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# The Untold History of the United States (English Edition)



*Par Oliver Stone, Peter Kuznick*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurA companion to Oliver Stones ten-part Showtime documentary series in the tradition of Howard Zinns Peoples History of the United States, this cutting-edge and provocative book challenges the status quo of American history. Multiple Academy Award-winner Oliver Stone (once called Dostoevsky behind a camera) has directed such iconic movies as Platoon, Wall Street, JFK, Natural Born Killers, and W and is known for his often controversial point of view and probing exploration of weighty historical and political topics. Now, Stone collaborates with esteemed American University professor Peter Kuznick to present our countrys secret history, one that has been unearthed through recently discovered archives and

newly declassified material. Filled with poignant photos and little-known historical facts, this book covers the rise of the American Empire and national security state from the late nineteenth century through the Obama administration, revealing how deeply rooted the seemingly aberrant policies of the Bush-Cheney administration are in the nations past and why it has proven so difficult for President Obama to significantly change course. By discerning patterns that have previously gone unrecognized and examining the most recently released classified documents, Stone and Kuznick challenge prevailing orthodoxies and ask questions not normally raised. The result is not the kind of history taught in schools or represented on television or in popular movies, and it will come as a surprise to the vast majority of American and global citizens, shocking and astounding both experts and history-lovers alike.

**Extrait**

### The Untold History of the United States Chapter 1 WORLD WAR I: Wilson vs. Lenin

The election of 1912 found Woodrow Wilson, a former president of Princeton University and governor of New Jersey, in a hard-fought four-party race against two former presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft and Socialist Eugene Debs. Though Wilson won the electoral college vote handily, the popular vote was closer: he received 42 percent to 27 percent for Roosevelt, the Progressive Party candidate, and 23 percent for Taft. Debs, running for a fourth time, tallied 6 percent of the vote. Wilson would put his personal stamp on the office and the country to a much greater extent than his immediate predecessor or his successors. Descended from Presbyterian ministers on both sides of the family, Wilson could be strongly moralistic and infuriatingly and self-righteously inflexible. His rigidity was often fueled by the dangerous belief that he was carrying out Gods plan. He shared his predecessors sense of the United States global mission. In 1907, the Princeton president declared, The doors of the nations which are closed must be battered down.... Concessions obtained by financiers must be safeguarded by ministers of state, even if the sovereignty of unwilling nations be outraged in the process.<sup>1</sup> In keeping with that sentiment, he would repeatedly transgress against the sovereignty of unwilling nations. And he shared his southern forebears sense of white racial superiority, taking steps to resegregate the federal government during his tenure in office. Wilson even screened D. W. Griffiths pioneering though notoriously racist film *Birth of a Nation* at the White House in 1915 for cabinet members and their families. In the film, a heroic Ku Klux Klan gallops in just in time to save white southerners, especially helpless women, from the clutches of brutish, lascivious freedmen and their corrupt white allies a perverse view of history that was then being promulgated in less extreme terms by William Dunning and his students at Columbia University. Upon viewing the film, Wilson commented, It is like writing history with Lightning and my only regret is that it is all so terribly true.<sup>2</sup> As Richard Hofstadter noted over seventy years ago, Wilsons political roots were Southern, his intellectual traditions were English. Among the English thinkers, he was most taken with the conservative views of Walter Bagehot. Bagehots influence was apparent in Wilsons 1889 study *The State*, in which Wilson wrote, In politics nothing radically novel may safely be attempted. No result of value can ever be reached... except through slow and gradual development, the careful adaptations and nice modifications of growth. What he liked about the American Revolution was that, in his view, it wasnt revolutionary at all. The French Revolution, on the other hand, was an abomination. He deplored Thomas Jeffersons embrace of revolution in general and the French Revolution in particular. He disapproved of labor and agrarian radicalism and expressed greater sympathy for business than for labor. Overall, Wilson had a deep abhorrence of radical change in any form.<sup>3</sup> Wilsons hatred of revolution and staunch defense of U.S. trade and investment would color his presidency and influence his policies both at home and abroad. There is nothing in which I am more interested than the fullest development of the trade of this country and its righteous conquest of foreign markets, he told the Foreign Trade Convention in 1914.<sup>4</sup> Together these views shaped Wilsons policy toward Mexico, where American bankers and businessmen, particularly oilmen, had a major stake in the outcome of the revolution. Between 1900 and 1910, U.S. investments in Mexico doubled to nearly \$2 billion, giving Americans ownership of approximately 43 percent of Mexican property values, 10 percent more than Mexicans themselves owned.<sup>5</sup> William Randolph Hearst alone held over 17 million acres. U.S. and British corporations had thrived under Porfirio Dazs three-decade dictatorship, laying siege to almost all of Mexicos minerals, railroads, and oil.<sup>6</sup> They had reason for concern when Francisco Maderos revolutionary forces overthrew Daz in 1911. Many U.S. businessmen quickly soured on the new regime and applauded when Victoriano Huerta, with the support of U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Henry Lane Wilson, ousted Madero in the waning days of the Taft administration.<sup>7</sup> But Woodrow Wilson, upon coming to power, not only refused to recognize the new government, whose legitimacy he questioned, he sent tens of thousands of troops to the Mexican border and warships to the oil fields near Tampico and the port of Vera Cruz. Wilson, who had once voiced a desire to

teach Latin Americans to elect good men,<sup>8</sup> itched for an excuse to intervene directly, overthrow Huerta, and tutor the backward Mexicans in good government. He got what he wanted on April 14, 1914, when U.S. sailors who rowed to Tampico were arrested for being in a war zone without a permit. When the Mexican commanding officer released them a couple hours later, he apologized both to them and to their U.S. commanding officer, Admiral Henry Mayo, who refused to accept the apology in the face of such an insult. Mayo demanded that the Mexican forces give a twenty-one-gun salute to the American flag. Instead, General Huerta added his apology and promised to punish the responsible Mexican officer. Over the objections of Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan and Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, Wilson backed Mayo. He rejected Huerta's offer of a reciprocal salute by the two sides and asked Congress to authorize the U.S. military to exact the fullest recognition of the rights and dignity of the United States.<sup>9</sup> Congress eagerly complied. Wilson sent a force of seven battleships, four fully manned marine troop transports, and numerous destroyers to Mexico. When Mexicans at Vera Cruz resisted U.S. seizure of a customhouse, over 150 were killed. Six thousand marines occupied Vera Cruz for seven months. In August 1914, U.S.-backed Venustiano Carranza replaced Huerta. But Carranza, a staunch nationalist, refused to bargain with Wilson, who then threw his support behind Pancho Villa, beginning a bungled series of political and military interventions into the Mexican Revolution. While the United States was busy policing its neighbors to the south, far more ominous developments were occurring in Europe. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by a Serbian fanatic on June 28, 1914, triggered a chain of events that, in August, plunged the world into the most brutal orgy of bloodshed and destruction humanity had yet seen. That predominantly European bloodletting—the Great War, World War I—would be only the start of a century of unending warfare and horrific violence, human and technological barbarism on an unimaginable scale, that would later come to be known as the American Century. The twentieth century dawned with a rush of optimism. War seemed a distant relic of a cruel and primitive past. Many people shared the optimistic belief propounded by Norman Angell in his 1910 book *The Great Illusion* that civilization had advanced beyond the point where war was possible. Such optimism proved illusory indeed. Europe was awash in imperial rivalries. Great Britain, with its powerful navy, had reigned supreme in the nineteenth century. But its economic model of cannibalizing the economies of increasing parts of the globe and not investing in its own homegrown manufacturing was failing. Reflecting Great Britain's ossified social order and lack of investment at home was the fact that, in 1914, only 1 percent of young Brits graduated from high schools compared with 9 percent of their U.S. counterparts.<sup>10</sup> As a result, Great Britain was being eclipsed by the United States in terms of industrial production, and, more ominously, its continental rival Germany was competing in the production of steel, electrical power, chemical energy, agriculture, iron, coal, and textiles. Germany's banks and railroads were growing, and in the battle for oil, the newest strategic fuel that was necessary to power modern navies, Germany's merchant fleet was rapidly gaining on Great Britain's. Great Britain was now 65 percent dependent on U.S. oil and 20 percent on Russian and was coveting potential new reserves of the Middle East, which were part of the tottering Ottoman Empire. A latecomer to the imperial land grab, Germany felt cheated of its due. It intended to right that wrong. Its economic and political penetration of the Ottoman Empire worried Great Britain. It set its sights on Africa. It wanted more. Other troubling signs appeared. A European arms race was occurring on land and, especially, at sea, where Great Britain and Germany battled for naval dominance. Great Britain's big-gun dreadnought class of battleships gave it the upper hand for now. And European nations conscripted young men into vast standing armies. Entangling alliances threatened to turn local conflicts into global conflagrations. And in August 1914, when Austria-Hungary declared war against Serbia, what looked like a third Balkan war quickly spiraled out of control. The Central Powers—Germany, Turkey, and Austria-Hungary—lined up against the Triple Entente—France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and Russia. Others would soon join. The battlefields would run red with blood. Only Europe's large socialist and labor parties and trade unions could prevent the slaughter. Many belonged to the socialist Second International. They knew that the most important conflict was between capital and labor, not German workers and their British counterparts. They pledged that if the capitalists went to war, the workers would refuse to follow. Why, they asked, should workers die to enrich their exploiters? Many supported a general strike. The more radical, like Vladimir Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, vowed, if war started, to overthrow the capitalist regimes. Hopes of stopping the madness rested with Germany, where the Social Democrats were the largest party in parliament, and with France. But those hopes were crushed when German socialists, claiming they had to defend the country against the Russian hordes, voted for war credits and the French, vowing to defend against the autocratic Germans, did the same.

Only in Russia and Serbia did the socialists stand true. In country after country, nationalism trumped internationalism, loyalty to nation outweighed loyalty to class. Europes naive young men marched off to die for God, glory, greed, and defense of the fatherland. Humanity was dealt a blow from which it has never fully recovered. The slaughter was on as civilization plunged into what Henry James described as this abyss of blood and darkness.<sup>11</sup> American social reformer Reverend John Haynes Holmes expressed the crushing impact it had on reformers everywhere: suddenly, in the wink of an eye, three hundred years of progress is tossed into the melting-pot. Civilization is all gone, and barbarism come.<sup>12</sup> Most Americans sympathized with the Allies against the Central Powers, but few clamored to join the fight. Americans of all political persuasions feared getting dragged into Europes bloodletting. Eugene Debs urged workers to oppose the war, wisely observing Let the capitalists do their own fighting and furnish their own corpses and there will never be another war on the face of the earth.<sup>13</sup> As reports of the fighting filtered in, antiwar sentiment held strong. The most popular song of 1915 was I Didnt Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier. Despite overwhelming sympathy for the Allies, the United States declared neutrality in the war. But many Americans, particularly those of German, Irish, and Italian heritage, sided with the Central Powers. We have to be neutral, Wilson explained, since otherwise our mixed populations would wage war on each other.<sup>14</sup> It was, however, a neutrality in principle more than in practice. Economic interests clearly placed the United States in the Allied camp. Between 1914, when the war began, and 1917, when the United States entered, U.S. banks loaned \$2.5 billion to the Allies but only \$27 million to the Central Powers. The House of Morgan was especially involved, serving as the British governments sole purchasing agent between 1915 and 1917. Eighty-four percent of Allied munitions bought in the United States during those years passed through Morgan hands.<sup>15</sup> Overall, the \$3 billion the United States was selling to Great Britain and France by 1916 dwarfed the miniscule \$1 million it sold to Germany and Austria-Hungary. Although deep-seated resentments toward Great Britain, stemming from the Revolutionary period and the War of 1812, had not completely abated, most Americans identified the Allied nations as democracies and Germany as a repressive autocracy. Czarist Russias involvement on the Allied side made it difficult to draw such clear lines. And both sides regularly violated the United States neutral rights. Great Britain, relying on its superior naval power, launched a blockade of northern European ports. Germany retaliated with a U-boat (the German word for submarine was Unterseeboot) campaign that threatened neutral shipping. Wilson accepted the Allied blockade but protested vigorously against Germanys actions. Bryan foresaw clearly that Wilsons tilt toward the Allies would drag the United States into the war and tried to maintain a more evenhanded approach. He had opposed allowing loans to the combatants, warning Wilson, Money is the worst of all contrabands because it commands everything else.<sup>16</sup> Though intent on remaining neutral so that he could help mediate an end to the war, Wilson rejected Bryans effort to bar U.S. citizens from traveling on belligerents ships. In May 1915, Germany sank the British liner Lusitania, leaving 1,200 dead, including 128 Americans. Roosevelt called for war. Despite initial disclaimers, the ship was in fact carrying a large cargo of arms to Great Britain. Bryan demanded that Wilson condemn the British blockade of Germany as well as the German attack, seeing both as infringements of neutral rights. When Wilson refused, Bryan resigned in protest. Though Wilson had won reelection in 1916 on the slogan He kept us out of war, he was increasingly coming to believe that if the United States didnt join the war, it would be denied a role in shaping the postwar world.<sup>17</sup> On January 22, 1917, Wilson dramatically delivered the first formal presidential address to the Senate since the days of George Washington. He laid bare his soaring vision for peace and the future. He called for peace without victory based on core American principles: self-determination, freedom of the seas, and an open world with no entangling alliances. The centerpiece of such a world would be a league of nations that could enforce the peace, a demand initially advanced by groups within Americas peace movement such as the Womans Peace Party. When he concluded, the Senate erupted in applause. Senator John Shafroth of Colorado called it the greatest message of a century.<sup>18</sup> The Atlanta Constitution wrote, Startling, staggering, astounding, the noblest utterance that has fallen from human lips since the Declaration of Independence, were among the expressions of senators. The president himself after his address said: I have said what everybody has been longing for, but has thought impossible. Now it appears to be possible.<sup>19</sup> Despite the Republicans carping, Wilsons peace message struck the right chord with most Americans. But the Europeans, having shed rivers of blood in two and a half years of fighting, were not feeling so magnanimous. French writer Anatole France observed that peace without victory was like bread without yeast, a camel without humps, or a town without brothel... an insipid thing that would be fetid, ignominious, obscene, fistulous, hemorrhoidal.<sup>20</sup> Germanys resumption of submarine warfare on January 31, 1917, after a

hiatus of almost a year, and its clumsy appeal to Mexico for a wartime military alliance that would facilitate a Mexican reconquest of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, intensified anti-German sentiment and heightened the pressure on Wilson to intervene. But Wilson's real motive was his belief that only by entering the war could he be guaranteed a voice in negotiations.<sup>21</sup> When Jane Addams and other leaders of the Emergency Peace Federation visited Wilson at the White House on February 28, the president explained that as head of a nation participating in the war, the President of the United States would have a seat at the Peace

Table, but that if he remained the representative of a neutral country he could at best only call through a crack in the door. The appeal he made was, in substance, that the foreign policies which we so extravagantly admired could have a chance if he were there to push and to defend them, but not otherwise.<sup>22</sup> On April 2, 1917, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war, saying, the world must be made safe for democracy.

Six opposed it in the Senate, including Robert La Follette of Wisconsin, and fifty voted against it in the House, including Jeannette Rankin of Montana, the first woman elected to Congress. Opponents attacked Wilson as a tool of Wall Street. We are about to put the dollar sign on the American flag, charged Senator George Norris of Nebraska.<sup>23</sup> La Follette exaggerated when claiming that the American people would vote against the war by more than a ten-to-one margin, but opposition did run deep. Despite government appeals for a million volunteers, reports of the horrors of trench warfare and poison gas dampened enthusiasm. Only 73,000 signed up in the first six weeks, forcing Congress to institute a draft. Among those who did volunteer

was future historian William Langer, who later remembered the eagerness of the men to get to France and above all to reach the front. One would think, he reasoned, that, after almost four years of war, after the most detailed and realistic accounts of murderous fighting on the Somme and around Verdun, to say nothing of the day-to-day agony of trench warfare, it would have been all but impossible to get anyone to serve without duress. But it was not so. We and many thousands of others volunteered.... I can hardly remember a single instance of serious discussion of American policy or of larger war issues. We men, most of us young, were simply fascinated by the prospect of adventure and heroism. Most of us, I think, had the feeling that life, if we survived, would run in the familiar, routine channel. Here was our one great chance for excitement and risk. We could not afford to pass it up.<sup>24</sup> Among those offering to serve was fifty-eight-year-old Teddy Roosevelt, who visited Wilson on April 10 and requested permission to lead a division of volunteers into battle. Roosevelt was so eager to go to the front that he even promised to cease his attacks on Wilson.

Wilson denied his request. Roosevelt accused him of basing his decision on political calculations. Among those who criticized Wilson's decision was soon-to-be French prime minister Georges Clemenceau, who thought Roosevelt's presence would be inspirational. Imbued with the martial spirit and patriotism of their father, all four of Roosevelt's sons did enlist and see combat. Ted, Jr., and Archie were wounded in action. Ted was also gassed at Cantigny. Twenty-year old Quentin, the youngest of the children, was killed when his plane was shot down in July 1918, a blow from which his father would never recover. Theodore Roosevelt's health declined rapidly and he died within six months at age sixty, having been able to witness, from a safe distance, the horrors of modern warfare. Unfortunately for Wilson, not all Americans were as gung ho as the Roosevelts. Because antiwar sentiment had run so deep in much of the country, the Wilson

administration felt compelled to take extraordinary measures to convince the skeptical public of the righteousness of the cause. For that purpose, the government established an official propaganda agency—the Committee on Public Information (CPI) headed by Denver newspaperman George Creel. The committee recruited 75,000 volunteers, known as four-minute men, who delivered short patriotic speeches in public venues across the country, including shopping districts, streetcars, movie theaters, and churches. It flooded the nation with propaganda touting the war as a noble crusade for democracy and encouraged newspapers to print stories highlighting German atrocities. It also asked Americans to inform on fellow citizens who criticized the war effort. CPI advertisements urged magazine readers to report to the Justice Department the man who spreads pessimistic stories... cries for peace, or belittles our efforts to win the war.<sup>25</sup> Underlying

Wilson's wartime declarations and the CPI's emphasis on promoting democracy was the realization that for many Americans democracy had become a kind of secular religion that could exist only within a capitalist system. Many also associated it with Americanism. It meant more than a set of identifiable institutions. As Creel said on one occasion, it is a theory of spiritual progress. On another occasion, he explained, Democracy is a religion with me, and throughout my whole adult life I have preached America as the hope of the world.<sup>26</sup> Newspapers voluntarily fell in line behind the propaganda effort as they had in 1898 and would in all future U.S. wars. Victor Clark's study of the wartime press for the National Board for Historical Service (NBHS) remarkably but revealingly concluded that the voluntary cooperation of the newspaper

publishers of America resulted in a more effective standardization of the information and arguments presented to the American people, than existed under the nominally strict military control exercised in Germany.<sup>27</sup> Historians also rallied to the cause. Creel established the CPIs Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation under the leadership of University of Minnesota historian Guy Stanton Ford. Several of the nations leading historians, including Charles Beard, Carl Becker, John R. Commons, J. Franklin Jameson, and Andrew McLaughlin, assisted Ford in simultaneously promoting U.S. aims and demonizing the enemy. Fords introduction to one CPI pamphlet decries the Pied Pipers of Prussianism, declaring, Before them is the war god, to whom they have offered up their reason and their humanity; behind them the misshapen image they have made of the German people, leering with bloodstained visage over the ruins of civilization.<sup>28</sup> The Committee on Public Information, the governments official wartime propaganda agency, recruited 75,000 volunteers, known as four-minute men, to deliver short patriotic speeches across the country. They flooded the nation with pro-war propaganda and urged Americans to inform on the man who spreads pessimistic stories... cries for peace, or belittles our efforts to win the war. The CPIs penultimate pamphlet, The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy, proved to be its most controversial. Based on documents obtained by the head of the CPIs foreign section and former Associate Chairman Edgar Sisson, the pamphlet alleged that Lenin and Trotsky and their associates were paid German agents who were betraying the Russian people on behalf of the imperial German government. The documents, for which Sisson paid lavishly, were widely known to be forgeries in Europe and were similarly suspected by the State Department. Wilsons chief foreign policy advisor, Colonel Edward House, wrote in his diary that he told the president that their publication signified a virtual declaration of war upon the Bolshevik Government and Wilson said he understood. Publication was withheld for four months. Wilson and the CPI ignored all warnings and released them to the press in seven installments beginning on September 15, 1918.<sup>29</sup> Most U.S. newspapers dutifully reported the story uncritically and unquestioningly. The New York Times, for example, ran a story under the headline Documents Prove Lenine and Trotzky [sic] Hired by Germans.<sup>30</sup> But controversy quickly erupted as the New York Evening Post challenged their authenticity, noting that the most important charges in the documents brought forward by Mr. Sisson were published in Paris months ago, and have, on the whole, been discredited.<sup>31</sup> Within a week, the Times and the Washington Post were both reporting charges by S. Nuorteva, the head of the Finnish Information Bureau, that the documents were widely known to be brazen forgeries.<sup>32</sup> Sisson and Creel defended their authenticity. Creel responded angrily to Nuortevas allegations: That is a lie! The government of the United States put out these documents and their authenticity is backed by the government. This is bolshevik propaganda and when an unsupported bolshevik attacks them it is hardly worth bothering about.<sup>33</sup> He flailed wildly in a threatening letter to the editor of the Evening Post: I say to you flatly that the New York Evening Post cannot escape the charge of having given aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States in an hour of national crisis. These documents were published with the full authority of the Government behind them. They were not given out until there was every conviction that they were absolutely genuine.... I do not make the charge that the New York Evening Post is German or that it has taken German money, but I do say that the service it has rendered to the enemies of the United States would have been purchased gladly by those enemies, and in terms of unrest and industrial stability this supposedly American paper has struck a blow at America more powerful [than] could possibly have been dealt by German hands.<sup>34</sup> Acceding to Creels request, the NBHS set up a committee, comprised of Jameson, the head of the Department of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution, and Samuel Harper, a professor of Russian language at the University of Chicago, to review the documents. They confirmed the authenticity of most of the fraudulent documents. The Nation charged that the documents and NBHS report spoiled the good name of the Government and the integrity of American historical scholarship.<sup>35</sup> In 1956, George Kennan proved once and for all what most suspected: the documents were indeed forgeries.<sup>36</sup> Historians and other academics complicity in selling wartime propaganda brought well-deserved opprobrium down on their heads during the interwar period. In 1927, H. L. Menckens American Mercury deplored the knee-jerk patriotic conformity that sullied all the countrys top colleges and universities. Charles Angoff wrote, Bacteriologists, physicists and chemists vied with philosophers, philologists and botanists in shouting maledictions upon the Hun, and thousands took to snooping upon their brethren as entertained the least doubt about the sanctity of the war.... Such guilt against American idealism was sufficient cause, in the eyes of all patriotic university presidents and boards of trustees, for the immediate dismissal of the traitors.<sup>37</sup> Despite the well-deserved criticism, controlling public opinion became a central element in all future war planning. Harold Lasswell identified its importance in his

1927 book *Propaganda Technique in the World War*. Lasswell wrote: During the war period it came to be recognized that the mobilization of men and means was not sufficient; there must be a mobilization of opinion. Power over opinion, as over life and property, passed into official hands, because the danger from license was greater than the danger of abuse. Indeed, there is no question but that government management of opinion is the unescapable corollary of large-scale modern war. The only question is the degree to which the government should try to conduct its propaganda secretly, and the degree to which it should conduct it openly.<sup>38</sup> Campuses became hotbeds of intolerance. University professors who spoke against the war were fired. Others were cowed into silence. As Columbia University President Nicholas Murray Butler exclaimed in announcing the end of academic freedom on campus: What had been tolerated before became intolerable now. What had been wrongheadedness was now sedition. What had been folly was now treason... there is and will be no place in Columbia University, either on the rolls of its Faculties or on the rolls of its students, for any person who opposes or counsels opposition to the effective enforcement of the laws of the United States, or who acts, speaks, or writes treason. The separation of any such person from Columbia University will be as speedy as the discovery of his offense.<sup>39</sup> This was no idle threat. The following October, Columbia announced the firing of two prominent faculty members for their outspoken opposition to the war.

Professors James McKeen Cattell, one of the nations leading psychologists, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, a grandson of the poet, were condemned by the faculty and trustees as well as by Butler. The official university statement charged that they had done grave injury to the university by their public agitation against the conduct of the war. The *New York Times* commented, Since the declaration of war against Germany Professor Cattell has been especially obnoxious to the Columbia Faculty because of his unhesitating denunciation of a war policy by our Government. Dana was ousted because of his active role in the antiwar Peoples Council.<sup>40</sup> Applauding Columbias action, the *Times* editorialized, The fantasies of academic freedom... cannot protect a professor who counsels resistance to the law and speaks, writes, disseminates treason. That a teacher of youth should teach sedition and treason, that he should infect, or seek to infect, youthful minds with ideas fatal to their duty to the country, is intolerable.<sup>41</sup> The following week, Professor Charles Beard, arguably the nations leading historian in the first half of the twentieth century, resigned in protest. Although an early and fervent supporter of the war and a harsh critic of German imperialism, he condemned the control of the university by a small and active group of trustees who have no standing in the world of education, who are reactionary and visionless in politics, narrow and mediaeval in religion. Beard explained that, despite his own enthusiastic support for the war, thousands of my countrymen do not share this view. Their opinions cannot be changed by curses or bludgeons. Arguments addressed to their reason and understandings are the best hope.<sup>42</sup> Beard had already incurred the ire of several trustees the previous spring when he declared at a conference, If we have to suppress everything we dont like to hear, this country is on a pretty wobbly basis. This country was founded on disrespect and the denial of authority, and it is no time to stop free discussion. At least two other faculty members also resigned in solidarity, and historian James H. Robinson and philosopher John Dewey condemned the firings and expressed regret at Beards resignation.<sup>43</sup> In December, Beard charged that reactionary trustees saw the war as an opportunity to drive out or humiliate or terrorize every man who held progressive, liberal, unconventional views on political matters in no way connected with the war. Similar purges of left-wing professors, as well as the application of very strong pressure on grammar and high school teachers, occurred throughout the country.<sup>44</sup> The War Department went one step further, turning the docile campuses into military training grounds. On October 1, 1918, 140,000 students on more than five hundred campuses across the country were simultaneously inducted into the army as part of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC). Given the rank of private, they were thereafter educated, housed, clothed, equipped, and fed at government expense.<sup>45</sup> They also received privates pay. The *Chicago Tribune* reported, Rah-rah days are over for American college boys.... College hereafter is to mean businesslargely intensive preparation for the business of war.<sup>46</sup> Eleven hours per week were slated for military drills, on top of forty-two hours of courses on largely military-oriented essential and allied subjects. As part of this training, students at participating institutions were required to take a propaganda-laden War Issues Course.<sup>47</sup> Having drawn blood in his personal campaign to make the universities safe for democracy, Butler set his sights higher, calling for the ouster of Robert La Follette from the U.S. Senate for his treasonous opposition to the war. Butler told three thousand wildly cheering delegates to the annual convention of the American Bankers Association in Atlantic City that they might just as well put poison into the food of every boy who went to war as to permit this man to make war upon the nation in the halls of congress.<sup>48</sup> La Follette was also

targeted by members of the University of Wisconsin faculty, over 90 percent of whom signed a petition condemning his antiwar position and several of whom began a drive to put La Follette and all his supporters out of business, according to one of the campaigns leaders.<sup>49</sup> Wisconsin's Robert Fighting Bob La Follette was one of six senators who voted against U.S. entry into World War I. La Follette survived the national campaign to force his ouster, but the Bill of Rights didn't fare as well. Congress passed some of the most repressive legislation in the country's history. The Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 curbed speech and created a climate of intolerance toward dissent. Under the Espionage Act, people faced \$10,000 fines and up to twenty years in jail for obstructing military operations in wartime. It targeted

Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the U.S.<sup>50</sup> The act empowered Postmaster General Albert Burleson, who, socialist Norman Thomas said, didn't know socialism from rheumatism, to ban from the mail any literature he believed advocated treason or insurrection or opposed the draft.<sup>51</sup> The following year, Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory convinced Congress to expand the act to ban anyone who might utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States... and whoever shall by word or act support or favor the cause of any country with which the United States is at war or by word or act oppose the cause of the United States.<sup>52</sup> The agents hired to enforce this crackdown on dissent were part of a burgeoning federal bureaucracy. The federal budget, which was less than \$1 billion in 1913, had ballooned to over \$13 billion five years later. Hundreds of people were jailed for criticizing the war, including IWW leader Big Bill Haywood and Socialist Eugene Debs. Debs spoke out repeatedly against the war and was finally arrested in June 1918 after addressing a large crowd outside the prison in Canton, Ohio, where three Socialists were being held for opposing the draft. Debs ridiculed the idea that the United States was a democracy when it jailed people for expressing their views: They tell us that we live in a great free republic; that our institutions are democratic; that we are a free and self-governing people. This is too much, even for a joke.<sup>53</sup> He spoke only briefly of the war itself: Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder.... And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles.<sup>54</sup> The U.S. attorney for northern Ohio, E.

S. Wertz, ignoring the advice of the Justice Department, had Debs indicted on ten violations of the Espionage Act. In solidarity with his jailed comrades around the world, Debs pleaded guilty to the charges. He told the jury, I have been accused of obstructing the war. I admit it. Gentlemen, I abhor war. I would oppose war if I stood alone.... I have sympathy with the suffering, struggling people everywhere. It does not make any difference under what flag they were born, or where they live. Prior to sentencing, he addressed the judge: Your honor, years ago I recognized my kinship within all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on earth. I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.<sup>55</sup> Upbraiding those who would strike the sword from the hand of this nation while she is engaged in defending

herself against a foreign and brutal power, the judge sentenced Debs to ten years in prison.<sup>56</sup> Socialist publications were banned from the mail. Patriotic thugs and local authorities broke into socialist organizations and union halls. Labor organizers and antiwar activists were beaten and sometimes killed. The

New York Times called the Butte, Montana, lynching of IWW Executive Board member Frank Little a deplorable and detestable crime, whose perpetrators should be found, tried, and punished by the law and justice they have outraged. But the Times was far more upset by the fact that IWW-led strikes were crippling the war effort and concluded, The IWW agitators are in effect, and perhaps in fact, agents of Germany. The Federal authorities should make short work of these treasonable conspirators against the United States.<sup>57</sup>

Under the 1917 Espionage Act, the U.S. imprisoned hundreds of draft protesters and war critics, including IWW leader Big Bill Haywood and the Socialist Eugene Debs. Debs (pictured here addressing a crowd in Chicago in 1912) had urged workers to oppose the war, proclaiming Let the capitalists do their own fighting and furnish their own corpses and there will never be another war on the face of the earth. All things German were vilified in a wave of intolerance masquerading as patriotism. Schools, many of which now demanded loyalty oaths from teachers, banned the German language from their curricula. Iowa, not taking any chances, went further and, under the 1918 Babel Proclamation, banned the speaking of all foreign languages in public and over the telephone. Nebraska followed suit. Libraries across the country discarded German books, and orchestras dropped German composers from their repertoires. Just as French fries would later be renamed

freedom fries by a know-nothing Congress furious at French opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, their World War I counterparts renamed hamburgers liberty sandwiches, sauerkraut liberty cabbage, German measles liberty measles, and German shepherds police dogs.<sup>58</sup> German Americans faced discrimination in all aspects of life. Given the widespread pressure for 100 percent Americanism, it is no surprise that dissidents were not only ostracized, they were occasionally murdered by patriotic mobs.<sup>59</sup> The Washington Post assured its readers that occasional lynchings were a small price to pay for a healthy upsurge of patriotism. The Post editorialized in April 1918, In spite of excesses such as lynchings, it is a healthful and wholesome awakening in the interior part of the country. Enemy propaganda must be stopped, even if a few lynchings may occur.<sup>60</sup> The nations heartland had indeed been slow to rally to the cause. Early on, the conservative Akron, Ohio, Beacon-Journal noted that there was scarcely a political observer... but what will admit that were an election to come now a mighty tide of socialism would inundate the Middle West. The country had never embarked upon a more unpopular war, it contended. Antiwar rallies drew thousands. Socialist Party candidates saw their votes increase exponentially in 1917 in cities throughout the country. Ten Socialists won seats in the New York State Legislature.<sup>61</sup> Despite the ostracism, mass arrests, and organized violence, the Socialists and radical laborites known as Wobblies would not be silenced. While some Americans marched off to war to the strains of the hit song Over There, the Wobblies responded with a parody of Onward Christian Soldiers titled Christians at War, which began Onward, Christian soldiers! Dutys way is plain; Slay your Christian neighbors, or by them be slain. And ended with History will say of you: That pack of God damned fools.<sup>62</sup> Wilsons lofty rhetoric and assurances about fighting a war to end all wars seduced many of the nations leading progressives, including John Dewey, Herbert Croly, and Walter Lippmann. They convinced themselves that war afforded a unique opportunity to implement long-desired reforms at home. Antiwar midwestern progressives like Senators La Follette and Norris more accurately understood that war presaged the death knell of meaningful reform. Among those who seized the opportunity to implement long-sought changes were the moral reformers, especially those who viewed the war as an opportunity to combat sexual vice. Ostensibly concerned about the health of the soldiers, they waged an aggressive campaign against prostitution and venereal disease. Red-light districts around the country were shut down, driving prostitutes underground and into the hands of pimps and other exploiters.<sup>63</sup> The crackdown intensified after the passage of the Chamberlain-Kahn Act in 1918, according to which any woman walking alone near a military base was subject to arrest, incarceration, and a forced gynecological exam, which reformers condemned as speculum rape. Those found to have venereal disease were quarantined in federal institutions.<sup>64</sup> The Commission on Training Camp Activities (CTCA) also endeavored to rein in male sexuality with an abstinence campaign that impugned the patriotism of soldiers who contracted venereal disease. The CTCA plastered training camp walls with posters reading A German Bullet is Cleaner than a Whore and A Soldier who gets a dose is a Traitor. One pamphlet asked, How can you look the flag in the face if you were dirty with gonorrhoea?<sup>65</sup> While VD rates among soldiers did not rise as rapidly as some feared, pregnancy rates among high school girls living in the vicinity of military bases certainly did. WWI anti-venereal disease posters. Moral reformers seized on the war as an opportunity to implement long-sought changes. The Commission on Training Camp Activities (CTCA) endeavored to rein in male sexuality with an abstinence campaign that impugned the patriotism of soldiers who contracted venereal disease. General John Black Jack Pershing, who commanded the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during the war, tried to ride herd on troops when they got to France a task that proved more difficult than defeating the Germans on the battlefield. CTCA head Raymond Fosdick took notice of the vast difference between French and American sexual attitudes. The French, he observed, felt that an army could not get along without sexual indulgence and that to attempt to carry out such a policy was to court discontent, a lowering of morale and health standards, and perhaps even mutiny. French Premier Clemenceau offered to set up licensed brothels for U.S. soldiers like the ones that serviced his own fighting men. Upon receiving the letter with Clemenceaus offer, Secretary of War Newton Baker reportedly blurted out, For Gods sake... dont show this to the President or hell stop the war.<sup>66</sup> The warnings proved futile. Those afflicted were segregated and ostracized. Moral reformers feared the veterans would return home and infect American women. But that was only one concern. Reformers also worried that the troops, having discovered what some called the French Way, would foist their newfound appetite for oral sex on innocent American girls. Colonel George Walker of the urological department fretted, When one thinks of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of young men who have returned to the United States with those new and degenerate ideas sapping their sources of self-respect and thereby lessening their powers of moral

resistance, one indeed is justified in becoming alarmed.<sup>67</sup> For the most part, reformers efforts to use the war as a laboratory for social and economic experimentation were cut short by the limited duration of U.S. involvement. The war years did, however, bring unprecedented collusion between large corporations and the government in an attempt to rationalize and stabilize the economy, control unfettered competition, and guarantee profits something that the top bankers and corporate executives had striven for decades to achieve.

As a result, American banks and corporations thrived during the war, with munitions makers leading the pack. Randolph Bourne, who decried fellow progressives fraudulent rationales for defending the war in his scathing article *Twilight of Idols*, observed elsewhere that war is the health of the state.<sup>68</sup> While reformers were hard at work, U.S. troops finally began arriving in Europe, where they contributed significantly to the Allied victory. Their arrival boosted Allied morale, and they assisted in winning some major battles. Arriving late, they managed to avoid the most brutal trench warfare Europeans on both sides had endured during the darkest times in 1916, when Great Britain suffered 60,000 casualties in a single day at the Somme. France and Germany together suffered almost a million casualties during the Battle of Verdun. Ordered to charge into the teeth of German machine guns and artillery, France lost half of its young men between the ages of fifteen and thirty. Americans first saw meaningful action in May 1918, six months before the wars end, when they helped beleaguered French forces turn the tide and repulse the Germans along the Marne. In September, 600,000 Americans fought valiantly to break through the German lines. The Germans surrendered on November 11, 1918. In all, of the 2 million U.S. soldiers who reached France, over 116,000 died and 204,000 were wounded. By comparison, European casualty figures were truly staggering perhaps as many as 10 million dead soldiers and 20 million dead civilians, the latter due mostly to disease and starvation. Had the war dragged on, the casualty figures might have been much higher. The unprecedented wartime mobilization of science and technology had already begun to transform the nature of warfare. Even more frightening innovations appeared to be imminent. Atop that list was a new generation of chemical weapons. The taboo against using chemical weapons and other poisons in war dates back to the Greeks and Romans. Various efforts were made to codify this ban over the centuries. In 1863, the U.S. War Departments Lieber Code of Conduct prohibited the use of poison in any manner, be it to poison wells, or food, or arms.<sup>69</sup> Just one year earlier, in 1862, John W. Doughty, a New York schoolteacher, had sent Secretary of War Edwin Stanton a design for a projectile filled with explosives in one compartment and liquid chlorine in the other that could be used to drive Confederate troops out of their fortifications. The War Department didnt pursue that suggestion or a later one by Forrest Shepherd, formerly a professor of economic geology and agricultural chemistry at Western Reserve University, to incapacitate Confederate soldiers with hydrogen chloride vapors. Other ideas for chemical weapons were also afoot during the Civil War. An 1862 article in *Scientific American* informed readers that several incendiary and asphyxiating shells have been invented for the purpose of scattering liquid fire and noxious fumes around the space where they explode. The 1905 *Washington Evening Star* obituary of chemist William Tilden contained the following intriguing tidbit: Tilden had a scheme for producing chemically a means of settling wars quickly by making them terribly destructive. He is said to have interested General Grant in this matter, and at the suggestion of the latter finally abandoned it, because, as General Grant said, such a terrific agency for destroying human life should not be permitted to come into use by the civilized nations of the world.<sup>70</sup> Others shared Grants sense of how civilized nations should behave. The Hague Declaration Concerning Asphyxiating Gases of 1899 outlawed the wartime use of projectiles whose sole object was the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gases.<sup>71</sup> Germany broke the spirit if not the letter of the Hague Convention when it first successfully used poison gas at the Second Battle of Ypres on April 22, 1915, following an abortive attempt at Bolimw on the eastern front. A yellowish green plume of chlorine gas blanketed French troops along four miles of trenches with catastrophic results. Over six hundred soon lay dead. Many more were temporarily blinded and a good number taken prisoner. The *Washington Post* headlined its front-page article *Crazed by Gas Bombs* and reported German threats that more potent gas weapons were on the way.<sup>72</sup> The Germans accused France of having been the first to use such weapons. The French had in fact made prior use of a chemical irritant on a limited scale at the start of the war. But Ypres represented a new departure. The *Post* reported that French soldiers died from agonizing suffocation, their bodies turned black, green, or yellow, and were driven insane. This use of poison gases, the *Post* predicted, will doubtless go on record as the most striking and distinguishing novelty of the present war, just as every great war of the past has been marked by some peculiarly surprising method of destroying life.<sup>73</sup> The *New York Times* editorially condemned the use of poison gas not because it killed people more cruelly than other methods but because of the suffering of

survivors, which was, according to the victims and to expert observers, of a severity unparalleled in the dreadful annals of conflict. After this harsh condemnation, the Times threw up its hands and accepted that if one side used such weapons, others will be obliged in self-defense to imitate the deplorable example. That, as everybody says, is war.<sup>74</sup> The British did indeed retaliate with poison gas at Loos in September, only to see the winds shift and the gas blown back into the British trenches, resulting in more British casualties than German. European armies devised fairly effective countermeasures against these initially milder varieties of gases that at least reduced the number of fatalities. Between April 1915 and July 1917, British forces suffered 21,908 casualties and 1,895 deaths from gas warfare. On July 12, 1917, Germany unleashed much more potent mustard gas weapons against the British, again at Ypres. From that point until the end of the war the following November, British forces suffered 160,970 casualties and 4,167 deaths. Hence, by the time U.S. troops joined the fighting, deadlier varieties were being used by both sides, including those with phosgene, hydrogen cyanide, and mustard agents. Casualties skyrocketed, but, in relative terms, the number of fatalities declined sharply.<sup>75</sup> American chemists were determined to change that. The United States launched a large-scale chemical warfare research program run initially under the aegis of several different departments until centralized under the newly established Chemical Warfare Service on June 28, 1918.

Research programs were initially dispersed on a number of campuses before being consolidated in the Experiment Station at American University in Washington, D.C., in September 1917. Most of the nations leading chemists descended on the campus to conduct the research. The effort eventually employed over 1,700 chemists, working out of more than sixty buildings, many hastily constructed. By wars end, 5,400 chemists were serving in the military in what was being labeled the Chemists War.<sup>76</sup> In rushing to serve their country, American chemists were following in the footsteps of their European colleagues. Germany's chemical warfare research was centered in its prestigious Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry, where such luminaries as Fritz Haber, James Franck, Otto Hahn, Walther Nernst, and Richard Willsttter all lent their services. Institute Director Haber rallied the others behind the notion that science... belonged to humanity in peacetime and the fatherland in war.<sup>77</sup> In Great Britain, scientists at thirty-three laboratories tested 150,000 organic and inorganic compounds in an effort to discover ever deadlier concoctions. The largest facility alone employed over a thousand scientists.<sup>78</sup> Scientists of all nations were eager to do their part to assist the war effort. Johns Hopkins physicist J. S. Ames wrote, For the first time in the history of science men who are devoting their lives to it have an immediate opportunity of proving their worth to their country. It is a wonderful moment; and the universities of the country are seizing it. University of Chicago physicist Robert Millikan gushed, the world has been waked up by the war to a new appreciation of what science can do.<sup>79</sup> The Chemical Warfare Service prioritized speed over safety. As a result, numerous deaths were recorded, according to electrical engineer George Temple, who had been head of motor maintenance at Camp American University. In an interview years later with the American University student newspaper, the Eagle, Temple recounted several incidents. In one, three men were burned by a deadly dose of gas. The bodies were hauled away on a cart, the flesh jiggling off their bones.<sup>80</sup> Each morning, during roll call, workers were asked to volunteer for burning with experimental gases. Temple volunteered seven times. In the laboratories, leaks often occurred. Canaries were kept nearby. The death of a canary meant that it was time to evacuate the building.<sup>81</sup> Temple described what it was like when researchers headed home after a day in the laboratories: At the end of the day the camp personnel, their clothes impregnated by gas, would pile into the trolleys. As the trolley cars neared the downtown area, civilians began boarding them. Soon they were all sneezing or crying, depending upon the type of gas the soldiers had been working with.<sup>82</sup> Living near campus was not particularly safe either, as former U.S. Senator Nathan Scott discovered. Scott, his wife, and his sister were gassed by a cloud that escaped from one of the campus labs. Scott and his sister sought treatment from the Experiment Station doctor and then at a local hospital.<sup>83</sup> Among those at American University was young Harvard chemist James Conant, who would go on to head U.S. scientific research during the next world war. His successful research on lewisite earned him a promotion in July 1918. The newly appointed twenty-five-year-old major was deployed to a Cleveland suburb to oversee a project to mass-produce lewisite. Working out of the factory of the Ben Hur Motor Company in Willoughby, Conants team produced artillery shells and aerial bombs packed with the deadly substance, of which contact with even the smallest amount was believed to cause intolerable agony and death after a few hours.<sup>84</sup> The CWS established its largest production facility adjacent to the Aberdeen, Maryland, proving ground. In early 1919, the New York Times detailed the massive operation at the site officially known as the Edgewood Arsenal, which it described as the largest poison gas factory on earth,

producing three to four times as much as the British, French, and Germans combined. Reporter Richard Barry, who toured the facility, wrote, I went through the hospitals and saw the men who had been struck down by the fiendish gases while at work; some with arms and legs and trunks shriveled and scarred as by a horrible fire, some with the deep suppurations still oozing after weeks of careful nursing. Barry guessed that the casualty rate might have exceeded that of any division in France.<sup>85</sup> The facility was enormous, containing almost three hundred buildings serviced by twenty-eight miles of railway and fifteen miles of roads. It produced 200,000 chemical bombs and shells daily. Twelve hundred researchers and seven hundred assistants studied more than four thousand potentially poisonous substances.<sup>86</sup> Barry interviewed Colonel William H. Walker, the former chair of MIT's chemical engineering department, who served as commanding officer of the proving grounds. Walker reported that two months before the armistice, the United States had perfected a new deadly approach to using chemical weapons. The United States was prepared to have its planes drop one-ton mustard gas containers over fortified German cities. One ton of gas would engulf an area of an acre or more and, Walker assured readers, not one living thing, not even a rat, would live through it. The new weapons were ready to deploy in September 1918, but the Allies balked at their use. England finally acceded, but France, fearing reprisals, withheld approval until the Allies had advanced sufficiently that the gas couldnt blow back into French territory and the Allies commanded the air so as to insure safety from possible reprisals. Those conditions would not have been met until spring 1919. At that point, Walker indicated, the United States would have had thousands of tons of mustard gas in France for the assault. We could have wiped out any German city we pleased... and probably several of them, within a few hours of giving the release signal. Walker concluded that the Germans knowledge of Allied plans was a very big factor in [their] capitulation. On Armistice Day, the CWS shuttered its Edgewood operations with 2,500 tons of mustard gas sitting on the piers ready for shipment. Somehow we had been cheated of our prey, Walker regretted, but he took comfort in his belief that the gas had expedited Germanys surrender.<sup>87</sup> In the 1920 Army Reorganization Hearings, Assistant Secretary of War Benedict Crowell made clear how central the use of chemical warfare had been to the United States planned 1919 offensive. Crowell testified, Our offensive in 1919, in my opinion, would have been a walk to Berlin, due to chemical warfare. Of course, that was kept as a secret.<sup>88</sup> During the war, the combatants used a total of 124,000 metric tons of thirty-nine different toxic agents, dispersed, for the most part, by 66 million artillery shells. Among the German casualties in October 1918 was Lance Corporal Adolf Hitler, who described the incident in *Mein Kampf*: My eyes were transformed into glowing coals and the world had grown dark around me.<sup>89</sup> Barry reported that when he visited the Edgewood plant in December 1918, it was being dismantled. The machinery is being carefully taken apart, oiled, and wrapped and stored awayready for the next war, should there ever be one. Disposing of the contaminated parts and gas would be a little more complicated, he mused, especially because the United States had produced enough gas to kill everyone in both North and South America.<sup>90</sup> Walker understood that chemical weapons could be made much more deadly if dropped by airplanes. Science fiction writers like Jules Verne in his novel *Clipper of the Clouds* (1886) and H. G. Wells in *The War in the Air* (1908) foresaw the frightening potential for conventional aerial bombardment in future wars. The world got a small taste of what this would be like prior to World War I: aerial attack from hot-air balloons can actually be traced back to late-eighteenth-century France, and Austria later used hot-air balloons to bomb Venice in 1849. Between 1911 and 1913, Italy, France, and Bulgaria employed aerial bombardment on a small scale in local skirmishes.<sup>91</sup> The prospect of using planes to drop chemical weapons was even more frightening. World War I provided the first real showcase of air warfare, though it only offered a small glimpse of what was to come. Germany struck first on August 6, 1914. Its zeppelins dropped bombs on Lige, Belgium. Germany was the first country to bomb civilians from the air when an August 1914 attack on a Parisian railway station missed its target and killed a woman. In September, during the First Battle of the Marne, German airmen bombed Paris on several occasions. The first Allied urban aerial bombing came in December, when French airmen bombed Freiburg. By spring 1918, German bombing had injured over four thousand British civilians and left more than one thousand dead. Though used on a limited scale, the potential for air warfare was apparent. British forces had only 110 warplanes when the war began. But Great Britain, along with France, produced 100,000 more before the war was over. Germany produced 44,000.<sup>92</sup> During the 1920s, Great Britain made extensive use of aerial bombardment to defend and police its far-flung empire in places as disparate as Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Yemen, Somaliland, and especially Iraq, which British forces occupied following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. Under the euphemism of air policing, the Royal Air Force conducted an extensive bombing campaign against Iraqis resisting British colonialism.

The commander of the 45th Squadron reported, They [i.e., the Arabs and the Kurds] now know what real bombing means, in casualties and damage; they now know that within 45 minutes a full sized village... can be practically wiped out and a third of its inhabitants killed or injured by four or five machines.<sup>93</sup> In the 1920s, Italian airpower strategist Giulio Douhet argued that aerial bombing now held the key to military victory and differentiating between soldiers and civilians was no longer possible. The United States leading advocate of airpower, General William Billy Mitchell, was thinking along similar lines. In his 1925 book *Winged Defense*, he warned, If a nation ambitious for universal conquest gets off to a flying start in a war of the future, it may be able to control the whole world.... Should a nation, therefore, attain complete control of the air, it could more nearly master the earth than has ever been the case in the past.<sup>94</sup> Others tried to couch their fascination with aerial warfare in more positive terms. CWS director General Amos Fries coined the following fanciful slogan for his agency: Every development of science that makes warfare more universal and more scientific makes for permanent peace by making warfare more intolerable (*italics in original*).<sup>95</sup>

While some planned for war, others planned for peace, fearing that another war augured even greater devastation. Will Irwin's 1921 book *The Next War* went through twelve printings that year. Irwin, a journalist who had worked with the Committee for Public Information, painted a bleak picture of future prospects. He reminded readers that at the time of the armistice, the United States was manufacturing Lewisite gas. He described the qualities that made it so effective and so terrifying: It was invisible; it was a sinking gas, which would search out the refugees of dugouts and cellars; if breathed, it killed at once and it killed not only through the lungs. Wherever it settled on the skin, it produced a poison which penetrated the system and brought almost certain death. It was inimical to all cell-life, animal or vegetable. Masks alone were of no use against it. Further, it had fifty-five times the spread of any poison gas hitherto used in the war. An expert has said that a dozen Lewisite air bombs of the greatest size in use during 1918 might with a favorable wind have eliminated the population of Berlin. Possibly he exaggerated, but probably not greatly. The Armistice came; but gas research went on. Now we have more than a hint of a gas beyond Lewisite.... A

mere capsule of this gas in a small grenade can generate square rods and even acres of death in the absolute.<sup>96</sup> Chemists, the most conservative segment of the scientific community and, not coincidentally, the one most closely tied to industry, took pride in their contribution to the war effort. That contribution didn't go unnoticed by others. The *New York Times* announced that chemists' efforts should be gratefully acknowledged by the lay public. Our chemists are among the best soldiers of democracy and the most effective of our national defenders.<sup>97</sup> Chemists joined with their military and industrial allies in resisting postwar efforts to ban future uses of chemical warfare. In 1925, the League of Nations adopted the Geneva Protocol, outlawing the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in war. The Coolidge administration supported it. Veterans groups, the American Chemical Society (ACS), and chemical manufacturers led the opposition. Meeting in Los Angeles in August, the ACS council unanimously resolved to go strongly on record against the ratification of the Geneva protocol on poisonous gases, as against both National safety and on the grounds of humanity. The chemists, five hundred of whom were still in the Chemical Warfare Officers Reserve Corps or the CWS, tried to convince the public that chemical weapons were actually more humane than other weapons, that the United States needed to be prepared for their use in the next war, and that the treaty might place the League of Nations in control of the U.S. chemical industry. Senator Joseph Ransdell of Louisiana hoped that the resolution would be sent back to the Committee on Foreign Relations and buried so deep it would never appear before us again.<sup>98</sup> He got his wish. The committee never released it for a floor vote. In the ten years that followed, forty countries including every great power besides the United States and Japan ended up ratifying the treaty.<sup>99</sup> Italian, British, and German bombers. Militaries first bombed targets, including civilians, during World War I. Germany began to do so in 1914, over Liege, Belgium. By spring of 1918, German bombs had injured over 4,000 British civilians and left over 1,000 dead. Gas warfare scored its greatest successes against the poorly equipped Russian troops on the eastern front, who suffered 425,000 gas-induced casualties and 56,000 deaths.<sup>100</sup> For Russia, with 2 million dead and 5 million wounded, the war proved disastrous in all regards. Finally fed up with the tsars' indifference to their hardships, the Russian people overthrew Nicholas II's regime in March 1917. But many felt further betrayed when, with Wilson's support, the reformist government of Alexander Kerensky opted to keep Russia in the war. The Russian masses demanded a sharper break with the past. On November 7, 1917, the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, seized power, dramatically changing the course of world history. They were inspired by Karl Marx, a nineteenth-century German-Jewish intellectual who believed that class struggle would eventually result in an egalitarian socialist society. Marx, ironically, had

doubted that a successful socialist revolution could occur in economically and culturally backward Russia. Ignoring Marx's warnings, the Bolsheviks set out to reorganize Russian society at its roots, nationalizing banks, distributing landed estates to the peasants, putting workers in control of factories, and confiscating church property. Lenin's Red Guard ransacked the old Foreign Office and brazenly published what it found: a web of secret agreements between the Allies from 1915 and 1916 that divided the postwar map into exclusive zones of influence. Much as the United States would react to the WikiLeaks publications of its diplomatic cables in 2010, the Allies were outraged at this brazen violation of the old diplomatic protocol, which now exposed the hollowness of Wilson's call for self-determination after the war. Among the treaties was the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which divided up the Ottoman Empire among Great Britain, France, and Russia. Carving out new nations with little regard for historical and cultural affinities, it planted the seeds of future conflict in the oil-rich Middle East. Not since the French Revolution some 125 years before had Europe been so profoundly shaken and changed. Lenin's vision of worldwide Communist revolution captured the imagination of workers and peasants around the globe, posing a direct challenge to Wilson's vision of liberal capitalist democracy. U.S. soldiers undergoing anti-gas training at Camp Dix, New Jersey. Despite being proscribed by civilizations for centuries, chemical warfare became widespread during World War I. Thousands died from poison gas attacks. Wilson's Anglophile secretary of state Robert Lansing reported disappointedly that Lenin's Communist message was resonating with workers. He warned Wilson on January 1, 1918, that Lenin's appeal was directed to the proletariat of all countries, to the ignorant and mentally deficient, who by their numbers are urged to become masters. Here seems to me to lie a very real danger in view of the present social unrest throughout the world.<sup>101</sup> Wilson decided to make his own bold move in an attempt to steal Lenin's thunder. He announced his Fourteen Points on January 8, 1918. This liberal, open, anti-imperialist peace plan endorsed self-determination, disarmament, freedom of the seas, free trade, and a League of Nations. Only such an exalted mission would justify continuing this tragical and appalling outpouring of blood and treasure. The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret covenants, he declared in what later would turn out to be a boldfaced lie.<sup>102</sup> But suddenly two competing new visions for the postwar world were on the table. Vladimir Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia on November 7, 1917, dramatically altering the course of world history. Lenin's vision of worldwide Communist revolution would capture the imagination of workers and peasants around the globe, posing a direct challenge to Woodrow Wilson's vision of liberal capitalist democracy. Lenin again caught the capitalist world off guard. On March 3, eight months before the armistice, he signed a peace treaty with Germany, pulling Russian troops from the war. Lenin was so desirous of peace that he acceded to the harsh terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk even though it meant relinquishing Russian control over Poland, Finland, the Baltic States, Ukraine, Georgia, and moreover 300,000 square miles of territory and 50 million people. Wilson and the Allies were furious. They reacted quickly. The conservative counterrevolution against the Bolsheviks was ferocious. Separate armies attacked the new Russia from all directions: native Russians and Cossacks, the Czech legion, Serbs, Greeks, Poles in the west, the French in Ukraine, and some 70,000 Japanese in the Far East. In reaction, Lenin's co-revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky ruthlessly put together a Red Army of approximately 5 million men. The outspoken ex-Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill spoke for capitalists everywhere when he said that Bolshevism should be strangled in its cradle. An estimated 40,000 British troops arrived in Russia, some deployed to the Caucasus to protect the oil reserves at Baku. Though most of the fighting would be over by 1920, pockets of resistance persisted until 1923. In a foreshadowing of what was to come some sixty years later, Muslim resistance in Central Asia lasted into the 1930s. President Woodrow Wilson speaking at the Greek Theatre in Berkeley, California, September 1919. Re-elected president in 1916 on the slogan He kept us out of war, Wilson entered World War I in 1917, hoping to give the United States a hand in shaping the postwar world. Japan, France, Great Britain, and several other nations sent tens of thousands of troops to Russia, in part to assist conservative White Russians attempting to overthrow the fledgling Bolshevik regime. The United States initially hesitated to join them but finally sent over 15,000 troops to eastern and northern Russia with the hope of maintaining a limited eastern front against Germany and limiting Japanese gains. Wilson rejected proposals by British cabinet officer Winston Churchill, commander in chief of the Allied armies, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, and other Allied leaders for a direct military intervention to overthrow the Bolsheviks. Wilson resisted Foch's ongoing entreaties, explaining any attempt to check a revolutionary movement by means of deployed armies is merely trying to use a broom to sweep back a high tide. Besides, armies may become impregnated with the very Bolshevism they are sent to combat.<sup>103</sup> Still, U.S. troops remained in the country until 1920, long

after the original military rationale had ceased to exist. U.S. participation in this operation poisoned its relations with the new Soviet government from the start.<sup>104</sup> It also deepened mistrust toward Wilson and his motives on the part of a crucial group of mostly midwestern progressive senators a mistrust that would come back to haunt him when he struggled to achieve his crowning vision, a league of nations. These peace progressives, as Robert David Johnson and other historians have labeled them, held differing views of Russias new revolutionary government, but they all recoiled at the notion of a U.S. military intervention. California Republican Senator Hiram Johnson took the lead. He argued that the United States should deal with the issues that had given rise to Bolshevism oppression, and poverty, and hunger rather than intervening militarily to overthrow the new government, an undertaking he saw as part of Wilsons war against revolution in all countries. He desired no American militarism to impose by force our will upon weaker nations. Mississippi Senator James Vardaman charged that the intervention had been conducted on behalf of international corporations that wanted to collect the \$10 billion that the imperial Russian government had owed them. Robert La Follette deplored it as a mockery of the Fourteen Points the crime of all crimes against democracy, self-determination, and the consent of the governed.<sup>105</sup> Idaho Senator William Borah reported that people who returned to the United States after spending months in Russia were telling a very different story about conditions there than the Wilson administration was presenting. Borah had been hearing that the Russian people very largely support the Soviet Government. And, he continued, If the Soviet Government represents the Russian people, if it represents 90 percent of the Russian people, I take the position that the Russian people have the same right to establish a socialistic state as we have to establish a republic.<sup>106</sup>

Johnson introduced a resolution to stop funding for the intervention, which gained strong support, deadlocking at 3333.<sup>107</sup> While growing numbers were beginning to question aspects of Wilsons diplomacy at home, he still seemed to offer a beacon of hope for war-weary Europeans. Adoring crowds mobbed him when he arrived in Europe on December 18, 1918, for the Paris Peace Conference. H. G. Wells recalled, For a brief interval Wilson stood alone for mankind. Or at least he seemed to stand for mankind. And in that brief interval there was a very extraordinary and significant wave of response to him throughout the earth.... He ceased to be a common statesman; he became a Messiah.<sup>108</sup> The Germans had surrendered on the basis of Wilsons Fourteen Points, believing that they would be treated fairly. One German town greeted returning troops with a banner reading Welcome, brave soldiers, your work has been done; God and Wilson will carry it on.<sup>109</sup> The Germans even deposed the kaiser and adopted a republican form of government as a sign of good faith. But the ill-defined Fourteen Points proved a weak foundation on which to base negotiations. And

Wilson mistakenly failed to get his allies to concur during the war when he had more leverage. He had naively told Colonel Edward House, When the war is over, we can force [England and France] to our way of thinking, because... they will be financially in our hands.<sup>110</sup> Despite their indebtedness, the Allies balked at Wilsons terms. Having paid such a high price for victory, they had little interest in Wilsons lofty rhetoric about making the world safe for democracy, freedom of the seas, and peace without victory. They wanted revenge, new colonies, and naval dominance. Wilson had already betrayed one of the central tenets by intervening in the Russian Civil War and maintaining forces in the country. More betrayals would follow. The British made it clear that they had no intention of abiding by Wilsons call for freedom of the seas, which would have limited their navys ability to enforce British trade routes. The French made it equally clear they would not accept a nonpunitive treaty. France had lost well over a million soldiers and Great Britain just under a million. British Prime Minister David Lloyd George noted that in the United States not a shack had been destroyed.<sup>111</sup> The French also remembered their defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, further fueling their desire to debilitate and dismember Germany. Twenty-seven nations met in Paris on January 12, 1919. The task ahead of them was enormous. To varying degrees, the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, German, and Russian empires were collapsing. New countries were emerging. Revolutionary change was encroaching.

Starvation was rampant. Disease was spreading. Displaced populations were seeking refuge. Visionary leadership was desperately needed. But Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando found Wilson, who considered himself the personal instrument of God, to be absolutely insufferable.<sup>112</sup> Clemenceau supposedly commented, Mr. Wilson bores me with his 14 Points; why, God Almighty has only ten!<sup>113</sup> Lloyd George took great pleasure in Clemenceaus response to Wilson: If the President took a flight beyond the azure main, as he was occasionally inclined to do without regard to relevance, Clemenceau would open his great eyes in twinkling wonder, and turn them on me as much as to say: Here he is off again. I really think that at first the idealistic President regarded himself as a missionary whose function was to rescue the poor European heathen. Lloyd George applauded his own performance

under the difficult circumstances, seated as I was between Jesus Christ and Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>114</sup> Few of Wilson's Fourteen Points remained in the final treaty. The victors, particularly Great Britain, France, and Japan, divided the former German colonies and holdings in Asia and Africa along the lines established by the secret 1915 Treaty of London. They also carved up the Ottoman Empire. They sanitized their actions by calling the colonies mandates. Wilson resisted but ultimately went along. He rationalized his acquiescence by arguing that the Germans had ruthlessly exploited their colonies, denying their citizens basic rights, while the Allies had treated their colonies humanely.<sup>115</sup>an assessment that was greeted with incredulity by the inhabitants of those Allied colonies, like French Indochina's Ho Chi Minh. Ho rented a tuxedo and bowler hat and visited Wilson and the U.S. delegation to the conference, carrying a petition demanding Vietnamese independence. Like most of the other non-Western world leaders in attendance, Ho would learn that liberation would come through armed struggle, not colonialist largesse. Mao Zedong, then working as a library assistant, expressed similar frustration: So much for national self-determination, he vented. I think it is really shameless!<sup>116</sup> Wilson went so far in compromising his principles that he even accepted a U.S. mandate over Armenia, leading Clemenceau to comment wryly, When you cease to be President, we will make you Grand Turk.<sup>117</sup> Allied leaders did little to hide the racism that underlay their continued subjugation of dark-skinned peoples. This was most apparent when Japan's representatives Baron Nobuake Makino and Viscount Chinda proposed that a clause on racial equality be included in the Covenant of the League of Nations. The clause read, The equality of states being a basic principle of the League of Nations, the High Contracting Parties agree to accord, as soon as possible, to all alien nationals of States members of the League, equal and just treatment in every respect, making no distinction, either in law or fact, on account of their race or nationality. The Japanese proposal was rejected outright by defenders of the British Empire, including British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour and Australian Prime Minister William Hughes. As one British cabinet member, Lord Robert Cecil, explained, the clause raised extremely serious problems for the British Empire.<sup>118</sup> Having admitted to Lloyd George before the proceedings began that he was less interested in the details of the settlement than in the League of Nations which he considered crucial to preventing future war Wilson's attempt to secure the kind of nonpunitive treaty he publicly advocated failed miserably. The treaty dealt very harshly with Germany. It included a war guilt clause, drafted by future secretary of state John Foster Dulles, that placed the entire blame on Germany for starting the war and required Germany to pay extremely heavy reparations. Wilson, intently focused on the League, repeatedly compromised on these and other crucial matters, disappointing even his strongest supporters. Clemenceau snidely remarked that Wilson talked like Jesus Christ but acted like Lloyd George.<sup>119</sup> Economist John Maynard Keynes condemned Wilson's capitulation to this Carthaginian Peace as a tragic repudiation of his Fourteen Points and predicted that it would lead to another European war.<sup>120</sup> Ho Chi Minh rented a tuxedo and bowler hat and visited Wilson and the U.S. delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, carrying a petition demanding Vietnamese independence. Like most of the other non-Western world leaders in attendance, Ho would learn that liberation would come through armed struggle, not the colonizers largesse. Although Lenin wasn't invited to Paris, Russia's presence cast a pall over the meetings, like the Banquo's ghost sitting at every Council table, according to Herbert Hoover.<sup>121</sup> Lenin had dismissed Wilson's Fourteen Points as empty rhetoric and said that the capitalist powers would never abandon their colonies or accept the Wilsonian vision of peacefully adjudicating conflicts. His call for worldwide revolution to overthrow the entire imperialist system was finding a receptive audience. Colonel House wrote in his diary in March, From the look of things the crisis will soon be here. Rumbblings of discontent every day. The people want peace. Bolshevism is gaining ground everywhere. Hungary has just succumbed. We are sitting upon an open powder magazine and some day a spark may ignite it.<sup>122</sup> The Allies were so worried about Communist revolutions in Eastern Europe that they inserted a clause in the armistice agreement forbidding the German army to evacuate the countries on its eastern frontier until the Allies think the moment suitable.<sup>123</sup> Though Bela Kun's Communist government in Hungary would soon be toppled by invading Romanian forces and an attempt to seize power by the Communists in Germany failed, House and Wilson had reason to be alarmed at the radical tide sweeping Europe and beyond. American workers also participated in the radical upsurge; 365,000 striking steelworkers led the way, followed by 450,000 miners and 120,000 textile workers. In Boston, police voted 1,134 to strike, leading the Wall Street Journal to warn, Lenin and Trotsky are on their way. Wilson called the strike a crime against civilization.<sup>124</sup> And a general strike in Seattle was led by a Soldiers, Sailors, and Workmen's Council modeled on the Russian Revolution. Seattle Mayor Ole Hanson denounced it as an attempted revolution. The strikers, he charged, want to take possession of our American

Government and try to duplicate the anarchy of Russia.<sup>125</sup> Over 5 million workers struck that year alone.

When strikebreakers, protected by armed guards, local police, and newly sworn in deputies, were not sufficient to defeat the strikes, state militias and even federal troops were called in to finish the job, sending the labor movement into a tailspin from which it would not recover for well over a decade. Though the use of federal troops on behalf of powerful capitalists had been highly controversial in 1877, workers had increasingly learned that police, courts, troops, and the entire apparatus of the state would be arrayed against them when they struggled for higher wages, better working conditions, and the right to join unions. Having badly weakened the Left during the war, government officials now tried to finish it off. In November 1919 and January 1920, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer used a spate of largely ineffectual anarchist bombings as an excuse to unleash federal agents to raid radical groups and labor organizations across the country. Though called the Palmer Raids, the operation was actually run by the twenty-four-year-old director of the Justice Departments Radical Division, J. Edgar Hoover. Over five thousand alleged radicals were arrested, many incarcerated without charges for months. Russian-born Emma Goldman and hundreds of other foreign-born activists were deported. This flagrant abuse of civil liberties not only devastated the progressive movement, it deliberately identified dissent with un-Americanism. But for Hoover, it was just the beginning. By 1921, his index-card system, cataloguing all potentially subversive individuals, groups, and publications, contained 450,000 entries.<sup>126</sup> From left to right: British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, Italian Premier Vittorio Orlando, French Premier Georges Clemenceau, and Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference. At the conference, most of the lofty rhetoric of Wilsons Fourteen Points was rejected by the other Allies, who were out for revenge, new colonies, and naval dominance in the postwar world. In 1919, over 4 million U.S. workers struck for higher wages, better conditions, and organizing rights. As illustrated by this leaflet from the Seattle General Strike, the Russian Revolution helped inspire this intensified labor militancy. After the Paris conference, Wilson gushed, At last the world knows America as the savior of the world!<sup>127</sup> Back in the United States, Wilson was greeted like anything but a savior by treaty opponents, who attacked from both the left and the right. Wilson fought back, touring the country. He argued that the United States needed to ratify the treaty so it could join the League of Nations, which was the only way it could rectify the problems created by the treaty. Senator Borah, leading the opposition among progressives like Senators La Follette, Norris, and Johnson, denounced Wilsons proposed international body as a league of imperialists bent upon defeating revolutions and defending their own imperial designs. Borah thought the treaty, despite Wilsons efforts to soften it, was a cruel, destructive, brutal document that had produced a league to guarantee the integrity of the British empire.<sup>128</sup> Norris condemned the treaty provision handing Shandong, the birthplace of Confucius, to Japan as the disgraceful rape of an innocent people.<sup>129</sup> They were joined by isolationists and others who wanted guarantees that the United States wouldnt be drawn into military actions without authorization by Congress. Ironically, Wilsons own wartime policy had deprived him of many of his best allies. CPI head Creel pointed this out to the beleaguered president in late 1918, telling him All the radical, or liberal friends of your anti-imperialist war policy were either silenced or intimidated. The Department of Justice and the Post Office were allowed to silence and intimidate them. There was no voice left to argue for your sort of peace. The Nation and the Public got nipped. All the radical and socialist press was dumb.<sup>130</sup> Wilsons obstinacy made a bad situation worse. Rather than compromise on proposed treaty modifications, Wilson watched the treaty and the League go down to defeat, finally falling seven votes short of ratification. The peace proved particularly onerous for Germany. Reparations totaled \$33 billion less than one-fifth what France demanded but more than double what Germany had expected, at a time when its ability to pay was severely compromised by its loss of colonies and Polish-speaking territories. Germany also surrendered the port of Danzig and the Saar coal region. And the German people were embittered by the war guilt clause. The House of Morgans fingerprints were all over the treatys economic clauses. As award-winning Morgan biographer Ron Chernow noted, Morgan men were so ubiquitous at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 that Bernard Baruch grumbled that J. P. Morgan and Company was running the show. The most prominent among the Morgan men was Thomas Lamont, the House of Morgans leading partner, upon whom Wilson relied. Another Morgan partner, George Whitney, observed that Wilson appeared to trust Lamonts financial views more than anyone elses. Lamont advocated setting German reparations at \$40 billion and later held to the belief that, if anything, the Germans had gotten off easy. At Paris, he and the other bankers made sure that Morgans interests were well protected.<sup>131</sup> Although the reparations and the war guilt clause created a hostile and unstable environment in postwar Germany, their impact has sometimes been exaggerated. The reparations were more onerous on paper than

in practice. Beginning in 1921, the actual payments were repeatedly revised downward based on Germany's ability to pay. And the war guilt clause Article 231 does not actually mention guilt. It holds Germany accountable for reparations for all the loss and damage resulting from a war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.<sup>132</sup> It is certainly true, however, that Hitler and other right-wing Germans exploited the postwar sense of victimization that came with defeat and Allied retribution. The fact that little of the fighting took place on German soil and that wartime government propaganda had led most Germans to believe that victory was imminent made the settlement even more difficult to swallow and lent credibility to Hitler's allegations. As this December 1919 Punch cartoon shows, the Senate's rejection of U.S. participation in the League of Nations rendered the League largely ineffectual. Wilson had helped guarantee the League's defeat by silencing potential anti-imperialist allies in the U.S. during the war. Economic, social, and political instability also rocked postwar Italy, where armed fascist followers of Benito

Mussolini repeatedly clashed with leftist demonstrators and strikers. U.S. Ambassador Robert Johnson warned of the dangers of a takeover by Mussolini's extreme right-wing forces. The U.S. Embassy reported in June 1921: the fascisti seem to be the aggressors, while the communists... have... shift[ed] the imputation of lawlessness and violence from the party of Red revolution to the self-constituted party of law and order. Later, when Richard Child, Warren G. Harding's ambassador to Italy, replaced Johnson, he did an about-face, praising Mussolini and castigating the Communists. Child and other embassy officials downplayed Mussolini's right-wing extremism, extolling instead his anti-Bolshevism and willingness to use strong-arm methods to defeat labor. U.S. support continued even after Mussolini's imposition of a Fascist dictatorship. Mussolini's defenders included American business leaders like Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon, Thomas Lamont of J. P. Morgan, and Ralph Easley of the National Civic Federation.<sup>133</sup> Historians have long since discredited the myth that revulsion caused by the war and European entanglements plunged the United States into isolationism in the 1920s. In fact, World War I marked the end of European dominance and the ascendancy of the United States and Japan, the war's two real victors. The twenties saw a rapid expansion of American business and finance around the globe. New York replaced London as the center of world finance. The era of U.S. domination of the world economy had now begun. Among the leaders in this effort were the oil companies. The war proved that controlling oil supplies was central to projecting and exercising power. Great Britain and Germany tried to cut off each other's oil supplies during the war. Great Britain, hurt by German attacks on its oil supply ships, first expressed concern about an oil shortage in early 1916. The Allies also blockaded Germany's access to oil resources, and British Colonel John Norton-Griffiths attempted to lay oil supplies in Romania to waste when Germany moved to seize them in late 1916.

Underscoring the importance of these developments, Britain's Lord Curzon pronounced soon after the armistice that the Allied cause had floated to victory upon a wave of oil. The United States was key to that victory, having met 80 percent of the Allies' wartime petroleum needs.<sup>134</sup> But once the war ended, oil companies were poised to grab whatever new oil-rich territories they could. As Royal Dutch Shell asserted in its 1920 annual report, We must not be outstripped in this struggle to obtain new territory... our geologists are everywhere where any chance of success exists.<sup>135</sup> Royal Dutch Shell trained its sights on Venezuela, where General Juan Vicente Gómez's government offered friendly, stable conditions that seemed much more hospitable than the ongoing volatility and declining production in Mexico.<sup>136</sup> Concerned about Great Britain's predominance in Venezuela and believing that production during World War I had largely depleted U.S. domestic supplies, U.S. companies soon joined the competition for Venezuelan oil.<sup>137</sup> In *The Prize*, Daniel Yergin's pioneering book on the oil industry, the author describes Gómez as a cruel, cunning, and avaricious dictator who, for twenty-seven years, ruled Venezuela for his personal enrichment.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, according to historian Steven Rabe, Gómez essentially made the country his private hacienda as he amassed a personal fortune estimated at \$200 million and landholdings of 20 million acres. Tellingly, the dictator's passing in 1935 would be greeted in Venezuela with a weeklong spontaneous popular outburst in which demonstrators vented their rage by ravaging his portraits, statues, and buildings, and even massacred some of his sycophants.<sup>139</sup> Gómez's power rested upon local caudillos (strongmen), an army staffed by his loyalists, and a network of domestic spies. Detractors faced harsh persecution. U.S. Chargé d'Affaires John Campbell White reported that prisoners in Venezuela were treated with medieval severity. The United States was always ready to step in if needed. In 1923, the United States sent a Special Service squadron to the country as a show of support in response to what turned out to be unfounded rumors of an impending revolution.<sup>140</sup> With an economy increasingly dependent on petroleum revenues, Gómez enlisted the oil companies to write parts of Venezuela's business-friendly 1922 Petroleum Law. The companies reaped

massive profits. Oil company workers and the environment fared less well. Spills and accidents occurred frequently. One oil well blowout in 1922 spread twenty-two miles, releasing nearly a million barrels of oil into Lake Maracaibo.<sup>141</sup> While Gmez was busy enjoying his wealth and fathering his alleged ninety-seven illegitimate children, his family and hangers-on, known as Gomecistas, bought up the choice properties and then sold them to foreign companies, accumulating vast fortunes for themselves and their leader, while their countrymen remained mired in poverty. In the process, Venezuelan oil production jumped from 1.4 million barrels in 1921 to 137 million in 1929, trailing only the United States in total output and first worldwide in exports. Of the three companies dominating the Venezuelan market, two were American-owned Gulf and Pan American, which had been purchased in 1925 by Standard Oil of Indiana.<sup>142</sup> Combined, the two companies replaced Great Britains Royal Dutch Shell as Venezuelas majority oil producers in 1928 and were responsible for 60 percent of production in the country by the time of Gmezs death.<sup>143</sup> But left-wing opposition to the dictatorships of Gmez and his successors was growing. Oil workers occasionally went on strike for better conditions and pay, and in 1928 students at the Universidad Central in Caracas, known as the Generation of 28, staged an uprising condemning the dictatorship and calling for a more democratic government. After years of struggle, in 1945, Rmulo Betancourts leftist Democratic Action (AD) succeeded in overthrowing the regime of Isaas Medina Angarita. Betancourt forged a relationship with the oil companies that was more representative of Venezuelas interests. He was ousted in a 1948 military coup. While acknowledging the need for outside investment, these progressive reformers established a legacy of radical nationalist and anti-imperialist resistance to exploitation of Venezuelan resources by foreign oil interests.<sup>144</sup> By 1920, Americans had wearied of Wilsonian idealism. They were ready for what Warren G. Harding labeled a return to normalcy, which, in terms of the decades first two Republican presidents, meant a return to mediocrity. The Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover administrations sought ways to expand U.S. economic interests in Latin America without resorting to the heavy-handed gunboat diplomacy that marked the Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson regimes. During the 1920 presidential campaign, Harding seized upon vice presidential candidate Franklin D. Roosevelts remark that as assistant secretary of the navy, he had personally written the constitution of Haiti to assure listeners that as president, he, Harding, would not empower an Assistant Secretary of the Navy to draft a constitution for helpless neighbors in the West Indies and jam it down their throats at the point of bayonets borne by United States Marines. He enumerated other things Wilson had done that he would not repeat: Nor will I misuse the power of the Executive to cover with a veil of secrecy repeated acts of unwarranted interference in domestic affairs of the little republics of the Western Hemisphere, such as in the last few years have not only made enemies of those who should be our friends, but have rightfully discredited our country as their trusted neighbor.<sup>145</sup> The Venezuelan dictator General Juan Vicente Gmezs brutal and rapacious reign made his country a favorite of American and British oil companies. While amassing his own fortune, Gmez employed local caudillos (strongmen), an army staffed by his loyalists, and a network of domestic spies to ensure that Venezuela remained stable and hospitable to Western oil interests. In fact, Harding and his Republican successors made more friends among U.S. bankers than among the inhabitants of those little republics. In May 1922, The Nation reported, revolutionaries sparked an uprising against Brown Bros. extremely unpopular President of Nicaragua. When the revolutionaries captured a fort overlooking the capital, the U.S. marine commander simply alerted them that he would use artillery if they didnt relinquish control. The Nation saw this as typical of what was happening throughout Latin America, where U.S. bankers ruled through puppet governments backed up by U.S. troops. The magazine inveighed against this deplorable situation: There are, or were, twenty independent republics to the south of us. Five at least Cuba, Panama, Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Nicaraguahave already been reduced to the status of colonies with at most a degree of rather fictitious self-government. Four more Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Peru appear to be in process of reduction to the same status. Mr. Hughes is not treating Mexico as a sovereign, independent state. How far is this to go?...

Is the United States to create a great empire in this hemispherean empire over which Congress and the American people exercise no authority, an empire ruled by a group of Wall Street bankers at whose disposal the State and Navy Departments graciously place their resources? These are the questions which the people, the plain people whose sons die of tropic fever or of a patriots bullet, have a right to ask.<sup>146</sup> Far from having become isolationist following the Great War, the United States found more effective ways than warfare to expand its empire. In fact, the war left an increasingly bitter taste in the mouths of most Americans. Although U.S. involvement in the First World War had been relatively brief and, by most measures, enormously successful, the nature of the fighting, marked by trench and chemical warfare, and the shaky

postwar settlement combined to undermine the glory of the war itself. In its aftermath, Americans became increasingly disillusioned. A war fought to make the world safe for democracy seemed to have failed in its purpose. Nor was there much hope that this war would end all wars. Though some people nevertheless clung to the belief that the United States had engaged in a great crusade for freedom and democracy, for others the phrase rang hollow. A postwar literature of disillusionment emerged in the works of E. E. Cummings, John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway, Ezra Pound, Thomas Boyd, William Faulkner, Laurence Stallings, Irwin Shaw, Ford Madox Ford, Dalton Trumbo, and other writers as the nation learned once again that the initial euphoria of war would be erased by the reality of what the war actually achieved. In Dos Passos's 1921 novel

*Three Soldiers*, his wounded protagonist, John Andrews, suffers through a visit from a YMCA representative, intent on lifting his spirits, who says, I guess you're in a hurry to get back at the front and get some more Huns.... It's great to feel you're doing your duty... [Huns] are barbarians, enemies of civilization.

Andrews recoils at the notion that the best that had been thought was reduced to this. Dos Passos wrote, Furious, hopeless irritation consumed him.... There must be something more in the world than greed and hatred and cruelty.<sup>147</sup> Some expressed anger at the war. Others just expressed a profound sense of postwar malaise. In 1920, in *This Side of Paradise*, F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote of Amory Blaine and his young friends

that here was a new generation... grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken.<sup>148</sup> Gertrude Stein saw that same sense of ennui in Ernest Hemingway and his drunken friends and commented, All of you young people who served in the war. You are a lost generation.<sup>149</sup> Not to be

outdone, Hollywood produced several successful antiwar movies, some of which are still classics. Rex Ingram's *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921) brought instant stardom to Rudolph Valentino. King Vidor's *The Big Parade* was the top box-office draw in 1925. William Wellman's *Wings* (1927) was the first film to win the Academy Award for Best Picture, and Lewis Milestone's powerful *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930) remains one of the great antiwar films of all time. The war proved demoralizing in a myriad of

subtle ways as well. The prewar march of civilization grounded in a faith in human progress had been negated by a war that seemed to showcase barbarism and depravity. Put simply, the faith in human capability and human decency had disappeared. This was understandably evident on both sides of the Atlantic. Sigmund Freud, who became a household name in the United States during the 1920s, is a case in point. Freud's prewar emphasis on the tension between the pleasure principle and the reality principle gave way to a postwar pessimism about human nature grounded in his focus on the death instinct. Negative views

of human nature were reflected in a loss of faith in essential human capabilities. The army presented psychologists with a vast laboratory on which to conduct experiments in human intelligence and the 3 million inductees provided an extraordinary pool of human guinea pigs. Working with army personnel, many of whom were trained in testing at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, psychologists administered intelligence tests to 1,727,000 recruits, including 41,000 officers. The data accumulated about educational levels were eye-opening. Some 30 percent of the recruits were illiterate.<sup>150</sup> The amount of education varied widely

among the different groups, ranging from a median of 6.9 years for native whites and 4.7 years for immigrants to 2.6 years for southern blacks. The results of intelligence tests were even more sobering. The tests, albeit crude and culturally biased, found an astounding 47 percent of white draftees and 89 percent of blacks to be morons.<sup>151</sup> Nowhere was the subsequently degraded view of human intelligence more evident than in postwar advertising. The 1920s is often viewed as the golden age of advertising, the decade in which the industry really blossomed into the principal capitalist art form. As Merle Curti showed in his study of the

advertising industry journal *Printers Ink*, before 1910, advertisers, by and large, assumed that consumers were rational and self-interested and could be appealed to on that basis. Between 1910 and 1930, however, the majority of comments indicated that advertisers were viewing consumers as nonrational. As a result, advertisements increasingly abandoned the reason-why approach and appealed to fantasies and emotions.<sup>152</sup>

A speaker at a 1923 advertising convention in Atlantic City captured this sense when he warned, Appeal to reason in your advertising, and you appeal to about four percent of the human race.<sup>153</sup> This sentiment became accepted wisdom among advertisers. William Esty of the J. Walter Thompson agency instructed colleagues that all experts believed that it is futile to try to appeal to masses of people on an intellectual or

logical basis.<sup>154</sup> John Benson, the president of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, observed in 1927, To tell the naked truth might make no appeal. It may be necessary to fool people for their own good. Doctors and even preachers know that and practice it. Average intelligence is surprisingly low. It is so much more effectively guided by its subconscious impulses and instincts than by its reason.<sup>155</sup> Nowhere was this postwar pessimism more apparent than in the writings of Walter Lippmann, who was, in many

respects, the nations outstanding public intellectual during the decade. A leading socialist and progressive in the prewar period, Lippmanns faith in human rationality steadily declined after the war. In his 1922 classic

Public Opinion, he introduced the term stereotypes to describe the images in peoples minds that did not correspond to reality. He proposed substituting scientifically trained experts for the democratic public, for whom the world had become too complex. By the time he published The Phantom Public two years later, his faith in democracy had eroded further. The best people could do, he believed, was choose good leaders to guide them. Then, in his 1929 classic A Preface to Morals, he despaired over the very purpose of human existence in a meaningless universe, a view reflective of the United States broader existential crisis of 1929-1930. The most acerbic of democracys critics was certainly H. L. Mencken, the sage of Baltimore. Mencken referred to the common man, mired in religion and other superstitions, as a boob, a member of the species boobus Americanus. He expressed contempt for the same yeoman farmers whom Jefferson anointed the backbone of democracy, exclaiming we are asked to venerate this prehensile moron as... the citizen par excellence, the foundation-stone of the state!... To Hell with him, and bad luck to him.<sup>156</sup> By the early 1920s, the America of Jefferson, Lincoln, Whitman, and the young William Jennings Bryan had ceased to exist. It had been replaced by the world of McKinley, Teddy Roosevelt, J. Edgar Hoover, and Woodrow Wilson. Wilsons failures, in many ways, provide a fitting capstone to a period in which the United States unique mixture of idealism, militarism, avarice, and realpolitik propelled the nation toward becoming a world power. Wilson proclaimed, America is the only idealistic nation in the world and acted as if he believed it were true.<sup>157</sup> He hoped to spread democracy, end colonialism, and transform the world. His record is much less positive. While supporting self-determination and opposing formal empire, he intervened repeatedly in other nations internal affairs, including Russia, Mexico, and throughout Central America.

While encouraging reform, he maintained a deep mistrust of the kind of fundamental, and at times revolutionary, change that would actually improve peoples lives. While championing social justice, he believed that property rights were sacrosanct and must never be infringed upon. Though endorsing human brotherhood, he believed that nonwhites were inferior and resegregated the federal government. While extolling democracy and the rule of law, he oversaw egregious abuses of civil liberties. While condemning imperialism, he sanctioned the maintenance of the global imperial order. And while proclaiming a just, nonpunitive peace, he acquiesced in a harsh, retributive peace that inadvertently helped create the preconditions for the rise of Hitler and the Nazis. Wilsons stunningly inept performance at Versailles and his combative intransigence upon his return home contributed to Senate defeat of the treaty and the League. Thus the war would have consequences that went far beyond the horrors on the battlefield. The United States never joined the League of Nations, rendering that body impotent in the face of Fascist aggression in the 1930s. Revelations that the United States had entered the First World War on false pretenses, while bankers and munitions manufacturers later labeled merchants of death had raked in huge profits, created widespread skepticism about foreign involvements at a time when the United States needed to contend with a real axis of evil: Germany, Italy, and Japan. By the time the United States acted, it was much too late. The necessity of finally combating fascism would, however, afford the United States an opportunity to reclaim some of that democratic, egalitarian heritage on which its earlier greatness and moral leadership had rested. And, though late in entering World War II, the United States provided crucial assistance in defeating Europes fascists and played the decisive role in defeating Japans militarists. But by setting off the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the war, the United States, once again, proved itself unready to provide the kind of leadership a desperate world cried out for. *Revue de presse* "Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick have done what many would consider impossible. They have written a political history of the United States in the 20th Century that tells us exactly how the United States became an empire through conscious decisions, and how the struggle to maintain that empire will go on despite which political party holds office. It is a brilliant survey of the untold story." (Lloyd C. Gardner, author of *The Road to Tahrir Square*) Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick provide a critical overview of US foreign policy during the past few decades. There is much here to reflect upon. Such a perspective is indispensable At stake is whether the United States will choose to be the policeman of a Pax Americana, which is a recipe for disaster, or partner with other nations on the way to a safer, more just and sustainable future. (President Mikhail Gorbachev) A brave revisionist study which shatters many foreign policy myths the Stone-Kuznick team grapples with the unsavory legacy of American militarism. . . . Make room on your book shelf for this compelling leftist primer. (Douglas Brinkley, New York Times bestselling author of *The Great Deluge*) "Howard [Zinn] would have loved this peoples history of the American Empire. It's compulsive reading: brilliant, a masterpiece! (Daniel Ellsberg, author of

Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers) Finally, a book with the guts to challenge the accepted narrative of recent American history This is the 'Washington didn't really chop down the cherry tree' book for our last hundred years." (Bill Maher) Kuznick and Stone's Untold History is the most important historical narrative of this century. (Martin Sherwin, Pulitzer Prize-winning co-author of American Prometheus)" By casting a spotlight on the shadier aspects of America's past, as well as the humane alternatives, Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick provide a thought-provoking rebuttal to the nationalist myths that are far too often served up as history. They remind us that, until Americans have the courage to confront reality, they will remain trapped by their illusions." (Lawrence Wittner, author of One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953)" Stone and Kuznick provide a boldly critical view of the most painful aspects of American history. Their perspective on nuclear danger is especially illuminating. They make clear how close we have come to the ultimate human absurdity of annihilating ourselves as a species with our own technology. One thinks of the Enlightenment motto, "Dare to know!" The knowledge we gain can be a source of powerful wisdom." (Robert Jay Lifton, author of Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism)" We won't be able to manage America's future if we don't know its past. In their Untold Story, Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick peel away layers of misleading myth about America in the 20th century. Some will be surprised, others angry. Most will understand their nation much better, especially the young. Then perhaps we can move forward in the new century." (Jeff Madrick, author of Taking America) Its time for serious people to confront rather than avoid or attempt to denigrate the profound challenges raised by Stone and Kuznick. They are asking (and answering!) all the right questions. (Gar Alperovitz, author of The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb) Many books have been written about specific episodes of American intervention and military aggression. And yet the master narrative remains intact: the US is the "indispensable nation," relied upon by people and nations around the world to preserve the peace and defend freedom. The immense contribution of The Untold History of the United States is to shatter the conventional wisdom, challenging readers to re-conceptualise the American role in the world... Everyone, who reads The Untold History will learn something new and be compelled to examine long held assumptions. For students of US history, this is an invaluable work. (Carolyn Eisenberg, author of Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany, 1944-1949)" A fascinating and provocative work. This courageous and clear-minded account of American history and the foundations of the American empire is a milestone in a surprisingly small genre of books, namely, critical history written of and for the people. It should have the widest possible reading." (Bruce Cumings, author of The Korean War)" Kuznick and Stone tell the untold history of the United States--the often disastrous consequences of American exceptionalism and global domination--with passion and clarity... beautifully illustrated, well-argued, and compellingly written." (Marilyn Young, author of The Vietnam Wars)" The Untold History of the United States is one of the most important books of our time. Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick disabuse us of the popular notion that this country has always been a force for good in the world. They document the tragic consequences of U.S. imperialism, the commission of war crimes, and the decimation of civil liberties under the guise of the war on terror. This work should give us pause whenever we are asked to uncritically accept the idea of American exceptionalism. " (Marjorie Cohn, author of Cowboy Republic: Six Ways the Bush Gang Has Defied the Law)