat of arms and German flags in the dictionaries, and urged that every home should destroy German text and library books they possess. We also spell Germany without a capital letter. A few days ago, we burned all our West's ancient Worlds, and I have the permission of our trustees to destroy any texts found to contain German propaganda."*⁵⁹ The efforts made by Mrs. Peterson were not uncommon, book burnings were regular occurrences, as was the need to change one's German name to sound more anglophone. The effort was being made not only to remove German culture from the current identity, but to act as if it had never been there.



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The methods used to spread both hate and patriotic pride were endless. Propaganda posters

⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, page 21, Oxford University Press. *America in the Great War : the rise of the war welfare state* : Schaffer, Ronald : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁷² Clair W. Hayes, *The Boy Allies in the Balkan Campaign*, 1915; *The BOY ALLIES In The BALKAN CAMPAIGN or The Struggle to Save a Nation. The Boy Allies of the Army Series #6* | Clair W. Hayes | Early, if not first, printing, ca 1915 (tavbooks.com)

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were one method, but ever more effort was made to connect to as many citizens as possible. The Four-minute Men were public speakers sent all across the nation to publicize up the cause. Their name came from their instruction not to speak for more than 4 minutes as that was believed to be the average human attention span. Not a lot of hard evidence could be expressed at that time but that was not the aim, the focus was to make the war omnipresent in people's lives. The CIP also focused much of its energy on published works that were purposely simple and easy to digest. Leaflets were one such method, but a more effective move was to work with the schools' programs. College professors in the Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation wrote, a war a Cyclopedia, effectively large contents of propaganda aimed at children. The focus was to explain why the war concerns them, as well as poems and stories for children. The children's stories proved to be a domain where the propaganda industry excelled, one of the most infamous being '*The Boys Allies*' young adult novels.

From 1915 to 1919, over two hundred juvenile adventure books would be published. They depicted young boys racing across to war time Europe and covered almost every battle. The most popular was Clair Wallace Hayes's twenty-three 'Boy Allies books. They tell the stories of two groups of boys. The first, two sixteen years old in the land army, Hal Paine, and Chester Crawford, joined the Belgium army and went on to fight with the British, Russians, Italians, and ultimately the US. They eventually become Colonels. The second group was in the navy, Jack Templeton and Frank Chadwick volunteered for the British Navy, in the end Frank is a lieutenant and Jack a captain. They all followed the same pattern, making out that the war was an adventure that any young man would be lucky to fight in. This palpable attempt to encourage young men to join the army proved immensely popular and enjoyed by a generation, or though less by veterans.

5: The Needs of the Nation Outweigh the Rights of Citizens

The CIP had made great progress in building a threat that the nation could rally against, but this was still not enough as many US citizens still did not see the monster in Europe as their problem. For the average US citizen, there had to be a clear present threat, not the idea that the enemy might one invade, he had to believe the enemy was already on the doorstep and that he had to act now. This need for an enemy on the inside coincided with another of the CIP's tasks, the need to find a valid reason to use real censorship on those who voiced opposition inside the nation.

Despite Wilson's claims that this right would never be lost, it cannot be understated how strict the censorship was on anything that went against even the theme of Wilson's 'crusade.' This was an obvious challenge as freedom of speech was one of the fundamental rights of the US democracy and pivotal to its cause to rid the world of autocratic regimes. It was one thing for the US government to create over exaggerated images of the enemy, or choose to leave out certain details, but to forbid US citizens from voicing concerns was another matter. However, if the nation could be convinced that the use of censorship was not to attack ordinary US citizens, but the traitors who hid amongst them, then its actions could be justified. ‘

The CIP now focused on a new enemy, not the Central Powers, but the enemies within, the spies hiding among free citizens, ready to tear down the nation. Attorney General Thomas Watt Gregory posted in a speech that every espionage act gave at least one conviction. According to the CPI there were as many as 300, 000 foreign agents in the US and it was the duty of every good Samaritan to seek them out. Government authorized a number of acts, the executive orders for the 'Espionage Act' of June 1917, the Trading with the Enemy act of June 1917, and the Sedition Act of May 1918. *“May God have mercy on them, for they need expect none from an outraged people and an avenging government.”*⁵²

Armed with these new legal weapons, the Justice department and CIP went to work at weeding out those who opposed the desired national mindset. Under these new regulations, soldiers who spoke out against patriotic speeches or testified to Allied war crimes were silenced. The need for unity went beyond censorship and propaganda, the government's control reached into the homes and lives of the American people and punished those who resisted. Private detectives used hidden dictaphones to record conversations of those who

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 26 page 355

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questioned the cause. George Creel would write, *“There was no part of the Great War machinery that we did not touch, no medium of appeal that we did not employ. The printed word, the spoken word, the motion- picture, the telegraph, the cable, the wireless, the poster, the signboard... all these were used in our campaign to make our own people and all other people understand the cause.”* The state of New Mexico sent letters warning those it saw as ungrateful; of the liberty and protection they were enjoying. In Missouri, cards were handed out in different shades depending on the severity of one’s offence, white for a first-time offence, blue for the second, red to be reported to the Postmaster.

For many the irony was obvious, The War to save democracy had come at the cost of personal freedom. The United States attorney for the Southern District of Ohio observed that the courts were *“Not permitting persons who have taken a stand against the Government in this war to seek shelter behind the Constitution, that in this time of need the constitution itself was “suspended.”* Under Wilson’s administration, the democratic foundations seemed to be slowly dismantling America as the nation that had for so long feared being overwhelmed by its own might. Now that prediction seemed to be coming true. The justice department instituted nearly 2200 prosecutions and 1055 convictions against people who opposed the war, all in the name of preserving national defense.

The nation was slowly but surely being turned against itself in one giant witch hunt, and the once promised unity was right in only one respect, everyone was a suspect. The primary victims of this national purge were the 8 million US citizens of German origin who lived within the US, now viewed as potential spies and assassins who had infiltrated the nation to bring death or commit treason. From the start of the war, the German Americans had been marked out as suspects. Despite claims by the government and Wilson himself not to take sides, it was no secret that an Allied Victory seemed preferable for America’s prospects. As the years went by and neutrality was slowly eroded, this façade became ever more evident, but was still maintained-at least on an official level. Now that the US stood firmly behind the Allied cause, there was no misunderstanding. German Americans were forced to physically kiss the US flag or sing the national anthem. Their businesses were looted on the pretext that they could be sending money to the Central Powers.

As the atrocity stories became ever more grotesque, the public's view of German US citizens went from suspicion to outright hatred. All over the country American citizens of German origin were harassed, their property looted, tarred, and feathered in physical attacks or worse. A German Lutheran pastor in Corpus Christie was whipped for preaching in his own language, something forbidden by the Council of Justice. In San Jose, California, George

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Koester was tarred and feathered and then chained to a cannon for alleged pro-German behavior.

The extent of mistrust and hatred was exemplified even before declaration in the speech 'Loyalty'⁷³ by ambassador James W. Gerard's warning. In his speech he expressed that "*Every citizen must declare himself American—or traitor.*" The ambassador's letter showed just how deep the mistrust ran. Gerard starts off by informing the population that the problems faced are indeed far greater than any could imagine, "*It is hard for Americans to realize the magnitude of the war in which we are involved.*" This line immediately heightens the tension and gives Gerard a position of power as the one with the answers to the conundrum. Interestingly, the narrative then becomes far milder as respect is shown towards German born citizens, "*The great majority of Americans of German descent have, in this great crisis of our history, shown themselves splendidly loyal to our flag. Everyone had the right to sympathize with any warring nation.*" However, this neutral stance then turns more radical as he announces that all must now "*Declare himself American –or traitor.*" In the preceding paragraph, Gerard refers to the German foreign minister and to the 500 000 (actually 800 000) German Americans as potential German reservists should the US act against the Fatherland. He then alludes to 500 000 lamp posts to hang the traitors should they prove troublesome. The principal argument is that no German American would give up everything the nation had given him for the Kaiser, but that if any did, the only solution is to "*Hog them up, give them back their wooden shoes and the rags they landed in, and ship them back to the Fatherland.*" The document does not describe every German in the US as a traitor but does imply that any German could be a traitor, and that the punishment for such a barbarian would be without mercy.

The act of calling out Americans of German descent as suspects was not new, but what makes Gerard's message ever more destructive is the line "*Every citizen must declare himself American—or traitor.*" In this line he establishes that all citizens are suspects until proven innocent by their acts of loyalty.

⁷³Ambassador James W. Gerard, *Loyalty*, ' 1918. James W. Gerard, "Loyalty", 1918 (ruhr-uni-bochum.de)



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By 1918, the view of charity and honor was overshadowed. One poster created by the artist Charles Raymond Macauley in 1917, showed how far the nation had come from the ideas of McAdoo when the war was treated as a noble sacrifice. The new poster depicted Lady Liberty herself pointing to the onlooker and demanding he “*Buy a Liberty Bond Lest I Perish.*” The visual is a clear imitation of the iconic Uncle Sam “*I want you,*” which was itself a copy of the British Lord Kitchener poster. With both Uncle Sam and Kitchener, the mood was one of national pride, here the onlooker is made to feel guilty since if Lady Liberty perishes then he is the culprit for not buying more.

This method of shaming people to buy bonds was common. Posters, often showing atrocities being committed by the Central Powers such as violating women, killing children, or destroying US symbols, showing soldiers being tortured, or in this case, putting iconic American landmarks at risk. It was not simply a moral and national obligation to help, it was that you were a traitor to the nation if you did not. To show support for the war was to prove one’s innocence, to guarantee no reprisals, for a time.

In some states buying bonds went from voluntary support to mandatory work. In South Dakota, councils were instructed to interrogate individuals who were not meeting their quota of Liberty Bond sales. In Iowa, those who failed to purchase faced “slacker courts,” and if.

⁷⁴ Charles Raymond Macauley, *Lest I Perish,* created, 1917. Charles Raymond Macauley | YOU / BUY A LIBERTY BOND / LEST I PERISH! . (1917) | Mutual Art

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found guilty, were placed on a list, or labelled pro-German.

Members of the CIP posted that the espionage acts had contributed both to national integrity and boosting morale. This last argument did have some truth, but not for the reasons many had believed. The need to hunt down traitors within the homeland had brought the war home for the US citizens, and whilst some were intimidated, others felt blessed that now they would get the chance to do their duty. For many, these were the sacrifices needed by total war, the demands of unity. Despite George Creel's public insistence that his department's actions were necessary, he showed signs in private of not believing the rumors he was helping to circulate. On March the 16, 1918, he would write to Wilson on the credibility of certain reports from the War Department. He had a document that made claims of an organized German force, to which Creel replies, "*As I said before, I flatly dispute this amazing theory of a spy army large enough to cover the entire country and make house to house campaigns.*"⁷⁵ He then goes on to contradict the possibility of the enemy having communication via cable or wireless. *The last contention of Military Intelligence that this could be done through Mexico, South America, and Spain, is mere farrago. The wireless at Chapultepec does not connect with South America, and our own censors control the wireless station at Pernambuco.*" While these are small details in the grand scheme, they nevertheless show that Creel's enthusiasm in the CIP was not only to find actual German spies.

Whether Creel believed the danger or not, the CIP had created a new view of freedom, 'free' to support what the nation demands. By the dawn of 1918 it had become law but also part of national organization. By this time, nine states had made it a crime to express opposition to the war effort. Many worked alongside the APL as well as local vigilante groups, to hunt down 'public enemies. What had once been an act of charity, to support the country, was now seen as a proof of loyalty. Acceptance as a US citizen was something that now, had to be earned with solid proof.

Encouraged by the idea that anyone who did not do their utmost was a traitor, the war on alien imposters was becoming ever more a true military effort. The Justice Department employed over a quarter of a million volunteers which were organized into the American Protective League, under Albert Brigs. Now entire new agencies were being created to infiltrate the US population like spies overseas. Armed with '*Secret Service Division Cards,*' the league

⁷⁵ Privat letter George Edward Creel to Woodrow Wilson, March 16, 1918. Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Papers, 1786-1957). George Edward Creel to Woodrow Wilson · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

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members read private mail, recorded conversations, wiretapped telephones and noted suspects. These were the men who had undertaken the kidnapping of the striking workers at Bisbee Arizona on July 12th, 1917, under the influence of Tomas Gregory. In the white-hot mess that was the fear created by Creel and the CIP, Gregory's volunteer army set out to make their patriotism heard.

Local Vigilante groups, normal American civilians who made it their sworn duty to seek out those opposed to war, became a powerful tool for the APL. Public Safety Committees (also known as Loyalty Bureaus) run by volunteers were given authority from the states to carry out their deeds. As many as 185, 000 organizations were formed by 1918. These groups provided many different services, from producing locally made war materials including clothing for the troops. They also helped raise money in Liberty Bonds and food programs. However, some of the works of these organizations were more that of paramilitary groups than community support. They naturally encouraged able-bodied men to join the army and promoted drafts, but they also aided in searches for army deserters, denounced those opposed to war measures and interrogated suspects. The Minnesota Public Safety Commission was given the authority to compel people to appear before it and testify under oath their support for the cause. Their data was fed back to the Justice Department and the sentences passed down. Patriotism had risen to new extremes as the war became an internal conflict.

As well as the establishment of a War Emergency Division, Gregory accepted help from a voluntary organization, the American Protective League, headed by Albert M. Briggs. Over 250, 000 members joined for the "*Cloak and dagger fantasy of middle-aged businessmen.*" As Dallek Robert put it. Armed with a Secret Service Division badge that cost just seventy-five cents, the APL was for men too old to serve but still wanted to fight against whatever enemy they could find (or whatever enemy could be manufactured). The members were told to track down and investigate suspicious members, then report to their field office. They did not have the right to act directly however, there were often no repercussions if they did.

The hunt for internal spies soon turned into a hunt for anyone who showed even the slightest signs of not supporting the war. One father of five children was turned in by a relative for saying it was "*A rich man's war*"⁵² after having been forced to buy a Liberty Bond. He would spend 2 years of a 20-year sentence in prison as well as being fined 5 000 Dollars.

This was the ultimate victory of the CIP in its task to make the nation censor itself, ordinary

⁵² Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War : The Rise of the War Welfare State* : 1991, page 9, Oxford University Press. Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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civilians were now voluntarily signing up to police the country, track down suspects and silence them. In a sense, every citizen was simultaneously a warden and a suspect. The American people were encouraged to support the war by stamping out the traitors, turning in the spies. The war had offered America a united cause, but the process of fulfilling that cause had created the most division and mistrust since the Civil War. In the name of safeguarding democracy, the CIP, and APL had brought war to the US homeland. The Tulsa, Oklahoma, Daily World told its readers to *“Watch your neighbor. If he is not doing everything in his power to help the nation in the crisis, see that he is reported to the authorities.”*

Whilst there were members of the voluntary groups who truly believed they were defending their nation, a great number joined for other reasons. Out of fear to show their devotion, or often to abuse their power. The fact that many members continued persecution even after the end of the war demonstrated cases where personal prejudice was more to blame than necessities of war.

As the number of volunteers grew the hysteria against internal spies became ever more ridiculous. McAdoo, who was in control of the real Secret Service said this new organization would lead to *“misunderstanding, confusion, and even fraud.”*⁵² Wilson himself voiced opposition to such a militant force in the USA, but he eventually let the organization continue. Gregory did all he could to confuse the league and the real secret service as well as the Investigation Bureau with the Justice Department Bureau of Investigation. Eventually the badges were withdrawn, but not because they were a threat to domestic life and security, but because McAdoo pointed out that any pro-German spy could simply join and continue his evil deeds under the radar. Nevertheless, many members continued to use the badges and Gregory did not go out of his way to stop them.

Wilson had made a point of going into the war to save democracy and of not letting the barbaric nature of war become domestic, which makes it hard to understand why he appointed and kept in office men who created such phobia that led to the loss of human rights. Wilson, on several occasions did speak his mind on what was happening to the country he had promised to keep away from harm. In a public address, he wrote as if he was a witness at a trial *“I take the liberty of addressing you upon a subject which so vitally affects the honor of the nation and the very character and integrity of our institution that I trust you will think me justified in speaking very plainly about it.”*⁷⁶ From the first line, Wilson gives the impression of telling the reader that he is facing a crime the Nation has committed. He then denounces the

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018

⁷⁶ Wilson, Woodrow, *Letter to the Nation*, 26 July 1918. Letter from President Woodrow Wilson to the Nation, July 26, 1918 | IDCA (iowaculture.gov)

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crimes, “mob spirit” and “many lynchings,” declaring them “*A blow at the heart of ordered law and humane justice. No man who loves America, no man who really cares for her fame and honor and character, or who is truly loyal to his institution, can justify mob action while the courts of justice are open.*” Wilson viciously attacks the men who committed such crimes under the defense of patriotism, he states that those men are no better than Germany herself, who has “made lynchers of her armies’ “. He states that his will has been that the US would rise above such a barbaric practice. The Peacekeeper Identity of being better than the enemy is made clear, “*We proudly claim to be the champions of democracy.*” But Wilson then states that if the US is to keep that title, it must obey its own values “*I say plainly that every American who takes part in the action of a mob or gives it any sort of countenance is no true son of this great democracy, but betrayer, and does more to discredit her by that single disloyalty to her standards.*” This was without question a dangerous political move, whilst fanatical, the members of the APL and other vigilante groups were a key part of keeping the nation in a state of war readiness. They saw their role as valuable and the propaganda by the CIP reinforced that mentality. Now Wilson was making the argument that these individuals were helping the enemy, “*Every mob contributed to German lies about the United States that her most gifted liars cannot improve upon by way of calumny.*”

Wilson’s address builds up the image of the US as the proud defender of justice and democracy and those who submit to mob mentality are tearing down the hard work. When one takes into consideration the persona Wilson had built for himself, as a ‘Preacher President’ who valued the purity of his nation, it makes the portrayal feel personal. Wilson gives a strong sensation that those who committed the crimes have taken a grave toll on him personally “*I therefore very earnestly and solemnly beg that the governors of all the states, the law officers of every community, and above all, the men and women of every community in the United States, all who revere America and wish to keep her name without stain or reproach, will cooperate-not passively, merely, but actively and watchfully-to make an end of this disgraceful evil.*” This passage in particular is very characteristic of Wilson’s public writing, taking more the theme of a sermon where the President encourages the people to reflect on their sins and then go back to the community.

In the final paragraph, Wilson makes a point of still congratulating the nation for the effort it has made towards the War, “*I have called upon the nation to put its great energy into this war, and it has responded-responded with a spirit and genius for action that has thrilled the world.*”

Wilson then goes on to insist that this energy is channeled into contributions that fall with the law. Despite later insisting that the crimes committed are “the standard of the enemy, the way in which

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Wilson congratulates the nation's energy after stating that US civilians that have been lynched does not create a clear message. It is also noticeable that he does not speak at all the victims, in fact we the audience do not know anything about them. It is implied that the lynchings were done by men who supported the war, and we assume they targeted German American, however there were recorded cases of individual being lynched who had no connection at all to Germany, such as workers on strike or black soldiers on leave. Wilson gives no explanation as to why these crimes took place; he does not question why normal US civilians would choose to forget the sacred values.

It is worth taking into consideration that harassment of suspected pro-Germans was not a late occurrence, with crimes being committed even before US entry into the war. These crimes were not secret, often mobs demonstrated in full view and lynchings were rarely done subtly, quite the opposite. It is also important to bear in mind that Wilson, despite claiming he never read a paper, was aware of what the CIP and ALP were doing. Several Government members, including McAdoo, would raise concerns. Creel had advocated for Wilson as the Democratic Presidential nominee as early as 1911 and was personally appointed by Wilson as head of the CIP. Creel wrote regularly to Wilson telling him of how the propaganda industry was reinforcing the anti-German sentiment. Wilson even contributed to Creel's speeches, editing drafts. Creel saved many of the drafts and even wrote a cover letter stating "*These papers not only have large historical interest but possess additional value by reason of bearing Woodrow Wilson's personal corrections. Here and there you will notice matters prepared by me and submitted to him for his signature...he signed nothing without reading it carefully...said, "I'm afraid, dear boy, that I was born without your passions for adjectives." Now and then, when called upon to make a speech that dealt with America's war aims and peace terms, I asked him to go over the address for me, and he did this with the same care that he gave his own.*"⁷⁶

The fact that Wilson and Creel were not only in constant contact, but even helped write each other's material, makes it hard to believe that Wilson was not aware of how far the CIP was pushing its anti-German narrative and the damage it was creating. All this is made even more difficult to understand when the date of his public address condemning the mobs is taken into consideration. The address was given on July 26th, 1918, over a year into the war. By this point the number of mob incidents and harassment complaints were beyond count, yet Wilson had not gone out of his way to voice his opposition. By July of 1918, the work of the Nation was mostly achieved, the bulk of the US army was moving into France and the early logistical hurdles had been overcome. The threat of the German Spring offensive had passed, and the Allies now had the upper hand. The fact that the address was given after the

⁷⁶ Privat letter George Edward Creel to Woodrow Wilson, March 16, 1918. Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Papers, 1786-1957). George Edward Creel to Woodrow Wilson · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

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US war machine had reached its full capacity could question Wilson's true thoughts on the topic. In *The Moralist*, Patricia O'Toole wrote that "*Wilson privately deplored such actions but declined to protest until the war was almost over. He never acknowledged the part that his Flag Day Speech had played in legitimizing the animosity.*"⁵²

"*Wilson's criticism of lynching mobs was infrequent and belated.*"⁵⁹ In his speech, Wilson had made a point of stating the sacrifice the nation was about to make. "*We are about to bid thousands, hundreds of thousands, maybe millions, of our men, the young, the strong, the capable men of the nation, to go forth and die beneath it on fields of blood far away, —for what? For some unaccustomed thing? ...It is plain enough how we were forced into the war.*"

⁷⁷ There is an attempt to increase suspicion of the enemy who forced war upon a pure and innocent nation. Then Wilson brings attention to the new enemy that Creel, the CIP, and the APL would choose to see too, "*The military masters of Germany denied us the right to be neutral. They filled our unsuspecting communities with vicious spies and conspirators and sought to corrupt the opinion of our people on their own behalf. When they found that they could not do that, their agents diligently spread sedition amongst us and sought to draw our own citizens from their allegiance, —and some of those agents were men connected with the official Embassy of the German Government itself here in our own capital.*" The argument could be made that Wilson is speaking specifically of the official German agents who participated in the Zimmerman Telegram and the other foreign offences, "*They tried to incite Mexico to take up arms against us and to draw Japan into a hostile alliance with her*", however he then goes on to state: "*Many of our own people were corrupted. Men began to look upon their own neighbors with suspicion and to wonder in their hot resentment and surprise whether there was any community in which hostile intrigue did not lurk. What great nation in such circumstances would not have taken up arms?*"

For many of the patriotic men who wanted to defend their communities, this was a call to arms. Despite Wilson going on to say that the Germans were "*themselves in the grip of the same sinister power*", the harm had been done. He speaks of the German desire before the war to spread its influence across Europe, like a hunter setting a trap, "*Their plan was to throw a broad belt of German military power and political control across the very center of Europe and beyond the Mediterranean into the heart of Asia...From Hamburg to the Persian Gulf the net is spread.*" It is implied that this giant web of hidden enemies is aiming to reach the US.

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralist*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018

⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, Oxford University Press. America in the Great War : the rise of the war welfare state : Schaffer, Ronald : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁷⁷ Woodrow Wilson, *Flag Day Speech*, June the 14th, 1917, Address on Flag Day | The American Presidency Project (ucsb.edu)

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Wilson outright confirms that the German “*Government has many spokesmen here, in places high and low. They have learned discretion. They keep within the law. It is the opinion they utter now, not sedition.*”⁷⁶ In the final paragraph, Wilson the man who advocated peace and restraint declares “*Woe be to the man or group of men that seeks to stand in our way in this day of high resolution.*”

Despite the President's claims that he did not mean to incite mob mentality or paranoia, there is no denying that his speech contributed greatly to the image of a land ridden with hidden enemies hiding amongst loyal citizens. It is also worth mentioning that Wilson signed the espionage act the very next day, showing his commitment to state security by any means. The choices made by Wilson show just how committed his admiration was to the war effort, whatever the cost. In total war, how much liberty is tolerated without risking war production? Ronald Schaffer wrote that “If the president had been more deeply committed to preserving free speech, his government might have treated dissenters less harshly. But that would have made him and the Democratic party more vulnerable to.

⁷⁶⁷⁶ *Privat letter George Edward Creel to Woodrow Wilson*, March 16, 1918. Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Papers, 1786-1957). George Edward Creel to Woodrow Wilson · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

6: The Peacekeeper Leads his Nation to War

War had changed the very meaning of being a US citizen, the power demonstrated by the government had altered, if not deconstructed civil rights in the name of preserving national security. Wilson recognized what that total war meant was the sacrifice of peace in the domestic life, *"To fight you must be brutal and ruthless, and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fiber of our national life, infecting Congress, the courts, the policeman on the beat, the man in the street."*⁷⁸ This had been the result he had most feared, however many still defended the measures taken that had produced results.

The total cost of America's 19 months of combat was a billion dollars. The Economist Hugh Rockoff estimated that 22% of this amount was raised through taxes on corporate profits and high-income earners, 20 % was raised through the creation of new money, but as much as fifty-eight million was raised through borrowing from the public mainly primarily via McAdoo's Liberty Bonds. Alongside the economic boom, the industrial production did increase, thanks mostly to the reforms and increase in better working conditions. But it must be admitted that the threat of retribution contributed to the increase in productivity. The need to nationalize the nation 's economy had led to new industry, including agriculture, transportation, labor relations and agriculture.

The ultimate result was that The Us army had gone from 200, 000 to 2, 500, 000 active recruits. The merchant shipping capacity had doubled and the US, by August of 1918, had reached a point where it was able to contribute as an army to the Allied cause.

This meant that as the war drew towards its conclusion, the US was in a position of power that it needed to make its voice heard when it came to the peace conference. Captain André Tardieu, the French high commissioner to the United States, commented, *"All that the war demanded America had accepted... all that it has represented she has understood, and all that is required for victory she has given."*⁵²

On the civilian and domestic level, the President's attempts to unite the nation under one mind set created extreme division and social injustice, yet it did also unite the majority of the nation behind the war effort, either out of patriotic love or fear of the invisible enemy. George Creel wrote *"I pray to God that someday historians will remember these momentous years as the years which made a single people of the great body of those who call themselves*

⁷⁸ Historical Document: Address given to Frank Cobb, the editor of the New York World, On March 19, 1917

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 27 page 377

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Americans."⁵⁹5959

Whilst somewhat hypocritical, his words were not false. The crusade Wilson had preached had been heard and the nation had responded. Many progressives, including Wilson, had opposed the war in 1917, stating that the conflict would lead to the dismantlement of social reforms. As the CIP's clamp down on freedom of speech and the harassment of labor unions had shown, that statement did prove to be correct. But so was the counter argument. The war had led to several reforms and social changes that fell within the progressive movement and would likely not have taken shape without US mobilization. "The United States government was never able to stamp out all disaffection, but what it did proved good enough. Enthusiasm for the crusade spread and intensified among the populace; most dissidents learned to keep silent; and the American people became mentally prepared, not only to serve on the battlefronts but also to join in the massive economic mobilization that the Great War demanded of belligerent nations."

The progressive writer and intellectual, Randolph Borne, was one who recognized both arguments. In his draft, 'The State,'⁷⁹ he deconstructed the full effect of total war on the US. The focus of his work is establishing the true definition of a 'state' and the role it plays in a nation's identity. He makes it clear that the state is not the same as a nation, that the nation is the great body of individuals and their shared experience, "*The drama of the pioneering conquest of the land, of the growth of wealth and the ways in which it was used, of the enterprise of education, and the carrying out of spiritual ideals, of the struggle of economic classes.*" The nation is the historical background on which the citizens can build their opinions and expectations. Moreover, it is what separates the citizen from the numerous other identities that exist, "*We are Americans because we live in a certain bounded territory, because our ancestors have carried on a great enterprise of pioneering and colonization, because we live in certain kinds of communities which have a certain look and express their aspirations in certain ways.*" The US citizen of the 20 Century understood other nations exist, but he knows what sets him apart, is not simply the cultural heritage, but the values that come with it.

The state on the other hand, is something less grounded. It is the invisible thread, a "*Mystical conception*" that ties the nation to the government, "*As a State, its history is that of playing a part in the world, making war, obstructing international trade, preventing itself*

⁵⁹ Schaffer, Ronald, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*: 1991, page 6, Oxford University Press. America in the Great War : the rise of the war welfare state : Schaffer, Ronald : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁷⁹ Randolph Bourne, 'The State,' 1918. The State (1918). By Randolph Bourne // Fair Use Repository (fair-use.org)

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from being split to pieces, punishing those citizens whom society agrees are offensive, and collecting money to pay for all." The state is essentially a concept of power, of competition with other nations. The view is comparable to Professor Samuel P. Huntington's notion of "*The American Creed*," the belief in an invisible link amongst US citizens that was not cultural, but relied on shared values, setting it apart from other nations, (see Book 1, chapter 1). However, where Hunting claimed that this feeling was the foundation of the US identity, Bourne clarifies that we are born into both a nation and a state, that the two are completely separate but, in peace, often become accepted as one. He also makes it clear that the state and the government are not one and the same. If the state is the essence of change, then the government is a tool for manipulation, "*A machinery by which the nation, organized as a state, carries out its state functions. Despite not being one and the same, the government is the only form in which we can envisage the state.*" It is a lens, a screen onto which the mental projection can be shown, analyzed and is able to influence the nation who are both the audience and the producers. They view the show, but also have a say in how it proceeds.

Because of this relation, the state being a thread woven by national consciousness, it is stimulated by national need. For this reason, Bourne makes his point that in times of peace, "*The sense of the State almost fades out of the consciousness of men.*" This unifying thread is pushed aside for the needs of the individual and the peaceful nation is often content to not change or question itself. Similarly, it is hard for the government to influence the nation in a time of peace as there is no great obvious need. However, with the advent of war, the nation's peace and tranquility is torn down and "*With the shock of war, however, the State comes into its own again.*" Suddenly, the nation is forced to rethink its own position with every aspect of national consciousness it puts in question, and it is in this situation that they allow themselves to be "*Regimented, coerced, deranged in all the environments of their lives, and turned into a solid manufactory of destruction toward whatever other people may have, in the appointed scheme of things, come within the range of the Government's disapprobation.*" The citizen is given a purpose, a role to play that harks back to a patriotic duty, the individualist feeling that reigned in peace time is outvoted. But why this sudden surge, if the state is a mental thread, what is its function under war and why is war needed?

When going deeper into how the state functions as an organic part of the nation and not just a mental image, Bourne's analysis becomes comparable to anatomy. He describes the states "*Idealism as a rich blood flowing to all the members of the body politic the state is the medium for political union and salvation... And it is precisely in war that the urgency for union seems greatest, and the necessity for universality seems most unquestioned. The State is*

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the organization of the herd to act offensively or defensively against another herd similarly organized.” In Bourne’s view, the state is an ever-constant immune system that is increased in time of war like a heart beating harder under fear of death. This biological need leads to the conclusion that *“War is essentially the health of the State.”*

“The more terrifying the occasion for defense, the closer will the organization become and the more coercive the influence upon each member of the herd.” Bourn frequently ties the State under war tensions to a herd mentality, implying that in these moments of crisis the nation’s natural survival instinct is to seek comfort with all those who fall within the scope of the State. And it is in this State that war proves fruitful, as now with this survival instinct, all controlling and alert, the nation is open to change that often would not be contemplated in peace. *“The slack is taken up, the crosscurrents fade out, and the nation moves lumberingly and slowly, but with ever accelerated speed and integration, toward the great end, toward the “peacefulness of being at war.”* The idea that in times of war the individual is in fact more at ease as he is stripped of minor problems and focused on the task at hand. *“Old national ideals are taken out, re-adapted to the purpose and used as universal touchstones, or molds into which all thought is poured.”* Effectively, Bourne makes the argument that these times of need are what stimulates reform. He therefore implies that it is only in this state that representative democracy can function, when the state is embraced, *“It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate cooperation with the Government in coercing into obedience the minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense.”* This view of war being the driving force of reform had proven true. Labor workers had won the right to form a union, 8- hour shifts and a minimum wage. Female suffrage had become national, even though certain states had already passed their acts before 1918. The war had also pushed the Great migration of black citizens not looking for new employment opportunities which had led to new social equality demands. As with the labor union demands, not all the reforms were fulfilled, but the notions were at least now a topic in government as opposed to earlier years. It could not be denied that the Great War had lived up to its promise of delivering progressive reform in some areas. Bourne’s view of the war as a potential progressive stimulant had proven true. However, in his text he makes it clear that a positive outcome is never guaranteed.

7: Conclusion

Under the demands of war, each citizen placed absolute trust in their government “*The impending distinction between society and the individual is almost blotted out.*” This focus permitted “*the highest level ever known of collective effort.*” But this herd mentality meant that judgement and morality were easy to push aside. It was in this state that Bourne warned that the conflict would encourage and empower “*The least democratic forces in American life.*” The need to conform to protect the majority out of fear had led to many fundamental US treaties being abandoned. The State increased the Nation’s trust of the government, who in this moment had returned to the role of a parental figure “*With whom is associated the earliest feelings of protection.*” The espionage act of 1917 had allowed members of the APL to spy and harass ordinary civilians. The Citation Act of 1918 that criminalized any statement that cast disrepute on the government, was a blow at the very notion of free speech. All the while, most of the nation had stood by, “*Obedient, respectful, trustful children again, full of that naïve faith in the all-wisdom and all-power of the adult who takes care of them.*” In this state of conscious ignorance, many were content to accept the role of an onlooker as it meant they did not have to accept the responsibility and anxieties that would have been so morally important in a time of peace.

This mentality of believing that the government knew best, made possible by the stimulation not the state, had resulted in the sacrifice of a portion of the population. Ordinary civilians had stood by as their neighbors were arrested without trial or hearings; worse still, they had chosen to aid in their capture so as not to be suspected themselves. In those moments, the citizen was provided a way to mentally clean his hands of the crime, believing it was what was needed by the state. “*A country at war - particularly our own country at war - does not act as a purely homogeneous herd.*” Bourne confirmed that the only ones who held onto their peace time individual convictions were those who were themselves suspected. For the industrial leaders, for those who had opposed the draft, and, especially for the US citizens of German origin, the war had been a clear demonstration of just how superficial the American democracy was. Many were moved to deep anger and did not forgive easily or conform to the peace offered. For H. L. Mencken, the man who had defended the German cause against all the monopoly of the pro allies' support, the war did not end in 1918. He continued to attack the Wilson administration’s human rights violations for decades after the Armistice and tear down the utopian image the nation had built for itself. “*In the decade that followed World*

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*War I, H; L. Mencken was perhaps the most influential commentator on the American scene... Mencken was the leader of the army which sought, in the postwar era, to upset the pedestal upon which the 100% American had been placed, to expose George F. Babbitt, and to force the American people to look at themselves and recognize not only those things which were rotten in American life, but also those things which were good and were being hidden beneath the rottenness of the Wilson- Harding Coolidge years... he seemed determined to not let America forget about the war to save democracy.”*⁸⁰

The US government, in its needs to transition the nation to total war had, purposefully started a fear campaign, “*A white terrorism is carried on by the Government against pacifists, socialists, enemy aliens, and a milder unofficial persecution against all persons or movements that can be imagined as connected with the enemy.*” It was in this that the war had been a false promise, “*War, which should be the health of the State, unifies all the bourgeois elements and the common people, and outlaws the rest.*”⁸⁰ The defining question for Bourne was whether the State of war mentality was kept.

The State was the link between war and the nation, it provoked citizens to give up the fundamentals of their homeland in time of need to focus on survival by ensuring trust in the Government. This mind set came with the comfort of herd mentality, a lack of responsibility and a clear path to follow, that created ease, “*It chose rather to adopt all the most obnoxious and coercive techniques of the enemy and of the other countries at war, and to rival in intimidation and ferocity of punishment the worst governmental systems of the age.*” The point of intersection came when the citizen chose to return to a more peacetime once again mentality, once again choosing responsibility for his actions and no longer seeing the state as an excuse for complacency. The US had achieved great reform by sacrificing rights, now it was a question of seeing if it could reclaim those same rights whilst keeping the reforms.

Bourne died in December of 1918, not from war, but from the Spanish Flu and would never see the true result of his nations sacrifice, “*History will decide whether the terrorization of opinion and the regimentation of life were justified under the most idealistic of democratic administrations.*” The question remained however, if too much had been sacrificed. Wilson had made a point of going into the conflict as pro-war but also with the hopes of holding true to the idea of peace without having to devastate Germany. By mid-1918, when the US had truly come to accept and embody the demands of total war, it was no longer clear if that ambition

⁸⁰ Merritt W. Moseley, *H. L. MENCKEN AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR*, Jr, *Baltimore Evening Sun*, Nov. 11, 1931, "A Bad Guess," H. L. Mencken H L Mencken on World War I (perno.com), PAGES 124/125/126

⁸⁰ Randolph Bourne, ‘*The State*’, 1918. *The State* (1918). By Randolph Bourne // Fair Use Repository (fair-use.org)

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was still valid. The country had been forced to adapt to total war, faster than might have been natural, in order to arrive in numbers before the guns fell silent. Such a mass shift could not have been made without stimulants and the CIP had opted to use scare tactics to put the nation into action. As a result, public perception of Germany was at an all-time low and there were few who still shared the feeling of neutrality seen in earlier years. Even members of Wilson's own administration were showing a lack of faith that his peace proposals would ever be taken seriously. As the Armistice came and Wilson prepared for his departure, it was time to see if his Peacekeeper Crusade to make the world safe for democracy would still be accepted, not only by the rest of the world, but his own country.

Part IV: Reaching Jerusalem

1918 to Present Day

1: Introduction

By the autumn of 1918, the Great War was coming to an end, and the US stood proud as one of the victors. Wilson had succeeded in bringing peace to the world, at least as far as ending the conflict was concerned. Now however came the time of delivering the peace he had promised to his nation and the world.

Wilson's faith and dedication to ending the suffering had brought victory for the Allies, but in November of 1918, victory for the USA and Wilson was still an elusive prize. The war had proven to be a test of national tolerance, it had led to progressive reform but at the cost of civil liberties, freedoms of expression, and one hundred thousand casualties. The war had also taken away something fundamental to the US, its feeling of invulnerability. To every citizen who had come to the New World looking to escape the troubles of the old, he now knew that the separateness was an illusion. Submarine warfare, naval blockades, economic restrictions, enemy sabotages, and the eventual mobilization of the US itself had shown that there was no haven, that the nation was no safer than any other when total war was concerned. The mood of the US public was mixed, they were proud of victory but had had a sour taste of the war that had not provided any real reward for the average citizen other than an economic crisis when the armament demands ended and the potential loss of a husband or father.

This final section will explore how Wilson's Peace Proposals were received by both his own nation and abroad. What were the consequences of his efforts in the USA, how the identity was changed and finally, whether there is still any trace of the Peacekeeper identity today?

2: Wilson's Dream of a New Universal World Peace

Wilson recognized that the future of the progressive movement was tied to the war, specifically to the peace he had promised. As the armistice approached the president recognized that his war was yet to come to the point where the Armistice itself meant very little to him. In the final months when victory was guaranteed, he had commented, "*I hate war, and the only thing I really care about on earth is the peace I am going to make out of the end of it.*"⁵² Now it was time for the Peacekeeper to make good his word.

Wilson's ambitions to end the war by his prepetition and progressive views had been an ambition since the start, but it was only after the declaration that his policies had become a serious proposal. By the end of 1916 it had become clear that both sides were fighting for conquest, and the black and white perception was gone. Wilson's peace was not constructed around creating a new world order where the mistakes of 1914 would not recur. In December of 1917, he had already enthusiastically fleshed out his plans for redrawing the map of Europe to his new ideals. When he unveiled his proposition of the 14 points, many found them pleasing. His address on the 14 January, where he promised "*peace without victory*", won support from both Democrats and Republicans, even his old rival Theodore Roosevelt showed approval. The 14 elevated the USA to the peacekeeper position that Roosevelt had long fought for during and after his time in office. Wilson has seemingly broken the ties of US isolationism to write a new chapter in world freedom, or at least that was the image given by The Tribune magazine, "*He has made America mean something more than it ever did before for us and for the world.*"

For the US population, the 14 points were another key step taken by the president to deliver the victory for democracy he had promised, the victory for which they had followed him. The policies were focused on many of the chief concerns when it came to the US. They were designed to undermine the Central Powers and take away many of the elements that had threatened US sanctity. Wilson called for the abolition of secret treaties, something which had greatly contributed to turning the European war into a world war. The article that demanded "*Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war.*"⁸¹ would guarantee that the lives of US naval men would never again be put at risk by U-boat or naval blockade. Article IV: "*Adequate guarantees given and taken that national*

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 27 page 369.

⁸¹ Woodrow Wilson, *The 14 Points*, 1917. President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points (1918) | National Archives

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armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety,” the end of arms races was another crucial lesson taken from 1914.

As well as placing pressure on the Central Powers, there were also articles designed to bolster the spirits of the Allies. Article VIII: “All French territory should be freed, and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace- Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all”. This demand would have little effect on the US way of life but promised support, it also reinforced the idea that the US was indeed fighting to free the oppressed and bring back democracy. So did the article on “*adjustment of all colonial claims.*”

Wilson had created an image of peace worthy of his crusader ideals, however despite the admiration, many could see the chinks in the armor from the beguiling. Once the flamboyant speech was looked at, the fact remained that Wilson's 14 points were effectively a wish list and carried no real political or legal leverage. One observer described Wilson’s peace proposals as little more than vague “*Articles of faith*” around which all liberals could rally.”

¹⁸ Many questioned how France or Italy would react to the article IX: “*A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.*” Wilson’s peace proposals were in keeping with his mentality that it did not occur to him that his reasoning could be wrong.

Optimistic, determined, and a little delusional, Wilson continued to promote his 14 points in several more speeches leading up to September of 1918. During this time, his policies continued to gain public support, as the nation became even more accustomed to the needs of total war and the ultimate victory was ever more interwoven with the nation’s fate, the public regarded Wilson’s policies as the eventual reward for the effort. Few men could seem more in tune with the nation’s desires, one newspaper headline commented that Wilson “*articulated the very conscience of the American people*”.

To many in September of 1918, Wilson’s proposals were already a victory and deserved to be held up with pride. The spring of 1918 had been the climax of the entire war. Operation Michelle, the spring offensive by Germany on the western front, had come close to knocking the British and French out of the war and handing the central Powers victory. However, as the Allied forces were pushed back to within less than a day's march of Paris, the American Expeditionary Force had stepped in, halted the advance, and guaranteed Allied victory. This view of the events, whilst overgenerous to the AEF’s contributions, was the one America had of the late spring offensives. Since then, the US forces in France had more than quadrupled and the German forces were now retreating to the Rhin. The US army was living up to its

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 33. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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Peacekeeper image, and on the 3rd of October, Wilson obtained yet another victory for his cause.

On October 3, 1918, prince Max von Baden sent a peace note to the US on behalf of the Reichstag. Since the entrance of the US into the war, the German had been fully aware that time was against them and that they needed a fast victory. Following the Battle of Amiens on 8 August, the 'Black Day of the German Army', Fredrick Lundedorth and Paul von Hindenburg had slowly been forced to the conclusion that the German army could not win the war. By October, the situation in Germany had deteriorated to the point where the country was facing an uprising and the Kaiser himself had approved of opening peace talks. Von Baden had reached out to Wilson to ask for peace, specifically he had asked for peace based on the 14 points. Following this demand, Austria Hungary soon followed.

This was the moment that Wilson had been waiting for since the outbreak of war, finally he had the opportunity to put his peace plan into effect. This was also the crucial moment when Wilson decided what the 14 points were, the policies of the US or of the war. The demand for peace was directed to him but he knew full well that the US was only one small part of the Allied force, and that he could not pretend to speak for the others. Yet if he were to answer he would be making commitments on their behalf. A draft of the reply to Germany, Wilson stated the importance of knowing Germany's intentions, "*Order that there may be no misunderstanding.*" The draft also makes clear the impossibility of "*an immediate armistice and the discussion of final arrangements of peace before at least some of the essential conditions set forth in the programme referred to had been actually complied with as an earnest of [the] purpose of the German Government.*"⁸²

Wilson then refers to the evacuation of Belgium, France, Russia and all the other occupied nations. News of the demand for peace did not reach Lloyd George and Clemenceau until the 6, both were shocked that Wilson had not informed them. House suggested Wilson consult them before he delivered his reply to Germany, but Wilson dismissed his advice and, and sent his reply to Berlin on the 8th of October. He had convinced himself that, "*If Germany is beaten, they will accept any terms, and if they are not beaten then I do not wish to make terms.*"⁴ Wilson demanded that the German army withdraw from occupied territories to ensure the Allies would agree. They were furious since they had much greater demands than

⁸² Wilson, Woodrow, *Draft of Reply to Germany*, Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Papers, 1918 October. Draft of Reply to Germany · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

⁴ Corelli Barnett/John Terraine, *The Great War*, Chapter 16 "*Right Is More Precious Than Peace*" BBC2 Network, First aired: 13 September 1964

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simply removing Germans from their own land. Clemenceau in particular was reproachful, saying that the demands of peace should be established by a committee of Allied experts and not one man representing one country. Nevertheless, Wilson continued his exchange with Germany who accepted his terms.

Wilson had made promises he knew full well were not his to make, and it is unclear if he meant to manipulate Germany or if he truly believed he could convince the Allies to accept his policies. What is certain is that he admitted to the Germans on 23rd of October that *“it does not appear that the heart of the present difficulty has been addressed”*, implying that the peace offered was a far cry from a true treaty. Not even a full day had been based before the first reproaches were heard from Europe. The British government expressed that its war aims could never fit within Wilson’s proposals. Yet relations with Britain remained positive, they had to be. Despite constant promises that the AEF would soon arrive in force, there was still little sign of this taking effect. He sent House to Europe as his representative to begin fleshing out the treaty that would end the conflict in the name of Peace.

As October gave way to November and the Armistice came, Wilson’s peace without victory seemed to finally be taking shape, but other factors had become more apparent. Wilson’s decision to not consult the Allies before promising peace had not gone down well with the Allies or his own nation. Theodore Roosevelt, the man who had initially applauded his 14 Points was horrified when he learnt of Wilson’s behavior, commenting that the only ones the president should discuss peace with the Allies. Roosevelt, despite supporting mobilization, had never been afraid to criticize Wilson’s methods for achieving victory. He had often spoken out about the lack of funding and preparation for the army or the war. Wilson’s administration dealt with the Union. Even the way food and agriculture policy were criticized, Herbert Hoover had tried to encourage the nation to ration itself. Roosevelt described the efforts as *“The governmental attitude toward production during the past year has been, at points, very unwise. There has not only been failure to encourage producing, the one thing vitally necessary to this nation at this time, but there has been at times, by unwise price fixing, a direct discouragement of producing.”*⁸³ The price fixing had been a deliberate attempt by Hoover to avoid inflation of prices, but Roosevelt argued that it did not encourage productivity, describing those who had made the new rules as ignorant *“socialists.”* Yet arguments over food production were one thing, now he was unhappy with the way Wilson was proposing peace, something that would have a long-lasting effect on US policy and national integrity as a whole.

When news of the Armistice hit the US, it seemed that Wilson’s gamble had paid off. Senator

⁸³ Theodore Roosevelt, *THE EVENING STAR, FRIDAY*, February 11, 1918.

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Key Pittman, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, would write in a statement on 11 November; *“The Armistice is in full compliance with the demands made by the President. It has accomplished everything that could have been accomplished by forcing an unconditional surrender to our armies upon the field.”*⁸⁴ While it was true that the German army was defeated as far as logistics and strategy went, they had not (as of their knowledge) accepted unconditional surrender. In fact, the nature of Wilson’s policies had been to avoid unconditional surrender, making the senators claim paradoxical. The claim of *“The President’s determination that the German people should have a democratic government has been accomplished”* was also debatable. The Kaiser had indeed abdicated, and a Republic installed, but Pittman failed to mention that the German Nation was under threat of revolution and the population starving to death. *“The President’s matchless diplomacy is now clear to the world.”* This was the ultimate prize for Wilson, proof in black and white that his crusade had been victorious, even if the promise he had made to the Germans was far from guaranteed. Nevertheless, the general population rejoiced that their President had secured peace and Pittman promised that this was only the start, *“He will sit at the peace table in person because there is no man who is qualified to represent him, and from that conference will come the establishment of the principles that he has advocated, and which will mean an enduring peace.”* This statement was true as Wilson had decided to represent his nation at the conferences himself. This decision and how he did not proceed would prove to contradict Pittman’s last promise, *“The American people will not again be deceived, and they will back him as a man in his fight for the principles that he will maintain at the peace conference.”*

Despite popular support for the victorious president, many other than Roosevelt were unhappy with his leadership, the Republican Party in general were becoming uneasy with Wilson’s war time leadership. He had more and more distanced himself from the opposition, preferring to surround himself with Democrats. With the congressional elections coming up, Wilson had attempted to sway the house, which had gone down badly, as many Republicans felt he was trying to silence them. They complained that Wilson let them buy bonds, pay taxes but had had no say in the war. Roosevelt asked; *“Who was Woodrow Wilson to say that this was no time for divided counsels?”*⁵² Roosevelt urged voters to *“Answer with your vote.”* On November 5, Wilson lost the election by the majority, gravely weakening his position. Henry Cabot Lodge went as far to compare Wilson to the European dictatorships. *The National*

⁸⁴ *Statement from Senator Key Pittman of Nevada*, member of the Foreign Relations Committee, November 11, 1918. Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Statement from Senator Key Pittman of Nevada, member of the Foreign Relations Committee · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 28 page 396.

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newspaper declared that *“For six long years he had imposed his will upon his party and upon Congress as no President has ever imposed it before. The congressional cloakrooms might murmur and rebel as they pleased, but prior to the war they were powerless before his prestige, his political skill, and his superior ability.”*

The situation was becoming serious as Wilson lost the support of the House and Senate, yet he refused to give way to the Republican Party. When it came to choose those, who would be his envoys to France, Wilson made a point of not considering any Republicans for the five positions. Both Lodge, Taft, Root, and Roosevelt were prime candidates who had experience in foreign affairs, but Wilson would have none of it, not wanting to weaken his personal influence in France. By this point, Wilson was not only fighting for his policies to be accepted abroad, but at home. Lodge had given a speech where he warned that if the peace treaty brought home from the Allies was as vague as the 14 Points, the Senate would reject it. He had not shown support for Wilson’s ‘Peace without Victors’ ideal. In an address in November he had stated his opinion that, *“Similar Measure Should Be Meted to Germany That She Gave to France in 1871 ...outlines Conditions to Be Imposed by the Allies After "Greatest Victory for Righteousness Ever Achieved"...Restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, Reconstruction of Belgium and France, Redemption of Italian Territory, Independence for Poland, and Slavic Nations --- Imperative Demand for Liberal Indemnities as Partial Reparation for Wrongs Committed Against Allied Nations and Neutrals.”*⁸⁵ An article in *The Boston Transcript*, published on 12th November 1918, went deeper into Lodge’s skepticism. He made a point of not calling Wilson’s achievement a victory, implying that the true victory was still a long way off, *“An armistice is a suspension of hostilities. Peace is yet to come when the terms of the armistice have been fulfilled.”* The contrast stands sharp with Pitman's glorification of the Armistice. Lodge instead focuses on the sacrifices made and what it was for, *“We ask only that the peace, by its terms, shall justify the sacrifices that have been made. We have the right to insist, and the American people can through public opinion insist, that the terms shall be conclusive, that the world shall be relieved once for all from the danger of another war by Germany -- that that cloud shall pass away from our children and our children's children.”* Lodge's view on how peace was to be achieved was in sharp contrast to Wilson, yet both men used similar sources to connect with their public. Lodge quotes a passage from a Civil War era poem by the Romantic poet and diplomat, James Russell Lowell,⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Henry Cabot Lodge, *Lodge Warns against Pacifist Sentimentality in Making Peace Terms*, written for the Boston Evening Transcript, November 1918, Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Paper, Lodge Warns against Pacifist Sentimentality in Making Peace Terms · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

⁸⁶ James Russell Lowell, *Mr. Hosea Biglow to the Editor of the Atlantic Monthly, Come, Peace! not like a mourner bowed*, April 1865. *Mr. Hosea Biglow to the Editor of the Atlantic Monthly* - The Atlantic

*Come, Peace! not like a mourner
 bowed for honor lost and' dear ones
 wasted, but proud, to meet a people
 proud, with eyes that tell o' triumph
 tasted!*

*Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt, A'
 step that proves ye Victory's daughter!*

*Longin' for you, our spirits wilt
 Like shipwrecked men on rafts for water.*

The poem reinforces the sense of sacrifice and like in many of Wilson's speeches, ties the Great War to the values of the past. It shows how Wilson and Lodge were fighting the same battle and that both understood their audience. *"In that war we did save a nation, this nation of ours, and we delivered a race, a race from slavery and now we are to have a dominant voice in the freeing of many nations, in saving many nations and in freeing more than one race from oppression and slavery. It is a great task and a great reward."*⁸⁶ However, while Wilson made the argument that US values rested on treating Germany with respect, Lodge made the argument that they rested on keeping Germany on its knees. Despite showing support for Wilson's statement that, *"There can be no peace by any kind of bargain or compromise with the governments of the Central Empires."* Lodge shows a lack of faith in what the eventual peace will lead to, *"When peace is made, upon whose promises and engagements beside our own is it to rest? Let us be perfectly frank with ourselves and admit that these questions cannot be satisfactorily answered now or at once."* He points out the dilemma of making peace with a nation whose government is in turmoil, *"The real difficulty of finding any Government with which we can make an effective peace."* Wilson has also made clear his view that Germany was not the enemy, its aggressive stance was the fault of the German government and also did not support the idea that the German people should be blamed for the entire conflict. Lodge however, made his opinion clear, Germany is responsible, *"We now know, by irrefutable testimony, who brought on the war."* He then speaks of the Franco-German War of 1870, reinforcing the idea that Germany is a threat and measures to cripple her are justified, not prejudicial. *"They dictated to poor, stricken, bleeding France, their own terms and they insisted on marching 20,000 of their men through*

⁸⁶ Henry Cabot Lodge, *Lodge Warns against Pacifist Sentimentality in Making Peace Terms*, written for the Boston Evening Transcript, November 1918, Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Paper, Lodge Warns against Pacifist Sentimentality in Making Peace Terms · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

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Paris in order to sear the hearts of the French people with the knowledge that the Germans had won.” Lodge then again ties this event to US values by quoting the Sermon on the Mount: “Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged, and what measure ye make shall be measured unto you again.”

Lodge's argument is that Europe and the world deserve revenge, *“They are entitled to have the same measure meted out to them that they meted out to them that they meted out to France”* and that the US has a moral duty as judge to see the world righted. *“Let us approach it, we who have suffered so much less, let us approach it in the spirit of justice. Let us do justice, and if justice is done, the penalty will be sufficiently severe.”* He then makes the need for personal justice by listing the crimes committed by Germany towards the US as well as war crimes quoting examples of the sinking of the Lusitania and the execution of civilians, *“They tortured and shot a priest, aged seventy-seven. They murdered 4500 non-combatants in Serbia in August 1914. Some were buried alive, and many were tortured.”*

Wilson's 14 Points were described as vague promises of faith. Lodge rams that point home by insisting that there must be *“Physical Guarantees, so that it makes no difference whether the signature to the treaty is valuable or not, or whether the Government that signs it is permanent or not. We can take such physical guarantees that Germany won't be able to break out again in the world.”* He effectively deems Wilson's 14 Points as worthless since the Germans have broken treaties before, a point that was true taking the invasion of neutral Belgium into consideration. It would only be with concrete measures that the US would be safe. Wilson had gone to war to make the world safe for democracy. Lodge claimed, *“We went into the war to make the world safe against a German war of conquest.”* Lodge lists the measures needed, ceding Austrian land to Italy, ending Turkey as a recognized country, dividing up the German territory, reparation owed to France for its suffering, taking away the German Colonies... All needed measures to ensure peace.

Lodge and Wilson were now in a battle for the US public support, on how the defeated nations should be treated. The position of the Senate and Republican Party showed Wilson was losing. The President was well aware of the challenge as he wrote to the Judge, the Honorable George

W. Anderson on the 18 of November, *“My dear Judge: Thank you for your letter of November 14th sending me a copy of Lodge's speech. I share your view about the Senator and am looking forward with genuine anxiety to the part he is likely to play as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate.”*⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Woodrow Wilson to the Judge, the Honorable George W. Anderson, on the 18th of November, Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Paper, George W. Anderson to Woodrow Wilson · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

Despite the threat made by Lodge, Wilson did not take much notice. He assumed that the Senate would be forced to accept his peace once the Allies had done so. He saw it as his duty to make good the debt to the 100,000 US casualties, once again allowing the emotion of the moment to shadow his better judgement. He did not yet seem to fully understand how fragile his peace policies were. During the crossing he spoke with Robert Lansing who, despite supporting the President's ambition, had serious concerns with the 14 Points. He pointed out that the promise of self-determination was one that could never deliver. It was also hypocritical since the US was an empire itself. He tried to explain to Wilson why the Senate would never accept the 14 Points. To him there were three main problems, the first was that it would oblige the US to contribute troops whenever another nation was attacked, undermining US autonomy. It would also infringe the right of Congress to declare war. Finally, it opened the possibility of European intervention in the Western Hemisphere, which went against the Monroe doctrine. Nevertheless, Lansing said he was in favor of Wilson's desire to safeguard peace and offered his suggestion to adapt the 14 Points. And suggested that Wilson turn the idea around, proposing that in a time of need, members of the league could send troops to aid others voluntarily. Wilson never replied.

3: Winning the War but Losing the Peace

When Wilson arrived in Europe on 13 December 1918, he received a hero's welcome that echoed that of Perching in 1917. Yet not all shared the enthusiasm, the Allied Prime Ministers, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George, were not happy with Wilson's decision to come since, as a president he outranked them. Yet despite this advantage it soon became clear that Wilson was the one on enemy territory. He had chosen to go and represent his nation, believing that only he could make good the promise of peace, but the treaty was now more than his crusader promise, it was essential to proving to his nation (particularly Lodge and the Republicans) that peace on the world stage in his terms would bring prosperity to the US. Wilson understood the need to seduce the Allied leaders, "*Europe was vital to the security of the United States.*"⁵² However, it was in this venture that the President of the US was out of his depth.

When Wilson arrived in Paris, it became clear that he was an outsider. Most of the European leaders had known each other for years, if not decades, and the approaching five years of international war had brought them ever closer. Lloyd George, the flamboyant showman, showed as much confidence in Versailles as he had in the streets of London. Clemenceau, the 'Tiger of France,' was now a senior citizen, but still lived up to his name and was determined to see his nation avenged. Both men also were in a position of great power, Lloyd George had a coalition victory backing him, Clemenceau had been given a 'carte blanche' by the deputies of France. Both men had been given the go ahead to fight as remorselessly as their soldiers had done, knowing their nation was united behind them. Wilson in comparison had lost the support of the Senate, the House, the Republican party and even his own administration had voiced concern as to his treaty ideas. The biggest drawback, however, was not the lack of connection of national support when the president arrived in Europe, it was that Wilson was the very first US President to ever step on European soil and the continent did not recognize him. The European nation had been in direct communication and coexistence for centuries, each nation understood the other's position and needs. Since the end of the Napoleonic wars and the creation of the Concert of Europe, foreign policy had gained a new relevance and had only grown. Wilson was coming from a nation that had spent most of its

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 30 page 417.

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short life in isolationism, which had never until now taken part in any great European treaty or conference.

Had Wilson been accompanied by Roosevelt, the former President who had ventures outside the US and broken peace with foreign lands, he would have had some guidance as to how to act. Instead, Wilson kept to his usual presbyterian identity, and it became clear that his preacher role did not travel well. When asked if he wanted to see the battlefield, Wilson refused saying he had seen the pathway of the Sherman marched to the sea, and he did not want to see more blood-soaked soil. What Wilson failed to understand was the point to which the French battlegrounds of the Western front symbolized a shared sacrifice, where millions of men from five great nations had bled. This would have seemed obvious to a Belgium, British, or Commonwealth envoy, but not to Wilson. The French took this as indifference to their suffering, that Wilson did not recognize their sacrifice as personal and subsequently, was only heard as a businessman coming to sign documents. Worst was to follow.

Any man who knew Woodrow Wilson, knew how central religion was to him and how he saw himself as a servant on a great mission, but never above other men. He was a preacher, an individual who had dedicated his life to God and therefore knew his ways, not a saint with a unique relationship. Yet this did not seem so clear in Paris when Wilson went as far as to compare himself to the Messiah, stating that Jesus had articulated the ideas of peace but did not have time to put them into practice, "*That is the reason why I am proposing a practical scheme to carry out his aim.*" This remark would not have caused offence in the US where the concept of fulfilling a divine mission was woven into national identity, but many in Europe saw him as imposing his will and claiming to know better than the Lord himself. Clemenceau in particular was most unimpressed, saying that Wilson was a delusional man with a Messiah complex. He later also jokingly remarked that Wilson's 14 points were fourteen more commandments than God had given.

Faced with ever growing disapproval, Wilson saw himself ever more like a lone crusader, facing down his own personal enemy. He believed his ideals were different from the others, more pure and less selfish. His faith driven political view gave him a mindset that echoed that of the Manifest Imperialism era. The strong belief that he knew better what was good for other nations and that he owed it to humanity to intervene. Wilson continued to advocate for '*Peace without victory,*'⁵² but his position had changed from the war years. His task was no

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, page 292.

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longer to bring peace between two sides, it was to calm the fury of the victor who held all the power and little mercy.

What Wilson failed to take into consideration was that the war was not only between the US and the Central Powers, but Europe also wanted security and their war had been very different from Wilson's. Since the beginning of the war, France had sent 20% of its population into the army, over 8 million men. Of these, over 1 300 000 were dead and these did not include the civilian casualties. Great Britain had given 6 million to the war, of whom 8 000 000 were also dead. She had also lost 7.5 million tons of shipping to German U boat attacks and over 1500 civilians in air raids. The European nations had been reminded of just how fragile their national security was, France wanted firm measures to protect herself from the next war. Clemenceau remarked to Wilson that his country did not have the luxury of the Atlantic Ocean to act as a moat.

Wilson had also overestimated just how much influence he had over the Allies. Following the US mobilization, the French and British had begged for men to save the failing military campaigns. Wilson had refused to deliver the numbers demanded, insisting that the US needed its own National army. This decision had allowed the country to stand on its own merit and command authority, but, it had also meant that the US had not contributed as much as the Allies might have hoped. Pershing had done his best to keep his forces independent until the point where it was absolutely crucial. When Wilson did eventually cave in and tell Pershing to assemble, the Commanding chief had gone to General Foch and gave a speech as if they had been kept out of the fight purposefully by the French. The Allied leader showed respect and thanks to Wilson and confirmed that the US had played a major part in the final victory. However, when Wilson spoke of the moral obligation and the US' right, they did not hold back from pointing out that the US had not been through the same experience and that it could have intervened earlier if its prioritization had been as selfless as claimed.

All the factors combined resulted in a negotiation that was not as straightforward as Wilson had hoped. He had risen to power with emotional hopes and vague promises based largely on faith, but that was not enough for the Allies. They wanted hard legal measures that Wilson was in no position to promise. Simply giving up the territory already invaded was not enough, France wanted to take back the territories lost in the Franco Prussian war and have a part of the Rhineland occupied. Britain wanted to take over the German colonies and both nations wanted to take possession of the German fleet, aircraft, and artillery. The financial

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demands by France were for 200 billion, to pay not only for reparations but also for the soldiers, widows and to compensate the private citizens who had been under German occupation. Britain, who's civilian population had not nearly suffered the same distress, wanted 120 billion, mostly for its soldiers. Both figures dwarfed that of Wilson who had suggested 30 billion on the basis that Germany could pay no more. Wilson remarked that "*Hunger does not breed reform; it breeds madness and all the ugly distempers that make an ordered life possible.*"⁵² The remark and the use of the word 'reform', reminded that the peace Wilson longed for was in no short part necessary for the survival of progressive reform, not only German survival. Yet, that did not change the reality that over 700,000 German civilians had starved, and the Allied blockade was still in place.

His pleas did little as Clemenceau was set on bleeding Germany dry. Lloyd George wanted the country to slowly recover to be able to one day be a trading partner again, but still wanted Germany weakened. Wilson's defense had Germany not have much leverage as it was clear that the defeated nation would not have any choice. As well as starvation and revolution the German nation was also under threat of invasion from the East by the new Bolshevik regime. This treaty also meant the Allies wanted to settle peace as soon as possible before the threat of the 'Red Scare' reached them. It is ironic that Wilson's nation's participation had, as he had to some degree predicted, brought about his defeat. America's participation, whilst not the final dramatic blow in defeating the Central Powers, had brought the war to an end before most would have predicted. Her declaration in 1917 had convinced Germany to risk everything on the Michael Offensive in the spring of 1918, when the bulk of the army had been thrown against the Allies in a final attempt. This great offensive, whilst breaking the deadlock of the Western Front, had drained the German army of the last of its strength and led to the 100 days advance by the allies and the German defeat. Had the US not participated, it is most likely German would have continued with its defending strategy and lingered on until 1919, at which point the 'war without victory' would have seemed more agreeable to the weary allies.

Even when Germany was not the chief topic, Wilson's 14 Points proved problematic to the Allies. Britain had agreed to keep discussions open on the matter of freedom at sea, leading Wilson to believe that they might be convinced. In reality keeping discussions open simply meant that they had not agreed to anything and were not likely to. France was outraged at the proposals of altering the map of Europe and accused Wilson of being pro German when

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 29 page 399.

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debate was raised on the lost French territories. There were also policies in the 14 points that did not make sense when taking other treaties into account. Wilson had insisted that the League of Nations would respect the 1823 Monroe Doctrine, which kept European interference out of the Western Hemisphere. The Allied leaders argued that this went against the entire objective, since it meant that the US would not be obliged to aid Europe and Europe would have no right to go West. Clemenceau said that Wilson's policy was one sided, giving the US special status over the other nation.

The one article that he defended most passionately and did make progress with was the Concept of the League of Nations, but it soon became clear that Clemenceau and Lloyd George could use that as a bargaining chip to make Wilson accept other deals. Europe had a strong desire to create its own league and proposals, mostly molded on the Haig Convention and other already existing pre-war structures. There was a need to find a fast and simple system so the nations could return to a normal way of life, something Wilson as an American found hard to comprehend. He expressed his concerns that such policies would do little good in preserving peace and was wounded by distrust more than cooperation.

With perseverance, Wilson managed to convince some that his League of Nations must be included in the treaty and that Germany should be included. Clemenceau, the Prime minister of France would not hear of it. Other nations such as Britain, at first seemed on side but then revealed the ambition to use Wilson's principles against him. Britain did indeed desire less war reparations on Germany, but this was so she could still be a trading partner to help British dominance. Italy also was in favor of less reparations, but also wanted to be granted land From Austria Hungary. The 14 Points attributed the right to self-government, to which L. George asked Wilson what was to happen to the Panama Canal and Hawaii. Wilson's policies were being used against him to the point they were becoming a disadvantage.

When Wilson returned to the US in February his first expedition had been a mixed result, he had given up the article on freedom at sea and the prospect of self-determination for the Colonies was waning. he had also agreed to Clemenceau's demand that if Germany ever returned then British and US troops would come to support France, something he knew his Senate would never accept. Yet for all these setbacks, he had established the groundwork of his League of Nations, which was the central pillar of his peace policies. On the public front he still had the public support, but the situation with the Senate had deteriorated ever more. The concession he had made caused outrage, with Lodge recruiting Republican signatures and

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threatening to send a different peace treaty to Germany. By March 2nd, 1919, the public was fully aware that some Senators were opposed to Wilson's peace treaty and that he lacked a two third majority. The nation still believed in the 14 Points and League of Nations but were beginning to doubt if Wilson could see them come to light. By March, the war was no longer over (as far as the Armistice goes), and the notion that The US had done enough was beginning to circulate. Wilson continued to defend his cause, claiming that Europe was vital to the security of the United States and that his policies were the only safeguard, but his speeches were no longer having the same effect as in January of 1919.

At Minneapolis, before leaving for Europe once again in March, he gave a speech, with the Marine Band playing 'over there' behind him. In addition to the band was Howard Taft, the respected Republican former President and leader of the League to Enforce Peace. Taft stood beside Wilson he as promised the crowd "*I will not come back till it's over, over there.*" The crowd cheered but Taft later noted that Wilson, "*He never answers any argument at all. He usually defies his opponent in many different ways, and makes a few taking apothegms and epigrams, states a few high ideals and lets it go at that.*"⁵² He supported Wilson but made no allusions that his peace policies and covenant needed change. By this point, the confidence of the US Government in its own President was fading. It was recognized that Wilson had put little preparation into how his policies were to be emplaced or enforced, when they all hinged on faith.

Once back in France, Wilson's primary focus was keeping the League of Nations proposal alive, and in order to do so he watched his 'peace without victors' slowly erode. He blamed the Allied leaders for being too selfish. Selfish or not, Wilson gave way on nearly everything, war reparations, colonies, even his opposition to the demand by Clemenceau that the Kaiser be put on trial was overruled. Wilson's demands were now a bargaining chip that the other victors used against him. During the main treaty debates, the big three, US, France, and Great Britain, were often debating more in the fashion of a bidding war than a conference. Lloyd George made use of the situation, often siding with Wilson against Clemenceau when he needed something for British interests alone. Wilson went as far as threatening that the US would sign a separate armistice. Britain and France accepted, but by this point the treaty had little resemblance to that of January 1918. There was also the assurance that if Germany did not accept the terms dictated, then the plans of 1919 would be followed, and the war would go

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018, chapter 29 page 399.

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on. Wilson, reluctantly, agreed to the alterations.

On May 7, the German Foreign Minister, Count Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau and his envoys entered Versailles, they sat on at a small table at the bottom of the room surrounded by their victors like a criminal in a trial. The judges, Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George, sat opposite, waiting to pass the sentence. The treaty was handed to the German minister, it was named the Second Treaty of Versailles, a reference to the treaty that Bismarck had offered to France at the end of the Franco Prussian war. In that historic and now ironic meeting of 1871, the French representatives had pleaded that the treaty demands were so great they would lead to a socialist revolution. Bismarck had calmly responded by advising them to provoke an uprising immediately, while they still had a functioning army to crush it. Now it was time for revenge. The Germans were given no rights to negotiate. The Count was so disturbed he found difficulty speaking and was afraid he would collapse. He acknowledged the German defeat, but also expressed that the German people believed their war had been defensive and not deserving of guilt. He also mentioned that the Allied blockade had remained after the Armistice and that German civilians were still starving. Finally, he mentioned that the peace was not in accordance with that which Wilson had promised and agreed upon. Wilson would privately refer to the speech as 'stupid.'

Germany would lose 1/8 of its territory and 1/10th of its population. The great German army would be demobilized and disarmed. They had to replace the losses of shipping suffered in the sea war and her colonies would go to the Allies. The Kaiser would go on trial. Five billion would be paid in the next 2 years, plus more when the exact figure had been calculated. A fifteen-year military occupation of Rhineland would be enforced to overlook the reparations. The war would officially be labelled as Germany's fault in history. The German delegates protested but were not in a situation to protest. The Treaty was seen as the death of Germany in the homeland and was followed by a week of national mourning. In the US, the reaction was one of amazement and shock, Wilson had promised a peace without victors, this peace was, as *The Nation* put it, "madness." Wilson was reproached for having promised mercy but delivering vengeance, that his foreign policies made the very name democracy a reproach. In the US peace commission in Paris, eight of Wilson's aides resigned out of shame. However, most of the US' population accepted Germany's fate, encouraged by the CIP's propaganda. In both cases, Wilson had failed.

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The German response cited Wilson's past promise several times, claiming the Allies had no right to take land or population and went against the principles of self-determination. That taking away colonies was against Article Five of the 14 Points. Nevertheless, Alsace Lorraine would be ceded, and the colonies lost, the only point Germany could revoke was the number of ships she had to give up and that was only because the Allies had asked for more than existed. The promises made to Germany by Wilson had no legal worth at all since he had not consulted the Allies, a decision he had consciously made to keep his hope alive. Now hope was dead, reality asserted itself and the Germans faced unconditional surrender. This false promise cast a dark shadow on Wilson's policies that would linger for years. On June 28th, an article in *The Times* read, "*Germans blame US President Wilson, because they say he has not kept his promise to bring about peace on the basis of his 14 points... Reluctantly, the Germans have recognized they do not have a choice...*"¹¹

When the Germans tried stalling, Marshall Foch went on a public tour of the Rhine where 600,000 troops were on standby. The victors made it clear that the Armistice was now over and that they would take whatever steps were needed to ensure their demands were met. Foch was instructed to advance towards Berlin at 7 pm on 23 June, if Germany had still not signed the Treaty. Finally, after yet another demand for an extension that the Allies denied, the German Minister of Colonial Affairs, Johanne Bell, arrived in Versailles on the 27 June. The next day, the on the 5th anniversary of the assassination of the Archduke of Hohenberg, Franz Ferdinand, the Great War ended with the German signature. On his way away from Paris after the celebration, Wilson said to his wife that the peace of the world was "*All on the lap of the Gods.*"

Returning once again to the US, Wilson's crusade abroad had failed. Now all that was left was the domestic crusade. He had sacrificed his Peace without Victors to accomplish the League of Nations, but that did not guarantee that the US would be a part of it. During his second time in France the Republicans had made an effort to turn the nation against him. The leaders of the Senate felt no obligation to the Wilson League, despite Wilson's pleading. During a conference in the Senate where he defended his policies, he asked if the US could refuse the moral leadership given by the world. His words were once again those of a preacher, not a politician, "*The stage is set, the destiny is disclosed. It has come about by no plan of our conceiving, but by the hand of God who led us into this war. We cannot turn back.*"

¹¹ *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, copyright: Dorling Kindersley 1988, page 260.

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We can only go forward, with lifted eyes and freshened spirit, to follow the vision. It was this that we dreamed at our birth. America shall in truth show the way. The light streams upon the path ahead, and nowhere else." ¹⁸ His peace was called a 'soap bubble' by the Republicans who did not appear convinced. Many eyewitnesses also remarked on Wilson's pale skin and bent posture, the sight was almost a repeat of the trial the German minister had faced in Versailles, with Wilson losing track of his words and speaking so faint that many could not hear him.

¹⁸¹⁸¹⁸ Dallek Robert, *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, chapter 3, page 90. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

4: The Nation's Rejection of Wilson's Bygone Crusade

But by late 1919, the Nation was growing tired of Wilson's vague policies. He was fighting to change the ideological nature of his country, but as 1918 arrived, he was faced ever more with the prospect that maybe what he wanted for the it wasn't in its best interest. The war had stimulated the US to a point where it would accept great change, but as Randolph Bourne observed, the change was never guaranteed. War created a stimulation of the State and forced the Nation to act, "*Out of a spiritual compulsion which pushes it on, perhaps against all its interests, all its real desires, and all its real sense of values.*"⁸⁰ Wilson had used the State to build up the image of his righteous peace in the name of the people, but "*It is states that make wars and not nations, and the very thought and almost necessity of war is bound up with the ideal of the State.*" Bourne explains his opinion that few new wars are actually as a result of the will of that of the people, some rare exceptions being the French Revolution or the October Rebellion in Russia. These were wars where the identity of the nation and not the government had been stimulated by the dream of a better system and changing of the state, "*The wars of the Revolutionary armies of France were clearly in defense of an imperiled freedom, and, moreover, they were clearly directed not against other peoples, but against the autocratic.*" Was Wilson's holy crusade for peace really that of the nation, did it reflect the nation's need and identity? Or was this war an empty promise that had been made to connect with the US identity, but not actually reflect it? Bourne had asked the very question, stating that so often war is a "*Function of states and not of nations,*" where men are tricked into a false sense of patriotism like "*A sort of blind animal push toward military unity.*"

When Wilson returned home, it still felt like the Nation's war on the surface, the majority of the population still supported the League of Nations, drawn to the idea of eternal peace. Lodge however, had made it his mission to see it crushed. Wilson declared he would consent to nothing, and so began yet another fight where Wilson slowly saw his policies eroded and picked apart. The President clung, as ever, to his faith in being in the right, that God would see him win. Lodge made the argument that Wilson's responsibility to the world was only a glamorous way of saying that the US would be tied to every other dispute and quarrel on the world stage. Despite Wilson insisting that intervention was optional and needed Congress support, the image stuck. The fear of foreign authority brought back the primal fears at the heart of the US identity and a violation of everything fought for in the War of Independence. The concern shown by House in 1918 had proven correct.

⁸⁰ Randolph Bourne, *The State*, 1918. The State (1918). By Randolph Bourne // Fair Use Repository (fair-use.org)

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Both Wilson and Lodge were fighting in the name of nationalism. Lodge argued that nationalism demanded focusing on one's own country and not foreign affairs. Wilson responded that if foreign affairs were not taken care of, then how could any nation have a great place amongst other nations and hold respect? When the treaty was sent to the senate on August 19, military obligations were the chief topic with Wilson continuously explaining that they were moral and not legal. This argument proved to be a bad move on his part as the Senator Warren G. Harding asked, if the obligation was only moral, then what was the point of the treaty at all? To this Wilson had no reply other than "National good conscience."⁵² The question of aid promised to France if Germany attacked again was then brought up.

The senators pressured Wilson to answer if this was also a question of "national good conscience"? Wilson lied and said the agreement with Clemenceau had been on moral obligation, but his alteration of the truth did little to save him. The occasion was for Wilson a defeat, but it could be debated if that was his intention. Long before the Senate debate, it was clear that the treaty policies he had returned with from Europe would never be accepted. This state has led historians to hypothesize that Wilson saw the Senate as an opportunity not to take the full blame for failure.

*"Unconsciously aware that his claims for the League were unrealizable, that a new world social order and advance toward domestic harmony were out of reach, he preferred rejection of the treaty by senators whom he could then label killers of the progressive dream. Refusing to accept reservations that would have made little difference in the long-term functioning of the League and would have assured Senate passage, Wilson contributed mightily to the final result... It was easier to blame the war and uncompromising foes of reform than to acknowledge that a small-town homogeneous America, where equal opportunity, democracy, and individualism flourished, was part of a bygone era which the country could no longer reclaim."*¹⁸

This theory would explain why he was unwilling to compromise, since even an adapted version of his treaty would not do, *"Wilson did not want to reach a compromise agreement with the Senate. He wanted to defeat the Senate and especially Lodge. If he could not overcome his enemies, it would be less painful to him to sacrifice the treaty than to make concessions."*⁸⁸

This theory is put in question by the fact that after the Senate disaster in July, Wilson would

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, chapter 3 page 91. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁸⁸ Thomas A. Bailey, *Woodrow Wilson, and the Great Betrayal*

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spend several months travelling the nation doing everything to win the public over, with faith in the knowledge that his oratorical powers preached to the nation would succeed. However, this could well have been to show that he was still fighting for his treaty and that if it failed it was entirely the fault of Lodge and the Republican majority.

Whether as an act of defiance, last hope, or diversion, the tour went ahead and echoed Wilson's 1916 campaign when he had stood under the promise of neutrality, when he had been offering a nation in crisis the promise of security and tranquility. Now he was demanding that a nation fresh out of war commit to more foreign affairs, whilst fighting off the Republican criticism. The pressure was too much, and his mental health was deteriorating fast. His temper was prone to outbursts and many in his entourage described him as mentally incompetent at times. He often had memory problems and many of his speeches as a politician lacked clarity. Yet Wilson in this moment was not a politician, but a preacher and in that role, it was observed that he carried the same authority as before. Often, there were times he had not even prepared a speech but gave fresh ideas to the audience using improvisation. He made his argument on morality and holy duty, proclaiming that if the US did not hold true to its promise, then its brave soldiers had died for nothing. He admitted that the economic and military obligations were not set in stone, but that it would be up to the nation to see the people's best interest achieved. He expressed with passion that this work had started in 1776 and that now the nation had the power to see that dream of every US citizen in history be fulfilled at last. This was perhaps Wilson's religious ideology at its most transparent, there was no hiding the inheritance of his father's clergyman ways, "*Let us-every one of us-blind ourselves in a solemn league and covenant of our own that we will redeem this expectation of the world so that men shall always say American soldiers saved Europe and American citizens saved the world.*"⁵² The public was moved, but not to the point that they took up pen and paper to write to their own Senator on his behalf.

It was clear now that Wilson's war was, as Bourne had put it, "*A function of States and not of nations.*"⁸⁰ The idea of sending troops to aid Japan against China, or helping Italy take territory from Austria, could not be comprehended. If this war was to be one that truly reflected the nation, then the entire national identity and perception of the State would have to be torn down, "*And we cannot expect, or take measures to ensure, that this war is a war to end war, unless at the same time we take measures to end the State in its traditional form.*" This was more than the US was capable of. It had given up national values, it had embraced total war and believed in Wilson's crusade. Being at war had meant a "*Calling away of energy*

⁵² Patricia O'Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018

⁸⁰ Randolph Bourne, *The State*, 1918. The State (1918). By Randolph Bourne // Fair Use Repository (fair-use.org)

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into military pursuits means a crippling of the productive and life-enhancing processes of national life.” All had been done without question, but the United States as a nation could not embrace the new identity Wilson was offering. The war had been fought to safeguard US national interest, which had now been accomplished and most were happy to leave it at that.

Wilson’s treaty was discredited by the Senate and rejected, putting an end to the possibility of the US joining the League of Nations under Wilson’s administration. His tour had done more to harm his chances as he had alienated so many of the voters he would need the next year. After three weeks on the road and with his health becoming alarmingly fragile, Wilson continued against all advice. It was now a question of which would give up first, his health, conviction, or mind. On 2 October, the answer came when Wilson suffered a massive stroke caused by a blood clot, leading to his left arm and leg being paralyzed. He would not be able to attend the Paris Peace Conference. Bourne himself had determined that Wilson’s war, despite being untimely for domestic reform, was too much to do with foreign policy that the us public simply did not care enough about, *“The present demand for "democratic control" of foreign policy indicates how completely, even in the most democratic of modern nations, foreign policy has been the secret private possession of the executive branch of the Government.”* He went as far as to imply that Wilson had deliberately manipulated the nation, *“The war was seen to have been made possible by a web of secret agreements between States, alliances that were made by Governments without the shadow of popular support or even popular knowledge... Did this mean a genuine transference of power in this most crucial of State functions from Government to people? Not at all.”*

Wilson's war to bring democracy had been visionary in terms of domestic progressive reform and the fight to make those reforms universal had been the greatest State stimulation in US history. But as far as being a people’s conflict that had the power to change the nation’s fundamental identity, it was rejected. Despite his sermons and prayers, there was no hiding that by 1920, the two decades of idealistic progressive mood and reform had come to an end. The morality that for so long had been linked to the progressive era, the image of the selfless American, had died with the failure of Wilson’s foreign policy. Despite the progressive reforms made possible, *“Idealists were alienated by the government’s suppression of civil liberties. The isolationists were outraged by Wilson’s involvement with America in Europe’s squabbles. The labor unions did not take kindly to the coercion of coal miners, failures to regulate railroads, and the government’s ambivalent attitude toward the strikes in 1919 and 1920. And a new generation of intellectuals and opinion makers, such as Walter Lippmann and H. L. Mencken, led a defection en masse from the ideals cherished by the progressive*

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reformers.”⁸⁹

The promise made in 1917, that the war would bring progressive reforms to the world stage, had not materialized as the Allies would double down on their demands to Germany. Untimely, Patricia O’Toole writes that it was “*Wilson who broke the heart of the world.*”⁵²

The President's progressivism was tainted, as was the Democratic party since he refused to sideline himself leading up to the 1920 election. William Gibbs McAdoo, the man who had overseen the Liberty Bonds and become a national image, was considered as a Democratic candidate but had to refuse, since he did not want to run against his father-in-law. Wilson wanted the Democratic campaign to be for the League, and by doing so, signed its defeat. People turned towards Warren G Harding’s new “*Promise, not heroism, but healing, not nostrums but normal icy.*”¹⁸ On November 2, (Harding’s birthday), the nation gave him a landslide of 60% of the vote, 16 million.

With the new Republican government, the path was clear to finally bring Wilson's crusade to an end. Harding advocated a return to normality and turned the nation’s back forever on the League of Nations, “*Call it the selfishness of nationality if you will. I think it is an inspiration to patriotic devotion. To safeguard America first, to stabilize America first, to prosper America first, to think America first.*” To the US population who had endured a string of lofty promises, this was a clear and direct policy that could be trusted on its own merit. The Senate rejection of the treaty meant that the US was still at war with Germany in 1919 and peace would not become official until May 27, 1920. Wilson vetoed it immediately, understanding that the time had come to let another try at guiding the nation towards eternal peace. The US had met the demands made by Lodge in November of 1918, “*We have gone outside the limits of our ordinary constitutional government. We must return if we are to prosper in the future as in the past--we must return, in my judgment, to the wise limits of the constitution made by Washington and his associates. Every part of the government should exercise the proper function attributed to it by the constitution.*”⁸⁶ This understanding did have another dimension, the hope that whatever path the nation had chosen would finish Wilson’s work.

⁸⁹ Juliette L. George and Alexander L. George, *Wilson, and House*

⁵² Patricia O’Toole, *The Moralists*, Simon, and Schuster, 2018

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, page 33. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

⁸⁶ Henry Cabot Lodge, *Lodge Warns against Pacifist Sentimentality in Making Peace Terms*, written for the Boston Evening Transcript, November 1918, Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Paper, Lodge Warns against Pacifist Sentimentality in Making Peace Terms · Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia (presidentwilson.org)

5: The Continuing Work and Legacy of the Peacekeeper.

Harding had won the election, but Wilson had not entirely lost. His vision had been to create a League of Nations to safeguard the future of American progressive evolution, both at home and on the world stage. Whilst the US had not joined the League, it had created and integrated many of his proposals, amended for Allied needs and wants but, still in the same vein. At the inauguration, the members honored Wilson for his contribution, who wished them the best in return. He understood that even if the US were not a member, the success of the League would be hugely beneficial in safeguarding world peace all the same (at least for 20 years). But even on the domestic front, his 14 Points and League of Nations had not entirely failed. Just as Wilson had struggled to undo new demands of Roosevelt's empirical Peacekeeper ambition, Harding found it hard to return the US to its post war isolationist stance after Wilson's crusade. The Great War forced the US onto the world stage and turned it into a 'superpower.' Its economy, military and industry were now tied to foreign affairs. In terms of moral duty, despite the nation's desire to move past Wilson's Peacekeeper ideals, there were situations where morality and national interest once again were hand in hand. Just like during the War of Sympathy, morality, economics, and nationalism could converge on foreign policy.

The most immediate need of the US post war was national security. The War had proven that no matter how much isolationism was prioritized, total neutrality could not be maintained. It was here that one of Wilson's policies, Article IV: "*Adequate guarantees given and taken those national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.*"⁸² Wilson's proposal had been viewed as unrealistic since it demanded that the US reduce its forces. Yet, in 1921, the Washington Naval Conference became a fact. Under the conference, Harding invited Great Britain, France, Belgium, China, Italy, and Japan to work toward disarming a portion of their fleets and setting limits on future construction. The lesson had been learnt from the arms race between Britain and Germany, now the US was looking towards Japan. As part of the Treaty of Versailles, the Japanese Tsingtao had been granted much of the former German Pacific Territories, including the stronghold of on the coast of China. With tensions rising between China and Japan, and the Treaty of 1911 that allied the British Empire with that of Japan, the US feared a war in the Pacific that would put her interest at great risk. This policy seemed a violation of Harding's promise of 'America First' since the nation was willingly limiting itself and destroying US ships such as the USS

⁸² Woodrow Wilson, *The 14 Points*, 1917. President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points (1918) | National Archives

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South Carolina. Yet this was a small price to pay to keep another war at bay.

Another key concern of the post war US was economic. Its role as arms manufacturer for the Allies had been of great economic profit, but the Allies themselves were now broke and had no way of paying. Britain and France were in turn, waiting on the reparations from Germany, who in turn was also broke. The solution proposed by the financier, Charles G. Dawes was to send financial aid to Germany in order to reinvigorate the world economy. Based on its research done in Paris in 1924, the Dawes Committee, the first payment was made for 1 billion Marks, with a rise of 2.5 billion by 1928. This payment was enough for Germany to pay back at least part of its debt to the Allies, whilst keeping some it to relaunch its economy. The plan was such a success that Dawes was awarded the 1925 Nobel peace prize. Once again, the motive was primarily national but the effect on the US' international reputation was phenomenal. This move was again in keeping with Wilson's original desire to not bleed Germany financially.



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Perhaps one of the most controversial acts taken was The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, which renounced war as an *“Instrument of national policy.”* Prompted by the French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand, France had been disappointed at America's refusal to join the League of Nations. Out of fear of Germany, who's economy had regained much of its economic strength by 1927, the pact aimed to outlaw war itself. Despite the idealist nature, the pact would

⁹⁰ *La signature l'acte mettant la guerre « Hors la loi » ; Le Petit Journal*

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be adopted by nearly every major nation. The US, be it indirectly, had become part of the global body of peace that Roosevelt had so longed for and Wilson so long fought for. In the 1930s, this trend of reaffirmation of non-interventionism continued with the good neighbor policy with Latin America, ending the imperial age of the US over Panama.

Whether it was national, economical, or moral, there was no denying that Harding's return to isolationism was not so truthful. The identity of the US on the world stage had forever changed and it was still seen as 'The Peacekeeper,' for might and economic wealth. The other great nations understood that they needed its support in one way or another. Wilson's policies had, despite every effort, become a necessary part of foreign policy if the US were to continue to thrive, but what of domestic life?

By the time Dawes received his Nobel Peace Prize in 1925 for aiding the debt crippled Germany, many US citizens might have struggled to remember where that debt was from. The war had arguably been one of the most important, if not the most important event in the US history of the 20th Century, in terms of national transformation and yet there was very little energy to remember the event at all. The novelist Rupert Brooke would go as far as to say, "*It is a thought the war had never been. Three years after the bloodiest conflict known to mankind... one may go to almost any theatre... one may see almost any magazine or book on the stalls, and except for the occasional remote allusion to happenings in the years of interregnum it is impossible to guess that anything momentous had happened to the world, to life itself since 1914.*"¹⁸

It was a fact that the US was fast desiring to forget the War, it had been tarnished by the failure of Wilson's treaty and the desire to move away from progressivism and internationalism, although it had still been a tremendous victory for the US. The government itself had declared the war a glorious endeavor and efforts had been made early on to cement this notion. The effort most notably took the form of war memorials, a direct link that sought to make tribute to lost soldiers. On November 14th, 1921, the decision was made to build a national victory memorial on Constitution Avenue in Washington. The monument would be a 7,000-seat auditorium, divided into several decorated rooms and exhibiting the names of the dead. The desire was to create a commemorative square to preserve the national memory, but also a place where normal civilians could participate in events. This was then not only an attempt to preserve the memory, but to do so in a way that it would remain a part of US present life.

At first the project seemed to be going smoothly. By 1924 the steps and the floor were

¹⁸ Dallek Robert, Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive Style of Foreign Policy, in *The American style of foreign policy : cultural politics and foreign affair*, New York : Knopf : Distributed by Random House, chapter 2 page 95. s : Dallek Robert : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

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finished and 1 million had been spent, however the government had failed to find the 9 million Dollars needed to complete the project. The population showed little support or enthusiasm and even less of a desire to contribute money to the project. In 1937, the unfinished monument was converted into the National Art Gallery. To this day there has been no attempt to create an official Great War memorial, despite one being made for every war since. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier became the de-facto war memorial for the conflict.

Why was this project such a defeat? Why was the most devastating war in US history being treated as an event of little importance? The answer comes back again to the national conscience of separating nation, state, and government, specifically the memory of each and how they complement each other.

According to the French thinker, and historian, Maurice Halbwachs, there are three main categories of collective memory. The first, familial memory, the stories and experiences often transmitted orally from generation to generation. Then secondly, there is the national memory, this was the one generated by the government and accepted as the point of view. It is important to keep in mind that while this memory was official that did not mean it was universally accepted. And finally, there was the religious memory, which revolves around the nation's spiritual beliefs and culture. This section complies with Randolph Bourne's view of the State as a mental perception that acts as the link between nation and government. Together, the three different types created the collective memory of a country. Each one often had a completely different perception and meant that there was no unity when it came to global memory.

In the case of The Great War, the desired national memory was to make the war a patriotic victory that held up the values of the nation. There was a proposal to accumulate unfinished Great War monuments with a monument attributed to George Washington, to link the memory of 1776 with that of 1918. This had been very much a perspective influenced by Wilson who had on many occasions stated that the war against the Central Powers was for the same freedom as against the British Empire. Yet despite the clear government support, this national memory of the war had not been accepted by familial memory. The general population did not share the view that the fallen soldiers in France had fought for a cause as noble and personal as George Washington. The idea of connecting the two was opposed and later discarded.

National memory is influenced, according to Halbwachs's theory, but national memory is determined more by outside needs. The government wanted to use the new power the war had

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given and that meant preserving the memory of the war as a fundamental steppingstone that had forged new opportunities. Familial memory on the other hand was less influenced by outside events and desires, it was molded by the experience unique to each generation and the way in which that experience was transmitted. For this reason, national memory and familial memory are often perceived as two sides of a scale working against each other, one official documentation and the other first-hand experience.

For the civilian population who determined familial memory, the war had not been a glorious retelling of George Washington's victory. It had indeed contributed to social reform and better domestic living conditions, but many did not make the automatic link. Despite the patriotic service many citizens did not get to see the great progressive reforms affect their lives, at least not in a way that made them feel that the four years of social division and fear had been worthwhile. Wages had gone up, but so had taxes. Unions had achieved greater rights but now with the War over, the demands of industry had decreased. In comparison, the Second World War would help the US escape the Great Depression, a clear and concrete result that every civilian could be thankful for. In the Great War however, the choice made by the Government to accept no war reparation had been a noble cause but meant that victory brought no real reward as far as economics were concerned. The Dawes plan would eventually bring home the war profits, but this was seen less as the yield of the war and more as compensating for the war's mistakes. The Second War also involved the US for a longer period of time and had a more direct effect on the home population since there were more casualties and civilians killed at Pearl Harbor.

6: The Unconscious Memory of the Peacekeeper

In the Great War, the civilian's war experience had been mainly through the media through propaganda posters, radio, film, and newspaper articles. News of the Rape of Belgium had created national anger and during the war that anger had led to patriotism. But the fact that barely any US citizen ever saw any real consequence of the Great War made it less personal and easier to forget. What first-hand experience had been felt had been internal turmoil, mostly to do with the hunt for pro-German traitors encouraged by the APL and CIP. This had been a period that many did not feel pride in and wanted to forget.

The result was that the familial memory of the war was still very much alive but had little importance as far as the collective consciousness was concerned. The war as a topic was not needed for the man on the street. The government slowly realized that its rhetoric did not match what the nation needed and adapted its position accordingly. Harding had promised a return to pre-war values because that is what was going to win votes and keep the country moving forward, as opposed to stagnating around a lost cause. Just as during the War, the State was used to guide the nation towards unity, "*The modern State is not the rational and intelligent product of modern men desiring to live harmoniously together with security of life, property, and opinion.*"⁸⁰ The collective memory's choice was to forget the War and focus on the new decade of economic growth, the fact that the War had led to that growth was not seen as that important.

National memory and familial memory are often seen as the only two components since they are the ones that directly decide where a nation places its attention, but in reality, they are both surpassed by religious memory. National rhetoric can be rewritten in a day if the new politician agenda demands it, familial memory can change from generation to generation since it depends on community communication which favors the opinion of the majority. Religious memory however is unconscious memory, the subtle nuances and values that remain in a community even if the origin of the values is gone. Religious memory is almost impossible to eradicate since it relies less on a direct reference and more on a subconscious link. The war had been forgotten but the fear, hope, and patriotic surge had very much lived on. Every time a family read a newspaper, they would feel the fear from once hoping the name of their loved one was not on the list of the dead or missing. This unconscious memory

⁸⁰ Randolph Bourne, *The State*, 1918. *The State* (1918). By Randolph Bourne // Fair Use Repository (fair-use.org)

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would become the primary tool for a group who did not want the Great War to become a half-finished art gallery.

For the millions of US veterans who had made it to France, and in particular the men who had seen combat, the choice made by their homeland to forget the war was a betrayal. They had fought in a war they were told was to safeguard the future of their nation's integrity yet were welcomed home by a population that often treated them as unwanted reminders of a crime. Ex- servicemen often found it hard to find work if they had suffered mental or physical harm in the war. They were aware of not being wanted, and worst, not being listened to. Despite attempts, it was impossible for the veterans to communicate their memory of the war. This was partly because nothing like this conflict had ever been experienced before, the image of trench networks soaked in blood, rat filled dugouts, day long artillery barrages and gas attacks, did not form a coherent picture to a nation who had been brought up on the romantic stories of Gettysburg or Roosevelt's cavalry charges in Spain.

The lack of comprehension was overshadowed by the fact that many veterans never got the opportunity to share their tails at all. As early as 1919, authors were encouraged not to end their articles on the topic of war as it would not win favor with audiences. Diaries or books focused on war experiences were often turned away as the publishers saw little economic potential.

For the countless men who had lived through horrors whose memory would never fade, there was a choice: Go away to find an audience who would listen, or join the crowd and pretend to forget, most were content with the latter. For those who chose to leave, the pain of betrayal was often worse, the historian M. Paul Holsinger wrote in her work, 'War and American Popular Culture,' "*After the war, a significant number of veterans found their answer was expatriation. Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner and dozens of similar young writers, poets and others fled the United States for the cities and towns of Great Britain, France, or Spain. Everyone wondered whether the War had been worth its death and destruction...but now, as the "Roaring Twenties" were about to begin, it was clear to nearly everyone that they had returned with neither a real place nor the guarantee of having made the lasting difference at all.*"⁴⁶ Writers like Hemingway would find success with their work abroad where the British and French were more receptive. His work would eventually find an audience in the US but not to the same degree. The nation was not ready to face up to the War, however, there were some veterans and artists who found ways around the problem of collective memory.

Books that depicted the war were not welcomed, but the advantage of art is that it does not

⁴⁶M. Paul Holsinger, *War and American Popular Culture*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999

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rely on logical connections but emotional connections. The importance of the writers was not to change the view of the war but reawaken the values to which it had led. The artist's eye was a way of taking the conflict and reducing it down to a human level, easier to relate to than a 100-page diary. Artists such as Horace Pipet, used art to fight for the rights black soldiers had been, but denied. Having fought with the Harlem Hell fighters, only to come home and face renewed discrimination, he made a point of showing the suffering his regiment had lived through.

The most famous piece of US war art and the one that perhaps best exploited the emotional link between familial and religious memory was John Singer Sargent's artwork in 1919. His 24-foot-long oil on canvas epic titled 'Gassed', depicts a line of gassed British soldiers being led away from a battle towards the first aid post. The scene is horrific, the marching soldiers have their eyes bandaged and walk blindly, all around them are more gassed men who lie on the ground, since there is no room left in the infirmary.



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The scene is deliberately apocalyptic, but what makes it even more shocking is that nothing about the scenario is shown as abnormal or wrong. The men are blinded, but not in panic or distress. They do not walk like wounded victims, but more like a group of miners exhausted by the day's work, simply going home to rest. Similarly, the men already on the grounds do not seem in agony, they lie in sleeping positions, very calm. One man drinks from a bottle with no sense of urgency. This theme is also seen in the background where we see the tents where the soldiers sleep, calm and intact. There is a group of men playing a game of football, ordinary life continuing regardless of the scene in the foreground. The suffering of the gassed men is completely inconsequential in the grand scheme, their agony matters not, just as long as the war is won. This feeling of worthlessness, that everything endured was just business as usual is most likely what Sargent felt when he returned home and wanted to communicate. His work makes the audience feel guilty as we are also simply going about our day-to-day life and will not be impacted by the men who are now blinded by war.

Art and literature were relying on the religious memory of the war, and so turned to allegorical depiction. The depiction of the war was turned away from the mud and blood of the trenches and fed to the public in metaphors depicting a reality that audiences could accept and

⁹¹ John Singer Sargent 'Gassed,' oil on canvas artwork, 1919. File: Sargent, John Singer (RA) - Gassed - Google Art

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connect with. It is in this metaphorical aspect that certain artists took the critic of collective memory even deeper.

One of the best-known examples of this movement is 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald. His work from 1925 focuses on the concept of memory and the desire to control the past. The main character, Gatsby, desires to return to his own nostalgic past to rediscover the love he had known as a young man towards a woman during the war. Gatsby is unable to come to terms with the fact that his romanticized view of the past is only an illusion. He does everything possible to try to recreate in his present the same feeling and atmosphere that there was during that now distant period. This metaphor alone is a good representation of national memory, the way countries glorify and hold on to customs of a lost era to maintain the illusion of still living inside it. But Fitzgerald goes further, he is not just referring to memory, he gives it new meaning.

The story takes place primarily in the shining outer suburb area of New York which, full of light, life, and prosperity, is a symbol of the economic boom of the Roaring 20s. However, in the second chapter we are presented to the "*Valley of Ash*", an industrial wasteland, "*A fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens; where the ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and finally, with a transcendent effort, of ash grey men who move dimly.*"⁹² The way this land is described with the ash and smoke blending into the land and hiding the men, is very similar to the popular view of 'No-man's land', even down to the men going to work like they are marching to a battle, "*Men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud, which screens their obscure operation from your sight.*"

But it is not the physical resemblance that is most important, but the metaphorical resemblance. This horror zone is not an aimless place, it is a fundamental part of the capitalist industrial machine that has shown all the glory and splendor that fills the glorious city where most of the story unfolds. It is a necessary, but an undesirable part of the system. Strong comparison is visible with the United States of the 20s and The Great War. The economic exploitation of arms, ammunition and vital commodities contracts was the economic boom and largely enabled the industrial growth that gave life to the golden age of the 20s. With the Valley of Ash, Fitzgerald implies this dark origin of the great cities, the source of wealth and prosperity. The population does everything it can to ignore the wasteland, but the truth remains in full view.

⁹² F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, Wordsworth Classics, 1925, chapter 2, page 16

Fitzgerald directly attacks 1920s society that enjoys wealth but chooses to forget the crimes that allowed its exploitation. He criticizes the desire to choose pleasant illusions and ignore the inconveniences of reality. The characters in the story know the Valley of Ash exists. In a literal and metaphorical sense, the land is in full view, looked over by the “*Eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg*” on a giant sign that gazes over the valley, but has no face to show emotion. The scene is in full view, a living memory, but we choose to ignore it. Fitzgerald shows the importance of accepting the past, and not by modifying memory according to a nationalist vision or personal need, because, as in Gatsby's wishes, the past can come back.

The similarities with the battlefields and the analysis of choosing to modify the origin 1920s exploits are pertinent, but these are not the main aspects that show the true nature of US collective memory. The most dramatic metaphor arrives in chapter 7 in the form of the death of Myrtle. This young woman is killed in a car crash in the Valley of Ash. The scene in question is not witnessed by the reader, but her death when later described gives us the full horror, “*It ripped her open.*” This passage brought the reader straight back to the war, the death of an innocent woman by mechanized products of the 20th Century. “*When they had torn open her shirtwaist, still damp with perspiration, they saw that her left breast was swinging loose like a flap, and there was no need to listen for the heart beneath. The mouth was wide open and ripped a little at the corners, as though she had choked a little giving up the tremendous vitality she had stored so long.*” The two body parts described as the face, the most human feature of a human, and the breast, symbol of motherhood and purity, both are rendered grotesque and unrecognizable.



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The way the corpse of Myrtle is presented fits perfectly in tune with *'The Cigarette,'* a 1918 painting by the American artist, George Bellows. His work shows the corpse of a violated woman, like Myrtle with a ripped mouth and mutilated breast. The body is half suspended against the wall as her aggressor, a soldier, smokes peacefully behind. It is also curious that, as in the next scene with the character of Gatsby when he speaks of Myrtle, he too is smoking, trying to forget his part in the crime.

In the original draft of his book, Fitzgerald was even more direct with his metaphor, having Gatsby directly compare the incident with the carnage he had witnessed in the war and saying how he does not want to know what the body looks like. Once again, we see a character choose to ignore the horrors of the past and live in ignorance. Myrtle's death as a metaphor for the suffering of the Great War, is particularly important when speaking of the US experience of the War. Like Gatsby, the public never saw the conflict firsthand, relying on secondhand perspectives to have an idea. These perspectives, mostly propaganda material, show us where the victims of the Germans were mostly civilian women and children. For any American who had seen George Bellows' painting, the famous 'Mad Brute' poster of a monster holding a woman, or heard stories of the Rape of Belgium, it would have difficult not to compare it and

⁹³ George Bellows, *The Cigarette*, 1918, [The Cigarette | The Art Institute of Chicago \(artic.edu\)](https://www.artic.edu/works/10000)

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experience the same feeling of fear when reading the passage of Myrtle death.

The final parallel is that the death of Myrtle does not affect Gatsby in any real way, he doesn't show any real regret or shame, in fact he blames the woman he supposedly loves for the crime, "*Don't tell me old sport. Daisy stepped on it. I tried to make her stop.*" He has his own view of the part and does not want to hear anything that contradicts it. Fitzgerald shows how easy it is to choose the past according to one's own needs.

General Conclusion

The aim of my work was to understand how The United States went from an isolationist nation believing in self-purification, to an international missionary believing in foreign purification. Moreover, I wished to see how each part of the US identity, domestic reforms, foreign relations, internal management, and artistic expression were affected, and lastly, to understand what made Wilson's specific ideology so important.

Whilst the Peacekeeper Identity did not originate with Wilson, it is his version that has set the stage for the US and the world. The American National Identity was forever changed by the Great War, even before her troops made it into the European trenches. Every aspect of her identity that had manifested since her foundation, the desire to stay separate, conflicting loyalty ties to Europe, fear of cultural change and the firm belief that her progress was ordained by God, all played a role in forging her new banner. Such an ideological evolution was unavoidable by fault. Whilst the declaration of war in 1917 could perhaps have been avoided, complete neutrality would never have been an option.

By trying to create a society that was centered around universal virtues, and where cultural differences were dependent on one's past national origins, America had created a society that was divided primarily by outside interference or intervention. Where underlying attachment of cultural, religious, or political sympathies could manifest themselves, it was unavoidable that cracks would begin to appear in the fragile infrastructure that had become the American Identity. An identity that had been created from diverse sources with conflicting ideals, needed an external common denominator to unite them as one people, as Americans.

When comparing the administrations of Roosevelt and Wilson, their different ideologies, views of the progressive movement and aims for their nation, it is amazing how much they differed and yet, how much they relied on the same policies. The Peacekeeper Identity that America held up as she marched to war in 1917, was a long way off from the one that Roosevelt had

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created before the conflict. This new identity, based on national, economic, and moral priorities to make the world safe for America's virtues, united the population in a way that imperialism never could and would go on to not only unify the nation, but push for new reforms. However, without Roosevelt, Wilson's identity would never have been possible, and the imperial aspect of the Peacekeeper, the belief in US immunity and right, would live on past the Treaty of 1921. The historian John Gerard Ruggie in his 1997 work: 'The Past as Prologue: Interests, Identity, and American Foreign Policy', stated that "*Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were theorists of international relations in their own right.*"⁹⁴ The ambition to take a nation born and bred in isolationism and apply her values overseas was a task many did not believe would be accepted and would take half a century of work.

And yet the Peacekeeper identity that Wilson gave his nation would be an unfinished work. The president's great progressive crusade to use the war to bring about domestic policies was a reasonable victory, despite the nation turning away from his vision after the main reforms had been passed. As far as the crusade to make the world safe for democracy by reinventing the US as a peacekeeper for American values, his plans ultimately did prove fruitful. Wilson had dreamed of the US becoming an agent in internationalism without having to resort to the same imperialist mentality that had guided Theodore Roosevelt before him. His 14 Points and League of Nations were designed to create a world where progressive reforms could flourish.

The US would be safe from having to once again resort to military action, but the Manifest Destiny ideal to spread the values of freedom and democracy could endure.

It is easy to look at the final year of Wilson's career as a failure. The end of the progressive movement, the refusal of the US to join the League of Nations and the nation's desire to regard the Great Wilsonian War Crusade as a tragic mistake that needed to be forgotten. But, in reality, his policies did succeed and forged a new era in the country's domestic and foreign affairs. The progressive reforms adopted during the war, whilst minimal in certain regards, owed a lot to the moral duty he built around the conflict with the importance of achieving victory by any means. The League of Nations was never joined by the US, but they did take several steps in the inter-war period to force similar alliances and treaties that had direct influence from Wilson's policies. The world post First World War had accepted the US as a

⁹⁴ John Gerard Ruggie, *The Past as Prologue: Interests, Identity, and American Foreign Policy*, by in his 1997, *The Past as Prologue?: Interests, Identity, and American Foreign Policy* (harvard.edu)

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peacekeeper and a moral and military safeguard. But the US in the interwar period did not abuse its power, at least not when compared to the period during Theodore Roosevelt's administration, or after the Second World War.

One of the chief concerns of Wilson had been that after the conflict, the US would follow in the footsteps of Britain or Germany, becoming a nation built on military power and structure whilst losing the purity he had so admired. It is here that the US Nation's distaste for the war and desire to move on can be almost admired. The war was remembered, but not glorified or romanticized. It was not seen as the new solution to US foreign problems since many had not been satisfied with the result it produced. Yet, despite this the memory of the War did not die out, not as far as the values it created were concerned. Lessons were taken and measures put in place so that the US would not have to again, send men to fight in foreign fields. Whilst the Wilsonian Peacekeeper ideology of non-military internationalism would ultimately fail in the late 1930s, it cannot be denied how much it influenced the next century of American policy. The Peacekeeper was a national myth, but like any national persona, it was one the US needed to believe was real.

Wilson was a preacher, a man of the church who convinced his nation that its holy values of self-purification and reform deserved to be shared. This 'Peacekeeper' image was, even during WW1, an ideal, with national and economic needs hiding behind it. But nevertheless, the image of the US as a holy crusader would become a part of the new American identity. In this form, Wilson lived up to Bourne's theory of the need to tear down the image of the Nation's state to reinvent its identity.

Roosevelt had tried to take an isolationist nation and push it onto the world stage. Yet, his failed attempts had been crucial to the next peacekeeper ideal. All the past ideologies, the stimulation of the State by the Great War, combined with Wilson's sermons that cut straight to the fundamental heart of US religious memory and national consciousness, permitted the change to finally take place. Manifest Destiny, The Creed, Roosevelt's Imperialist Peacekeeper... all these had been amalgamated into this new divine cause which had become fundamental to social, political for a new state structure.

Following the Armistice, the US would spend the next twenty-three years combating its new identity with both its government and people. But the Peacekeeper role was firmly planted. Pandora's Box had been opened.

Epilogue: The Peacekeeper of the New Millennium

Following the death of its father in 1921, the Wilsonian Peacekeeper Identity would be reinvented countless times, just as Wilson had reinvented Roosevelt's Imperialist Peacekeeper ideology. From the isolationist, but philanthropic years, of the Dawes plan to the destruction of the Nazi war machine and the confrontation of the USSR to the War on Terror, the image of the 'Peacekeeper' had been redesigned to whatever the US State needed it to be. Yet despite now being over a hundred years since Wilson's promise to make the world safe for democracy, the same image of divine duty is held up as a banner. Even as recently as the 16 March 2022 President Joe Biden declared.

“What is at stake here are the principles of the United States and the United Nations ... it's about freedom, it's about the right of people to determine their own future. It's about making sure that Ukraine will never be a victory for Putin... The American people are answering President Zelensky's call for more help; more weapons to Ukraine, more tools to fight Russian aggression, and that's what we are doing. In fact, we started our assistance to Ukraine before this war began... We took the treaty of Putin invading Ukraine very seriously and we acted on it. We sent Ukraine more security systems last year, six hundred and thirty-six million dollars, anti-air, and anti-armor equipment, before the invasion, more than we had ever provided before... It's clearly helped Ukraine inflict massive damage on Russian forces. We are not doing this alone, our Allies have stepped up to provide significant shipments of security systems, and will continue to help facilitate these shipments as well... I am going to be honest with you, this could be a long and difficult battle, but the American people will be steadfast in our support of the people of Ukraine, in the face of Putin's immoral unethical attacks on civilian populations. We are united in our abhorrence of Putin's depraved onslaught, and we are going to continue to have their backs as they fight for their freedom, for democracy, for survival... In just the past three weeks we provided three hundred million dollars in humanitarian assistance to the people in Ukraine and the neighboring countries. Tens of thousands of foods and water, and medicine and basic supplies for people in need... This is the struggle that puts the will of an autocrat against humankind's desire to be free, and let there be no doubt, no uncertainty, no question, America stands with the forces of

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freedom. We always have and always will. I want to thank you all and God please you.”⁹⁵

Biden’s speech, despite not being an actual declaration of war, bears great resemblance to Wilson’s declaration speech of 1917. Biden states that freedom and democracy are fundamental US values that the nation has a moral obligation to share. He states the importance of cooperating with other nations to preserve democracy but does not hide the view that it is the US who is leading the charge by giving aid, even before being asked. This again is very in keeping with Wilson’s belief that the US had a moral obligation to do more than other nations, having been given a special place of privilege by God because of its economic privileges. He also draws attention to the humanitarian side, evoking that the America is not only providing the military to fight, but is also giving the resources to help those who have been affected by the fight. Above all, Biden makes clear that the choice to support the war is not one of profit, since the aid given is not for economic needs, the cause is only moral and in keeping with the will of God. He then ends his speech: “*And may God protect the young Ukrainians defending their country,*” implying that the Lord is on the side of democracy and freedom, in the same vein as Wilson.

There are also some major differences, one is that despite Biden not actually declaring war, he shows more of a war mentality than Wilson, who actually ordered mobilization. Biden declares Putin’s Russia to be an immoral autocratic force that is an affront to the values of freedom and democracy. A large part of his address focuses on listing the exact assistance packages comprising of all the modern armament needed to combat Russia. His speech spreads the message that the world must come together to destroy the threat of Russia’s autocracy. Wilson’s speech was more focused on ending the conflict by striking a peace that was able to fit both sides simultaneously. But it must be kept in mind that his speech was not a sincere reflection of his true political policies and that his 14 Points did favor the Allies. The US was definitely focused on bringing Germany to a surrender. However, the validity of Wilson’s speech was not the focus, what mattered was that the US population and the World in general believed the President’s promise and that is still the chief concern politically today. It was noted by journalists after his speech that President Biden was not only reaching the people of Ukraine but also his own fellow US citizens. That the population would feel better with the knowledge that their country was doing all it could, keeping faith with the Peacekeeper promise.

This begs the question, does the Peacekeeper image still have any power? When Wilson led his nation to war, he was, for the first time, pushing the US onto the world stage as an active

⁹⁵ Joe Bidon speech on economic and logistical aid to Ukraine, 16 March 2022, YouTube, President Biden delivers remarks on providing assistance to Ukraine — 3/16/22 - YouTube

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humanitarian superpower. The notion of Peacekeeper was already a false image since the US was an imperialist nation and had united its nation by committing organized genocide towards the indigenous people who had already been living on the land. But to the rest of the world still living mostly under monarchies, the US did live up to its facade. Now however, after a century of American foreign intervention in different regions of the world, does that image still exist? After the use of the A-bomb on Japan's cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the invasion of neutral countries including Korea and Vietnam, the funding of non-democratic terrorist factions and the disastrous Middle Eastern campaign, does the sign of the US flag appearing over the horizon still inspire the same confidence to people looking for freedom and civil rights?

This is the focus of my final section. Is Biden's claim that the US is a moral crusader for democracy, a united nation with a religious conviction, still believed in by the world as it was at the end of WW1?

To try and have a true perspective of how America is viewed today, abroad and at home, I arranged an interview with a professional American photojournalist Alex Quesada. His perception provided a rounded view since he has not only lived within the US, but during his career was one of the photojournalists who accompanied Hilary Clinton on the campaign trail for her husband Bill Clinton's bid for the Presidency of the United States. He therefore had a first-hand insight to what happens behind the speeches. Mr. Quesada has also covered news and political stories in all four corners of the globe, including nations that have been the recipients of US foreign intervention and aid.

I began by asking Mr. Quesada what he believed was the modern-day collective US view of the world and its role in its affairs, to determine if there still exists that belief that the US has a special status to judge and determine the needs of other nations. His answer was that *"The US is known for a lot of mirroring in their foreign policy where they don't necessarily take control or account of what country they're dealing with, but project what they think is right onto those countries."* This tendency for the US to plan what it believes a nation need as opposed to what they actually want echoes back to Wilson's policies for Europe which was made without any advice or input from the actual European leaders. *"Some countries don't want democracy. They want US aid, and the democratic process gets corrupted along the way."* *The US is extremely naive, sometimes in trying to impose their values, market economy, democracy into cultures that have no preparation for this way of living and, and it is frightening how innocent the Americans are sometimes projected policies in this way which*

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I call mirroring-like in a mirror. ``

In this sense, the US Peacekeeper has become a new form of imperialism. Mr. Quesada also says *"They reflect onto the rest of the world what they think is the right way. Because it's right in America it doesn't mean it's right for some country in Africa or Southeast Asia and what is amazing is that the World's most powerful country, you would think, would have enough sophistication and they do! They have very well-trained people who know those countries in and out and yet many times they have tried to run through a programme that doesn't fit "*. In the 100 years since the end of WW1, the US' methods of foreign policy have mostly proven to be fruitful, at least from the US' point of view. The two World Wars were great victories and even the string of failed ventures in the Cold War period ended with the downfall of the USSR in 1991, leaving the US as the world's main superpower. With such a military heritage, it is understandable.

This belief that the US knows better is inherent with the divine nature that Mr. Quesada states still exist. However, he stated it had now become more of a token policy that politicians trot out to get domestic support for their foreign policy that clinches their initiatives. The religious connotation does appear far less in the presidential rhetoric of today, as opposed to the early 20th Century. Despite the US being the country with the highest percentage of Christian believers, it is acknowledged that a politician can no longer rely on the power of the sermon to sell foreign policy. Even when Biden mentioned God in his speech, he was not using divine will to justify his entire policy, but to reassure the US listeners that his policies are in accordance with the missionary identity. It is a strange paradox that Biden felt the need to remind his nation that the Wilsonian Peacekeeper Identity is still being maintained.

Yet to Mr. Quesada, whatever influence the religious aspect had over foreign policy, its place has been handed to *"The worship of the almighty dollar. It's business that usually drives a lot of foreign policy."* This response was not surprising as the US' role as a munition's seller, implementing the Dawes plan and the exploitation of the economic boom in the 1920s, show that even during WW1, the economy was a chief motivator. The difference is that today it is far more obvious and blatant. A major aspect of modern representative government is the need, not only for support towards the head of government, but, for the different subcategories of Ministers and Senators to have faith in one cause. This is where Wilson's policies went astray, as he tried to unite the nation by placing his most loyal followers in higher positions of power, but by doing so alienated the others leading to him lose the Senate and House of Representatives. The concept of a divine national crusader mission relies on the belief that the whole nation is united behind it. Today, with the existing Government ever

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more divided, it is hard to see such cooperation, *“Congressmen and Senators represent their constituencies and their individual states, and they will lobby and push for their Christian, right or left-wing agendas, whatever they feel their people want their government to do.”* His response shows the relevance today of Bourne’s theory of war as the stimulus of the state to permit reform. The Great War had a true impact because the nation truly believed they were at risk. The same stimulation has been seen in recent years with the 9/11 attacks, but for the most part, the nation has not one single cause to rally behind.

The image Mr. Quesada was presenting was that Wilson’s Peacekeeper Identity had retired into religious memory, an unconscious mindset that no longer guides US foreign policy. But a policy that people still identify with and choose to believe in to help justify certain policy decisions. When I asked if this was his perception, he clarified that even if it was in many ways a facade, *“It’s still, almost the backbone of the US policy to be the policeman of the world, to bring democracy to countries and this is what I was telling you earlier. Some countries don’t even know what democracy is.”* It cannot be understated that the US’ humanitarian efforts have been considerable and these efforts with the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and other organizations, have kept the US Peacekeeper Identity alive across the globe.

In recent years, with the exit from the Middle East and the choice to support, but not fight alongside Ukraine (mainly due to it not being a NATO member), the US does seem to be going back into a more isolationist mentality. It still has a moral and political need to play a role on the world stage but is more willing to do so less directly than in the years following WW2. *“A full-scale effort to assist Ukraine, in preserving democracy, in fighting the Russian invasion, that’s the US doing what they do well, and it’s got the backing because someone like Putin is not gonna stay still.”* This approach seems more in line with Wilson’s original Peacekeeper ambitions, keep the US neutral and act as a mediator, *“There’s a lot of parallels being drawn to Munich conferences with Chamberlain (British Prime Minister in 1939) appeasing Hitler and they say no, we can’t do this now, we’ve gotta stop Putin now! So, short of putting American troops on the ground they’re pulling out many stops to help the Ukrainians so in this case it’s a good example of American interventionism. They are still involved in dozens of countries, covert ventures and not so covert, so I don’t think they’re stepping back. I think there’s a call to step back from the front line and for the US to use international treaties in a lot of other wars.”*

In the modern geopolitical setting, the peacekeeper mentality of ‘whatever a nation can do to help world balance must be done,’ has become more accepted since the coexistence of most

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nations has become ever more important. The needs of one nation, for example to build more factories, are placed in question when compared to the world's needs for a clean and low pollutant atmosphere. This need for harmony and cooperation among nations to best determine the needs of the world was the ambition of the League of Nations, and this can be seen in the United Nations and other world organizations that the US is very much a part of. Since the end of the Second World War, it has become apparent that the world's international affairs cannot fall into a simple black and white division. Politicians now work in the 'grey zone' and try to find a compromise, *"Henry Kissinger, who was considered a master statesman, diplomat, was very actively involved in prolonging He wasn't looking for peace in the Middle East, he was looking for a status quo. He was trying to avoid things from getting worse."* This again is very in keeping with Wilson's desire to make peace and not war, understanding that no matter the conflict, the priority was to plan ahead and stop the next one. However, in the case of the US, the theme of National Right, that the country should be allowed to do as it pleases, does remain vocal to some extent, *"There still is a very strong drive to put right what is of interest to its (US) own interests and that is where it gets complicated because US interests are not always looking for that."* The peacekeeper mentality, if it does not have a clear determined cause that relates to what the world needs, is destined to return to the imperialist ways Wilson did so much to escape from. The truth is that to use the peacekeeper as a justification is a tempting idea for politicians.

The conclusion is that, as far as mental perception is concerned, the Wilson Peacekeeper Identity does still exist and that it can be regarded as both a positive and negative force. It is a danger because it is so easy for the 'crusader to march straight towards the promised land' and ignore the damage he does on the way. But it is also a blessing because in some shape or form, the world still needs the US to have a committed presence on the world stage. *"Let's just say that the UN, Europe, and NATO can't do anything without the US leading. The Europeans would never have gotten. So, it is still very much a force to be dealt with, but people are never sure if they're gonna be there for you tomorrow."*

The peacekeeper identity and the responsibility it carries has become a standard the US has set itself, what it owes to humanity. The question is, how each generation and leader interpret this responsibility and how they decide on what is needed to *"Make the world safe for democracy."* With the war in Ukraine still ongoing and the 2024 elections less than two years away, only time will tell if it will be the slogan of Wilson or Harding that is repeated.

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1: List of Primary Sources

I: Poems

Document 1: *Walt Whitman, 'Starting from Paumanok', 1860* The poem is one of the most famous of Whitman, showing his more political and patriotic side. It shows a chronological retelling of the nation's slow evolution. The individual is faced with this land of untapped potential, not yet polluted with European influence. Whitman paints a picture of a new Garden of Eden, a new verging land and following this admiration he pronounces the immortal words: "*Solitary, singing in the West, I strike up for a New World.*"

Whitman drew on something familiar to paint his vision, the feeling of holy approval had always been a major part in American lives going back to the first settlers, "*Underfoot the divine soil.*" He describes the process of the slow transformation, and this leads to his perception of where the nation should proceed. Following the glorious image of the US, the universal values that have tied its citizens together, Whitman writes of "*Sailing to other shores to annex the same yet welcoming every new brother.*" The seemingly natural transition from fellow Americans to a distant shore where 'new brothers are waiting, shows expansionism as a cosmic law. Whitman describes a world that needs a new driving force, where the old powers have faded, "*A world primal again, vistas of glory incessant and branching.*" The poem shows the American Manifest Destiny being redirected into Manifest Imperialist Destiny, Whitman's belief that the US owed it to the world to spread its prosperity.

Document 2: '*To Roosevelt*' by Rubén Darío

Ruben Dario's poem is one that shows the US Empire from the outside point of view. This modernist poet, addressing himself directly to Roosevelt, paints a vision of the US as a tyrant. While born in central America, Dario spent much time in Spain and witnessed America's imperial might during her invasion. But what makes his work poignant is he uses American values to fight his cause.

"*It is with the voice of the Bible, or verse of Walt Whitman, that we should reach you, Hunter!*" Dario references God and one of America's greatest poets, then implies his words of reproach run through them, using the US' own culture as it is the only culture the uninformed "*Hunter*" could possibly understand. He paints the US as a nation of paradoxes, "*Primitive and modern, simple and complicated.*" But the image was not only one of disapproval. Dario was a well-travelled freelance journalist and admired above all, intercultural influence, and the sharing of artistic ideas. Dario painted a nation that still had traces of the original identity that it glorified, the one of freedom, revolution, and divine destiny, "*with a bit of Washington,*" but that this spark is overshadowed by new factors, "*and a bit of Nimrod.*" The tragic sense of irony and pity towards a great nation that had sunk to barbarism, yet this pity is soon replaced with anger, "*You are the future invader.*"

Dario expresses a deep sense of regret, that he lived to see a country he believed held value,

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sink to be worse than the old European nations it had broken away from. In a last verse of defiance, he writes to Roosevelt, “*Order to keep us in your tight grip. And you may count it all, missing one thing: God!*” He admits the US has the power to make it will prevail, but to make no mistake the Divine Imperialist Destiny, preached by Roosevelt, will never have God's blessing. Dario's poem is one of the most important demonstrations of the American identity crisis and its growing lack of respect in the rest of the world.

II: Articles/Essays

Document 3: *Extract from photojournalistic report: 'How the Other Half Lives', by Jacob Riis, 1890.*

Jacob Riis's, a reporter and photographer born in 1849, gives in this report a close look at the American industrial slum of the late XIX Century. Riis' view was one of disapproval at the nation who proclaimed opportunities and equality but chose to ignore the living conditions of the low paid workers needed to keep the industries going. His report showed the unequal scramble of the migrant masses faced with an ever-steeper social ladder. He highlights the fact that many of the employees in the harsh factories were unable to speak English, but this was not required for them to perform the simple menial tasks needed.

However, what made his article particularly shocking was that he associated blame of the suffering to the State, imposing the view that the US government had abandoned these citizens in order to reach greater economic profit. His article also shows anger at a population choosing to turn a blind eye and his view would go on to lay the groundwork for ‘muckraking’ journalism.

Document 4: *Essay: 'The Crisis of American National Identity', Charles Kesler, 2005*

The American Creed was a notion put forward by Professor Samuel P. Huntington, that the American culture was different from other nations. It was based not on a common language, religion, or ethical heritage, but a set of ideals that all follow: Liberty, equality, democracy, individualism, and the rule of law under a constitution. This Utopian ideology is discredited by Charles Kesler, on several levels.

He questions Huntington's interpretation of cultural fluidity on the linguistic side, stating, “*A country based on common principles would logically want a common language in which to express them.*” He points out that the Christian God is mentioned four times in the Declaration of Independence, meaning there is a clear religious side to the intent.

Kesler's view on the Creed is that it is a romanticization, but he does not flatly dismiss Huntington's theory. He confirms that traces of the American Creed are indeed real and can be seen as part of the cultural identity. But he mentions two important points: Firstly, that this is not unique to America, almost every nation has its own Creed based on its own values that are not classical characteristics, such as religion or language.

His second point is that even if the Creed may have merit, it is not one single grain from which a national identity may grow, it needs a solid foundation, an original identity, “*The American Republic needed a culture to help uphold its creed.*” The author shows his conviction to portray the US as a country, not a facade.

III: Books

Document 5: *'Robert Lansing and American Neutrality 1914-1917', Daniel Smith*

Daniel Smith's biographical work investigates the role played by the Counsellor and Secretary of State, Robert Lansing. The years of US neutrality during the Great War is often perceived as a time when the nation stood firm against the conflict, united behind Wilson's resort to prevent American death in foreign fields. This image has endured and even Wilson did not contradict it, despite having stated to his private secretary in the autumn of 1914 "*England is fighting our fight.*" Smith counters the general perception of most historians that Lansing was a secondary figure during the years of neutrality, implying instead that man had a large share of the responsibility for US intervention in the war.

By following this one man and his policies towards submarine warfare and American interventionism, Smith shows his view on the inevitability of the declaration and the myth that the US was ever truly neutral during the Great War.

Document 6: *'The Moralists', Patricia O'Toole*

The book in question is the second written by the author with the historian Dallek Robert. *When Trumpets Call: Theodore Roosevelt after the White House*. This first work focused on Theodore Roosevelt and the second on Woodrow, *The American style of foreign policy: cultural politics and foreign affairs*, on Woodrow Wilson. In both cases, Robert looks not only at the President's policies, but how they fit in with what the nation identified as.

The biography of Wilson follows America's role on the world stage slowly evolving from isolationist observer to World power.

Document 7: *'The American style of foreign policy: cultural politics and foreign affairs', by Dallek Robert*

Robert's analysis of each decade shows how the most seemingly opposite thinking leaders, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, were both dependent on the same resources but chose to highlight different messages. Roosevelt's time as president is seen as one that championed foreign policies, however Robert views that every policy was primarily fueled by domestic needs and the desire to create national stability. Similarly, he analyzed Wilson's supposed policies of neutrality, showing that Wilson's dependence on military resources was even greater than for Roosevelt.

Robert's view on the foreign policy highlights less the idea of the USA changing because of outside events, and more the US choosing to change its identity toward the World depending on what it needs. From the Progressive era of the early 20th century to the War on Terror of the 21st century, the public need to fit foreign policy into a prefabricated mold is seen.

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Document 8: *War and American Popular Culture*, edited by M. Paul Holsinger

This encyclopedia chronologically follows every war in US history and the subsequent art it inspired. Holsinger shows how each conflict left a different mark on the population, depending on the time period and what the nation reflected. The author also shows the impact of different art forms, particularly between literature and film. Because of this the encyclopedia shows how the perception of the war evolved in US culture with the passage of time and new technological developments. Holsinger sees pop culture not as the public's view of events, but as a vital way those events are translated to different generations, molded by each era's new perception. He lists films and novels written centuries after the war in question ended and expresses his view that each crisis adds to the cultural worth of those that came before.

Document 9: *What the World Should Be*, by Malcolm D. Magee

Similarly, to *The Moralist*, Patricia O'Toole, Magee follows the slow evolution of Wilson's foreign policy guided by faith. However, where O'Toole investigates how Wilson's ideals were formed, Magee focuses more on what they were intended to be, and Wilson saw his role in the world and the reasoning behind it. By looking into his religious upbringing and academic lifestyle, the logic behind his attempts at creating the 14 Points and League of Nations is explored. The book explores how this religious side of Wilson's policies helped galvanize the divine aspect of America's foreign policy following The Great War.

However, O'Toole does not focus only on the missionary, but also the politician. He explores the similarities with imperialist Roosevelt policies, Wilson's more political and economic agendas, and the desire to create a stronger national unity. Magee's view is that one cannot understand Wilson's policies without first understanding his spiritual upbringing.

Document 10: *The Great War and America, Civil-Military Relations During World War I*, by Nancy Gentile Ford

The Great War forever changed the US foreign political identity, however what is often overlooked is how the nation's military was transformed to reflect this identity. The US army of 1918 was unrecognizable from what it had been four years earlier. To fully understand the need for the transformation, Ford goes back to the War of Independence. The US army had always had a paradoxical relationship with its nation. The first American army, under the leadership of George Washington, had fought and won freedom from the British Empire and had proven itself an essential tool, but it was also a great danger. Even during the War of Independence, itself, before the first national constitutions were written, the US army had threatened to overthrow the government when the states refused to pay taxes which were needed to pay the soldier's wages.

Because of this double edged, Ford explains that *"The armed forces simultaneously represented both a threat to democracy and its ultimate protector."* Effort was made by the founding father to create an army, *"Capable of expanding in defense of the nation, but weak enough as to not usurp the power of the government."*

Ford's book shows how the national perception changed, faced with the new dangers of total

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war, where the army needed to be ready for any unprovoked invasion. This is the period often seen as the birth of the modern US army, going from 100,000 men to 4 million in 18918. However, Ford also breaks down the romanticized vision, going into great detail on how unprepared the US was in 1917. The author shows the sharp contrast with the desire of the US government to create an independent national army, and the fact that the American troops were largely dependent on their allies for everything, from infantry weapons to tanks and planes to helmets.

Ford tells the untold story of the US army evolution, but at the same time explains how it led to the historical inaccuracies we have come to accept. Her work shows, nonetheless the respect towards the romanticized vision as it is all a part is how the army has gone from being seen as a threat to the nation, to part of the nation.

IV: Historical Documents

Document 11: *'The Free Lance'*, by H. L. Mencken, *Baltimore Evening Sun*, September 28, 1914

By 1916, the pro-British feeling was almost universal. The Americans of German origin realized that they were slowly becoming the face of the enemy within and were being treated accordingly. One individual who refused to watch his culture be reduced to a propaganda tool was the writer of German origin, H.L. Mencken. He saw it as his responsibility in this time of war to present the German side to anyone who would listen. His pro-German essays in his 'Free-lance Column' were a source of reassurance for some, and outrage to others. In 1914 he had written *"The German attitude towards the world is simple. He tells the world to go to the devil. This German arrogance, is an affront to Anglo Saxon pride."* Such words marked Mencken as a pro-German sympathizer, yet he stated that he was no more pro-German than he was pro- American. His anger was towards the Government which claimed neutrality, but secretly had pro-Allied reservations and forced them on the Nation through deliberate propaganda. He harbored a particular discontent towards Wilson, who preached neutrality, but showed clear evidence of deep Allied support. Mencken systematically investigated stories that the Evening Sun reprinted from the London Globe, exposing the numerous fabrications. He described his battle as one of heart and mind, a trap to catch the gullible American reader. The trap was made ever more dangerous by the fact that *"The suckers are numerous and eager to be caught."*

America's role as an arms dealer seemed to be a well-liked compromise of righteous sentiment and self-interest, an ideal situation for judicial propaganda. This was Mencken's opponent, he knew that if war reached America, the already strong hatred against Americans of German origin would become a nightmare. But, faced with the lack of direct information caused by the lack of German cables and the ever more powerful press propaganda, he was fighting a losing battle.

Document 12: *'Why we Must Keep the Philippines'*, by Albert Beveridge; 1900.

Albert Beveridge, the Republican Senator of Indiana, was one of the more vocal spokesmen

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behind the new age of American Imperialism, “*Nothing is more natural as trade with one's neighbors.*” Beveridge showed America's empire as a simple business transaction, where land and men were the products, “*The Philippines bring us permanently face to face with the most sought-for customers of the world.*” Additionally, to this business perspective, there was another side, one of duty. Beveridge explains that American imperialism is justified, for if these lands were not acquired, other less noble nations would seize them instead, “*No man on the spot can fail to see that this would be their fate if we retired.*” The imperialist ambitions are seen as a power race, one that America could not possibly lose, since its objective was not to conquer but to 'aide', “*We may tangle conditions by applying academic arrangement of self- government to crude situations: their failure will drive us to our duty in the end.*” Aid or invasion justified or criminal, the American Empire was now a fact-visible on the map. The American idealist dream of Manifest Destiny had been redirected to focus on the rest of the world.

Document 13: *The Future of American Ideals*, by Prescott Hall, 1912

The identity of the United States, rendered mythical by the fight for independence and divine right, was a source of paranoia, the fear that this holy nation and its values may be compromised. With the wave of 'New Migrants', fear of the unknown was not hard to find. Prescott Hall, a far-right political spokesman and founder of the 'Immigration Restriction League', in 1894, described in his 1912 work, 'The Future of American Ideals', a devastated nation, where an invasion of inferior races had decimated the foundation of America and robbed her of her future, “*America is likely to be, not the cradle of a new, but the grave of an old race. Is there, indeed, a danger that the race which made our country great will pass away, and that ideals and institutions which it has cherished will be lost.*” This fear of social and ideological change, whilst exaggerated beyond reason, was grounded in reality (albeit a biased reality). Hall's views were based on an ideal disturbingly similar to Huntington's 'American Creed', believing America was a nation built on universal moral values, “*American type, which had defined itself, not so much in literature or art, as in politics and invention, and in certain social ideals.*”

Hall's perception of the US was that of a carefully built civilization that had to be protected at any cost, against all those who he saw as undeserving, who were already infiltrating the nation. He explains that the reason this invasion has gone unnoticed by many was because it was done in discretion. The “*Peaceful invasion*” where the alien cultures slowly infiltrated normal American families like a plague, an, “*Invading hostile army.*” This image of the slow erosion of American Society, a nation filled with paranoia at the prospect of losing their hard forged cultural identity, fanned the fear into hysteria and would hinder the Progressive Movement labor unions.

3: Interviews/Recording

Interview 1

SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW:

Professor Galen Perros, Department of History of University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Ref: Questions from Jeremy Plumptre on the Wilson Peacekeeper identity and its aftermath.

1: When compared to the European nations whose experiences were far more traumatic, it makes sense that the war does not carry the same weight in the US but to the point where it was purposefully removed from public and national consciousness seems extreme. Even the National War Memorial proposed in 1921 was abandoned mid production and converted to an art gallery in 1937, never to be replaced.

Why was there such an intense public condemnation of the memory of the war? Was it a result of the failed progressive reforms and failed Wilsonian foreign policies that made people regard the war as for nothing? Was it due to the desire to return to the more isolationist position which was easier if the war was simply ignored? Or was it that the war had been a traumatic experience for the US domestic life that had witnessed human right violation by its own government (espionage act of 1917 and sedition act of 1918), and there was a desire to wash the nation's hands of the affair?

As many Americans had not wanted to enter the war in 1917, it is no surprise that many wanted to forget the war as soon as was possible, especially as many saw the punitive peace forced upon Germany as betraying the reasons US went to war (a just peace without blame). No doubt the deaths of 100,000 US troops also played a role in creating such hostility to the war's results.

2: In *The American Style of Foreign Policy*, the author proposes his theory that Wilson proposed his League of Nations to the US Senate in 1919 knowing and even hoping that it would be rejected so his he would not be blamed, knowing they were now beyond repair, ““Unconsciously aware that his claims for the League were unrealizable , that a new world social order and advance toward domestic harmony were out of reach, he preferred rejection of the treaty by senators whom he could then label killers of the progressive dream. Refusing to accept reservations that would have made little difference in the long-term functioning of the League and would have assured Senate passage, Wilson contributed mightily to the result. It was easier to blame the war and uncompromising foes of reform than to acknowledge that a small-town homogeneous America, where equal opportunity, democracy, and individualism flourished, was part of a bygone era which the country could no longer reclaim.”

This view, whilst holding water from the political angle, seems a radical move taking into consideration that Wilson was convinced that his role in the peace talks was one ordained by God and that he had a moral and holy duty to see it finished. The idea that he would willingly jeopardize his policies to avoid the blame after having spent his entire political career building these policies seems strange, what is your opinion?

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Wilson may have reasoned that he had little choice after the war but to blame the Senate for the lack of progress regarding the peace treaty and the League of Nations, thus appealing to US progressives. But his administration's policies during the war, stifling of dissent, jailing of war opponents, injured Wilson's cause and likely cost him control of Congress in 1918.

3: This next question is on the same theme of Wilson choosing to abandon his peace policies. By March of 1919 when he returned from Europe the evidence was clear that he knew his policies were not going to be accepted after the disastrous Allied conferences in Paris. However, Wilson's behavior before leaving in February imply his hopes of succeeding were already fading. When he replied to the German demand for peace talks in early October, he implied that he could not speak for the Allies demands and later informed the Germans that the principal issues had yet to be solved. The Germans had asked for peace based on Wilson's 14 Points, but the President had already received clear signs that the British and French would not accept several of the points. Wilson must have been aware that he was promising more than he could possibly deliver, do you think he recognized this and was deliberately manipulating the Germans, or did he still have faith he could convince the Allies to give in to his demands?

Wilson likely hoped that massive numbers of US troops and US loans to allies during WWI would give him clout as the war wound down. But the collapse of the German army and political system in 1918 before US troops could really be brought to bear robbed him of said clout. While US cash was clearly vital, allied troops won the war on the battlefield in 1918.

4: In his 1918 article 'The State', the thinker Randolph Bourne defines the differences between a war of the people (ex. the Russian Revolution), and the war of a government where the people's needs are not taken into consideration. Wilson built his war policies around trying to make the war one that the average US citizen could identify and support, calling to "make the world safe for democracy," selling shares under the name 'Liberty Bonds,' using the CIP to convince the public that the threat to US ideals was real... The support shown by the population indicates these actions did have some relevant success, so where did Wilson go wrong to lose the support of the population so fast in the end of the conflict?

It is hard to argue that America was fighting a war overseas to save democracy in WWI when Wilson's administration quashed non-violent antiwar dissent at home so unpleasantly using the Espionage Act, the Sedition Act, etc.

5: Wilson often described himself as a preacher and not a politician and the way he acted and delivered his policies reflected that mentality, due in large part to his Presbyterian origins. His 14 Points were described at the time as "vague articles of faith" that liberals would support but few politicians could take seriously. In your opinion, how did Wilson see himself in the construction of the American Identity moving towards the war. He remarked in his writing that he was but a servant to God and had no special relationship, but at other times he made remarks that seemed to compare himself to a saint finishing the holy work that no one else could undertake but him. He often refused guidance from others, trusting his own instincts, but he also admitted that he was unaware of many factors, admitting that he never read a single newspaper during the war. How do you view the man and his mentality towards the role of President? Did he see himself as a representative of the people to the World or a representative of God to the people?

This is a hard question to answer. The position of the President is often described as a "bully pulpit," that is, the President's real power is to shape US public opinion. But as Franklin D

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Roosevelt once said, one cannot lead the American people where they will not go. Wilson had exalted views of his own skills and powers, and that arrogance cost him when he did little or nothing to bring Senate Republicans into the peace process.

6: Today the US still has very much a role in the world as a 'Peacekeeper' (police force), would you say that the Wilsonian mentality to make the world safe for democracy is still alive to some degree?

Also, a large deciding factor of modern US foreign military action is economic and national security. But it can be argued that in WW1 that was already the case, seeing as the US needed an Allied victory to collect the money owed by armament purchase and the German U-boat campaign was threatening the US merchant trade. Despite this, Wilson's peace policies did have a moral groundwork that had a religious foundation. In today's US foreign policy, does this humanitarian aspect still exist in your opinion, or has the economic and security aspect taken far more of a leading role?

A humanitarian impulse always exists alongside more cynical power-politics impulses in US foreign policy. President Carter has been accused of putting human rights ahead of tougher political policies. Henry Kissinger bemoaned humanitarian impulses as injuring more hard-nosed US interests.

8: Another part of the Wilson Peacekeeper ideal was that the US was a model to follow, a model democracy who had a moral obligation to spread its fortune with others. This ideal has a very 'City on the Hill' vibe that dates back to the idea of the US being a beacon of hope for all, "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to break free..." This utopian image is very much still present in the US identity and foreign policy. In your opinion, does it still have any credibility following the disasters in Vietnam, and the Middle East, but taking into consideration the efforts made to help Ukraine against Russia, does the US image still have that utopian power, or does whatever respect it receives stem more from its economic resources?

Many Americans still believe in the shining City of the Hill notion. Many politicians use that notion to attract support for their hard-nosed policies, Ronald Reagan for example in the 1980s. George HW Bush promoted world order and saving Kuwaiti "democracy" in 1990-91 to justify Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm against Iraq. Try selling a war to allow old Americans to put cheap gas into their RVs!

9: This last question is far more based on speculation and contemplation than historical fact, as it is on a work of art. Following The Great War, there were relatively few written US works of fiction on the period as authors were advised that the nation wasn't interested and wanted to move on.

The result is that many of the most famous works were allegorical and did not admit to being in the war. One work I found interesting was the Great Gatsby, the novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The story depicting the booming and shining city of lies that owes its economic success to the black ash industrial desert that no one wants to address, had been compared to the US economic boom thanks to the war profits. The industrial pit where Myrtle dies is described in a similar way to the shell craters. Even the two leading characters are veterans who struggle to find acceptance in the new US. Taking this into consideration and the fact that the writer himself enlisted in the army, do you believe the work is a criticism of the US choice to ignore the war but still reap the rewards in the roaring 20s?

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I would add that while most US authors did not write about the war in the 1920s, Ernest Hemingway, wounded in Italy as an ambulance driver, did write the well-regarded novel "A Farewell to Arms," based on his experiences. No doubt many Americans were influenced by the works of prominent Britons who wrote dark wartime memoirs and novels, notably Robert Graves and Siegfried Sassoon, who cemented WWI's reputation as a bloody and pointless conflict.

Links

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Interview 2

SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW:

Alex Quesada, Photographer/photojournalist

INTERVIEWER:

Jeremy Plumptre

My name is Jeremy Plumptre, and this is a written copy of a recorded interview for my essay on human studies. My subject is Alex Quesada, an American photojournalist.

I have previously interviewed Mr. Quesada for my studies on his profession but, for this interview I will be concentrating on his observations on American society and its perception of its identity from the point of view of a national who, by means of his profession. During his career, Mr. Quesada was one of the photojournalists who accompanied Hilary Clinton on her campaign trail for Bill Clinton's for the Presidency of the United States.

Firstly, can you introduce yourself?

Yes, my name is Alex Quesada, I am a photographer and I live in Germany.

Ok, so the focus of my research is on the evolution of the US's foreign mentality, specifically on the way it sees its role in foreign affairs. I wanted to ask you as a photojournalist, as a man who has worked closely, not specifically in, but around the US political system, what is your perception of the US's view of the world, specifically it's view of its role as a peacekeeper and to whether this mentality still exists to this day essentially?

Yes, this still exists, usually it is well intentioned although in my opinion, it is quite provincial. The US is known for a lot of mirroring in their foreign policy where they don't necessarily take control or account of what country they're dealing with but project what they think is right onto those countries. That's many times the perception that foreigners have of Americans.

Now, another question I have is, does this mentality still have a strong religious base?

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Going back to the First World War, the image of making the World “safe for democracy” (as quoted by President Woodrow Wilson), was born very much out of his own Presbyterian outlook. In the US, does that religious foundation behind the belief that there is a cause, is that still very dominant?

Amongst a section of the political body there is but, I would say that's more of a token policy that politicians trot out to get domestic support for their foreign policy that clinches their initiatives. I think more so than religion it's the worship of the almighty dollar. It's business usually that drives a lot of foreign policy in my opinion although the religious aspect to it still has a very large hand in it, but as I said, it's not so much heart-felt belief amongst the political elite, but they use it as a vote getting message. There are still many Southern politicians who yes, they believe they are on God's mission to save the world and bring democracy and Christianity to everybody who wants to quietly live, but, once it gets people who try to influence the foreign policy decisions, when you get to the level of State department and executive branches it's not that prevalent, no.

So, the mentality is very much today dominated by financial gain. But you mentioned how that part of the population still clings, or still holds faith to the idea that it is an ordained mission. Is there still, going back to the birth of this idea, the mentality that was still guided by the American economy but that there was an attempt to give it a religious foundation, to pass it off as something more righteous, almost something more ordained?

In a very cynical manner. Once you wave into a level of executive and state department views it's a cynical use of a religious base. You have a lot of senators and congressmen who will 'talk that talk' to their constituents and you know, are totally incoherent, foaming at the mouth in a bible thumping manner. But that only carries so much weight as when it actually comes to implementing foreign policy decisions. They can pass and then reform foreign policy bills and where they have to have to sometimes pass a foreign policy to another country, or try and push for, let's say, birth control or no abortion types of policy attached to some foreign aid bill. But again, that's not the driving force. It's down mostly to the local politicians who, like I said, senators and congressmen who try to get this added on to foreign policies to please their constituents and because they probably are bible thumping Christians from the South (laughs)! These things can be watered down quite a bit, it's not a big deal like it used to be. These are my observations, and I don't know what really drives any of these people, but these are my observations.

I understand. But your observation is that the foreign policy is dictated by what the domestic policy needs. For each individual Congressman, for each individual spokesperson, he or she will do whatever will get him elected in the country of office.

Congressmen and senators represent their constituencies and their individual states, and they will lobby and push for their Christian, right or left-wing agendas, whatever they feel their people want their government to do. When it gets to the time for signing off a reform bill, or a military aid bill or for a military action in another country, that Christian, that religious aspect, is given a literal meaning of the decision process. How can I say this; the congressmen and senators are further to the camp of a Duma (Russian democratic system under early 1900's) for their foreign policy. Ok, they serve on committees, and they will try to ram through some amendments to these foreign policy bills but, it's not a major part of American foreign policy as much as it used to be. I mean the Cold War was fought with, was a campaign with a lot of fervor from a lot of segments of the US government but those were different days and things are a little more, how would I say it, mercenary, I think.

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So, we've established very much that the religious element is, even though it's technically still there, is no longer the driving force – although possibly it never truly was? The US after World War 1 and going into and especially after World War 11, built the identity of the nation to save democracy and that mentality still seems to be very dominant. Or do you feel that mentality has gone down, do you feel that in recent years it is declining, dying out? After the First WW it was very prevalent, after the Second WW the massive victory, it was incredibly dominant but in recent years the US has not had the same gravitas, has not had a string of victories.

Do you feel that this mentality of the peacekeeper, the crusader, is finally drawing to an end or do you think it will live on?

It's still a big part of the US, it's still, almost the backbone of the US policy to be the policeman of the world, to bring democracy to countries and this is what I was telling you earlier. Some countries don't even know what democracy is.

Some countries don't want democracy. They want US aid, and the democratic process gets corrupted along the way. The US is extremely naive sometimes in trying to impose their values, market economy, democracy into cultures that have no preparation for this way of living and, and it's frightening how innocent the Americans are sometimes projected policies in this way which I call mirroring-like in a mirror. They reflect onto the rest of the world what they think is the right way. Because it's right in America it doesn't mean it's right for some country in Africa or Southeast Asia and what is amazing is that the World's most powerful country, you would think, would have enough sophistication and they do! They have very well-trained people who know those countries in and out and yet many times they have tried to run through a programme that doesn't fit.

I have just been reading something today in Foreign Affairs magazine on how one of the big mistakes the US is making with China is trying to react to everything that China is doing instead of coming up with a clear, long vision that upholds the culture of the true American values, they're trying to 'out China' China. If China makes a move in the South Pacific, the Americans have to react many times on short notice, it's like a knee-jerk reaction problem. You have an administration that lasts four years and it can change. The Chinese set policies that go thirty years into the future, and they stick to it!

So, it gets quite complicated when the US intervenes overseas. There is a lot more involved domestically for the American leaders than just doing the right thing overseas. The financial budget, the political support they need to have a foreign intervention, whether it's economic, political, or military, they catch it in religious terms, the catch it in moralistic terms and, many times, it's just about money (laughs cynically).

You mentioned before, one of the phrases you used was trying to 'out China.' In that sense is it possible to say that the US is, even though it still has the same peacekeeper, 'we must make the world safe' mentality, it's taking a bit of a back-step?

For example, after WW1, it was a mixture between isolationism and interventionism where it participated in a lot of foreign affairs but not in foreign wars. This is contrary to after WW11, where it 'jumped' into another war just five years later. Now, following the disaster in the Middle East...

I just wanted to point out that there were quite a few military interventions between the wars

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in the mid 20's and 30's, the US invaded Haiti. They didn't like that the Haitians were doing something with the gold. Anyway, they invaded Haiti, they didn't stay quiet between the wars and that intervention was backed up with religious rhetoric as well.

But anyway, please continue, I'm sorry.

No, thank you. It's a point that I'm glad you brought up.

My question is today, do you think that the mentality, even if it is still alive, is taking a step back because of the negative publicity it had in the Middle East and other affairs?

No, no as you can see here a full-scale effort to assist Ukraine, in preserving democracy, in fighting the Russian invasion, that's the US doing what they do well, and it's got the backing because someone like Putin is not gonna stay still. He's got an imperial dream for 'his' Russia and appeasing him in the Ukraine or stepping back from the Ukraine is only going to embolden this man.

One opinion amongst a lot of foreign policy talk is that he's gotta be stopped now.

There's a lot of parallels being drawn to Munich conferences with Chamberlain (British Prime Minister in 1939) appeasing Hitler, and they say no, we can't do this now, we've gotta stop Putin now! So, short of putting American troops on the ground they're pulling out many stops to help the Ukrainians so in this case it's a good example of American interventionism. They are still involved in dozens of countries, covert ventures and not so covert, so I don't think they're stepping back. I think there's a call to step back from the front line and for the US to use international treaties in a lot of other wars.

But there still are some strong maximization trends in America but it's not a realistic ideal as the US has a global stage and of course where they can do it responsibly if they, how can I say it... mature their views, be a little bit more sophisticated and a little bit more culturally sensitive to the country's impediments. But there still is a very strong drive to put right what is of interest to its US, and its own interests and that is where it gets complicated because US interests are not always looking for that.

So, the peacekeeper mentality is still alive and well and you have put the argument forward that there are, despite the fact that the peacekeeper identity is very much mythologized, romanticized and exaggerated, that there are still elements of truth to it. You mentioned the war in Ukraine which is undoubtedly a positive cause and is definitely making the world safer for democracy. So, the initial objective, even though it's been sidelined today by economic needs, is still there, that key central moral driving force does still linger on even if it is overshadowed by different things.

Yes, but I wouldn't call it peacekeeping. The US is not interested in peacekeeping roles. When they get involved it's to put things in order the way they want things. I don't know, peacekeeping is a UN (United Nations) role, I don't see the US as a peacekeeper. They say they want to have a peaceful world, but they're involved militarily globally every day of the year somewhere. They are not necessarily peacekeepers. I don't think that's the right word. I'd be careful about using that word.

Now I've used the word peacekeeper because that's the term that was used both by Roosevelt and Wilson when this 'make the world safer' mentality was first put into place. But that doesn't mean that it is the actual way it works out, especially not in the way the rest of the

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world views them. But that was the initial perception they had of themselves at least.

I'm not sure, I'm not clear on that part of history but I don't know that they viewed themselves as peacekeepers more than as they had the right to do 'the right thing' to remove tyranny. To give people freedom and that usually costs military intervention which is not peacekeeping.

The US is there to defend human rights, to free the oppressed, to fight tyranny and all that is open to interpretation too because in our fight against communism we supported some tyrannical sons of bitches' dictators who were anti-communist. So, it's all relative.

Henry Kissinger, who was considered a master statesman, diplomat, was very actively involved in prolonging He wasn't looking for peace in the Middle East, he was looking for a status quo. He was trying to avoid things from getting worse and if that meant an ongoing simmering conflict, he was never ... I have just finished reading this huge book on Kissinger so it's on my mind (laughs). But his goal was not to get, to settle for peace in the Middle East, he was there to prevent things from getting any worse and if that meant keeping a certain amount of belligerency going on between different countries, that was better than a bleeding war and he was also very intent on keeping the Soviets out of the Middle East. Though he railed politics (which is a term on how Kissinger behaved) it was a whole occupation in terms of human life and territorial boundaries. It was a game and is still considered a game.

I'm sorry, I'm moving off track here. There are so many dimensions to what we're talking about in my mind, I'm traveling all over the place. Keep me on message, let's go!

It's not a problem. I think one of my final questions is on the theme and how the role of the peacekeeper mentality has evolved.

We've talked about how the US views itself and we've talked about what fuels modern day US foreign relations but, how do you feel that today, how the US is viewed? Going back again to WW1, the view from the majority at that point of the US was still very much the 'City on the Hill', a golden light to civilization and that was an enormous part of what made their war to save democracy so fundamental and believed—especially. Does that belief, or at least does that universal view of the USA still hold true today or has it been slowly eroded, washed away by a century of US foreign policy?

A century of US foreign policy which was made up by a lot of failures. For example, yes, in the bright shining city on the hill it was not so very neat. A lot of foreign governments who needed US aid will 'talk the talk' and the US is still expected to intervene. Let's just say that the UN, Europe, and NATO can't do anything without the US leading.

The Europeans would never have gotten this far on their own. So, it is still very much a force to be dealt with, but people are never sure if they're going to be there for you tomorrow.

This is when the Americans are here when it's interesting to them. But are they going to be here when we need them? And that I'd say is a universal view, that the US can't really be trusted all the time unless there's an economic stake, and then what happens if Trump comes in in the next term again and gets re-elected? We got to start from zero again.

So, there's this... there's always this hope that the US will come in and the invaders will think, let's give them a wide berth as here come the Americans with their money and their big machines and big efforts. And they can do things right when they want to! But they can screw it up really as well. Afghanistan, so many other places.... Syria. There is only so much the

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country can do.

So, the view is there, that we hope the Americans come in and help us. We hope the Americans come in and say what happens afterwards when the Americans are done and pull out. They don't stay in for the long haul. In Iraq, they pulled out of the place and pilloried it. Afghanistan, they ran out of there with the tail between their legs. Haiti, they pulled out and left an anarchic economy.

I don't know, that's my opinion. I mean when I travel, that's what I hear and what I read, that this is that the US is not a partner you can always count on. We totally come in, we hopefully set things right. I think that's kind of the view that's out there.

Thank you, Alex, that's perfect. That answers all my questions.

Did it really?

It really did! Thank you.

Length of interview 31minutes 33 seconds

Links

Subject profile:

<https://www.alexquesada.com/content.html?page=2>

