

THE PENS OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS DURING  
WORLD WAR I: INSTRUMENTS OF  
PATRIOTS OR PROFESSIONALS?

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A Thesis

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by

Cathy Sue Atkinson

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Approved:

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James Olson, Chairman

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Thomas Camfield

Approved:

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Oliver Refsell

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Bascom Barry Hayes  
Dean of the Graduate School

## ABSTRACT

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### Purpose

The intention of this thesis was to study the propagandist activities of American historians during World War I by examining (1) the sentiments among historians concerning their wartime activities; (2) the extent to which scientific methodology was abandoned; (3) the professional status of those historians engaged in propaganda; and (4) the repercussions the historians' activities had on their personal careers as well as upon the profession itself.

### Methods

The methodology employed included (1) the consultation of general works on propagandist activities in the United States during World War I; (2) the analysis of the historians' work in the Red, White, and Blue Series, the War Information Series, and in the field of public education; and (3) the evaluation of the historians' adherence to scientific research methodology.

## Findings

1. There were three organized groups of historians during World War I--the National Security League, the National Board for Historical Service, and the Committee on Public Information. Each of these associations disregarded scientific research methodology at times--some more frequently than others.

2. The historians associated with the National Security League were alarmist in their attempt to arouse the attention of Americans for military preparations as early as 1914. For this reason the United States government viewed their activities with disdain.

3. The function of the National Board for Historical Service was to serve as the "watch-dog" for the maintenance of scientific research methodology. However, even this organization contributed to the distortion of history in the field of public education.

4. The Committee on Public Information historians considered the task of promoting patriotism and reassuring Americans of the honorable intentions of the United States participation in the war as their main priority, rather than abiding by scientific research methodology. Their adherence to this propagandist philosophy, however, was only temporary, and it dissolved with the end of the war.

5. The non-scientific research methodology of historians was not detrimental to their individual careers, with the exception

of Samuel B. Harding. Other historians who engaged in the propagandist endeavors, such as Guy Ford, James Shotwell, Andrew McLaughlin, Wallace Notestein, Claude Van Tyne, and Carl Becker became prominent in their discipline.

6. The propagandist activities of historians were not significantly detrimental to the profession. This was because many other disciplines were also engaged in propaganda work. Also, the revisionist historians' reprimand of their colleagues' activities restored the discipline's professionalism by re-emphasizing the importance of scientific research methodology.

7. Historians generally were not ashamed of their wartime activities nor were they boastful. Guy Ford, Claude Van Tyne, and Albert Hart on the contrary were very defensive about their war-oriented work.

Approved:

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Supervising Professor

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## CHAPTER I

### THE DILEMMA: PATRIOTS OR PROFESSIONALS

Amateurism in scholarly endeavors gradually went out of vogue in the late nineteenth century and by the early twentieth century professionalism had superceded it. This new trend engulfed numerous disciplines in the arts, sciences, education, and law. Professionalism in the field of history was also an integral part of this broad movement. The role of the historian came to be conceived of as the process of objectively and scientifically evaluating historical facts. Historians also undertook to pool their talents to advance scholarship in the discipline. Thus, individual achievement was overshadowed by a cooperative spirit.

The struggle to make history a professional discipline had been a long and tedious one, its origins dating back to the 1870's. Symbolic of the emergence of a movement toward professionalism among American historians was the creation, in September, 1884, of the American Historical Association. Professionalism entailed certain responsibilities for historians, such as adherence to a code of ethics. According to this code a professional rendered unsurpassed services regardless of personal bias. Conversely, amateurs

were more apt to be non-objective in their appraisal of the past by isolating the incident being researched from other related events. The amateur practice of a quasi-secretive attitude concerning prompt dissemination of new data to fellow colleagues was unacceptable to professionals.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the AHA was founded to promote historical work and studies through meetings and such publications as the American Historical Review, which was first printed in 1895. Since less than one-third of the forty charter members were trained historians, the AHA was not a professional organization initially.<sup>2</sup> The professional historians admitted the amateurs to the AHA because they were influential in state, local, and ethnic historical societies which had voluminous records of the past. If the professionals had barred amateurs from joining the AHA, it would have alienated the amateurs from sharing their historical records with the professionals.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest Greenwood, "The Elements of Professionalization," in Howard M. Vollmer and Donald L. Mills (eds.), Professionalization (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 9-19.

<sup>2</sup>Herbert Baxter Adams, "Report of the Proceedings at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1889 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), p. 1. Hereafter the American Historical Association cited as AHA.

<sup>3</sup>John Higham, Leonard Krieger, and Felix Gilbert, History (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1965), pp. 8-10.



The admission of the amateurs to this organization gradually caused state and local historical societies to react positively toward the professionals. This was evident by the participation of western state and local historical societies in the AHA's Conference of State and Local Historical Societies. The gradual acceptance by these smaller historical organizations of professional objectives was apparent when in 1907 the Mississippi Valley Historical Association rejected any effort to popularize history.<sup>4</sup> This Association's positive attitude toward professionalism was further reinforced in 1914 with the initiation of a scholarly review known as the Mississippi Valley Historical Review.<sup>5</sup> The development of this trend toward professionalism had also been apparent in 1904, when Albert Bushnell Hart, a reputable Harvard historian, became editor of the American Nation Series.<sup>6</sup> The climax of the initial stages establishing professionalism occurred in 1907 with the selection of a professional historian, James Franklin Jameson, to serve as

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<sup>4</sup>George T. Blakey, Historians on the Homefront: American Propagandist for the Great War (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1970), p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 7. During the ten year period 1882-1892, Johns Hopkins University had thirty-eight doctoral students, including James Franklin Jameson, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Woodrow Wilson.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

president for the AHA.<sup>7</sup> The number of academic historians in the AHA had grown to 2700 members in the Western hemisphere.<sup>8</sup> These trained professionals had learned to examine their sources of information, while maintaining a balance between reliable primary and secondary references.

This trend toward professional organization was enhanced by accelerating development of doctoral programs in history. Almost forty years after the establishment of the first graduate program in the United States at Johns Hopkins University in 1876, approximately 250 doctoral degrees in history had been conferred by American universities with similar Ph. D. programs.<sup>9</sup> With the growing trend toward professionalism, it was evident that the pendulum had oscillated to the point where non-academic historians were no longer at the helm of the AHA. The service of Jameson as president and Hart as editor of the American Nation Series only confirmed this development. They were not completely displaced, however, since

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<sup>7</sup> Blakey, pp. 8-9. Hereafter the American Historical Review cited as AHR, the Mississippi Valley Historical Association cited as MVHA, and the Mississippi Valley Historical Review cited as MVHR.

<sup>8</sup> "Organization and Activities," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1917 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), p. 25. The AHA had members in the United States, Canada, and South America.

<sup>9</sup> William B. Hesseltine and Louis Kaplan, "Doctors of Philosophy in History: A Statistical Study," AHR, XLVII (New York: The Macmillan Company, July, 1942), pp. 772-773.

amateurs, such as Waldo F. Leland, secretary of the AHA, were still members.

The outbreak of World War I posed two serious challenges to the historical profession: would historians negate their new professionalism and yield to patriotism? This was the crux of the dilemma which confronted them after April, 1917, with America's entry into World War I, especially when a government agency, the Committee on Public Information, solicited their aid.<sup>10</sup> The CPI specifically wanted the historians to produce pamphlets and speeches justifying American participation in the war. If historians participated in a propaganda campaign of selling the war to Americans, then this relatively new profession could suffer repercussions by reverting to an amateur inclination toward patriotic bias. If they disregarded objectivity, historians would not create an accurate record of the past and this was the foremost standard of the new profession. Instead, history would become a tool used to distort rather than clarify events. Secondly, if historians refrained from engaging in propaganda activities, the United States would have a more difficult task of rallying Americans behind their government. Historians had to decide if they were patriots first, or if they were professionals.

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<sup>10</sup>Hereafter the Committee on Public Information cited as CPI.

Claude H. Van Tyne, who was educated at the University of Michigan and later became chairman of the history department at that institute, was one who resorted to non-professional tactics. The deterioration of his professionalism after America's declaration of war was evident by his constant slandering of Senator Robert La Follette, a staunch war opponent. In a letter published in the New York Times concerning La Follette's opposition to the war Van Tyne stated, ". . . in the whole history of the United States, . . . I know of none but Aaron Burr who seems to me to have been more ready to betray democracy for his own selfish ends than the little Badger Napoleon, the Senator from Wisconsin."<sup>11</sup>

Van Tyne's desire for American intervention harmonized with the views of William Roscoe Thayer, who had been educated at Harvard University. Thayer had authored an anti-German book in 1916 entitled Germany vs. Civilization.<sup>12</sup> Unlike Van Tyne, Thayer did not single out any one person. Instead the Harvard historian aimed his attacks at Germany. The obsession of Germanophobia in his book revealed his sentiments to relax historical objectivity during the war.

Other historians who supported American intervention before 1917 believed, contrary to Van Tyne and Thayer, that more

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<sup>11</sup> The Times [New York], August 21, 1917, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Blakey, p. 12.

restraint was necessary when expressing anti-German opinions. Charles A. Beard, James T. Shotwell, and James Harvey Robinson, all of Columbia, shared this view. Beard was the first of the three to advocate this approach. He asserted that the minds of war opponents "could not be changed by curses or bludgeons. Arguments addressed to their reason and understanding are our best hope."<sup>13</sup> Robinson, who was the least vocal of the three, agreed with Beard. It was not until nearly a year later in December, 1916, that Shotwell concurred with Beard. Shotwell in a letter to one of his associates expressed the hope that "we will be able to keep our sanity and deal with questions of fact" so that professors would not bring disrepute on the academic world.<sup>14</sup> Thus, even before the war, the profession was debating the dilemma of professional objectivity versus patriotic enthusiasm.

Once America entered the war Professor Shotwell expressed greater concern about the duties of the 690 historians who held doctoral degrees from American universities.<sup>15</sup> He wrote to several of his colleagues to inquire about forming a committee of historians

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<sup>13</sup>The Times [New York], October 9, 1917, p. 1. In protest of the unprofessional work by some historians during the war, Beard resigned his position at Columbia University in 1917.

<sup>14</sup>Blakey, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup>Hesseltine and Kaplan, p. 772-773.

from various universities to consider the problem of maintaining professional standards during the war. Frederick Jackson Turner and James Franklin Jameson were the first to respond. Turner and Jameson, along with Shotwell, decided they would invite several other historians to a conference in Washington on April 28, 1917. On that day fifteen historians crowded into Jameson's office at the Carnegie Institution.<sup>16</sup> This small group of historians discussed formulating wartime programs for explaining America's entry in the war. The objective of these fifteen historians was to enlighten the confused public concerning the United States' entry into the war. Thus, the duties of historians, as interpreted by these men were recording events and presenting them to the American public. It was in this spirit that they established the National Board for Historical Service. This voluntary and unofficial organization located in Washington was to utilize the talents of historians to provide the public with reliable fact. However, the purpose of the NBHS was not fulfilled because its war pamphlets were eventually published under the auspices of a propaganda organization, the CPI. The nature of this Board was such that it did not have the authority or right to direct or control historians.<sup>17</sup> Its function was to design various

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<sup>16</sup> Blakey, pp. 16-17.

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Cunningham McLaughlin, "Historians in the War," Dial, LXII (May 17, 1917), pp. 427-478.

programs, consisting of pamphleteering, arranging speaking tours, and revising school curriculum, in which interested historians could participate.

Shotwell served as chairman of the Board. His credentials proved that he was worthy of this honor. He had edited seven volumes of European documents. Shotwell had spent more than half of his life in his native Canada. He had completed his undergraduate training in British oriented schools, but received his doctoral degree from Columbia University. Other professional members of the Board were Victor S. Clark, Robert D. W. Connor, Carl R. Fish, Charles D. Hagen, Charles H. Hull, Gaillard Hunt, Waldo G. Leland, and Turner.<sup>18</sup>

Jameson, one of the founders of the Board, made a significant contribution to the NBHS. He solicited assistance from the Carnegie Institution for this organization. The results of his efforts proved fruitful. Jameson obtained adequate office space in Washington for the historians without cost. He also secured financial grants from Andrew Carnegie which quite adequately supported the Board's clerical, traveling, printing, and mailing expenses.<sup>19</sup>

Historians, who might have been reluctant to join the Board because of their careers, were less hesitant to do so because a

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<sup>18</sup>McLaughlin, Dial, p. 427. Hereafter the National Board for Historical Service cited as NBHS.

<sup>19</sup>Blakey, p. 19.

person with Jameson's credentials supported this organization. Jameson was the first to receive a Ph. D. in history from Johns Hopkins University and later he was a professor at this institution. While he was director of the department of historical research at the Carnegie Institution, Jameson successfully led a campaign for a national archives. One of his highest honors was to serve as the twenty-second president of the American Historical Association in 1906. During the war Jameson was managing editor of the AHR.<sup>20</sup> He utilized this journal as a sounding board, stressing the historians' responsibilities to the public and to history. Jameson wrote, "if the public is not guided by sound historical information, it will be guided by unsound."<sup>21</sup> His efforts to mobilize historians gained him the prominence of being their unofficial leader in 1917.<sup>22</sup>

Jameson chose as his right-hand man, Waldo Leland, a non-academic historian. Leland served as a liaison between the trained and the amateurs. He coordinated activities of smaller subcommittees operating independently of each other and helped to raise funds for the Board. As secretary of the AHA, Leland was instrumental in finding summer and semester replacements for historians

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<sup>20</sup> "James Franklin Jameson," Encyclopedia Americana (1969), XV, p. 685.

<sup>21</sup> James Franklin Jameson, "Historical Scholars in Wartime," AHR, XXII (July, 1917), pp. 831-833.

<sup>22</sup> Blakey, p. 2.



engaging in off-campus NBHS projects. Of Leland's work, that which had the most lasting value, was his compilation of the Board's records and his comprehensive account of the NBHS's work.<sup>23</sup>

On May 1, 1917, the NBHS circulated a letter informing 165 historians of its existence.<sup>24</sup> This letter, besides explaining the purpose of the Board, requested suggestions for NBHS projects. Also, interested individuals who would donate their talents were asked to contact the NBHS. Clearly stated in the letter was the idea that wartime writing should not reflect wartime emotions--nothing that one would be ashamed of ten years after the war was over.<sup>25</sup> The letter was generally received with favor but some historians were cautious about the organization's undefined plans to accomplish their objectives. One such historian was E. D. Adams of Stanford University. He wrote "the impression it makes upon me is that a group of historians at Washington, very anxious to do something for their country are plunging, without sufficient consideration into this movement, which may perhaps embarrass more than it will help our national cause."<sup>26</sup> The attitude of historians like Adams prompted

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> James T. Shotwell, The Autobiography of James T. Shotwell (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1961), p. 73.

<sup>26</sup> Blakey, p. 20.

the NBHS to set forth more definite suggestions in their future correspondence.

Turner suggested that college courses and research seminars be made relevant to the war. Leland proposed lecturing before schools, churches, and clubs; writing articles for newspapers and magazines; and developing special courses in school systems to promote American involvement in the war.<sup>27</sup> By creating program guidelines for historians, NBHS directors hoped to stimulate a broader participation in their wartime activities on the part of prominent but suspicious historians.

A general clearinghouse for war information was initially created when Wilson established the CPI. Prior to the creation of the CPI the Secretary of Navy, Josephus Daniels, the Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, and the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, had discussed war censorship and expressed their views jointly in a formal letter to Wilson recommending the formation of a censorship committee.<sup>28</sup> However, these Cabinet members learned that the President had been contemplating creating a committee of this nature prior to receiving their letter. In an effort to modify the existing hostile opinions of Americans toward the war and educate

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Josephus Daniels, The Wilson Era: Years of War and After, 1917-1923 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1946), p. 221.

them on the war aims of their country, the CPI was formed on April 13, 1917 by an executive order.<sup>29</sup>

As stipulated in this order the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of Navy were named as members to the Committee, with George Creel as chairman.<sup>30</sup> When Creel took charge on April 16 the press, in general, responded enthusiastically.<sup>31</sup> As chairman of the Committee, Creel viewed his task as a fight for the minds of men.<sup>32</sup> The Committee established four basic objectives. Their primary goal was national unity. In addition to this, the Committee sought to stimulate allied morale,

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>31</sup>E. David Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 1913-1921 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 134.

<sup>32</sup>Maxine Block (ed.), Current Biography Yearbook (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1944), p. 14. Creel, a Missourian born in 1876, was educated in the public schools of Kansas City, and after one year during which he had written for his high school's paper, he left his formal academic environment. Creel then traveled to various parts of the United States where he worked as a newspaper reporter. Later he became editor, owner, and publisher of the Kansas City Independent. The Independent was more than a literary publication since Creel was also interested in social and economic issues. His political sympathies at the turn of the twentieth century were close to those of the Socialist party, but he was later to become an ardent spokesman for Wilson's "New Freedom." Creel, who had been opposed to American intervention, had supported the re-election of Wilson in 1916. The President, grateful for Creel's support, offered him the post of civilian chairman of the CPI.

obtain the support of neutral nations, and break through the barrage of "lies" which the people of the Central Powers had been told.<sup>33</sup> Once the Committee had determined its objectives, they were confronted with the task of achieving them.

Initially, Creel provided Washington correspondents with data regarding government departments or helped them verify information. In this stage, Creel and the Committee were little more than a liaison between Washington correspondents and the government.<sup>34</sup> As Creel's Committee became more organized, it was able to broaden its scope. It accomplished this by utilizing a variety of techniques to publicize American war aims at home.

Creel divided the CPI into twenty-one subcommittees, each with the same purpose, namely, justifying America's participation in the war.<sup>35</sup> The Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation, which was composed of historians and professional educators, was probably the least dynamic of the subcommittees. Creel searched for a man who was highly qualified and respected by his colleagues to head this division. The events which led to the appointment of Guy Stanton Ford, a professional historian, to this position were

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<sup>33</sup>Mark Sullivan, Our Times, 1900-1915, Vol. V, Over Here, 1914-1918 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 428.

<sup>34</sup>George Creel, "How We Advertised America," John A. Garraty and Robert A. Divine (eds.), Twentieth-Century America (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, Inc., 1968), p. 175.

<sup>35</sup>Blakey, p. 22.

unusual. Ford addressed an open letter to the school principals in April, 1917, regarding the possibility of using the high school commencement ceremonies for patriotic purposes. He attempted to obtain the signature of the Commissioner of Education but was unsuccessful. In spite of this, the letter was circulated. A copy of it reached Creel's desk through some member of the NBHS. There were ties between these two organizations since the CPI published the NBHS war pamphlets. Creel's pleasure with the letter prompted him to invite Ford to Washington to be the director of the Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation. Shotwell, who was chairman of the NBHS, urged Ford to accept Creel's offer--whereupon he did.<sup>36</sup>

Ford's impressive credentials also aided him in securing this position. He had been a history professor at Yale and then at the University of Illinois. Later Ford became the Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Minnesota. His colleagues honored him by appointing him executive secretary and managing editor of the AHR.<sup>37</sup> Since Ford had proven himself in his profession, Creel's decision was viewed favorably by the Committee.

Ford's division distributed more than seventy-five million pieces of literature.<sup>38</sup> The scope of this material ranged from a

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-23.

<sup>37</sup> "Guy Stanton Ford," Encyclopedia Americana (1969), XI, pp. 464-465.

<sup>38</sup> James R. Mock and Cedrick Larson, Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919 (Princeton: Princeton Press, 1939), p. 159.

four page leaflet to an elaborate War Cyclopedia and numerous annotated works of research. This literature was published in English, Swedish, Polish, Spanish, Italian, Bohemian, Portuguese, and other languages. In addition to this, the material was written to appeal to the various intellectual levels. Ford, indicated the use of non-professional techniques in these publications in a letter to Howard M. Strong of the Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association dated May 25, 1917. He wrote, "There is no idea of propaganda other than bringing home to the great mass of people some attitude other than that of mere passiveness and acceptance of the war because it has been decreed at Washington."<sup>39</sup>

Though the spirit with which Ford undertook his new endeavors was great, his facilities were limited. He, along with his staff, consisting of one assistant, an editor, and a few stenographers, worked in a room and a half.<sup>40</sup> Samuel B. Harding, professor of history at the University of Indiana, was Ford's chief assistant. James W. Searson, professor of English and journalism at Kansas State University, did the editorial work. The total cost of the division's operation was \$568,306.08, most of which represented the cost of the voluminous material distributed by request because people seldom paid for it.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>40</sup>Blakey, p. 23.

<sup>41</sup>Mock and Larson, Words That Won the War, p. 160. Ford's annual salary for his efforts with the division was \$5,200. Harding received a yearly income of \$2,600.

Many scholars throughout the United States offered their services without any compensation. They either worked on the campuses where they were employed or went to Washington for brief consultation periods. Those who did the latter received \$25 or \$50 as reimbursement for traveling expenses.<sup>42</sup> In the beginning, Ford primarily tapped the historical talents of Minnesota scholars. However, by the close of the war Illinois had the largest representation. The University of Chicago, Columbia University, Princeton University, and the University of Wisconsin were only four of the nearly forty institutions whose scholars had made substantial contributions.<sup>43</sup>

While the CPI and the NBHS were associated with each other and benefited from government facilities, another patriotic organization, the National Security League, conducted a separate but related educational battle.<sup>44</sup> This League was founded considerably earlier than the CPI and the NBHS due to the efforts of S. Stanford Menken, a New York corporation lawyer. Menken, while on a business trip, had been temporarily stranded in England when the war began in 1914. To pass the time until he could return home, he visited the House of Commons. Menken was shocked at the lack of preparations England had made for the war and this aroused his

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Blakey, p. 26.

fears about America's unpreparedness.<sup>45</sup> On his return to the United States, he studied the American military organization and its policy.

Menken conferred with several men who believed as he did, such as former President Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Stimson, Leonard Wood, George Putman, and United States Representative Augustus P. Gardner of Massachusetts. They agreed that larger military appropriations were needed. These men reasoned that by arousing public opinion Congress would more likely increase military expenditures. With Gardner's support and the aid of 150 men, the National Security League was formed on December 1, 1914 in New York.<sup>46</sup> Menken served as president. Prominent men such as Secretary of War Elihu Root, and the 1904 Democratic nominee for President of the United States, Alton B. Parker, gave the NSL an aura of integrity.<sup>47</sup>

Initially the League advocated compulsory military training and larger congressional naval and armament appropriations. This was to be accomplished by sending NSL speakers to various parts of America. These speakers alarmed local Chambers of Commerce,

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<sup>45</sup>Robert D. Ward, "The Origin and Activities of the National Security League, 1914-1919," MVHR, XLVII (June, 1960), p. 51. Menken had been a candidate for a position in New York on the Henry George ticket in 1897.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., pp. 52-53. Hereafter the National Security League cited as NSL.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 53.



Rotary and Kiwanis groups, and schools by speculating that Germany would invade the United States if the Allies were defeated. This approach proved fruitful in augmenting the League's membership to approximately 100,000 with branch organizations in twenty-two states. The increased membership meant the NSL had sufficient financial funds for their program. This money was used partially to support training camp programs for the League's speakers. Also the funds were spent to oppose anti-war politicians and for parades to apply pressure on Wilson to take a more aggressive war stance.<sup>48</sup>

One of the League's subcommittees, the Committee on Patriotism Through Education, participated in this endeavor. Historians dominated this particular committee.<sup>49</sup> Its first chairman was historian Albert B. Hart of Harvard University. Hart, recipient of a doctoral degree at Germany's Freiburg University, had been instrumental in establishing the AHR and had served as editor of the American Nation series. As the war dragged on Hart's dislike for Germany was apparent. This was exemplified by a remark to his Harvard students about German universities. He said that there were no longer any "eminent professors of history in Germany" and the only thing worth partaking of in Germany was beer.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>49</sup>Blakey, p. 28.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

With America's entry into the conflict, Hart relied on historians and educators to make speeches nationwide. The topics of these talks were the causes of the war and the necessity to have a strong military defense. In July, 1917, Hart organized the Speaker's Training Camp at Chautauqua to better prepare historians and educators for their speaking engagements.<sup>51</sup> Hart retired as chairman later in July, 1917, and was succeeded by Princeton historian, Robert McElroy. He won favor with the former chairman by giving an impromptu speech at Chautauqua for the NSL. McElroy, unlike Hart, was not a German Ph. D. Instead he had received his doctorate at Princeton University. McElroy then studied in Germany for a year prior to succeeding Wilson as chairman of the history department at Princeton in 1901.<sup>52</sup>

McElroy was promoted to educational director of the NSL a few weeks after Hart resigned. Basically his objectives remained similar to Hart's goals--organizing historians to combat apathy and misconceptions about America's involvement in the war.<sup>53</sup> However, McElroy expanded the activities of the NSL's Committee on Patriotism to include many projects similar to those of the CPI and the

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

NBHS. These consisted of pamphleteering, helping revise school curricula, and investigating anti-American activities and literature.<sup>54</sup>

Those historians who wanted to promote nationalism among their fellow Americans now had at least three options--the NBHS, the CPI, and the NSL. Unfortunately, the promotion of nationalism did not always coincide with the professional standards of "scientific history." Although those who worked for these organizations did not constitute a majority of the profession, they were nevertheless influential. In a short time, these professionals would degenerate into prejudicial anti-German propagandists.

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-32.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PENCIL CAMPAIGN FOR WAR

The bulk of the historians' contribution to the war effort was writing pamphlets for world-wide distribution. Two of the more well known series, the Red, White, and Blue Series and the War Information Series, were published under the auspices of Creel's Committee. These pamphlets served dual purposes. First, they were designed to clarify the goals of the United States regarding American involvement in the war.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, these pamphlets were to expose to the world the "destructive" aims of Germany and the methods they would resort to in order to achieve their objectives.<sup>2</sup>

According to Ford, the data for these pamphlets was based on the words and deeds of Germans, in addition to the testimony of American citizens who had observed or studied them either in the United States or abroad.<sup>3</sup> Ford claimed that the Division of Civic and Educational Publications' sources were indisputable. However, the span of time that elapsed from the Americans' observations

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<sup>1</sup>Guy Stanton Ford, "America's Fight for Public Opinion," Minnesota History Bulletin, XI (February 3, 1919), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

until their testimony was an important factor in determining the validity of this information. The motives and circumstances which prompted the Germans to bring forth evidence against their country must also be considered. Equally as significant as the sources was the manner in which the material was extracted from the testimonies or conversations. Verification that these statements were not taken out of context was necessary. Therefore, an examination of these pamphlets was essential in determining whether historians were true to the newly established ideals of the profession. If historians veered from the guidelines, then it was necessary to consider to what degree their wartime pamphlets did not meet these standards.

American historians made their debut in this particular endeavor by emphasizing the "evil" and non-democratic nature of the German government. Professor Charles Hazen of Columbia University authored a pamphlet entitled The Government of Germany for the War Information Series. The election system in Germany, he stressed, was contrary to the democratic way. Equal representation was non-existent because electoral districts which were created in 1871 had not been revised.<sup>4</sup> Thus there were some members of the Reichstag elected by a few thousand voters, others by

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<sup>4</sup>Charles D. Hazen, The Government of Germany, The Committee on Public Information Publication, War Information Series No. 3 (Washington: Government Printing Office, August, 1917), p. 6.

the hundreds of thousands. A vote in one district, for example, was the equivalent of thirty votes in other districts.<sup>5</sup> It was primarily the progressive cities which were underrepresented. Professor Hazen's objectivity was questionable because he neglected to mention that this type of electoral process was not unique to Germany. Even the United States did not count one man's vote equal to another man's vote. After the United States passed a law that each state should be represented equally on the basis of a census taken every ten years, this did not solve the problem of one man-one vote. If a state in the Union did not lose or gain any United States Representatives, then these states did not bother to redistrict. However, redistricting was necessary whether a state gained or lost representatives because of the shift from agrarian to urban areas. Only recently has the United States Supreme Court required each state in the Union to redistrict every ten years regardless of whether the number of representatives are altered. Not until the case Wesberry v. Sanders in 1964, did the Supreme Court rule that one man's vote must be equal to another man's vote.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, Hazen distorted the shortcomings of Germany's electoral system by implying that they were peculiar only to Germany.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>6</sup>Robert P. Ludlum and others, American Government: National, State and Local (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), pp. 135-136.

Hazen's The Government of Germany included the fact that since 1850, Prussia, comprising two-thirds of the territory and population of Germany, had a constitution and a parliament. Prussia's legislature, the Landstag, consisted of the House of Lords and the House of Representatives. The bulk of legislation was proposed by the government rather than being initiated by the legislature.<sup>7</sup> This branch had little if any control over the permanent bureaucracy. The House of Lords merely functioned in an advisory capacity.<sup>8</sup> It had the veto power regarding all legislation, but the King also had an absolute veto.<sup>9</sup> Historian Hazen sarcastically described the House of Representatives in this manner:

Yet there exists another House in this legislature which enacts the laws that govern 40,000,000 Prussians--the so-called House of Representatives; and marvelous indeed is the construction and composity of that body. Every Prussian man who has attained his twenty-fifth year has the vote. Is Prussia, therefore a democracy?<sup>10</sup>

Hazen responded to this question negatively since the poor people's vote was practically annihilated. In each electoral district the voters were divided into three classes based on their wealth. The amount of taxes paid by the district was divided into three equal parts. The

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<sup>7</sup>Hazen, Government of Germany, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

taxpayers who paid the first third were one group, those who paid the second third were classified into a group, and the voters paying the remainder were in another class. Each of these groups elected an equal number of delegates to a convention which selected the delegates to the House of Representatives.<sup>11</sup> Thus, though Prussians had universal suffrage for males, it was not democratic since the well-to-do classes were consolidated.

It was evident from an evaluation of Hazen's pamphlet that he was extremely biased, contrary to professional ethics which had recently been established for historians. The professor's data concerning Germany was correct but it was misleading. It was essential for Hazen to compare Germany's structure of government with the

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid. One example of the inadequacy of the American system was the non-democratic manner by which the President and Vice-President of the United States are elected to office--the electoral college. Though the electors chosen to cast their ballot for the two highest offices in the United States are morally bound to vote for the candidates who received the majority of votes in their respective states, they are not legally obligated to do so. Also the fact that women were not given their suffrage until 1920 and other races were disenfranchised until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 indicate non-democratic government procedures. The United States Senators until 1913 were elected by the state legislators rather than by all of the constituents of each state. Thus, in some aspects the United States Senate was similar to the Prussian House of Lords. All of these defects in the American suffrage system substantiated the fact that at this particular time the United States lacked a completely democratic voting system. For further information see Ludlum, American Government, pp. 135-136.



United States or some other Allied nations to put it in its proper perspective. Unfortunately, he failed to make those comparisons.

While Hazen had been criticizing Germany's structure of government, Samuel B. Harding of Indiana University launched a verbal assault on Germany in another pamphlet entitled The Study of the Great War: A Topical Outline with Extensive Quotations and Reading References. There, he elaborated on Germany's premeditated war efforts. There were numerous events on which he based his findings. Laws passed in 1911, 1912, and particularly in 1913 authorized increases in the size of the German army. Prior to the passage of these laws there were 515,000 men serving in the German army and after these measures had become effective 806,000 men were in this branch of service.<sup>12</sup> This increase was substantial, especially during peacetime. Men in the reserves were called up in May and June, 1914, from as far away as South America. The implications of Harding's data were significant in supporting his premise. The increase in Germany's army seemed substantial but the figures were misleading. By comparing the size of the armies of all contesting nations, Harding could have solved this problem. It was necessary to know that the Allied countries had 12,100,000

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<sup>12</sup>Samuel B. Harding, The Study of the Great War, The Committee on Public Information Publication, War Information Series No. 16 (Washington: Government Printing Office, April, 1918), p. 24.

trained men in 1914 and the Central Powers had 7,700,000 combat troops to put the statistics in proper perspective.<sup>13</sup> A further breakdown of each Allied nation would have proved helpful in making an assessment of Harding's quantitative data. His failure to provide this additional data seriously impaired the implications of his statistics.

Harding also provided information concerning monies to finance Germany's war efforts. Prior to June, 1914, a war tax of \$225,000,000 was levied.<sup>14</sup> In addition to this, a special war fund used for mobilization had increased from \$30,000,000 in 1911 to \$90,000,000 in 1913.<sup>15</sup> Germany allocated a portion of these

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<sup>13</sup>Francis J. Reynolds (ed.), The Story of the Great War, II (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1916), pp. 419, 424. A breakdown of the trained army combat troops in 1914 for the Allied Nations were: Russia 5,500,000, France 4,000,000, Austria-Hungary 2,500,000, Italy 2,000,000 and Great Britain 600,000. The statistics in 1914 for the Central Powers' army were: Germany 5,500,000, Austria-Hungary 2,500,000, and Turkey 700,000. An estimated breakdown of the naval statistics for the Allied Nations in 1914 were: Great Britain had sixty-eight battle ships and one hundred and ten cruisers, France had twenty-one battle ships and thirty cruisers, Russia had seventeen battle ships and thirty-one cruisers, and Italy had fifteen battle ships and twenty cruisers. The Central Powers' naval force consisted of the following in 1914: Germany had thirty-seven battle ships and forty-eight cruisers, Austria-Hungary had sixteen battle ships and twelve cruisers, and Turkey had three battle ships and two cruisers.

<sup>14</sup>Harding, Study of the Great War, p. 24.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

monies for construction purposes. The Kiel Canal connecting the Baltic and the North Sea was quickly rebuilt so it would be finished in the early summer of 1914. Strategic railways leading to the Belgian, French, and Russian frontiers were constructed.<sup>16</sup> Harding noted that

an immense sum of money has been sunk in these railways, . . . and there is not the least prospect of an adequate return on them as commercial ventures. They are purely military and strategical preparations for war with France.<sup>17</sup>

Another military measure that Germany began prior to June, 1914 was the accumulation of war materials. This was accomplished in part by greatly reducing in 1913 and 1914 the exportation of chemicals used in making explosives.<sup>18</sup> Germany's war preparations also included an increase in the importation of horses, foodstuffs, and fats.<sup>19</sup> The latter was utilized in the production of nitroglycerine.

Arrangements for fueling German naval vessels were also made. A German cruiser, the Eber, was docked at Cape Town a few days before the war broke out and left at an opportune moment. According to a Cape Town correspondent of the London Times a

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

letter addressed to the commander of the Eber containing instructions from Berlin was intercepted. This letter dated June 14, 1914, revealed a complete system for coaling the German navy through secret service agents in Cape Town, New York, and Chicago.<sup>20</sup> The commander of the Eber was provided with the names of shippers and bankers on whom he could rely. "The essence of the plan [was] that a collier would leave Table Bay [Cape Colony] ostensibly bound for England, but really to meet a German warship at an agreed rendezvous."<sup>21</sup> When Harding wrote about the ship, Eber, he did not divulge the name of the London Times correspondent who was the source of this information, nor did he reveal who in Berlin wrote the letter concerning the refueling stations for German vessels. Both of these factors were essential for verification of this letter.

Harding concluded that prior to June 28, 1914, Germany initiated another test of diplomatic strength in which the threat of war should be a decisive factor. The passage of the military laws, the construction programs, and the allocations of funds for strengthening the army and navy confirmed his findings. Harding's syllabus reputed to be a study of the war was in reality propaganda for the Allied cause. This finding was corroborated by historian Blakey. Although Harding methodically cited his sources, he relied primarily

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

on the War Cyclopedia, the Yellow Books, and the Blue Books. These works were published by the United States, France, and Britain respectively to promote the Allied cause. Since Harding made no reference to available German sources such as government sponsored films, pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers, his viewpoint was distorted by examining only Allied publications. Even though available Allied and German materials were biased, a better perspective could have been achieved by examining all sources.

Harding also failed to elaborate on the causes for Germany's early mobilization. This was the thesis of another pamphlet, Conquest and Kulture: Aims of the Germans in Their Own Words, co-authored by Wallace Notestein and Elmer E. Stoll. They thoroughly researched their topic and then footnoted their findings. Initially, they argued, Germany attempted to camouflage its real reason for the military augment to her ally, Turkey, whose power had been reduced because of the Balkan wars. Germany alleged that the increased power was to meet the military buildup of France and Russia, according to Notestein and Stoll.<sup>22</sup> However, the dates of such French and Russian legislation repudiated this statement. An increase of Germany's military force was initially formulated in

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<sup>22</sup>Wallace Notestein and Elmer E. Stoll, Conquest and Kultur: Aims of the Germans in Their Own Words, The Committee on Public Information Publication, Red, White, and Blue Series No. 5 (Washington: Government Printing Office, January, 1918), p. 125.

November, 1912, openly discussed in January, 1913, and passed on June 30, 1913.<sup>23</sup> The French law, providing for three years service, was not devised until February, 1913 and became law on July 19, 1913 due to German's recent military measure.<sup>24</sup> There was great opposition to this French law by the legislators and inhabitants of that country and it was passed solely because of Germany's action, explained Notestein and Stoll. Russia did not formulate a law to strengthen their military until March, 1913 according to these historians and Russia like France did so only to offset Germany's proposed buildup.<sup>25</sup> Contrary to Notestein's and Stoll's information, France and Russia had begun building up their military forces as early as 1911 rather than 1913. Thus, the historians' contention that German had begun increasing their forces prior to France and Russia was not valid.

After other nations began to see through Germany's "thinly cloaked veil," Notestein and Stoll went on, the officials of that country revised their position. Deputy Haase in the Reichstag on April 7, 1913 replied to those who tried to justify German's action in this situation based on those false statements. He said,

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

Gentlemen, it has been said that we are compelled to increase our army, because France is going to introduce compulsory service for the term of three years. Whoever says that falsifies the real facts of the case, for without our army bill France would not have dreamt of introducing the three year service bill.<sup>26</sup>

Notestein and Stoll should have included the armed forces statistics of all contesting nations for clarity. These figures would have substantiated the theory that in spite of Germany's increase in her army the Central Powers still lagged behind the number of Allied armed forces.

The German government stated that they needed to mobilize because more territory was needed for their growing population, which at this time was increasing at the rate of 800,000 people per year according to Notestein and Stoll.<sup>27</sup> Since land was scarce, the only way to acquire it was by conquest. The German government explained that territorial expansion was essential for future generations. The Germans supposedly reasoned that war was necessary if they were to become a world power. It was the consensus among the Germans that if war was inevitable it should come at the moment which would be most favorable to themselves. The Germans believed, therefore, that a country should not wait until there was a reason for war, but should strike when it was most convenient.

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

Notestein and Stoll went on to quote former Senator Elihu Root in a speech delivered in Chicago on September 14, 1914, in which he said that Germany, by initiating war when she chose, did so in the belief "that she could conquer the earth nation by nation."<sup>28</sup>

According to University of Chicago historian Andrew C. McLaughlin's pamphlet entitled The Great War: From Spectator to Participant, it was difficult for Americans to comprehend Germany's intentions to become a world power. An analysis of the Germans revealed that they believed their culture to be superior to all others. McLaughlin also stated that the ruling classes in Germany failed to understand that political control was not necessary to the extension of influence, to permeation of thought, and even to the development of trade.<sup>29</sup> These officials thought that the world should live in awe of Germany and rivals must be defeated.

With the outbreak of the war Americans were firm in their conviction of non-interference. This attitude was prevalent even when the United States realized the possible peril of a German invasion of American soil if the Huns were not defeated.

But something more than fear was needed to force us [Americans] into the fight; not until the issues were clear to

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Andrew C. McLaughlin, The Great War: From Spectator to Participant, The Committee on Public Information Publication, War Information Series No. 4 (Washington: Government Printing Office, August, 1917), p. 5.



the nations of the world, not until there was hope for constructive peace, not till we [Americans] heard the call of humanity were we [Americans] prepared to fling in our [American] power and resources.<sup>30</sup>

The United States' entrance into the war was not the result of one or two incidents, according to McLaughlin, but rather due to repeated offenses by the Germans. These consisted of German espionage in America, the sinking of the Lusitania, the violation of the Sussex pledge, and the undermining of America's industry.

McLaughlin's premises were corroborated by Earl E. Sperry, professor of history at Syracuse University and Willis M. West, former chairman of the history department at Minnesota. Their study entitled German Plots and Intrigues in the United States During the Period of Our Neutrality disclosed the methods that the Germans and Austrians used to achieve their objectives. Prevention of exportation was to be accomplished by striking at the very source of these supplies--the American factory.<sup>31</sup> Ambassador Constantin T. Dumba of Austria in his correspondence with Baron Busian, the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary wrote ". . . A private German employment office has been established which

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>31</sup>Earl E. Sperry and Willis M. West, German Plots and Intrigues in the United States During the Period of Our Neutrality, The Committee on Public Information Publication, Red, White, and Blue Series No. 10 (Washington: Government Printing Office, July, 1918), p. 7.

provides employment for persons who have voluntarily given up their places, and it is already working well."<sup>32</sup> The central office for this German employment bureau was in New York with branches in Bridgeport, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, and Cincinnati. This was an expensive undertaking and the Germans had made preparations for it as early as August, 1915. This document verified the existence of German espionage in America and revealed the German plans to undermine the industry of the United States.

The aims of the German propagandists in America, Sperry and West pointed out, paralleled the espionage efforts of their fellow countrymen. These propagandists relied primarily on newspapers and periodicals for publication of their material.<sup>33</sup> One such newspaper which was established prior to the outbreak of war and supported by the German government was The Fatherland.<sup>34</sup> In spite of its proclamation of loyalty to the American government, this publication persistently criticized the President of the United States, in addition to other public officials, and it also demanded the adoption of policies which would make the United States an ally of Germany.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

A German official, Franz von Rintelen, had prepared and widely circulated a pamphlet which lauded peace and denounced the "corrupt and greedy Americans who for the sake of profit were forcing the United States into the present war."<sup>36</sup> The pro-German propaganda distributed in the United States, which was either maintained or subsidized by the German government, advocated several measures. These included the enactment by Congress of a law forbidding Americans to travel on the ships of the belligerent states; an embargo on munitions; the prohibition by the government of loans to the Allied powers and the boycott of banks which made them; the defeat of Wilson for re-election in 1916 and also of the Senators and Representatives who would not vote for bills favored by the German government; the support of pacificism in the sense that the United States should not defend the lives and property of its citizens from attack by Germany.<sup>37</sup> These propagandists, through the German war office, distributed war films in the United States which were widely circulated. Thus, Sperry and West concluded, that the German propagandists launched a massive campaign to saturate the American people with the "righteous" ideals of Germany and the horrors that war would bring to the United States if it ceased to be neutral.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

The findings of Sperry and West, in addition to Germany's hostile activities against the United States government which became publicly known with the sinking of the Lusitania in May, 1915, substantiated McLaughlin's espionage theory. Historian McLaughlin described the Lusitania disaster as a "shameful and premeditated crime."<sup>39</sup> Wilson responded to the sinking of this vessel with a

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<sup>39</sup>McLaughlin, The Great War, p. 8. Available data has revealed that the British liner, the Lusitania, was not simply a passenger ship and that the Germans had provocations to attack the vessel without prior warning. This British vessel had a cargo of ten and a half tons of American war materials and President Wilson had been informed of this matter. The President considered the safety of the American passengers on board secondary to the camouflaging the cargo. Wilson's position was substantiated when the American State Department ordered all fifty ads warning potential passengers on the Lusitania of the risk blacked out. The British government regardless of America's reasons was pleased the United States was engaging in these illegal activities. As a friendly gesture, Britain had assured Captain William Turner of the Lusitania that a British escort, the Juno, would rendezvous with his vessel forty miles west of the Fastnet rock off Ireland's coast. On May 5, Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, ordered the Juno which was on route to meet the Lusitania to terminate her mission and return to port. The initial orders of the Juno had been rescinded after the British had learned a German U-20 was to rendezvous with the Lusitania. The British Admiralty failed to inform the Lusitania of their disasterous course. The German submarine attacked the Lusitania with a single torpedo which caused a 15° list. The second explosion which caused the ship to sink was attributed to a massive internal explosion. After the disaster, Lord Mersey presided over the Court of Inquiry. He was sent a letter by a high Admiralty official saying it was "considered politically expedient that Captain Turner, the master of the Lusitania, be most prominently blamed for the disaster"--Mersey refused. The remainder of his verdict assisted the British government in shunning any of the blame. Mersey stated there had been no internal explosions on the Lusitania and the ship did not contain any contraband nor troops. Two days after his verdict, Mersey refused his fee for the case and asked never to sit as judge again. The Lusitania case, he told his children, "was a damned dirty business." For further information see Colin Simpson, "Lusitania," Life, LXXIII (October 13, 1973), pp. 58, 60, 63-64, 66, 68-72, 74, 76, 79-80.

stern warning. He sent a letter to the German government condemning and warning them that the United States would defend its rights on the high seas. Wilson believed that the sharp tone of his letter would result in Germany's reevaluation of her conduct, but this was only temporarily the case. Germany ceased sinking American liners on September 1, 1915, until the Sussex pledge was revoked by Germany.

The Sussex affair, in the summer of 1916, further strained American relations with the German government according to McLaughlin. To calm the United States, Germany made the proposal that merchant ships would be given warning prior to being sunk and the people aboard would be allowed to leave the ship before it was sunk unless the vessel should resist or attempt to escape. However, there was one stipulation in the German proposition. The German government promised to abide by this offer if the United States would persuade Britain to halt what Berlin considered an illegal blockade. Due to this demand Wilson rejected Germany's proposal. The American government was aware that Germany's willingness to consider any type of agreement meant that their old U-boats were being destroyed and therefore, they were not prepared at this time to attack large vessels stated McLaughlin.<sup>40</sup> In 1917 Germany reversed their position by announcing that 'no warning

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<sup>40</sup>McLaughlin, The Great War, pp. 8-9.

would be given when ships were sunk within a war zone, " which applied practically to the entire western European coast.<sup>41</sup>

This hostile announcement was not as provocative, McLaughlin suggested, as the Zimmerman note of January 19, 1917. The context of the note, which was published by the Associated Press on February 28, 1917, was that the German Secretary for Foreign Affairs secretly inform the German minister to Mexico of their intentions to repudiate the Sussex pledge. If Mexico agreed to join with Japan in attacking the United States, the German government would give New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona back to Mexico.

These hostile actions prompted Wilson to send the German ambassador home. The German foreign office reported this incident to the Reichstag and the German people claimed that Wilson abruptly severed diplomatic relations. Conversely, the United States asserted "the step [to severe diplomatic relations] was taken eighteen months or more . . . [following] the exchange of notes about the Sussex."<sup>42</sup> Thus, McLaughlin provided an overview of the incidents which prompted America's declaration of war. His espionage arguments were substantiated by historians, Sperry and West. In spite of this corroboration, McLaughlin's work was not

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

flawless since he omitted any implications of antagonism by the United States which contributed to Germany's action. This was exemplified by Britain being the primary recipient of American loans and supplies, such as the Lusitania's cargo, while the United States was supposedly neutral. Though McLaughlin adhered to the professional guidelines more closely than Hazen, Harding, Notestein, and Stoll, he still was not completely objective.

After McLaughlin's work, attention was focused on the abuses foreigners were subjected to by the Germans. Professor Dana C. Munro of Princeton University, George C. Sellery of the University of Wisconsin, and August C. Krey of the University of Minnesota gave an account of the German atrocities. For their German sources they relied on official proclamations, official letters and diaries of soldiers, and quotes from the newspapers. The American sources which they consulted were war material from the archives of the State Department and statements from United States' officials.

Munro, Sellery, and Krey elaborated on the "horrible" deaths contrived by the Germans. For this data they relied on the diaries of German soldiers. One such diary described the destruction of a village.

In the night of August 18-19 the village of Saint-Maurice was punished for having fired on German soldiers by being burnt to the ground by the German troops. The village was surrounded,

men posted about a yard from one another, so that no one could get out. Then the Uhlans set fire to it, house by house. Neither man, woman, nor child could escape. . . . Anyone who ventured to come out was shot down. All the inhabitants left in the village were burnt with the houses.<sup>43</sup>

In this passage, in spite of the horrible deaths of these people, these historians advocated that his action was done as retaliation for a previous attack on the German soldiers. The point that they made was the "cruel" manner in which they inflicted punishment, especially since women and children were not permitted to leave.<sup>44</sup>

Another report of the "frightful" German policies was described by Minister Whitlock, a British official, to the Secretary of State in the following manner:

During the execution of about forty inhabitants of Dinant, the Germans placed before the condemned their wives and children. . . . Madame Albin who had just given birth to a child, three days previously, was brought on a mattress by German soldiers to witness the execution of her husband; her cries and supplications were so pressing that her husband's life was spared.<sup>45</sup>

This account disclosed two things about the German character. For one, they were unnecessarily cruel because the women and children had to witness the death of their spouses and fathers. However, the

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<sup>43</sup>Dana C. Munro, George C. Sellery, and August C. Krey, German War Practices: Treatment of Civilians, Part I, The Committee on Public Information Publication, Red, White, and Blue Series No. 6 (Washington: Government Printing Office, January, 1918), p. 27.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 32.



Germans' action of sparing the soldier's life, who had recently fathered a child, also showed that they were humane. The historians could have deleted the portion regarding the husband's life being spared in order to display a more inhumane picture. However, they respected the duties of their profession in this instance by foregoing deletion of this information, which detracted from their primary objective--proving the German atrocities.

These historians did not leave this last account imprinted on their readers' minds but proceeded to describe the slaughter of innocent people by the Germans. Among the people killed at the Rocher of Bayard were children who were as young as three weeks.<sup>46</sup> Twelve of the ninety people who died were children under the age of six.<sup>47</sup> This account exemplified the "extreme cruelty" of the Germans which was the primary objective of these pamphleteer historians. These historians did not give an account of the circumstances leading to the disaster at Rocher of Bayard. Also Munro, Sellery, and Krey while discussing atrocities neglected to mention any that were committed by Allied nations and thus failed to be completely objective in their work.

Background information regarding the initial outbreak of war and the events which followed was contained in McLaughlin's

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

pamphlet entitled The Great War: From Spectator to Participant.

Luxemburg was invaded on August 2, 1914, in violation of the Treaty of London of 1867 and of her rights as a neutral state in general.

Germany requested permission from Belgium to pass through in order to attack France. The Germans falsely alleged that France intended to invade Belgium. Though Germany offered to restore Belgium and pay indemnities at the end of the war, the small country denied Germany's proposal. Had Belgium accepted, they would have shunned their responsibility to their allies by disregarding their alliances. When Germany invaded Belgium on August 2, 1914, the defenseless country appealed to Great Britain, Austria, France, and Russia for assistance.<sup>48</sup> This attack was a severe blow to diplomacy since the German Empire had been the successor to Prussia in guaranteeing Belgium neutrality. Though Belgium was virtually defenseless with 180,000 troops compared to Germany's 4,500,000 men, McLaughlin's point would have been more meaningful if statistics had been included.<sup>49</sup>

Once Germany attacked Belgium, the inhabitants of this country under seige were mistreated, McLaughlin stated. The Rathenau Plan suggested by Dr. Walter Rathenau, President of the General Electric Company of Germany, was to establish a Bureau of Raw Materials

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<sup>48</sup>McLaughlin, The Great War, p. 46.

<sup>49</sup>Reynolds, The Great War, p. 419.

for the war. This plan was designed to make German industry more secure. In addition to obtaining war support by contributions and requisitions forced from the conquered peoples, this plan according to McLaughlin was aimed at destroying the industries of the conquered so it would not be possible to rebuild them for several years, if at all. The objectives of this plan violated the Hague Convention in several aspects. According to the Convention, private property was not to be confiscated. Also requisitions in kind and services were not to be demanded from municipalities or inhabitants except for the needs of the occupying army.<sup>50</sup> McLaughlin's account stated that contributions in kind were to be paid in cash if possible and if not, a receipt was to be given and the payment in full made as soon as possible.

McLaughlin cited further violations of the Hague Convention. Immediately after Germany's invasion, she levied fines and made requisitions, many of which were not "for the needs of the army."<sup>51</sup> On August 27, 1914, an order issued by the Germany Headquarters Staff stated that Belgium would provide for their military needs to afford relief to German territory. This pretence according to McLaughlin was later discarded. Belgium was admittedly exploited

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<sup>50</sup>McLaughlin, The Great War, pp. 46-47, 7-9.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

for the benefit of the German industry, commerce, agriculture, and military needs in violation of the Hague Convention.<sup>52</sup>

Article four of the Hague Convention stipulated that requisitions from towns and their inhabitants could only be permitted when they were directly destined for the army of occupation.<sup>53</sup> This occurred numerous times McLaughlin stated. Walnut trees were chopped down and shipped to Germany for the manufacture of rifle-stocks for the army. Also millions of dollars worth of raw materials, the property of private individuals, were seized and sent to Germany. The Hague Convention was again violated when the German army requisitioned for the daily support of the troops and a large part of the supplies were shipped to Germany in spite of the provisions of the Hague Convention.<sup>54</sup> Exploitation during wartime was not unique to Germany alone. William Marcy, United States Senator of New York, expressed it best-- "to the victors belong the spoils of the enemy."<sup>55</sup> To present a more balanced account McLaughlin should have mentioned that exploitation had been a common practice during all wars.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Frank Magruder, Magruder's American Government (Dallas: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972), p. 558.

Based on these arguments the CPI and the NBHS historians working under the auspices of the CPI reasoned that the United States could no longer idly stand by and witness the violation of treaties and the loss of human life--war was declared. Wilson, in the Calvinist tradition, made it clear that America's entrance into the war was without hope of profit.<sup>56</sup> The President had delayed declaring war because he reasoned that the United States could be more helpful in securing peace as an arbitrator rather than as an ally. It was essential for Americans to be aware of the United States' motives so that unity would prevail.

These pamphleteer historians had abandoned professionalism to a large extent in lieu of patriotism. Historians resolved one problem only to be confronted with another. Was it necessary to indoctrinate the public, via its educational system, with their biased opinions? What purpose would it serve? These perplexing questions were in the minds of historians.

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<sup>56</sup>McLaughlin, The Great War, p. 10.

The activities of S. H. Clark, a professor of education at the University of Chicago, exemplified the efforts of educators for such a curriculum. For months Clark had attempted to solicit the aid of Ford and Creel in creating guidelines for classroom teachers regarding the war issues. After Clark had made a trek from New York to California for the purpose of visiting schools, he wrote Creel that "not one school in twenty were doing anything like effective work."<sup>2</sup> Exactly what Clark meant by "effective work" is left open to various interpretations. One can only surmise that students did not fully understand the implications of the United States' involvement. This disturbed him.

The presentation of war material was not the only problem that confronted educators. The amount of time which should be allotted to the war in the schools was equally perplexing. Typical during the early months of America's military involvement were requests for students to participate in victory and loyalty demonstrations. One superintendent, E. B. Tucker, reported that the pre-occupation with the war was detrimental to the educational process. This administrator said, "I have had to make enemies by refusing to parade my children at every demand."<sup>3</sup> This type of

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<sup>2</sup>Lewis Paul Todd, Wartime Relations of the Federal Government and the Public Schools, 1917-1918 (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1945), p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>E. B. Tucker (Helena, Arkansas) to CPI, May 23, 1918, 3-A7, Tray 2 CPI Records as cited in Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 107.

atmosphere was creating anxieties in the public school system rather than providing an understanding of the war. The remedy to this dilemma in part was to develop a program for studying the war in public schools.

Ford, due to the pleas from educators, proposed the immediate formation of an organization, composed of secondary social studies teachers, and patterned after the NBHS. [This was the last major propaganda effort engaged in by historians.] Ford suggested that his association maintain permanent representatives in Washington. The organization in Washington would establish close contact with the work of the government and, therefore, would be able to accommodate the needs of public school teachers. The formation of this organization meant printed materials would be available through the Bureau of Education and the Creel Committee and speakers could be sent out for teachers' meetings and educational conferences.<sup>4</sup> In short, this organization was to be the central reservoir of information for educators. The teachers of New York City were urged to pilot such a project. A conference was held in the spring of 1917, but action was delayed until the fall. By then the NSL had begun to sponsor conferences where some 30,000 teachers heard speeches on Americanism.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Todd, Wartime Relations, pp. 34-35.

<sup>5</sup>Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 109.

Ford's plan to maintain a central reservoir of data for educators was viable, and if it had been followed, confusion could have been minimized. The Creel Committee in part did not abide by Ford's proposal because of other pressing priorities.<sup>6</sup> By September, 1917, the CPI's Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation had published and was in the process of distributing twelve bulletins on the war. Although these had not been designed for students, they would be of some value to the teachers.

The Committee had to cope with the manner of distribution. Among the suggestions was a proposal to use the Boy Scouts as distributing agents, but it was rejected. The plan, which was ultimately adopted with only a few modifications, was devised by Professor David S. Snedden of Teachers College, Columbia University. He proposed that the Bureau of Education prepare a single sheet leaflet containing a prospectus of each pamphlet and a concluding statement urging interested teachers to send for a copy.<sup>7</sup> This type of plan was resorted to because of the decentralization of the educational system in August, 1917. Ford had been unable to secure a list of officers and teachers employed in the nation's schools from Bureau of Education.<sup>8</sup> As late as October he was still trying to

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<sup>6</sup>Todd, Wartime Relations, p. 35.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 36.



compile a directory of all the schools in the United States and their superintendents.<sup>9</sup> While direct circulation of propaganda materials to each teacher would have been effective, distribution of the information in this manner was a slow process.

To partially alleviate this problem, Ford advertised the Committee's bulletins in the educational journal, The History Teacher's Magazine. In this journal historians published four articles each month for a period of nine months. This periodical, an adjunct of the American Historical Association, in part functioned as another outlet for historians to dispense war information in the fields of ancient, European, British, and American history. These academicians attempted to aid history teachers by proposing various approaches to relate past history with World War I in a supplement to the History Teacher's Magazine entitled, Opportunities for History Teachers: The Lessons of the Great War in the Classroom. In this leaflet historians urged teachers to view history in its proper perspective since many educators believed that distortion of facts was their patriotic duty.<sup>10</sup> They emphasized that with war came sacrifice, perhaps even life itself was imminent. The success or

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>U. S. Bureau of Education, Opportunities for History Teachers: The Lessons of the Great War in the Classroom, Teacher's Leaflet, No. 1 (Washington, D. C., 1917), p. 2.

failure of America's efforts to aid the Allied forces depended on the number of citizens who saw themselves as members of a continuing community rather than individuals striving to survive. This was the common ground on which history and patriotism met.<sup>11</sup> Instilling a sense of community spirit was only one way in which the history teacher served the nation.

The training of youths and the students' parents to have an international rather than an isolationist outlook was also a duty of the teacher. War between two countries was no longer a national problem but an international one. Without international law no nation can be safe, particularly a democratic government.<sup>12</sup> International law can only be defended, historians stressed, by possessing knowledge of other nations. They concluded that the isolationist attitude of Americans must be overcome to avert a serious disaster.<sup>13</sup> This need provoked twenty-five historians to pool their talents to provide possible guidelines for educators.

These historians offered suggestions in four areas of history: ancient, European, British, and American. R. V. D. Magoffin, J. H. Breasted, S. P. R. Chadwick, W. S. Davis, W. S. Ferguson, A. T. Olmstead, and W. L. Westermann prepared a synopsis on the

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

technique of relating ancient history to the war.<sup>14</sup> These academicians warned that no nation is indestructable. This was verified by the rise and decline of the ancient empires whose political and social systems appeared secure from destructive perils.<sup>15</sup> Breasted, who introduced the ancient history series, suggested that teachers compare the rise of a national state and the desire for conquest and empire in ancient Egypt to European imperial rivalries of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From this comparison Breasted concluded that America could consider itself proud not to have been enveloped in this "old and familiar cloak of a selfish and sordid nationalism."<sup>16</sup> Historian William D. Gray applied Breasted's parallels to another age, showing how "ancient Caesarism and imperialism are living forces in Germany today."<sup>17</sup> After Gray compared Roman and German desires for conquest, the worship of power, the "pompous and arrogant speeches," and the "grandiose and brutal triumphal monuments," he concluded that German teachers taught

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>16</sup>James H. Breasted, "Ancient History and the Modern World," History Teacher's Magazine, VIII (September, 1917), pp. 214-15 as cited in Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 112.

<sup>17</sup>William D. Gray, "The Great War and Roman History," History Teacher's Magazine, IX (March, 1918), pp. 138-139 as cited in Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 112.

their students "that it is their mission to take the place of Rome as the great conquering and civilizing power."<sup>18</sup>

While the ancient history series was primarily concerned with the use of historical comparisons to discredit the Central Powers, the European history series suggested various topics for classroom instruction. These historians, D. C. Munro, F. M. Anderson, A. I. Knowlton, and Margaret McGill, because of limited space did not expound on their potential topics in this particular article.<sup>19</sup> Among the suggested concepts were an in depth study of the Prussian State, the doctrine of divine right, and the use of the military for purposes of conquest.<sup>20</sup> These historians wanted to focus the center of attention on the people rather than the monarchs.<sup>21</sup> Munro in an article, "Suggestions for Medieval History" implied that there should be less emphasis on Western Europe and more regarding the Balkans, the Mideast, Russia, and the interrelations between Asia and Europe. Munro justified the shift of concentration because an understanding of the ethnological and commercial problems, which had been instrumental in bringing on war, was essential.<sup>22</sup> When

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>U. S., Bureau of Education, Opportunities for History Teachers, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>22</sup>Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 112.

presenting these various topics in the classroom, the historians urged the teacher not to indulge in the perversion of history in the interest of any particular creed whether it be pacificism or militarism, nationalism or internationalism.<sup>23</sup> Educators should avoid the German practice which has used history in the public schools as a means of inculcating "love of the reigning Hohenzollern family" and the "need of a strong navy."<sup>24</sup> This plea by historians was ludicrous, since instilling a sense of "love of one's country" was a fundamental concept in the American educational system. In addition to this the historians did not practice complete objectivity--Harding's The Study of the Great War: A Topical Outline is one such exemplification.

The historians concerned with the presentation of British studies in the classroom refrained from lecturing on objectivity. The crux of the British studies was to stress America's indebtedness to England politically, philosophically, scientifically, and culturally. The historians who assembled this synopsis were A. L. Cross, Wayland J. Chase, E. P. Cheyney, Blanche E. Hazard, I. M. Larson, and Wallace Notestein.<sup>25</sup> The origins of the American political parties, parliamentary systems, and the executive cabinet

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<sup>23</sup>U. S., Bureau of Education, Opportunities for History Teachers, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

were traced to Britain's governmental structure by Notestein.<sup>26</sup> The concept that the representative body was more powerful than the king was embodied in the ideology of the Puritan Revolution and the Magna Carta.<sup>27</sup> In the leaflet mention of the American Revolution was limited to one sentence which stated America's indebtedness to the French. Historians surmised that "except for a few inevitable points of friction resolved by arbitration that England has been extremely well disposed toward the United States."<sup>28</sup> This statement was misleading because it implied that there were never any wars between Britain and the United States. Historians also stressed the British influence on the internal progress of the United States by suggesting such topics as the English industrial revolution's effect on America's economic growth, the numerous scientific discoveries by Englishmen which aided society's progress, humanitarian and religious reforms, and cultural contributions made by the British in literature and painting, and the contributions of English philosophers.<sup>29</sup> These projected topics not only showed how the United States had profited from England, but showed Britain to be a civilized nation as opposed

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<sup>26</sup> Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 113.

<sup>27</sup> U. S., Bureau of Education, Opportunities for History Teachers, pp. 14-15.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

to the "barbaric" country of Germany. The historians did not provide the educators with a defined approach to these topics in this leaflet. Therefore, they cannot be criticized on their treatment of each topic. However, they are to be reprimanded for their deletion of topics which portrayed England in an unfavorable manner and thus distorting British history.

The treatment of American history by the academicians varied from those concerned with Britain. Due to the voluminous data, historians in the American field of studies confined their discussion to the war experiences of the Americans and the history of the relations of the United States with foreign nations in the leaflet Opportunities for History Teachers: The Lessons of the Great War in the Classroom.<sup>30</sup> Historians participating in this endeavor were E. B. Greene, W. L. Fleming, R. A. Maurer, F. L. Paxson, T. S. Smith, James Sullivan, and E. M. Violette.<sup>31</sup> These historians were critical of the format of textbooks for allocating too much space to war and military operations, while less than adequate space on the important achievements of peace was provided.<sup>32</sup> War history was objectionable because too much of it was relative. It was presented in such a manner as to stimulate the war spirit, which only

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

perpetuated popular prejudices and thus implied that hatred for other nations was a vital part of patriotism.<sup>33</sup> The consensus among military historians was that textbooks minimized the weak points in America's war record which created a dangerous optimism about "triumphant democracy."<sup>34</sup>

War cannot be omitted from American history textbooks. Rather than advocating a deletion of war, the historians proposed a new approach--studying the manner in which American armies have been brought together.<sup>35</sup> Prior to World War I the armies had been voluntary, but this was no longer feasible because in the Spanish War the gathering of inexperienced men in large numbers resulted in a loss of time and life.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, "selective conscription" was primarily relied on. Selective conscription was based on the principle that the government shall determine whether a man of military age can best serve his country in the armed forces or in some other capacity.<sup>37</sup> Basically the success of a war depends largely on men and women who fight the battle at home rather than on the front. By this approach, which implied that there was no such thing as menial

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.



tasks during a national crisis, historians attempted to make everyone feel important regardless of one's wartime duties.

The powers of the government during the war was another subject for the historians' pens. The concept that the President and Congress were not abusing their powers in wartime needed to be clarified by educators.<sup>38</sup> Even when such extremes like Abraham Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was invoked, the educator should have explained that this was only a temporary restriction of liberty in the permanent interests of democracy.<sup>39</sup> Historians believed this type of explanation would be satisfactory to the inquisitive students.

American historians like the ancient academicians wanted the students to realize that the isolationist policy was not feasible. It was important that the United States no longer be thought of as an isolated entity but as a member of the "society of nations."<sup>40</sup> Carl Becker in an essay argued that America could no longer use the Monroe Doctrine to protect its geographical interests in an isolated corner of the world. The doctrine must be expanded to guarantee ideological interests.<sup>41</sup> Students needed to be aware that the United

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.

<sup>41</sup> Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, pp. 113-114.

States was fighting to defend international law on the high seas to make the world, not merely America, "safe for democracy."<sup>42</sup>

Thus, Americans must look beyond this war and think in terms of how to prevent future wars and students should be guided in that direction.

The simplistic parallels, the generalizations, and the arbitrary interpretations caused one of the ancient historians, W. L. Westermann, to react negatively.<sup>43</sup> He had agreed to write an article on the Roman Empire, then decided the dangers involved in the project outweighed the anticipated gains.<sup>44</sup> As a result, he wrote the chairman of the ancient history group, Magoffin, requesting that he be replaced by someone who agreed more fully with the aims of the series.<sup>45</sup> Westermann also expressed his concern about his colleagues. "If they permit themselves to suggest to secondary teachers that they should make analogies and draw lessons from the past to stimulate patriotism or to explain the present war, they will have done a serious wrong. . . . They will have played into the

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<sup>42</sup> U. S., Bureau of Education, Opportunities for History Teachers, p. 22.

<sup>43</sup> Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 115.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

hands of pseudo-historians.<sup>46</sup> In spite of Westermann's reservations, he remained on the Committee and wrote his article. His work resembled the contributions of other historians in the series except for greater reservations to impose patterns on historical events.<sup>47</sup> Whatever Westermann's reasons for remaining on the project, he and his fellow academicians through their writings attempted to manipulate the instruction of history for non-academic ends.

Harding's pamphlet, The Study of the Great War: A Topical Outline, which was one of the most comprehensive and popular study aids during the war, continued in the same non-professional vane. In this bulletin he discussed the idea of Germany's premediated acts in order to secure a 'place in the sun.'<sup>48</sup> He based his premise on a war tax which had been levied prior to the war, the substantial increase in the German armed forces before the conflict, and the stockpiling of chemicals in 1913 and 1914 which would be needed in the event of war.<sup>49</sup>

Throughout the lengthy and detailed syllabus, Harding had quotes by the Germans which reflected their feelings of superiority.

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<sup>46</sup>W. L. Westermann to R. V. D. Magoffin, July 10, 1917 (copy), Box 5, NBHS Records as cited in Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 115.

<sup>47</sup>Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 115.

<sup>48</sup>Harding, The Study of the Great War, p. 24.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 24-25.

One such example was "The German race is called to bind the earth under its control, to exploit the natural resources and physical powers of man, to use the passive races in subordinate capacity for the development of its Kultur."<sup>50</sup> Harding did casually make mention of the distinction between the German government and the German people. In June, 1917, he said that the German people desired peace but the government rejected this idea.<sup>51</sup> He made it clear that the common people were powerless under the German form of government and thus the government turned a deaf ear to them.

After Harding had viewed Germany in this light, he enumerated the honorable intentions of America entering the war. He plainly stated that the United States entered the war after all other peaceful alternatives had been exhausted. "We [the United States] enter the war only where we are clearly forced into it, because there is no means of defending our rights."<sup>52</sup> America had to make democracy safe for the United States as well as for the rest of the world. Thus, he joined his other colleagues in reiterating the idea that isolationism had no place in the twentieth century.

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

Harding's pamphlet was of an emotional nature which coincided with one of the chief aims of the education bureau--to appeal to the students' emotions.<sup>53</sup> This criteria could have been more easily met if he had been addressing his comments to elementary students rather than to probing secondary pupils. However, the numerous citations and reading references he listed were impressive to the students because it gave the pamphlet an authoritarian nature as did the seal of the CPI which endorsed it. However, to the historian and the teacher the camouflage was easily recognized.

Harding's pamphlet, unlike the work of J. Montgomery Gambrill, had met the classroom objectives of the NBHS--promoting hatred of the Germans in students. Gambrill, a history professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, had been asked by the NBHS to prepare a thirty-two page syllabus for use by elementary school teachers and pupils. As he formulated his ideas, Gambrill remained in constant communication with the historians of the National Board. Through conversations and correspondence they were always informed of his thoughts.<sup>54</sup> After consulting educators and administrations throughout the United States, he decided that his

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<sup>53</sup> Blakey, Historians on the Homefront, p. 116.

<sup>54</sup> U. S., Bureau of Education, Government Policies Involving the Schools in Wartime, Teacher's Leaflet, No. 3 (Washington, D. C. : April, 1918), p. 55.

contribution should be for the education of teachers. In this way, he hoped to reach both students and parents.

Gambrill considered intellectual preparedness for victory more significant than the indoctrination of children with hatred of the Germans.<sup>55</sup> In his syllabus he elaborated on this thought.

. . . Too many people entertain the delusion that a decisive defeat of Germany would ipso facto bring permanent peace. There could be no greater mistake. The problem of abolishing or even greatly reducing war is complex and difficult. Its solution will require a careful analysis of the sources of international strife, the collection of a great mass of information about existing conditions in all parts of the world, a coolness of temper difficult to command immediately after a long and bitter war, and a capacity to deal with all questions from the broadest viewpoint of international welfare.<sup>56</sup>

Gambrill was not advocating that nationalism be deleted from the students' education. Instead he was stressing the priority of reconciling nationalism with internationalism. Because Gambrill had kept the NBHS informed of his thoughts, he was stunned when his syllabus was rejected in May, 1918 by this organization. The Board for Historical Service candidly explained the rejection because "it is not suited to the specific purpose for which it was designed, namely, that of offering practical suggestions to teachers especially in elementary schools."<sup>57</sup> This was a flimsy criticism since the original

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

purpose of the bulletin had been changed with the full knowledge of the historians as early as January to embrace the viewpoint which was finally embodied in his outline.<sup>58</sup> The rejection of Gambrill's work reflected the type of patriotism that the federal propaganda agencies endorsed in public schools.

The NBHS viewed the public schools as one of the most important available agencies to advance the cause of democracy for two reasons. Not only did the schools provide a broad basis for the propaganda but the American people have confidence in this institution.<sup>59</sup> This was illustrated by an incident involving a Chicago immigrant mother who refused to sign a food pledge card for a card distributor and slammed the door in his face. But when her young daughter brought a food pledge card home from school and the girl told her mother that the teacher said that it was all right, the woman's attitude was different. The mother replied, "Vell if your teacher say it is all right, then I sign."<sup>60</sup> Since this particular story was not footnoted, as was the case with all stories in the National School Service, its validity was questionable. The belief, however, that most Americans trusted the schools was undebatable.

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>National School Service, Vol. I, No. 1 (Washington, D. C. : CPI, September 1, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

The government in Washington did not want the quantity or quality of education to suffer during the conflict. Students were urged to remain in school. The government took steps to discourage drop-outs by such stipulations that to enlist in the armed forces and to secure a civil service job, the person had to be at least eighteen years old. Even the younger students who helped on their farms were encouraged to get an education. The government stated that the labor of boys under fourteen years of age was not a vital factor on the farm.<sup>61</sup> The most effective campaign to keep students in schools were suggestions, which appeared in the National School Service, on how they could participate in the war effort while finishing their education.

The last major propaganda effort for the educational discipline culminated in a tabloid of newspapers for schoolteachers called the National School Service. The CPI's two regular historians, Ford and Harding, closely supervised its publication even though the paper contained little that required the services of trained historians. According to Ford, the purpose of this publication was neither to bring the war into the school (it was already there), nor was it the aim of the periodical "to make the American school teacher the intellectual drill sergeant of national prejudices and

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<sup>61</sup> U. S. , Bureau of Education, Government Policies, pp. 2-4.



vain-glories and the exponent of international suspicion and envy."<sup>62</sup> The object of this publication in part was to serve as a reservoir of information regarding the war savings, the Red Cross, the food and fuel administrations, and other governmental agencies seeking to enlist the support of the schools and the students' parents.<sup>63</sup> Basically the bulletins were published as an aid to teachers in the war studies.

A committee appointed by the NBHS composed of Charles Coulomb, Armand Gerson and Albert McKinley, compiled a pamphlet, portions of which appeared in the National School Service. This pamphlet, Outline of An Emergency Course on the War, coordinated the type of classroom instruction according to the grade level. These educators suggested the amount of time to be spent on the war and a different curriculum for every other grade in the elementary grades was proposed.<sup>64</sup> Suggestions for high school students were mainly outlined in Harding's pamphlet and the leaflet for history teachers.

The curriculum for the first and second grades focused on three issues. Initially, the children were to be exposed to stories

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<sup>62</sup>Ford, National School Service, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>U. S., Bureau of Education, Outline of An Emergency Course Instruction On the War, Teacher's Leaflet, No. 4 (Washington, D. C.: August, 1918), pp. 4-5. The NBHS attempted to stimulate interest by sponsoring an essay contest for teachers on the subject "Why the United States Is At War" in sixteen states. Cited in National School Service, p. 6.

embodying heroism and sacrifice by Americans, Frenchmen, Belgians, and other nationalities. Secondly, the celebration of national holidays was to be conducted in the spirit that Washington founded this nation and Lincoln saved it, so that the United States might help establish liberty and democracy for the world. The third issue was twofold. First the children were told the reasons their relatives went to war. Then it was suggested that children be encouraged to help the war effort by saving their money for thrift stamps, by avoiding wasting food, and by good behavior.<sup>65</sup> Techniques to sell thrift stamps were suggested to the teacher. The following is one such positive approach set forth.

Good morning, boys and girls! Uncle Sam needs some more money this morning. When the boys went forward this morning they had to use a lot of ammunition. Besides, there were a number of uniforms badly torn when the soldiers went through the German barbed wire, and some helmets had holes shot in them, the Hun bullets just missing the soldiers underneath.

How many stamps are we going to buy to help make everything all right again?<sup>66</sup>

This technique was more effective than saying that if no one wanted to buy thrift stamps get out your text books.

The selling technique and all the ideas in the first two grades were a part of the guidelines for the third and fourth grades. In

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<sup>65</sup>U. S., Bureau of Education, Outline for An Emergency Course, pp. 5-7.

<sup>66</sup>National School Service, Vol. I, No. 2 (Washington, D. C.: CPI, September 15, 1918), p. 15.

addition to these methods, other suggestions were made such as comparing the educational system of Germany to the United States. The students were told that those children which did not have money to pay for their education had to leave school when they were fourteen years old. The students also discussed the different branches of the service and the uniforms. The United States helped other countries by sending soldiers as well as food and money which were needed. In addition to growing war gardens, it was suggested that children aid in the sale of Liberty Bonds and collect subscriptions for the Red Cross, the Knights of Columbus, and other similar organizations.<sup>67</sup>

In grades five and six special attention was still given to national holidays and stories of war incidents were told. A curriculum also was suggested for the purpose of comparing the opportunities in American society as opposed to Germany. In the power structure of Germany it was not conceivable to have someone of Lincoln's background run the government. Also students were told of the untrustworthiness of the Germans due to the invasion of Belgium, the

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<sup>67</sup>National School Service, Vol. I, No. 1 (Washington, D. C. : CPI, September 1, 1918), pp. 5-7. In order to sell more bonds an itemized list of the war supplies it would pay for was provided. For example a one hundred dollar bond would buy five rifles, thirty rifle grenades, forty-five hand grenades, two thousand surgical needles, clothes for a soldier, and food for a soldier for eight months. Cited in National School Service, Vol. I, No. 2 (Washington, D. C. : CPI, September 15, 1918), p. 15.

Brest-Litovsk Treaty with Russia, and the plots against the United States--all aimed at the hatred image of Germans. While Germany was viewed negatively, France and Britain were portrayed in a favorable light. Emphasis was given to the debt the United States owed France in the American Revolution and the merit of the ties America had with Britain because of our language and government. In regard to the War for Independence, the point was made that the colonists had been oppressed by George III and his party and not the English people. After this indoctrination, students were urged to help in the war effort by pursuing the suggested tasks of previous elementary grades.<sup>68</sup>

The curriculum in the seventh and eighth grades was based on a more intellectual study of the war rather than emotional appeal. The class was to discuss current military events, actions by the Congress and President, the League of Nations, international law, and the concept of a balance of power. The reasons that Germany started the war were to be discussed in depth. Suggestions for Germany's action were "war is the most profitable business a nation can engage in, " to secure territory, and to have "a place in the sun" meaning that it would be a world power rather than a continental power. The United States' participation in the war was given a lesser

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<sup>68</sup>U. S., Bureau of Education, Outline for an Emergency Course, pp. 9-12.

degree of attention.<sup>69</sup> It was evident by this work that educators outside the field of history engaged in propaganda.

The portions of the sixteen page biweekly publication which were historically oriented primarily gave accounts of the Allies military progress. Since this newspaper was not published until September 1, 1918, which meant the Allies were victorious in all of the major battles, it was not possible to fairly assess the partiality of these historians. Stories of American contributions to other countries were abundant. However, it was to the credit of the publication that accounts of the United States being helped by other allied countries appeared in the periodical. One such account, which was written as a personal narrative, appeared as a lead story in the periodical. It described the sinking of a steamship by a German U-boat and the unselfish rescue efforts of a British destroyer.<sup>70</sup>

The unnamed survivor stated:

She [Britain] laid herself open to the gravest disaster, because it is the practice of the U-boat to lie in wait for just the moment when the destroyer is loaded with her freight of human beings, and is about to pull off and then send a torpedo to crash into her side. The captain knew that, but he stood by until we were rescued. . . .<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., pp. 12-19.

<sup>70</sup>National School Service, Vol. I, No. 2 (Washington, D. C. : CPI, September 15, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-3.

Though this story had a personal touch it failed to meet the criterion of objectivity. Probably Ford and Harding approved it because it portrayed the feelings of cordiality among the Allies. Perhaps more historians would have made contributions to the National School Service if the first publication had appeared sooner than three months before the war ended.

Ironically, Ford, who had become involved with the CPI by suggesting in 1917 that the war be the topic at high school commencement exercises, was never convinced that the public schools were his primary responsibility. It was only at the urging of teachers and administrators that historians engaged in their public school endeavors. The fact that historians did not take the initiative to introduce propaganda in the classroom was to the profession's credit. Thus, wartime propaganda with the endorsement of public educators had become a part of the educational curriculum.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

During World War I, a significant number of historians deviated from the scientific research methodology espoused by Charles Beard, James Shotwell, James Robinson, and Frederick Turner. Historians participating in wartime activities had three options--the National Security League, the National Board for Historical Service, and the Committee on Public Information. All of these organizations disregarded scientific research methodology--some more frequently than others. Originally, when these associations were organized, each one focused on a different aspect of the propaganda activities.

The historians associated with the NSL, such as Claude Van Tyne and William Thayer, were alarmist in their objective of arousing the attention of isolationist Americans for military training as early as 1914. This organization advocated compulsory military training. Because this was contrary to governmental policy of the United States, the administration viewed their activities with disdain. For its part, the NSL supported this extreme alternative for America in the hope that a strengthening of the defense forces would

occur. In short, the NSL by advocating a "radical" idea then the government would be more willing to take more moderate steps--moderate when comparing it to the extreme alternative. The techniques utilized by the NSL historians however, did not comprise its most important shortcoming. Instead, it was the neglect of the most fundamental function of an historian--to preserve the records of the association's activities.

The NBHS adhered more closely to the scientific research guidelines than did the NSL. The function of the NBHS was to serve as the profession's official "watch-dog" for the maintenance of this type of research methodology. Beard, Jameson, Robinson, and Turner were the primary spokesmen urging historians to exercise caution when unearthing data. In spite of these constant reminders, even members of this organization contributed to the distortion of history in the field of public education. This was exemplified by the articles in the History Teacher's Magazine and also by the fact that this association sponsored a periodical, the National School Service, which published propagandist literature.

The CPI historians, who worked closely with their colleagues in the NBHS, were even more deeply involved in propaganda activities. The task of promoting patriotism and reassuring Americans of the honorable intentions of their country's engagement in the war was considered more important by CPI historians than abiding by



scientific research methodology. One of the most popular pamphlets, The Study of the Great War: A Topical Outline, with Extensive Quotations and Reading Reference, authored by Samuel Harding, illustrated this point. The sources cited in his pamphlet, such as the Blue, Yellow, and Orange books, which were official propagandist government publications, were not reliable sources. While the CPI historians did not hesitate to indoctrinate the adult population, they were more reluctant to do so to America's youth. The latter also was true of the NBHS. The reasons for the historians' lackadaisical attitude are not altogether clear--possibly they anticipated a short war or they felt that indoctrination of the adult population was more essential or because they thought propaganda should not be a part of the school's curriculum. It is to the historians' credit that they did not engage in these activities until educators repeatedly urged them to do so.

The propagandist activities of historians were not detrimental to their individual careers, with the exception of Harding. Other historians who engaged in the askew endeavors, such as Carl Becker, Guy Ford, Andrew McLaughlin, Wallace Notestein, and Van Tyne, became prominent in their discipline. These propagandist accounts were not significantly detrimental to the profession. This was because many other disciplines were also engaged in propagandist work. Also, the reprimand by revisionist historians of their

colleagues' activities and their call for a return to scientific research methodology helped restore the discipline's professionalism.

Historians generally were not ashamed of their wartime activities nor were they boastful. Some, however, as Albert Hart, Van Tyne, and Ford, were very defensive about their war-oriented work. Though Shotwell claimed that he did not regret his participation in the propaganda campaign and did list it when giving his credentials, he made only one vague reference to the NBHS in his autobiography. The end of the war was accompanied by a relaxation of the chauvinistic pressures which had so deeply affected historians. Once again, historians could fulfill their roles as scholars; they were no longer instruments of any national cultural policy designed to inculcate patriotism. Professionalism once again rose to prominence, and the cult of patriotism quietly receded into the past.

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