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**“Making a Science of Cooperation”: Labor, Business, Government, and the
Defense Council System in the Wartime American West, 1916-1921**

By

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M.A., Eastern Washington University, Cheney, Washington, 2014

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Dissertation

**presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

**Ph.D.
in History**

**The University of Montana
Missoula, MT**

August 2022

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Abstract

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““Making a Science of Cooperation”: Labor, Business, Government, and the Defense Council System in the Wartime American West, 1916-1921” examines the socioeconomic and political transformations that occurred in the American West as a result of homefront mobilization for World War I. While those transformations happened at the national level as well, they were the most impactful in and inherently informed by the political and socioeconomic developments occurring in the western states at the time.

The vehicle in which those transformations were delivered was the Defense Council System (DCS), a unique federal mobilization program that enlisted the help of the nation’s state and county governments to mobilize their populations for the Great War. The most significant aspect of the process was seen in the amalgamation of the public and private sectors, whose wartime cooperation blurred the lines between the duties of government and those of business. The private sector participants appointed to lead the DCS by the Wilson Administration, including some of the nation’s most powerful and influential corporate executives and leaders of organized labor, worked together in the name of patriotic coordination and cooperation for the purpose of mobilization. Ironically enough, it was the inclusion of business associations and labor organizations who, in working together along with the government to create a practical and expeditious manner of homefront mobilization, ushered in the rise of the administrative state in American governance in the decades following World War I.

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List of Abbreviations

ACGA	Arizona Cotton Growers' Association
ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
AFL	American Federation of Labor
AMC	Anaconda Mining Company
ASCD	Arizona State Council of Defense
AWIU	Agricultural Workers Industrial Union No. 400
BCCD	Beaverhead County Council of Defense
BGCA	Boys and Girls Clubs of America
BSA	Boy Scouts of America
BWR	Boy's Working Reserve
CCCD	Carbon County Council of Defense
CCCD	Custer County Council of Defense
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CND	Council of National Defense
CPI	Committee on Public Information
CRIP	Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad
CSCD	California State Council of Defense
CWIU	Construction Workers Industrial Union No. 573
DCS	Defense Council System
DoJ	United States Department of Justice
FCCD	Fergus County Council of Defense
FLA	Federal Farm Loan Act
IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
ICCD	Imperial County Council of Defense
IPB	Industrial Preparedness Board
ISCD	Idaho State Council of Defense
IWW	Industrial Workers of the World
JCCD	Johnson Community Council of Defense
LACCD	Los Angeles County Council of Defense
LCCD	Lincoln County Council of Defense
LWIU	Lumber Workers Industrial Union No. 500
MCCD	Mohave County Council of Defense
MMSW	International United Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers
MMWU	Metal Mine Workers Union
MSC	Montana State College
MSCD	Montana State Council of Defense
MTC	Montana Trade Commission
NAM	National Association of Manufacturers
NCB	Naval Consulting Board
NCF	National Civic Federation
NCID	National Council for Industrial Defense
NDA	National Defense Act
NDCD	North Dakota State Council of Defense
NICB	National Industrial Conference Board

NLMA	National Lumber Manufacturers Association
NPL	Nonpartisan League
NSCD	Nevada State Council of Defense
NSL	National Security League
NWLB	National War Labor Board
NWPC	Northwest Preparedness Conference
OIA	Office of Indian Affairs
PCCD	Pierce County Council of Defense
PMC	President's Mediation Commission
PSTC	Puget Sound Traction, Light, and Power Company
SCCD	Sheridan County Council of Defense
SCCD	Spokane County Council of Defense
SCCD	Stevens County Council of Defense
SCLC	Seattle Central Labor Council
SCLC	Spokane Central Labor Council
SDCD	South Dakota State Council of Defense
SHL	State Harvester's League
SPA	Socialist Party of America
SPD	Spruce Production Division
SPW	Socialist Party of Washington
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VWC	Veterans Welfare Commission
WCCD	Wenatchee County Council of Defense
WCCD	Whitman County Council of Defense
WDB	Washington Detective Bureau
WFM	Western Federation of Miners
WIB	War Industries Board
WLA	Women's Land Army
WSC	Washington State College
WSCD	Washington State Council of Defense
WSFL	Washington State Federation of Labor
WSP	Washington State Patrol
WSS	Washington State Secret Service
WVA	War Veterans' Association
YCCD	Yavapai County Council of Defense
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
4L	Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen

Timeline of Key Events

Feb. 4, 1912	Arizona Territory admitted into the Union as the State of Arizona
Dec. 12, 1913	The first “Defense Council Bill” brought before Congress is rejected
May 8, 1914	Smith-Lever Act goes into effect; Cooperative Extension Service created
Jun. 28, 1914	Franz and Sophie Ferdinand assassinated in Sarajevo; Great War begins
Sep. 26, 1914	Federal Trade Commission created; price controls go into effect
Feb. 1915	Nonpartisan League founded by North Dakota farmer, Arthur C. Townley
May 7, 1915	German submarine torpedoes and sinks the R.M.S. Lusitania
Sep. 13, 1915	Josephus Daniels and Thomas Edison create the Naval Consulting Board
Mar. 9, 1916	Pancho Villa’s forces raid the US border town of Columbus, New Mexico
Jun. 3, 1916	Passage of the National Defense Act
Jul. 17, 1916	Federal Farm Loan Act goes into effect
Jul. 21, 1916	Naval Appropriation Bill Passed
Aug. 29, 1916	Army Appropriations Act ratified; Council of National Defense created
Nov. 6, 1916	Everett Massacre (Everett, WA)
Nov. 7, 1916	Woodrow Wilson reelected to second presidential term
Jan. 17, 1917	Zimmerman Telegram sent to Carranza government in Mexico
Feb. 1, 1917	Immigration Act of 1917 goes in to effect
Apr. 6, 1917	US Congress declares war against Germany; allies with Entente forces
Apr. 6, 1917	California State Council of Defense established by the state legislature
Apr. 6, 1917	Montana State Council of Defense established by Governor Stewart
Apr. 12, 1917	Arizona State Council of Defense established by Governor Campbell
May 2, 1917	National Defense Conference commences
May 18, 1917	Passage of Selective Service Act
Jun. 15, 1917	Espionage Act ratified
Aug. 1, 1917	Frank Little is murdered in Butte, Montana
Aug. 14, 1917	James Rowan declares a General Strike in all Northwest industries
Jun. 5, 1917	First round of military draft-selection commences
Jun. 8, 1917	Speculator Mine Disaster in Butte, Montana
Jun. 16, 1917	Washington State Council of Defense established by Governor Lister
Jul. 10-12, 1917	Deportation of miners in Jerome and Bisbee, Arizona
Jul. 28, 1917	War Industries Board created
Feb. 25, 1918	Sedition law enacted in Montana
Apr. 8, 1918	National War Labor Board created
Mar. 3, 1918	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk takes Russia out of the war; Eastern Front closed
May 6, 1918	Federal Sedition Act ratified
May 21, 1918	Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen established
Nov. 11, 1918	Ceasefire agreed upon by belligerents; Great War <i>unofficially</i> ends

Jan. 9, 1919	Washington State Council of Defense dissolved by Governor Lister
Jan. 31, 1919	California State Council of Defense disbanded by the state assembly
Feb. 6-11, 1919	General Strike declared by trade unions of Seattle, Washington
Jun. 11, 1919	Arizona State Council of Defense dissolved by the state legislature
Jun. 28, 1919	Treaty of Versailles signed by Central Powers and Entente, except for US
Nov. 11, 1919	Centralia Massacre (Centralia, WA)
Nov. 2, 1920	Warren G. Harding elected President
Dec. 13, 1920	Federal Sedition Act repealed
Jun. 30, 1921	Council of National Defense disbanded by Congress
Jul. 2, 1921	President Harding ratifies US-German Peace Treaty
Aug. 8, 1921	Congress establishes Veterans' Bureau to assist Great War veterans
Aug. 25, 1921	US-German Peace Treaty signed in Berlin, ending the Great War
Aug. 26, 1921	Montana State Council of Defense dissolved by Governor Stewart
Jul. 6, 1935	National Labor Relations Act/Wagner Act ratified by President Roosevelt
May 26, 1940	Council of National Defense remobilized by President Roosevelt for World War II

Introduction

“Work, War, or Jail”: Modernizing Labor in the West

On July 21, 1918, sheriff’s deputies in Red Lodge, Montana, arrested eight traveling salesmen for violating Order Number 2, a compulsory labor law recently implemented by the Montana State Council of Defense (MSCD). Steve Smith, Norman Colbert, J.E. Bowers, George Kutova, Mayer Maxwell, Nathan Bransom, S. Livermore, and Pete Gutana, all unaware of the ordinance, had arrived in Red Lodge the previous day to solicit orders for enlarged portraits. Prior to their arrests, Carbon County Prosecutor, H.A. Simmons, had informed them that their vocation did not meet the threshold of “essential wartime work.” If they planned to stay in Red Lodge, they needed to find “essential employment” on a local farm or they would be arrested for vagrancy. In choosing to remain, the Red Lodge Eight became unwitting defendants in the first Order Number 2 case tried in Montana.¹ Seven of the men pled guilty with each receiving a fine of \$25 and Simmons dropped S. Livermore’s charge, citing insufficient evidence. Following the verdicts, the eight salesmen immediately left the state for parts unknown.²

In the western United States, food production was one of the region’s most significant contributions to wartime mobilization and farmers there had experienced considerable difficulties finding reliable laborers. Military conscription, coupled with steady labor strikes by farmhands affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), threatened Montana’s ability to partake in the wartime food production increases demanded by the federal government.³ In response, the MSCD – Montana’s wartime governing body and a creature of

¹ “Indictment,” August 1, 1918, box 1, folder 15, Montana Defense Council Records; “Head On Collision Course with Council,” *Helena Independent-Record*, August 7, 1918, 4.

² H.A. Simmons to State Council of Defense, August 3, 1918, box 1, folder 15, Montana Defense Council Records.

³ US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Legislation of 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 64.

wartime federal law, comprised of farmers, bankers, businessmen, and labor leaders appointed by the Governor – opted for compulsion. Order Number 2 declared that “every person (except an Indian) without visible means of living, who has the physical ability to work, and who does not seek employment ... must engage in some legitimate occupation for at least five days each week.” Convictions carried a fine of up to \$500 and a possible year in prison. It was one in a series of ordinances the MSCD drafted to augment the state’s wartime mobilization efforts related to food production.⁴

The MSCD handed responsibility for enforcing the order to the state’s county defense councils, local units of the state council whose chairmen had also been appointed by the Governor.⁵ The Carbon County Council of Defense (CCCD) empowered “community captains” in Red Lodge and the adjacent towns to find “anyone who appears to be unemployed or idle.” CCCD officials registered the suspected “labor slackers” on a draft-labor index for temporary employment on area farms, and if they failed to comply, they would be charged with vagrancy. If the crops were not yet ready to be harvested, then accused vagrants could be drafted for employment in other “essential industries” like hardrock mining or timber harvesting.⁶

Charles Greenfield, Secretary of the MSCD, celebrated the results of the Red Lodge Eight test case, letting the CCCD know “of the great value of the test you made in your county ... [and] the affect it will have on other communities where there has been an indisposition to take advantage of the order.” Greenfield hoped it would inspire other county defense councils in the state to use Order Number 2 to either “intimidate the floating population” into performing

⁴ Montana Council of Defense, “Order Number 2,” April 22, 1918, box 4, folder 36, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁵ Ibid.; “Every Man Who Can Work Must Take Some Task,” *Independent-Record*, April 23, 1918, 1, 7.

⁶ “Seditionists, Idlers, and Vags Conspicuous by Absence in Carbon,” *Helena Independent*, October 10, 1918, 5; “Idlers Must Work Orders Defense Council,” *Anaconda Standard*, April 23, 1918, 9.

farm labor or force them to leave, especially IWW members. The swift departure of the Red Lodge Eight suggested that the order succeeded in its design, even if the salesmen chose arrest over coerced labor.⁷ In 1918, county-level enforcement of Order Number 2 led to the arrests of an estimated 5,000 “labor slackers” throughout Montana, thus earning the MSCD its new slogan: “Work, War, or Jail.”⁸

The passage of Order Number 2 inspired the state defense councils of Nevada, North Dakota, and South Dakota to draft their own compulsory labor orders meant to coerce migrants into agricultural employment.⁹ On May 25, 1918, the South Dakota State Council of Defense (SDCD) drafted Order Number 5, which, aside from labor compulsion, was also used as a political cudgel. Republican and Democrat appointees working within the SDCD used the order to attack the region’s upstart political populists, the Nonpartisan League (NPL), which threatened to upend the political dominance of both major parties in South Dakota just as it had done in North Dakota. Panicked SDCD officials obliged the state’s county defense councils to use Order Number 5 to prevent NPL meetings and harass organizers by charging them with vagrancy. Republicans and Democrats, however, campaigned and held rallies without the fear of such intimidation.¹⁰

⁷ Charles Greenfield to H.A. Simmons, August 6, 1918, box 1, folder 15, Montana Defense Council Records; “Seven Husky Photo Enlargers Trimmed,” *Helena Independent*, August 6, 1918, 2.

⁸ “Every Man Who Can Must Work Some Task,” *Independent-Record*, April 23, 1918, 1; “Idler Raids are Renewed in City,” *Anaconda Standard*, September 25, 1918, 16; “Tough Sledding for the Slacker,” *Mineral Independent*, October 10, 1918, 2; “Montana News Brieflets,” *River Press*, August 7, 1918, 16.

⁹ “Want Anti-Loafer Law,” *Eureka Sentinel*, April 27, 1918, 2; “Montana Sets Example for North Dakota,” *Bismarck Morning Tribune*, May 7, 1918, 5; “Council of Defense Notice,” *Citizen-Republican*, July 11, 1918, 5.

¹⁰ South Dakota State Council of Defense, *Report of South Dakota State Council of Defense* (Pierre: State Publishing Company, 1919), 75-76; “League Protests Over Treatment,” *Tabor Independent*, June 13, 1918, 6; W.W. Casteel, “League Men to Pierre; Fight Looms Up Today,” *Morning Republican*, May 28, 1918, 1.

Compulsory labor orders had the added benefit of eradicating the growing problem of vagrancy resulting from the region's economic reliance on IWW-organized migrant workers, a vital but unwelcomed segment of the working class. Although the Red Lodge Eight were not IWW members, they, like the IWW, represented the stereotype of a conflict-addled Wild West frontier, which the region's political establishments had been trying to escape since statehood. Modernizing a region that still depended on denigrated segments of the working-class, whether traveling salesmen or "Wobbly hoboes," constituted a large part of what those who controlled the defense councils in the western states hoped to accomplish. It was one element of a larger push to use mobilization as a pretext to make the region more socioeconomically efficient and less susceptible to radical impulses and class conflict. It came to be used by Republicans and Democrats working within the region's defense councils to consolidate their respective partisan influences by eliminating the rise of political populism. Ultimately, if defense council officials in the western states could justify that their activities related to mobilization even slightly, then they could freely govern with little-to-no restriction.¹¹

* * * * *

This dissertation argues that the mobilization effort for World War I irrevocably transformed the socioeconomic character and political life of the American West. That transformation helped to modernize the region through increased federal, state, and local

¹¹ William J. Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home: Civilian Mobilization, Wartime Federalism, and the Council of National Defense, 1917-1919* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 74-75, 104-106; Conference of Governors, *Proceedings of the Tenth Meeting of the Governors of the States of the Union* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 69-72. During the 1918 Governor's Conference, Washington State Governor, Ernest Lister, referred to the mobilization effort as "a master class in ... modernization through reform ... [and] federal-state cooperation." Samuel V. Stewart, Governor of Montana, concurred with Lister, calling the DCS's role in World War I mobilization as being "necessary [for the] ... adjustment of regional production, [both] socially and economically."

government regulation of the economy, most especially in the extractive industries. It also helped to reinvigorate and consolidate the traditional Two-Party System in the West through the propagation of non-partisan nationalism and the rejection of political populism. The Progressive Era ideal of non-partisan nationalism emphasized patriotic duty and nationalistic pride over class or party as a means to garner popular support for the war effort. However, some Republicans and Democrats working within the system manipulated it to increase their partisan influences in the region, oftentimes working together to do so. The rise of non-partisan nationalism hampered the ability for radical politics to regain mainstream recognition throughout much of the 1920s, bolstering the rising popularity of modern political conservatism.

At the center of this story was the Defense Council System (DCS), born from the creation of the Council of National Defense (CND) in August 1916. The CND functioned in a very top-down manner, with Woodrow Wilson's Cabinet determining the CND's Executive Committee composition by directly appointing its members. Only the President had the ability to accept or reject the appointees suggested by his administrators, preventing Congress from having a direct say in who would be selected to lead the mobilization effort. Yet, a significant aspect of the character of the federal wartime regime was found in the decentralization and diffusion of the CND's regulatory powers into increasingly smaller, more localized units of governance at the state, county, and community levels. The local defense council units engaged in a majority of the DCS's practical on-the-ground efforts, mobilizing smaller and more dispersed populations, reaching evermore towards the individual.¹²

¹² James A.B. Scherer, *The Nation at War* (New York: George H. Duran Company, 1918), 51-56; Franklin K. Martin, *Digest of the Proceedings of the Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1934), 37-38.

The DCS changed the relationship between public and private actors. An important aspect of the DCS's mobilization philosophy was in the development of a hybrid administrative bureaucracy, one which relied heavily upon private-sector cooperation. The dominant nineteenth-century emphasis on private-sector associations and voluntarism as the main modes of social cohesion and political organization were replaced with a new fusion of public and private power that altered those traditional practices, blurring their lines of distinction.¹³ The DCS brought the private-sector into the fold to lead the effort, obfuscating its administrative nature. As historian Brian Balogh explains, "Americans have braided public and private actions [and] state and voluntary-sector institutions to achieve collective goals without undermining citizens' essential belief in individual freedom."¹⁴ The appointment of private-sector actors to lead the mobilization effort actually increased the regulatory power of the state as they discovered a newfound ability to directly impact policy. As a result, mobilization fashioned more bureaucratic modes of associational governance, organized by the state but operated and seemingly overseen by private-sector actors.¹⁵

As opposed to nineteenth century associationalism, the hybrid mode of administrative associationalism that emerged during World War I was something different, signaling a shift in how government institutions interacted with the private sector. The DCS absorbed private associations like the Red Cross, Boy Scouts, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) into the larger bulk of homefront mobilization through

¹³ William J. Novak, "The American Law of Association: The Legal-Political Construction of Civil Society," *Studies in American Political Development*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (October 2001): 172-175; Brian Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight: The Mystery of National Authority in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 379.

¹⁴ Brian Balogh, *The Associational State: American Governance in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 3.

¹⁵ Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 234-235.

the local defense councils with whom they worked, dictating how they would operate and limiting the levels of autonomy they had traditionally enjoyed. Through the wartime coordination with federal, state, and local governments, private associations sacrificed a great deal of their autonomy in exchange for the kind of efficiency, rationalization, and patriotic legitimacy provided by administrative bureaucracies at the federal and state levels.¹⁶

Early attempts by the private sector to organize the country for a prospective military foray into the Great War exposed the inherent flaws and inadequacies of traditional associationalism. The public-private form of voluntary cooperation as emphasized by associational governance culminated in the creation of the Naval Consulting Board (NCB) in 1915, an organization founded and led by Thomas Edison and Naval Secretary, Josephus Daniels. The NCB attempted to prepare the nation for war by inventorying all available resources, including agriculture, minerals, and manufacturing. But its overreliance on the voluntarism of private-sector actors proved to be a toothless endeavor since, as a private association itself, the NCB could not force participation. The experiences of the private-sector during the years of the Preparedness Movement, peaking in 1916, subsequently drove calls for more structured, state-directed modes of associational governance.¹⁷

Guided by associationalism and public-private cooperation, the DCS invited nominally at-odds actors to coordinate with the government as equal partners, doing so with very little conflict. In making partners out of businesses, professional associations, employers' associations, labor organizations, universities, and women's clubs, the DCS extended its reach deep into American society. Through their involvement in the DCS, and as a result of cooperative

¹⁶ Balogh, *The Associational State*.

¹⁷ Lloyd N. Scott, *The Naval Consulting Board of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 7-13.

partnerships between private and public actors, state governments in the American West successfully reorganized their political and socioeconomic power structures. The cooperative effort socioeconomically modernized the region as state defense councils initiated infrastructure projects, improved employment practices, and increased the states' regulatory presence in industry, making the regional economy more efficient and less hindered by class-conflict and partisan wrangling.¹⁸

Another crucial feature of the DCS was found in the coordination between the federal and state governments, otherwise known as “cooperative federalism.” The CND may have initiated the entire process, but it was in the counties and local communities of the states where practical, on-the-ground mobilization activities commenced. As powerful as it appeared, the CND really only prescribed general guidelines, such as expanding agricultural production, increasing manufacturing output, and managing conscription duties. The DCS was most clearly represented in the work of the state and county defense councils, whose participation in the mobilization effort afforded them a chance to engage in duties that would normally be reserved for the federal government. Cooperative federalism provided an opportunity for state, county, and local governments in the American West to make significant adjustments to their respective socioeconomic and political structures without federal interference or advisement.¹⁹

The changes wrought by the DCS had substantial long-term socioeconomic and political repercussions across the country, but the effects were especially transformative in the American West. State defense councils in the region used the mobilization effort to stifle dissent and attack political populism. They enthusiastically went after the IWW, hobbling the union beyond

¹⁸ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 20-23.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 47-50; Council of National Defense, *Report on Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 4-5.

effective repair and eliminating any chances it had at gaining mainstream acceptance. State defense councils in the region greatly expanded their agricultural industries as they worked to revive and repopulate their farming districts. Republicans and Democrats working within the DCS used mobilization to consolidate the Two-Party Political System to help eliminate the growth and influence of competitive populist factions and increase their respective partisan power. Viable alternative political parties that experienced steady increases in engagement before World War I, such as the Socialist Party and the NPL were, by 1921, left completely demoralized, never regaining their once-promising political influence.²⁰

Prompted by the region's populist and pro-labor trajectory, defense council officials in the western states scribed many progressive reform policies into law. Subsequently, many of the wartime policy demands of defense councils of the West made their way to Congress where they would impact the development of federal laws. For example, the Sedition Act of 1918 was heavily influenced by a near exact law drafted by the MSCD and the Immigration Act of 1924 resulted in part from the protestations that came from defense councils of the Southwest who demanded a suspension of the Immigration Act of 1917 to allow the movement of Mexican labor to and from the United States. The period of 1916-1921, from the zenith of the Preparedness Movement to the ratification of the US-German Peace Treaty, signified the American West's rise as a regional political and economic power. The World War I-era transformation in the political and socioeconomic significance of the West was unquestionably structured by the activities of the DCS.²¹

²⁰ Michael J. Lansing, *Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in North American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 238-240.

²¹ Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 17-25; William Preston, Jr., *Aliens & Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 145; Clemens P. Work, *Darkest*

* * * * *

The impact of the DCS on the American West has yet to be considered by scholars. This study will be the first. While scholars have sporadically examined specific defense councils of the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and the various committees and functions of the CND, few have considered the significance of the state defense councils of the American West to a discernable extent.²² Some scholars have outright dismissed the historical significance of the DCS in the western states, choosing instead to highlight the work of those in the Midwest and Northeast.²³ There have been some scholarly examinations of western state defense councils, however, those who have broached the subject have done so within the context of a broader research effort wherein the defense councils are rarely the predominant focus, such as the nativist efforts to “de-hyphenate” German immigrants by criminalizing the their language.²⁴

Contemporary examinations of western American history which include defense council analyses have reflected the larger changes occurring in the field, such as the significance of race, ethnicity, and gender to regional development. Recent studies of DCS operations in the Southwestern states have looked at the impact of the region’s Hispanic population in stimulating

Before Dawn: Sedition and Free Speech in the American West (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 100-101, 237-238.

²² Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*; William J. Breen, “Mobilization and Cooperative Federalism: The Connecticut State Council of Defense, 1917-1919,” *The Historian*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (November 1979): 58-84; William J. Breen, “The North Carolina Council of Defense during World War I, 1917-1919,” *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (January 1973): 1-31; Gerald Senn, “Molders of Thought, Directors of Action: The Arkansas Council of Defense, 1918-1919,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Autumn 1977): 280-290.

²³ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 71-95. Aside from his examination of the CND, Breen also looks at the activities of the state defense councils region-by-region, emphasizing the good work of the Midwest councils but giving short shrift to those of the West, considering them to have been rather weak and inconsequential. Consult Breen’s book for a more in-depth examination of the CND and its *Section on Cooperation with the States*.

²⁴ William G. Ross, *Forging New Freedoms: Nativism, Education, and the Constitution, 1917-1927* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Frank Van Nuys, *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2002).

wartime production and how that participation in turn affected their standing within local communities.²⁵ Scholars have also brought into light the efforts of women's organizations in the western states who used the DCS to engage with the political system as well as to propagate for a national suffrage amendment. The mobilization efforts of the CND's Women's Committee in promoting suffrage and citizenship rights in the American West played a substantial role in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. These articles consider the reactions of national and state defense council committees to broader social trends rather than their efforts to help transform regional and national modes of governance or economic production.²⁶

The extant historiography of the DCS and the World War I-era homefront has nominally been focused on vigilantism and censorship. As William Breen states, "To emphasize the vigilante aspects of what [the defense councils] did is to distort and minimize their contribution to mobilization."²⁷ The varied activities of the national and state defense councils held so much more significance than simply that of military mobilization or discouraging dissent. Yet, even for those who have studied any of the broader aspects of the DCS, the focus has mostly been confined to those efforts. While military mobilization for the Great War was the primary reason for its existence, that alone does not explain how the DCS impacted the larger socioeconomic

²⁵ Phillip Gonzalez and Ann Massmann, "Loyalty Questioned: Nuevo Mexicanos in the Great War," *Pacific Historical Review* Vol. 75, No. 4 (November 2006): 629-666.

²⁶ Lynn Dumenil, "Women's Reform Organizations in World War I-Era Los Angeles," *Journal of Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 2011): 213-245. Dumenil examines the Women's Committee of the CND in relation to women's clubs in Los Angeles and how their mobilization efforts, mainly focused on Progressive Era-derived maternalistic reform programs, used mobilization as means to promote suffrage and women's rights. Dumenil's research highlights the significance of both women and women's clubs to mobilization, as well as the importance of associationalism and voluntary participation to the process.

²⁷ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, xiii.

and political transformations that occurred during that time, nor does it explain how their efforts informed regional modernization efforts in the American West.²⁸

Contemporary scholarship of the twentieth-century American West is a significant element in the historiography of this dissertation. Generally speaking, the central understanding of the history of the American West is most often manifested in its socioeconomic and political development throughout the course of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The West has, by and large, been defined by its existence as a region of contest and conflict over control of its people and its vast natural resources.²⁹ That conflict defined the West before the arrival of the Europeans and Americans, and it continued to define the region during the World War I years. Historians have also characterized the region as having been heavily dependent upon the federal government to resolve political and socioeconomic issues within the states.³⁰

Scholars have pointed to the Populist Revolt of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as the event that dislodged the region's dependence on absentee corporations for economic development. Populism also broke the region's political dependence on federal assistance and advisement, which promoted political maturity. The corruption of the region's earliest political establishments, evinced by Robber Barons like William Clark, the Butte Copper King who used his wealth to buy a seat in the US Senate in 1899, gave rise to the Populist

²⁸ Ibid., xiv-xvii; Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

²⁹ Michael P. Malone and Richard W. Etulain, *The American West: A Twentieth-Century History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).

³⁰ Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987). Limerick's research elucidates the history of the American West as a region of conquest, conflict, and contested territory, downplaying the "frontier thesis" and emphasizing continuity. The West was a battleground for labor and capital during the WWI years and the inability of state and local governments the region to prevent violent class conflict forced federal intervention for a number of incidents. The American West is a region more dependent on the federal government than perhaps anywhere else in the country.

Revolt. The economic appetite of railroad and mining corporations further added to the support for populist rhetoric. Populist political factions of various stripes saw little success in national elections, but combined, they afforded the American West with its first regional partisan coalition. As a result, a new locally-driven democratic movement took root, leading to the popular election of senators, the advent of the recall petition, and various regulatory reforms in the industrial sector. The DCS as it emerged in the western states was born from the region's populist and pro-labor trajectory, informing the wartime policy decisions made by state governments.³¹ The rise of more direct modes of American democracy allowed ordinary working-class Americans the ability to compete with corporate interests over the political and socioeconomic future of the West. That competition defined regional modernity along the lines of increased political participation and the search for socioeconomic independence while simultaneously shifting the boundaries of participatory inclusion and exclusion.³²

The study of radical labor movements, namely that of the IWW, plays a prominent role in the study of western American history and scholars have thoroughly analyzed the IWW's well-documented activities in the region. Most have conceded that the repressive efforts of the state and federal governments, along with vigilante violence and assassinations, ultimately led to the demise of the Wobblies. However, the development and implementation of non-violent forms of

³¹ Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). White's "New West synthesis" considers the material development of the region to be a result of politically determined boundaries, not geographic ones. Like Limerick, White finds that the region has been defined as a place of contestation and conquest, which is constantly being redefined and remade depending on particular political and socioeconomic occurrences. While the region's dependence on the federal state has remained fairly constant, the Populist Revolt, the Progressive Movement, and the social inequalities produced by industrialization helped to make the American West far more independent in its abilities to handle labor conflicts and eschew dependence on East Coast corporations to build up regional infrastructure.

³² Sarah Deutsch, *Making a Modern US West: The Contested Terrain of a Region and Its Borders, 1898-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022).

labor repression signaled a key feature of how DCS officials successfully extricated the IWW's ideological and organizational influence from among the region's working-class population. Subsequently, state and local governments dealt with radicalism and dissent using more effective forms of non-violent repression. The drive to eliminate the IWW indicated an effort to modernize the West by promoting socioeconomic conformity through methods of coercion.³³

Scholars have long examined the role of the organized labor movement during the Great War, considering it the moment that the federal government brought labor into the lawmaking process for the first time.³⁴ Current scholarship asserts that the wartime coordination of labor, business, and government was not a state-sponsored development, but one imagined and implemented by industrialists. New government administrations like the National War Labor Board (NWLB) were created by the CND at the suggestion of its private-sector appointees to, as historian Nelson Lichtenstein says, "co-opt the union impulse."³⁵ As the vehicle in which the CND brought together disparate groups of private-sector actors, the NWLB formalized the emergent mode of administrative associationalism and institutionalized the conservative craft-

³³ Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969); David R. Berman, *Radicalism in the Mountain West, 1890-1920: Socialists, Populists, Miners, and Wobblies* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007); Greg Hall, *Harvest Wobblies The Industrial Workers of the World and Agricultural Laborers in the American West, 1905-1930* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2001). Unlike the broader focus of Melvyn Dubofsky, Hall's more micro-focused research elucidates the interactions between the IWW and local governments in the West, including the Washington State and North Dakota State Councils of Defense, and how that in turn affected the IWW's downfall. Hall's scholarship provides a nuanced look at how regional state defense councils devised methods of non-violent repression to demoralize and marginalize the union.

³⁴ David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); William J. Breen, *Labor Market Politics and the Great War: The Department of Labor, the States, and the First U.S. Employment Service, 1907-1933* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1997).

³⁵ Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 37, 63. Lichtenstein's synthesis posits that by marginalizing radical labor and bringing the AFL to help lead the mobilization effort, industrialists adroitly avoided any major disruptions in wartime production. At the same time, they appeased craft-labor by supporting policies that provided them with piecemeal improvements to their material conditions while leaving behind the more radical methods of direct-action and agitation espoused by unions like the IWW.

labor ideals of the AFL, effectively controlling the ideological direction of the labor movement for years to come. The wartime partnership between labor, business, and government eliminated the growth of labor radicalism.³⁶ “Radical dreams died amid the post-war reaction,” notes labor historian Joseph McCartin, “leaving behind no short-term alternative to the ‘business unionism’ of the [AFL].”³⁷

This dissertation also builds upon the extant scholarship of American statecraft and political history. Scholarly examinations on the rise of the administrative state within the federal government contend that the World War I mobilization effort played a substantial role in the nation’s shift towards a more bureaucratic existence. One of the most crucial aspects of how the Great War transformed existing political structures was through a pragmatic focus on public-private cooperation and coordination. The wartime partnership between the government and private-sector actors arose as an important feature of the mobilization effort and a defining characteristic of how the DCS operated.³⁸ “The [US] declaration of war ... reinforced the administrative state,” notes historian Thomas Leonard, “it expanded and fortified the fiscal state ... [proving] to be a boon for American economic expertise in the service of the state.” The focus

³⁶ Valerie Jean Conner, *The National War Labor Board: Stability, Social Justice, and the Voluntary State in World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983). Studied through the lens of voluntarism and associationalism, Conner argues that the NWLB, a government-administration formed by the CND but controlled by private-sector actors, served to benefit workers more than it did for businesses. If conservative unionists “gradually adjusted their antipathy towards militarism,” then they would be provided with a seat at the negotiating table and would earn recognition from employers. The NWLB transformed the notion of voluntarism into conservative weapon “of semi-coercion for liberal ends.”

³⁷ Joseph A. McCartin, *Labor’s Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations, 1912-1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 3.

³⁸ Gary Gerstle, *Liberty and Coercion: The Paradox of American Government, from the Founding to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015); Marc Allen Eisner, *From Welfare State to Warfare State: World War I, Compensatory State Building, and the Limits of Modern Order* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2000).

on associational modes of mobilization early in the war underscored the benefits of administrative governance and indicated that its rise was an approaching inevitability.³⁹

The DCS symbolized the ultimate realization of public-private cooperative governance while also planting the seeds for a nascent bureaucratic revolution rooted in private-sector influence. In highlighting the Great War as a transitory period in the evolution of American governance, historian Stephen Skowronek explains that through the formation of the DCS, “America embarked upon ... a congressional offensive against hierarchical control and professional coordination in departmental administration. Business-government cooperation was introduced ... [while] the cosmopolitan standard for administrative development was being rejected.”⁴⁰ It was, in essence, peak associationalism. Scholars have seen the period of World War I as a sort of socioeconomic and political middle ground when traditional modes of nineteenth-century associationalism merged with administrative bureaucracies. The shift occurred not through a government effort, but by the influence of the private-sector actors who worked within the DCS.⁴¹

Progressive Era reform movements influenced many of the transformations that occurred during the period and scholars have analyzed how the progressive pursuit of reform manifested itself during World War I. Historian Alan Dawley describes the CND as “a halfway bureaucracy typical of progressive reform, it linked both the federal and state governments to civil society in

³⁹ Thomas C. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics, and American Economics in the Progressive Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 47, 49.

⁴⁰ Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, 234; Andrew J. Polsky and Olesya Tkacheva, “Legacies Versus Politics: Herbert Hoover, Partisan Conflict, and the Symbolic Appeal of Associationalism,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Winter 2002): 207-235.

⁴¹ Kimberley S. Johnson, *Governing the American State: Congress and the New Federalism, 1877-1929* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Daniel R. Ernst, *Tocqueville's Nightmare: The Administrative State Emerges in America, 1900-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

a parastate nexus of public/private power.”⁴² Efficiency, standardization, and scientific rationalization are common themes found in the study of the Progressive Era and they played significant roles in the ideological underpinnings of the DCS. Progressive ideology informed the development of defense council activity and most of the participants in the DCS used the system to propagate progressive reform policies to one degree or another. Just as the DCS may be considered peak associationalism, so too could it be considered peak progressivism.⁴³

Scholars of American progressivism have reached a consensus that the Progressive Era ended around 1920, with the Great War having influenced its demise. David Kennedy encapsulates that consensus, noting that mobilization for World War I “both arrested and transformed the progressive debate over political economy, [which] marked a distinct and formative moment in the history of American society.”⁴⁴ The DCS helped to cement progressive economic and political reforms, especially out West, a region rife with political populism and labor radicalism. The CND appointed influential private-sector actors to prominent positions within the DCS, many of whom had been educated in Progressive Era reform ideals, providing them with the ability to impact wartime policy far more than had they been working from the outside looking in. The brief period of World War I would be one of the last vestiges of the

⁴² Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 115. Dawley examines the efforts of American progressives to impart their socioeconomic sensibilities during the Great War and how that influence informed domestic political developments. Private-sector experience was melded together with governmental power to formulate a mode of mobilization entrenched in progressive ideals of reform that had been inspired by middle-class notions of moral superiority. The melding of public and private contributed to the death of progressivism by handing reform responsibilities to the state, as opposed to private actors influencing from the outside.

⁴³ Howard W. Allen, *Poindexter of Washington: A Study in Progressive Politics* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981); William Deverell and Tom Sitton, ed.’s, *California Progressivism Revisited* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁴⁴ David Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 84.

progressive reform era in state and federal policymaking before the rise of political conservatism, which would come to occupy a large space of American political thought throughout the 1920s.⁴⁵

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This dissertation is divided into five sections and ten chapters. Section I, “The Preparedness Movement,” examines the Preparedness Movement in 1916 and its role in generating a pro-war interventionist consensus among policymakers and in encouraging the development of more administrative modes of governance. Chapter One considers the political rise of the US West in 1916, its significance to preparedness, and the implication of traditional associationalism as the nation’s de facto mode of socioeconomic organization. Labor and business associations popularized intervention, forcing a pro-war consensus in Congress and preestablishing the roles they would play during mobilization before the DCS made its appearance. Chapter Two looks at the NCB’s 1916 efforts for wartime preparedness, which exhibited the apex in the use of traditional associationalism. The NCB demonstrated just how crucial the private sector would be to mobilization, while also exposing traditional associationalism as ineffective, driving calls from within American society for more administrative and bureaucratic modes of associational governance.

Section II, “Establishing the Defense Council System,” looks at the development of the DCS, beginning with the formation of the CND in August 1916 and the establishment of the greater DCS in 1917 following the creation of the various state defense councils. Chapter Three examines the CND’s establishment after years of failed attempts by policymakers trying to improve the nation’s military defenses. The CND represented the dawn of a new mode of

⁴⁵ David R. Berman, *Governors and the Progressive Movement* (Louisville, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2019); David R. Berman, *Reformers, Corporations, and the Electorate: An Analysis of Arizona’s Age of Reform* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1992).

governance that imbued associationalism with administrative characteristics, bringing labor and business into the federal policymaking process with government as equal partners. Chapter Four examines the ideological underpinnings of the state defense council system and the more specific details of how the process worked in the western states. Looking specifically at the formation of state defense councils in Arizona, California, Montana, and Washington, with each state representing a specific subregion of the Far West, this chapter also considers the development of county and community defense councils in those states and their significance to mobilization.

Section III, “Agricultural Adjustment,” analyzes the transformations made to the agricultural industries of the American West through the mobilization efforts of the regional state and county defense councils. Chapter Five looks at the growth of administrative governance in the region’s farming industries, facilitated by the need for increased food production to feed America’s European allies as well as itself. The cooperative nature of the DCS brought federal, state, and county governments together in a coordinated effort to expand the region’s farming capabilities with the assistance of state land-grant schools. Chapter Six looks at the practical application of agricultural expansion policies during World War I, which swelled regional farmland acreage. State defense councils in the region facilitated farm loans, increased mechanization, encouraged urban farming, procured farm labor, and greatly improved rural infrastructures.

Section IV, “Labor Readjustment,” looks at the role of the western state defense councils in formulating policies to “readjust” the high levels of class-conflict and labor radicalism that had been so prevalent in the region for decades, increasing the amount of regulatory authority possessed by state and local governments in matters of employment and business. Chapter Seven looks at the rise of the labor surveillance state organized by the DCS and its use as a means of

preventing labor agitation and radicalism through the development of state spy agencies, loyalty leagues, citizen snitches, and Home Guard companies. Chapter Eight analyzes the DCS's successful efforts to reform and rationalize regional employment practices and implement labor-friendly policies. Through the application of non-violent methods of labor repression and with the cooperation of conservative craft-labor unions, state defense councils in the American West ensured the AFL's domination of the organized labor movement and the IWW's demise.

Section V, "Two-Party Consolidation," examines how the wartime rhetoric of non-partisan nationalism in the western states opened up opportunities for the Republican and Democratic Parties in the region to eliminate the rise of political populism and further consolidate partisan control. Through analyses of Socialism in Washington State and the NPL in Montana, Chapter Nine examines the Washington State Council of Defense (WSCD) and the MSCD's attempts to eradicate populist influences from within their states. The WSCD engaged in a surreptitious battle with the Socialist Party, all but guaranteeing the domination of the Republicans and Democrats for the foreseeable future. The MSCD went after the NPL's growing influence among the state's farmers by instituting watered-down versions of NPL reform policies into state law, cementing Two-Party domination in the state. Chapter Ten looks at the partisan political consolidation of the Republicans in California and the Democrats in Arizona. The California State Council of Defense (CSCD) and the Arizona State Council of Defense (ASCD) each sought to increase the political control of their dominant parties, but with their respective efforts displaying far different results. In California, the CSCD successfully consolidated the GOP, but in a manner that killed its progressive character. In Arizona, the ASCD consolidated Democratic power during the war, which had the effect of helping the Republican Party increase its influence in the state, contributing to the rise of political conservatism in the 1920s.

Section I: The Preparedness Movement

–Chapter One–

Preparedness, Politics, and Associationalism in the West

The preparedness movement and the subsequent mobilization movement were more than just wartime measures, they were important steps towards the realization of socioeconomic and political reorganization. In an age of rapid industrialization, corporate consolidation, and the practical application of progressive ideals rooted in efficiency and rationalization, much of the American private sector was asking for such a transformation. The concept of public-private cooperation and coordination as a staple of American associationalism would act as the very foundation on which the United States operated its mobilization process. That process would in turn act as the foundation on which a modernized and more efficient socioeconomic mode of production in the American West would be constructed.

Business and labor associations popularized the notion of wartime preparedness, albeit on different levels of engagement, forming the ideological groundwork for the movement itself. In the fight between labor and capital, preparedness for war became a common denominator, with both labor unions and business associations hoping to use preparedness and the prospect of mobilization as a means to fulfill their own organizational and socioeconomic endgames. That often took the form of craft-labor's rhetoric of "preparedness for peace," or the overwhelming concurrence of business associations who advocated for "preparedness for war." Whatever form that preparedness and mobilization would eventually take, both labor and business demanded that the federal government use the growing calls for intervention to formulate a political consensus that determined once and for all where the country stood – for Great War isolation or intervention. At the same time, ordinary Americans demanded that the federal government also

increase its regulatory presence in the private sector, using preparedness as an opportunity to clamp down on the wealth and political influence of corporations. Ultimately, it was the existing modes of organization utilized by corporations that won out, setting the standard for how preparedness and eventual mobilization would proceed.

I: Political and Socioeconomic Rise of the West

The debates and ensuing conflict related to questions of federal and state power, of business and labor, and between intervention and isolation, played out most significantly in the US West. The region had become much more populated and far more politically consequential than it had ever been in the years and decades preceding the Preparedness Movement, mirroring the multifaceted nature of the country's most substantial political and socioeconomic issues. Whereas Democrats dominated the Southeast and Republicans nominally dominated the Northeast and Midwest; the Northwest, Southwest, and Intermountain subregions of the West displayed a far more complicated political character. In the American West, the political stakes were much higher. Voters in the region displayed a keen awareness of their newfound ability to tip the scales of national politics. The region's rising political significance was especially noticeable in relation to the political power gained through the enfranchisement of women.¹

Women's suffrage had gained considerable traction in the early part of the century. Through a series of referendums and initiatives between the 1860s and 1914, beginning with Wyoming Territory in 1869, western women were among the first in the country to have earned the right to vote. In 1914, Montana became the last western state to enfranchise women, nearly five years before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. The twelve states that passed laws enfranchising women prior to the Nineteenth Amendment were all far western states. As the

¹ Berman, *Radicalism in the Mountain West*, 26-28; Michael S. Neiberg, *The Path to War: How the First World War Created Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 151-152.

country prepared to cast their votes in the 1916 general election, the West had gained nearly five-million prospective female voters. The fact that Republicans had been more willing to oppose state referendums to enfranchise women, even though President Wilson himself opposed a national women's suffrage amendment, gave those new voters enough reasons to support other political parties, including large numbers of women who voted for Democrats and Progressives, and, to a lesser extent, Prohibitionists.²

The recent consolidation of the western territories into states also played a role in the region's rising political significance. With the granting of statehood to Arizona and New Mexico in 1912, Congress completed the full inclusion of the western continental states, save Alaska, and the subsequent struggle for partisan control within the western states commenced. The region looked far less like the geo-partisan bulwarks of the Northeast and the "Solid South." While partisan domination within some states did exist to some extent, the American West did not have a dominating regional political faction and voters in the western states supported more Third and Fourth-Party candidates than the rest of the country did. The popularity of Democrats, Republicans, Progressives, Socialists, Suffragists, and Prohibitionists in the region fluctuated regularly depending on the particular issues, candidates, or location. Voters in the western states exhibited a higher level of political independence as opposed to the more dedicated geopolitical and partisan biases found in the rest of the country, making the region highly contested in the realm of state and national politics.³

² "Women of U.S. Hold Balance of Power for Presidential Election," *Tacoma Times*, March 23, 1916, 1; Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Women Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 75, 83-86; Elaine Weiss, *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote* (New York: Penguin Books, 2018), 30-33.

³ *Ibid.*; David R. Berman, *Arizona Politics & Government: The Quest for Autonomy, Democracy, and Development* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 41.

The complicated nature of partisan politics in the West was most noticeable in the partisan disparities of those elected to state and federal offices. Between 1912 and 1916, the California State Legislature was composed of a variety of Republicans, Democrats, Progressives, and Prohibitionists, but voters elected a strict Republican majority for its national delegation. Washington State maintained a Republican majority in Olympia, split its national delegation between both major parties, and elected a progressive Democratic Governor to two terms. In Montana, voters wavered between Democrat and Republican majorities in the state legislature, elected a Republican and a Democrat to the US Senate, and selected Republican Jeanette Rankin, the first woman ever to serve in the House of Representatives. In 1915, Idaho chose Democrat Moses Alexander as its governor, the second Jewish state governor in the nation's history. Idaho voted for a Democrat majority in the state legislature, elected senators from both major parties, and sent Republicans to the House of Representatives. Arizona was the most solid bastion for the Democrats in the western states during the time. With the exception of Republican governor Thomas Campbell, who only served one year of his term before the Arizona Supreme Court overturned his victory in favor of his Democratic opponent, Arizona remained solidly Democrat until 1919.⁴

Regardless of the various intrastate and interstate political divisions in the West, the region voted overwhelmingly to elect Democrat Woodrow Wilson as President in both the 1912 and 1916 general elections. Only four states west of the Mississippi – Oregon, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa – gave Republican candidate Charles Evans Hughes their electoral votes in the 1916 election. California and North Dakota's electoral votes were considered to be so crucial

⁴ Berman, *Governors and the Progressive Movement*, 201, 224; Michael J. Dubin, *Party Affiliations in the State Legislatures: A Year by Year Summary, 1796-2006* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2007), 25, 54, 111-112, 195.

to the presidential election that Hughes and his Republican allies referred to them as the “tipping-point” for Wilson’s victory. Even though California was a nominally Republican-leaning state in national and state elections, the state’s support for Wilson exhibited the complexity that seemed to be so inherent with partisan politics in the American West.⁵

Such complicated partisan disparities demonstrated the highly contested and independent nature of politics in the West in the years preceding World War I. It also highlighted the region’s significance as an emergent force in the country’s political balance and, consequently, the manner in which it would move forward with wartime preparedness. By 1916, the days of the Northeast and the Solid South as the predominant geopolitical rivalries and deciders of federal policymaking had been displaced by a more diverse geographic and partisan arrangement. Following the 1916 general election, newspapers throughout the West excitedly declared that the “political transfer of power from the east to the west, from crowded industrial centers to small cities and farms ... [is] the most amazing political revolution ever known in this country ... it gives the West a dominating position.”⁶ In contextualizing the stereotype of East Coast elitism and corporatism with the newfound political power of the West, New York’s *Evening World* newspaper proclaimed that “the cash register patriotism of New York has been spat upon by a virile American West that is keeping the faith of the [founding] fathers.”⁷

Combined with the region’s standing as the nation’s epicenter for resource extraction, the political economy of the American West would come to play a consequential role in how the Preparedness Movement operated at the state level and, by proxy, how wartime mobilization would proceed nationally. The subsequent impact that western regional politics had on national

⁵ White, *It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 357, 378, 382-383, 437; “Wilson Elected by the Votes of California and North Dakota,” *Ogden Standard*, November 9, 1916, 1.

⁶ “The West Has Spoken,” *Border Vidette*, November 25, 1916, 1.

⁷ “A New Era in American Politics,” *Evening World*, November 9, 1916, 2.

politics, reform movements, and socioeconomic matters in general, came to represent the rising political and socioeconomic significance of the West. The emerging political power of the region occurred right as the Preparedness Movement peaked in cultural popularity in 1916.⁸

Western Labor and Capital Confront Preparedness

Before the formation of the CND in August 1916, and in the midst of the heated national debates regarding preparedness, American citizens in the western states began vocalizing their desire to enact local wartime preparedness measures themselves. In the absence of a designated system of national preparedness; ordinary citizens, business organizations, and engineering societies turned to private-sector organizations to find answers for how to prepare for a wartime economy with or without the help of the federal government. The preexisting modes of operation utilized by private associations tended to be the great American fallback in the absence of more direct forms of governmental organization. There were rarely any attempts to organize for preparedness without the leadership or direct involvement of businesses and their corresponding employers' associations. Aside from the expectation that workers should demonstrate their patriotism through enthusiastic participation, labor unions – easily the most popular private associations in the West – were left out of the mainstream discussions of preparedness early in the process, forced to debate the topic in their own newspapers.⁹

In relation to the involvement of business associations, the most vocal opponents of preparedness measures belonged to labor organizations. The unwillingness of many state labor federations to want to participate did not always come from a raw, militant ideology that naturally opposed war. Sometimes it was as simple as knowing that they were being excluded

⁸ Malone and Etulain, *The American West*, 54-66, 264-265.

⁹ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 72, 75, 94; Peter J. Albert and Grace Palladino, ed.'s, *The Samuel Gompers Papers, Vol. 9: The American Federation of Labor at the Height of Progressivism, 1913-17* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 373-377.

from the discussion in such a way that it appeared as if manufacturers and businessmen were being touted, or touted themselves, as the quintessence of American patriotism while looking at labor as a barely tolerated subclass of capital. While business associations often paid lip-service to the role of workers in preparedness, organized labor was conspicuously absent from the discussion. Such business-centric efforts at preparedness were just as confusing as they were infuriating to union leadership and to rank-and-file workers, but so was the biased focus by the press on what preparedness should represent.¹⁰ “The program advocated by big business and the newspapers which it controls should be opposed by organized labor,” declared the *Labor Journal*, the Everett Trade Council’s official daily. “The kind of preparedness in which we believe would not result in the destruction, but in the protection of human life and the products of labor.”¹¹

Resulting from a lack of consensus or even of practical alternatives, the labor movement experienced an internecine struggle over what preparedness should mean to workers and whether or not they should be involved. Samuel Gompers was an outspoken advocate of preparedness and moderation, but, throughout much of 1916 he still articulated an anti-war stance for the most part. “[The labor] movement stands for the principles of righteousness, for justice, [and] for freedom,” Gompers explained during a meeting with Woodrow Wilson in late-1916, “[and] we demand peace though preparedness.”¹² He represented a small but highly influential faction of labor leaders who felt that American military involvement in the war was imminent and that only by acquiescence through coordination with the government and cooperation with employers

¹⁰ “Labor Favors Preparedness, but is Opposed to Compulsory Service,” *Labor World*, June 8, 1916, 3; “Federation of Labor vs. Preparedness,” *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, October 6, 1916, 1; Norman Hapgood, ed., *Professional Patriots* (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1927), 140.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; “Real Preparedness,” *Labor Journal*, April 14, 1916, 1.

¹² Arthur S. Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vol. 38: August 7-November 19, 1916* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 672.

would workers receive the gains for which they had struggled. For Gompers, the labor movement's moment had arrived, yet it came with the caveat of compromise. The anti-war camp within organized labor, most notably in the American West with the far more militant and radical IWW and Western Federation of Miners (WFM), believed that any such cross-class cooperation with the government and employers would only serve to weaken the organized labor movement. Such cooperation, they felt, would strip unions of their ability to produce change via direct action through the use of strikes, boycotts, slowdowns, etc.¹³

Unlike the patriotic bluster of Samuel Gompers, many state labor federation leaders did not support preparedness in principle because they felt it was only one short step away from industrialized warfare, "organized by capitalist interests and paid for in blood by the working-class." John White, President of the AFL-affiliated United Mine Workers Union, informed Gompers that he was "personally against the whole scheme of war and preparedness ... I believe that it is a distinctly commercial war."¹⁴ White's comments highlighted a major reason why businesses and other advocates of preparedness attempted to leave labor out of the discussion. A labor-focused program for preparedness would, ostensibly, be more concerned with the welfare of ordinary Americans, not with business interests and profit margins. Anti-union employers' associations, such as the NAM and the National Civic Federation (NCF), expressed fears that giving labor a seat at the table would eventually lead "not only to a labor government in Washington, but a radical labor crowd in power."¹⁵

¹³ Alexander Trachtenberg, ed., *The American Labor Year Book, 1917-18* (New York: The Rand School of Social Science, 1918), 44-47.

¹⁴ Peter J. Albert and Grace Palladino, ed.'s, *The Samuel Gompers Papers, Vol. 10: The American Federation of Labor and the Great War, 1917-1918* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 22.

¹⁵ *The American Labor Year Book, 1916* (New York: The Rand School of Social Science, 1916), 21-23; Hapgood, *Professional Patriots*, 38.

At the same time that organized labor struggled to build some kind of internal consensus regarding a definitive position on preparedness, businesses and “patriotic” private associations began mobilizing in whatever fashion they could, relying upon their preexisting modes of organization to contribute to the discussion of preparedness measures. With the emergence of rationalization and scientific management within the industrial sector as staples of practical progressive principles, pro-preparedness associations made tremendous headway in their propaganda campaigns to convince the country that military and industrial buildup was a matter of efficiency. That momentum led directly to the cooperative partnership between businesses, employers’ associations, engineering societies, and the federal and state governments with the creation of the Naval Consulting Board. Labor, however, would continue to be sidelined by the powerbrokers of government and capital for the time being, even as interventionists were grooming the industrial sector for wartime mobilization.¹⁶

Regional Defense Conferences

In the first half of 1916, several regional preparedness conferences convened throughout the United States for the purpose of urging the federal government to devise a more concrete wartime preparedness plan and to shore up regional political support for preparedness. Unsurprisingly, the Northeast experienced the largest number of regional conferences, most often in New York City and organized, more often than not, by associations like the Navy League and the National Security League (NSL). Aside from population density, the frequency was due to the region’s abundance of military installations, its industrial manufacturing centers, and its proximity to the financial hubs of Boston and New York. The War College in Washington DC also hosted two preparedness conferences that year under the auspices of the

¹⁶ “Labor Against War and Preparedness,” *Labor Journal*, January 28, 1916, 1; Scott, *Naval Consulting Board of the United States*, 118.

NSL. The NSL was an elemental force in the propagation of military preparedness and the organizer of most regional preparedness conferences throughout 1916. The NSL quickly became one of the most influential and outspoken associations advocating for military intervention in both the Mexican Revolution and the Great War.¹⁷

The NSL was formed in 1914 by a group of government officials, prominent industrialists, and military officers. US Rep. Augustus Peabody Gardner (R-MA); Solomon Menken, Progressive-Republican and corporate lawyer for J.P. Morgan; and US Army General Leonard Wood, also a Republican, were the main forces behind the group's formation and the three men headed the NSL's Executive Committee. The NSL led the charge for a more militant preparedness plan, with its members having both nationalistic and financial motivations to do so. By 1916, the NSL had become widely accepted as the foremost privately-organized association for shaping public opinion and government support in favor of intervention. While the earliest iteration of the NSL focused mostly on indoctrinating school children in patriotic rhetoric and advocating for compulsory military service for all adult males, it had become, by January 1916, the leading campaigner for industrial preparedness efforts as well.¹⁸

Not coincidentally, many of those involved with the league would likely benefit economically if Congress were to declare war and the military purchased supplies, munitions, and armaments from companies that they held stock in or owned outright. The involvement of JP Morgan underscored that concern. The NSL sponsored several preparedness conferences and parades, with most of them taking place in 1916 once the Preparedness Movement really began to explode in popularity among the general American public. To pursue its agenda, the NSL

¹⁷ National Security League, *Proceedings of the National Security Congress* (New York: The National Security League, Inc., 1916), 3.

¹⁸ National Security League, *Our Country: Official Bulletin of the National Security League* Vol. 1, No. 6 (May 1916): 2-3.

often partnered up with business and employers' associations to organize the regional events, highlighting the importance of local participation by regional industrialists in the conferences.¹⁹

The reoccurring themes of the conferences focused predominantly on military buildup, how to push the federal government towards intervention and mobilization, and the role of industrial manufacturing in preparedness. Not a single preparedness conference in 1916 was an officially government-organized affair and labor was rarely included in the proceedings by organizers. Even though elected officials and military officers sometimes attended or sent representatives to the various conferences, neither the federal nor state governments took the initiative to organize any of the conferences themselves. The lack of initiative, or perhaps fear of alienating segments of the anti-interventionist voting population, displayed a continued desire to leave preparedness to the private sector, as well as a general inability of the federal government to effectively make decisions. As a result, private citizens, often in the form of business associations, took it upon themselves to agitate and organize for preparedness. Regional conferences would henceforth be dominated by area business associations with increasing support from their advocates in local and state government.²⁰

The Southern Preparedness Conference was held in Charleston, South Carolina, in April 1916 under the auspices of both the NSL and the Charleston Chamber of Commerce. Midwest preparedness conferences took place in Toledo in February and Chicago in April. Like the conferences in New York and Charleston, the Toledo conference was organized by the NSL, while the Chicago conference was organized by the Illinois Manufacturing Association, a NAM affiliate. The Southwest region held preparedness conferences as well, however, those events

¹⁹ Hapgood, 8, 20-23; Allan L. Benson, *Inviting War to America* (New York: The Pearson Publishing Company, 1916), 71-73.

²⁰ "Preparedness Convention of Northwest Businessmen," *Gazette-Times*, March 16, 1916, 3; Neiberg, *The Path to War*, 139-140, 149-150.

focused almost exclusively on the recent spillover of the Mexican Revolution into the US borderlands following Pancho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico, in March 1916.²¹

Curiously, the only regional preparedness conference to have convened without any organizational assistance from the NSL took place in the Northwest. In consideration of the existential impact that the extractive industries of the Northwest had on national manufacturing output, the lack of NSL activity was a welcomed omission by regional preparedness advocates. Interventionist business associations in the Northwest attempted to organize the region themselves and proudly did so without the assistance of what regional conference organizers considered "corporate money-men and back-east financiers." Such a remark signified an interesting development since so much of the wealth produced by resource extraction in the West made its way back to those very same "back-east financiers" who held an enormous financial stake in the region's industrial development. The ideology of rugged individualism in the West often smacked of such socioeconomic contradictions.²²

From March 27-28, 1916, over three-thousand state and local government representatives and area businessmen from Washington, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Wyoming, and the Dakotas, gathered for the first and only Northwest Preparedness Conference (NWPC) at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane, Washington. Hosted by Spokane businessman, William McCrae, and sponsored by the Spokane and Kalispell Chambers of Commerce, the purpose of the conference, similar to the NSL-organized events in the Southeast, Northeast, and Midwest, was to discuss strategies for how to redirect the federal government's tepid response to the European war

²¹ National Security League, *Our Country: Official Bulletin of the National Security League* Vol. 1, No. 6 (May 1916): 4; "Preparedness Sessions in Charleston End," *Evening Star*, April 29, 1916, 5; "Arranges Conference," *Evening Review*, February 28, 1916, 1.

²² "Northwest will get a Line on Preparedness," *Daily East Oregonian*, March 17, 1916, 6; "Would Perpetuate Conference Work," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, March 29, 1916, 12.

towards a more resolute interventionist stance. More importantly, however, were the participants' discussions concerning the roles of manufacturing, farming, timber, and mineral extraction in the Northwest; how those industries related to preparedness, their contribution to future wartime mobilization, and ultimately, how bottom lines would be affected by their participation.²³

The NWPC attendees adopted several resolutions, but the most significant ones were focused on compulsory military training for young men, construction of coastal fortifications on the Pacific seaboard to repel invasions, an improved highway system for the transportation of domestic goods, unconditional support for the tariff, and "a comprehensive plan for industrial development" in the West. Although stockpiling arms and advocating for the formation of a professionalized standing military were, ostensibly, the main impetuses behind the NWPC, mineral extraction and transportation, along with their ability to produce wartime profits, emerged as the most substantial incentives for the region's business community to push the nation towards war. The resolutions adopted at the conference soon made their way to Congress when US Senator Miles Poindexter (R-WA), a keynote speaker at the NWPC, subsequently presented the resolutions on the Senate floor two-months later, officially entering them into the congressional record. The NWPC was the only regional conference to have had their proposals presented to and considered by Congress, which demonstrated the emerging significance of the West to national socioeconomic and political matters.²⁴

²³ "Ask Bigger Navy, Better Training, and Naval Bases," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, March 28, 1916, 1; "For Preparedness," *Flathead Courier*, March 16, 1916, 3.

²⁴ US Congress, *Congressional Record of the First Session of the Sixty-Fourth Congress, Vol. LIII* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 5864-5865; "Would Perpetuate Conference Work," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, March 29, 1916, 12.

On the rare occasions that representatives of the labor movement were invited to the preparedness conferences, organizers only asked AFL-affiliated craft-labor unions to attend. On January 19, 1916, Samuel Gompers was invited by the NCF to give the keynote speech at its preparedness conference in Washington DC. “[Workers] must feel that they are part of the nation with a voice determining its destinies,” Gompers asserted, “war as it is being waged today is not determined merely by the men on the battle field, but also by the mobilization of national resources and national industry.” Gompers concluded his speech by suggesting to the NCF that only through “the recognition of and cooperation with the organized-labor movement in all fields of activity,” would preparedness and mobilization achieve success. He received a standing ovation by the crowd of mostly business owners, evincing a promising shift in the relationship between business associations and labor unions, namely the AFL, whose national leadership eschewed the anarcho-syndicalist philosophies of the IWW and who nominally displayed a more pragmatic approach to dealing with employers.²⁵

The leitmotifs discussed at the regional conferences exposed some significant conflicts bubbling just below the surface of American society, many of which erupted into the open once the discussion of preparedness began to dominate the nation’s social discourse. One of those conflicts was the ever-present political struggle between advocates of local/state autonomy and that of federal government supremacy. Inherent within that long-standing partisan feud between Democrats and Republicans – and, by the turn-of-the-century, Progressives and Socialists as well – was the debate over the role of business in politics and the concerns most Americans shared about the economic power and political influence of corporations. While the debate occurred

²⁵ Samuel Gompers, *Preparedness for National Defense*, “U.S. Senate Document No. 311” (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 5, 11; Simeon Larson, “The American Federation of Labor and the Preparedness Controversy,” *The Historian*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (November 1974): 73-76.

nationally, it signified a distinctive aspect and defining characteristic of socioeconomic and political dialogue in the West. Western states often struggled with the implications of the region's economic dependence on and domination by corporate interests based in the Northeast. The autonomy vocalized by regional business interests showed a growing desire to separate themselves from the long-standing economic and political dominance by absentee East Coast corporations.²⁶

Class, Labor, and Preparedness

The debates surrounding issues of local and state democracy versus federal supremacy, and labor versus capital had long-endured as distinguishing features of the American political zeitgeist. Those social debates waxed and waned in the decades following the Civil War and the Era of Reconstruction, with immigration and the expansion of America's overseas empire often garnering more public attention, especially during the 1890s and the 19-aughts. In 1916 however, the ensuing discussion of preparedness in response to international warfare, along with the various forms of political and socioeconomic conflict which it exposed, rekindled the public's passion for issues related to local democracy and class politics. The inherent tension that surrounded class politics was likewise represented in the debate over whether or not the nation should intervene in the European conflict in a military capacity. Class politics informed the debate between interventionists and isolationists in significant fashion.²⁷

²⁶ Ibid.; Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2011), 9-11; Van Nuys, *Americanizing the West*, 1-4.

²⁷ Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America: From 1870 to the Present* (New York: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1978), p. 60, 100. Goldstein's examination reveals how events such as the various immigrant exclusion acts, the Spanish-American War, political discord in Mexico, and the spread of American empire into Asia and Latin America, all helped to steer the public's attention away from the domestic issues facing the nation in the late-1890s and early-1900s. That included the expansion of third-party political influences, the rise of class consciousness and labor conflict, and the growth of political populism.

As 1916 progressed, and Democrats and Republicans were coming around to the idea of intervention in greater numbers, the Socialist Party of America (SPA) still nominally supported peace over military aggression. Nevertheless, some Socialist partisans vehemently rejected the idea of peace in support of intervention to defeat German militarism. Others argued that the SPA should support intervention for different, far more contentious reasons. In a letter to the SPA's weekly newspaper in Washington State, the *Washington Socialist*, firebrand partisan Frans Bostrom declared that "the only thing that stands in the way of a cooperative commonwealth is the ignorance of the working-classes ... [so] the only way to raise the standard of intelligence is to exterminate the fools." Bostrom boldly advocated the controversial idea of using intervention as a means of leading "foolish," indifferent, and apathetic workers to their slaughter to cull the ranks of labor of its "undesirables." While not a common Socialist response to war, it exhibited the complicated and nuanced nature of the interventionist-isolationist debate, which complicated the SPA's notions of socialist internationalism.²⁸

In the main, interventionists, whose adherents spread across class and party lines, held that it was the nation's duty to declare war against the "Hunnish aggression" of Germany, align itself with the Triple Entente, and mobilize the nation for total, industrialized warfare. Conversely, isolationists, whose supporters also ran the gamut of class and party affiliation, believed that the nation should maintain a neutral stance and avoid military aggression at all costs – that it was in the country's best interest to stay out of the conflict altogether. Not all adherents to either point of view held the same interests or motivations for why they respectively supported one idea over the other. For example, anarchists nominally supported anti-war

²⁸ Frans Bostrom, "What About It?," *Washington Socialist*, February 18, 1915, 2; Jeffrey A. Johnson, *They're All Red Out Here: Socialist Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1895-1925* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 213.

isolationism over military aggression, yet, on July 22, 1916, were willing to detonate a bomb during a preparedness parade in San Francisco's Presidio, killing ten bystanders and wounding forty more. The divisiveness of the debate had literally exploded into openly violent conflict in the streets of the American West, blurring the lines of intervention and isolation even further.²⁹

Another common thread within the nation's long-standing partisan struggle for the balance of political power was found in the debate over the role of business and labor in politics and the concerns that many Americans shared about the political influence of corporations. As seen in their respective 1916 party platforms, Republicans were more supportive of the business sector, while Democrats tried harder to attract small farmers and the working-class. The 1916 Democratic Party Platform championed rural credits for farmers and emphasized the need for more labor protections. The GOP's Party Platform declared that the government should avoid "business regulation and supervision ... which should be left within the sphere of private enterprise," railroads and "the great industrial corporations" being the exception.³⁰ Even some Republicans themselves exposed the corporate nature of the party. Robert La Follette, a progressive Republican US Senator from Wisconsin, described his own party during that time as having been subverted by "big burglars" like Rockefeller and DuPont and "who sacrificed human life for private gain."³¹

²⁹ Van Nuys, 80; *The American Labor Year Book, 1916*, 202; Joseph T. McCann, *Terrorism on American Soil: A Concise History of Plots and Perpetrators from the Famous to the Forgotten* (Boulder, CO: Sentient Publications, 2006), 48-50. While the true identity of the perpetrator of the bombing has never been discovered, scholars such as McCann have provided ample evidence in the years since that point to Greek or Italian anarchists as the bomber(s). The man initially arrested and convicted for the crime, California union leader Thomas Mooney, was later found innocent and pardoned by Governor Culbert Olson in 1939; "Mooney Greeted by S.F.," *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, January 9, 1939, 9.

³⁰ US House of Representatives, *Platforms of the Two Great Political Parties of the United States, 1856-1916, Inclusive* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 198-199, 201-202, 209.

³¹ "La Follette for President," *La Follette's Magazine*, Vol. VIII, No. 3 (March 1916): 7, 14; Richard Drake, *The Education of an Anti-Imperialist: Robert La Follette and U.S. Expansion* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 155-156.

By 1916, the key to political victory at the national level was increasingly found in courting the labor vote. Every political faction tried to appeal to voters active within the organized labor movement whose bloc-voting impact on local, state, and national elections had expanded significantly over the preceding decade. But it was the Democrats who gained the majority of organized labor's political support following President Wilson's backing of the Clayton Antitrust Act in 1914, which exempted unions from the draconian anti-labor stipulations found in the 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act. Even though the Clayton Act was so watered-down in its regulatory language that it actually did very little to affect any real protections for labor, Samuel Gompers still managed to rally the AFL and many state labor federations behind it. Gompers' blessing helped tip the scales in favor of the Democrats for the 1916 presidential election, ultimately leading to Woodrow Wilson's reelection, however, Republicans did make modest gains in the House that same year and again during the 1918 midterm elections.³²

Although the discussion of preparedness increased in popularity as 1916 progressed, millions of Americans still hoped to avoid the slightest whiff of US militarism in Europe. Former Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, an ardent Democrat and affirmed pacifist, represented that trepidation, encouraging "the exercise of Christian principles in combatting war, and the substitution of reason for force in remedying and protesting war."³³ But, ultimately, the protestations of pacifists and other anti-preparedness advocates were drowned-out by the rising tide of pro-war sentiment. Even labor organizations who were generally displeased by or rejected the idea of war demanded that the federal government begin the commencement of national preparedness efforts. At the 1916 AFL Convention in San Francisco, Samuel Gompers

³² McCartin, *Labor's Great War*, 17-18; Conner, *The National War Labor Board*, 17; Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor*, 357.

³³ "Arrayed Against President's Plan," *Evening Star*, January 31, 1916, 3.

announced to the rank-and-file members that “the only way to prevent war is to organize for peace through preparedness.”³⁴ For labor, preparedness did not necessarily mean supporting the idea of war or being ready for it in a military capacity, it meant preventing war.

The United States had never before faced the kind of simultaneous foreign and domestic policy situations that it was confronted with following the eruption of the Great War in Europe. The nation had grown vastly more diverse in both its demographics and its political ideologies than it had ever been by the time of Franz Ferdinand’s assassination on June 28, 1914. Along with the dramatic transformations to the nation’s racial, ethnic, and religious character, the economic changes wrought from the Industrial Revolution created immense, yet tightly concentrated amounts of newfound wealth for corporations. At the same time, economic disparities increased for working-class Americans. The accompanying explosion of socioeconomic transformation and subsequent political conflict helped to shape an indecisive federal government that had dithered on most issues foreign and domestic.³⁵

With the federal government unable to devise a solution or come to a working agreement on how the country should deal with the destruction of the Great War in Europe, American citizens began demanding a more concrete plan of action from Washington. For millions of Americans, war appeared either inevitable or at least highly probable. Although deadlocked and conflicted, the country still seemed destined to join the fight in a more direct manner. Fed up with the political stalemating; private citizens, state and locally-elected officials, labor leaders, and business leaders – sometimes working together, sometimes apart, and hardly ever with the same motivations or concerns – formed the basis of the loosely-organized Preparedness Movement. As indicated by the discussions held at the 1916 preparedness conferences and the

³⁴ Phillip Taft, *The A.F.L. in the Time of Gompers* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957), 343.

³⁵ Montgomery, 357-259; Neiberg, 138-140.

debates among the working-class, the private sector had begun to poise itself to lead the charge for national preparedness as the federal government wavered in its decision-making abilities.³⁶

II: Industrial Preparedness

On April 29, 1916, the Progressive Party's presidential nominee, Teddy Roosevelt, presented a speech at Chicago's Annual Bar Association Banquet on the necessity of wartime preparedness. "We've been idle!" Roosevelt shouted to the cheering crowd. "Our prime duty, is the duty of preparedness ... preparedness must be both of the soul and body. It must not only be military but industrial and social."³⁷ In the age of industrialization, as Roosevelt implied, military might was directly proportional to any given nation's resource extraction and manufacturing capabilities. Therefore, preparedness meant more than just the benefit of martial proficiency. If the military was "the body," then American industry was "the soul." Preparedness was the call, yet still, very few understood exactly what that meant or how the United States, a cross-continental nation of 100-million-plus, should even begin to prepare. Whatever form preparedness would take, the nation's industrial sector, as alluded to by Roosevelt's homily, was expected to be a fundamental part of the process.³⁸

The Preparedness Movement had grown into an American cultural phenomenon by the spring of 1916. Civic organizations mobilized hundreds of "preparedness parades" in cities and towns across the country to drum-up patriotic fervor and to advertise the local businesses who supported it. Retailers nationwide attempted to cash-in on the excitement. The Van Bree & Ryder department store in Racine, Wisconsin, advertised a "Preparedness Sale" with "big

³⁶ Walter E. Weyl, *The End of the War* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 50; Neiberg, 149-150.

³⁷ Progressive National Executive Committee, *The Progressive Party: Its Record from January to July 1916* (New York: Press of the Mail and Express Job Print, 1916), 14, 18.

³⁸ Neiberg, 125-126; "We've Been Idle," *Topeka Daily State Journal*, May 1, 1916, 10; "T.R. and Preparedness," *The Day Book*, May 2, 1916, 25.

reductions on all boys clothing.”³⁹ Hills, McLean & Haskins in Binghamton, New York, advertised its “Preparedness Week Sale,” which, the ad mentioned, was “right in line with the national issue of the day.”⁴⁰ Similarly, Alexander’s in Boise, Idaho, declared that “preparedness is today’s household word,” while equivocating it with the low prices of their men’s suit inventory.⁴¹

The excitement surrounding preparedness was far more than a trite profit motive. American society in general became engrossed in the movement. Aside from national defense, the main questions Americans asked themselves in relation to preparedness, generally speaking, were: “How can I contribute to preparedness in a manner beneficial for the country but also benefits myself and my community?” “How can preparedness be used to facilitate my particular political or economic needs?” For example, women’s clubs discussed preparedness at social gatherings across the country, debating the best ways to ensure that women could be involved in the process. Such discussions were not derived purely from feelings of nationalist sentimentality. Preparedness presented itself as an excellent opportunity for citizens to demonstrate their ability to contribute to society in ways that had been denied them, especially in regard to direct political participation.⁴² “Women [feel] that they must demonstrate the ability to properly consider matters of public importance,” mentioned one woman in her local newspaper’s editorial page, “therefore [we] seize upon the opportunity to promote national preparedness.” Preparedness was a divisive social issue, however, it was also a galvanizing one, demanding resoluteness and some

³⁹ “Van Bree & Ryders Big Preparedness Sale,” *Racine Journal-News*, June 7, 1916, 3.

⁴⁰ “Preparedness Week,” *Press and Sun-Bulletin*, May 8, 1916, 18.

⁴¹ “Preparedness is Today’s Household Word,” *Evening Capital News*, April 16, 1916, 12.

⁴² “Seattle Men Discuss Preparedness,” *Seattle Star*, March 30, 1916, 1; Emily Newell Blair, *The Women’s Committee of the Council of National Defense: An Interpretive Report* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 6-8.

form of consensus from a conflicted federal government and in fact, from society, whether that was against the war or in support of it.⁴³

President Woodrow Wilson also spoke of preparedness, albeit in more hushed tones and vaguer language than that of an increasingly marginalized Teddy Roosevelt. 1916 was an important election year and President Wilson, ever the pragmatist, did not wish to alienate supporters on either side of the war question. While Wilson played both sides of the issue, refusing to take a principled stand either for or against the nation's military involvement in the war, his opponent, Republican nominee Charles Evans Hughes, hitched his political horse, and by proxy, the Republican Party's, to the interventionist wagon.⁴⁴ During his acceptance speech at the 1916 GOP Convention in Chicago, Hughes professed that "there is no isolation in the world of the twentieth century ... [and] we cannot fail to recognize our international duty ... All our preparedness will have proper relation to this end."⁴⁵

In contrast, one of Wilson's most popular campaign slogans during the 1916 presidential race was, "He Kept Us Out of War." Wilson couched his tenuous support for a government-organized preparedness plan around the rhetoric of "preparation in peacetime." The prospect of military involvement in Europe still frightened many Americans, and Wilson's centrist moderation and expert political dodging regarding the war question likely won him his reelection. The key to not alienating fence-sitters, anti-war isolationists, labor unionists, and other prospective Democratic supporters was found in such carefully worded language.⁴⁶

⁴³ "Women and Preparedness," *Adair County News*, April 5, 1916, 3.

⁴⁴ George F. Authier, "Is Wilson Riding Two Horses with His Preparedness?," *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, October 13, 1916, 8.

⁴⁵ "Hughes Scores Wilson's Entire Foreign Policy," *Harrisburg Telegraph*, August 1, 1916, 10.

⁴⁶ "Bryan is Quick to Oppose Plan," *Anaconda Standard*, November 6, 1915, 2; "How They Explain It," *Wichita Daily Eagle*, November 9, 1916, 5.

Even though Wilson eventually decided to take a more definitive stance on his support for preparedness and eventual intervention, it would not be until August of 1916 before his administration would take the reins of mobilization. During that period, from January through August of 1916, the majority of national preparedness efforts fell to the private sector as businesses and labor organizations engaged in internal debates over how each one or the other, respectively, should engage in those efforts. As labor, business, and their corresponding private associations debated their roles in the Preparedness Movement and in prospective warfare, members and representatives within each camp began demanding that their elected officials to take more direct action. While labor and business tried to figure out their places within the Preparedness Movement, both sides needed federal policymakers for guidance, protection, and political consensus regarding the nation's involvement in the Great War.⁴⁷

Throughout the first half of 1916, hundreds of Washington State residents flooded US Senator Wesley Jones' (R-WA) office with letters and telegrams inquiring about the federal government's preparedness efforts. In "An Open Letter to the Citizens of Washington," written by Senator Jones and printed in papers across the state, the second-term senator asked his constituents to "sit down and write me his or her views on ... preparedness."⁴⁸ Washington State Federation of Labor (WSFL) president, Ernest P. Marsh, happily obliged. After reading Jones' request, Marsh initiated a letter-writing campaign, asking his rank-and-file members and their families to demand from Jones a democratic, labor-centric preparedness plan.⁴⁹ "Labor is distinctly for preparedness," Soester Anthon, a labor reporter and WSFL member, wrote to

⁴⁷ "National Defense and International Peace," *Hope Pioneer*, June 8, 1916, 3; "Sen. W.L. Jones on Preparedness," *Spokesman-Review*, January 19, 1916, 3; "Defense Council," *Fergus County Democrat*, October 12, 1916, 1; "The Council of Defense," *New York Times*, October 13, 1916, 10.

⁴⁸ W.L. Jones, "Touching the Public Pulse," *Oroville Weekly Gazette*, January 7, 1916, 2.

⁴⁹ "Report of President E.P. Marsh of State Federation of Labor," *The Labor Journal*, January 28, 1916, 1; "Jones is a Riddle," *Tacoma Times*, April 15, 1916, 4.

Jones, “but [it is] distinctly not in favor of a preparedness which is [itself] in favor of greater armament ... In the case of war, the fighting should be done by the capitalist classes, who are expected to reap the benefits from it.” The saber-rattling and militant attitude which had grown alongside interventionism galvanized workers against a pro-business emphasis on preparedness, one which would conceivably lead to the deaths of workers in the name of corporate profit.⁵⁰

Washington’s workers also expressed concerns to Senator Jones about how preparedness would affect the regulation of industries and the welfare of workers. One letter-writer asked Jones, “What, if any, measures will you take to prevent war profiteering? ... Would labor’s support for preparedness bring wage guarantees by Congress? What of the eight-hour workday? ... America’s working-classes must be involved ... [labor] must be protected.”⁵¹ Like many other Americans who wondered how, through their active participation, preparedness could be used to improve their socioeconomic conditions; Marsh, Anthon, and their fellow workers sought to exploit preparedness in a manner befitting the labor movement. But, more than that, they wanted a dramatic reconfiguration of an industrialized society in flux, one in which the government would play a more prominent administrative and regulatory role in protecting workers. As revealed by the WSFL’s engagement with Jones, neither businesses nor a conflicted federal government could be trusted by the working-class to engage in the kind of socioeconomic readjustments that they hoped preparedness would facilitate.⁵²

Federal policymakers felt increasing pressure by the American public to use the Preparedness Movement as a means for the greater regulation of the private-sector, especially

⁵⁰ Soester I. Anthon to Wesley L. Jones, January 13, 1916, box 40, folder 35, Senator Wesley Jones Papers.

⁵¹ Fulton DeWitt to Wesley L. Jones, March 3, 1916, box 40, folder 35, Senator Wesley L. Jones Papers.

⁵² “The Papers and Senator Jones,” *Washington Standard*, January 7, 1916, 2; “Jones Doesn’t Represent,” *Washington Standard*, March 17, 1916, 3; “Putting it up to the People,” *Oroville Weekly Gazette*, January 7, 1916, 2.

corporations. As the Preparedness Movement was just getting off the ground and gaining momentum, Americans vocalized their concerns about the relationship between big business, government contracts, and warfare. An editorial in the *Peoria Journal* declared that “the real enemies of preparedness ... are the armor plate monopoly ... the powder monopoly ... and the log-rolling congressmen.”⁵³ An opinion piece in the *Aberdeen Herald* noted that “private manufacturers of war supplies are playing a hold-up game ... they are patriotically gouging Uncle Sam to the limit.”⁵⁴ Even policymakers themselves expressed similar concerns. “The thieves are sitting like buzzards,” observed Senator Benjamin Tillman (D-SC), “watching to grab off the tremendous profits they foresee in preparedness.”⁵⁵

In response to the growing apprehension over corporate America’s role in wartime preparations, a cross-aisle coalition of US Senators proposed S.B. 1417, which would permit the federal government to take control of a portion of the nation’s defense manufacturing industries “in the name of efficiency and preparedness.” Senator Tillman, chair of the Naval Affairs Committee and sponsor of the bill, in coordination with Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, proposed an appropriation of \$11,000,000 for a government-owned and operated armor-plating plant. If approved and signed into law, the plant would circumvent the expected wartime profiteering of the “big three” armor-plating manufacturers: Bethlehem, Carnegie, and Midvale – known as the “the armor trust.” Although a majority of Republicans opposed the bill at the outset, the progressive-wing of the party supported it, shoring-up more support for Wilson as his administration searched for a consensus on how or even if preparedness should proceed.⁵⁶

⁵³ “Defense and Preparedness,” *Peoria Journal*, June 19, 1915, 6.

⁵⁴ “War Preparations and Graft,” *Aberdeen Herald*, June 20, 1915, 4.

⁵⁵ “Tillman would Provide Government Armor Plate,” *Manning Times*, December 15, 1915, 10.

⁵⁶ US House of Representatives, *Report of the Committee to Investigate the Cost of an Armor Plant for the United States* (Washington: Government Printer, 1915), 1; Melvin I. Urofsky, “Josephus Daniels and the Armor Trust,” *North Carolina Historical Review* Vol. 45, No. 3 (July 1968): 250, 256-258.

S.B. 1417 gained enough political traction early on that the Bethlehem Steel Co. purchased hundreds of full-page advertisements in newspapers across the country to deride the bill as big government overreach and a threat to the private autonomy of all Americans. “Our company has no inclinations to make capital out of the military necessities of the United States,” declared E.G. Grace, president of the Pennsylvania steel giant. Bethlehem even published a 146-page missive titled *Appeals to the People*, pleading with the American public to persuade their representatives in Congress to reject the bill outright. “Why waste \$11,000,000 of the people’s money?,” Bethlehem asked. E.G. Grace commented that the proposal “is the most absurd and poppy-cock thing I have ever heard of.”⁵⁷

When their appeals failed to elicit the desired results, Bethlehem Steel threatened to raise the price of steel an additional \$200/ton if the bill passed. Undeterred by the economic threat, the US Senate passed the bill on March 21, 1916, by a vote of 58-23. Democrats presented a unified bloc to pass the bill, while nine Republicans joined them. While not an impressive show of bipartisan support, it was a far cry from the number of Republicans who supported the bill only a few months prior to the vote, which was zero. US Senator Wesley Jones had initially rejected the bill, but after months of badgering from his constituents, changed his mind and voted in favor of it. Following its passage in the Senate, the House voted on and passed the bill on June 2 by a vote of 236-135 with the Republicans’ Progressive Caucus siding with the Democrats.⁵⁸

Regardless of the lack of unanimous Republican support, the seed of bureaucratic consensus had been planted as the American public grew tired of monopolies, trusts, and lobbies,

⁵⁷ E.G. Grace, “The Bethlehem Steel Company’s Offer to the United States Government,” *Evening Star*, June 23, 1916, 7; *The Bethlehem Steel Company’s Appeals to the People* (New York: Robert L. Stillson Company, 1916), 8, 10.

⁵⁸ “Senate Passes Bill for Government Armor Plate Factory,” *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* Vol. 102, No. 2648 (March 25, 1916): 17-19.

while socioeconomic adjustment via preparedness continued to see rising public support. Ultimately, Congress lumped the bill together with a massive overall wartime appropriation of \$315,000,000 for what Congress called the Naval Appropriation Bill, which passed with near unanimity on July 21. A total of seven congressmen from both chambers and both major parties voted against it. It seemed that a form of political consensus in favor of interventionism had finally been reached among federal policymakers.⁵⁹

Western politicians seemed especially interested to not only support the idea of government-owned manufacturing facilities, but to get those facilities located in their states. When Montana's Democratic Senators, Thomas J. Walsh and Henry L. Myers, realized that the government also wanted to use part of the funds to construct nitrate plants, the two lobbied to get those plants built in Montana. They also saw possibilities for the funds to be used for government-owned power plants in various locations throughout the state.⁶⁰ In California, Senators James D. Phelan, a Democrat; and John D. Works, a Republican, both lobbied the Naval Department to use the funds to construct a West Coast Naval Academy in the state.⁶¹ Senator Reed Smoot (R-UT) also envisioned the region as a destination for military installations, insisting that some of the appropriations be used to erect "a Military Aviation Academy."⁶² While their requests never materialized, the sudden surge of support for more administrative forms of governance demonstrated the economic possibilities war could bring to the West.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 19; Urofsky, "Josephus Daniels and the Armor Trust," 258-260; "Great Naval Bill Passed by Senate," *New York Times*, July 22, 1916, 1.

⁶⁰ J. Leonard Bates, *Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana: Law and Public Affairs, from TR to FDR* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 126-127.

⁶¹ Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 24.

⁶² Harvard S. Heath, ed., *In the World: The Diaries of Reed Smoot* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 302.

With wartime preparedness increasing in popularity and pacifists and isolationists becoming more polarized in the midst of a budding American hyper-nationalism, the prospect of war became a political equalizer of sorts. As greater numbers of Democrats and Republicans began supporting the Preparedness Movement in principle, a tentative pro-war political consensus took root. The quick shift from tepid bipartisan support for S.B. 1417 to the overwhelming bipartisan support for the Naval Appropriation Bill revealed an emergent consensus which reinforced the expanded involvement of the regulatory state in American society as its defining feature. It also confirmed the growth of a non-partisan political consensus in favor of European intervention. Public support for the bills confirmed the desire of Americans to see the government take a more active role in socioeconomic matters to counter the wealth and power of corporate America while also finalizing a determination for its stance on the Great War. Reaching that conclusion meant that government officials had to set aside partisan conflict.⁶³

Even business associations who, ostensibly, would have been the least likely candidates to ask the government to regulate the private sector, began requesting that the government organize their industries “along the lines of efficiency and preparedness.” In June 1916, L.C. Boyle, general counsel for the National Lumber Manufacturer’s Association (NLMA), “speaking on behalf of the industry,” asked the Federal Trade Commission to “investigate our remaining tree supply to the end that a more rational national policy be worked out ... in accordance with public interest.”⁶⁴ As the Preparedness Movement grew in popularity, and, as seen in the kinds of requests they had been making to federal policymakers; American workers, employers, and government officials understood that such an effort would only find success if the government

⁶³ “Robins Joins G.O.P.,” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 5, 1916, 5; Johnson, *They’re All Red Out Here*, 143.

⁶⁴ “Wants Government Aid for Timber Industry,” *Evening Star*, June 5, 1916, 10.

took the reins. There appeared to be a clear lack of public trust in corporate America's motivations or abilities to efficiently organize the nation in times of crisis. To a certain extent, corporations themselves understood that to be true. For Boyle and the NLMA, one of the largest business associations in the American West, increased regulation was in fact the desired outcome. Even as a means for generating increased profits and regulating domestic competition in the midst of a growing wartime crisis, the lumber industry of the West hoped to use the notion of public-private cooperation to increase efficiency through a pronounced level of regulatory involvement by the federal government. The seeds of a burgeoning administrative bureaucracy had been planted, not by bureaucratic politicians, but by the private sector.⁶⁵

Working through the traditions of associationalism and progressivism and fueled by the threat of war, the Preparedness Movement had, by 1916, already begun to transform the nation's long-held political and socioeconomic customs. A non-partisan, administrative-state consensus was being constructed by actors in both the public and private sectors, while simultaneously, yet subtly, deemphasizing the long-held importance of associationalism and its reliance upon private autonomy as the mythological bedrock of the nation's mode of socioeconomic production. The groundwork for a nascent administrative bureaucracy was being built, not so much by progressive activists or "statist politicians," but rather by labor unions, employer's associations, and ordinary Americans demanding policymakers for an increase in regulatory practices. They were desperate for more decisive political leadership as well as a general readjustment of the nation's socioeconomic order.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Neiberg, 105; Business Men Want Preparedness," *Nation's Business*, Vol. 4, No. 6 (June 1916): 1; Federal Trade Commission, *Brief on Behalf of the National Lumber Manufacturers Association* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 199.

⁶⁶ "Industrial Preparedness Imperative, Says Colonel," *Indianapolis Star*, June 3, 1916, 3; Neiberg, 169-170.

In an era fraught with rampant industrialization, radicalism, rising class consciousness, and the looming threat of industrialized total warfare, preparedness meant reorganizing and reconsolidating not only the military, but also party politics, the labor movement, and industry – all vital participants in the modern age of warfare. Public-private cooperation and coordination were quickly established by the private-sector as the means to achieve such a readjustment and would henceforth be the vehicle in which to do so as 1916 progressed. The ideal materialized in the form of the Naval Consulting Board (NCB) and soon thereafter, the CND. The NCB arose as the physical manifestation of the private-sector’s drive to propagate preparedness measures according to their respective interests. Subsequently, it would become the ideological foundation of the federal government’s mobilization program as realized by the CND in April 1917.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Weyl, *The End of the War*, 307-308; Neiberg, 107-109.

–Chapter Two– Naval Consulting Board and the Genesis of Mobilization

When the NCB appointed head statistician for the American Bell Telephone Company, Walter S. Gifford, to serve as its secretary in January 1916, he made the completion of the NCB's Industrial Preparedness Survey his top priority. The NCB worked closely with civilian manufacturers and professional associations to inventory the United States' prospective wartime production capabilities throughout the year. With Gifford's career experience as a statistician guiding the process, the NCB facilitated the first successful coast-to-coast survey of the American industrial sector in the country's history. With the direct assistance of the business community, private associations, and individuals, the NCB inventoried hundreds-of-thousands of factories, farms, forests, and mines, demonstrating the latent possibilities of the private sector in assisting with prospective wartime mobilization. "These businessmen," Gifford observed, "are very swiftly putting an end to the traditional conflict between American government and American business life ... it is making a science of cooperation."¹

Working under the traditional banner of associationalism, the NCB would lay the foundation for the organizational structure of the future CND, bringing the private sector into the realm of governance in a significant manner. The inclusion of business associations, along with the use of rhetorical patriotic shaming, allowed for the country to swallow the pill of military intervention more easily, but it also deftly circumvented the issue of government overreach by proceeding with mobilization in an associationalist, voluntary, and oftentimes slyly coercive manner. As the associational state experienced a palpable surge in influence, in a sense peaking around 1916, the specter of war was simultaneously exposing the associational ideal as weak and

¹ Donald Wilhelm, "The Mobilizer-in-Chief," *The Independent*, Vol. 90, No. 35 (May 5, 1917): 236; "Has All Industries Ready for Defense," *New York Times*, September 2, 1916, 11.

untenable, deemphasizing its long-held importance while pushing the American political and socioeconomic system towards a more administrative existence. In addition, powerful pro-war business associations and engineering societies helped to incubate a political culture of non-partisan nationalism, which elevated patriotic duty over partisan or class fidelities.

I: Associational Preparedness in Practice

In the year before the United States entered the Great War, the NCB emerged as the nation's tentative answer for a working plan of preparedness. It would inadvertently provide the model of practical action from which eventual wartime mobilization and post-war reconstruction would be shaped. Established in 1915 as the brainchild of famed inventor Thomas Alva Edison and naval secretary Josephus Daniels, the NCB was hatched from the progressive ideals of rationalization, professional expertise, and efficiency; utilizing the preexisting administrative structures of the nation's most prominent engineering societies as its own structural template.² According to Howard Coffin, President of Hudson Motor Co. and Chairman of the NCB's Production, Organization, Manufacture, and Standardization Committee, "the plan of organization of the [NCB] ... followed the same scheme used by the Society of Automotive Engineers in their work on standardization."³ In stressing the transformative possibilities and political ramifications of the NCB, Coffin added that, "in my judgement, [the NCB] forms a vast flexible organization, the likes of which has never been known in this or any other country of the world ... which, from top to bottom, is absolutely non-partisan." The key to fomenting popular support for preparedness and mobilization in a politically polarized nation was by de-politicizing its efforts, deploying the rhetoric of "non-partisan nationalism" to do so.⁴

² Josephus Daniels, *The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 490-492.

³ Scott, *The Naval Consulting Board*, 27.

⁴ "Complete Survey of Resources of Country Planned," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, April 16, 1916, 7.

The NCB appealed to the patriotic inclinations of American businessmen and engineers to keep the nation's industrial sector ready to begin producing for a wartime economy if and when it became necessary. As a concept steeped heavily in the associational ideal, participation in the NCB was entirely voluntary and its executive board was populated with a mixture of federal government officials, engineers, and prominent business leaders all appointed by an executive panel led by Edison and Daniels. While the federal government supported and advertised its efforts, the NCB was never an actual government-run project, but a typical depiction of the associational state in action, with men like Thomas Edison and Josephus Daniels working together in public-private cooperation to solve problems that most Americans would likely consider as being strictly government duties. Along with the cooperative efforts of the federal government and the NCB, the coordination between the individual states and the NCB further demonstrated the significance of localized forms of private-public cooperation to preparedness and mobilization.⁵

The NCB established an administrative presence in each of the forty-eight states to help facilitate its goal of cataloging the nation's industrial resources for the purpose of future wartime mobilization. To accomplish this, the NCB's executive committee established the Industrial Preparedness Board (IPB) to act as its interstate representatives and to do a majority of the necessary work of organizing their locales. Aside from Edison and Daniels, the executive committee was comprised of representatives of the nation's five largest engineering societies: the American Institute of Mining Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, American Institute of Electrical Engineers, American Society of Civil Engineers, and the American Chemical Society.⁶ Each of the five professional societies appointed one person to form five-

⁵ Scott, 27-30.

⁶ Ibid., 47-49; Daniels, *The Wilson Era*, 391-393.

member IPB committees within all forty-eight states, which would then lead their state's industrial preparedness efforts under the administrative guidance of the NCB. By the time the board had completed its committee appointments, the IPB had installed more than 20,000 professionals throughout the country to various committees and boards to assist with its most significant wartime project – overseeing the industrial preparedness surveys.⁷

In the spring of 1916, the IPB instituted the first nationwide Industrial Preparedness Inventory survey. The purpose of the survey was to catalog the nation's farms, factories, and shops to compile what kind of equipment they had and how it could be used or otherwise altered to produce war supplies. Prior to the IPB survey, most businesses failed to comprehend that almost any factory could be transformed into a wartime manufacturing facility with relative ease. For example, upon completing the survey, dye manufacturers learned that their plants could be transformed into mass-producers of high-grade explosives in only ten days. A manufacturer of threshing machines discovered his plant could make up to 600 six-inch shells per day with only a few adjustments. Even underwear manufactories could help by producing bandages for wounded servicemen. The IPB survey helped the American industrial sector realize just how much it could assist in the effort to aid both the United States and its European allies. It also made them realize just how essential their services would be in the event of the country's military participation in the Great War.⁸

While not an official creature of the state, the federal government provided the NCB with some fiscal support. More significantly, the NCB was co-chaired by Josephus Daniels acting in his official capacity as Secretary of the Navy. Due to its hybrid nature, Howard Coffin referred to

⁷ Scott, 49; "Coeur d'Alenes Play Important Part in Industrial Preparedness Report," *Wallace Miner*, August 31, 1916, 1.

⁸ Montgomery, 353; "More Watchful Waiting," *Glasgow Courier*, May 26, 1916, 4; "Naval Advisory Board to Mobilize Industry of U.S. in Peacetime," *Bridgeport Evening Farmer*, March 28, 1916, 14.

the organization as a “quasi-governmental association.” Founded by Thomas Edison on the associationalist principle of non-compulsory, voluntary cooperation, it was considered by most to be a private entity which prided itself on coordinating with but being independent from the government.⁹ The NCB was an effective method for the federal government to circumvent long-held fears about regulatory overreach among businesses while still coercing participation through patriotic rhetoric, among other tactics. The CND, established in August 1916 to mobilize the nation for the Great War, would later assume control of the NCB, weaving public and private duties into an intricate web of private-sector-led administrative governance. The NCB’s mode of operation set the organizational standard for mobilization, but in a manner that relied upon federal-state coordination as a key to its success.¹⁰

In the western states, the act of federal-state cooperation revolved around the region’s most prominent and profitable industries: farming, mining, timber, and to a lesser but still significant extent, manufacturing. As the country’s most productive and important region for the extraction of minerals, industrial agriculture, and lumber production, the extractive economy of the West was crucial to the economic livelihood of the nation as a whole, not just regionally. As such, the American West became a key element for the production and mobilization of wartime materials and labor resources. While the more populous cities and states of the Midwest and Northeast acted as the nation’s de facto manufacturing and financial centers, the West maintained its consequential role as the very foundation of American industry on a more existential level.¹¹

⁹ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 3-4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5-6; “Has All Industries Ready for Defense,” *New York Times*, September 2, 1916, 11; “Engineers to Survey Industry,” *Carson City Daily Appeal*, April 28, 1916, 3; “Survey for Army and Navy,” *Cut Bank Pioneer Press*, May 5, 1916, 7.

¹¹ Mayors’ Committee for National Defense, *Report of the Executive Committee of the Mayor’s Committee for National Defense* (New York: Public Printers, 1917), 1, 25; Scott, 117.

NCB Agricultural Surveys

Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Wyoming were among the first states to take up the NCB's recommendations to organize intensive agricultural surveys of their farming districts and to survey uncultivated land that could be used to expand their farming capabilities. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) had been involved in similar surveys of the nation's farmlands, performing an in-depth inventory of cultivated land every ten-years since 1840. In addition to the USDA's activities, agricultural departments in the various states performed annual or biannual surveys. But the NCB's survey presented itself as an entirely different creature, organized by a private association which appealed to the American conservative political tradition of private autonomy, yet it was not an official state or federal government administration. The inclusion of area farmers to lead state IPB farming surveys furthered the NCB's goals as it appeared that other farmers, not government bureaucrats, were in charge of the process – the associational state at work.¹²

With food production emerging as a significant aspect of domestic wartime contribution, along with the USDA's fixed prices of staple food crops and livestock, farmers in the West felt increasing pressure by the federal government to expand their acreage to grow more food or raise more livestock for the nation's European allies. From 1914-1919, American farmers saw the highest prices ever for staples like grains, cereals, fruits, and vegetables. In response to the Great War in Europe, and long before Congress declared war against Germany; the USDA, in conjunction with the Department of Commerce, fixed the prices of common foodstuffs inordinately high to encourage increased production for cross-Atlantic distribution. During that

¹² "Made Extended Agricultural Survey," *Grand Forks Herald*, July 12, 1916, 10; "Farmer's Week Draws Old Men and Children," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, January 5, 1916, 3; "Montana's War Resources," *Glasgow Courier*, Glasgow, MT, January 21, 1916, 6; C.H. Lane, *Agricultural Education, 1916-1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 35.

period, costs quickly skyrocketed to the highest commodity rates in the nation's history. Spring wheat, for example, maintained an average cost of around \$0.93 per bushel between 1909 and 1913. By 1916, that price had risen to as high as \$2.25 per bushel, a massive increase in a span of only three-years for an essential product like wheat. American farmers were uniquely positioned to make handsome profits from the war's disruption of Europe's domestic agricultural marketplace.¹³

In states where the local economy relied heavily upon agricultural production, such as was the case in nearly every western state, the surveys played a major role in their ability to contribute to the Preparedness Movement. In Montana, where farming comprised the bulk of the state's economic resources, and subsequently, the state's ability to contribute to wartime preparedness and eventual mobilization, the NCB's efforts took on an especially urgent character. In a letter to M.A. Alderson, Montana's Secretary of State, Thomas Robbins, National Secretary of the NCB, referred to the state as "the future storehouse of the nation ... [with] food supplies that are nearly inexhaustible." Montana's vast reserves of natural resources and its industrial mineral extraction capabilities signified the importance of the Northwest and intermountain regions in their ability to contribute to national preparedness and wartime mobilization through, in this case, industrialized agriculture.¹⁴

Aside from the farmers themselves, the NCB also enlisted the help of corporate business interests to help complete the agricultural surveys. The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad (CRIP) volunteered its own engineers to assist the NCB in the survey in the states

¹³ Andrew P. Duffin, *Plowed Under: Agriculture and Environment in the Palouse* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), 42, 55-58; "The American Farmer and the World's Food Supply," 1916, box 3, folder 41, James M. Hamilton Papers.

¹⁴ "Montana's War Resources," *Glasgow Courier*, January 21, 1916, 6; "Narrative Annual Report for Missoula County Agriculturist, 1916," box 43, folder 21, Montana State University Extension Service Records, 1912-1970.

where the company had railroads, coordinating with the extension services of twelve land grant colleges – four in the Southwest, four in the Southeast, and four in the Midwest. At its own expense, the CRIP even established agricultural experiment stations in eight western states during the 1916 growing season. The company hired agricultural engineers to monitor the stations and report the results back to the IPB committees in each respective state to be included in the NCB’s inventory survey. The CRIP’s part in the process highlighted the enthusiasm with which some participants volunteered their services.¹⁵

Upon completion of the survey in late July, L.M. Allen, manager of the CRIP’s Passenger Traffic Division and supervisor for its agricultural survey, declared that “there will be no need for bread tickets or meat diet restrictions in the case of invasion by any foreign foe ... because the American farmer is prepared for any emergency.” The survey further concluded that “the ability of the wheat, corn, and cotton states to not only sustain themselves, but to furnish the bulk of nation’s food supply” was of undeniable benefit and easily attainable. The railroad’s interest in ensuring a more efficient system of farming to prevent waste and increase transportation profits through the expansion of farmable land in states where its tracks ran through played a large role in its decision to assist the NCB with the survey effort. Even if corporate expansion and increased profits were the endgames for business interests involved in the effort, wartime preparedness through patriotic participation became the vehicle in which to achieve that end.¹⁶

NCB Mining Surveys

The mineral extraction industry was of particular significance to the economy of the American West and for the country in general and the mines of western Montana and southern Arizona had an especially large impact. In 1916, the Silver Valley mining districts in the

¹⁵ “Voluntary Contributions,” *Rock Island Employees Magazine* Vol. 10, No. 1 (July 1916): 43.

¹⁶ “American Farmer Ready for War Emergency,” *Daily Capital Journal*, July 17, 1916, 7.

Northern Idaho Panhandle produced 346,000,000 pounds of lead – one-third of the nation’s supply. Along with silver, zinc, and copper ore mining, Idaho ranked among the most important states in the country for mineral extraction. Idaho’s aptly named Silver Valley was the world’s most productive silver mining region. Arizona, Utah, and Montana’s copper mining districts comprised a vast majority of the nation’s copper supply. As a key element for the conduction of electricity, copper was second only to iron and steel as a valuable wartime natural resource. Lead followed closely behind as it was a key mineral in the manufacture of ammunition. The economic importance of mining in the West made the NCB’s mining surveys a crucial aspect of its preparedness efforts, however, the process took on a different character than the other industrial surveys.¹⁷

Because mineral extraction in the West was such big business, the NCB considered the vertical integration of the industry to be efficient enough on its own that it did not feel the need to focus on mining surveys with the same gusto as its farming and manufacturing surveys. Most regional mining operations were owned by a handful of corporations, while a majority of farms were most often operated by independent owners, some small, some large. Additionally, the federal government had already been involved in those efforts through the work of the US Bureau of Mines, which had regularly catalogued and surveyed the nation’s mineral deposits since its creation in 1910, working closely with mining companies for that purpose. As a result of that preexisting structure, and in light of the high death and injury rates of western miners, the NCB looked more at the protection of workers for its mining surveys as opposed to inventorying mines and mining equipment, a job determined to be efficient enough on its own not to warrant

¹⁷ “Coeur d’Alenes Play Important Part in Industrial Preparedness Report,” *Wallace Miner*, August 31, 1916, 1; E.F. Richter, “The Copper Mining Industry in the United States, 1845-1925,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 41, No. 2 (February 1927): 237-239.

additional efforts. The NCB's ostensible concern for workers was due more to their desire to limit the labor radicalism that seemed inherent with dangerous mine work and bred IWW agitation, which in turn led to decreased industrial efficiency, i.e., production and profit.¹⁸

In November 1916, the Bureau of Mines, in coordination with the NCB's Metallurgy and Mines Committee, sent survey forms to every mine operator in the country asking them to provide information about their safety plans in the case of a mine collapse and what equipment they had at their disposal to rescue their workers. "There has been a serious absence of the equipment necessary for the recovery of men entombed," noted the survey, "[and a] lack of such preparedness ... no doubt has resulted in an unnecessary loss of life among the imprisoned men." Whereas the NCB's effort were mostly in resource and equipment inventory, the turn towards worker safety in a notoriously unsafe industry represented yet another step in the regulatory evolution of government within industry and the private-sector's role in facilitating it.¹⁹

The sudden move by the NCB towards a seemingly more worker-friendly form of wartime preparedness came not from a general concern of the welfare of workers by mining companies, but from that of the federal government. The Bureau of Mines felt that it was the responsibility of management to maintain workplace safety and since they were not doing it satisfactorily, the government partnered with a private association in the NCB to remind them of that duty. The raising of such concerns were of course nothing new as unions representing mine workers had brought safety issues to the attention of management and to state and federal governments for decades. The rise of the Preparedness Movement in conjunction with growing rates of worker radicalism and the presence of IWW organizers in the mining districts of the

¹⁸ Scott, 98; William Franklin Willoughby, *Government Organization in Wartime and After* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1919), 31-32.

¹⁹ "Preparedness in Mining," *Coconino Sun*, December 1, 1916, 4.

West created a new sense of urgency among policymakers to address those concerns with more seriousness. However, the efforts by the NCB to provide a safer workplace environment for miners were still seen as a problem for the mining companies themselves to solve, albeit with a gentle nudge from a federal agency. The NCB was not and would never be endowed with the kind of regulatory police power needed to force that compliance, nor would it have wanted it.²⁰

NCB Manufacturing Surveys

The NCB's efforts to achieve a complete inventory of the nation's manufactories comprised another significant phase of the process. The IPB committees would need to convince factory owners in their states, usually through patriotic appeals and no more, that, when the time comes, they should voluntarily convert their factories to wartime manufacturing facilities. Farmers merely needed to be persuaded to expand their acreage, grow more of the same crops, rotate them differently, or experiment with new farming methods. Not a necessarily simple task, but one made much simpler due to an abundance of land, increases in irrigation and dryland farming techniques, and the efforts of state land grant schools utilizing modern ag science. Manufacturers, however, would be expected to halt their normal modes of industrial production and switch to military-grade manufacturing; becoming reliant on government contracts to sustain them during wartime as opposed to the standard market demands they were used to.²¹

While the IPB's farming and mining surveys were undoubtedly important, most state land grant schools in the West were already uniquely situated to assist in those efforts through the existing structures of the extension service and the county agent system. Mining fared

²⁰ Robert W. Bruere, "Copper Camp Patriotism," *The Nation* Vol. 106, No. 2747 (February 21, 1918): 202-203; Samuel Gompers, *American Labor and the War* (New York: George H. Duran Company, 1919), 53-55.

²¹ Duffin, *Plowed Under*, 56-57; Bernard M. Baruch, *American Industry in the War* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 146, 189, 211, 264.

similarly, considering the advancements in mining engineering and the work of the Bureau of Mines, along with the almost perfected system of vertical integration used by mining companies. But the inventory of manufacturing industries faced a different, far more difficult challenge. There was no preexisting federal administration in place to catalog and survey all industrial manufacturing and the IPBs could not regulate the participation of factory owners or assist them with industrial demonstrations, such as was provided to farmers by land grant schools. It was incumbent upon the willingness of individual factory owners and their managers to cooperate with the NCB's IPB surveys. That meant if a particular factory owner, for example, held reservations about supporting preparedness, they could simply refuse to partake in the survey. With such an emphasis on voluntary participation, the NCB could only do so much to coerce compliance. In the event of a declaration of war, coercing participation would present an entirely different set of problems, especially once the government became more intimately involved with private-sector regulation.²²

The NCB experienced some, but relatively minimal, overall difficulties getting its state IPB committees to convince manufacturers to participate in the preparedness inventory survey. Oklahoma's IPB committee noted that several factory owners in Tulsa and Oklahoma City were unwilling to fully cooperate with their efforts. Some of those asked to contribute to the surveys accused the committee of being part of "a government scheme" to increase the regulatory power of the federal government over business. In press releases calling those business owners out for their failure to participate, Oklahoma IPB committee member, military officer, and civil engineer, Capt. H.V. Hinckley, reminded them that "by neglecting to fill and return those

²² "Manufacturers of Oklahoma Asleep?," *Tulsa Daily World*, July 2, 1916, 5; Scott, 26-28, 32; W.S. Gifford, "Realizing Industrial Preparedness," *Scientific American*, Vol. 114, No. 23 (June 3, 1916): 576, 598, 600.

inventories, many Oklahoma manufacturers are standing in the way of their own prosperity.”²³

Although cooperation in the effort “is not compulsory,” Capt. Hinckley mentioned, failure to participate in the process could be seen as one “shirking their patriotic duty.” The patriotic shaming garnered immediate results. Only four-days later, several of the delinquent factory owners had completed and returned their inventory forms, including many of those who had previously called the survey “a government scheme.” Those men were subsequently applauded by Capt. Hinckley in local newspapers for their “patriotic efforts.”²⁴

The occasional and oftentimes subtle forms of coercion involved with the preparedness effort added an interesting element to the qualified success of the NCB. Private associations engaged in preparedness work, such as the NCB, often had the full support of local and national media outlets, who, in their own gestures of patriotic voluntarism, offered free advertising for IPB bulletins, reports, and reminders. Hundreds of local and national newspapers across the country frequently printed articles detailing the progress of the NCB’s preparedness work and IPB committee members regularly occupied the editorial space of papers in towns throughout their state. In May 1916, *The Record*, a local newspaper in St. Maries, Idaho, printed a plea to the town’s businessmen from M.S. Parker, a committee member of the state’s IPB. His general tone spoke to the voluntary, non-compulsory nature of the program. Parker politely asked area businesses for their “cordial cooperation in the patriotic service undertaken by the engineers and chemists of this country.” However, inferring that one’s participation quantified their patriotism gave the otherwise polite request a much more coercive tone.²⁵

²³ “Manufacturers of Oklahoma Asleep?,” *Tulsa Daily World*, July 2, 1916, 5.

²⁴ “Tooting Our Horn,” *Tulsa Daily World*, July 6, 1916, 1.

²⁵ “Asks Co-operation of Business Men,” *The Record*, May 12, 1916, 3.

The regular barrage of preparedness propaganda in support of the accomplishments and in celebration of the patriotism of the states' industrialists were read by millions of Americans throughout 1916. The media campaigns informed and shaped the opinions of Americans regarding the role of industrialists in the Preparedness Movement, painting their participation as inherently selfless and patriotic. On the other hand, striking miners would be painted as disloyal and even subversive by the same newspapers. As a precursor to the Committee on Public Information (CPI), the United States' infamous World War I propaganda machine, the NCB planned to use tens-of-thousands of media outlets across the United States to "educate the American public on preparedness." "The backbone of [the NCB] campaign," explained Howard Coffin, "was a straight drive through the newspapers which had its genesis in a luncheon ... at which were present the leading publishers and editors of newspapers and magazines." With the assistance of the nation's media outlets, the distribution of propaganda would constitute a major element for the agenda of wartime preparedness advocates and boosted the social capital of participating businesses.²⁶

While some states, such as Oklahoma, experienced more difficulty than others in getting their state's businessmen to participate in the survey, most state IPBs achieved success with little-to-no difficulties to speak of. The IPB committees in the western states were praised by the NCB's Executive Committee for the manner in which they handled their inventory surveys in relation to the efforts of manufacturers in the Southeast and Northeast. With the appointment of prominent industrialists and engineers to head IPB committees, some of whom also happened to be military officers, the chances of manufacturers within those states participating improved greatly. Prospective participants found it more difficult to complain about being asked to

²⁶ Scott, 34, 247.

complete the surveys or to accuse the IPB of “big-government scheming” when one of their own was in charge and those same people were also respected military officers.²⁷

In Arizona, the NCB appointed Capt. John Greenway – mining engineer, general manager of the Calumet & Arizona Mining Company and former Rough Rider – to lead the state’s IPB Committee. By placing a well-known employer and accomplished military officer at the helm of the Arizona IPB, “other industrialists in the state,” as explained by Capt. Greenway himself, seemed “more likely take the task seriously.” Arizona became the first state to complete its industrial preparedness survey in 1916, and Capt. Greenway mentioned that his IPB committees experienced “no real complications to speak of” in getting the state’s industrialists to participate.²⁸ After a thorough four-month inventory of the state’s manufacturing resources, the final report of Arizona’s IPB survey specified that “there were sixty-eight plants and factories in the state susceptible of being utilized by the Navy and War Departments in case of war.”²⁹

The successful completion of the NCB’s industrial preparedness survey meant much more to a state like Arizona than simply having gotten it done. The “active and patriotic participation” by Arizona’s industrial sector symbolized the young state’s inclusion into the larger socioeconomic and political framework of the United States in general. Having been a state for only four years by 1916, the business community of Arizona jumped at the chance to demonstrate to the nation at large that they could be counted on to participate in preparing the nation for war in active and enthusiastic fashion. Partisan fidelities were, ostensibly, being sidelined by employers for what was being touted by the NCB as something far more

²⁷ Ibid., 44-47; “Asks Co-operation of Business Men,” *The Record*, May 12, 1916, 3.

²⁸ “Southwest for Preparedness,” *Copper Era and Morenci Leader*, August 4, 1916, 3.

²⁹ “Report Reviewed by Committee of Engineers,” *Copper Era and Morenci Leader*, May 26, 1916, 6; “‘Sneer Zone’ of Verde District No More,” *Copper Era and Morenci Leader*, November 24, 1916, 8.

consequential. Josephus Daniels and Thomas Edison considered their participation to be a marker of the American business community's "non-partisan patriotic integrity."³⁰

As crucial as democratic participation was for any individual state's ability to affect national politics, the inclusion of a state's socioeconomic energy was highly significant as well. This was especially true for a younger state like Arizona, whose rising economic importance as a mineral-extraction capital and budding regional manufacturing center correlated directly to its political activities. The political economy of Arizona brought the state further into the national fold as a result of the relationship between the NCB and the state's industrial sector. Preparedness was not simply a social or patriotic exercise to see what the nation was capable of in terms of militarily preparedness. It was also an opportunity for the states to demonstrate their socioeconomic worth to the country as a whole, as well as a chance to demonstrate their patriotic enthusiasm as Americans through industrial preparedness.³¹

II: Successes and Inherent Limitations of Associational Preparedness

By August of 1916, the NCB's various IPB committees in all forty-eight states had received over 100,000 completed survey forms from manufacturers across the country. "All are able to do something," the final report stated, explaining that "the survey of industrial resources was made by nearly thirty-thousand civil, electrical, and mechanical engineers who volunteered their services for the task."³² The survey provided a unique opportunity for farmers, mining companies, and manufacturers in the American West to display their patriotic devotion through an uncharacteristic willingness to "sacrifice profit for patriotism" as one reporter boldly, if not

³⁰ C.E. Mills, letter to Judge Walter Shute, May 1, 1917, box 1, folder 6, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

³¹ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense* (Phoenix: Republican Print Shop, 1919), 17-20.

³² *Oakland Tribune*, June 28, 1916, 12.

inaccurately, stated. Even if many of those farmers, mine operators, and manufacturers increased their wealth as a result of price controls and limited competition, the mere suggestion that their participation was born more from a love of country and national defense gave credence to the idea that they were motivated more by patriotic inclinations than monetary ones.³³

According to one factory owner in California, as quoted in the *Oakland Tribune*, the overall effort “was an encouraging act of collective patriotism” by the nation’s industrialists. Many of those participants understood that in helping the government by converting their factories to wartime production facilities, it *might* mean taking a sizable loss in profits “resulting from the disarrangement of normal operations.”³⁴ While nationalistic pride was an important part of the Preparedness Movement, the appointment of engineers and businessmen, along with their roles in ensuring the completion of the survey, further confirmed the social significance of scientific rationalization and efficiency to the process. But in 1916, as war had not yet been declared by the United States, such a patriotically induced “financial sacrifice” was entirely hypothetical and, as an article in the *Northwest Worker* explained, “nothing more than self-aggrandizing bluster by the employing-class.”³⁵

Ultimately, the success of the IPB surveys demonstrated how the nation’s industrial sector could and would be expected to contribute when the country did enter the conflict, but it could not force compliance, nor was it intended to include other sectors of society to participate. Most importantly, the NCB, whether intentionally or not, excluded the participation of labor organizations. That exclusion created a problem for the cooperative nature of preparedness because it left out a vast majority of the citizenry and, most importantly, disregarded the

³³ Ibid.; *Oakland Tribune*, June 8, 1916, 4.

³⁴ “Preparedness and Home Industry,” *Bakersfield Californian*, July 27, 1916, 10.

³⁵ “Latest Move of Big Interests,” *Northwest Worker*, November 30, 1916, 1.

significance of workers to the process. The business and professional-based focus of the NCB exposed serious flaws that needed to be corrected if a similar method of associational-based, cooperative mobilization was to be utilized once Congress declared war. The coordinated efforts of and between the NCB and the federal government, between the NCB and state governments, and that of private enterprise with all levels of government, displayed a general readiness for those parties involved to synchronize for the coming wartime emergency. A foundation for future wartime mobilization had been laid by the NCB, as had a designed system of public-private coordination for the federal government to follow.³⁶

The efforts and overall successes of the NCB signified a crucial and necessary first step for national wartime preparedness. It laid the groundwork for an innovative system of public-private, as well as federal-state cooperation, to be applied in the event of the country's entrance into the Great War in a military capacity. The voluntary, associationalist, and cooperation-based system would be emulated and greatly built upon by the CND as a practical method of homefront wartime mobilization and, concomitantly, as a foundation for future socioeconomic readjustment. The efficacy of the public-private coordinative efforts between the NCB and the states, as represented by the state IPB structure, led directly to the mode of federal-state cooperation used by the DCS upon its inauguration in 1917, which would emerge as the primary contributor for wartime mobilization and socioeconomic readjustment.³⁷

The NCB's heady focus on voluntary participation, its lack of regulatory power, and its employer-centric, associationalist emphasis, exposed a variety of practical limitations in its ability to translate the inventory survey into a program of practicality. In regard to agricultural expansion, the main problem with the IPB was the impractical nature of expecting farmers to

³⁶ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 3-4; Scott, 3.

³⁷ Scott, 114.

voluntarily risk expanding their farmland without a guarantee that they would not lose that investment due to droughts, disease, transportation and storage fees, or other vagaries of the agricultural market. The USDA's high fixed-price scheme would not last forever and even for those who could afford to expand their agricultural operations, the risk did not always outweigh the reward.³⁸

The national economy's reliance upon private property and market idiosyncrasies to motivate increases in production proved to be more of a detriment to what the NCB hoped to accomplish rather than a benefit. Without state or federal funds being funneled into the countryside to offset those economic fears, and by relying solely upon the voluntary and patriotic inclinations of farmers, the surveys ultimately did relatively little except to demonstrate the latent possibilities of the region's farmlands. For manufacturers, similar variables could become roadblocks in their ability to participate voluntarily and enthusiastically. This was especially true when considering the lofty expectation that factories be freely transformed into military-grade production facilities without a guarantee that government defense contracts would keep their businesses afloat until a return to normal operations.³⁹

Although an important and necessary first step, and even as the nation's premier mobilization preparedness organization, the efforts of the NCB still needed serious improvements. While the point of conducting the surveys was to determine the ability of the nation's industrial sector to contribute to wartime production and really nothing more, it soon became obvious to federal policymakers, state governments, labor organizations, and ordinary Americans that something more practical and perhaps even compulsory would need to be

³⁸ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 36-37; US Department of Agriculture, "Circular 130," *Address of D.F. Houston before the Trans-Mississippi Readjustment Congress* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 6-8.

³⁹ Scott, 48.

devised upon a declaration of war. As a survey and assessment project, it was a massive success. But, as a plan of practicality and actual utility in regard to on-the-ground mobilization, it needed several drastic improvements, including a marked increase in regulatory control. According to Josephus Daniels and other NCB executives, an administrative presence grounded in the progressive ideals of efficiency and rationalization would be a pragmatic means for overcoming those limitations.⁴⁰

The emerging significance of cooperation and coordination, as evinced by how the NCB's Executive Committee worked through its various state IPB representatives and in how it coordinated with the federal government through its emphasis on associationalism, laid the groundwork for future wartime mobilization. In paving the way for an efficient, rationalized system of mobilization that brought together disparate groups of political and socioeconomic actors for a common purpose, the NCB also laid the foundation for a unique bureaucratic system of national governance founded upon the notion of cooperation and coordination. While the Wilson Administration still needed an extra push to move forward with a more coherently articulated and administratively organized form of wartime mobilization, the basic principles had already been devised through the efforts of the NCB. Those efforts would then be built upon, expanded, and thoroughly improved by its bureaucratic successor the CND, and soon thereafter, the State Council of Defense System – the fundamental structure of the DCS in general.⁴¹

As the national debates concerning the United States' possible military involvement in the Great War grew more intense and divisive throughout 1916, concepts of preparedness evolved from strict emphases on military professionalization and expansion to that of a more

⁴⁰ Ibid., 49-51; Daniels, *The Wilson Era*, 499-500.

⁴¹ Grosvenor B. Clarkson, *Industrial America in the War: The Strategy Behind the Line, 1917-1918* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923), 10-13.

general readjustment of American socioeconomic practices and industrial efficiency. Speaking to that evolution, Charles Edward Knoeppel, a distinguished organizational theorist and management consultant, explained that “the vital question confronting every serious-minded American today is – Do we need preparedness against war?” Expounding upon his query, Knoeppel dove further into the socioeconomic context of what preparedness represented on a more fundamental level, positing that “we need preparedness against industrial inefficiency and industrial unrest.”⁴²

Such reevaluations of what preparedness should look like and who would benefit soon become actualized by the late summer of 1916 with the creation of the CND and the state and county defense councils. The DCS would consolidate the kind of associationalist practices and ideals which rose to prominence during the preparedness period into a fully realized and state-organized project of wartime mobilization. In a sense, it was the ultimate culmination of progressivism, reaching its practical and ideological zenith and becoming firmly embedded within the American political and the socioeconomic system. For decades, progressive actors of various stripes had attempted to affect socioeconomic and political change at the top with varying degrees of success. With the looming threat of war on the horizon, the subsequent popularity of the Preparedness Movement by the private-sector, and the rise of American hyper-nationalism, they would finally get their chance to cement that influence within the socioeconomic and political machinery of the United States Government.⁴³

⁴² C.E. Knoeppel, *Industrial Preparedness* (New York: The Engineering Magazine Co., 1916), 1.

⁴³ Dawley, *Changing the World*, 1-5, 120-123. Dawley’s research further elucidates the various methods that Progressives used to entrench their ideals within American society, especially in relation to influencing legislation and the staffing of state agencies. For more on this subject, consult Dawley’s book.; Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers*, 42-45. Leonard labels the rise of administrative bureaucracies during the years of the Wilson Presidency as the “fourth branch of the government,” with a regulatory authority that combined legislative, executive, and judicial, all in one agency. While it was erected in Wilson’s first term, it was thoroughly expanded upon and enhanced during his second term.

Section II: Establishing the Defense Council System

–Chapter Three–

Public-Private Cooperation and the Council of National Defense

For the purpose of accomplishing wartime mobilization, and in following the lead of the NCB, the CND would bring together a variety of disparate political and socioeconomic actors who had historically been in competition with one another: labor, capital, and the federal government. By appointing high-ranking representatives of both capital and labor to work together alongside federal policymakers to cooperatively take charge of mobilization duties, the federal state provided them with a great deal of power over the wartime economy. The federal government used that willingness for cooperation and coordination, as demonstrated in part by the work of the NCB, to pursue an agenda of perpetuating a non-partisan nationalist, pro-war consensus. Non-partisan nationalism presented the visage of classlessness, with patriotism and love of nation being touted as a novel, less conflicted, and purer form of national or social cohesion.

The development of the non-partisan nationalist ideal successfully prevented the ability of politicians within even the major political parties to effectively dissent against those beating the drums of war. As a result of those efforts, labor made gains that unions had struggled to achieve for decades, and businesses worked with, not against, the federal government on industrial regulation policies, thereby stemming the rising tide of political dissent and labor radicalism, forcing it back to the fringes of society. With proof that labor, capital, and government could work with instead of against one another, Americans could once again place their trust in not only the Two-Party Political System, but in the economic system as well.

Although it was the Great War that triggered the process, it was something that policymakers had been considering long before Gavrilo Princip fired the first shots of World War I.

I: Modernizing America's National Defenses, 1912-1916

In May 1912, US Rep. Richmond P. Hobson (D-AL), a former Navy Admiral and a ranking member of the House Committee on Military Affairs, proposed H.R. 1309 – the first “Council of National Defense bill.”¹ In explaining the importance of the bill to the local press in his hometown of Birmingham, Hobson observed that “the country has suffered more from the lack of a well-defined [national defense] policy than anything else. Appropriations have been grudgingly doled out ... with utter disregard to the development of the other principal powers.”² Hobson and supporters of his bill looked to the examples set by those “other principal powers” – namely Germany, Japan, and Great Britain, all of whom had recently established similar councils – as templates from which to form a comparable system of modernized national defense. If the “other military powers operated efficiently under an administrative ... system of national governance and defense,” Hobson supposed, “then so too could the United States ... albeit with greater efficiency and stronger results.”³

Beginning as early as 1910, more than four years before the start of the Great War in Europe, policymakers, military leaders, and business associations in the United States regularly requested federal policymakers for the formation of a national defense council. Initially, the charge was led by the Navy League, a lobby of naval officers and defense contractors who felt that the manner in which US troops were raised during the Spanish-American War exposed

¹ Clarkson, *Industrial America in the World War*, 15-18.

² “Council of National Defense,” *Army and Navy Register*, Vol. LI, No. 1692 (May 25, 1912): 5, 12.

³ C.E. Stewart, “Favors National Council of Defense,” *Birmingham Age-Herald*, January 17, 1913, 3; “To Improve the Navy,” *New York Times*, January 8, 1913, 8; *The Navy League Unmasked: Speech of Hon. Clyde H. Tavenner of Illinois* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 16, 18.

serious flaws, both in the nation's volunteer militia system and within the regular armed forces. With the massive military buildup among European and Asian powers in the race for colonial domination, the weaknesses in America's military preparedness capabilities, according to the Navy League, could prove disastrous to the country's prosperity. Resultingly, the Navy League sought to increase government expenditures for the military, create "a permanent system of national defense," and "to secure effective official communication between the executive and legislative departments in times of war." But the early pre-Great War attempts at creating a defense council system rarely made it beyond the committee stage, including Hobson's failed bill which died in committee in December 1913 never having received a final vote.⁴

On December 4, 1913, less than a week before the ultimate demise of H.R. 1309, Congress passed H.R. 7138, which doubled down on the nation's reliance on a predominantly volunteer militia. Perhaps to send a message to Hobson and the Navy League, the Republican-supported H.R. 7138 explicitly stated that "only during actual or threatened war" would militias be raised, dashing the hopes of some policymakers and lobbyists to create a more professionalized and imposing standing military. It also dashed the hopes of defense manufacturers connected to the Navy League who desired increased profits through lucrative government contracts. The contrast in political support between the two bills showed that federal policymakers had, at least in 1913, made clear their anti-administrative stance, even as some policymakers looked to Europe and Asia for inspiration for a modernized, administrative system of national defense. By and large, both major parties hoped to prevent corporate lobbyists from influencing militarization, even forming bipartisan subcommittees to investigate the nascent

⁴ "Council of National Defense," *New York Times*, January 14, 1913, 16; "Urges National Defense Council for the Nation," *Cairo Bulletin*, Cairo, IL, March 3, 1913, 8; *Army and Navy Register*, Vol. LIV, No. 1742 (December 6, 1913): 709.

political influences of powerful business associations. However, those committees targeted specific members of associations accused of currying favors, rather than considering the larger, long-term socioeconomic implications of well-financed private associations having the ability to influence political decision making in the first place.⁵

Aside from their anti-administrative military position and a general fear of compulsory military service, a strong majority of policymakers on both sides of the aisle still seemed content to leave the nation's industrial mobilization responsibilities to the very business associations they had recently investigated. Ironically enough, and even in trying to avoid militarization, Congress did very little to curb the economic influence of groups like the NAM, the National Council for Industrial Defense (NCID), and the NCF, whose members would have undoubtedly benefitted from defense contracts. The earliest conception of a national defense council as articulated in H.R. 1309 focused almost exclusively on military buildup and standardization, mostly overlooking the roles that would be played by organized labor. The omission of those private actors from the discussion, combined with its overtly militant tone, ensured that the bill would

⁵ Ibid.; *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the Sixty-Third Congress, Second Session* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1914), 149, 155, 158; "Hobson in Topeka," *Topeka Daily State Journal*, December 3, 1915, 4; Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation*, "Hearings before a Subcommittee on the Judiciary, Part 46," August 12, 1913 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 3898-3982. On August 12, 1913, the Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony from James A. Emery, lead counsel for the National Council for Industrial Defense (NCID), a powerful business association comprised of the country's foremost defense and weapons manufacturers. Mr. Emery testified that the NCID was not trying to influence military expansion for its own financial interests, as it had been accused of by a bipartisan coalition of Congress. Lobbying in general was not a new development, however, lobbying for military expansion by corporations was seen as being particularly nefarious and such powerful associations frightened many federal policymakers with their ability to curry political favors. While this may seem like a typical political development in 2021, such powerful defense lobbies were relatively unfamiliar and somewhat ominous during the early twentieth century.

fail to gain the support needed to convince Congress to ratify it. In contrast, the passage of H.R. 7138 cast a pall on administrative governance, relegating its status for the time being.⁶

H.R. 1309 may have been a dead letter by the time the Preparedness Movement had started to gain popularity a few years later, but Hobson's overall concerns as articulated in the bill's language soon gained the attention of the American public. Reflecting the views of many within the nation's business community, especially in the western states, an October 1915 editorial in the *Arizona Republican* suggested that Hobson's national defense council idea could benefit the nation economically, as a stronger regular Navy would improve the ability to ship American-produced goods across the globe. As civil society began considering with more seriousness the implications of a national defense council in 1915 and 1916, and how it might benefit their respective interests, Hobson's idea evolved into something far more substantial than even he had planned. Business and labor organizations seemed especially interested in getting involved with such a system. Business and labor both understood that the ongoing European war and the nation's prospective involvement in it could be beneficial for their respective goals, provided they were intimately involved in the process, whatever form that might take.⁷

In 1915, the AFL's Executive Committee informed the US Labor Department that it would not participate in future wartime mobilization unless it was a truly democratic process, one that embedded labor unions within the system. The AFL was not against war so much as it was against being left out of the discussion. During a speech to the NCF in February 1915, Samuel Gompers stated that "the American workingman has no notion of working for

⁶ "Investigate Nat'l Council of Industrial Defense," *Daily Star-Mirror*, July 17, 1913, 1; "Perry Belmont Pleads for a Stronger Navy," *Evening Star*, November 28, 1914, 4.

⁷ "An Adequate Navy," *Arizona Republican*, October 6, 1915, 4; *Report of the Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, 1915* (Washington: The Law Reporter Printing Company, 1915), 15-17; Albert and Palladino, *The Samuel Gompers Papers, Vol. 10*, 18, 39-41.

disarmament ... [he] looks cheerfully upon war for his country as one of his burdens ... all that we ask ... is to enable him to be an efficient human being ... Only to this end would the [AFL] pledge its support to a council of national defense.”⁸ Unlike the more radical and stridently anti-war labor unions, such as the IWW or the WFM, AFL executives deftly exploited the possibility of war and used it to their advantage, rather than protesting against it outright. Gompers understood the crucial role that workers would play in wartime industrial mobilization, and he looked at it as an opportunity to expand labor’s influence and to sway pro-union legislation at the federal level.⁹

Regardless of their respective and often conflicting goals, labor unions and business associations both imagined the national defense council as a bureaucratic instrument that could be used to facilitate a general readjustment of the nation’s political and socioeconomic character. Preferably, one which would allow for their interests to hold even greater clout within the lawmaking and regulatory process. Regardless of what each side hoped for insofar as their political or economic endgames, the desired restructuring would be rooted firmly within the country’s fixation on efficiency, rationalization, and standardization. Business associations and labor unions both hoped to braid their respective interests even further into the nation’s longstanding tradition of public-private cooperation. Both would soon get their chance with the onset of the Great War and a sudden shift in how federal policymakers understood the role of the state within the private sector.¹⁰

More than three years after Rep. Hobson’s defense bill proposal failed for its perceived “militarist and statist” platform, Congress ratified the National Defense Act (NDA) on June 3,

⁸ “Gompers Talks for National Defense,” *Labor World*, February 6, 1915, 1.

⁹ Taft, *The A.F.L. in the Time of Gompers*, 342-347; F. Ernst Johnson, *The New Spirit in Industry* (New York: Association Press, 1919), 21-27.

¹⁰ Skowronek, 233-234, 236; “Labor Pledges Services in War,” *New York Times*, March 13, 1917, 1.

1916. Following years of sundry debate, helped along by the sinking of the Lusitania a year earlier and the spillover of the Mexican Revolution into the American Southwest, the NDA's passage represented the long sought after achievement of the Preparedness Movement as propagated by interventionists. It also demonstrated the nation's conscious effort towards building a more administrative federal bureaucracy by placing more restraints on how business associations influenced policy matters by including them in the process more directly in order to more closely manage their activities.¹¹

The NDA scribed into law a general reorganization of the US Armed Forces into a more proficient, professionalized, and better-funded fighting force, essentially decertifying the passage of H.R. 7138, and, in a sense, resurrecting and reforming H.R. 1309. The NDA deemphasized the importance of volunteer militias, thereby expanding and funding the regular military exponentially. Soon thereafter, and to deal with the industrial portion of the preparedness question more than anything else, Congress passed H.R. 17498 two-months later, which solidified plans for what would become a systematic socioeconomic readjustment of the country to better accommodate future wartime mobilization. 1916 was a watershed year for the expansion of military expenditures, especially in how it related to corporate influences within politics.¹²

¹¹ *The National Defense Act, Approved June 3, 1916* (Washington: Government Printer, 1921), 5-7. For residents of the US Southwest, Pancho Villa's raid on the border town of Columbus, New Mexico, in March of 1916 represented an even greater threat than did the Triple Alliance, thus heightening national concerns. Along with the more distant threat of the Triple Alliance in Europe, the spillover of the Mexican Revolution into the borderlands region signified enough of a domestic threat that Congress included it within the broader provisions of the NDA.

¹² "Take First Step for Council on Yankee Defense," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 2, 1915, 3; "A Council of Defense," *New York Times*, July 3, 1916, 8.

II: Establishing the Council of National Defense

On August 29, 1916, the experimental, haphazard, yet constantly evolving nature of the Preparedness Movement finally transformed into an official mobilization project once President Wilson signed into law H.R. 17498 – the Army Appropriations Act – which established the CND. The previous work of the NCB could be fully realized and expanded upon, with the federal government itself now organizing the effort, but in very close coordination and cooperation with the private sector, namely business associations and labor unions. The creation of the CND indicated the most practical step in the country’s seriousness about wartime preparedness by moving towards an inclusive and all-encompassing effort wherein all levels of government and all manner of private citizen could be thoroughly mobilized for war. The stage was set for the federal state to become more engaged within the lives of Americans than ever before. Although Congress did not declare war for another eight months, the decision to do so appears to have already been made with the passage of the Army Appropriations Act.¹³

Section One of the act, which was straightforward and procedural with its stipulations, provided additional funding to the Army and Navy Departments, increased the number of soldiers and sailors, and expanded funding for the Quartermaster’s Corps. Section Two of the act was far vaguer in its provisions, even though it proved to be far more significant in affecting wartime preparations and eventual mobilization. It simply authorized “the creation of a Council of National Defense for the coordination of industries and resources for the national security and welfare, to consist of the Secretaries of War, [the Navy, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and

¹³ *Army Appropriations Bill: Hearings before the Committee on Military Affairs* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 623-624; *First Annual Report of the Council of National Defense: For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1917* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 6.

Labor].”¹⁴ The act gave the President the power to appoint an advisory commission, “consisting of no more than seven persons, each of whom shall have special knowledge of some industry, public utility, or the development of some natural resource.”¹⁵

The design of Section Two, or perhaps lack of design, provided Wilson’s Cabinet with the ability to cement progressive policies into the nation’s legal framework, thereby giving the federal government the ultimate power over what was a long-held American tradition of private autonomy in economic organization. Even with the presence of private sector actors working in tandem with policymakers as an integral part of the process, the US government invested within itself a level of authority over the private sector that permanently altered the traditional associationalist hierarchy – making the federal state more socially tangible and economically authoritative than it had been previously. At the same time, those associations worked in close cooperation with the government, with executives given plum positions to lead committees responsible for the development of wartime mobilization.¹⁶

Early on, the CND’s purpose, similar to that of the NCB, was to look into what would be needed to prepare the country for a massive undertaking of industrial mobilization and restructuring in wartime. But what that would look like and how it would be formulated was still up for debate. As a result, the CND was not limited in its scope of operations nor in its regulatory powers, such as the NCB was. What the CND’s Advisory Commission did make clear early on

¹⁴ *Ibid.*; Martin, *Digest of the Proceedings of the Council of National Defense during the World War*, xxiii.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶ Skowronek, 234. Skowronek considers the passage of H.R. 17498 to be both “a congressional offensive against hierarchical control and [against] professional coordination in departmental administration,” which threatened the autonomy of both the business community and the government. The blending of private and public in this manner signaled a change in private sector independence while also laying the foundation for a new kind of associationalist bureaucracy. The act represented a kind of governmental middle ground between the more traditional associational state of the nineteenth century and the burgeoning administrative state of the twentieth century.

was that however mobilization proceeded, farming, manufacturing, resource extraction, labor unions, and business associations, would be crucial elements to its success. “We believe that ... the provision of an adequate military and naval defense,” noted the Commission, “must be based on an adequate industrial and commercial coordination.” Industrial coordination and cooperation, as envisioned by the Advisory Commission, emerged as the dominant ideological method of wartime mobilization.¹⁷

Over the proceeding months, the CND would prove to be an innovative yet complicated bureaucratic establishment consisting of various committees, sub-committees, directors, and chairpersons, all working in an experimental capacity devoid of any practical precedents to guide it. The initial motivation for its creation may have come from Europe and Japan, but those in charge of its organization within the Advisory Commission made it a uniquely American creation based in domestic progressivism and private-public cooperation. The only remotely useful practical knowledge it possessed was through the preparedness efforts of the NCB and its various industrial surveys. Also similar to the NCB, it utilized the standard corporate management archetype to structure its top-down style of organization. As the membership composition of the appointees who would head the various CND committees indicated, its structural organization was heavily influenced not only by the corporate model but was also deeply rooted in the process of scientific management, a hallmark feature of the Progressive Era search for order and efficiency in both governance and business.¹⁸

The six department secretaries expressly mentioned in the act – Newton Baker, Secretary of War and CND Chairman; Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy; Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior; David Houston, Secretary of Agriculture; William D. Redfield,

¹⁷ Martin, 86.

¹⁸ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 242-243; *First Annual Report of the Council of National Defense*, 68-69.

Secretary of Commerce; and William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor – were all designated by Congress to nominate candidates for “no more than seven” various industry and labor-related committees. It was then up to the President to either accept or reject the appointees. Once confirmed, those appointees would then begin the arduous task of creating more committees and appointing additional members to help mobilize the private sector for war. That same process ultimately worked its way down to the state, county, and community levels of governance; altogether part of an industrialized, efficiency-driven, and what would prove to be increasingly decentralized administrative bureaucracies.¹⁹

Wasting no time to kick the plan into effect, Woodrow Wilson quickly appointed the first and only seven candidates that his six department heads recommended: Daniel Willard, B&O Railroad President, Transportation and Communications Committee; Howard E. Coffin, Hudson Motor Co. President, Munitions, Manufacturing, and Industrial Relations Committee; Julius Rosenwald, Sears, Roebuck & Co. President, Supplies and Clothing Committee; Bernard Baruch, stockbroker, Raw Material, Minerals, and Metals Committee; Dr. Hollis Godfrey, Drexel Institute President, Education and Engineering Committee; Samuel Gompers, AFL President, Labor Committee; and Dr. Franklin Martin, Secretary General of the American College of Surgeons, Medicine and Surgery Committee. Upon their appointments, the seven committee heads selected Bell Telephone publicist and former NCB Secretary, Grosvenor B. Clarkson, as Secretary of the CND; and statistician Walter S. Gifford as Director. Together, the elite group helped spawn the creation of new modes of government organization which spread

¹⁹ *Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printer, 1917), 1; Council of National Defense, Section on Cooperation with the States, *Report on Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, June 18, 1917), 1.

into every corner of American society in a rather short span of time, helping to reshape the direction of American governance and socioeconomic practices for years to come.²⁰

The vocations and socioeconomic statuses of Wilson's appointees made it clear that the direction of future wartime mobilization would fall into the hands of some of the nation's most prominent corporate executives and, to a lesser yet still very significant extent, leaders of organized labor. American industrialists and the AFL were both poised to take on powerful new roles in US society once the nation entered the conflict in a military capacity. Ostensibly appointed without regard to partisan fidelities, the civilian composition of the Council's committee heads, according to CND Secretary, Grosvenor Clarkson, "marked the entrance of the non-partisan engineer and professional man into American governmental affairs on a wider scale than ever before."²¹

In an attempt to provide the CND with a mien of non-partisan and nationalist integrity and to validate the development of a budding pro-war political consensus in Foggy Bottom, Congress mandated that the CND "cannot make decisions on a partisan basis." All available evidence reveals that this was most often the case. The CND maintained a relatively even balance of Republicans and Democrats throughout its five-year existence. Grosvenor Clarkson proudly remarked that "politics simply did not enter into the makeup of the American industrial war machine." Clarkson, a lifelong Democrat, noted that his immediate staff and that of his successor were both comprised almost entirely of Republicans, "not because anyone ever inquired as to the politics of an appointee," he observed, "but because it happened to be so." He confidently theorized that any future impartial analyses of the politics and wartime activities of

²⁰ Ibid.; Clarkson, *Industrial America in the War*, vii-ix; "Defense Council," *Fergus County Democrat*, October 12, 1916, 1.

²¹ Clarkson, *Industrial America in the War*, 22.

the CND will likewise conclude the same. Democrats in the CND often attempted to depoliticize the war effort as a national and moral issue, not a political one. In many ways, those attempts were successful and highlighted the wartime rise of non-partisan nationalism.²²

Clarkson was not alone in his admiration of the CND's non-partisan nature. Thomas Edison, a stalwart Republican and vocal critic of the Wilson administration, also admired the CND and its ability to set partisan politics aside to deal with the bigger issues of preparedness and mobilization. Even though, to both his dismay and contentment, the CND absorbed Edison's NCB into its organizational framework in 1917 to prevent any duplication of effort, the famous inventor nevertheless heaped praise upon the Council. "With this accomplishment comes not merely a better understanding between the businessmen of America and their government," Edison pronounced, using language nearly identical to Clarkson, "but it marks the entrance of the trained, non-partisan engineer, doing his job on the sole basis of efficiency, integrity, and Americanism." The cooperative bipartisanship realized through the organization of the CND demonstrated very early on what political consensus could achieve under the right circumstances if partisan bickering could be temporarily set aside.²³

Ultimately, the entire process of CND organization characteristically reflected the Progressive Era principles of efficiency and rationalization. Who better to organize the mobilization of national resources and manpower than those already engaged within those industries? Who better to mobilize resources than those who already controlled the production of those resources? Who better to mobilize the workers than the labor unions they belonged to? These basic questions undergirded the progressivist philosophy regarding the role of the state, corporations, and workers in society during wartime. The emergence of the DCS signified the

²² Ibid., 39; Alfred L.P. Dennis, "A National Defense Council," *New York Times*, April 24, 1916, 12.

²³ "Has All Industries Ready for Defense," *New York Times*, September 2, 1916, 11.

transformation of progressive ideals of political economy into “a parastate nexus of public and private power.” It embodied the peak development of progressivism. Labor reformers, civil society groups, state actors, and various other students of Progressive Era thought, shaped the very core of the CND’s mobilization ideology. The fact that the majority of the CND’s committee heads were prominent corporate executives, engineers, and statisticians, also evinced the importance of scientific management as a crucial component of wartime mobilization.²⁴

Along with progressive principles of efficiency, reform, and rationalization, the CND leaned heavily upon voluntarism, a key feature of the associational impulse. Appointed members gladly accepted the chance to demonstrate their patriotic inclinations by accepting their appointments as strictly unpaid and voluntary. CND publicists professed that the Advisory Committee “served the country without remuneration, efficiency being their sole object and Americanism their only motive.”²⁵ Eagerly serving the nation’s interests in times of crisis demonstrated their patriotic nature, but ultimately, men of wealth, power, and prestige, including CND chairmen, seemingly engaged with the process as a means to further their own personal and pecuniary interests. Enjoining a government program that allowed them almost unfettered access to the political arena without the same limitations and oversight as elected officials afforded them that opportunity. However, it did not come without its own unique disputes.²⁶

²⁴ Dawley, 115; Clarkson, *Industrial America in the War*, 121-122; Kennedy, 48, 142. In his study of the American homefront during World War I, David Kennedy notes that the war “both arrested and transformed the progressive debate over political economy, [which] marked a distinct and formative moment in the history of American society.” It was the ultimate realization of progressivism, and, at the same time, signaled the death of traditional American progressivism as those actors were being wedded together with the workings of the federal government.

²⁵ “Defense Council: President Names Board to Assist in Mobilizing Resources,” *Fergus County Democrat*, October 12, 1916, 1.

²⁶ Gerstle, *Liberty and Coercion*, 118-120; “Senators Assail Defense Council,” *New York Times*, July 18, 1917, 1.

Political Conflict and Consensus-Building

In January 1917, five months after the formation of the CND, Republican members of Congress accused wealthy New York stockbroker and head of the CND's Raw Materials, Minerals, and Metals Committee, Bernard Baruch, of having used his position to manipulate the stock market for financial gain. Baruch was alleged to have leaked classified information to his contacts on Wall Street regarding the federal government's plans to stop purchasing large amounts of steel which had been used for the manufacture of allied war material. The Republican-led House Rules Committee started an investigation to determine if Baruch had in fact been the source of the leak. Rep. William Bennett (R-NY) proclaimed that "Mr. Barney Baruch, a member of the [CND], was the man who was responsible for this information getting to Wall Street and that thirty minutes before [the government's plans to halt the purchase of steel] was made public, he sold on a rising market in steel 15,000 shares."²⁷

Reports of a possible German surrender had circulated in early-1917 following a speech by German Chancellor Theobald Bethmann-Hollweg regarding possible peace proposals, which if true, would have brought the rising steel-speculation market down considerably, making a quick dump of shares a good way to make a fast profit. Because of the sensitive nature of the information, combined with an easily manipulated stock market, the federal government acted fast to keep Bethmann-Hollweg's speech under wraps. While Baruch did profit from the transaction, he categorically denied the charges of being the source of the leak. Congressional investigators ultimately cleared him of any wrongdoing after two journalists were found to have been the source of the leak. Regardless of his guilt, the episode showed just how worried some members of Congress were about giving someone like Bernard Baruch such a sensitive position

²⁷ "Representative Bennett of New York Mentions Broker as Beneficiary of Leak," *Quincy Whig*, January 4, 1917, 1.

within the highest levels of government. With powerful financiers and corporate executives placed at the helm of wartime mobilization, Republicans waited for the opportunity to accuse Wilson's CND appointees of graft and profiteering.²⁸

The appointment of wealthy corporate executives to roles that would normally be reserved for elected officials appointed to congressional committees, especially in the midst of a wartime crisis, bothered a small but vocal minority in Congress. The civilian, unelected, non-civil-servant-led committees of the CND did not sit well with many Republicans and the President's habit of skirting pre-established rules to protect his appointees appeared unfortunate at best and blatantly corrupt at worst. Eleven days after the United States entered the war, President Wilson signed Executive Order No. 2600, exempting the seven civilian members of the Advisory Commission from civil service examinations as a requisite for their involvement in government affairs. "Due to the confidential nature of this work," the order stated, "the Council is authorized, without reference to the requirements of the civil service law and rules" to permit the services of any presidential appointee of the Advisory Commission. Wilson's executive order broke longstanding political norms, raising red flags for the President's detractors.²⁹

Some members of Congress lobbed even heavier accusations. Rep. William Graham (R-PA) criticized the CND of being "a secret government unduly friendly to big business." Graham further charged that the Council's very existence violated federal law because it was created with \$200,000 of War Department funds, yet the President activated it several months before an

²⁸ John M. Blum, "The Leak Investigation of 1917," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (April 1949): 548-552.

²⁹ Woodrow Wilson, "Executive Order No. 2600 of April 17, 1917 [Council of National Defense authorized to employ persons best adapted to its work for the period of the war without regard to Civil Service Rules]," *CIS Index to Presidential Executive Orders & Proclamations, Part I: April 30, 1789 to March 4, 1921: George Washington to Woodrow Wilson* (Washington: Congressional Information Service, Inc., 1987), 1948.

official declaration of war. Upon reading the minutes of the Advisory Commission's first meeting, Graham later recounted that "a commission of seven men chosen by the President seems to have devised the entire system of purchasing war supplies, planned a press censorship, designed a system of food control and ... determined a daylight savings scheme ... and did all this behind closed doors ... before Congress declared war against Germany."³⁰ While Democrats appeared united behind the President's plans, convincing Republicans to support Wilson's plans looked increasingly difficult – until the discovery of the Zimmerman telegram in early 1917.³¹

With news of Germany's desperate attempt to bring Mexico onto the side of the Triple Alliance with promises of returning its former territories in the American Southwest, the voices of anti-war Republicans were increasingly drowned-out by a growing number of bipartisan supporters of intervention. The Zimmerman Telegram and the nationalist, pro-war fervor it produced quickly grew too large for any one politician take a principled, non-interventionist stand against, leading to a surge of Republican support for Wilson's war plans. The Zimmerman episode was the death knell of isolationism, pushing partisan political conflict further into the territory of a political wartime consensus, further enabling the development of the non-partisan nationalist ideal.³²

III: Organizational Refinement

The CND's legal authority was altogether unclear and vague during the first several months of its existence and it did relatively little during the period between August 1916 and April 1917 other than acting in a strictly "research and planning" capacity. Section Two of the Army Appropriations Act, which included the provisions creating the CND, seemed purposefully

³⁰ "Says Seven Men Ran War for US," *New York Times*, July 8, 1919, 15.

³¹ Clarkson, *Industrial America in the War*, 24; Neiberg, 220-222; "A Strange Alliance," *New York Times*, March 1, 1917, 12.

³² *Ibid.*; Neiberg, 219-220.

nebulous in its wording. It did not elaborate on the extent or limitations of the Council's powers, only that an Advisory Commission would be appointed to then decide how mobilization should proceed. In the eight-month period between the formation of the CND and Congress' war declaration, the CND focused its efforts on expanding national manufacturing output and resource extraction capabilities, along with demarcating the extent of its legal and regulatory powers. The Advisory Commission advised the government on the best use of railroads for military purposes, improved seagoing shipping and transportation routes, and investigated means for increasing munitions manufacturing and the development of natural resources. The Advisory Commission's primary goal during those first few months was to take upon and expand the industrial preparedness work of the NCB, temporarily leaving industrial mobilization to business associations.³³

The Advisory Commission moved rather slowly to begin the process of mobilization. Full and complete organization of the various committees did not even occur until March of 1917, less than a month before the war declaration. During that time, the CND fervently capitalized on its corporate-centric composition to encourage the business sector to assist in their efforts to mobilize labor, transportation, and natural resources in the name of preparedness. More often than not, making public appeals to the patriotic impulses of corporations garnered results. Such appeals were especially useful when dealing with railroad corporations. Considering the fact that several leading executives of various railroad enterprises served as chairmen of CND committees related to railroad transportation – including Daniel Willard (B&O), Samuel Rea

³³ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 4, 5.

(Pennsylvania), E.E. Calvin (Union Pacific), Julius Kruttschnitt (Southern Pacific), and J.D. Farrell (Oregon & Washington) – such a task was made much simpler.³⁴

In March 1917, the Union Pacific Railroad, at the suggestion of president E.E. Calvin, offered up its rail lines to the federal government in the case of war. In a statement made by Union Pacific publicists, the railroad pledged that “all of our resources will be at the command of the United States Government and the Council of National Defense for the purpose of preparedness in the present national crisis.”³⁵ To better prepare for such an occasion, and to demonstrate its seriousness in assisting with Uncle Sam’s mobilization activities, Union Pacific purchased nearly \$4,000,000 in new engines and spent an additional \$5,000,000 in the construction of new freight equipment and trunk lines. On top of the expenses used to expand and improve its railroads, Union Pacific also spent an unspecified sum for the purpose of guarding its various properties. Those guards included both private security employees as well as Secret Service agents working for the railroad under the auspices and employment of the federal government. The public-private cooperation envisioned by the CND was rapidly taking shape as the country edged closer to war.³⁶

The CND did not limit its work in preparing the nation’s railways for wartime mobilization simply to expectations of corporate voluntarism, or even to the expansion and improvement of the country’s rail lines. It also had much to do with solving the longstanding labor conflicts between the railroads and the unions who represented their workers. Preventing labor strikes in the railroad industry comprised a significant chunk of the CND’s earliest efforts,

³⁴ *First Annual Report of the Council of National Defense*, 7-8; *Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense*, 6-7.

³⁵ “U.P. Road Offered to the Government,” *Omaha Daily Bee*, March 25, 1917, 4.

³⁶ “Railroads Ready for Emergencies,” *New York Times*, February 5, 1917, 4; “Nation’s Railways United for Defense,” *New York Times*, February 17, 1917, 2.

providing a level of practical experience that would come in handy once the war commenced. With Samuel Gompers representing the interests of labor on the CND's Labor Committee, and Daniel Willard representing the interests of the railroads, the Advisory Commission was in an excellent position to facilitate a compromise that would benefit both sides. As a result, the CND successfully advocated for the nation's first federal eight-hour workday law. Although initially limited to railroad workers, the new law set into motion events that would see the introduction of similar legislative efforts for nearly every other industry over the course of World War I. In the months before the declaration of war on April 6, 1917, the CND took its first practical steps towards socioeconomic reorganization and in increasing the federal state's regulatory power. Additionally, the inclusion of labor in the process ensured that workers would receive greater representation in the matter.³⁷

While the CND maintained a predominantly corporatist bend in both its composition and its early approaches toward mobilization, AFL President Samuel Gompers enjoyed a considerable amount of influence and authority as an executive member of the CND and as a personal friend of and political ally to Woodrow Wilson. As president of the nation's largest labor federation with nearly four-million members, Gompers maintained his role as a key player in the mobilization movement throughout the period of the war. In the earliest phase of the mobilization process, and with considerable prodding from Gompers' Labor Committee, the federal government finally took up the question of the eight-hour workday in earnest. The somewhat Faustian bargain that labor made with the government – to trade radicalism and direct

³⁷ Montgomery, 367-369; "Urges Big Defense Plan," *New York Times*, February 11, 1916, 5.

action during the war for nationalist loyalty – appeared to be paying off, at least for AFL-organized railroad worker unions.³⁸

The eight-hour debate itself was nothing new, as workers and unions had pressed for the establishment of the basic eight-hour workday with a great deal of pushback by employers for some time. Not until the threat of total war, the creation of the CND, and the CND-facilitated cooperation between Gompers and Willard, was a compromise eventually reached.

Subsequently, President Wilson signed H.R. 17700 – the eight-hour bill – into law on September 5, 1916, just a little over a week after the creation of the CND. Although H.R. 17700 was only drafted in reference to railroad workers belonging to the engineers, brakemen, firemen, and conductors brotherhoods, the bill evinced a promising and effective start to the kind of wartime coordination engendered by public-private cooperation. The CND successfully influenced legislation that unions had struggled for decades to affect, further demonstrating its influence in advancing administrative-state development and regulatory practices in general.³⁹

Declaration of War and Military Conscription

When Congress declared war on April 6, 1917, the CND rapidly switched gears from being an investigational preparedness organization to that of an active wartime mobilization mechanism. With war declared, “preparedness” became moot, instantaneously replaced with “practical action” via mobilization. Several of the necessary pieces were already in place due in part to the early efforts of the NCB and, subsequently, the CND’s Advisory Commission. But the small group of civilian members could not adequately mobilize the nation without further

³⁸ Gompers, *American Labor and the War*, v, 83, 112; US Department of Labor, *Labor Legislation of 1917* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 774-775.

³⁹ *Report of the Commission of Eight* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 10, 27; Board of Industrial Research, *How the Government Handled its Labor Problems during the War* (Washington: Bureau of Industrial Research, 1919), 22, 43.

assistance, nor could they be expected to. For the continued support of the Council's wartime mobilization efforts, the federal government created powerful new bureaucracies and influenced stringent new federal laws meant to aid in a more streamlined mobilization process. One of the CND's more immediately consequential activities during the first few months of its existence involved its efforts shoring-up public support for military conscription and professionalizing the nation's volunteer and standing military forces.⁴⁰

On May 17, 1917, President Wilson signed the Selective Service Act into law after it passed both the House and Senate with near unanimity. The 1916 Army Appropriations Act had already permitted the Army to expand from a paltry force of 165,000 to a more modest force of 450,000. But upon the declaration of war, Wilson's cabinet desired an even greater military force, one that could reach into the millions if needed. The industrialized mass-killing of the Great War had already caused millions of deaths between 1914 and early-1917 and American politicians expressed concerns about how many of the nation's young men would be sacrificed at the altar of war. Knowing that the news of the slaughter of millions in the trenches of Western Europe could possibly deter young men from voluntary enlistment, federal policymakers and the military looked to conscription to fill the ranks. In doing so, it steered focus away from voluntarism to a more concerted emphasis on a federally administered military force.⁴¹

Although a bipartisan pro-war consensus had manifested within the federal government, as vacillating as it may have been, Republican detractors privately grumbled about the initiation of the first military draft since the Civil War. In letters to friends, newly-elected US Senator Hiram Johnson of California, a progressive Republican and longtime opponent of the Wilson

⁴⁰*Second Annual Report of the Council of National Defense: For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1918* (Washington: Government Printer, 1918), 6.

⁴¹ Neiberg, 132-134; Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 25, 36-37.

Administration, spoke to both the growth of a nascent political consensus and to the Republicans' displeasure with conscription. Senator Johnson lamented that "the President's program for raising a great army will of course be adopted with practical unanimity. There is real sentiment ... among Senators and Congressmen against this ... The popular branch of government seems to have been paralyzed and it reflects ... simply the will of the Chief Executive."⁴²

Even those who expressed concerns about conscription, or even against the nation's involvement in the war in general, felt politically marginalized by the growing surge of anti-German and pro-war patriotic sentiment that swept through American society. Although Senator Johnson thought the draft to be unnecessary and that it amounted to nothing less than administrative bullying, the Selective Service Act still passed both chambers almost unanimously as predicted by Johnson, demonstrating the power and coercion of the era's formidable pro-war political consensus. Politicians on both sides of the aisle may not have agreed with the nation's involvement in the war, or even supported the idea of conscription, but regardless, they still allowed both to happen with little-to-no meaningful opposition. Hiram Johnson summed that mindset up succinctly, remarking that, "I am voting for everything the President asks ... not because I want to or because I like it, but that nothing shall be withheld from the leader selected by the people ... to uphold the position our government has taken. I will give the President all the autocratic powers he asks."⁴³

The difference in the attitude of Hiram Johnson in private and his actions in public evinced a strong willingness on the part of Wilson's critics to engage with the cooperative aspect

⁴² Hiram Johnson, letter to Charles McClatchy, April 7, 1917, Hiram Johnson Collection, Part III: box 1 (film), University of California Special Collections.

⁴³ *Ibid.*; Hiram Johnson to Joseph Scott, June 25, 1917, Hiram Johnson Collection, Part III: box 1 (film), University of California Special Collections.

of mobilization. While the CND intended on facilitating cooperation and coordination between business and labor, and between the federal government and private sector, there also existed a need for non-partisan political cooperation to ensure that mobilization proceeded quickly and efficiently. Developing a pro-war consensus was important, but an even more essential aspect of reaching that consensus was the ability of both major parties to put their political differences aside to achieve a common goal. That common goal was the development of a system of wartime mobilization that required cooperation and coordination as an existential function.⁴⁴

The language used to elicit support for the draft attempted to replace fear and apprehension with nationalist pride, doing so with decidedly gendered terminology. When appeals to nationalism and patriotism failed, then perhaps appeals to masculinity might find success. Urging young American men not to think about the draft as “a conscription of the unwilling,” but rather “as a selection from a nation which has volunteered in mass . . . It is nothing less than the day upon which [the] manhood of the country shall step forward in defense of the ideals to which this nation is consecrated.”⁴⁵ Wilson and his department heads tasked the CND with ensuring the public’s support for conscription, most often accomplished through the same hyper-patriotic rhetoric used to generate support for the war in general. In most cases their appeals were masculine in nature and spoke to the attempts of men like Teddy Roosevelt who appealed to the masculinity of war and the regenerative benefits of “manly combat” and killing – the “martial ethic.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 9; Michael Kazin, *War Against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 199-200.

⁴⁵ “President’s Proclamation for Army Registration,” *The Official Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 9 (May 19, 1917): 3.

⁴⁶ Council of National Defense, *Fourth Annual Report of the United State Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 48; Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 31, 208.

The CND played a consequential role in generating public support for the draft by justifying its ideological importance through patriotic appeals and by marginalizing opposition to the draft. To emphasize the importance of national service via the draft, Maj. Rutledge Smith, a ranking CND committee member, spoke to a crowd of draft registrants in Jackson County, Tennessee, to remind them that “there are, as a matter of fact, about three classes of persons in the country today – soldiers, slickers, and slackers ... The man who is not engaged in some labor connected with the winning of this war should be ashamed to look his neighbor in the face.”⁴⁷ CND officials commonly employed such rhetoric to drum up as much support for the war effort as possible.⁴⁸

The first draft registration commenced on June 5, 1917, and it proved to be a successful and massive undertaking. In total, ten-million men between the ages of 21 and 31 were registered in the usual polling locations around the country. In June of 1918, local draft boards registered an additional 900,000 men between 18 and 25. In September 1918, local draft boards added another twelve-million names to the draft rolls, raising the maximum draft age to 45. By the time of the ceasefire in November 1918, a combined total of 24-million men between the ages of 18 and 45 had been registered for military conscription, with close to three-million called on to perform active duty military service abroad or stateside.⁴⁹

The critical deemphasis of voluntary military service as America’s primary source of defense signaled yet another blow for the traditional nineteenth-century-era focus on associationalism and voluntarism as the predominant modes of social organization. The total

⁴⁷ “The Soldiers, Slickers, and Slackers,” *Jackson County Sentinel*, September 19, 1918, 1.

⁴⁸ *Second Annual Report of the United States Council of National Defense*, 18, 107, 185; “Draft Camps Open,” *New York Times*, September 9, 1917, 54.

⁴⁹ “Draft Men to Leave Juneau for the Fort,” *Alaska Daily Empire*, May 15, 1918, 6; Gerald E. Shenk, *Work or Fight!: Race, Gender, and the Draft in World War I* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 3-5.

number of active duty American soldiers and sailors that served during World War I, around three-million, could have easily been supplied by the nearly four-million Americans who volunteered themselves for military service in the months before Wilson signed the draft order. By supplanting the nation's historic reliance on volunteer military service with coercion through conscription even though it may not have been necessary, the Selective Service Act underscored the conscious effort by both elected officials and CND members to alter the social and political norms. Apart from the gendered focus on the wartime contribution of men, the CND also put a great deal of effort into organizing women for homefront mobilization duties. Women played a significant role in the effort as active participants in mobilization, a fact that cannot go unmentioned in any examination of the CND.⁵⁰

Women's Committee of the CND

The CND did not limit its efforts to manufacturing, military conscription, transportation, or labor. Its ultimate purpose was to facilitate a general readjustment of how the American socioeconomic system operated, both during and after the war, and such a monumental task could not be accomplished by focusing on only the male half of the population. Even though most American women could not vote until after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and were, nominally speaking, the legal wards of their husbands or fathers through the application of centuries-old coverture laws, the CND brought them into the fold of wartime mobilization out of practical necessity.⁵¹ “As new as woman was in her industrial and educational relations,” explained Secretary of War and CND Chairman Newton Baker, “she saw their implications and contributed her personal suffering ... but added to it the dignified gift of the worker who brings

⁵⁰ Ibid., Capozzola, 92, 124.

⁵¹ Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 1-3.

mind and hand to the aggregate of the nation's strength in an emergency which demands that all bring all."⁵²

The CND's Executive Committee established the Women's Committee on April 21, 1917, "to coordinate and centralize the organized and unorganized forces of women throughout the country ... to provide a new and direct channel of communication between American women and their government."⁵³ Although the CND hoped to use the Women's Committee to mobilize as many American women as possible, it focused predominantly on those women already organized through existing clubs and other associations, further evidence of the importance of associationalism as the key to a successful process of mobilization. By relying on established private associations as the foundation for its organizational process and for conveying its mobilization plans, the CND adroitly circumvented American concerns about governmental intrusion and centralization. In utilizing those associations to help organize for total war while simultaneously directing their activities through new administrative bureaucracies, the federal state was, in a sense, obfuscated behind a veneer of private associations.⁵⁴

The CND's Women's Committee systematized and consolidated national women's groups like the Federation of Women's Clubs, the Young Women's Christian Association, Daughters of the American Revolution, Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the National League for Women's Service, tapping into their existing modes of organization and using them to serve the mobilization effort. At the same time, the CND helped to breakdown historic cultural

⁵² Blair, *The Women's Committee of the United States Council of National Defense*, 8.

⁵³ *First Annual Report of the Council of National Defense*, 46.

⁵⁴ Grosvenor B. Clarkson, *A Tribute and a Look to the Future* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 14-15; Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight*, If "Americans did not want the federal government in their lives," as Balogh suggests, then the use of private-sector actors and organizations presented itself as an excellent means for keeping the government out of sight, yet still very much active in the lives of ordinary Americans, even if they did not understand that was the case.

suspicions about federal motives as Americans welcomed the emerging partnership between the state and private organizations in a show of patriotism and national duty rather than fearing a powerful regulatory government. The work of the Women's Committee embodied the public-private dialectic as a characteristic representation of the how private-sector actors within the executive structure of the CND attempted to mobilize for the Great War.⁵⁵

The Executive Committee of the Women's Committee was a veritable who's who of white, middle-class, Progressive Era female reformers, along with rising stars in the women's organized labor movement. Committee members included: Ida Tarbell, journalist, Publicity Committee; Anna Howard Shaw, National American Women's Suffrage Association, Chairman; Antoinette Funk, lawyer, Legal Committee; Hannah Patterson, suffragist, Field Division; Emily Newell Blair, Children's Bureau, Publicity; Agnes Nestor, International Glove Workers Union President, Industry Committee; and Margaret Robins, National Women's Trade Union League, Industry Committee. Those prominent women, among the many others active within the Women's Committee, mobilized millions of women for wartime service in the name of "efficiency and patriotic impulse." However, the tasks undertaken by the Women's Committee differed from those of the other CND committees comprised of their male counterparts.⁵⁶

Notions of "women's work" as being something distinct from the wartime organization of the committees headed by men dictated the mobilization efforts of the Women's Committee. Nominally speaking, "women's work" included activities related to food conservation and home economics, draft registration assistance, Americanization, immigrant education, children's welfare, the creation and maintenance of new social services and welfare agencies, health and

⁵⁵ Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 97, 101; Ida Clyde Clarke, *American Women and the World War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1918), vii.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 6-7, 28-29.

hygiene campaigns, recreation, foreign and domestic war relief, and the organization of women in the industrial sector. One of the most popular activities for those organized through the Women's Committee was war relief work with the Red Cross. Through its efforts, the Women's Committee helped to increase the total number of female Red Cross volunteers by over 300% between 1917 and 1918.⁵⁷

Food production and conservation emerged as one of the more significant activities for women's war work. In coordinating with the Food Production and Home Economics Departments of the various states, the Women's Committee helped to popularize the Liberty Garden campaign, encouraging Americans to grow their own food so the crops grown on the nation's farms could be used to supply the war effort. Backyards, front yards, schoolgrounds, vacant lots, and anywhere else a garden could be planted, were used to help sustain the diets of millions of Americans. In Maryland, for example, 20,000 backyards were transformed into Liberty Gardens through local Women's Committee efforts. War gardens became an especially useful tool in the American West where so much of the region's agricultural products were destined for European markets. One woman near Colorado Springs, Colorado, cleared twenty-eight acres of farmland and invited others to take as much space as they need to plant their own Liberty Gardens. The wartime farmers distributed two-thirds of the produce to nearby families and sold the other third, donating the proceeds to the Red Cross. Policymakers throughout the nation considered the World War I Liberty Garden campaign to be a major success and women once again proved that, when given the opportunity, they could contribute to the war effort in significant fashion, even if they did not fight on the front lines.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Blair, 11-13; Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense, "Bulletin No. 1" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 1-4; *Report of the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 18.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

Aside from food production, the Women's Committee placed a great deal of emphasis on food conservation as well. One popular method of food preservation was through the development of canning clubs. With the guidance of the Women's Committee, American women formed canning clubs to make the storage and preservation of food a social activity, an especially welcomed development in rural sections of the American West where social gatherings occurred less frequently. Women used canning clubs as an opportunity to socialize, make new friends, travel, and to participate in the war effort. Members of canning clubs taught the skill by traveling from town to town and home to home providing canning demonstrations and supplying equipment, bringing more participants into the fold. Inspired by a similar organization in Great Britain, the Women's Committee also instituted the Women's Land Army (WLA), a crucial participant in the homefront effort to expand the nation's labor and agricultural resources. The WLA trained thousands of women across the country to take the place of male farmhands and farmers whose duties were interrupted by military service. As the war progressed, the work of the Women's Committee and that of the CND in general focused its efforts increasingly on labor problems, including procurement, training, and the mediation of labor conflicts in industries that predominantly employed women.⁵⁹

IV: Industrial Regulation and Development of Pro-Union Policies

With such a concerted emphasis on the role of industry and labor in modern warfare, the CND similarly looked to fill the ranks of labor at home, to "draft" men, women, and even children into the nation's homefront "industrial army." Expecting businessmen and labor unions to voluntarily come together in patriotic harmony, regardless of their nationalist or partisan

⁵⁹ Elaine F. Weiss, *Fruits of Victory: The Women's Land Army of America in the Great War* (Washington: Potomac Books, 2008), 25; *Report of the Women's Committee of the State Council of Defense of California to Governor William D. Stephens* (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1919), 36, 56.

sensibilities, was not going to be accomplished through the lofty middle-class ideals of progressivism, nor through associationalism and volunteerism. The conflict between industrial workers and employers during the early twentieth century was far too adversarial to imagine such willing cross-class cooperation. Even with the principles of associationalism presumably delineating how corporations and unions should be expected to cooperate during a wartime emergency, class-conflict precluded the hope of it achieving even a modicum of success. In order to facilitate coordination between employers and labor unions, the federal government stepped in to provide the necessary organizational framework to make that cooperation happen with as little conflict as possible.⁶⁰

With recommendations and direct assistance from the CND's Advisory Committee, President Wilson established the War Industries Board (WIB) on July 28, 1917, to coordinate the purchase of war supplies between manufacturers, the War Department, and the Departments of the Army and Navy. Almost immediately after its creation, Wilson handed control of the WIB to the CND under the supervision of stockbroker Bernard Baruch, Chairman of the Raw Material, Minerals, and Metals Committee of the CND. The WIB was the first concerted wartime attempt by the CND to initiate on-the-ground cooperation between the federal government and the industrial sector for mobilization. In a characteristic reflection of the CND itself, the WIB was ad hoc in its creation and organization, constantly drafting and revising experimental new strategies to figure out what worked and what did not.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Scherer, *The Nation at War*, 482.

⁶¹ Bernard M. Baruch, *American Industry in the War: A Report of the War Industries Board* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 18-20; Woodrow Wilson, "Executive Order No. 3126 of July 22, 1919 [War Industries Board Records and Files Transferred to the Council of National Defense]," *CIS Index to Presidential Executive Orders & Proclamations, Part I: April 30, 1789 to March 4, 1921: George Washington to Woodrow Wilson* (Washington: Congressional Information Service, Inc., 1987), 2147. The order demanded the WIB's absorption into the larger CND structure to avoid the duplication of wartime mobilization efforts. Even though the WIB was created as a recommendation by the CND's

Aside from coordinating the various war departments, the WIB encouraged American industries to utilize mass-production techniques, or Taylorism, to increase both the quantity of production and the quality of the modes of economic efficiency. America's industrial organization capabilities held just as much significance for victory as did its military capabilities, perhaps even more so. Aside from proliferating tried and true methods to increase manufacturing output, the WIB also involved itself in price-fixing, a practice normally reserved for public services and utilities as regulated by the Interstate Commerce Commission since its creation in 1887. Once again, the CND's private-sector-led Executive Committee bypassed traditional avenues of governmental regulation to initiate its own regulatory practices in the name of efficiency and "industrial adjustment."⁶²

In September 1917, the WIB and the nation's leading copper producers entered into an agreement to fix the price of refined copper at 23.5 cents per pound. Copper market speculation fluctuated regularly since the beginning of the war, going from as low as \$0.13 per pound to as high as \$0.36 per pound between 1915 and 1917. The plan was part of a larger bid by the federal government to control the prices of war supplies to encourage American businesses, from mining and farming to auto manufacturing, to produce as much of a supply as possible. Because of the government's price-fixing schemes, the copper market stabilized considerably, controlling market speculation for the time being. The United States did not simply produce for the nation itself, it produced for much Europe as well, whose agricultural and manufacturing industries experienced a severe crisis due to the destruction of the Great War. However, American

Advisory Commission, its absorption into the DCS made it a subset of CND, not an independent wartime organization subordinate to the President.

⁶² "Government to Cooperate in Motor Car Production," *Santa Ana Register*, December 1, 1917, 8; Lewis Kennedy-Morse, "The Price-Fixing of Copper," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (November 1918): 71, 94.

businesses were not simply assisting their European allies out of nationalist duty or cross-Atlantic friendship. With the assistance of the federal government and the CND, American businesses profited handsomely from the chaos of war in Europe.⁶³

The copper industry's price-fixing arrangement, fully supported by the President, set the new price controls for a four-month period, at which point the two sides would again meet to decide if either a continuation or another cost increase would be necessary. However, the WIB put in place certain requirements to come to an agreement for the new costs, including the copper industry's assurances that the wages of its workers remained consistent with the increases in corporate profits. That feature of the arrangement reflected the influence of the CND's Samuel Gompers-led Committee on Labor. Any reduction in wages for the employees of the copper mines or refineries would effectively rescind the fixed-price agreement and could lead to steep fines or cancelled contracts for copper producers. In keeping with the era's associationalist principles, the agreement was wholly voluntary, appealing especially to the patriotism of the copper mine and refinery owners. Once the participants signed the agreement it became a binding contract for that four-month period.⁶⁴

Regardless of the WIB's actual intent in regard to workers, governmental regulation of private enterprise as envisioned and practiced through the CND carefully considered the question of fair wages and economic stability for the industrial worker. The socioeconomic effects which proceeded the WIB's regulatory activities had lasting repercussions on the relationship between the private sector and the federal government, not just during the period of the war years, but following the war as well. In 1919, statistician Leo Wolman noted that the WIB caused "the most

⁶³ Ibid., 72; "President O.K.'s Fixing Price of Copper at 23.5," *Chicago Tribune*, September 21, 1917, 2.

⁶⁴ *L. Vogelstein & Co. v. The United States*, US Court of Claims, No. 33974, June 13, 1921; Robert D. Cuff, *The War Industries Board: Business-Government Relations during World War I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 58-60, 128-129.

radical and perhaps most rapid changes in function and authority [of the federal government] ... in [President Wilson's] letter designating Mr. Baruch as chairman of the [WIB], he conferred upon that organization larger and clearer power than it had possessed in the past."⁶⁵

Grosvenor Clarkson likened the soldier on the frontlines with the worker on the homefront, stating that "twentieth century warfare demands that the blood of the soldier must be mingled with from three to five parts of the sweat of the man in the factories, mills, mines, and fields of the nation at arms."⁶⁶ In the era of industrialization, military power would be determined not just by the size, strength or strategy of the armed forces, it would be directly linked to the industrial capabilities of any given nation-state. The industrial working-class was subsequently brought into the machinery of war and politics in a manner never before experienced in the nation's history. Inspired by private-sector actors working within the CND, including corporate representatives, the inclusion of the working-class was a direct result of the efforts by the CND.⁶⁷

While the WIB and CND worked in close cooperation with various mines, refineries, and munitions and vehicle manufacturers, the constant threat of labor agitation loomed large in the imagination of both the federal government and within those industries assisting in wartime production. The emergence of the wartime mobilization movement was seen by large swaths of organized labor as an excellent opportunity to gain the recognition they had sought for the past several decades. During the first year of mobilization, from April 1917 through April 1918, the United States experienced an impressive, if not unprecedented, surge of strike activity. AFL-

⁶⁵ Leo Wolman, "The Statistical Work of the War Industries Board," *Publications of the American Statistical Association*, Vol. 16, No., 125 (March 1919): 248-249.

⁶⁶ Clarkson, *Industrial America in the World War*, xxi.

⁶⁷ "The Girl Behind the Man Behind the Gun," *Evening Herald*, Klamath Fall, OR, November 8, 1918, 4; Knoeppel, *Industrial Preparedness*, 108-110; "A Dollar an Hour," *Hartford Herald*, Hartford, KY, October 30, 1918, 3.

affiliated labor unions conducted approximately 5,000 union-sanctioned and wildcat strikes during that brief period, with 130 lockouts by employers. Even with the fiercely nationalist and loyal Wilsonian Samuel Gompers at the helm of the CND's Labor Committee, the AFL still managed to produce a great deal of agitation throughout the war years. The AFL never actually promised to suspend labor agitation during the period of the war, such as was erroneously reported by the media at the time. Gompers did however hope to sway AFL-affiliated unions from wartime agitation as much as possible in order to keep labor's wartime coordination with the business sector in operation without being accused by either employers or the government of having supported labor radicalism.⁶⁸

In response to the emerging labor unrest and threats of continued labor agitation, and in cooperation with the CND's Labor Committee, President Wilson formed the National War Labor Board (NWLB) on April 8, 1918. In yet another blow to the idealistic vision of voluntary regulation as propagated by the cult of associationalism, the NWLB required that labor mediation be made a responsibility of the state. The hopes of private interests in attempting to ameliorate socioeconomic conflict with organized labor sans state intervention, or at least without a decidedly pro-business government, seemed limited. To properly situate the NWLB and give it some semblance of legitimacy and objectivity, Wilson looked to two of his most trusted CND advisors in matters of labor: Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson and Samuel Gompers. Wilson and Gompers worked together to create the nation's first federal labor program, bringing leaders of the organized labor movement into the halls of government for the first time.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Alexander M. Bing, *Wartime Strikes and their Adjustment* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1921), 293; Cuff, *The War Industries Board*, 273.

⁶⁹ Conner, ix, 32.

Two men headed the NWLB, one chosen by a panel of union leaders handpicked by Samuel Gompers and the other chosen by a coterie of employers handpicked by William B. Wilson. The labor unionists representing the workers' interests on the NWLB selected Frank Walsh, a prominent labor lawyer and head of the Commission on Industrial Relations. Wilson's employer appointees chose former president William Howard Taft to represent their interests on the board. According to Frank Walsh, "it was due to the self-restraint, tact, and earnest patriotic desire of the representatives of the employers and the workers to reach a conclusion."⁷⁰ Taft similarly praised the work of the NWLB, telling reporters that he "was satisfied that there will be a ready and hearty acquiescence therein by the employers and workers of the country ... The industrial army ... is second only in importance and necessity to our forces in the theatre of war."⁷¹

Perhaps the most important aspect of the NWLB's efforts was in giving workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. For decades, the working-class had unsuccessfully lobbied the federal government to institute legal protections in support of the closed shop and collective bargaining. The closed shop stipulation was roundly decried by Taft and the employers he represented on the NWLB, but there was, as Taft had noted, a "hearty acquiescence" to protecting workers' rights to engage in collective bargaining. As tentative as the agreement was, collective bargaining rights still guaranteed a certain level of protection for unions and their rank-and-file members from arbitrary or punitive actions from employers. The creation of the NWLB exposed the early emergence of the administrative state, which became the governmental guarantor of the most basic rights that workers had demanded from employers.⁷²

⁷⁰ "Capital and Labor Agreement Expected to End All Strikes," *Butler County Press*, April 5, 1918, 1.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷² Conner, 29; W.B. Wilson to Samuel Gompers, January 28, 1918, Albert and Palladino, *The Samuel Gompers Papers*, Vol. 10, 333-334. In a letter to Samuel Gompers, William B. Wilson explained the

Unfortunately, it took a devastating world war and a transformation of governmental priorities for the government to recognize the need to coerce businesses and organized labor to come to some sort of agreement over workers' rights. But even then, the CND still provided employers a disproportionate amount of say in the negotiation process, demonstrating the level of control held by business interests within the CND's structure.⁷³ An administrative bureaucracy appeared to be developing as a replacement for the increasingly obsolete practices of traditional associationalism, even if that nascent bureaucracy was populated with a disproportionate number of pro-business operatives. Similar to the WIB, Woodrow Wilson later absorbed the NWLB into the larger mobilization efforts of the CND through an executive order. Executive Order No. 3268 transferred all records and files of the NWLB to the CND for final custody in 1920.⁷⁴

Due to the presence and expanded influence of corporate executives in the Council, rank-and-file union members and even some prominent AFL leaders accused the CND of acting as an instrument to help preserve the pre-war status quo. Some union members suggested that the NWLB denied unions the rights many felt were already destined to occur as a result of a decades-long campaign of sustained labor agitation. Since most employers desired to maintain an anti-union status quo and the CND contained several prominent businessmen, such a conclusion was more than understandable. However, in its attempts to keep certain aspects of the status quo from faltering as a result of either inaction or anti-union action on the part of employers, the

plans for the creation of the NWLB, describing the nation's need for a stronger regulatory presence within the private sector to mediate labor conflicts, noting that only through "an administrative labor program" would industries experience a decrease in labor agitation.

⁷³ "Says Report of Board Named to Formulate War Labor Program," *Labor World*, April 6, 1918, 1; "National War Labor Program is Announced," *Bridgport Times and Evening Farmer*, May 16, 1918, 4.

⁷⁴ Woodrow Wilson, "Executive Order No. 3268 of May 5, 1920 [War Labor Board Records Transferred to Council of National Defense]," *CIS Index to Presidential Executive Orders & Proclamations, Part I: April 30, 1789 to March 4, 1921: George Washington to Woodrow Wilson* (Washington: Congressional Information Service, Inc., 1987), 2216.

CND forever altered business as usual. Ultimately, those alterations worked in favor of unions like the AFL, who were more concerned with bread-and-butter issues, rather than those that held more radical proclivities, such as the IWW or WFM. The efforts to assuage labor during the war awarded workers in many cases with shorter hours, increased wages, collective bargaining rights, and improved working conditions. Through the efforts of the NWLB, and in its attempts to stave off further labor agitation, the CND paved the way for the closed shop legislation of the 1930s, most notably the 1935 Wagner Act.⁷⁵

The DCS helped institute a variety of other labor policies that unions had been fighting to achieve. The federal government passed child labor laws which restricted the employment of minors other than as laborers on family-operated farms, women took on a more prominent role in the workforce, and health and safety regulations improved considerably. With Samuel Gompers affecting government labor policies through his efforts as a committee head for the CND; organized labor, nominally the more conservative, traditionalist craft labor organizations such as the AFL, looked increasingly to the federal government for legitimation rather than relying on the principles of direct action alone, relying less on the use of strikes, slowdowns, and boycotts to make progress and focusing more on a regulatory federal government.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Bing, *Wartime Strikes and their Adjustment*, 153; Montgomery, 357-359. Montgomery's research finds that the CND and NWLB encouraged employers to work with AFL unions, but to reject the IWW and WFM at all costs, which was the "appearance in embryonic form of the doctrine of the certified bargaining agent," which would be solidified into law with the 1935 Wagner Act. Whereas the CND provided the AFL with that bargaining ability in 1917, with the Wagner Act, it would become the responsibility of the federal government's Department of Labor to approve collective bargaining agreements.

⁷⁶ US Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, *The Employment Certificate System: A Safeguard for the Working Child* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919); US Department of Agriculture, *Women on the Farm: An Address Before the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918); Gompers, *American Labor and the War*, 192-194.

–Chapter Four–

The Defense Council System in the American West

The DCS coalesced in April 1917 with the establishment of the various state and county defense councils around the country. It was within the states and counties of the nation is where the real on-the-ground work of wartime mobilization would be accomplished. The wartime détente among the Republicans, Democrats, and what remained of the Progressives, allowed state and local mobilization to occur in a more bottom-up fashion relative to the top-down manner in which the CND operated. The direct involvement of local government in the process provided an opportunity for private-sector actors to engage with socioeconomic readjustment and political realignment at the state and county levels – a far more palatable process for Americans as opposed to a federal directive. Through the efforts of the state defense councils, localized government and cooperative federalism could once again be emphasized as a practical alternative to the kind of rigid federalism, partisan sectionalism, and political radicalism that had caused so much conflict over the preceding decades.

As a result of their efforts, defense council officials in the American West helped to transform the region from one of rising populist party influences, nascent labor radicalism, and class-conflict into a more traditional regional political contributor and a more stable resource extraction center and contributor to the national economy. A revised emphasis on wartime mobilization through local participation, even if meant to be a temporary expedient, provided the ability for millions of residents to reengage with and place more trust in the traditional Two-Party System. If western Americans felt that Democrats and Republicans were in fact working together for the people, then populist third parties would, ostensibly, not be necessary. Additionally, the reestablishment of conventional partisan trust among residents of the West would, in theory, help secure their socioeconomic stake in national prosperity. CND priorities

could be fully realized as local business associations and labor unions – in cooperation and coordination with their respective state defense councils – helped mobilize Americans at every level of governance, imbuing them with the same kind of non-partisan nationalism being attempted by the federal government. Due to the inclusion of the state defense councils, the Great War became more about carrying out an experimental plan of long-term socioeconomic and political reorganization, rather than being focused solely on wartime mobilization.

I: Ideological Foundations of the State Defense Council Section

As vital as the CND was for establishing the basic structure of wartime mobilization in general, the overall success of the DCS depended almost exclusively upon its ability to convince the individual states to cooperate readily and enthusiastically with the federal government's efforts. That included convincing all forty-eight states and even the territorial governments to engage in the majority of the organizational and practical on-the-ground work needed for what was expected to be a massive undertaking of manpower and resource deployment. The task to create an efficient, cooperative system of national wartime mobilization did not look to be a simple one, especially in a politically and economically polarized nation like the United States was during the early-twentieth century.¹

Regardless of the difficulties to be expected with homefront mobilization, it needed to be a quickly moving process, one that could move through the American political tradition of democratic reciprocity by navigating the conflicts so inherent within the states-versus-federal power dynamic. Ultimately, and as a result of the traditional American debate of the separation of government power, the states and the local defense councils they formed would become the most important players in the nation's mobilization efforts. Not coincidentally, the entire process

¹ Scherer, 13-14; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 17-18.

looked quite similar to the manner in which the NCB had worked through its various state IPB committees during the 1916 Preparedness Movement. Just as the NCB had used the IPB committees to engage in the majority of the necessary preparedness work at the local level, so too did the CND use the various state defense councils to engage in the bulk of mobilization duties locally, utilizing a similar structure of diffusion. Cooperation and coordination between the federal and state governments, similar to that between private and public actors, emerged as another key element to the process.²

The most necessary step in determining the success of the CND and for expediting homefront mobilization in general was found in the formation of the various state councils of defense, created at the behest of the CND and the Wilson Administration, but on a strictly voluntary basis. As Secretary of War Newton Baker explained:

“The Council of National Defense, as empowered by act of Congress, August 29, 1916, is now engaged in the work of preparation for the war and in the coordination of the resources and energies of the Nation. It holds itself in readiness to co-operate with the states to bring about the most effective coordination of activities and procedures for the general good of the Nation and the successful prosecution of the war and it invites the states to advise with it. To further the prompt and energetic organization which the situation demands, it recommends the creation, by the States, of committees with broad powers, to cooperate with the Council – such committees to perhaps be known as the State Councils of Defense – these committees to be representative of the state’s resources.”³

While the CND would retain its existential and ideological significance to the mobilization effort, the state defense councils would become its most useful tool in the practical application of mobilization duties. That important fact was recognized early on by private sector interests, as evinced by the preparedness efforts of the NCB and the influence of private associations in pushing for war. Federal policymakers working within the CND formulated a plan for

² Ibid., 18-20; Daniels, *The Wilson Era*, 491-493, 589-590; Josephus Daniels, *Our Navy at War* (New York: George H. Duran Company, 1922), 364.

³ Newton Baker, “Instructions to the State Councils of Defense,” April 9, 1917, box 2J359, folder 3, Texas War Records Collection.

mobilization that could be manifested through federal-state coordination and cooperation and the creation of the DCS was, as inferred by Newton Baker, the best way to accomplish that. Participation through “invitation” and “voluntarism,” not through coercion, signified a considerable part of the strategy, inducing state governments to let go of factional alliances and participate actively with the federal government via the DCS.⁴

Before the creation of the forty-eight state defense councils and an intensive focus on localized participation, homefront mobilization was, for most Americans, thought to be a strictly federal project. It was, after all, the federal government that declared war, not the states. The urgent need to organize a continental nation of 100-million-plus in the midst of a war already three-years in progress required the need for something more expansive, more localized, and far more personal. Bringing Americans together through a universal wartime consensus, de-politicizing mobilization, and easing existing partisan tensions could be made a much simpler task if, as individuals and as part of a larger whole, they contributed directly to the effort and held a stake in the process. The CND touted the creation of state, county, and community defense councils as the best method to encourage that participation. By decentralizing mobilization duties, the process elicited meaningful participation and accountability, rather than the federal government simply dictating how individual Americans should participate.⁵

On April 6, 1917, the same day that Congress declared war against Germany, the CND’s Executive Committee formed the Section on Cooperation with the States to coordinate mobilization with the forty-eight individual state governments and the territorial governments of Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. On April 9, Newton Baker sent letters

⁴ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 48-49.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5; Frederick Lewis Allen, “The Forty-Eight Defenders: A Study of the Work of the State Councils of Defense,” *Century Magazine*, Vol. LXXIII (November 1917 through April 1918): 263.

to all of the state and territorial governors who had not yet created their defense councils, beseeching them to do so quickly. Participating states and territories would be placed in charge of their own defense council operations, with only some general guidelines and broad expectations to guide them. George Porter, assistant to CND Director Walter Gifford and head of the Section on Cooperation with the States, considered the state section to be, more than anything else, “a clearing house for communication” between the state and federal governments.⁶

President Wilson echoed George Porter and Newton Baker’s understandings of the role of the states, while simultaneously assuaging fears Americans had of the war helping to create an even more centralized federal government. “[The CND’s] function ... has not been to dictate or even to give advice, but to get things coordinated,” Wilson explained, “my function ... is the very pleasant function of saying how much I am obliged to you for having associated yourself with us in this great task.”⁷ Mobilization would then, in effect, be accomplished by the states themselves, but in a manner that allowed them to share responsibilities as well as successes with the national government.⁸

One of the most fascinating aspects of the DCS’s concerted emphasis on state and local government control was that it arose, not in spite of, but because of and in concert with the longstanding authority and supremacy of the United States government. Through the CND’s federal-state coordination efforts, Americans were encouraged to reconsider their roles as citizens of not just a nation, but of individual states and local communities as well. The normative focus of World War I mobilization, as with most military conflicts, has often been

⁶ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 20; Newton Baker, “Instructions to the State Councils of Defense,” April 9, 1917, box 2J359, folder 3, Texas War Records Collection.

⁷ James Daniel Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents of the United States* (New York: Bureau of National Literature, 1918), 8354-8255.

⁸ CND Field Division, *Council of Defense Field Division Report* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 3.

considered to be that of a federal project, a common misconception since Congress declares war and the states are subordinated to federal oversight during wartime emergencies. The focus on state and local governance as a fundamental element of the process underscored the perceived value of non-partisan nationalism, its relation to local democracy, and the manner in which the CND expected partisan conflict to be sacrificed for a successful war effort. By presenting participation in mobilization as a choice, not a directive, the CND cleverly avoided creating further political conflict.⁹

National Defense Conference

Less than a month after the formation of the Section on Cooperation with the States, the CND's Executive Committee seemed more than displeased at the overall pace of state defense council organization. In a communication sent out to all state governors, Newton Baker implored them and their representatives to travel to the nation's capital to attend the first annual National Defense Conference from May 2-3, 1917. The point of the conference was to convince state governors to accelerate the development of their respective defense councils and to better articulate the federal government's wartime expectations of the individual states.¹⁰

In the brief period between the Congressional declaration of war on April 6 and the opening of the National Defense Conference on May 2, only eleven states – Arizona, California, Connecticut, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Wisconsin

⁹ Breen, "Mobilization and Cooperative Federalism," 58. As Breen notes, "The federal structure and a strong tradition of state's rights made it inevitable that wartime mobilization was not an entirely centralized process." This notion formed the ideological basis of the CND's decision to spread mobilization duties around to the states in order to skillfully avoid the inherent conflicts surrounding the subject of state's rights and state-versus-federal control. This concept was an important factor for realizing the practical benefits of cooperative federalism and for depoliticizing the overall efforts of the DCS.

¹⁰ Council of National Defense, *Report on the Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 1, 4-5.

– had established their defense councils as per the CND’s recommendations. Those eleven states had all created their state defense council units in the time between April 7 and April 29. Illinois, the twelfth state to establish its defense council, did so on May 2, the very same day the National Defense Conference convened. Although the federal government emphasized the importance of voluntary participation to the process, the lack of engagement early on concerned the Wilson Administration and the CND’s Executive Committee, further demonstrating the relatively naive expectation that volunteer-based associational practices would work efficiently and when the government demanded it to.¹¹

Throughout the two-day event, conference speakers inculcated the importance of not just individual state participation in the country’s wartime efforts, but of county, city, and community participation as well. The conference afforded the opportunity for state defense council representatives from the states that had already formed their councils to share with one another the type of activities and methods of organization they had so far undertaken and to impart their early experiences. Without a specific standard-bearing precedent for modern wartime mobilization being used as a template, state defense councils relied upon their own trial and error experiences, leaning on one another to figure out what worked and what did not during the first months of organization. Even representatives of America’s main European ally, Great Britain, attended the conference to explain how the United States could learn from Britain’s mistakes early on in the war so as not to be repeated by the Americans and the country could hit the ground running.¹²

¹¹ Illinois State Council of Defense, *Final Report of the State Council of Defense of Illinois, 1917-1918-1919* (Chicago: Allied Printing, 1919), 1; Clarkson, *A Tribute and a Look into the Future*, 9.

¹² “Governors Handed Nation’s Problems for Consideration,” *Des Moines Register*, May 3, 1917, 1; *Report on the Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense*, 1, 4; *Council of National Defense Field Division Report*, 3.

Looking specifically to the labor experiences of Great Britain, which had been involved in the Great War for three-years at that point, and at the behest of Samuel Gompers, Newton Baker invited British labor union leaders to explain the importance of securing the highest levels of support from the American working-class. “Your chief mission,” according to Charles Bowerman, British Trade Unions Secretary; and James Thomas, head of the British Engineering Brotherhood, “should be to learn from the experiences of England in properly whipping its laboring masses into shape in factories and shipyards to meet the war’s vast demands.” The British delegates informed the state governors in attendance that their own country had not done enough early on in the conflict to prepare and motivate its working and professional classes for a wartime economy. By “learning from England’s mistakes” before it began mobilizing the nation in earnest, the United States would be in a better position to secure public support for the effort.¹³

Conference speakers also emphasized food production and the adjustment of labor problems. Governors representing the western states expected that there would be a great shortage of farm laborers within their states and most made a point to underscore the need to establish federal employment assistance in case those fears came to fruition, which they in fact would. In a motion made to prepare for increased food production, a consensus of western governors stated that “a great army of civilians not eligible for the draft should be commenced in the West ... an Agricultural Army.”¹⁴ Newton Baker sent the plans for a “National Service Reserve” to the CND’s Executive Committee following the conference and the CND quickly approved the measure. The motion stated that workers could be “drafted to work under any private employer engaged in government contracts or on farms ... [and that] they would be given

¹³ “British Labor Leaders Here for Conference,” *Washington Herald*, May 6, 1917, 15; “Governors Handed Nation’s Problems for Consideration,” *Des Moines Register*, May 3, 1917, 2.

¹⁴ “The Agricultural Army Plan,” 1917, box 17, folder 534, Ernest O. Holland Records.

compensation for the time spent in government service.” The plan would “maintain labor standards; establish federal and state employment agencies; procure the labor of boys, women, and retired men on farms; help [secure] Liberty Loans and Red Cross donations; organize centralized food production committees within the states” ... and “help reduce food waste in the home.” A year before state defense councils in the American West drafted compulsory labor laws, governors of the region had already identified the problems they hoped to resolve during the war.¹⁵

In closing the conference, Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, advised the state governors in attendance “to let their people know the government is preparing for a long war and that every resource of the country must be developed to its utmost if the United States hopes to win.” The defense council representatives subsequently repeated that warning upon their return back to their home states. University of Montana Chancellor and Governor Samuel V. Stewart’s defense council proxy for the conference, Edward C. Elliott, returned home to Missoula to relay the message that “the United States is in for a prolonged war and there is every indication that it will last at least five years.”¹⁶

Cooperative Federalism and Associationalism in Wartime

The inherent conflicts found within the mobilization effort reflected the larger political tensions and conflicts already existing in the United States at the time. In the decades following the Civil War and the Period of Reconstruction, debates about the role of the federal government

¹⁵ “Defense Council Discusses Plan for Civilian Army,” *Circle Banner*, May 11, 1917, 2; “Man and Woman Reservist Army for Home Guard,” *Daily Missoulian*, May 4, 1917, 1, 10; *First Annual Report of the Council of National Defense, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1917* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 46-47.

¹⁶ “Chancellor Elliot Sees Long Conflict,” *Daily Missoulian*, May 18, 1917, 7; Council of National Defense, *Report on the Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 1, 4; *Council of National Defense Field Division Report*, 3.

and of state's rights still permeated the nation's political dialogue. Aside from the Supremacy Clause found in Article VI of the US Constitution, the federal state had undoubtedly sealed its status as the supreme governmental entity following the Civil War. As evinced by the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, the authority of the federal government clearly surpassed that of any individual state or regional coalition of states who might challenge its power. But the Confederate legacy of state's rights political ideology endured, fueling the continued debate over the balance of governmental power. During the World War I years, that discussion focused on the role of the DCS, such as the federal government's role in mobilization, and the role of the state governments in coordinating along with it.¹⁷

The CND's Field Division, which managed practical on-the-ground mobilization activities between the federal government and the states with its "field agents," insisted that the need for federal-state cooperation was an altogether urgent one. Although the CND's Advisory Commission and Executive Committee played a crucial role within the larger process of mobilization in a general sense, "the maintenance of a complete and active local organization," according to Field Division officials, "is a fundamental part of the council of defense system [and] without it, the greatest value that it can contribute will be destroyed."¹⁸ In other words, simply dictating to the states how to manage their mobilization duties in a top-down fashion would not suffice. There needed to be a coherent administrative connection between the wartime machinery of the states and that of the federal government in order for the CND's strategy to succeed. To facilitate that connection, the CND not only worked closely with individual state

¹⁷ Gerstle, 76, 92.

¹⁸ *Council of National Defense Field Division Report*, 3, 5-6; Scherer, 51.

defense councils, but it also expected the states to establish county and community defense councils for that very same purpose.¹⁹

With each subsequent echelon of the DCS, the federal state progressively diffused its authority. According to field agents, a “wise, nonpartisan community organization is a permanent need of the United States” in order to encourage, create, and maintain a robust form of local democratic participation. The type of social and political organization proposed by the CND “developed a community consciousness and cooperative spirit that will meet many needs of our civic life” without sacrificing the integrity of individual state authority and local democratic procedures.²⁰ At the same time, it could not threaten federal government supremacy, meaning that the higher the level of government, such as at the federal or state levels, popular participation would be a less significant feature.²¹

The further down the line the system ventured, such as into the county, municipal, and community levels, more opportunities would be found for individual Americans to participate. The smaller and more diffused the defense council units became, the less concerned those participants were by becoming subsumed by a growing, yet cleverly concealed federal bureaucracy, thereby making their involvement much more voluntary, participatory, and inclusive. However, as a purposeful design of the system, the DCS denied the participation of certain actors, especially those seen as a threat to the socioeconomic and political status quo of capitalism and the Two-Party System. The DCS eschewed radical labor unions like the IWW and WFM and populist political parties like the SPA and the NPL. CND officials encouraged

¹⁹ Ida Clyde Clarke, *The Little Democracy: A Textbook on Community Organization* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1918), ix-x, 1-3.

²⁰ *Council of National Defense Field Division Report*, 3.

²¹ *Second Annual Report of the United States Council of National Defense*, 11-15.

Republicans, Democrats, conservative craft-labor unionists, and Progressives to participate, while marginalizing and actively repressing those seen as a threat to the pre-war status quo.²²

The cultural significance of associationalism played an important role in formulating the CND's organizational philosophy. For a quickly moving, effective, and successful mobilization process to take place, civil society needed to be melded together with the state in a more rigorous fashion. With the formation of the DCS and its characteristic inclusion of private-sector actors, associations began to look much more like privately organized instruments of the state, even if "the state" in that sense was being represented by private-sector actors themselves. Regardless, most private associations complained very little about their absorption into the larger bulk of the nation's wartime endeavors due to the sense of patriotic pride and honor injected into their traditional activities as a result of working cooperatively with the government. In the midst of a wartime emergency and a budding hyper-nationalism, there was little time for or point in competing against the will of the United States government, especially if their activities provided them with additional social and patriotic capital.²³

The early preparedness campaigns of 1916 and the declaration of war in 1917 brought about the creation of new and the growth of existing civic, fraternal, patriotic, religious, and benevolent societies and clubs. Preexisting associations became far more patriotic in their general tone and focused more concertedly on using their social influences to help more with mobilization duties than engaging in their regular activities. With the service of organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Knights of Columbus, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and the YMCA, defense councils at every level tapped into those associations' preestablished forms of community organization to assist with mobilization. The World War I-era partnership of public

²² Van Nuys, 158-162; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 14.

²³ Capozzola, 42-44; *Report on Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense*, 15-17.

and private combined the spirit of associationalism with the patriotic zeal of nationalism, helping to reorganize American society into a more administrative existence by encouraging support for and involvement in the DCS.²⁴

The process of socioeconomic organization as coordinated through the associationalist impulse was not a new development for Americans. Associations in one form or another had been helping to manage the nation's socioeconomic and political character since its inception. Alexis de Tocqueville noticed as much in his travels to the United States in the 1830s, remarking that "the Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches ... wherever you see the government in the United States ... you will be sure to find an association."²⁵ Nearly a century after de Tocqueville's astute observations, those same kinds of private associations continued to wield tremendous socioeconomic and political influence due to the nature of the country's lasting affair with the braiding together of the public and private sectors. As a result of the Preparedness Movement and the subsequent mobilization effort, those groups found themselves under the regulatory purview of governments more than they had ever experienced in decades past.²⁶

With the expansion and attempted consolidation of private associations following the outbreak of the Great War, along with the rise of an almost rabid nationalistic wartime ardor, governments organized them in a more efficient and practical manner. The federal and state governments increasingly scrutinized and micromanaged their activities to ensure an efficient mode of mobilization and to avoid the duplication of effort. Through government organization, the DCS fused private associations and civilian expertise together with the state in a grand

²⁴ Capozzola, 8-12; Henry E. Jackson, *A Community Center: What it is and How to Organize it* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 66-68.

²⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 129-130; *Ibid.*, 110.

²⁶ Balogh, *The Associational State*, 3-5.

attempt to reorganize society in the name of wartime efficiency. With the federal and state governments playing a more managerial role over private associations, and with private-sector actors leading the wartime mobilization effort, it was at the same time both the ultimate realization of progressivism and traditional associationalism – and their decline.²⁷

The idea that associationalism – which depended upon private-sector actors voluntarily coming together in self-regulating groups – could organize society more effectively than through administrative governance, ultimately demonstrated its own ineffectiveness and unsustainability. Associationalism could not guarantee operational efficiency in times of emergency and crisis, such as during an international military conflict. That fact was especially true when considering that all of society needed to be quickly mobilized for a singular purpose, not simply those belonging to or otherwise connected to any given association. The disparate nature of the twentieth-century American population and its eclectic political character almost guaranteed the inefficiency of associationalism in wartime.²⁸

The type of administrative-based social organization proffered by federal, state, and county governments under the guise of the DCS promptly, yet subtly, replaced the lofty and oftentimes unrealistic ambitions of associationalism during World War I. They did this not through force or outright coercion, but by extending a more accountable form of socioeconomic and political organization through decentralization, diffusion, and local participation as realized through the designs of the DCS. The relative ease in which Americans appeared willing to abandon the traditional associationalist ideal in favor of more administrative-based associational practices exposed it as a somewhat worn-out methodology. The DCS employed the preexisting organizational structures of groups like the NAM, and the American Society of Civil Engineers,

²⁷ *First Annual Report of the Council of National Defense*, 42; Capozzola, 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 209; Balogh, *The Associational State*, 3.

and the NCB by tying them to the larger administrative structures of the mobilization effort. Private organizations played a substantial role in those efforts, but they essentially became cogs in the government's wartime machinery, even as the private sector led the mobilization effort.²⁹

The desire of the federal and state governments to reorganize US society in such a cooperative, private-sector-led manner could be seen in the committee and membership composition of every state defense council. Depending on the state, its particular economic resources, and its available manpower, individual state defense councils exhibited a range of actors, activities, inclinations, long-term goals, and purposes. Regardless of how different they may have appeared at first glance their basic operation and membership composition highlighted the similarities. The CND's Executive Commission did express one overarching expectation for the states when forming their defense councils – that all state governors act as the *ex officio* head of their respective state defense council systems. The declaration of a wartime emergency ultimately handed state governors a great deal of power, which most of them wielded unchallenged.³⁰

In California, Nebraska, and Texas, state lawmakers asked their legislatures to put forth motions to create their state defense councils, thus providing them with a higher level of democratic accountability. But even then, those legislatures still handed over almost unfettered control of their state defense councils to their executive branches. "Councils of this type," according to the CND's Section on Cooperation with the States, "exercise large powers as an agency of the governor ... the popular influence and control which accrues to them ... enables them to exercise influence over executive action and the legislation of the state." World War I

²⁹ Breen, "Mobilization and Cooperative Federalism," 58-61; Council of National Defense, *Summary of Important Defense Council Work* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 4-5, 13.

³⁰ *Report on Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense*, 7.

provided the ability for state governments to accomplish legislation through innovative new forms of political organization, doing so without the concern of the being challenged by the federal government or being encumbered by intrastate partisan disagreements.³¹

Early on in the process, the declaration of a wartime emergency and the subsequent reactions of some state governors made it seem as if the state defense councils would work more dictatorially as several states formed their defense councils in an even less democratic fashion. “Councils of this type,” were, more often than not, found within the far western states. The governors of Idaho, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, completely bypassed their state legislatures through executive orders that established their defense councils. The legal processes of defense council formation varied slightly from state to state, but their conceptions and overall modes of operation remained decidedly similar with state governors serving in an administrative and supervisory capacity as the heads of their Councils. Across the board, sometimes by accident and sometimes through a coordinated effort, they all emphasized and organized for similar forms of mobilization activity. Defense councils in the western states shared a great deal in common in regard to their wartime activities, especially in regard to agriculture, labor, and eliminating the rising threat of political populism to the ensure the domination of the Republican and Democratic Parties in the region.³²

II: DCS Development in the Western States

In the American West, agricultural expansion, increased resource extraction capabilities, and devising ways to consolidate and de-radicalize the organized labor force, especially the millions of migrant laborers who worked in the agricultural and extractive industries, comprised

³¹ Ibid.; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, xi-xii, 15-16.

³² *Council of National Defense Field Division Report*, 3, 4; *Report on Organization and Activities of the State Councils of Defense*, 5-7, 9.

a significant portion of the region's mobilization activities. Enhanced wartime production necessitated labor adjustments and de-radicalization, and the American West held the title of the most important region for the extraction of natural resources. In relation to wartime production, that was, for most state councils, an existential aspect of their contributions to mobilization. Speaking to that importance, Washington State Governor Ernest Lister, proudly reminded his gubernatorial counterparts during the 1918 Governor's Conference that "the work done in the Pacific states in connection with war activities produced more tonnage in shipments for the federal government . . . than was produced by all the Atlantic states." Even with its smaller regional population compared to the Northeast, Southeast, and Midwest, the socioeconomic significance of the West to wartime mobilization, as suggested by Governor Lister, could not be contested.³³

By increasing the regulatory presence of the government within regional industries, state defense council activities ultimately transformed the character of the regional modes of production in the West, both during and after the war. Doing so created a domino effect in relation to the socioeconomic production of the rest of the nation due to the importance of the region's extractive industries – mainly farming, mining, timber harvesting, and lumber manufacturing. Those industries formed the socioeconomic cornerstone for the wartime involvement of the states located within the Pacific Coast, Northwest, Southwest, Intermountain Rockies, and the Northern Great Plains. The very ability of the United States to mobilize for a decisive military victory depended heavily upon the nation's industrial capabilities, which in-turn relied intrinsically upon the natural resources of the West, making the states of the region indispensable to the entire homefront mobilization effort. The federal government maintained a

³³ *Proceedings of the Tenth Meeting of the Governors of the States of the Union*, 121.

hands-off approach to how states regulated their industrial sectors, insisting only that they retain the leadership and expertise of public-private cooperation to do so.³⁴

Northern Rockies/Great Plains: Montana State Council of Defense

Montana was among the first states in the country to form a defense council, doing so even before the CND created the Section on Cooperation with the States and before Newton Baker's National Defense Conference. Governor Samuel V. Stewart established the MSCD by executive order immediately following the congressional declaration of war on April 6, 1917. The Montana State Legislature convened once every two years and the declaration of war, along with Governor Stewart's creation of the MSCD, came in-between regular legislative sessions, forcing Stewart to call an "Extraordinary Session of the Legislative Assembly." As his first act, Stewart appointed Charles Greenfield, Montana's Agricultural and Publicity Commissioner, to serve as Secretary of the MSCD, highlighting the pronounced role that agriculture would play in the state's wartime activities. The first iteration of the MSCD consisted of nine members appointed by Stewart, each representing a range of the state's most significant economic activities.³⁵

Governor Stewart appointed seven committee heads in non-partisan fashion as per the standard CND recommendation. The original committee members included Norman B. Holter, hardware dealer; Jesse Thompson, Montana Federation of Women's Clubs Chairwoman; J.E. Edwards, President of the Bank of Commerce; William A. Campbell, Editor of the *Helena Independent*; Charles J. Kelly, President of the Henny Mercantile Company; B.C. White,

³⁴ G.F. Loughlin, *Mineral Resources of the United States, Part I: Metals* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 8A-10A; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 71-82; *Report on Organization and Activities of State Councils of Defense*, 5-7, 9-10, 13-16.

³⁵ Samuel Stewart, "Montana Council of Defense," 1917, box 22, folder 5, Montana Defense Council Records.

rancher; and Edward C. Elliot, Chancellor of the University of Montana. The range of occupations was demonstrative of how most of the region's state defense councils formed their committees, but with unique state-by-state differences. In the case of Montana, the inclusion of retail shop owners, such as Holter and Kelly, demonstrated the attempt to appeal to the local business community. More broadly speaking, academics and middle-class professionals could be found in most state defense council structures, including university administrators, women's club presidents, and bankers. Newspaper editors were also a common appearance, as media propaganda constituted a special aspect of DCS activities across the board.³⁶

Although Governor Stewart established the MSCD in April 1917, it remained a rather impotent body throughout the remainder of the year due to a lack of funding and a yet undetermined concept of what its bounds of authority would be. To remediate that problem, Stewart called another "Extraordinary Session of the House and Senate" on February 14, 1918, to request that the state legislature make the MSCD a "legal entity clothed with legal authority" to validate the appropriation of state funds, expand its range of operations, and to legitimize it in the eyes of the state's citizens. Upon approval by the legislature of a sum of \$500,000, the second iteration of the MSCD, imbued with a more clearly articulated legal authority, formed three primary committees, retaining many of the original nine members to lead them.³⁷ Governor Stewart appointed a new Executive Committee, led by himself, Charles Greenfield, William Campbell, N.T. Lease, and Charles J. Kelly. The Executive Committee then appointed Mortimer M. Donoghue, N.T. Lease, and Charles J. Kelly to head the Labor Committee; and Ignatius

³⁶ Nancy Rice Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," Master's Thesis, University of Montana (1966): 11-12; J.B. Collins to Charles Greenfield, June 11, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records.

³⁷ State of Montana, *Message of Governor S.V. Stewart to the First Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana* (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1918), 5.

O'Donnell, Samuel Sansburn, and C.V. Peck to head the Agricultural Finance Committee. Stewart appointed Mrs. Jesse Thompson, head of the Montana Federation of Women's Clubs, as chairwoman of the MSCD's Women's Committee.³⁸

The addition of a Women's Committee was another point of commonality for every state council, including the CND, which had encouraged the states to make the inclusion of women an essential part of the process. Their role was to coordinate the various women's clubs and societies around the state for "women's work," consisting predominantly of Red Cross coordination, food conservation, and food preservation. The 1918 legislative act that reorganized the MSCD also stated that "three of the council's members must be farmers," hence the inclusion of O'Donnell, Sansburn, and Peck, further reiterating the importance of agricultural production to Montana's prospective mobilization activities.³⁹

In keeping with the idea of non-partisan nationalism, the reformed MSCD was comprised of a nearly even balance of Republicans and Democrats. C.V. Peck, Samuel Sansburn, Sidney Logan, and N.T. Lease were all members of the Republican Party. Charles Kelly, Ignatius O'Donnell, and William Campbell were, along with Governor Stewart and Charles Greenfield, stalwart Democrats. Montana's Attorney General disallowed the involvement of two of the original Executive Committee members in the MSCD's second iteration, B.C. White and J.E. Edwards, because they were both elected members of the state legislature. To avoid any possible conflicts of interest and to emphasize the importance of the private sector as part of its agenda, Attorney General Samuel Ford and Governor Stewart both insisted that the MSCD should avoid

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 5-7; "Montana Council of Defense," February 1918, box 5, folder 22, Montana Defense Council Records.

³⁹ "Governor Let Free to Name State Council," *Helena Independent*, February 19, 1918, 1.

the appointment of any state legislators to the Council. In doing so, the MSCD handed private-sector actors a great deal of wartime authority.⁴⁰

Pacific Coast: California State Council of Defense

The process of defense council formation in California appeared different than that of Montana, but, in a testament to the manner in which the state defense councils tended to resemble and mirror one another, its overall operation and composition looked remarkably similar. Rather than being established by an executive order, the California State Council of Defense (CSCD) was created on April 6, 1917, by an act of the overwhelmingly Republican-controlled California State Legislative Assembly – the same day that Congress declared war. The CSCD was, along with Montana, among first state defense councils to be formed in the nation. Recently elected Republican governor, William D. Stephens, quickly signed the act into law that same day.⁴¹

The act gave Governor Stephens very broad and general powers, permitting him to secure appointments for “not more than thirty-three” men and women to lead twenty different committees related to California’s most significant economic activities. However, as per the act’s established guidelines, Stephens appointed or approved those committee heads at his own discretion. He also retained the ability to create subcommittees and appoint additional members if he felt it necessary. Stephens and the twelve members of the CSCD’s Executive Committee formed eighteen committees: Public Defense and Security; Transportation; Highways and Routes of Travel; Public Health and Sanitation; Relief, Resources and Food Supplies; Oil and Fuel

⁴⁰ Fritz, “Montana Council of Defense,” 23-25; “Governor Names Council Members,” *Circle Banner*, March 15, 1918, 3; I.W. Choate, *The Revised Codes of Montana of 1921: Volume One, Political Code* (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1921), 2081.

⁴¹ California State Council of Defense, *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense, from April 6, 1917, to January 1, 1918* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 5-7.

Supplies; Publication; Military Training; Public Revenue and Finance; Manufactories; Scientific Research; Law; Federal Relations; Disbursements; Labor; Shipbuilding; Military Welfare Commission; and a Farm Labor Committee.⁴²

The legislative act creating the CSCD broadly stated that its purpose was “to make investigations into the effect of the occurrence of war upon the civil and economic life of the State of California ... [and] for the fuller development of the resources of the state, particularly those from which are derived the supplies of food and other commodities.” The act also stipulated that “the governor shall be *ex officio* chairman with the ability to employ any persons and make any expenditures as he may deem necessary,” further emphasizing the amount of fiscal and political power placed in the hands of the new governor by the state legislature. Although dissimilar to some other regional state defense councils in that it was created by an act of the state legislature rather than by an executive order, the CSCD still looked quite similar in its basic operation. California’s state executive branch retained almost full control of the entire defense council apparatus following its legislative creation.⁴³

The CSCD’s committee composition represented a cross-section of professionals typical of nearly all state defense councils. Stephens appointed bankers, university professors, private utility officials, railroad regulators, insurance men, newspapermen, labor leaders, medical professionals, industrialists, farmers, food administrators, women’s club leaders, and business association presidents. To represent the state’s more unique socioeconomic activities, such as petroleum extraction, Stephens appointed one of the world’s wealthiest oil tycoons, Edward Doheny, to head the CSCD’s Oil and Other Fuel Supplies Committee. To ensure maximum

⁴² *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁴³ *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 5.

cooperation and coordination with the CND, Stephens also formed a Federal Relations Committee, chaired by former US Senator from California, Frank P. Flint.⁴⁴

Stephens appointed his thirty-three committee chairpersons, ostensibly, in non-partisan fashion. Of the thirty-three Executive Committee members, including Stephens, the CSCD contained twenty Republicans, seven Democrats, two Independents, three self-described “non-partisans,” and one Socialist. Although the partisan balance leaned strongly in favor of the Republicans, it still represented a higher proportion of Democrats than the legislative assembly did. When Stephens formed the CSCD in 1917, Republicans comprised sixty-nine seats of the eighty-seat lower chamber, while Democrats held only nine seats. One Progressive and one Prohibitionist held the remaining two seats. In the upper chamber, Republicans held twenty of forty seats and Democrats held eleven. Eight Progressives and one Independent retained the other ten seats. Democrats represented only sixteen percent of the State Legislature, while Republicans accounted for seventy-four percent. In comparison to the CSCD, Stephens’ Democratic appointees comprised twenty-one percent of its committee membership. In terms of apportionment relative to partisan representation in the legislature, the CSCD did exhibit a non-partisan character to an extent.⁴⁵

Like every other state defense council in the West, and even though it contained a broader range of committees than others in the region, the CSCD focused much of its wartime efforts on improving and expanding California’s agricultural industries. Socioeconomic modernization and readjustment, common themes that undergirded the DCS’s wartime efforts in

⁴⁴ Ibid., 6-8; California State Council of Defense, *Report of the Committee on Petroleum* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1917), 11-13.

⁴⁵ Jackson K. Putnam, *Modern California Politics, 1917-1980* (San Francisco: Boyd & Frasier Publishing Company, 1980), 2-10; Frank P. Flint, “California State Council of Defense,” *California Southland*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Winter, 1918-1919): 5; California Historical Survey Commission, *California in the War* (Sacramento: California State Publishing Company, 1921), 19, 52, 55.

general, relied upon the increased development of any given state's agricultural and extractive industries, and California's economy relied heavily upon natural resource extraction, especially the farming, ranching, dairy, and fruit canning industries. California also endured a great deal of political conflict, due mainly to its large and diverse population, its embrace of populist politics, and partisan infighting among the Republicans. Subsequently, Stephens used the CSCD as a tool to further consolidate party control into the hands of himself and his political allies.⁴⁶

The election of California Governor Hiram Johnson to a US Senate seat in November 1916 left the state's executive office vacant in the middle of the term. State law dictated that in such circumstances the governor's seat would be filled by their appointed Lieutenant Governor, who was William D. Stephens. The intra-partisan divide that emerged as a result of Stephens' elevation to the governorship was rooted deeply in the conflict between isolationists and interventionists within the Republican Party. Johnson and his allies claimed American isolation as the best approach, while Stephens and his supporters went along with the Wilson Administration and the interventionist camp, embracing non-partisan nationalism in the process. For Johnson, this was most evident in Stephens' immediate establishment of the CSCD on the very same day that Congress declared war. For the "Johnsonites," the DCS in California would for years remain a symbol of war mongering, anti-Progressivism, and American imperialism.⁴⁷

Southwest: Arizona State Council of Defense

On April 12, 1917, only six-days after Congress declared war against Germany, Arizona's newly elected Republican Governor, Thomas E. Campbell, sent out invitations to "a

⁴⁶ California State Council of Defense, *Report of the Committee on Petroleum*, 17-18; R.L. Adams and T.R. Kelly, University of California College of Agriculture, "Circular No. 193: A Study of Farm Labor in California" (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1918), 1-4.

⁴⁷ Hiram Johnson to Meyer Lissner, April 18, 1917, box 1 (film), Hiram Johnson Papers; Hiram Johnson to John Neylan, April 14, 1917, box 1 (film), Hiram Johnson Papers.

selected list of men involved in all lines of activity with the state” to meet at the Arizona State House in Phoenix on April 18 to establish the Arizona State Council of Defense (ASCD).

Among the guests on Governor Campbell’s list were some of the state’s most prominent and politically-connected citizens and businessmen, including representatives of the state’s various mining corporations and business associations.⁴⁸ Unlike most other state defense councils, the ASCD emerged from the efforts of Governor Campbell to unite the state’s executive branch of government with a select group of Arizona businessmen, engineers, and newspapermen; a good representation of how state governments formulated their respective brands of administrative associationalism. Rather than first creating committees with the input of state policymakers and elected officials and then appointing experts to head those committees, as was the case in Montana and California, Governor Campbell instead sought the input of industrialists and engineers to suggest to him which defense council committees should be formed and who to appoint to head those committees.⁴⁹

Similar to the MSCD and unlike the CSCD, Arizona’s defense council was established by an executive order of the governor. As a result of the highly centralized nature of the ASCD, the manner in which the state moved forward with wartime mobilization, at least in 1917 under Campbell’s leadership, proceeded efficiently but in a more dictatorial and less labor-friendly fashion than those states that insisted on working through the normal channels of legislation to do so. Even the MSCD, which may have initially been established by an executive order, still

⁴⁸ Arizona State Council of Defense, *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense* (Phoenix: Republican Print Shop, 1919), 12; “Defense Board Gives Advice to People,” *Weekly Journal-Miner*, April 25, 1917, 5.

⁴⁹ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 12-13, 17-18; “Summary Covering Principal Work Done by the State Council of Defense,” October 1, 1917, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; Pascual M. Vargas to Dwight B. Heard, October 15, 1917, box 3, folder 53, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

approached the state legislature to ask it to provide the Council with some level of democratic legitimacy. Neither the ASCD nor Governor Campbell asked the legislature for such a courtesy, an interesting fact when considering that Arizona's 1910 constitution had purposely limited the executive's power over the legislature. Arizona's population was small and its politics strongly Democratic, making the business-friendly Republican administration of Thomas Campbell a target of the state's Democrat-led progressive reform movement. Throughout 1917, the ASCD proved to be one of the least progressive and most authoritative of any other regional defense council.⁵⁰

Six-days after the meeting with Arizona's private-sector participants, and twelve-days after the declaration of war against Germany, Governor Campbell officially established the ASCD on April 18, 1917. Keeping in mind the suggestions made during his meeting with the private sector, Thomas Campbell appointed the following committees and chairpersons: Dwight B. Heard, Executive Committee; Allen B. Jaynes, Publications Committee; Dr. D.T. MacDougal, Scientific Research Committee; Judge E.W. Weils, Relief Committee; Dr. R.N. Looney, Public Health and Sanitation Committee; Col. LeRoy Brown, Military Training Committee; R.B. Von Kleinsmid, Production, Conservation, and Distribution of Food Supplies Committee; John H. Page, Public Revenue and Finance Committee; George W.P. Hunt, former Arizona Governor, Federal and Interstate Relations Committee; Lamar Cobb, Highways and Routes of Travel Committee; Wiley Jones, Law Committee; C.E. Mills, Mines and Manufactories Committee; Col. Epes Randolph, Transportation Committee; Capt. John Greenway, Public Defense and

⁵⁰ Arizona State Council of Defense, *The Arizona Council of Defense: Its Purposes and a Brief Statement of its Work Accomplished and Under Way* (Phoenix: R.A. Watkins Printing Co., 1918), 2-6.

Security Committee; and John L. Donnelly, Labor Committee. On May 23, 1917, Governor Campbell added a Women's Committee, headed by Mrs. Pauline O'Neil.⁵¹

As a Republican governor in a predominantly Democratic state, Campbell maintained the CND's wartime expectation of non-partisan nationalism when appointing his committee chairs. Of the sixteen committee chairpersons; Hunt, Cobb, Jones, Donnelly, Law, and O'Neil were Democrats. Heard, Jaynes, Greenway, Randolph, Mills, and Page all belonged to the Republican Party. The remaining four committee heads; MacDougal, Von Kleinsmid, Weils, and Looney, all classified themselves as Independents. Executive Committee Chairman, Dwight B. Heard, commended Campbell on his "strictly non-partisan organization [which] can hold the confidence and support of all the people of the state."⁵²

Like most other defense councils, the ASCD included committees related to publicity, agriculture, finance, law, home defense, and labor. Committees on mining and public security were specific to Arizona's unique geography and industrial composition, highlighting the state's insistence on retaining regulatory control over its most significant economic activity – copper mining. The ASCD formed the Public Defense and Security Committee, headed by Spanish-American War veteran and manager of the Copper Queen Mine, Capt. John Greenway, in part as a response to Pancho Villa's 1916 border raid of Columbus, New Mexico, in case a military force needed to be quickly mobilized to defend the border communities from further Villista incursions. With the exception of the committees related to the state's unique economic activities

⁵¹ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 12-16.

⁵² Dwight B. Heard to George W.P. Hunt, May 21, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records;

such as mining, the ASCD's committee structure looked quite similar to both Montana and California's defense councils.⁵³

Mining corporations operating in Arizona held a disproportionate amount of influence within the state government and Arizona struggled to find a balance between economic development and economic reform. But unlike the MSCD, the ASCD created its own mining committee. The CND's preestablished involvement in the regulation of copper production did not preclude or deter the ASCD from involving itself in the regulation of the state's copper mining industry. As a result, from 1917-1919, copper mining giants Calumet and Arizona Mining Company; and Phelps-Dodge and Company, found themselves in a protracted battle with the Department of the Interior, the CND's Labor Committee, and even the state's Democrats over Arizona's copper mining practices, almost always in relation to working conditions and the wages of the miners.⁵⁴

The Democrats dominated Arizona's state political system prior to the Great War. However, with the rising significance of non-partisan nationalism to mobilization, Republicans began to rapidly increase their partisan influence among the electorate. From the first year of Arizona statehood in 1912 up until the establishment of the ASCD, Republicans had struggled to gain a foothold in both state and local politics, even though they thoroughly dominated in the territorial period. With the reassessment of wartime partisanship arising from the creation of the DCS, the Democrats' grip on the state's political culture loosened as they displayed a greater

⁵³ Arizona Council of Defense, *Service U.S.A., 1917* (Phoenix: Republican Print Shop, 1917), 15; *The Arizona Council of Defense: Its Purposes and a Brief Statement of its Work*, 12-13; "Executives of State Council Plan Meeting," *Arizona Republican*, December 27, 1917, 8.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 16; *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 21; "Some Job Proposed for Defense Council," *The Copper Era and Morenci Leader*, May 18, 1917, 4; John Donnelly to Walter Shute, May 1, 1917, box 1, folder 6, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; Stuart French to Dwight B. Heard, April 23, 1917, box 1, folder 6, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

willingness to work with their Republican counterparts in the name of patriotic cooperation and efficiency in mobilization.⁵⁵

Pacific Northwest: The Washington State Council of Defense

Washington State was somewhat late to take up Newton Baker's invitation to create its state defense council, doing so over a month after the National Defense Conference in May of 1917. However, it was still one of the first ten states to do so following the National Defense Conference. Governor Ernest Lister established the Washington State Council of Defense (WSCD) by executive order on June 16, 1917, naming University of Washington Chancellor, Henry Suzzallo, as its chairman. Lister formed fifteen committees, each correlating to some important economic resource or progressive institution within the state that he considered useful for wartime mobilization. Like many western states, Washington held large reserves of natural resources, productive farmland, and well-developed manufacturing capabilities, all of which were represented in the WSCD's committee composition to one degree or another.⁵⁶

The WSCD Executive Committee contained the state's most prominent industrialists, lawyers, and middle-class professionals. Lister appointed Henry Suzzallo, University of Washington Chancellor, Coordination of Societies and Education Institutions and WSCD Chairman; William A. Peters, lawyer, Home Defense Committee; Charles Hebbard, Washington State Food Administrator, Food Supply and Conservation Committee; Dr. Ernest Wheeler, medical doctor, Sanitation and Medicine Committee; Ernest P. Marsh, WSFL President, Labor Committee; A.L. Rogers, farmer, Farm Labor Committee; Ruth Carr McKee, Washington State

⁵⁵ Berman, *Arizona Politics and Government*, xi, xxiii-xxiv, 41-48; "Governor Campbell Takes Oath of Office – Arizona's First Republican Governor," *Coconino Sun*, January 10, 1919, 1.

⁵⁶ Washington State Council of Defense, *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington* (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn: Public Printer, 1919), 5; "State Council of Defense to Meet June 25," *Seattle Star*, June 18, 1917, 10.

Federation of Women's Clubs, Women's Work Committee; Everett Griggs, St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Co., Lumber Committee; J.G. Kelly, Walla Walla Bulletin, Publicity Committee; George Donald, Yakima National Bank, Transportation Committee; John Heffernan, Heffernan Engine Co., Manufacturing Committee; W.A. Lowman, cannery operator, Fisheries Committee; C.J. Lord, Capitol National Bank, Shipbuilding Committee; William Boeing, airplane manufacturer, Aviation Committee; and E.S. McCord, lawyer, Law and Finance Committee.⁵⁷

The composition of the WSCD's committees and its appointed chairpersons provided an excellent cross-section of the committees and composition of most state defense councils in the American West. Committees related to labor, agriculture, women's work, manufacturing, transportation, publicity, and home defense, were all present in every western state defense council to some extent. The appointment of a farm labor committee in addition to a labor committee underscored the emphasis Lister intended to place on adjusting the state's reliance on migrant farm workers. The WSCD and CSCD were the only defense councils in the region to have formed farm-labor committees as something distinct and separate from the standard labor committees. Other committees, such as aviation, fisheries, shipbuilding, and lumber, represented the unique and more specialized committees associated with any given state's more geographically specific industrial activities.⁵⁸

Washington's extensive spruce and cedar forests in the western portion of the state made it an important center for the manufacture of airplanes, a valuable new addition to the theatre of war. The state's proximity to the Pacific Ocean made it a great location for shipbuilding and fishing. The orchards of the Big Bend region in central Washington and the grain fields of the Palouse region in the southeast made Washington an important food producer. Those industries,

⁵⁷ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 5-6.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 8; *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 3.

along with mineral extraction and the manufacturing and transportation hubs of Spokane, Tacoma, and Seattle, helped categorize the state as a noteworthy contributor to wartime mobilization. Washington's military installations also made the state a significant contributor to national defense in general, especially in regard to homefront defense preparations and the construction of coastal fortifications.⁵⁹

Under the leadership of the "able, affable, and energetic" Governor Ernest Lister, the WSCD evolved into one of the most successful and capable state defense council units in the entire American West, perhaps the nation. Like any organization or form of government, state defense councils were either helped or hindered by the capacities of their leadership. The intelligence and guidance of Ernest Lister assisted the WSCD in becoming an excellent example of what worked. The inclusion of prominent progressive members in the WSCD, such as University of Washington President Henry Suzzallo and Federation of Women's Clubs President Ruth Carr McKee, ensured that efficiency and progressive idealism would remain a key aspect of the WSCD's mode of operation. While prominent industrialists and labor leaders comprised a significant portion of Washington's contributions to the mobilization effort, people like Suzzallo and McKee played an integral role in bridging the gap between business, government, academia, and private associations like labor unions.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ R.B. Coglan, "War Work of County Agents: Special Report," September 20, 1918, box 1, folder 1, Ernest O. Holland Records; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 36, 37, 39-41, 41-44.

⁶⁰ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 72. In his examination of the defense council system, *Uncle Same at Home*, William J. Breen touts the highly ordered and efficacious organizing capabilities of the WSCD, going as far as to consider it the Northwest's "only effective state council." However, stating that it was, so matter-of-factly, the "only" effective or noteworthy state council of defense in the region is misleading to say the least. Montana, Idaho, and to a far lesser extent, Oregon, also formed defense councils whose work could be considered comparable to that of Washington's in many respects. However, the WSCD stood out in its ability to mobilize the state with relatively little political conflict and was definitely, as Breen states, "the most effective" state defense council unit in the region.

The WSCD enjoyed a great deal of cooperation among the state's various industrial sectors and did not experience much in the way of political conflict. The non-partisan nationalist ideal seemed to have been an easy pill to swallow for most of Washington's policymakers and its appointed defense council members. The process of defense council organization in Washington appeared streamlined and effective from the state to the county and even community levels, exhibiting relatively few weaknesses as compared to the more unorganized, and poorly directed defense councils present in some other western states. That efficacy was most pronounced when judged within the context of less efficient defense councils, most notably the CSCD, which in many ways could have been considered the antithesis to the WSCD. The organizational foundation of the WSCD was so strong and effective that several other states looked to Washington as a prime example of how to succeed with their own mobilization efforts.⁶¹

The WSCD's final report boasted that "the State of Indiana found our plan especially practicable and useful" and the CND's Section on Cooperation with the States touted the WSCD as one the DCS's most glaring examples of success. On more than one occasion, the Field Division of the CND referred other states to emulate Washington's organizational methodology as a template for improving their own state defense council operations. In his travels across the country to observe the various mobilization activities of the different states, Dr. James Scherer, Chief Field Agent for the CND's Section on Cooperation with the States, proudly remarked that "[Washington State] has transformed itself into a bee-hive of the most effective war workers, with a Council of Defense second to none in the country."⁶²

⁶¹ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 13.

⁶² Council of National Defense, *Second Annual Report of the Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 13, 19; Scherer, 137.

Native Americans and the DCS

During the World War I years, Native American tribes and individuals in the western states were still being subjected to the federal government's attempts at forced Americanization as stipulated by the General Allotment Act of 1887 – the Dawes Act. The Dawes Act had broken up tribal lands and divided them into allotments to be distributed to the male heads of tribal households, effectively ending the practice of communal landholding. In order for Native Americans to receive titles to their new plots of land, they had to renounce their tribal membership and embrace American citizenship. While the act was, ostensibly, meant to acculturate and absorb Native Americans into the mainstream culture of white American society, it actually had the more immediate effect of destroying their agricultural economy and providing opportunities for white settlers to snatch up millions of acres of tribal lands.⁶³

Even though thousands of Native Americans received patents to their private plots of land, and due to the technicalities present in how federal Indian Agents determined “full-blood status” of tribal members, many more remained under the purview of the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA). In Montana and Arizona, two states in the American West with some of the largest Native American populations in the region, most Natives could not be compelled by state governments, including state defense councils, to engage in mobilization duties. Since tribal members were still technically wards of the federal government, coercing their participation in homefront mobilization was a job designed specifically for the federal government and the OIA. State and county defense councils in the region happily accepted the assistance offered by the local Native American community, and many thousands did so without being compelled. However, for those who did not volunteer their services, and through the wartime coordination of the OIA and the

⁶³ Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest*, 195-199.

DCS, Native Americans throughout the West were coerced to engage in mobilization labor in a variety of ways.⁶⁴

Just as the MSCD had dealt with suspected “labor slackers” in the cities and in the countryside, so too would the federal government deal with supposed labor slackers on reservation lands. On the Blackfeet Reservation in northcentral Montana in 1918, OIA officials encouraged Native American allotment owners to lease their surplus lands to non-Native farmers and ranchers. Because of the food production increases demanded by the federal government during the Great War, OIA “Indian Courts” on the reservation passed temporary wartime measures to compel tribal members to work on their own land for the lessees as farmhands or ranch-hands for daily wages. Echoing the general tone of patriotic voluntarism found in mainstream American society at the time, Frank C. Campbell, Superintendent of the Blackfeet Agency, demanded that “all persons living on the reservation [will] work this season.” Campbell insisted that they labor “not as Indians or even as individual men, but as Americans.” Because the OIA had so much control over the tribal members residing within what still remained of the reservation system, OIA agents used mobilization to coerce increased food production rates on reservation lands. They also used it to Americanize as many tribal members as possible by inculcating the importance of private property and production through land leases and emphasizing wage labor as their best chances at acculturation and financial success.⁶⁵

In Arizona, the ASCD frequently coordinated with OIA agencies on the reservations located within the state. In the summer of 1917, Ernest Stecker, Superintendent of the San Carlos Apache Reservation in southeastern Arizona, worked with the ASCD to procure nearly 1,000

⁶⁴ Thomas A. Britten, *Native Americans in World War I: At Home and at War* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 140-143.

⁶⁵ “He Wanted to Quit but Changed Mind,” *Helena Daily Independent*, April 28, 1918, 7.

Apache farmhands for use throughout the state during the war. “The Indians of Arizona are fairly good farmhands,” Stecker informed ASCD Chairman, Dwight Heard, “the Apaches are the least agriculturally inclined, but at all kinds of work they make fair hands.”⁶⁶ The ASCD’s Executive Committee worked closely with the OIA superintendents of the Papago, Navajo, and Apache Tribes to secure agricultural labor forces of mostly teenaged boys to help with the fall cotton harvests in counties where labor was scarce. For its part, the OIA requested that the ASCD assist the federal government in securing white settlement on Arizona reservations and in educating Native American land holders on methods for improving production on their farmlands. The ASCD’s Committee on Production, Conservation, and Distribution of Food Supplies, led by Dr. R.B. von Kleinsmid, took charge of those duties.⁶⁷

For many Native Americans living on tribal reservations in the western states, mobilization for World War I became a sort of acculturation cudgel. The wartime emergency allowed for the federal government to apply Dawes Act stipulations faster and more vigorously than they had been able to do during peacetime. The state defense councils may not have been able to directly coerce their local Native American populations into performing compulsory agricultural labor, but they could always coordinate with the federal government, CND, and/or OIA to do that work for them, which is exactly what occurred in states with relatively large populations of Native Americans like Montana and Arizona. Food production and land improvements were the basis of DCS-OIA coordination on the region’s reservations, but it also

⁶⁶ “Plenty of Indians for Extra Farm Labor,” *Copper Era and Morenci Leader*, June 8, 1917, 7.

⁶⁷ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 38; *The Arizona Council of Defense*, 4, 10; E.W. Hudson, “Growing Egyptian Cotton in the Salt River Valley,” *Arizona Republican*, February 17, 1918, 9-10.

allowed for a coercive crash course in Americanization, capitalism, and agricultural production, three crucial elements of what the Dawes Act had originally sought to accomplish.⁶⁸

III: County and Community Defense Councils

Continuing the mobilization process in a “practicable, economical, and efficient” manner, state defense councils diffused and decentralized their regulatory power structures even further by creating county defense councils, similar to what the CND did with the creation of the state councils. Due to the region’s abundance of natural resources so necessary for wartime production, its millions of acres of farmland, and its widely dispersed population, the defense councils of the American West engaged in state-county governmental diffusion more keenly than the states of the Midwest, Northeast, or Southeast did. In a region whose residents were so personally affected by the rise of political populism, labor radicalism, and the cultural credo of rugged individualism, the experimental organization of the DCS awakened the residents of the West to a greater possibility of a more participatory relationship with their political system. The increased levels of participation at the local levels of governance helped facilitate socioeconomic transformation from the bottom-up. The emphasis on counties and communities was a conscious effort by federal and state policymakers to balance the CND’s top-heavy mode of organization, promote efficiency, and avoid the problems inherent with the federal-state power dynamic.⁶⁹

Even though the state defense councils organized and managed their own mobilization activities, the fact that the process was initiated by the federal government was, for many Americans, enough of a reason to question what the system was attempting to accomplish. At first glance, the entire DCS appeared top-heavy, with general orders and expectations moving in

⁶⁸ Britten, *Native Americans in World War I*, 3-5, 140-143.

⁶⁹ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 9; Council of National Defense, *Readjustment and Reconstruction Information: Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 13-17, 72-77, 176-181.

a decidedly top-down manner from non-elected committee heads appointed by the President. In regard to the CND's modus operandi, that was mostly true. However, the more localized the defense council and the more competent and efficient its respective leadership, then the more bottom-up and seamlessly it operated. Subsequently, the further down the governmental line – from federal to state, state to county, and county to community – the more participatory and efficacious the process operated.⁷⁰

As the organizational progression of the system worked its way down to the more localized forms of government authority, state defense councils could more effectively organize their populations by focusing on increasingly smaller, rural, and more dispersed populations. That was, of course, a more prominent issue in the western states as opposed to the more densely populated East Coast or Midwestern states. The proliferation of county and community councils acted as practical counterbalance to the top-down methods of mobilization utilized by the CND, thereby giving ordinary citizens a greater ability to participate in the process relative to their general inability to enjoin the process of state or national defense councils. Committee composition at the state level, similar to the CND, tended to be reserved for prominent and influential industrialists, academics, engineers, and labor leaders. With friends, neighbors, and acquaintances appointed to lead mobilization duties in the counties, cities, and towns of the West, residents recognized the benefits of localized defense councils. The inclusion of local government in the mobilization effort provided the general population with a reason to want to be involved in the process, thereby limiting opposition and a constant need for coercion.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Breen, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 13-14.

⁷¹ Elliot Dunlap Smith, "Community Councils: Their Present Work, Their Future Opportunity," *Proceedings of the First National Country Life Conference, 1919* (New York: National Country Life Association Press, 1919), 36-39.

Montana's county defense council system was indicative of how nearly all state councils diffused their systems, but with slight locational differences. During the MSCD's first meeting, held from April 18-19, 1917, at the Placer Hotel in Helena, Governor Stewart expressed his desire to foment a more grassroots level of operation through the creation of county defense councils within each of the state's forty-three counties. He then personally appointed three members to serve in and lead each of those county councils. As per the rule agreed upon by the MSCD, one unique to the state, the three members of each county council would be composed of one banker, one farmer, and one general shopkeeper. The specific professional composition appointed to lead the county defense councils demonstrated the MSCD's larger goals of economic structuring during the war. Bankers would be needed to facilitate local finance for farmers and shopkeepers. Shopkeepers would represent the Council's desire to appeal to area businessmen. Politicians in the western states understood the economic significance of industrial agriculture, and in consideration of the kind of socioeconomic readjustment the DCS sought to attempt in the region, the direct participation of farmers was deemed especially necessary.⁷²

Each county would then be subdivided even further into community defense councils based on school districts in rural areas and voting precincts in urban areas. Their members would be appointed by the county defense council leaders who had been appointed by the governor. The community councils brought even the remotest and most sparsely populated farming communities into the larger machinery of the MSCD and, in effect, into the larger state body politic. The inclusion of communities was a significant aspect in consideration of the state's scattered rural population. Facilitating localized control over mobilization duties comprised a major element of the DCS's overall wartime priorities. In states like Montana, that was much

⁷² State of Montana, *Laws of the State of Montana Passed by the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly* (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1918), 3-5.

more necessary than some other states due to its large size and having a more dispersed population. While the process of determining who would represent the county defense councils saw some slight differences from state to state, nearly all western states did so either through direct governor appointments or through their executive committees.⁷³

While defense council members at all levels may have been appointed by elected officials, the fact that mobilization decisions could be affected by ordinary Americans within their communities, regardless of their status within their state or local defense council system, allowed for a more participatory mobilization process. As the DCS continued down the line of governmental authority, the entire process of mobilization became more streamlined, effective, decentralized, and provided greater opportunities for ordinary citizens to want to participate, not just feel pressured or coerced into it. In some instances, residents even formed neighborhood defense councils which usually operated through local churches and schools, further decreasing the need for associational-based organization by encouraging the contribution of individuals, not just of associations.⁷⁴

As the DCS extended into several tens-of-thousands of county, city, and community units between April 1917 and November 1918, the traditional duties of American associationalism were being steadily and concertedly fused together with an increasingly administrative form of associational governance. That fusion foisted upon private associations a kind of accountability they had not experienced, making their socioeconomic and political influences more accessible to ordinary citizens. Americans began relying less upon private associations as socioeconomic coordinators and, as active participants themselves, began looking more to an individualistic,

⁷³ Fritz, 12; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 46-48.

⁷⁴ Robert E. Cavanaugh and Walter S. Bittner, *School and Community Service: Experiments in Democratic Organization* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1919), 17, 18.

participatory-based administrative associationalism to help manage the socioeconomic and political functions of society.⁷⁵

The nascent transformation towards an administrative bureaucracy provided many Americans with a reason to want to place more faith in their state and federal governments. Business interests were considered by many Americans to be less accountable in affairs of governance than their elected and appointed officials, especially since the rise of industrialism and the increased consolidation of corporate power. With the emergence of civilian expertise in government as an intrinsic aspect of Progressive Era ideology, Americans could, ostensibly, trust that both policymakers and their appointees would not shirk their sacred responsibilities, especially when those citizens could be afforded a more active role in the policymaking process and were more intimately entwined within the local political process.⁷⁶

The fusion of private and public that undergirded the American associational impulse as first observed by Alexis de Tocqueville in the early nineteenth century was, by 1918, beginning to look much more like a grassroots democratic society, relatively speaking, with stronger ties being cultivated between individual citizens and the state via the associations that Americans belonged to or were otherwise affected by. As new government administrations such as employment agencies and charitable relief organizations absorbed the duties which had traditionally been operated by private associations, their roles as social organizers were increasingly emphasized over the private sector. The mobilizational energies of the DCS

⁷⁵ California State Council of Defense, *Handbook on Community Organization* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 8-10.

⁷⁶ Clarke, *The Little Democracy*, 12-14.

underscored the significance of the individual citizen in relation to the political process, especially at the state and local levels of governance.⁷⁷

In California, the CSCD's emphasis on local mobilization, as was the case with most of the region's state councils, proved to be highly effective and well-organized, far more so than the CSCD was at the state level. Individual citizen participation within community defense council units held much promise early on as not only were county and municipal councils created, but local residents began developing school and neighborhood councils as well. While the county and community defense council systems in every state held a special significance to the overall efforts of the greater DCS, in California, it was far more expansive than in any other state. Subsequently, local defense council organization was seen by many Californians – from state policymakers in Sacramento, to schoolboard members in Los Angeles, and farmers in Stockton – as being a valuable tool for a general readjustment of the state's social and economic priorities both during and after the war.⁷⁸

An excellent example of the practical application of localized defense council organization in California was found in the Los Angeles City School System, which emerged as one of the most prolific examples of the kind of robust bottom-up form of community organization produced by localized defense council units. The more localized the council, the greater its ability to engage with the individual citizen, lending itself to being the most tangible outgrowths of the CSCD and the CND as seen by ordinary Californians. Members of the Los Angeles City Schoolboard used their “school-system defense council” to organize volunteers to

⁷⁷ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 22; Scherer, 51; *Fourth Annual Report of the United States Council of National Defense*, 29-30.

⁷⁸ William V. Cowan, *The Community and the Post-War Problems* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 4-7; Dwight Sanderson and Robert A. Polson, *Rural Community Organization* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1939), v-viii, 1-7.

provide economic relief to needful residents of the city, especially for women whose husbands had been called into service. They organized volunteers, both children and adults, to provide labor for area farmers who had trouble finding workers during the harvest season. They even formed a citywide organization called the Red Star, employing more than 16,000 school children between 1917 and 1919 to help adopt, train, and rehome thousands of stray dogs and abandoned or abused horses.⁷⁹

By the time the formation of the various local defense councils had reached its zenith in the Fall of 1918, forty-eight state governors, three territorial governors, and their various appointed committee members had established over 184,000 county, municipal, and community defense council units. Not all of them enjoyed high levels of success, and more than a few did relatively nothing of value. But within those approximately 184,000 various defense council units, new forms of socioeconomic organization, or “socioeconomic readjustment,” began to blossom, bringing forth the foundation of the contemporary age of political and economic modernization to the United States. They also brought forth a prospective system of democratic participation that looked more like the kind of American political system as envisioned by revolutionary-era ideals.⁸⁰

While it ultimately proved to be a short-lived, “mini democratic revolution,” the optimistic outpouring of political and social participation enabled by the efforts of state and local defense councils was by no means predetermined to fade away into oblivion after the war. The destructive economic boom fueled by post-war consumerism, surplus overproduction, the rise in political conservatism, and the accompanying expansion of corporate power, were not all

⁷⁹ Los Angeles City School District, *Los Angeles City Schools and the War* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Public Schools, 1918), 5-6, 37, 49-50.

⁸⁰ Clarkson, *Industrial America in the World War*, viii.

inevitable outcomes of the Great War. The DCS, especially at the state and local levels, provided the framework for the possibility of a livelier, more inclusive, and relatively egalitarian form of democratic participation. Still, several important questions lingered in the minds of those involved: How long would it all last before the optimistic surge of cooperation and coordination ended? How long before corporate America gained even more economic power and political influence? When would the longstanding conflicts among employers, workers, and the state once again return to their pre-war status quo?

Section III: Agricultural Adjustment

–Chapter Five–

Administrative Adjustments to Western American Agriculture

Federal policymakers and DCS officials in the western states considered increased agricultural production to be one of the most consequential aspects of the nation's mobilization activities during the Great War. While the NCB's preparedness efforts highlighted the necessity of farming surveys, suggesting augmented production rates and farmland acreage expansion, they had very little legal power to do much more than hope that farmers would engage with their plans and would participate actively and patriotically. With the Congressional declaration of war on April 6, 1917, and the subsequent establishment of the DCS, there was little time to ask or even expect the region's farmers to abide by such a voluntary-based plan.

State defense councils in the American West were seriously engaged with their respective farming industries during World War I. To increase the region's food production capabilities, state defense councils established a more commanding administrative presence within their agricultural districts. The direct federal and state government involvement in agriculture brought the DCS deeper into assisting with the socioeconomic livelihood of the individual farmer, and concomitantly, brought the regulatory purview of the state deeper into the lives of ordinary Americans. The cooperative nature of the wartime relationship between the federal government and the state governments of the West played an outsized role in facilitating the transformations that occurred to regional agriculture from 1917-1921.

I: DCS-Extension Service Coordination

In the western states, the Extension Services and County Agent Systems of the region's land-grant schools became an integral part of the nation's plan to increase food production for

both domestic and foreign markets. Through the application of modern agricultural science and the latest in farming technology, land-grant universities in the US West helped make farming a far more profitable commercial venture than it had ever been before. Much of that success was due to the creation of the Cooperative Extension Service, a program developed and funded by the USDA as part of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. With the wartime mobilization efforts of the state defense councils directly involved with the Extension Service of their respective agricultural schools as an important aspect of mobilization, farming was not simply a major contributor to the war effort, but it also helped to increase the economic viability of industrial agriculture throughout the American West, even after the war.¹

The significance of farming to the United States was not simply economic – it was a deeply entrenched aspect of American culture. European settlers had transformed the North American colonies into an agricultural empire during the seventeenth century and very little had changed in that respect when the United States declared independence and broke off from Great Britain in the eighteenth century. The notion of independent yeoman farmers diligently migrating westward as the impetus behind the formation of new territories and states is a mythological representation that has permeated American culture ever since the nation’s founding. Agriculture in the US has never been independent of government regulation, nor has the nation’s agricultural economy ever relied upon subsistence farming as a relative socioeconomic factor.²

Cooperative Extension Service

The utilization of varying forms of government involvement in agriculture has been a standard mode of economic operation since before American independence, and the idea that

¹ Benjamin Hibbard, *The Effects of the Great War upon Agriculture in the United States and Great Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919), 68-70.

² Alfred Charles True, *A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States, 1785-1923* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928), 3-5.

farmers ever did it without government assistance is a persistent falsehood. Long before the passage of the Morrill Acts (1862 and 1890) and the Smith-Lever Act (1914), American farmers came to depend on different types of governmental welfare, subsidies, and market regulation to help them navigate the vagaries that have always determined agricultural output, namely droughts, inclement weather, transportation fees, storage costs, and labor availability. However, the economic and regulatory nature of the Morrill and Smith-Lever Acts brought federal government management into the nation's farming communities in a more significant and tangible fashion, due almost exclusively to the efforts of the land-grant universities and their respective Cooperative Extension Service departments.³

Along with the extraction of mineral resources and timber, farming was the most important element of most state economies in the western American states when the country declared war against Germany in 1917. By 1900, most territorial and state governments throughout the country had established their own agricultural departments to help regulate their farming and ranching industries, just as the federal government had done with the creation of the USDA in 1862 as part of the first Morrill Act. While the various state agricultural departments had always played important roles in the development of their respective farming industries, it was the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, the subsequent creation of the Cooperative Extension Service, and federal government-matched funding that allowed for the states to increase their agricultural

³ Ibid., 3-13. True determines that, long before the passage of the *Morrill Acts*, state and local governments had already been heavily involved with their farming industries, but it was not until the coming of the Industrial Revolution and industrialized farming that the federal government decided to take a more active role in helping to regulate agriculture on a national scale. Without the assistance of federal and state governments, it was understood that farming, with all of its various market and environmental inconsistencies, could not have become such a well-developed national industry. The need to feed a rapidly growing population and to be more prominently involved in the international marketplace made such a regulatory commitment not only useful, but an existential necessity.

output. As a result of that financial assistance, the American West quickly developed into one of the world's foremost food producing regions in a relatively short amount of time.⁴

The Cooperative Extension Service did several important things. Most notably, it matched funds that the states paid into their own land-grant schools, most of which had already been established in the years between the passage of the 1862 and 1890 Morrill Acts. It stipulated that all of the federal funding must be used directly through the state land-grant universities to educate residents within the rural areas in the current developments of home economics, food conservation, and in the application of the latest farming sciences and techniques. The various activities of the Extension Service depended almost exclusively on the knowledge and efforts of their "county agents," the Extension Service's on-the-ground representatives who had studied the most recent advances of agricultural science, developed new farming techniques, and learned how to apply modern technology to improve crop quality and increase yields. County agents traveled throughout their designated farming districts to instruct those communities in-person, usually through public or private demonstrations. County agents signified a unique form of intergovernmental cooperation, working under federal, state, and county government employment and sometimes through private donations.⁵

In partnership with the land-grant schools, Extension Service personnel also established experiment stations throughout their state's farming districts to test soils, monitor climate, develop better planting and harvesting techniques, find means for conserving farm labor, and experimenting with different pest and disease control methods. Farmers understood that it was

⁴ Ibid.; United States Department of Agriculture, *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture for the Year Ending June 30, 1920* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 13-16.

⁵ Marcia Ostrom, "Radical Roots and Twenty-First Century Realities: Rediscovering the Egalitarian Aspirations of Land Grant University Extension," *Agriculture and Human Values*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Winter 2020): 935-943.

almost always in their best interest to actively engage with their respective extension services and to develop working professional relationships with their local county agents to help them become more successful in their ventures. Farmers would often send their children to study agricultural science and home economics at those same universities. When the mobilization effort began in earnest in May 1917, an overwhelming majority of farmers in the American West had already become intimately involved with their states' Extension Service to some degree, thus preestablishing their participation with their state defense council's activities in a more comprehensive manner as mobilization moved forward.⁶

If there existed any one issue that Democrat and Republican policymakers out West could agree upon during the World War I years, regardless of differences in political ideologies, it was the socioeconomic importance of agriculture and of the Extension Service. Very few policymakers from either major party, whether at the national or state levels of governance, disagreed about the significance of the Cooperative Extension Service and the role the DCS should play in coordinating with it. While there did exist some partisan disagreements as to how much state funding should be allocated for that purpose or how much money the various state Extension Service programs should accept from the federal government, the propagation of non-partisan nationalism meant that those debates did not devolve into partisan conflict, at least not during the Great War. The regulation and financing of agriculture acted as a political foundation on which to build a socioeconomic consensus, especially in the western states where Republicans and Democrats agreed that further development was necessary.⁷

Even after the Great War, the importance of farming helped maintain some semblance of bipartisan cohesion. Charles H. Williams, a Montana State Senator representing Powell County,

⁶ Ibid., 936-937.

⁷ "We Want Land, Not Politics," *Evening Herald*, September 16, 1918, 6.

remarked that “this [land grant] endowment is too big a thing and too valuable to our children to be used as a political stepping stone on which ambitious politicians can rise.”⁸ As a Republican in a state where a large Democratic majority held county and statewide offices, Williams was representative of how avoiding the trappings of partisan conflict could be beneficial to the economic accomplishments that western states had gained through support of their agricultural industries. Getting bogged down in partisan feuds, as Williams inferred, would not benefit anyone, especially their constituents. Supporting the land-grant universities and increasing their overall funding was, for those on both sides of the aisle, far more important than playing political games. Those who might dare to question such forms of state government regulation could easily be accused by their political opponents as not only clueless and anti-farmer, but unpatriotic or un-American, accusations that no politician wanted to be confronted with during the World War I years, or especially during the Red Scare of 1919.⁹

County Agent System

While every state government in the West had, by 1917, already established their Extension Service and were engaged with their land-grant universities to some extent, many of them had, prior to the Great War, done so quite half-heartedly as a matter of policy. Montana, for example, did not have an even remotely useful County Agent System with which to impart more directly their Extension Service’s knowledge among the state’s scattered and diverse farming communities. A geographically large state like Montana could have really benefitted from the kind of assistance that the Cooperative Extension Service offered, yet it had not really attempted to do so. Realizing that the absence of county agents would undoubtedly hinder the state’s ability

⁸ “Republican Would Keep Land Grant Out of Politics,” *Great Falls Daily Tribune*, February 26, 1919, 2.

⁹ “Send Frank Beal to the Legislature,” *Imperial Valley Daily Press*, El Centro, CA, August 30, 1920, 6; “Kept Press Sees Menace to Vested Interest in Producer-Consumer Vote,” *Montana Leader*, Great Falls, MT, September 14, 1918, 1.

to expand farmland acreage and increase food production, which would thereby limit the state's ability to properly contribute to the mobilization effort, the MSCD made the improvement of its relatively useless County Agent System one of its top priorities very early on.¹⁰

With the appointment of prominent and successful farmers to head committees related to food production, the associations they belonged to were heavily involved in influencing the MSCD to institute a better funded and more practical County Agent System. The Montana Farmer's Union pressured the state government to become more involved in the regulation and further development of the state's farming industries in general. Ignatius O'Donnell – ranking member of the MSCD's Agricultural Finance Committee, Billings Chamber of Commerce trustee, and member of the Montana Farmer's Union – used his influence in all three organizations to press his MSCD colleagues to improve funding to increase the number of county agents in the state.¹¹ “Not only would [an enhanced County Agent System] help with mobilization,” O'Donnell explained to his MSCD cohort during a 1917 war conference, “but increased Smith-Lever [Act] funding for that purpose would make Montana a more competitive food producer ... [both] nationally and internationally.”¹²

Between 1914 and 1916, the State of Montana only procured \$1,000 dollars per year for Extension Service funding. Even with the federal government's fund-matching priorities as stipulated in the Smith-Lever Act, that still only amounted to \$2,000 annually, an objectively

¹⁰ Edward C. Elliott to J.M. Hamilton, April 21, 1917, box 98, folder 33, Montana State University Extension Service Records.

¹¹ Tom Stout, *Montana: Its Story and Biography, Vol. II* (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1921), 384-385; “Memorandum Regarding a Project for Temporary County Agent Work in those Counties in Montana Not Already Having County Agents,” June 1917, box 98, folder 33, Montana State University Extension Service Records; “Getting Out to Work on Legislature,” *Montana Nonpartisan*, December 14, 1918, 2.

¹² I.D. O'Donnell to Governor Samuel V. Stewart, “War Conference Measures,” June 13, 1917, box 1, folder 10, I.D. O'Donnell Papers, Series II.

small amount of funding considering the large size of Montana and the significance of farming to the state's economy. Additionally, and as a result of that lack of funding during that period, Montana's land-grant university in Bozeman, Montana State College (MSC), only maintained between four and seven county agents for its forty-three counties in what was the third largest state in the country. As evinced by their support for Ignatius O'Donnell's proposal to increase Extension Service funding, calling it "a turning point for the relationship between farmers and the State Government in Helena," the Montana Farmer's Union, the biggest and most politically influential farming association in the state, clearly understood the significance of a more administrative governmental presence within Montana's agricultural industries.¹³

O'Donnell's persistence ultimately paid off. In the winter of 1917, the MSCD agreed to appropriate \$5,500 in extra funding to hire more county agents in order to begin moving forward with its plans for agricultural expansion. The additional funding also included the hiring of women as county agents, making Montana one of the first states in the US West to hire female county agents. In 1916, Montana never had more than seven county agents on the payroll, but by late-1917, MSCD funding increased that number to twelve. By 1918, with the addition of women hires as county agents, that number was further increased to forty-one agents. With the cessation of wartime hostilities in November 1918, the number of county agents had dropped slightly, totaling thirty-five male and female agents. While that number was still relatively small in proportion to the number of counties and the amount of farmland acreage in the state, the MSCD had increased the number of the state's county agents nearly five-fold in only two years, an impressive increase relative to the rate of growth before the mobilization effort began.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., True, *A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States*, 57; "6 Percent Money for Farmers," *Powder River County Examiner*, September 12, 1919, 1; "Getting Out to Work on Legislature," *Montana Non-Partisan*, December 14, 1918, 2.

¹⁴ True, 200-201.

County agents throughout the American West wore many hats during the period of the war. Not only did they perform their regular Extension Service duties, but they were also thrust into the role of DCS representatives within the rural communities where they operated. County agents solicited farmers for Liberty Loans, held patriotic meetings and rallies, organized parades and county fairs, provided updates on the war, and detailed the nation's mobilization progress. In underdeveloped western states like Montana, county agents became the most tangible connection between rural communities, their state government, and the regulatory presence of the federal government. County agents also maintained an invasive propagandist presence in rural areas, emphasizing the need for farmers and their hires to utilize their land and labor just as much for Uncle Sam and the war effort as for their traditional community-motivated or self-interested economic desires. The propagandist efforts of county agents during World War I incubated and nurtured a patriotic spirit and sense of nationalist duty throughout the farming districts of the region.¹⁵

Montana's county agents gladly performed their new job as wartime propagandists with gusto. While presenting a speech at a patriotic rally in the town of Glasgow in August 1917, Ray Cannon, Extension Service agent for Valley County wherein Glasgow was situated, warned of the recent "infiltration of German and Prussian spies" within the small farming community. As the stunned crowd of farmers, farm hands, and their families chattered in disbelief, Cannon clarified his comment further. He explained that "the gopher is a valuable ally of the Kaiser ... [and] those friends of the Kaiser are coming out and it is up to you to be on the ground to meet

¹⁵ W.S. Murdock, "Special Supplementary Report, 1917 (War Work for County Agents)," box 92, folder 23, MSU Extension service Records; "Song of the Patriotic Plowman," *Mineral Independent*, July 4, 1918; David D. Danbom, "The Agricultural Extension System and the First World War," *The Historian*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (February 1979): 316; "Governor Boosts for State Fair," *Bozeman Courier*, August 17, 1921, 8.

the enemy with a spoonful of poisoned bait. It requires teamwork to fight these entrenched Huns on our farms.”¹⁶

Cannon carefully designed his evocative speech to elicit feelings of wartime paranoia and to stimulate patriotic impulses while simultaneously introducing a compulsory statewide rodent-poisoning campaign initiated by the MSCD’s Agricultural Finance Committee under recommendations by the state’s Extension Service. Personifying crop-devouring gophers into insidious “Teutonic enemies” reminded the Valley County farmers that their work contained a grander patriotic purpose. As exaggerated as Ray Cannon’s comparison may have seemed, such abstract equivocations occurred quite regularly in the farming communities of the region and the people who lived in those communities took them seriously. On the wartime homefront of the American West, county agents working under instructions from their respective state defense councils in cooperation with the land-grant universities and the USDA for whom they were employed, successfully transformed the region’s farming districts into frontlines and farmers into soldiers.¹⁷

Working in conjunction with Montana’s Cooperative Extension Service and its recently reformed County Agent System, the MSCD infused Montana’s farming districts with patriotic meaning in order to achieve three principal goals. First, the MSCD used the declaration of a wartime emergency to neutralize the radicalizing influence of the IWW within the itinerant worker population. Second, it used the mobilization effort as a pretext to force a campaign of Americanization upon the state’s immigrant farming population, most especially those who

¹⁶ Ray Cannon, “The German Gopher and the Prussian Prairie Dog,” 1918, box 63, folder 23, Montana State University Extension Service Records.

¹⁷ Ray Cannon, “Valley County Farm Bureau, Annual Report, 1918,” box 63, folder 23, Montana State University Extension Service Records; Fred Whiteside, letter to Governor Samuel Stewart, July 12, 1918, box 1, folder 20, Montana Defense Council Records.

spoke German as their native tongue. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the collusion between the MSCD and the state's Extension Service worked to expand, consolidate, and mechanize Montana's agricultural industries to the greatest extent possible.¹⁸ Helping farmers locate the financing needed to expand acreage, increase production, and procure the latest in mechanized farming equipment comprised a significant element of the MSCD's mobilization activities. Montana's wartime improvements to its agricultural economy were indicative of how state defense councils throughout the region operated during the period of mobilization. Even in states with more developed and better funded agricultural industries, improvements to the system were still a high priority.¹⁹

California, another large western state, both in geographic size and in overall population, also went to great lengths to improve its County Agent System, even though the USDA already considered California to have one of the country's most well-organized agricultural economies and with far more regulatory involvement by the state government via the well-funded land-grant school in Berkeley. To help boost the state's food production capabilities and improve the economic viability of the farming industry, the CSCD increased the number of county agents in California's "eighteen principal agricultural producing counties" from thirteen in 1916 to seventeen in May of 1917, a relatively slight increase. However, by 1918 that number had risen to fifty-seven county agents, comprised of thirty-three men and twenty-four women. Along with

¹⁸ A.H. Bowman, telegram to Council of Defense, August 10, 1918, box 1, folder 3, Montana Council of Defense Records; J.H. Gilbert, letter to Charles Greenfield, May 6, 1918, box 1, folder 2, Montana Council of Defense Records; "Congress Plans are Well Nigh Complete," *Great Falls Daily Tribune*, January 5, 1919, 3.

¹⁹ D.L. Andersen to State Council of Defense, April 29, 1918, box 1, folder 1, Montana Council of Defense Records.

Montana, California was one of the first states in the region to employ women as county agents.²⁰

In addition to the significant increase to the number of county agents, the CSCD also introduced a completely new element to the state's County Agent System – the use of “city agents.” In another wartime deviation from how the County Agent System traditionally operated, the CSCD's city agents were all women hires, and, similar to the duties performed by women county agents, the city agents' work mostly focused on teaching home economics and food conservation skills to women within California's urban areas. Rather than being compensated through the usual channels of county agent payment – a combination of federal, state, and county funding – the salaries for California's city agents were subsidized by the funds originally appropriated for the CSCD's wartime activities. Mobilization for the Great War transformed the very manner in which the Extension Service and its County Agent System operated.²¹

II: Administrative Improvements to Western American Agriculture

Throughout 1916, the NCB's work in completing its state-by-state industrial preparedness surveys demonstrated the overall extent to which farming in the American West could be expanded to help feed both the homefront population and the nation's European allies during the war. However, that expansion could also be used to increase the market viability of the nation's agricultural industries and perhaps transform the region into the fabled “breadbasket of the world” that had been imagined since the early-nineteenth century. With the creation of the DCS in 1917, coordination with the Cooperative Extension Service, and the subsequent improvements to the states' respective County Agent Systems, the groundwork laid by the NCB

²⁰True, 200-201; *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 17-20.

²¹ US Department of Agriculture, *Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, 1917* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 188-190; “To Extend Rural Aid,” *Imperial Valley Daily Press*, August 24, 1917, 4; True, 97.

in 1916 could be built upon and expanded to make those prospective preparedness plans into an administrative reality.²²

To accomplish the practical expansion of food production, state defense councils initiated agricultural surveys upon recommendations by the USDA and the CND. “The State Councils of Defense,” declared USDA Secretary David Houston, “will be in charge of encouraging their state’s farming districts to be as active as possible in taking up the [survey process].” As mobilization ramped-up in the late-spring and summer of 1917, state defense councils throughout the American West heeded Secretary Houston’s call and seized the chance to push for an extensive expansion of their agricultural districts by inserting themselves into the activities of their respective agricultural departments and land-grant schools, thoroughly ensconcing the Cooperative Extension Service within the nation’s mobilization effort. Never before had American farmers and state agricultural departments been so intimately involved in the theater of war, at least not in such a thoroughly organized and administrative fashion.²³

The geographic nature of the American West, a vast region with a widely dispersed population and relatively little in the way of the kind of infrastructure needed to consistently sustain surplus food production, stymied the growth of regional agricultural development. Aside from the typical problems related to weather and climate, such as droughts, hail, early or late frosts, etc., farmers in the West historically struggled with transportation fees, storage costs, and proper irrigation. Additionally, many farming districts severely lacked in their ability to effectively communicate with the cities and surrounding areas where wholesalers and retailers resided due to a want of telegraph and phone lines in the countryside. Such infrastructure

²² Courtney Fullilove, *The Profits of the Earth: The Global Seeds of American Agriculture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 8; *Laws of the State of Montana Passed by the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly*, 33; Scott, 45.

²³ “Billion Bushels of Wheat Next Year,” *Arizona Sentinel*, August 16, 1917, 1.

problems necessitated the crop surveys and farming censuses that many western states failed to institute before the Great War but would become an important part of what the DCS was attempting to accomplish with the mobilization effort. The crop surveys were less about counting farms and types of crops and more about improving rural infrastructure to facilitate the development of a more sustainable and robust agricultural economy.²⁴

Not only were the western states among the first and most active participants in the 1916 NCB preparedness surveys, but they were also the most active participants in the nation in regard to their respective defense council farming censuses from 1917 through 1920. Through the CND's Executive Committee, of which USDA Secretary David Houston was an active member, the federal government strongly encouraged state defense councils across the country to initiate farming censuses and surveys. Staying true to the cooperative aspect of voluntary participation and to avoid the inevitable complaints of federal overreach and coercion within the states, the CND never attempted to force their participation. The CND's main purpose was to encourage involvement and to make suggestions to the state defense councils in how they could expand their respective agricultural industries. On more than one occasion, David Houston reminded state governors of the "patriotic and practical importance" of organizing the farming surveys. "It is," the USDA head explained, "a simple wartime necessity ... [and not] a matter of political ideology, economic management, or partisan competition."²⁵

The process looked remarkably similar to what the NCB had done during its 1916 IPB surveys, the main difference, however, being that county agents acted as direct government

²⁴ Franklin K. Lane, *Development of Unused Lands*, "Document No. 262" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 37-40; Hibbard, *The Effects of the Great War on Agriculture in the United States and Great Britain*, 72-75.

²⁵ US Department of Agriculture, *Address of David F. Houston Before the Trans-Mississippi Readjustment Congress*, "USDA Circular No. 130" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 5-6; "The Farm Census," *Arizona Republican*, March 3, 1918, 4.

representatives, not as agents of a toothless private association. Even though the surveys were still technically voluntary, there existed a good amount of patriotic coercion and shaming to ensure the forms would be completed by those asked to participate. State defense councils worked with their respective land-grant university Extension Service and County Agent Systems to survey the entirety of their farming districts and to figure out where they could expand their farmlands, how they would do so, and what kind of production to focus on in regard to that expansion. By 1917, county agents appeared to be working more under the auspices and direction of their respective state defense councils than that of the Cooperative Extension Service and the federal government – an example of cooperative federalism in action.²⁶

County agents traveled throughout the counties they were placed in charge of, contacting farmers and providing them with census forms to complete. But they did not always rely on survey participants to be as quick or forthcoming with the forms as they hoped. The experience gained from the NCB's survey efforts had already demonstrated that even during the threat of a looming wartime emergency not all could be relied on to provide the proper information. In fact, some could not be relied on to provide anything at all. Rather than force participation in those instances, county agents often performed the task themselves, especially when their requests failed to elicit the support they expected, making sure that the reported census information was accurate and properly recorded. Propagating economic efficiency through bureaucratic methods held far greater emphasis over voluntary participation, especially during wartime.²⁷

²⁶ House of Representatives, "Document No. 1612," *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture for the Year Ended June 30, 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 361, 388, 393, 421, 455; US Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1917* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 20-23, 31, 45, 75.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 74-75; House of Representatives, *Food Production Act, 1919: Hearing Before the Committee on Agriculture* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 47, 58-61, 173, 210; Louis Bernard Schmidt and Earle Dudley Ross, ed.'s, *Readings in the Economic History of American Agriculture* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), 511-513, 521.

In Arizona, the ASCD deemed the expansion of the state's farmlands important enough for the wartime economy that Governor George W.P. Hunt placed ASCD Commissioner, Dwight B. Heard, in charge of the state's crop census. Heard coordinated directly with the state land-grant university's Cooperative Extension Service in Tucson to organize its county agents under the leadership the ASCD. The first wartime crop census, which began on May 31, 1917, ending in November, determined that "491,867 acres of land are under cultivation in the state." In terms of total acreage, alfalfa was the highest at 185,057. Pasture acreage and rangeland came in second at 54,694 acres and the next most produced crop was barley at 32,500 acres. Arizona's cotton farming industry also held measurable economic significance and the state was one of the most important cotton producers in the West with 53,054 total acres, making cotton Arizona's third most commonly grown crop in terms of total acreage and overall yields.²⁸

Working just as fervently under the auspices of the WSCD as it had under the traditional leadership of the USDA and the state's agricultural department, Washington's county agents engaged in the survey and census process with similar enthusiasm and vigor. Under the direct supervision of the WSCD's Food Supply and Conservation Committee, county agents counted a total of 63,570 farms in the state in a period of only three months. Of that number, county agents "thoroughly surveyed 25,000 farms" to determine how they could "experiment [with those farms] ... to focus a more intense production of crops that can bring in a higher economic return" for their owners. In his 1918 crop census report, J.C. Scott, Farm Help Specialist for Washington State College, mentioned that "county agents took charge of the work in counties where there

²⁸ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense* (Phoenix: Republican Print Shop, 1919), 16; J.E. Sellers, "Report of Crop Survey for the State of Arizona," 1917, box 2, folder 33, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

was county agents and the chairman of the county councils of defense [led the survey process] in counties where there were no county agents.”²⁹

State defense councils in the American West did not simply defer to the expertise of their land-grant universities or the Cooperative Extension Service during the period of the Great War. They commanded almost total control of their supervisory duties. Most state defense councils in the region had almost unfettered control over state policies related to farmland expansion and agro-economic regulation. The subsumption of the Extension Service and County Agent System by the various state defense councils underscored the complexities of the kind of federal-state cooperation touted as the foundation for a successful mobilization effort. While the process appeared in practice to be very top-heavy, with general orders relayed from the CND committees and the USDA to the state councils, the significance of individual county agents and farmers cannot be overstated. As the on-the-ground rural representatives of the federal, state, and county governments, the DCS relied upon land-grant universities, the Extension Service, and their county agents for their experience, expertise, and ability to organize and energize area farmers. Orders may have come down from the CND and the USDA, but the defense councils’ capacity to actively readjust the nation’s agricultural economy could only be as successful as their ability to trust the work of the individual county agents and their ability to convince the individual farmer to participate actively and enthusiastically.³⁰

Most commonly, defense councils in the western states emphasized increases in cereal grain farming. While they emphasized increases in the production of fruits, dairy products, vegetables, and feed, they did so to a far lesser extent than the emphasis placed on the expansion

²⁹ J.C. Scott, “Report of the Farm Survey for the State of Washington,” 1918, box 21, folder 638, Ernest O. Holland Collection; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 39-42.

³⁰ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 28, 79, 103-106.

of grain farming. Not only did grains keep longer and could be stored easier and more affordably than perishable products like dairy, meat, fruits, or vegetables, thereby making it easier to supply American “Doughboys” in Europe and their allies, but the high, fixed prices of foodstuffs during the war years made the farming of cereal grains an especially attractive industry. For farmers looking to expand their acreage, purchasing additional farmland, rotating or switching their production to the crops most affected by fixed prices held the potential for farmers to reap tremendous profits during World War I.³¹

III: Land Settlements and Planned Rural Development

Another ambitious plan initiated by the DCS in the American West was that of land settlement. Due to the steady movement of people from the countryside into the cities during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, policymakers feared the effects that rural flight might have on the nation’s agricultural industry. “It is not enough that farming must be made to pay,” declared a concerned David Houston, “[but] country life must be made attractive ... if not, then our nation will continue to lose its farmers to the economic advancement offered by most cities.”³² Not only could the decreasing population in the rural areas prove detrimental for plans to expand farming capabilities, but it could also harm the nation’s ability to maintain a surplus food supply and, by proxy, the ability to control the market value of foodstuffs. With a rapidly growing national population that needed to be fed, along with the significance of agriculture to the national economy, the growing rural-to-urban population shift signaled a possibly

³¹ Schmidt and Ross, *Readings in the Economic History of American Agriculture*, 530-533; Duffin, 52-55; Adina Popescu, “Casting Bread upon the Waters: American Farming and the International Wheat Market, 1880-1920,” PhD Diss. (Columbia University, 2014), 186-187.

³² *Address of David F. Houston Before the Trans-Mississippi Readjustment Congress*, 14.

catastrophic socioeconomic problem, one that most western defense councils hoped to avoid with inventive policies based on the expertise of land-grant university agronomists.³³

In November 1918, C.C. Moore, Chairman of the CSCD, requested that the state's agricultural college in Berkeley submit a proposal outlining how the CSCD could introduce a farm settlement policy within the state to repopulate the dwindling rural populations. After a three-month study on the feasibility of the idea, the final proposal draft determined that land reclamation and irrigation projects would first be needed in order to commence with the settlement idea. Stimulating the development of California's rural infrastructure constituted the most crucial element of the plan. The final proposal encouraged the CSCD to approve largescale irrigation and drainage projects "that will furnish the labor of returning soldiers" following the termination of the war. Additionally, "the hastening of highway construction, so greatly needed by our agricultural interests, will also materially aid in furnishing ... profitable employment." The proposal also insisted that propertyless farm workers be included in the settlement plan to provide the average farmhand with land ownership opportunities.³⁴

As far as the CSCD and the land-grant university in Berkeley were concerned, there existed a clear need to improve California's rural infrastructure system in order to increase the development of the state's agricultural industries. According to Berkeley agronomists, that could not be accomplished without more meaningful government planning and funding. As a result of the coordinative effort between the CSCD and the university, California established the Durham Land Settlement Colony in Butte County. The Durham Colony would provide a blueprint for the CSCD to formulate a working plan for infrastructural development, repopulation, and increased

³³ *Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States*, 16, 34-35, 180, 342-343.

³⁴ University of California, *Report of the College of Agriculture and the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of California, from July 1, 1918, to June 30, 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1919), 152.

agricultural production. It also provided a practical plan for what to do with the discharged veterans and civilians engaged in war work once the conflict ended. State land settlements, as hoped by CSCD officials, might even create a stop-gap measure for rural flight to the cities.³⁵

In June 1917, an act of the California Legislative Assembly initiated by CSCD Resources and Food Supply Committee Chairman and President of the University of California Land-Grant University, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, created the California State Land Settlement Board. The purpose of the board was to expressly coordinate with the University of California and the CSCD in order to establish a planned rural community from the ground up. “The [Act] is significant,” according to Land Settlement Board President, Dr. Elwood Mead, “because it eliminates speculations, ... [and] aims to create fixed communities by ... providing those things essential to early and enduring success, [and] for the manner in which the expert knowledge and practical experience of the state has been mobilized to secure desired results.” With the creation of the Land Settlement Board and the Durham Colony, the CSCD actively engaged with economic planning policies meant specifically to assist workers and military veterans, not for the direct benefit of corporations, employers, or those who already owned land.³⁶

The Durham Colony was the first of its kind ever attempted in the country and the plan mirrored that of a similar settlement project initiated in Australia a few years prior which had already been considered a major success. With an initial appropriation of \$260,000, the State of California purchased parcels of partially irrigated farmland totaling 6,239 acres near the town of Durham in Northern California’s Butte County. The land was then subdivided, some plots to be

³⁵ Ibid., 152-153; California Land Settlement Board, *How California Helps Men Own Farms and Rural Homes* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1920), 5.

³⁶ California Land Settlement Board, *1921 Report of the State Land Settlement Board of the State of California* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921), 6; “Land Settlement,” *California Cultivator* Vol. XLIX, No. 12 (September 22, 1917): 8.

sold and others rented, with the hope that renters would soon become owners after having worked the land for a certain amount of time. The workers who applied and were selected to be residents at Durham performed the infrastructure labor themselves, constructing drainage canals and irrigation ditches, clearing land for pasture, and building small family homes. After several years of working the land and selling their products, the residents would then be able to purchase the homes and land at wholesale rates from the state. The land, comprised mostly of almond orchards, cattle ranches, and dairies, would be worked cooperatively by the residents and the profits put back into the community for continued expansion, improvements, and for the prospective ownership of its tenant residents.³⁷

By 1918, even its detractors considered the Durham Land Colony settlement to be a major success. The California Chamber of Commerce, once an early opponent of the plan that they had derided as being “socialistic and unnecessary,” began lobbying the state government for increased funding to expand the program into several other locations. In March 1919, the Kern County Chamber of Commerce asked the Land Settlement Board to consider the establishment of a settlement in the farming community of Buttonwillow, stating that “we are ready to give our whole-hearted support and cooperation” to the project. The Fresno Chamber of Commerce also requested a settlement “for soldiers seeking home on farmlands.” Business associations like the California Chamber of Commerce, which initially criticized the plan, quickly set aside their conservative economic sensibilities once they realized the benefits that land settlement could bring to state and local economies. Business associations increasingly sought more

³⁷ Ibid., 5-8; George Mansfield, *History of Butte County California* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1918), 357-358; “Colonizing Good Acres Planned,” *Oakland Tribune*, September 10, 1917, 6.

administrative modes of governance to plan state and local economic development rather than relying on abstract notions of the free market.³⁸

Not only did the state land settlement program prove to be a profitable and well-supported plan domestically, but other nations also expressed admiration for it, hoping to utilize Durham as a blueprint for their own land settlement designs. Great Britain sent investigators to Durham in 1919 to gauge how they could implement similar settlements at home to “relieve the congestion of the cities” and so that residents might “have the satisfaction of knowing the money will be used for the common welfare.” Government officials from Australia, the same country that inspired the land settlement plan in the first place, similarly praised the Durham Colony. Australian Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, asserted that “the Durham settlement plan is more modern than that of our own country.”³⁹

In keeping with the theme of patriotism in relation to the treatment of soldiers and sailors, a major feature of the land settlement plan was found in providing affordable farmland for discharged military veterans. Most state defense councils found that land settlement policies meant specifically for discharged soldiers and sailors appeared to be quite popular among the general public. Not only would it be good optics for state governments to assist veterans along patriotic lines, but it would also, ostensibly, be an excellent means for increasing agricultural output in the sparsely populated farmlands of the American West. Defense councils in the region

³⁸ “Buttonwillow Acreage Will be Inspected by State Land Settlement Board,” *Bakersfield Morning Echo*, March 23, 1919, 1; *1921 Report of the State Land Settlement Board of the State of California*, 8, 39.

³⁹ “Australian M.P. Praises Durham State Land Colony,” *Chico Record*, April 6, 1919, 3; “British Empire Sends Investigator to Durham,” *Bakersfield Morning Echo*, November 23, 1919, 7; California Land Settlement Board, *1918 Report of the State Land Settlement Board of the State of California* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 14.

hoped that the growth of their rural populations would increase reclamation project funding from the federal government to assist in further expansion, making it a practical economic plan.⁴⁰

The Durham Land Colony remained in existence for fourteen productive years, with the Great Depression signaling its ultimate demise. During the time that California's land settlement program was in operation, from 1917-1931, 750 discharged veterans of World War I and their families had settled there, most of whom found the experience both personally and economically fulfilling. Men and women who might otherwise not have ever had such an opportunity to own land or to engage in agricultural production were provided such a chance by the efforts of the CSCD and the land-grant school. Durham was a prime example of the social shift towards the acceptance of a more administrative form of government, one that even conservative business associations like the Chamber of Commerce clearly saw the benefit of.⁴¹

The Land Settlement Board approved the establishment of several other similar farming colonies throughout California between 1918 and 1921. Many other states, inspired by the success of California's land settlements, created similar settlement policies under the direction of and coordination between their defense councils and land-grant universities. Elsewhere in the region, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, North Dakota, and Washington, all established their own land settlement policies under the auspices of their state defense councils and land-grant universities, which, along with California's settlement acreage, totaled 437,000 acres of western farmland in 1919 alone. None of the other land settlement programs achieved nearly the same levels of success as California's did, nor were they as willing to assist the landless farm worker as the

⁴⁰ Council of National Defense, *Third Annual Report of the United States Council of National Defense: For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1919* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 91-92; "Land Settlement Important Problem," *Kennewick Courier-Reporter*, December 12, 1918, 8; Lew Palmer, "Employment Opportunities for the Disabled," *The Annals*, Vol. 80 (November 1918): 75-76.

⁴¹ US House of Representatives, *Development of Unused Lands*, "Document No. 262," (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 114-116; Hibbard, 163-164.

CSCD was. The land settlement projects developed in other western states focused exclusively on “soldier resettlement” during the period of post-war reconstruction.⁴²

Regardless of the success of the program, the experience was relatively short lived. As the agricultural depression began affecting the nation’s farming communities in the early 1920s as a result of wartime overproduction, severe droughts, and unsound market maneuvering, the land settlement colonies started to become more of a financial risk for the state and for the residents of the colonies. As several devastating environmental and market vagaries combined to create a catastrophic situation for the land settlement experiment and for western farmers in general, California could not recoup the funds appropriated for the project. The California Legislature eventually dissolved the Land Settlement Board in 1931. The other states who had followed California’s lead also eliminated their settlements from their budgets and by 1932 the land settlement colony plan had ended nationwide.⁴³

Considering that the United States was in the early throes of the First Red Scare during Durham’s first few years, the fact that there existed such a consensus as to the necessity and desire of state land colonies was nothing short of miraculous. The Soviet Union commenced with its own plans of agricultural settlement following the Great War with its Jewish land settlements, and, more famously, with its unpopular collectivization programs. While the settlement policies of the United States and the Soviet Union were glaringly different in both principal and practice, political conservatives still made the comparison. In contrasting the two nations’ agricultural settlement policies in 1926, the Washington State Legislature determined the “settlement scheme to be un-American, socialistic, and paternalistic; contrary to the best interests of the settlers in

⁴² *Development of Unused Lands*, 116; “May Locate Experiment Farm,” *Pullman Tribune*, August 10, 1917, 1.

⁴³ State of California, *Statutes of California, 1931* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1931), 214-216.

the state.” Aside from such occasional criticisms in the press, there did not appear to be any significant cultural backlash to the creation and maintenance of state-organized land settlement colonies like Durham.⁴⁴

California’s once successful state land colony project may have been a dead letter by 1931, but while it was still in operation the project accomplished many of the goals that the CSCD hoped to achieve. The project expanded the state’s farmland acreage, increased the varieties of produce, regulated competition and prices, and brought Americans back to the rural areas during a time when urban congestion and a lack of state assistance had become a drain on farming resources. The state land colonies provided meaningful employment for shell-shocked veterans of the Great War and made it possible for propertyless farm laborers to become land owners. As a result, the DCS provided both groups of working-class Americans a vested financial interest and perhaps more faith in the nation’s socioeconomic system.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ “Soldiers Land Scheme Given Drastic Knock,” *Alaska Daily Empire*, May 13, 1926, 2; “Is Called Socialist,” *Daily Gate City*, September 29, 1919, 5.

⁴⁵ *How California Helps Men Own Farms and Rural Homes*, 3-7; “Unemployed Soldier Problem Considered,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, January 21, 1919, 1.

–Chapter Six–
Agricultural Expansion and Government Assistance in the West

As a result of the need for increased regulatory involvement of the federal and state governments in agricultural production on western American farms, every state defense council in the nation created their own committees related to food production and conservation. With the CND's insistence on individual states operating their own defense council units to contribute to the mobilization effort, it then became the direct responsibility of the state governments to encourage their agricultural districts to assist in a more meaningful and productive manner. Resulting from their efforts, farmable acreage throughout the West increased a great deal, providing a blueprint for modern governmental regulation in agriculture. Post-war irrigation projects commenced at a rate surpassed only by New Deal programs a generation later and the federal and state governments became far more involved in regulating the nation's agricultural economy through the vigorous application of farm loans and a greatly enhanced fiscal presence.¹

I: Logistics and Preparation

The procurement of financial resources by the various state defense councils and the increased involvement of their respective extension services allowed for the expansion of western American farmlands to be made a practical reality. Not only did state defense councils facilitate a general expansion of acreage in the rural areas, but they also brought agriculture into the urban areas, initiating one of the country's first urban gardening programs. The first steps in making that expansion a reality through improvements made to the Extension Service and County Agent System had already been accomplished, but the financial aspects of practical

¹ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 46-50; Charles Hebbard, letter to Ernest Lister, April 19, 1917, box 6, folder 15, Ernest Lister Collection; US Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1921* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 414-440.

expansion also needed to be considered for that purpose. State defense councils, staying true to their pledge to work in cooperation and coordination with the federal government, managed and facilitated farm loans through the Department of Commerce and the USDA. They also came to rely on new federal and state administered labor agencies, leaving behind the notion of voluntary participation and private-sector employment agencies, embracing more rigorously involved government programs that dismantled the nation's traditional reliance on job placement practices and provided financial assistance for struggling farmers.²

Agricultural Financial Assistance

Congress passed the Federal Farm Loan Act (FLA) into law in 1916 for the purpose of expanding the nation's agricultural output in response to the high fixed commodity prices of foodstuffs, which also contributed to the ability of western state defense councils to expand their respective agricultural industries. Before the creation of the Federal Farm Loan Bureau, which administered the farm loans, most farmers engaged with the typical means of borrowing, using their property as collateral for what were usually high-interest, unregulated loans from privately-operated local banks. Between 1900 and 1912, rural credit in the western states averaged around twelve-percent interest and most state governments avoided placing caps on the amount of interest banks could charge debtors. Such high interest rates discouraged farmers from borrowing, limiting their capability to engage in the kind of food production increases that the CND demanded.³

² "Farm Loans for Westmoreland are Large," *Imperial Valley Daily Press*, May 5, 1917, 1; "To Appraise Seeley Land in Order to Grant Loans," *Imperial Valley Daily Press*, May 23, 1917, 1; "Farmer's Bank to Move to Its Magnificent New Home at Minden," *Record-Courier*, December 13, 1918, 1.

³ George F. Putnam, "The Federal Farm Loan Act," *American Economic Review*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (December 1916): 770-775; Jesse E. Pope, *The Federal Farm Loan Act* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 3-7.

The growing inability of farmers to procure the necessary funds to purchase additional land on which to cultivate had, by 1916, become a real problem in the West. During the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, as historian Christopher Shaw notes, “agricultural debt was a chronic feature of life in rural America.”⁴ Furthermore, urban flight had steadily drained the region of not only reliable labor pools as workers fled for the cities to attain higher paying jobs, but the promise of steady work and better pay also attracted farmers to the cities. In 1910, 51% of the population of the American West lived in rural areas. By 1920, that number had decreased to 47%. At first glance, that difference did not appear to be overly consequential, but, in consideration of the fact that the region’s population had increased by around 23% between 1910 and 1920, the decrease in the rural population was quite significant for the nation’s agro-economic sector. As the western states looked to repopulate their rural districts, which included trying to economically entice farmers to return to the countryside, they struggled to provide the necessary inducements due to a general unavailability of funds or a general lack of concern by state policymakers.⁵

Neither the federal government nor the CND had the authority to demand that the individual states mandate and fund their own farm loan programs, but they did have the authority to initiate their own farm loan funding programs. The CND placed a concerted emphasis on federal-state cooperation and coordination in regard to how the FLA funds were to be allocated and borrowers had to work through their state and county governments in order to procure FLA loans. During the World War I years, a majority of FLA loans were approved and distributed

⁴ Christopher A. Shaw, “‘Tired of Being Exploited’: The Grassroots Origins of the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916,” *Agricultural History*, Vol. 92, No. 4 (Fall 2018): 513.

⁵ US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Abstract of the Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1923), 190; US Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Abstract of the Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), 103.

through the combined effort of county defense councils and the respective land grant universities. The entire process was indicative of how cooperative federalism operated in the United States, especially within the agricultural industries.⁶

The federal government appropriated a set amount of funding earmarked for farm loans, but only at the discretion of the state governments. The states then handed the management of dispersing the loans to the individual counties, who worked with their state's Extension Service to determine individual approvals. While the state governments oversaw the loan process, it was the coordination among county officials and the federal government, as represented by the partnership of Extension Service officials and county agents who were on the ground and in contact with the farmers applying for the loans. States gladly welcomed the financial aid proffered by the federal government because it not only provided their farming districts with a much needed economic boost, but it did so in a way that appeared to limit the federal government's regulatory stipulations over state autonomy by handing the states the power to approve and disperse the loans. At the same time, the federal government was still involved in those approvals and dispersals through the participation of the Extension Service and its county agents, who, while remunerated through a combination of funds from state and county governments, were still agents and employees of the federal government first and foremost.⁷

Small farmers benefitted the most from FLA assistance. The act capped interest rates at six percent and allowed farmers to borrow up to 50% of their total land value and 20% of their equity. The farm loans ranged from a minimum of \$100 to a maximum of \$10,000 and borrowers had anywhere from five to forty years of amortization. Passage of the FLA not only made it

⁶ Schmidt and Ross, *Readings in the Economic History of American Agriculture*, 506-509.

⁷ W. Stull Holt, *The Federal Farm Loan Bureau: Its History, Activities, and Organization* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1924), 23-27, 32-34, 45.

easier and less-risky for farmers to procure loans for expansion and improvements, but it also gave individual state governments an excuse to avoid the kind of political conflict associated with government-regulated lending practices within the private sector. State defense councils coordinated with the USDA and the Department of Commerce – the federal entities overseeing the Farm Loan Bureau – to provide their farmers with the financial assistance needed to increase food production and expand their acreage.⁸

Not all state defense councils made farm loan funding a priority. While some, such as the CSCD and MSCD, set aside state funds earmarked for farmer welfare, many state councils still expected farmland expansion to be the responsibility of the farmers themselves, or even that of the federal government. The reliance upon the federal government and the FLA marked yet another departure from how the state governments typically understood their regulatory roles within the private sector. Because they were so inherently tied to the CND and woven into the greater DCS in general, state defense councils transformed how individual state governments understood their relationship with the federal government. Instead of performatively opposing federal assistance in an abstract show of support for the *laissez-faire* myth, defense council officials acted as facilitators; a kind of middleman between the regulatory designs of the federal government and the economic desires of the individual citizen. In the absence of significant

⁸ Shaw, “‘Tired of Being Exploited’,” 512-515. According to Shaw, the FLA “repudiated the creed of *laissez-faire* by declaring that the government had a responsibility to assist ordinary citizens economically,” in this case, the small farmer. The insistence of banks to wantonly charge such high interest rates for farm loans was demonstrative of the larger class struggle happening in the country at the time. The passage of and overwhelming support for the FLA served as a kind of litmus test for regulatory involvement of the state in agriculture moving forward. As the popularity of the FLA demonstrated, Americans were willing to abandon abstract notions of “the free-market” for greater regulatory practices, provided that help was applied directly to the small farmer.

forms of financial assistance at the state level, the federal government acted as an economic safety net.⁹

The further down the line of governance the DCS ventured, the more personal its activities became within the communities where the local defense council units operated and to the individuals residing within those communities. County defense councils were much more willing than their federal or state government counterparts to see that the necessary funds to assist local farmers with certain financial aspects of their trade were appropriated and properly distributed throughout their own communities. Being that most if not all farmers in any given county had some sort of relationship with or knowledge of at least one of their county defense council members, it made good economic sense that the more localized defense council units would attempt to assist on a more personal and meaningful level.¹⁰

County defense councils, especially when their members themselves were involved in the local agricultural industries as many in fact were, especially in the rural counties of the western states, demonstrated a propensity to do more than just demand that their friends and fellow farmers increase their acreage. Patriotic appeals sounded good, but economic inducements would be needed to motivate practical results. County defense council members often did everything in their power to facilitate expansion in a thoughtful and practical manner so as to avoid harming their local economy, and ultimately, their own pocketbooks. One of the most widely utilized and popular methods of agricultural expansion that county defense councils engaged with was in providing low interest, no-interest, or collateral-free loans and free seeds to area farmers. County defense councils throughout the American West, at the behest of the farmers who resided within

⁹ *Laws Passed by the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly*, 33; California State Council of Defense, *Report of the California State Council of Defense* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 38-39; Pope, *The Federal Farm Loan Act*, 11-18.

¹⁰ Sanderson and Polson, *Rural Community Organization*, 210-214.

their borders, did far more in procuring funds to assist area agriculture than what was done by the state defense councils. State councils like the MSCD and the CSCD preferred to distribute funds to their county defense councils for allocation rather than doling those funds out themselves to the individual, letting local government determine who should get what and how much.¹¹

In Montana's southcentral grain farming region, the Musselshell County Council of Defense procured MSCD funds for loans totaling \$13,818.30 to be provided to sixty-eight farmers within the county. While the MSCD provided the money, it was the county councils who determined how it would be loaned and to whom. The amounts ranged from \$40 to \$750 and were used to help borrowers purchase equipment, make improvements, and to purchase additional acreage. The money was taken from the MSCD's initial appropriation of \$500,000, much of which was earmarked for the distinct purpose of assisting farmers with agricultural expansion. Bearing six-percent interest and with the first payments to be made in January 1919, the farm loans were usually secured through the mortgages of personal property owned by the debtors. While the MSCD allotted each county a specific share of the \$500,000, borrowers had to meet a certain threshold of financial need to qualify. That meant that the more successful farmers in Montana with larger tracts of farmland most often did not qualify. County defense councils in Montana successfully fought for farmers with less land to help them expand and compete with their wealthier neighbors, oftentimes accepting promissory notes rather than collateral to back the loans.¹²

¹¹ Clarke, *The Little Democracy*, 49, 54-55; "Feed and Seed for Farmers Now on Way," *Glasgow Courier*, April 5, 1918, 1.

¹² "Nearly \$14,000 Loaned Farmers," *Roundup Record*, July 12, 1918, 1; D.L. Anderson to State Council of Defense, April 29, 1918, box 1, folder 1, Montana Defense Council Records; F.B. Leinard to F.B. Linfield, May 17, 1917, box 1, folder 15, Montana Council of Defense Records.

Liberty Gardens and Urban Farming

Professional farmers were not the only people to benefit from the increased governmental assistance related to food production, nor were they the only Americans tasked with that duty. With so many of the nation's industrial farms dedicated to growing crops that were, for the most part, destined for international markets and for American military camps, the proliferation of Liberty Gardens in urban areas aimed to offset the loss of produce to the cities during the war from area farming districts and helped Americans stay nourished by growing their own food. County and municipal defense councils throughout the country became vocal proponents of the Liberty Garden Movement, with some state defense councils earmarking a portion of their food production funds to provide free seeds for liberty gardeners. As significant contributors to wartime food production and important factors in the much needed supplementation of the nation's wartime diet, women and children were the most common participants in the Liberty Garden Movement¹³

In early-1918, the Los Angeles Municipal Council of Defense, working in cooperation with the LA City Council, combined a portion of their respective funds, \$2,000 in total, to purchase vegetable seeds in bulk to distribute to thousands of the city's residents. The free seed distribution program sought to encourage Angelenos within the city limits to grow their own food at home, in empty fields, vacant lots, or anywhere else seeds might be planted. For its part, the Los Angeles County Council of Defense, which had been temporarily placed in charge of regulating the county's water system during the war, promised to lower water usage rates for residents who pledged to plant and cultivate their own Liberty Gardens. The introduction of

¹³ US Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of the United State Department of Agriculture, 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 197-199; Rose Hayden-Smith, *Sowing the Seeds of Victory: American Gardening Programs of World War I* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2014), 7-9.

farming to the urban areas was a novel wartime expedient made possible only through inventive new regulatory policies which brought federal, state, city, and county governments into the kitchens of millions of ordinary Americans. It also encouraged Americans to strengthen their communities by supplying their neighbors through the distribution of local produce.¹⁴

Aside from government assistance, corporations, with some intervention from state defense councils, also provided forms of aid to encourage their workers to plant Liberty Gardens. In Arizona, the ASCD, in cooperation with the state's land-grant university in Tucson, placed agricultural expert J.R. Sandige, the University of Arizona Extension Service's agent for Gila County, in charge of assisting employees and management of the companies in the state's copper mining districts to plant Liberty Gardens throughout 1918 and 1919. Sandige reported that, by July of 1919, "100 acres of employee gardens were put in by the Inspiration Consolidated Copper Co., Miami Copper Co., and the Old Dominion Copper Co. ... in all of these cases the companies furnish the ground, water, (some seed), instructions, guard it for the gardeners, and give them all they raise." "As a result of this work," Sandige explained, "\$100,000 worth of vegetables will be raised in the Globe-Miami district, \$18,000 worth in the Hayden district, and about \$14,000 worth in the Jerome-Verde district."¹⁵

Unlike its regional defense council counterparts, the ASCD did not appropriate funds for the purpose of furnishing free seeds for the state's farmers, nor did it provide financial assistance for its county councils to help Arizonans plant Liberty Gardens. It did however seem more than content in facilitating a kind of corporate welfare wherein the state government looked to the management of the various copper mining companies to engage in war work that was being

¹⁴ "Civic Support for War Gardens in Los Angeles," *Bakersfield Californian*, March 21, 1918, 4; *Yearbook of the United State Department of Agriculture, 1918*, 197.

¹⁵ J.R. Sandige, "Narrative Report of J.R. Sandige, County Agricultural Agent, Gila County, Arizona, from Jan. 1st to July 1st, 1919," University of Arizona Agricultural Extension Service Reports.

reserved for defense councils in states like Montana and California. Arizona's agricultural industry was dominated by cotton farming, not grain, fruit, feed, or vegetable farming. The majority of Arizona's food production was, during World War I, mostly found in the cattle ranching industry. However, it was not from a lack of want on the part of the ASCD. In the words of ASCD officials, the lack of free seed distribution was "to a large extent [due to] the absence of capital and facilities for handling seeds."¹⁶

In Washington, the WSCD did not appropriate any state funds for the explicit purpose of providing assistance for Liberty Gardens. To take up the need to organize their communities for urban farming, residents in cities and towns formed private associations to help in the endeavor. In 1918, Tacoma residents established the Tacoma War Garden Committee, pooling together their resources and manpower to increase the number of the city's community gardens and to ensure their proper maintenance. The committee worked with area farmers and the Pierce County Council of Defense (PCCD) to procure donated or wholesale seeds for Liberty Gardens, arrange demonstrations, and to provide advice by experts to help inexperienced gardeners. The efforts of the committee were so successful at encouraging their neighbors to become involved that, by the fall of 1918, Tacoma had planted ten-times the amount of Liberty Gardens than it had in 1917.¹⁷

As a result of the work of private patriotic organizations like the Tacoma War Garden Committee, municipal and county defense councils in Washington began taking greater steps to increase their role in the wartime urban farming effort. In 1918, the PCCD worked with the Tacoma City Council to pass an ordinance which converted all public and privately-owned vacant lots and alleyways within the city limits into Liberty Gardens. Vancouver soon followed

¹⁶ Thorwood Larson to Thomas E. Campbell, May 14, 1917, box 2, folder 30, Arizona Council of Defense Records; *The Arizona Council of Defense: Its Purposes and a Brief Statement of its Work*, 10.

¹⁷ "War Gardens are Booming," *Tacoma Times*, April 15, 1918, 7; "Plant War Gardens Now; Advice is Free," *Tacoma Times*, March 27, 1918, 8.

suit, with the City Council passing a similar law, albeit with some patriotic coercion from the Clark County Council of Defense. In the City of Colville in northeast Washington, residents planted and protected their Liberty Gardens with such fervor that the Colville City Council passed an ordinance in May of 1918 which made it unlawful for livestock “to run at large within the corporate city limits” in order to protect the gardens from being trampled or devoured by cattle, sheep, and pigs. The first laws in Washington designed to keep livestock from roaming the city streets came from World War I mobilization and DCS involvement in the effort, helping to create modern urban landscapes from a wartime necessity.¹⁸

In many locations throughout the region, private associations like war garden committees and commercial clubs may have performed the necessary labor for the Liberty Garden Movement, but the cramped urban space and unwillingness of property owners to volunteer their land for community gardens limited their efforts. By passing laws which forced owners of vacant lots to allow their neighbors to plant Liberty Gardens on their property, defense councils such as those of Pierce County and Clark County, as well as various city governments, brought new notions of local regulatory policymaking into the lives of Americans. As seen in the case of Colville, local laws that eliminated livestock traffic in urban areas also helped to modernize western towns and cities, putting the aesthetic desires of residents and the wartime requirements of the agricultural marketplace over the financial interests of area ranchers, whose produce was in far less demand than that of fruits, grains, or vegetables.¹⁹

¹⁸ “Many Plant War Gardens,” *Tacoma Times*, April 22, 1918, 8; Vancouver, Washington, “City Council Minutes,” November 17, 1919, Washington State Digital Archives; “Livestock Lose Freedom for Sake of War Gardens,” *Colville Examiner*, May 18, 1918, 3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 115.

Farm Mechanization

Even as late as 1917, most farmers still relied on the traditional method of using teams of draft animals and large labor crews to bring in the harvest. For generations, farmers had depended on teams of upwards to fifty farmhands and sometimes dozens of draft animals to perform the necessary labor. Their overhead costs included paying wages for the workers, buying feed for their draft animals, hauling water, and maintaining their equipment. As a step towards modernization, consolidation, the expansion of western agriculture, and the increase of farming profits, state defense councils looked to assist their farmers in mechanizing their agricultural enterprises. Doing away with traditional methods of cultivation and ushering in a new age of mechanized industrial farming signified an important aspect of the DCS's contributions to the modernization of American agriculture, both during and after World War I.²⁰

Facilitating regional modernization through mechanized farming required a hearty dose of public-private cooperation. Henry Ford & Son Inc. released its new Fordson model tractor in 1917 as the latest advent in modern combustible-engine farm mechanization and it was the most popular tractor on the market from 1917-1922. The Fordson was such a popular and sought after model that once farmland expansion efforts ramped-up, farmers began asking their local and state defense councils how they could procure one themselves to increase their output. In response, state defense councils from around the country flooded Ford's Detroit headquarters with telegrams and letters requesting that it fast-track its manufacture of Fordsons for the distinct purpose of increasing agricultural production within the states. Some even attempted to procure the Fordson at below-market or wholesale rates, hoping that Ford's patriotic sensibilities might outweigh the company's profit motives. While such naïve requests failed, the fact that some

²⁰ Hall, *Harvest Wobblies*, 20-29, 44-46; Arthur G. Peterson, "Governmental Policy Relating to Farm Machinery in World War I," *Agricultural History*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (January 1943): 31-32, 35-36.

defense councils thought it to be even a remote possibility evinced a new dynamic in the associational relationship between public and private, one which articulated the needs of national socioeconomic matters over corporate profit.²¹

At a basic starting cost of \$750 per tractor, not including accessories, equipment, maintenance, and interest rates, the cost was prohibitive. Even in consideration of the costs related to traditional draft-powered harvest work, the Fordson proved to be a costly addition for most farmers. With the inclusion of interest rates and shipping costs, the amount appeared prohibitive at best and a non-starter at worst. If the Fordson was to be made more accessible to American farmers, then they could not only remove the need for so many farmhands and draft animals, but they could also perform more work in a shorter amount of time, thereby making an expansion of farmland a simpler task and a practical reality. A.W. Shaw, head of the CND's Commercial Economy Board subcommittee, suggested to Henry Ford that interest rates and shipping fees be included to help farmers defray some of the cost, which he begrudgingly agreed to. However, the regulation of wartime production had made the manufacture of the Fordson a difficult task and the rising cost of raw materials due to production limitations further added to the problem.²²

The federal government's wartime regulatory policies, especially in regard to limits on steel and iron production to help with increased munitions and armor-plating manufacturing had made it challenging for Ford to be able to keep up with the high demand for its tractors between October 1917 and March 1918. In January 1918, the US Fuel Administration had ordered the

²¹ E.F. Benson to Ernest Holland, "Fordson Tractor," May 24, 1918, box 22, folder 663, Ernest O. Holland Records; Ernest Holland to A.L. Rogers, June 4, 1918, box 28, folder 874, Ernest O. Holland Records.

²² E.F. Benson to Henry Ford, April 30, 1918, box 22, folder 663, Ernest O. Holland Records; D.L. Anderson to the Montana State Council of Defense, April 20, 1918, box 1, folder 1, Montana Council of Defense Records; *Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense*, 2.

intermittent closures of tractor plants to deal with national fuel shortages and to improve conservation practices, which included the Michigan plant where Fordson produced its tractors. Subsequently, many state defense council agricultural committees proceeded to hound the Wilson Administration to allow Ford to be at least partially exempt from wartime regulations. USDA Secretary David Houston attempted to convince the WIB to ease production limits for farm implements at least long enough to allow Ford to be able to increase its production of tractors to assist with the expansion of farmland acreage.²³

In May 1918, USDA Assistant Secretaries Raymond Pearson and Carl Vrooman, in close coordination with the WIB and the CND's Munitions and Manufacturing Committee, revised the licensing procedures for companies like Ford & Son to be able to circumvent the production limits. The licensing revisions would be allowed only if Ford guaranteed that it would not engage in "excessive profiteering." The WIB similarly greenlighted Ford's Raw Material Division and its independent suppliers to increase production as a way to lower the cost of materials. In March 1918, Ford was producing only sixty-four Fordson tractors a day. By July, only two-months after the licensing revision, Ford had more than doubled its production rates with 131 tractors coming off the assembly line each day. As per the revised licensing agreement, Ford expanded production of its Tractor Division, but only after the company agreed in writing to charge no more than cost, plus an additional \$50 for each tractor. In 1918 alone, Ford manufactured 34,167 Fordsons, with nearly all of them interest and shipping-cost free when purchased by farmers directly through their respective defense councils.²⁴

²³ Lester P. Edge to Ernest Lister, May 15, 1918, box 140, folder "Misc. War Issues," Governor Ernest Lister Papers; T.A. Strong to Charles Greenfield, July 31, 1918, box 1, folder 24, Montana Council of Defense Records; E.F. Benson to Henry Suzzallo, May 16, 1918, box 22, folder 663, Ernest O. Holland Records; Peterson, "Governmental Policy Relating to Farm Machinery in World War I," 33-34.

²⁴ Peterson, 34-36; Randy Leffingwell, *John Deer* (St. Paul: MBI Publishing Company, 2002), 37-38.

In May 1918, shortly after Ford & Son, Inc. and the USDA reworked the licensing agreement to produce more tractors, the various state defense councils immediately reserved a vast majority of the Fordsons on behalf of their farmers. The process of getting the tractors to the consumer varied from state to state, but the WSCD's delivery method was demonstrative of how most defense councils streamlined their distribution process. Washington State Agriculture Commissioner and WSCD Food Supply and Conservation Committee Chairman, E.F. Benson, secured an allotment of 100 Fordson tractors purchased with state funds. County defense council chairmen worked with their respective Extension Service county agents to receive applications for the tractors from individual farmers interested in reserving one. "Each application will be accompanied by a certified check of \$100.00 ... to show good faith," Benson insisted, "the balance of the purchase price to be paid on delivery of [the] tractor."²⁵

State defense councils reserved and allotted thousands of Fordsons throughout the western American states in 1918. In Montana, the MSCD devised methods of public-private coordination to help the state's farmers purchase the new tractors. From May 1918 through July 1919, the MSCD, working through Montana's County Agent System, helped secure lines of low-interest, collateral-free credit for 1,033 farmers to purchase new Fordson tractors. Montana's first Fordsons arrived by rail on August 1, 1918, their arrival and distribution directly supervised by the county defense council officials who had helped to secure the loans and purchases.²⁶

The federal government's involvement in regulating the private-sector manufacture of tractors effectively helped increase food production in exchange for limiting Ford's ability to

²⁵ E.F. Benson to Henry Ford, April 30, 1918, box 22, folder 663, Ernest O. Holland Records; Henry Suzzallo to E.F. Benson, May 1, 1917, box 22, folder 663, Ernest O. Holland Records; E.F. Benson to Ernest Holland, "Fordson Tractors" May 24, 1918, box 22, folder 663, Ernest O. Holland Records.

²⁶ "Ford Tractors Allotted for State Distribution," *Mineral County Independent*, July 4, 1918, 6; "Fordson Tractors are Arriving," *Producer's News*, August 2, 1918, 1.

gouge wholesalers and consumers. As a result of that wartime regulation and public-private cooperation, Ford & Sons, Inc., according to Henry Ford, made just enough profit with the Fordson throughout the remainder of 1918 to meet overhead costs and nothing more. The USDA's push to boost wartime tractor production would become one of the most popular methods through which the various state defense councils could facilitate the expansion and modernization of western agriculture, made possible in part because of the voluntary public-private cooperation and coordination facilitated by the DCS.²⁷

Farm Labor Procurement

Even before the Great War and the federal government's subsequent conscription order, finding reliable farm labor had become a growing problem for farmers in the West. Americans had been moving into urban areas in greater numbers as manufacturing proved to be a more lucrative and steadier economic activity than that of agriculture. With the arrival of the railroads in the 1870s and 1880s throughout much of the further reaches of the region, western development spread rapidly, bringing more low-paid migrant workers into the region to sustain that development. Coupled with the city-bound emigrations, farmers, along with the timber harvesting operations and mining companies they competed with for laborers, were becoming more reliant on migratory workers to perform the labor that locally based farmhands had traditionally been hired to do in places like the Northeast, Southeast, and Midwest. That meant that western farmers had become reliant on a class of workers who, in their own reliance upon

²⁷ D.L. Anderson to State Council of Defense, April 29, 1918, box 1, folder 1, Montana Defense Council Records; Ed. Rudolph to Dwight B. Heard, June 19, 1918, box 2, folder 29, Arizona Council of Defense Records.

outside factors like train travel or better pay elsewhere, could not always be counted on to arrive by harvest time or to stick around long enough to bring in the harvest.²⁸

The agricultural industries of the American West had already been experiencing difficulties finding seasonal laborers by the time Woodrow Wilson signed the Selective Service Act into law in May 1917. The draft then only served to compound preexisting labor problems by removing even more able-bodied workers from the mines, forests, and farms of the region, inserting them into military bases across the country and into the trenches of Europe. As a result of the compounded wartime blows to farm labor, farmers and other employers in the western states demanded that their state and county defense councils find some remediation to the problem.²⁹ Fred Whiteside, president of the Elk Basin Oil Co. of Billings, Montana, explained to Governor Stewart that “it is obvious that this [farm labor] situation can only be relieved through organized effort ... this work can no doubt be done by the State Council of Defense in cooperation with the local Council of Defense in each county.”³⁰

In relation to labor difficulties early on in the mobilization process, the CND focused the lion’s share of its energy on the industries that were more directly related to the manufacturing of military equipment, such as mineral extraction, munitions, shipbuilding, the automobile industry, aviation, etc. A majority of their efforts usually had something to do with quelling strikes or other work stoppages, as well as setting industry-wide wage standards for workers in those industries. The CND subsequently tasked the state defense councils for using their own resources

²⁸ Mark Wyman, *Hoboes: Bindlestiffs, Fruit Tramps, and the Harvesting of the West* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), 3-7.

²⁹ G.I. Christie, *Finding Labor to Harvest the Food Crops*, “Circular No. 115,” (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 3-6; G.I. Christie, *Supplying the Farm Labor Need: Organization, Cooperation, and the Government’s Interest* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 2-4.

³⁰ Fred Whiteside to Governor S.V. Stewart, July 12, 1918, box 1, folder 20, Montana Defense Council Records.

and efforts to find solutions for any difficulties related to farm labor and food production.

Finding solutions for labor procurement was problematic out West, where finding reliable and experienced farmhands was often a more difficult proposition than finding workers in the more densely-packed urban centers.³¹

In response, state defense councils devised unique, non-traditional, and innovative methods to tackle the farm labor problem. Their solutions almost always came in three forms: the creation of government employment agencies; the organization of “patriotic” volunteers, such as women, children, and retirees to be utilized as “replacement labor;” and the “importation” of immigrant farm workers. Immigrant laborers, most especially migratory workers from Mexico, were most often used by farmers in the southwestern states, including Arizona and California. Although other methods like mechanization and various other labor-saving techniques had been propagated by the USDA and the CND, procuring traditional human labor was, for most state defense councils, the most practical answer to the farm labor shortage question and the next best thing, financially-speaking, to pushing for mechanization.³²

In early-1917, the standard defense council process for procuring farm labor typically fell to the private associations that already existed in the rural and urban areas. In trying to avoid the trappings of getting too involved, regulatorily speaking, in the private sector, the state defense councils of Montana and Washington looked to utilize the organization of farmer’s unions and farming cooperatives to encourage a community-motivated means of assisting one another. However, the urgent need for workers could not be supplied by the private sector, at least not

³¹ Ibid., 4-8; “Farm Labor Shortage Threatens America with Food Famine Next Winter,” *El Paso Morning Times*, March 31, 1918, 27.

³² *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 42-46; *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 20-21; “Labor Problem of the Farmer,” *Fergus County Democrat*, July 12, 1917, 1; “Draft Able-Bodied Men to Harvest,” *Roundup Record*, July 26, 1918, 1.

without the coordination of the state governments, a fact recognized by some of those private-sector participants themselves.³³ “While the work of the various clubs and associations around the state has been helpful in finding labor to harvest the food crops,” lamented the Washington State Grain Growers Association during their 1918 convention, “the real assistance should be applied by the [WSCD] and the county councils ... who can put the organizational strength of the state behind the farm labor effort as a military necessity.” Realizing their own ineffectiveness, private associations pressed their state and local defense councils for more direct regulatory involvement, essentially admitting their inability to be trusted with the task, while at the same time recognizing the private-sector’s influence in leading the mobilization effort.³⁴

In response to the private-sector’s requests for greater government involvement, the WSCD organized the State Harvester’s League (SHL) in the summer of 1917. The group’s funding was supplied entirely by private donations, a majority of which were donated by two wealthy farmers, Frank Waterhouse and R.H. Parsons. With input from the organization’s donors, WSCD Farm Labor Committee head, A.L. Rogers, placed Waterhouse and Welford Beaton, the WSCD’s in-house propagandist, in charge of the SHL. The SHL was an excellent example of how associationalism worked and how it was transformed during the Great War into a more administrative-state partner as a result of its participation. The WSCD initiated the formation of the SHL but did not provide it with any state funds. The fact that the SHL operated with privately donated funds and was managed by private citizens, even if one was a governor-

³³ “Information Concerning the Employment of Farm Laborers,” 1918, box 21, folder 638, Ernest O. Holland Records; J.C. Scott, “Report of the Farm Survey for the State of Washington,” box 21, folder 638, Ernest O. Holland Records.

³⁴ “To Help Solve the Farm Labor Problem,” *Pullman Herald*, May 11, 1918, 4.

appointed defense council operative, gave it the appearance of a private association, yet it was an idea completely conceived, organized, and managed by the WSCD.³⁵

Throughout the 1917 harvest season, the SHL, almost always in coordination with Washington State College and the various county defense councils, organized volunteers in women, children, and “professional men from the cities” to assist with bringing in the harvest in the state’s farming districts. “Registration of men and women willing to spend a portion of the summer in agricultural work was maintained at Seattle,” and, according to the WSCD’s final report, “many hundreds of persons were registered.” But, as more men answered the supplemental draft calls of 1918 and agricultural expansion continued to demand more workers, not even state-organized private associations could keep up with the growing need for more farmhands. Their answer was to combine “the seven most essential agencies” related to labor procurement in the state “to adopt policies to meet the farm labor shortage and that some control must be exercised.” The WSCD looked to leave private-sector employment organizing behind altogether and take charge of that job itself.³⁶

II: Agricultural Expansion by the Numbers, 1917-1921

In the USDA’s 1919 report on the wartime expansion of American agriculture, David Houston remarked that “during the first year of our participation in the war, 1917, saw the Nation’s record for acreage planted – 283,000,000 of the leading cereal grains, potatoes ... and cotton, as [compared to] 261,000,000 for the preceding year ... there was planted in 1918 for the same crops, 289,000,000 acres ... an increase of 5,600,000.”³⁷ Of that 5.6 million additional

³⁵ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 47-48.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 47-48; Carl F. Reuss, “The Farm Labor Problem in Washington, 1917-1918,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (October 1943): 342, 346-349, 350-352.

³⁷ US House of Representatives, “Document No. 1612,” *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture for the Year Ended June 30, 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 5.

acres planted throughout the country in 1918, approximately 2.45 million acres were planted by farmers in the eleven states of the Northwest (WA, ID, OR), Southwest (UT, NM, AZ, CA), and Intermountain West (MT, CO, WY, UT). The millions of additional acres of farmland did not come as a result of patriotically motivated farmers, nor was it only due to the fixed price raises in produce costs. The high rate of expansion was made possible because of the pronounced involvement of the DCS and an ability to affect socioeconomic transformation through innovative regulatory activity.³⁸

Between 1909 and 1917, the organic pre-DCS growth of the agricultural industries in Arizona, California, Montana, and Washington experienced steady and modest increases for nearly all crops. Even with population increases due to high immigration rates and the corresponding standard annual increases of farmland as a result, the pre-World War I-era growth of western American agriculture appeared typical, with nothing to signify any abnormalities. However, between 1917 and 1919, the region experienced massive increases in farmland expansion, dwarfing the numbers seen during the second decade of the twentieth century. The upward trend continued into the early 1920s, peaking in 1921, right around the time the agricultural depression started to emerge as a prospective socioeconomic problem.³⁹

Agricultural Expansion in California

Thanks to the work of the CSCD during the period of its existence, from April 1917 through January 1920, California's farming industries received a massive boost to both the expansion of acreage and the overall crop yields per acre. The surge of food production increases

³⁸ US Dept. of Agriculture, *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 727.

³⁹ *Abstract of the Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, 583-599; US Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1920* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 807, 810.

in California were noticeable by the time the first wartime crop was harvested in the fall of 1917. With the expansion of the state's total productive acreage, combined with the wartime commodity hikes, California made a fifty-percent increase in food production values in 1917 compared to 1916, totaling \$650,000,000 in prospective market value. That increase presented an impressive figure considering that a regional drought, which had lasted from at least 1917 through 1919 in most parts of the West including California, threatened to hinder the growth of most crops. Ultimately, grain and legume farmers benefitted the most from the increases, with potatoes and sugar beets following closely behind.⁴⁰

Between 1916 and 1917, wheat production in California increased by 930,000 bushels, corn by 362,000 bushels, rice by 1,857,000 bushels, barley by 1,880,000 bushels, and beans increased by a whopping 5,165,000 bushels in only one season. Legume farms, which saw the largest increases in production rates, expanded by 14,264 acres in 1917. In April 1917, the CSCD's Supplies and Food Production Committee had requested that the state's wheat farmers aim for an expansion of 80,000 acres by the end of the year. Thanks to the CSCD's coordination with the agricultural college in Berkeley – an effort which facilitated farmland acreage increases, improved the state's County Agent System, and provided other forms of financial assistance – wheat growers actually exceeded that number by more than 20,000 acres. As a result of the coordination between and among the CSCD, the University of California, and the state's farming communities, California's wheat producing farmlands expanded an additional 101,470 acres in just the first year of mobilization activity.⁴¹

The statistics related to expansion could not be attributed to the standard growth rates experienced by the state's agricultural industries before the World War I years. Between 1909

⁴⁰ *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 17.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

and 1916, California's farmers experienced a steady yet still relatively insignificant increase in the aggregate growth of their lands, a typical expectation when considering the steady growth of the population and rising immigration rates. In the aggregate, California's 1909 farmlands totaled 4,924,733 acres. By 1916, a year before the formation and pronounced regulatory involvement of the CSCD, that number had only increased to 5,520,900 acres, an average increase of 85,166 acres per year over a seven-year period. By the time of the 1918 harvest season, in response to the increased food demands by the federal government and the CND's requests that state defense councils do more to expand their farmlands, California experienced a surge in aggregate farmland, totaling 5,805,000 acres of all crops. That number dipped somewhat following the ceasefire in November 1918. By 1919, the state's aggregate farmland held at 5,762,000 acres; a decrease of 43,000 acres from the previous season, but still much larger than before the war.⁴²

Agricultural Expansion in Montana

With the help of the MSCD and its coordinated efforts with the land-grant university in Bozeman, Montana experienced tremendous enhancements to its agricultural industries between 1917 and 1921. Like most states, cereal grains saw the most expansive increases in production rates and, at the time, Montana was the country's most prolific harvester of spring wheat. In 1917, Montana farmers harvested 17,963,000 bushels of wheat on 1,720,000 acres of farmland. By 1918, that number had grown to 29,961,000 bushels of wheat on 2,386,000 acres, an expansion of 666,000 additional acres of wheat farms alone. Not only were farmers able to increase the state's wheat farming acreage by well over a half-million acres, but the number of bushels per acre also increased, improving from 10.4 bushels per acre to 12.6 in one year. The Montana Department of Agriculture and the USDA both attributed the production improvements,

⁴² *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919, 727.*

in the midst of a catastrophic drought, to increased Extension Service funding and the subsequent boost to Montana's County Agent System.⁴³

In 1916, Montana had an estimated twenty-five percent of the state's prospective dryland and irrigable farming regions under cultivation. By 1917, that number had increased to an estimated forty percent of prospective farmland. As expected, the numbers continued to steadily climb with the arrival of more settlers. In 1918, with the involvement of the MSCD in that expansion, those numbers greatly improved, far higher than the natural levels of expansion that would normally occur with steady rates of farmland settlement. The state's agricultural industries also experienced a move towards more diversification in the types of crops being planted. While wheat was the most produced crop in the state during and after the period of World War I, Montana's farmers also began experimenting much more frequently with different types of crops, such as sugar beets, flax, beans, and peas. The MSCD deemphasized the continued implementation of monocrop culture as an economic necessity, leading to modernized and more sustainable agroeconomic practices for most of Montana's farming communities.⁴⁴

Between 1909 and 1916, Montana, unlike California, experienced a massive expansion of its aggregate farmland acreage, one of the most productive expansions to be found anywhere in the nation. In 1909, Montana maintained 1,827,000 of total farmland acreage, a paltry number in consideration of the sheer size of the state. By 1917, that number had increased to 4,522,000 acres; an average increase of 385,000 acres per year. Between 1917 and 1918, Montana's aggregate farmland acreage increased by 602,000 – from 4,522,000 acres to 5,124,000. While

⁴³ "Some Montana Facts and Problems," 1923, box 28, folder 1, President Atkinson Correspondence Files; Department of Agriculture, Labor, and Industry, *Montana: Industrial Resource Edition* (Missoula: The Missoulian Publishing Company, 1923), 21-22.

⁴⁴ James M. Hamilton, "The American Farmer and the World's Food Supply," 1918, box 3, folder 41, Montana State College, Office of the President Records, Series 2; *Montana: Industrial Resource Edition*, 34.

the pre-war numbers were more than impressive, with Montana experiencing agricultural growth at rates far greater than most other states in the country, that number was still nearly doubled in only one year. The MSCD's focus on expanding the state's farming capabilities facilitated the state's rise as one of the region's most important grain and feed growers, shifting Montana's economy from an extraction-based mining and timber economy to that of a more diverse agricultural-focused economy.⁴⁵

Not only did the MSCD help to expand Montana's farmlands, thereby increasing the profitability of the state's agricultural industries, but it effectively made Montana a legitimate food-producing competitor. In a state with a great deal of unreached potential insofar as its prospective agricultural capabilities, Montana's state government had, for decades, failed to regulate the industry in an efficient and productive manner. Much of the state's economy was centered on the copper mining and timber harvesting industries, not agricultural food production. As a result of that lack of governmental regulation, farming industries languished while the mining and timber industries blossomed. During the period of the Great War, the MSCD not only elevated the state's economic viability, but it made farming the state's biggest economic contribution. The drop in copper prices following World War I caused considerable damage to Montana's mining industry, providing an additional reason for state policymakers and the private-sector-led MSCD to concentrate more regulatory involvement on agriculture. Montana would henceforth be one of the region's premier farming states.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919*, 727.

⁴⁶ Montana Dept. of Agriculture, *Resources of Montana: The Land of Opportunity, 1920* (Helena: Independent Publishing Co, 1920), 27-30.

Agricultural Expansion in Washington State

In a letter to Washington State College (WSC) President, Ernest Holland, Governor Ernest Lister underscored the importance of expanding the state's farming capabilities, telling the head of the state's land-grant university that, "In no line is a greater opportunity presented in the winning of the war than that of the production of greater crops."⁴⁷ During the World War I years, Washington was one of the region's most important states for agricultural production, especially grain and tree-fruit farming, namely wheat, cherries, and apples. Governor Lister and the WSCD placed an incredible amount of effort into ensuring that food production emerged as one the state's most significant contributions to the national mobilization effort. WSC in Pullman, the state's flagship land-grant university, maintained impressive levels of participation in coordinating with the WSCD, the state's agricultural department, the USDA, and area farmers. Ernest Holland and Governor Lister maintained almost daily communication regarding the relationship between the war effort and Washington's farming districts. The WSCD placed a greater importance on increased food production than perhaps any other defense council in the West, doing so in an efficient manner, highlighting the progressive principles of the state's political establishment.⁴⁸

In 1909, Washington State contained around 3,382,000 total acres of farmland. That number had actually decreased to an aggregate of 3,284,500 acres by 1917, an average loss of 97,500 acres per year over a nine-year period. Beginning with its expansion efforts in the summer of 1917, the participation of the WSCD had a transformative impact on the state's agricultural industries. Resulting from the WSCD's wartime mobilization efforts during the first

⁴⁷ Ernest Lister to Ernest Holland, 1917, box 26, folder 812, Ernest O. Holland Records; Ernest Holland to E.F. Benson, July 26, 1917, box 11, folder 337, Ernest O. Holland Records.

⁴⁸ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919*, 727; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 39-40.

year of its existence, Washington's farmlands expanded to 3,664,100 acres by the end of 1918 – an increase of 379,600 acres during that first year of mobilization. In 1919, that number again increased, reaching an aggregate of 3,900,600 acres of farmland.⁴⁹ Between 1909 and 1917, Washington's aggregate farmland expanded at an average rate of 12,188 acres per year. With a concerted emphasis on agricultural expansion during World War I, the average annual rate of Washington's farmland expansion between 1917 and 1920 increased to around 39,300 acres per year, more than three-times the average increase found between 1909-1917. The cooperation and coordination between the federal, state, and county governments in Washington State had proven to be an efficient method for expanding the region's agricultural output.⁵⁰

Wheat prices per bushel dropped drastically in 1919 as the wartime increases created a massive surplus. By 1921, as the agricultural depression began to rear its head, wheat farmers in Washington averaged around \$0.81-\$0.90 per bushel. During the fixed, high commodity price period of 1914-1919, growers of "King Wheat" in Washington commanded anywhere from \$1.65-\$2.15 per bushel, averaging around \$2.00 a bushel. As more and more farmers expanded their farmlands during the Great War, and the wheat surplus continued to grow, the market prices dropped accordingly. By the end of the 1920 growing season, the wheat surplus was so massive that demand could not keep up with market values. Wheat prices bottomed-out to around \$.80 per bushel that year, making the expansion efforts of farmers in the western states a relative waste of time and resources.⁵¹

⁴⁹ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1920*, 808; *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919*, 727.

⁵⁰ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919*, 727.

⁵¹ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1921*, 119-122; Duffin, 55-57.

Agricultural Expansion in Arizona

Arizona may not have been as significant of an agricultural food producer as other states in the region were, but it still contained a large amount of prospective farmland, even in the parched desert. Cotton, Arizona's main agricultural activity, dominated the state's farming industry and was the main focus of the ASCD's agricultural expansion policies. In 1917, Arizona contained around 41,000 acres of cotton farms. That number doubled by 1918 to 95,000 acres – a direct result of the ASCD's agricultural expansion policies during its busiest year of the war period. By 1919, cotton acreage continued to increase, but only slightly, totaling 107,000 acres. 1920 saw the biggest increase yet at 230,000 acres of cotton farms. Between 1917 and 1920, Arizona increased its cotton producing farmlands by 190,000 acres.⁵²

If anything, the push for agricultural expansion by the ASCD worked too well. As a result of the rapid growth of the wartime cotton farming industry, a massive surplus created a price drop for bales of cotton and the state's cotton farms experienced a severe contraction. By 1921, Arizona counted a total of only 90,000 acres of cotton farms, which was 5,000 acres less than 1918's numbers and a full 140,000 acres less cotton than what had been harvested the year before. The coming agricultural depression had exposed itself as early as 1921 and western states with historically drier climates were the first to experience its effects.⁵³

Arizona's farmers, with assistance from the ASCD and the county defense councils, expanded the state's farmland acreage more than any other state in the region, even in the face of a severe regional drought. In 1909, Arizona had a total of around 177,000 acres of agricultural land. In 1917, the first year that the ASCD initiated its expansion policies, that number had increased by nearly two-fold, totaling 403,000 acres. During the first full year of the ASCD's

⁵² *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1919*, 727.

⁵³ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1921*, 611.

existence, from April 1917 through April 1918, agricultural expansion efforts helped to grow the state's farmlands by an additional 48,000 acres. By the end of the 1918 growing season, Arizona's farmable lands had, in the aggregate, been extended to roughly 451,000 acres. In 1919, which was the state's most impressive year of farmland acreage expansion, farmers added 506,000 acres to the aggregate – an increase of 55,000 acres in only one year.⁵⁴

Between 1910 and 1920, one of the most significant periods of growth in Arizona's early years, the population had increased from 204,354 in 1910 to 354,162 by 1920. Normally, such expansive population growth in only a decade would account for a large portion of the state's farmland acreage increases. However, a majority of those new arrivals to Arizona, mostly middle-class professionals and skilled laborers from the Midwest and Southeastern regions of the country, settled predominantly in the cities, especially in Phoenix, Tucson, and Flagstaff. The American West in general, not just Arizona, grew rapidly during the first quarter of the twentieth century, but that growth did not correspond with the increases in the region's farmland. The intervention of the DCS in the western states played an outsized role in facilitating that expansion.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1920*, 808.

⁵⁵ *Abstract of the Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, 18.

Section IV: Labor Readjustment

–Chapter Seven–

Rise of the Economic Surveillance State

One of the most significant socioeconomic conflicts occurring in the United States going into the Great War was the battle between organized labor and business. The class-conflict it generated was especially pronounced in the American West, where the region's extractive and agricultural industries held an existential significance to the nation's economic livelihood in general and where political populism had shaken-up the nation's traditional political order. Coercing labor's patriotic wartime loyalty constituted an essential element of DCS operations in the region. Subsequently, the AFL's determined coordination with the CND and the state defense councils contributed to the union federation's ability to emerge from the Great War as the nation's dominant labor organization for the foreseeable future.

Every state defense council in the American West, just like their federal counterpart, formed labor committees to deal with the issues related to socioeconomic conflicts, including the mediation of strikes and the procurement of replacement labor. Most states already had labor departments within their governmental structures, but, due to the common practice of governors appointing business-friendly commissioners, they often failed to curb the increasing levels of wartime labor agitation. With the inclusion of labor committees within the structure of the state defense councils, usually comprised of state labor federation representatives or other prominent conservative labor leaders, the cooperative nature of the DCS worked to find innovative new methods for curbing labor radicalism and ameliorating economic conflict in a manner that would avoid alienating labor's wartime support or its political influences.

I: Coercion of Labor

Not unlike the rest of the nation, Washington State's working-class population felt the heavy yoke of the Preparedness Movement in 1916 as both isolationists and interventionists tried to pull organized labor onto their respective sides. When the rank-and-file of the Seattle Central Labor Council (SCLC) voted in principle against partaking in the state's preparedness campaigns, local media outlets reminded them that "preparedness is not a class question ... it is up to labor unions to participate actively in order that the preparedness achieved shall be democratic preparedness ... [one] that is truly representative of the citizenry of the United States." Using an analogy of "the Chinese of old" building a wall around themselves for protection through isolation, the *Seattle Star* asked, "Will the trade unions really so *Chinify* themselves?"¹ Many businesses, politicians, and several AFL-affiliated unions in Washington supported the Preparedness Movement, at least in principle, but the powerful SCLC, which represented around 15,000 Seattle-area workers, stood firm in its anti-preparedness-for-war stance throughout 1916 and the first half of 1917.²

In October 1916, two months after the formation of the CND, William B. Wilson, head of the US Labor Department and a ranking member of the CND's Executive Committee, traveled to Seattle in a bid to pull the SCLC onto the side of wartime preparedness. After a meeting with James A. Duncan, President of the SCLC, Wilson departed the state frustrated with his inability to get Duncan, and subsequently, a large portion of Seattle's working-class, onto the side of the

¹ "Labor and Preparedness," *Seattle Star*, May 16, 1916, p. 1; American Federation of Labor, *Report of Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, 1918* (Washington: The Law Reporter Printing Company, 1918), 276.

² "Labor Notes," *The Public*, Vol. XIX, No. 948 (June 2, 1916): 514; "Trades Council News," *The Labor Journal*, October 20, 1916, p. 1; Jonathon Dembo, *Unions and Politics in Washington State, 1885-1935* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983), 627; Robert L. and Robin Friedheim, "The Seattle Labor Movement, 1919-1920," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (October 1964): 146-147.

government in supporting the CND's early preparedness efforts. The government needed labor behind the effort to help gain popular support for preparedness and to ensure a wartime mobilization process unhindered by class conflict. But not even a visit from the federal government's top labor man could sway the recalcitrant Duncan, who, like many local labor leaders, feared that preparedness would soon be weaponized by employers to upend the gains made by union agitation in recent years.³

The SCLC's attitude towards wartime mobilization softened a bit shortly after Washington State Governor Ernest Lister formed the WSCD in June 1917. The addition of the WSCD's Labor Committee and appointment of WSFL President and longtime acquaintance and union brother of James Duncan, Ernest P. Marsh, convinced Duncan that perhaps the war could be used to advance the cause of organized labor, rather than impeding it. The establishment of a more localized form of mobilization, combined with a strong organized labor presence in the upper echelons of both the CND and WSCD, seemed to have swayed the once-reluctant Duncan and the SCLC to support the WSCD and its attempts to create a sentiment of patriotic enthusiasm within the ranks of organized labor. While many of the rank-and-file SCLC members likely disagreed with Duncan and Marsh's collusion with the state government, getting the union's leadership on board with the state's mobilization plans was an effective and promising start.⁴

James A. Duncan's reticence towards the WSCD decreased even further during the summer of 1917 following a walkout strike of the Tacoma Carmen, an SCLC-affiliated union of streetcar workers. The Puget Sound Traction, Light, and Power Company (PSTC), which owned

³ "Labor Sec. Wilson's Plea to Seattle Unions," *Seattle Union Record*, October 12, 1916, 2; "Unions to End IWW Support," *Aberdeen Herald*, May 18, 1917, 1.

⁴ "A Call to Workers from the National Labor Defence Council," *Labor Journal*, June 29, 1917, 3; Washington State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Convention of the Washington State Federation of Labor, 1918* (Tacoma: T.V. Copeland & Son Printers, 1918), 9-14.

the tracks and cars on which the Carmen's Union worked, refused to meet any of their demands, bringing the city's public transportation system to a screeching halt. The Washington State Labor Department and the WSCD both placed the blame for the strike entirely on the PSTC due to "the mental attitude of the corporation, which has stood for many years as the immovable and implacable enemy of labor unionism, defeating every attempt of its employees to organize." When the PSTC fired seven employees in Tacoma for their involvement in the union, the SCLC voted almost unanimously to call a strike on all of PSTC's lines on July 16, 1917. When the company imported replacement workers from East Coast cities, the threats of violence grew imminent enough that most of the replacements simply joined with the striking workers.⁵

In response to the growing labor tensions and the probability of violence, Governor Lister sent in WSCD Chairman, Henry Suzzallo, to meet with Duncan, who in addition to being the union's secretary was also head of the SCLC's strike committee. By the time Suzzallo and Duncan began their secret meetings in late-July, the strike had only been in progress for two-weeks, but the lack of public transportation had negatively affected the entire Puget Sound region to such an extent that the Tacoma City Council and Mayor Angelo Fawcett were only days away from forcing arbitration through the district courts. With Ernest Marsh's advice in mind regarding the possibility of a pro-labor outcome in working with the DCS, Duncan jumped on the opportunity to utilize Suzzallo and the WSCD as mediators, rather than taking his chances at forced arbitration which most labor union leaders avoided whenever possible.⁶

The PSTC did not appear to take the negotiation process seriously, which rattled Suzzallo and Lister. The company first attempted to force an injunction through the courts to stop the

⁵ Washington State Bureau of Labor, *Eleventh Biennial Report, 1917-1918* (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn, Public Printer, 1918), 64-65; "Get 10 Slackers from Car Strikebreakers," *Seattle Star*, July 26, 1917, 10.

⁶ "Tacoma Carmen Will Fight," *Seattle Star*, July 28, 1917, 1; "Victory for Carmen is Near," *Seattle Star*, July 31, 1917, 1.

strike and avoid WSCD involvement, but the application was denied after Suzzallo and Lister approached the court to ask it to wait until the WSCD had exhausted its mediation options. The court concurred and denied the PSTC's injunction application, opting instead to permit the WSCD to perform its wartime duties as allowed by the declaration of a wartime emergency, the federal act that created the CND, and the purview of Washington State law which established the WSCD and gave it its authority to engage in such negotiations.⁷

James A. Duncan, an avowed radical labor unionist who would later go on to become one of the main organizers of the Seattle General Strike of 1919, was more than pleased with the results of Suzzallo's mediation between the SCLC and the PSTC. Not only did the WSCD help to secure union recognition for the Carmen's Union, but it also secured higher wages and improved working conditions for its members. Duncan's relationship with Suzzallo and the WSCD remained cordial throughout the remainder of the Great War, thus tempering the SCLC, one of the region's most radical AFL-affiliated union councils. Duncan and the SCLC would once again become problematic for the state government and the employer-class with the 1919 General Strike in Seattle, but from 1917 through 1918, union leadership struck a temporary wartime alliance with the WSCD.⁸

In addition to the anti-union actions of the PSTC not succeeding, they also had the effect of damaging the company's reputation to the point that it would soon be taken over by local governments. The municipal governments in the Puget Sound area were so upset by the company's actions that Seattle and Tacoma looked to purchase the PSTC and make the city's public transportation a public institution. Seattle Mayor, Ole Hanson, described the PSTC –

⁷ *Puget Sound Traction, Power, and Light Co. v. Whitley et al.*, July 25, 1917, US District Court for the Western District of Washington, No. 131-E, 243 F. 945.

⁸ "Streetcar Strike Ends," *Washington Standard*, August 3, 1917, 8; "Reynolds was Asked by Leonard to Help End the Car Strike," *Seattle Star*, August 2, 1917, 1, 10;

owned by Stone & Webster, a national utility corporation based out of Boston – as “a cartel.” After a successful ballot proposition in November 1918, the company’s assets were purchased by the City of Seattle in December 1918 for \$15,000,000.⁹ The Tacoma Carmen’s Strike of 1917 demonstrated the strength and influence of the state defense councils and what could be accomplished with voluntary cooperation. Even though Duncan and many SCLC rank-and-file members held reservations about the nation’s involvement in the war in general, they did not hesitate to engage in the cooperative aspects of the process if it worked in their favor. On the other hand, the PSTC’s refusal to cooperate with the WSCD “in a voluntary and patriotic manner” led to the company’s ultimate demise.¹⁰

IWW vs. WSCD

In making new allies out of former rivals by appointing labor representatives to work alongside members of the employing-class and state policymakers, the DCS experiment appeared to be working almost immediately in Washington State. The cooperative efforts between labor, business, and the state government in Washington would make the WSCD an excellent example of what negotiation, compromise, and cooperation could offer the country, not just during the wartime emergency, but perhaps as a pragmatic, long-term policy solution that could reshape the manner in which the three groups interacted with one another. A more cooperative partnership as opposed to an adversarial one actually held much promise in 1917, as did the continuing attempts to propagate the idea of non-partisan nationalism as a form of social cohesion devoid of class conflict.¹¹

⁹ Robert Bridges, “Bob Bridges to Vote ‘Yes’ on Car Purchase,” *Seattle Star*, October 31, 1918, 1; “Papers Present Knotty Problems in Car Deal,” *Seattle Times*, December 8, 1918, 23.

¹⁰ “Seattle Evidence All In,” *Electric Railway Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 13 (September 29, 1917): 592-593.

¹¹ Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 72-73; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 73-75.

The creation of the CND and the subsequent formation of the DCS in 1917 brought conservative organized labor into the mobilization process as an active and often enthusiastic partner. Where a strong majority of union leadership and rank-and-file members once feared the implications of preparedness and mobilization, they now had an opportunity to participate in exchange for certain guarantees from the government that their involvement would institute continued changes in their material conditions. However, the changes facilitated by the DCS were firmly rooted in bread-and-butter unionism, insisting upon the total rejection of the kind of labor radicalism that looked to abolish private property or otherwise disrupt the capitalist mode of economic production. Throughout the war, the AFL used the addition of Samuel Gompers within the CND's executive structure to further isolate the IWW and prevent it from gaining favor within the mainstream labor movement. At the same time, Gompers presented craft labor unionism as loyal, patriotic, and willing to work within the socioeconomic status quo.¹²

In articulating the importance of workers within the emerging labor-state-business partnership, and in wartime mobilization in general, Samuel Gompers declared that “[workers] must pay for our liberties as long as we have liberties ... Workers of America, your country calls to you ... to give strength to this cause.”¹³ The formation of the WSCD triggered the very changes that the state's working-class had strived for so long. It also unwittingly forced AFL-affiliated labor unions to take up the cause of the employing-class in its ongoing fight against the more radical groups like the IWW. The IWW and the AFL had been in a protracted organizational and ideological conflict since the IWW's 1905 inception, and mobilization presented itself as a way for the AFL's leadership to ingratiate itself with federal and state

¹² McCartin, 5-6.

¹³ “Gompers’ Call to Labor,” *Seattle Star*, September 24, 1918, p. 4.

governments at the expense of the IWW. In coordinating with both employers and state governments, the AFL was able to eliminate the IWW as a competing labor organization.¹⁴

State defense council officials and the governors of every state in the American West placed a target on the backs of the IWW, and Washington State had some of the highest numbers of IWW members in the region. From the outset, the WSCD targeted the IWW for its vocal anti-war dissent and to break its control over the region's migrant workers. Not only did the IWW print and distribute pamphlets criticizing the Great War as "capitalist imperialism," and "capitalistic war profiteering," but it also actively organized several thousands of the state's timber harvesters, farm hands, construction workers, and miners – the frontline of Washington's "industrial army." "The problems presented to the [WSCD] by industrial and farm labor difficulties," according to WSCD reports, "has necessitated a consideration of a multitude of factors and the adoption of a policy entirely independent from any precedents." A unique plan of action needed to be devised in order to wrest organizational control from the IWW to then place its locals into the hands of more conservative craft labor unions affiliated with the AFL, whose leadership had already pledged their patriotic fealty to the wartime state.¹⁵

The lack of precedents, however, did not hinder the WSCD's ability to prevent strikes and acts of labor radicalism. The fact that there did not exist any empirical precedents previously utilized by the state government in dealing with wartime strikes actually worked out in the WSCD's favor. It could more freely experiment with new methods of strikebreaking and union-busting without the worry of bumping up against previously established legal guidelines that might prevent their efforts. Additionally, the declaration of a wartime emergency provided state

¹⁴ Montgomery, 359-361.

¹⁵ Justus Ebert, *The I.W.W. in Theory and Practice* (Chicago: Printing and Publishing Workers Industrial Union No. 1200, 1920), 60-61; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 73.

defense councils with the ability to take more drastic actions like declaring martial law, calling in federal troops or state militias, and declaring their own local wartime emergencies to suspend or simply ignore *habeas corpus* with impunity. The associational-based emphasis on private-sector leadership within the DCS permitted the WSCD to engage in forms of repression that good government ostensibly avoided, such as encouraging vigilante violence.¹⁶

The methods used by the state and its local governments before the WSCD's formation had long been considered abject disappointments, failing to curb the tide of IWW organizing activities at best and effectively strengthening them at worst. Up until mobilization for the Great War and the creation of the DCS, Washington, like many other western states, left "the IWW problem" up to local governments and county sheriffs to solve. The most commonly deployed forms of repression in response to IWW activity by local officials before World War I were most often physical violence, including murder, or the enforcement of harsh punitive measures for violating vagrancy statutes.¹⁷

The heavy-handed actions by local officials in Washington State had culminated in the Everett Massacre on November 6, 1916. Snohomish County Sheriff Donald McRae, notorious for his violent anti-union inclinations, ordered his deputies to open fire on a docked steamer carrying IWW members into Everett to help support a local strike action by the AFL's Shingle Weavers Industrial Union. The unprovoked attack took the lives of five workers and two deputies, wounding dozens more on both sides. However, the violence only served to strengthen the resolve of and galvanize support for the IWW among the state's working-class community. Nearly a year later, the WSCD, still cognizant of the incident and its lingering backlash, worked

¹⁶ Ibid., 42-43, 73-74.

¹⁷ Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 339-341.

to find less violent, more practical, and longer-term solutions for suppressing the IWW and for mediating labor conflicts in general.¹⁸

Using the wartime emergency and the ramped-up production increases as leverage for their agitation efforts, the IWW threatened or actively conducted dozens of strikes throughout the state immediately following the nation's declaration of war in April of 1917. With a majority of the WSCD's committees created for the sole purpose of increasing and regulating statewide industrial production, it had ample reasons to fear the amount of organizational power and ideological influence possessed by the IWW. If the union refused to acquiesce to the WSCD's mobilization demands and wartime production rates actually dropped, then it could possibly gain an incredible advantage. However, IWW leadership at nearly every level failed to consider the lasting consequences that their actions might bring if they did not play their hand properly. The WSCD held vast resources at their disposal to prevent strikes and, if need be, to devise new methods to punish or otherwise break the obstinate labor union if their activities continued unabated during the war.¹⁹

The wartime reconfiguration of public-private coordination welded national, state, and local governments together with Progressive Era expertise and rationalization, which made the process of solving labor difficulties far more effective. Finding solutions to those conflicts ultimately helped to decrease the violence that had been so endemic with late nineteenth and early twentieth-century labor agitation efforts. The President's Mediation Commission (PMC), established in 1917 by the Wilson Administration to devise solutions for the nation's rising tide of labor unrest, provided some insight into how state defense councils should approach and

¹⁸ Ibid.; Edwin J. Brown, "The Everett Massacre, the I.W.W., the Recall," *Seattle Star*, November 21, 1916, 6.

¹⁹ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 44, 74-77.

resolve labor conflicts, especially in relation to the IWW. “Repressive dealing with manifestations of labor unrest is the source of much bitterness,” stated the PMC’s 1918 report, “[it] turns radical labor leaders into martyrs and thus increases their following ... The IWW has exercised its strongest hold ... where employers have most resisted the trade union movement.” As inferred by the PMC’s report, socioeconomic conflict and stubborn employers incubated and nurtured radical ideologies, and if employers accepted unions rather than fighting against them, then labor radicalism would, ostensibly, fall to the wayside.²⁰

It was no coincidence that the western American states, where employers and law enforcement fought unions more aggressively than their other regional counterparts, experienced more frequent episodes of disruptive IWW agitation than the rest of the nation. With the advice of the PMC in mind, the WSCD looked towards devising practical, localized solutions that discouraged violent forms of repression while also encouraging employers to recognize traditional craft labor union organizing among their employees. Convincing the working-class to be weary of or to altogether abandon the anarcho-syndicalist philosophies of the IWW would be an easier pill to swallow if they were allowed to freely organize without fear of retribution. As far as labor experts were concerned, relying solely upon violence or punitive legal deterrents had proven unsustainable, and the early wartime surges in IWW membership rates seemed to have reinforced those concerns. Working through the WSCD, appointed experts successfully changed the manner in which the state dealt with labor conflicts moving forward.²¹

The appointments of union leaders to head the labor committees within the structure of every state defense council within the DCS signified the willingness of state governments to

²⁰ President’s Mediation Commission, *Report of President’s Mediation Commission to the President of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 19.

²¹ Bing, 225-230.

make a more conscious effort to bring traditional, conservative labor union organizations into the fold to help readjust the ineffective methods used by local governments in the boss-worker relationship. In the case of the WSCD, Labor Committee Chairman, Ernest P. Marsh, embodied that willingness. As President of the WSFL, an AFL-affiliated blanket labor federation comprised of more than 220 various Washington unions with nearly 24,000 members in 1917, Marsh commanded tremendous influence among the state's working-class.²² To help assuage both striking workers and frustrated employers, Marsh's WSCD duties required frequent coordination with labor expert and professor of economics at the University of Washington, Dr. Carlton H. Parker. Governor Lister tasked Marsh's Labor Committee and Dr. Parker to assess strike threats, recommend proper adjustments to employers and their fellow WSCD members, and to help mediate any given conflict on a case-by-case basis. The progressive tradition of relying upon university educated, middle-class professionals played a major ideological role in how the WSCD mobilized its share of the homefront and how it controlled wartime labor agitation efforts within the state.²³

In the late-spring and early-summer of 1918, the IWW's Construction Workers Industrial Union No. 573 (CWIU) declared the first in a series of labor strikes during the construction of cantonments at Camp Lewis, a military base near Tacoma. Even though Camp Lewis was a federal military installation, the CND had asked the WSCD to regulate its construction and to eliminate any labor conflicts that might hinder its completion, highlighting the significance of cooperative federalism to the mobilization process. In response to the strikes, the WSCD took

²² Dembo, *Unions and Politics in Washington State*, 627; Commission on Industrial Relations, *Industrial Relations: Final Report and Testimony, Vol. 5* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 4390-4391.

²³ Carlton H. Parker, *The Casual Laborer and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920), 5-10.

immediate action, eschewing violence and working towards a respectful solution for both sides.²⁴ Workers had complained of rotten food, a lack of proper housing, and “wages far below the average for a federal government contract.” Using the hyper-patriotic fervor of the war years as their own form of leverage, the WSCD sent members of its Speakers Bureau “to make public appeals to the CWIU workers’ patriotism” – a commonly deployed form of coercive wartime strikebreaking. Oftentimes, and in combination with those patriotic appeals, Carlton Parker and Ernest Marsh convinced employers to make compromises with the workers as their patriotic duty to the country, rather than resorting to the traditional method of skull cracking.²⁵

At Camp Lewis, the results of Marsh and Parker’s involvement was palpable. Rank-and-file CWIU members received a “decent increase in their hourly wages,” hot meals, free bedding, and promises to improve jobsite safety, successfully forestalling the strikes. While IWW leadership had hoped that the flurry of wartime strikes would help them achieve their larger ideological goals of socioeconomic disruption and industrial democracy, the union’s rank-and-file workers, as was often the case, seemed more concerned with the bread-and-butter issues of higher wages and improved working conditions.²⁶ In total, the CWIU declared eighteen strikes at the Camp Lewis cantonment between June 1917 and November 1918 and the WSCD averted nearly all of those strikes as a result of Marsh and Parker’s coordinated efforts. Governor Lister, federal officials, employers, and area labor representatives all credited and praised the work of the WSCD’s Labor Committee for having prevented wartime strikes through a concerted

²⁴ “Cantonment Strike in Tacoma,” *The Public: A Journal of Democracy* Vol. 11, No. 1058 (July 13, 1918): 879-880.

²⁵ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 43-44.

²⁶ “Appeal to Patriotism of Workers of the Inland Empire,” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 17, 1917, p. 1; Alice Palmer Henderson, *The Ninety-First: The First at Camp Lewis* (Tacoma: Press of Smith-Kinney Co., 1918) 45, 301-302; US Department of Labor, *Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1923), 74-75, 79.

campaign of state-induced economic compromise. The WSCD's final report concluded that "Mr. Marsh ... and Dr. Carlton H. Parker of the Labor Adjustment Board have furnished invaluable assistance in preventing strikes at the cantonment."²⁷

Because of the academic expertise of progressive scholars like Carlton Parker and the practical experience of labor union leaders like Ernest Marsh, employers in Washington began to better comprehend the practicality of using experts and specialists for mediating disputes while also recognizing the impracticality of hiring strikebreakers or importing replacement labor. Regardless of the desires of the employing-class, the organized labor movement was not going away anytime soon. The quicker that employers recognized that simple fact and began working with, not against, labor organizations and appealing to bread-and-butter issues, the quicker that labor radicals like the IWW would lose their ideological grip on the disconsolate working-classes. With unique new diplomatic and administrative responses to labor radicalism at their disposal, labor committees of the region's various state defense councils helped secure wage and safety conciliations for a range of occupations.²⁸

The WSCD's Labor Committee facilitated wage and improved workplace safety negotiations for several thousands of Washington's workers; from AFL-organized Steelworkers in Seattle to IWW-organized wheat threshing crews in Albion and even non-unionized Native American hop-pickers in Yakima.²⁹ Due to the WSCD's more progressive and preventative approach to labor conflicts, Washington avoided the kind of violent incidents that occurred in

²⁷ "[WSCD] Labor Report," 1918, box 136, folder "Council of Defense Labor Reports," Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

²⁸ Robert W. Bruere, *Following the Trail of the IWW* (New York: New York Evening Post, 1918), 11-12; National Civil Liberties Bureau, "The Knights of Liberty Mob and the IWW Prisoners at Tulsa, Okla.," Pamphlet (February 1918).

²⁹ "Albion Farmers Fix Wages," *Pullman Tribune*, March 8, 1918; "Reduce Wages After the War," *Labor Journal*, January 17, 1918, 3; *The Truth About the I.W.W.: Facts in Relation to the Trial at Chicago* (New York: American Civil Liberties Bureau, 1918), 10.

Montana, California, Arizona, and elsewhere throughout the American West during the World War I years. The WSCD demonstrated that if state and local governments made a more conscious effort to utilize the knowledge and experience of experts, specialists, and labor representatives, rather than simply resorting to punitive violence, more effective and practical outcomes would be realized. That consensus would later be destroyed in November 1919 with the Centralia Massacre, which occurred several months after the dissolution of the WSCD amidst a decline in the use of the Council's wartime labor conflict amelioration methods.³⁰

II: Vigilantism and Economic Surveillance

An important aspect of the wartime consolidation of administrative power by federal and state governments was found in the elimination of organized violence by private-sector actors and the increased legitimation of state-sanctioned anti-radicalism and wartime economic surveillance. The activities of vigilantes often served the larger purpose of eliciting support for the government's wartime efforts by reinforcing the status quo and deterring dissent more generally. The traditional mode of private-sector organization so elemental to the associationalist impulse, even in the realm of pro-war vigilantism, actually served to weaken the kind of socioeconomic readjustments the DCS engaged in. Additionally, the spread of wartime vigilantism made state governments out West appear weak, ineffectual, and unable to control their own citizens, which could prove problematic for the wartime goals of socioeconomic readjustment and modernization in the region. With the rise of administrative policymaking and the gradual deemphasis of traditional associationalism, the DCS in the American West sought to curb private-sector vigilantism and reassert the government's martial authority. The DCS

³⁰ "Ten I.W.W. Face Murder Charge," *Seattle Star*, November 14, 1919, 1; "Raid on Centralia I.W.W. Hal Planned by Commercial Interests Without Knowledge of Rank and File of American Legion," *Butte Daily Bulletin*, March 4, 1920, 1.

consolidated and legitimized vigilante activity under the direction of state and county governments to further the larger goals of socioeconomic readjustment through the maintenance of a loyal and patriotic labor force.³¹

Reasserting State Authority

Montana, like many other western states, experienced a surge of wartime vigilantism, much of it aimed at those who did not express a reactionary level of patriotic pro-war enthusiasm. Montanans could find themselves the targets of vigilantes for something as simple as uttering words that could be misconstrued as disloyal speech. They might even be accused of disloyalty resulting from personal vendettas or property disputes. In terms of vigilante violence and accusations of disloyalty, no one group fared as badly as the IWW. The IWW's deliberately provocative anti-capitalist, anarchist-tinged rhetoric made the union an easy target for vigilantes. Tarring and feathering, kidnappings, horse-whippings, and even the occasional lynching, were some of the violent methods used by vigilantes throughout the American West during the period of World War I.³²

The murder of IWW organizer Frank Little in Butte, Montana, was one of the most infamous examples of World War I-era vigilante violence in the American West, if not the country. Little, a prominent organizer and executive board member of the IWW, had arrived in Butte in late-July to lend the IWW's support to a recent labor strike organized by the Butte Metal Mine Workers Union. During the late evening of August 1, 1917, a group of masked vigilantes viciously attacked Little while in his boarding room. The group then tied Little by his ankles to the bumper of a black Cadillac and proceeded to drag him through the streets of uptown Butte

³¹ Capozzola, 119-123.

³² Work, *Darkest Before Dawn*, 72, 96; "Hathaway was Horsewhipped," *Spokane Chronicle*, March 4, 1918, 3.

for nearly a mile until his kneecaps were ground to the sinew. His torture finally ended at the railroad trestle over Wyoming Street where he was hanged. The following morning, Little's broken, battered body was discovered by a passerby with a note pinned to his jacket that read: "3-7-77: First and last warning, other take notice."³³

To a certain extent, the murder of Frank Little embarrassed state politicians and local authorities. That embarrassment only worsened over the coming months as authorities failed to discover the identities of the perpetrators, nor did they put much effort into trying. Little's murder presented the image of a lawless western American frontier. Even anti-union newspapers like the *Helena Independent*, owned by MSCD Executive Committee member and rabid anti-IWW propagandist, William A. Campbell, questioned the legitimacy of the violence. The day after the lynching, the *Helena Independent*, in referencing the crime, noted that "Butte has disgraced itself" while also going on to say that "the traitor met his deserts." The bipolar reaction to the assassination of Frank Little showed that, while the killing was somehow justified because the victim was a known agitator, the fact that the crime was committed by masked vigilantes, not the proper authorities, made it an unacceptable act. An arrest and conviction for Little's alleged disloyalty would have been preferable. Defense councils throughout the region responded by readjusting the manner in which they engaged with or otherwise tolerated vigilantism.³⁴

As the defense council units that were the most visible and which maintained more personal connections within their communities than did the state defense councils or the CND, county defense councils had perhaps the greatest amount of responsibility in dealing with vigilante behavior. In order to discourage vigilante violence, many county defense councils

³³ Jane Little Botkin, *Frank Little and the IWW: The Blood that Stained an American Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017), 296-300.

³⁴ "Authorities of City and County in Vain Seek Little's Slayers," *Helena Independent*, August 2, 1917, 1, 8; Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America*, 128-131.

attempted to circumvent the possibility of extralegal vigilantism by consolidating would-be vigilantes under the banner of the DCS, thereby making those groups the responsibility of local government.³⁵ By the nature of their localized activities and their interactions with the communities where they operated, county and community defense councils could eliminate violent vigilantism much easier than federal or state governments, especially in places with dispersed rural populations. To help accomplish their goal, many local defense councils formed “vigilance committees” under the purview of their respective state defense councils, commonly referred to as “loyalty leagues.” Loyalty leagues presented themselves as privately organized patriotic associations but were in fact organized and directed by county or community defense council members under the supervision of their respective state councils.³⁶

The purpose of the leagues, ultimately, was to maintain order within the community, discourage dissent and radicalism, and promote a general sentiment of pro-war enthusiasm. They also acted as a buffer of sorts, consolidating and subsuming any prospective wartime vigilantism through the organization and accountability proffered by local defense council units, effectively decreasing the amount of unsanctioned violence that may have otherwise been committed. The interjection of county and community defense councils in such matters allowed them to control the vigilante narrative within their locales.³⁷ The DCS promoted the less-violent notion of “vigilance,” loosely defined as diligently policing the community, as opposed to “vigilantism,” defined more specifically as tactics of physical coercion and the use of terroristic violence.³⁸

³⁵ “Next-of-Kin to the Montana Soldiers Organize to Crush Hun Propaganda,” *Sanders County Independent-Ledger*, August 1, 1918, 3.

³⁶ Capozzola, 117-121.

³⁷ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 12-13; “Council of National Defense, Bulletin No. 76: Coordination of Patriotic Societies,” November 26, 1917, box 1, folder 9, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; “Patriotic League to Extend Scope,” *Spokesman-Review*, December 4, 1917, 10.

³⁸ Capozzola, 118-119.

Unlike some other regional state defense councils, the WSCD proved quite effective at curtailing vigilante violence and that effectiveness was likewise reflected in the actions of the various county and community councils. Local defense councils in Washington devised unique, if not questionable, methods for publicly shaming their neighbors without violence, but in a manner that would allow for anyone accused of disloyalty to redeem their good name. In the small farming community of Johnson, in southeast Washington, the Johnson Community Council of Defense (JCCD), whose members had been appointed by the Whitman County Council of Defense, erected a large “slacker monument” in July 1918. The JCCD used the “memorial” as both a warning and as a vigilante deterrent. The slacker monument featured the names of four residents of Johnson: C.N. Matheny, H.P. Willard, N. Haynes, and J. Steiner. The four men had been accused by the JCCD of having “refused to help win the war through the purchase of Liberty Bonds.”³⁹

The JCCD officially unveiled the slacker monument on Monday, July 22, during a regular scheduled meeting. The local Council made an event out of its inauguration, even inviting the Whitman County food administrator and members of the Whitman County Council of Defense to attend. The monument, “painted a vivid yellow,” stood seven-feet high and “at the bottom was painted the word ‘slackers’ in huge letters” with the four men’s names inscribed on both sides. JCCD officials placed it at the busiest intersection in town to ensure that everyone would see it, sufficiently and relentlessly shaming the alleged “financial slackers.” During the evening of Tuesday, July 23, someone doused it with gasoline and burned it to cinders. The JCCD, angered by the arson, vowed to erect a “larger and more glaring monument.” Surprisingly, even with the tense atmosphere of wartime paranoia, and due most likely to the

³⁹ “Johnson ‘Slacker’ Monument Burned,” *Pullman Herald*, July 26, 1918, 1.

pronounced role of the defense council, no one was ever publicly accused of the arson, nor were any arrests made.⁴⁰

The unusual method of public shaming appeared to have worked better than the JCCD had hoped. Before they could rebuild the monument, all four of the “financial slackers” had visited their local defense council officials and purchased both War Savings Stamps and Liberty Bonds. Rather than simply moving on from the incident, JCCD officials instead chose to reconstruct the monument to “honor the four men” they had recently accused of being disloyal, and to honor the patriotism and loyalty of the people of Johnson. The new “monument of loyalty” would instead be built to celebrate the fact that everyone in Johnson had contributed their financial part to the winning of the war. “Instead of pointing with shame to four members of the community” noted the *Pullman Herald*, “the monument now stands as a fitting tribute to a community which is 100 percent loyal.”⁴¹

While the slacker monument episode may have been a blatant exercise in coercion, the JCCD considered the action to have been an effective, non-violent response to a complicated problem. In their minds, their state and county-sanctioned authority needed to be respected, as did the wartime goals of the mobilization effort. But, that respect would pay off far greater dividends if it were to be earned through signs of loyalty and respect, not through fear by way of vigilantism, even if coerced through public shaming. It accomplished the goal of encouraging patriotic participation while also discouraging anyone else from shirking their “patriotic duty” to purchase war bonds and savings stamps, a significant feature of the domestic wartime economy. The JCCD provided a practical solution that did not include violence or threats, which was an

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Slacker Monument Now Honor Insignia,” *Pullman Herald*, August 2, 1918, 1; “Abuses Townsmen; Lands in Jail,” *Pullman Herald*, September 13, 1918, 1.

especially significant fact in light of the spate of vigilante violence plaguing the homefront during the Great War. However, not all local defense council solutions meant to prevent vigilante violence or mob justice worked as well, especially when loyalty leagues operated without direct supervision from their respective county defense council overseers.⁴²

Samuel P. Weaver, Chairman of the Lincoln County Council of Defense and president of the Sprague Patriotic League, took a different tact than his counterparts in Johnson. Sprague residents had accused Albert Schnase, a naturalized US citizen originally from Germany and one of Lincoln County's first homesteaders of having been in possession of "rabid pro-German literature." Samuel Weaver ordered Lincoln County Sheriff's deputies to bring Schnase before the Sprague Patriotic League at its headquarters on Main Street. During the impromptu interrogation, Schnase admitted to "harboring German sympathies."⁴³ Before he could be handed over to federal authorities for a probable treason charge, Weaver decided that Schnase should first be punished and humiliated in front of the townspeople of Sprague. Those in attendance physically forced Schnase to kneel, take the oath of allegiance, and salute the American flag. "At a suggestion of someone from the crowd," Weaver then "made the offender eat several bites from the pamphlet, then it was burned." Several young boys harassed Schnase as he left, spitting on his leg and hurling verbal insults at him.⁴⁴

Following the episode, the *Spokesman-Review* insisted that Weaver and the Sprague Patriotic League had total control of the situation and that none of Sprague's residents "engaged in any bouts of physical violence towards Schnase." While the entire event was undoubtedly demeaning and traumatic for Albert Schnase, "at no point was he in danger of losing his life or

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "Made to Cheer and Kiss Flag," *Spokesman-Review*, April 2, 1918, 6.

⁴⁴ "Committee is Appointed an Organization by the Patriotic League," *Spokesman-Review*, April 5, 1918, 1.

of being brutally assaulted,” according to those present at the meeting. County defense councils and the loyalty leagues/patriotic leagues they established sought to deter disloyalty and dissent and to propagate patriotic fervor. But they also sought to warn Americans that vigilante violence would not be given a chance to trump the martial powers reserved for federal, state, or local governments. “Vigilance” meant being aware of disloyalty and reporting it to the proper authorities as a civic responsibility. “Vigilantism,” on the other hand, meant doling out extralegal violence to send a message to the communities where they lived. The former could be freely used by average citizens and was in fact encouraged by defense council officials. The latter, however, was to be reserved for state and local authorities only, bringing the region more into the modern body politic and leaving behind the image of a lawless frontier controlled by violence.⁴⁵

Nominally speaking, loyalty leagues were locally organized groups of self-styled patriotic citizens who decided to take it upon themselves to discourage disloyalty, dissent, labor radicalism, pro-Germanism, and other perceived threats of treason within local communities. Speaking to the quasi-governmental aspect of public-private coordination and associationalism, loyalty leagues were also organized and given legitimacy by their county defense council units. They encouraged ostracization and public humiliation as the most common forms of punishment for suspected disloyalty.⁴⁶ They could also become violent when confronting the people they labeled as disloyal or treasonous, especially the IWW, which had been regularly demonized in regional newspapers for well over a decade. As subsets of the larger state defense council system, Washington State’s loyalty leagues supported the WSCD and the government’s mobilization efforts with an almost rabid devotion, yet still, Governor Lister did not trust them.

⁴⁵ “Will Form Home Guard at Sprague,” *Spokesman-Review*, April 5, 1918, 1; Capozzola, 118-119, 126-130.

⁴⁶ “Colfax Patriots Urge Ostracism,” *Spokesman-Review*, November 30, 1917, 6; Capozzola, 115-118.

Lister and the various WSCD committee heads considered the leagues useful for discouraging anti-war dissent and in opposing labor agitation, but at the same time considered them to be unpredictable liabilities whose connection to the state's county defense councils might threaten to delegitimize the WSCD's mobilization efforts if they did not comport themselves properly.⁴⁷

Surveillance, Spies, and Secret Services

As part of the WSCD's overall mobilization efforts, W.A. Peters, Chairman of the WSCD's Home Defense Committee, introduced his idea for the formation of a "state secret service," to be known as the Washington State Secret Service (WSS), placed under direct authority and control of the WSCD and the governor. Upon the Executive Committee's approval of the plan, Lister gave Peters permission to hire C.B. Reed, an employee of the Washington DC-based Washington Detective Bureau, to lead a covert force of ten operatives whose salaries would be paid for through state coffers and who would be supervised by the Home Defense Committee. Lister and Peters ordered Reed to assign agents to infiltrate any organization that might prove to be a hinderance to the WSCD's mobilization activities, including those who claimed to support the government's wartime efforts. Under the direction of C.B. Reed, WSS agents traveled throughout the state to penetrate various organizations, including AFL-affiliated unions, the IWW, and even various loyalty leagues and patriotic associations.⁴⁸

In the spring of 1918, Operator 43 of the WSS, whose real name is not revealed in state documents, successfully infiltrated the Spokane Loyalty League, established and operated by the Spokane County Council of Defense (SCCD). Operator 43 gained the trust of the loyalty league

⁴⁷ "Fireman Escapes Tar and Feathers," *Spokesman-Review*, April 5, 1918, 3; "Lister Ready to Handle I.W.W. in Spokane County," *Spokesman-Review*, April 4, 1918, 1.

⁴⁸ C.B. Reed to Ernest Lister, April 10, 1918, box 129, folder "Secret Service Correspondence," Governor Ernest Lister Papers; *Fourth Message of Governor Ernest Lister to the State Legislature, Sixteenth Session* (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn, Public Printer, 1919), 8-9; Albert F. Gunns, *Civil Liberties in Crisis: The Pacific Northwest, 1917-1919* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983), 31.

members who subsequently involved him in their unauthorized vigilante activity. Operator 43 reported to Reed that the group informed him of a troubling action scheduled to take place during a patriotic parade in downtown Spokane the following evening. Unbeknownst to the SCCD's executive committee, the Spokane Loyalty League had formed a special "loyalty committee" which planned to roam the city, labeling every male over the age of twelve as "disloyal slackers" if they did not attend the parade. The loyalty committee planned to simultaneously invade local "Wobbly hangouts" and coerce those inside "to join the parade or show good reason." In explaining the group's plans to his supervisor, Operator 43 wrote, "I know the feelings of the people and feel confident that if the IWWs resist going to the parade some of them will lose their lives ... an IWW that does not parade tomorrow night ... is in for a dose of tar and feathers or worse." The undercover operative then notified the SCCD who stopped the loyalty committee's sordid plans from happening before the parade commenced.⁴⁹

Regardless of the WSCD's efforts to rid the state of the "IWW menace," such violent forms of coercion by private citizens did not sit well with its members, especially Governor Lister, a self-styled Progressive Democrat and nominally labor-friendly politician. The formation of the WSS and the directive of agents to infiltrate the various loyalty leagues in the state revealed the WSCD's desire to prevent another incident like the Everett Massacre. Aside from preventing acts of unsanctioned vigilante violence, the WSS also signified the desire by the WSCD and by Governor Lister to consolidate the state's monopoly on violence by eradicating citizen vigilantism, among other things.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Operative 43 to C.B. Reed, May 1918, box 130, folder "Secret Service Reports," Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁵⁰ Christopher Andrew, "Government and Secret Services: A Historical Perspective," *International Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Spring, 1979): 167-169.

With an uptick of IWW agitation throughout Washington State during World War I, the WSS became one of the most effective tools in the state's fight against labor radicalism and for ensuring that wartime production increases would not be negatively affected by the union's agitation efforts. Even as it attempted to regulate the activities of the loyalty leagues and other area vigilante groups, the WSS still spent a vast majority of its time infiltrating IWW gatherings. Although it emerged as an important aspect of the WSCD's larger goals of mobilization, the foremost duty of the WSS was not to keep tabs on vigilante groups contemplating violence against dissenters and labor radicals. In fact, infiltrating loyalty leagues comprised a relatively insignificant amount of the WSS's overall efforts. Its main purpose was to keep tabs on the workers and organizers within the industries where the IWW had succeeded in gaining an organizational foothold.⁵¹

The WSS epitomized the traditional application of associational-state activity and the cooperation between private-sector actors and state governments. At the same time, its very existence demonstrated the emergent emphasis on developing a stronger, more accountable administrative-state presence. Washington's first state law enforcement arm originated in the work of the WSS as realized through the work of the Washington Detective Bureau (WDB), a private detective agency based in Washington DC which, similar to other detective agencies like the Pinkertons, had been contracted by the city's employers and local government for strikebreaking jobs. For example, in March 1917, the Washington Railway and Electric Company hired the WDB to break a strike called by the Streetcar Workers Union. C.B. Reed, a head agent for the WDB, led his employees and fellow agents against the strike, hired replacement laborers, and infiltrated union meetings. Reed's experience in DC provided a

⁵¹ Ibid.; *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 74-76.

foundation for his future work in Washington State as head of the WSCD's civilian-monitoring and labor surveillance organization – the WSS.⁵²

The WSS spent much of its surveillance efforts in 1918 surreptitiously monitoring the various IWW branches around the state. WSS agents successfully infiltrated union locals for undercover work, attending meetings and relaying pertinent information back to the WSCD's Home Defense Committee in Olympia. When an agent discovered information that indicated an upcoming strike action or anything that could be somehow construed as treasonous, seditious, or revolutionary, the local defense council would be contacted, and depending on the severity of the accusation, would coordinate with local law enforcement agencies to arrest the accused. More often than not, the process seriously violated the civil rights of workers whose only crime was having been a member of the IWW or having engaged in labor agitation activities.⁵³

WSS agents successfully prevented several IWW strikes throughout 1918 and much of 1919. Their efforts not only prevented labor agitation, but they were also an important aspect of how the state defense councils ultimately defeated the socioeconomic designs of the radical labor union during the period of mobilization. As an undercover agent, Bart Raperto, one of the WSS's most productive Spokane-based agents, infiltrated the IWW's Agricultural Workers Industrial Union No. 400 branch (AWIU) beginning in late-1917, gaining the trust of the union's leadership and rank-and-file members. During a meeting in August 1918, Agent Raperto learned that the IWW was secretly planning a general strike on the region's farms during the upcoming harvest. He notified supervising agent, C.B. Reed, who in-turn contacted W.A. Peters of the

⁵² US Senate, *Street Railway Conditions in the District of Columbia: Hearings Before the Special Committee of the United States Senate* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), 1132-1137; Joan M. Jensen, *Army Surveillance in America, 1775-1980* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 136-140.

⁵³ D.F. Costello to C.B. Reed, January 27, 1919, box 129, folder "Secret Service Correspondence," Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

WSCD. Peters then wired the SCCD who coordinated with Spokane police detectives to be at the ready to make arrests once the details of the strike were discovered by Raperto.⁵⁴

On August 23, 1918, recently disbarred IWW lawyer, Edward Hofstede, approached Raperto while he was standing outside of the Congress Restaurant on Washington Street in downtown Spokane. Hofstede exclaimed to the undercover agent that “now was the time to show our solidarity ... we’ll never have such an opportunity again.” Having determined by Hofstede’s demeanor that he knew of the strike plans, Raperto asked, “why the hell don’t we do something?” Hofstede then brought Raperto to the bathroom of the restaurant where he removed his shoe, revealing the general strike order in a folded up piece of paper beneath the sole. When asked who made the order, Hofstede said that he “did not know who was responsible for it, but that he was going to do everything in his power to have it carried out.” Raperto immediately left the restaurant and notified Police Detective Martin J. Burns, informing him where he would find Hofstede and where the strike order was hidden. Burns had Hofstede arrested, and with the discovery of the strike order, Spokane police had enough evidence to raid the IWW’s Workingman’s Palace on Trent Avenue, where they arrested eighteen Wobblies on conspiracy charges.⁵⁵

Due to the efforts of Agent Bart Raperto’s undercover work, the fall harvest strike of 1918 never materialized. Because Edward Hofstede, the person tasked with getting the strike order to the printing press, was arrested before he could get the order out, the IWW in Spokane and those already in the farming districts had no way of knowing about the strike. The subsequent raids and arrests of IWW members further prevented the ability of the union’s

⁵⁴ B. Raperto to C.B. Reed, August 26, 1918, box 130, folder “Secret Service Reports,” Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁵⁵ Ibid.; “Says Hofstede’s Shoe Held Plans for Huge Strike,” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 26, 1918, 1.

leadership to get the message to its rank-and-file. “This action has taken the rank and file of the organization by such surprise that they have not fully recovered,” C.B. Reed informed Governor Lister, “[and] no one seems to want to take the initiative to go through with the general order for the strike ... we will be able to checkmate any move they make.”⁵⁶

Governor Lister officially dissolved the WSS on January 9, 1919, in tandem with his dissolution of the WSCD. Washington’s employing-class and its state policymakers expressed gratitude for the efforts of the WSS during the two-years that it was in operation and wished to see something similar be permanently organized by the state legislature. “During the war ... a secret service was organized and given work that would properly have been handled by a state constabulary,” Governor Ernest Lister explained to the state’s upper chamber in 1919, asking the state senate to legislate the permanent organization of a state police force of no more than “twenty to twenty-five men, [which] would be sufficient.”⁵⁷ Two years later, during the 1921 session, the Washington State Legislature “assumed a new policing power” by passing a bill that created the Washington State Patrol (WSP), establishing the first state police force in Washington. Although the WSP’s activities looked much different than that of the WSS, focusing instead on “the protection of life and property upon highways,” it evolved directly from the wartime efforts of the WSCD.⁵⁸

Being the organizational exception to the experience of most state defense councils, the WSCD was one of the only councils to have established a state-funded and operated secret police

⁵⁶ C.B. Reed to Ernest Lister, August 28, 1918, box 129, folder “Secret Service Correspondence,” Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁵⁷ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 54-55; Washington State Senate, *Senate Journal of the Sixteenth Legislature of the State of Washington* (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn, Public Printer, 1919), 62.

⁵⁸ Joint Board of Higher Curricula of the State of Washington, *The Fourth Biennial Report of the Joint Board of Higher Curricula to the Governor of Washington, Part One, 1922-1923* (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn, Public Printer, 1923), 63.

force. Other state councils, while not having established official secret service agencies like the WSCD did, still employed various private detective agencies and individuals to monitor the local migrant worker population. In Montana, the MSCD endorsed a plan in April 1918 for the use of “special agents in connection with running down pro-Germans ... labor radicals, and revolutionists.” Governor Samuel V. Stewart and the MSCD decided that, rather than the state government establishing a tax-funded detective bureau, similar to how the WSCD funded the WSS, they would instead leave that duty to the individual county defense councils of the state. The county defense councils of Montana would subsequently be responsible for hiring their own “secret service men” at their own expense and under the supervision of their respective county governments.⁵⁹

Within only a matter of days following the MSCD’s decision to suggest the funding of secret agents in the counties, several county defense councils requested that the MSCD furnish them with references and suggestions for who to hire as their agents or through which agencies to contract detectives. The defense councils of Custer, Fergus, Prairie, Fallon, Wibaux, Silver Bow, and Missoula Counties were the first county council units in the state to hire their own secret agents. They used their agents to keep tabs on the “floating population” of migrant laborers, known or suspected IWW organizers, and suspected “slackers and idlers.” They also used the agents to monitor the German-speaking population within their county borders and to assist local law enforcement with the capture of anyone attempting to avoid military conscription or otherwise accused of obstructing the recruitment process.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Charles Greenfield to J.B. Collins, April 2, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records; J.B. Collins to Charles Greenfield, April 3, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁶⁰ “War is Declared on Army Slackers,” *Circle Banner*, October 4, 1918, 7.

The Custer County Council of Defense, in not wanting to assume all of the county government's authority, worked in cooperation with the Custer County Board of Commissioners for approval "to employ a secret service man, one unknown to the citizens of the county." The agent's identity would only be revealed to two county commissioners, the Custer County Sheriff, the county defense council's executive committee, and the MSCD. State and county defense councils in the region relied on the trial-and-error experiences of one another, including referrals for which agencies to procure their secret agents through. The Fergus County Council of Defense (FCCD) hired an agent referred to them directly by WSS Supervising Agent C.B. Reed from his offices in Seattle. "We are having some unrest here especially among the labor union," J.E. Laue, Chairman of the FCCD, explained to Governor Stewart, "we have been informed that [our agent from Seattle] will take care of this."⁶¹

In many cases, the paranoid wartime atmosphere of the US homefront oftentimes precluded the need for state or county defense councils to organize secret services or hire private detectives. Unwarranted surveillance of neighbors and friends by overly vigilant Americans became the norm during the World War I years, especially in the smaller towns and farming communities of the West where new faces tended to raise suspicions. Considering the proliferation of DCS bulletins and government warnings in newspapers about the threat of German spies and agitators it was not surprising that so many Americans took such threats seriously. Even the slightest perceived transgression or "disloyal utterance" could find completely loyal, patriotic Americans on the receiving end of sedition charges or the business end of violent attack. The MSCD's offices in Helena regularly received letters and telegrams

⁶¹ Custer County Council of Defense to Charles Greenfield, March 28, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Council of Defense Records; J.E. Laue to Governor S.V. Stewart, May 7, 1918, box 1, folder 22, Montana Defense Council Records.

from ordinary citizens informing them of their concerns regarding their neighbors. Newspaper articles and MSCD bulletins encouraged Montanans to be mindful of disloyal persons within their communities, but to never take action themselves and to instead contact their local defense council officials. Disloyalty took various shapes and forms, but the civilian monitoring of labor, whether it was suspected Wobblies or individual slackers on a family farm, made up the bulk of the accusations.⁶²

On April 8, 1918, R. Vandenburg of Denton, Montana, wrote Governor Stewart to report the supposed “loafing and slacking” of his neighbor, John Vander Giessen, and his children. “They do not work any more than 6 hours [each day],” Vandenburg complained to the Governor, “[and] I don’t see that they have any excuse for not helping our country in this time of need.”⁶³ MSCD Secretary, Charles Greenfield, responded to Mr. Vandenburg on April 23, telling him that, after a thorough investigation, “a report has been made that Mr. Vander Giessen farms heavily and that his boys all work on the farm ... he is a very patriotic citizen and the investigator gives it his opinion that the charges are unfounded.” Although the MSCD found no validity in the claims against Vander Giessen, the fact that one of his neighbors was willing to report him and his children for not working as much as their accuser felt they should be demonstrated the emergence of an interesting social dynamic. DCS propaganda reconfigured notions of the relationship between work, war, and nationalism, bringing ordinary citizens deeper into an administrative web of unsolicited and unwarranted economic surveillance.⁶⁴

⁶² “Stop Malicious Rumors – Help Win the War,” 1917, box 4, folder 31, Montana Defense Council Records; “A Good American Golden Rule,” 1918, box 1, folder 7, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁶³ R. Vanden Berg to Governor Stewart, April 8, 1918, box 1, folder 22, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁶⁴ Charles Greenfield to Mr. R. Vanden Berg, April 23, 1918, box 1, folder 22, Montana Defense Council Records.

III: Home Guards and Community Militias

With the mustering of the National Guard for military duty in the Great War, many western American states were left without their regular militias or “home guard defenses.” In the case of a local disturbance that the state militia may have been called out for and given the responsibility for handling, the absence of those forces could create problems for mobilization and homefront security. To prepare for any such possibilities, almost every state defense council in the country established a Home Guard system, usually under the organization and supervision of the various versions of the “public defense and security” committees of the state councils. Similar to how the National Guard operated when called upon by a state’s executive branch, state governors acted as the commanders-in-chief of the Home Guards, with the ability to call them out to quell domestic disturbances if needed. In some states, such as Arizona and California, the governors placed state defense council chairmen in charge of the guards. Home guards, however, were not nearly as well-trained, well-funded, or as well-armed as their regular military and National Guard counterparts, ensuring that Home Guard units would be populated mostly by ragtag groups of mostly inexperienced volunteers of mostly teenagers and older men.⁶⁵

Home Guards were state and county government-organized or approved militias, not privately-operated vigilante units. By forming and mustering Home Guard companies, state defense councils, under the authority of their respective state governments and governors, hoped to accomplish two primary goals. First, by providing the ability for ordinary individuals to join, they jumped in front of any attempts by citizens to form vigilante possies. Second, and perhaps most importantly, county and community defense councils had the capacity to muster their own local military forces to eradicate any attempts at labor agitation by the IWW, under the guise of

⁶⁵ Barry M. Stentiford, *The American Home Guard: The State Militia in the Twentieth Century* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 21-24; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 11, 22.

suppressing suspected rebellions. Along with secret service agents, contracted detective agencies, and their coordination with local law enforcement, the Home Guards of the western states emerged as one of the most effective tools in each respective state defense council's arsenal in fighting labor radicalism.⁶⁶

In Arizona, similar to how most states initiated the process, the ASCD's organization of Home Guard companies was a rather haphazard and patchwork procedure which varied from county to county. In the town of Kingman, in western Arizona's Mohave County, Sheriff J.H. Cohenour registered "loyal citizens" for the formation of a local Home Guard company "for the protection of Kingman." 165 men registered for the Kingman Home Guard, most of whom had their own rifles – a common requisite for most regional Home Guard companies being that registrants should have personal firearms at their disposal. Upon its formation and the deputization of its volunteer members, the Mohave County Council of Defense (MCCD) and the ASCD immediately recognized the Kingman Home Guard as a law enforcement unit. With the county's blessing, the ASCD formalized the Kingman Home Guard's existence and authority as an official police force to be called into duty at the request of the county defense council, the ASCD, or the Mohave County Sheriff. The county sheriffs of the state most often organized and managed Arizona's Home Guard companies. According to ASCD regulations as permitted by the governor and the state legislature, county sheriffs answered directly to their respective county defense council members during the period of the war.⁶⁷

The ASCD and its county defense councils mobilized Home Guard companies to break a number of IWW strikes in the state's copper mining camps throughout 1917 and 1918. The

⁶⁶ "Home Guard Open to All Citizens," *Times-Republican*, May 31, 1917, 8.

⁶⁷ F.C. Blodgett to Governor Thomas E. Campbell, "Report of the Kingman Home Guard," April 26, 1917, box 5, folder 73, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; *The Arizona Council of Defense: Its Purposes and a Brief Statement of its Work*, 12-13.

Arizona Home Guard played a key role in the forced deportations of striking miners in Jerome and Bisbee in July 1917. In the mining camps of the Kingman Mining District near the town of Jerome, the IWW had recently arrived to organize new members and to encourage existing members of the AFL-affiliated International United Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (MMSW) to register for dual membership in both unions. The dual membership tactic allowed the IWW to effectively takeover the MMSW's representation of the Kingman District miners. When IWW organizers called a strike on July 9, 1917, Governor Campbell requested that the federal government send in the National Guard to quell the strike and allow replacement workers to enter the mines unmolested.⁶⁸ At the behest of Labor Secretary William B. Wilson, federal authorities rebuffed Campbell's request. Wilson felt that Campbell, a vehemently anti-labor Republican, would use the National Guard to suppress AFL-affiliated unions as well as the IWW, a risk Wilson did not wish to take due to the wartime cooperation between the DCS and the AFL. In response, and under the pretext of "the protection of private property and to prevent injury and loss of life," Governor Campbell turned to the MCCD and Sheriff Cohenour.⁶⁹

On July 10, Campbell and the ASCD's Public Defense and Security Committee ordered Sheriff Cohenour and the MCCD to muster the Kingman Home Guard into active duty to quash the strike. The Home Guardsmen raided residences, hangouts, and the mining camps, rounding up nearly seventy strikers and suspected strikers regardless of their specific union affiliation. The guardsmen then loaded the strikers onto cattle cars at gunpoint, forcibly deporting them out of Arizona.⁷⁰ In nearby Yavapai County, which sat along the railroad's route, the Yavapai County

⁶⁸ Dubofsky, 384-387, Bruere, *Following the Trail of the I.W.W.*, 10-13.

⁶⁹ W.H. Archdeacon to Dwight B. Heard and Thomas Campbell, July 8, 1917, box 3, folder 44, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

⁷⁰ John H. Lindquist, "The Jerome Deportation of 1917," *Arizona and the West*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Autumn 1969): 236-238; "67 'Wobblies' are Shipped from Jerome in Cattle Cars," *Bisbee Daily Review*, July 11, 1917, 1.

Council of Defense (YCCD) mobilized the Prescott Home Guard to meet the train and make sure none of the kidnapped miners had a chance to escape their mobile prison. The train eventually stopped at its final destination in Needles, California, where accompanying Home Guard officers unloaded the deportees from the boxcars and told them to never return to the area. Later that evening during a meeting held under the auspices of the Prescott Home Guard and the YCCD, “citizens passed a resolution declaring that the [IWW] are enemies of the United States ... [and that] there is no room in Yavapai County for [the IWW].”⁷¹

The Jerome deportation inspired the management of the Copper Queen Mining District in Bisbee, over 300-miles to the southeast of Kingman, to call for the deployment of the local Home Guard to remove their own IWW agitators. During the evening of July 11, Cochise County Sheriff and head of the local Home Guard company, Henry Wheeler, deputized more than 2,000 “loyal citizens of Bisbee” as Home Guard volunteers for the purpose of “eliminating anarchistic and treasonable propaganda” and “removing the [IWW] menace.”⁷² The following morning, on July 12, the 2,000-member-strong posse, the largest ever formed in the history of the United States, forcibly removed over 1,200 of the striking miners and other suspected agitators from Bisbee at gunpoint. Home Guard volunteers and Bisbee vigilantes, including several local business owners and management of the Copper Queen Mine, forced them onto cattle cars belonging to the El Paso and Southwest Railroad, sending them on a 275-mile, sixteen-hour-long train ride to Tres Hermanas, New Mexico, without food or water and in the

⁷¹ “Yavapai is No Place for I.W.W. Agitators,” *Arizona Republican*, July 10, 1917, 1.

⁷² Arthur Notman to Dwight B. Heard, August 4, 1917, box 5, folder 73, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

middle of the summer. One deportee died from medical complications resulting from the desert heat and dehydration.⁷³

Mounted deputies and Home Guard volunteers, some on foot, some in automobiles, patrolled the town for the next several days following the deportations to make sure that no workers or their supporters made any public showings of solidarity. The Bisbee and Jerome deportations were perhaps the most egregious examples of IWW oppression by any state defense council in the region during World War I. Because of the involvement of the Arizona Home Guard and its partnership with the sheriff's departments of Mohave and Yavapai Counties, the deportations displayed a high level of coordination, efficiency, motivation, and purpose.⁷⁴ In referencing the Bisbee deportation a month after the event, Arthur Notman, Chairman of the ASCD's Public Defense and Security Committee, proudly explained to the Executive Committee that "the members of the various local Councils of Defense and Home Guards have taken an unofficial but active part in [the deportations]."⁷⁵

The oppression of workers in Arizona's mining districts and the logistical support provided by the ASCD and the Home Guard in facilitating that oppression created a serious problem for the federal government and for the CND. Woodrow Wilson, Samuel Gompers, Felix Frankfurter, and William B. Wilson all expressed their anger and frustration at the manner in which the events transpired. Samuel Gompers was especially bothered by the deportations, informing the President that "there is no law ... that gives authority to private citizens to

⁷³ David R. Berman, *Politics, Labor, and the War on Big Business: The Path of Reform in Arizona, 1890-1920* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2012), 213-215.

⁷⁴ "Will Consider Another Threat as Intimidation of Executive Action," *Arizona Republican*, July 12, 1917, 1.

⁷⁵ Arthur Notman to Dwight B. Heard, August 4, 1917, box 5, folder 73, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

undertake to deport from the state any man.”⁷⁶ He was upset, not because he felt a general concern for the civil rights for all workers, but because several AFL-organized union locals were also victimized by the Jerome and Bisbee vigilantes.⁷⁷

The CND’s Labor Committee, headed by Samuel Gompers, initiated a federal investigation by the PMC to determine the causes of the deportations and to examine the roles played by the state and county governments of Arizona. The PMC’s final report stated that the deportations were “wholly illegal and without authority in law, either State or Federal.”⁷⁸ Even though the PMC pinpointed the unlawful activity of those involved, the federal government’s reaction was slow and undetermined. In May 1918, the US Department of Justice arrested twenty-one mining company executives and a handful of elected officials from Cochise County and the City of Bisbee on conspiracy charges related to the deportations. As there was no federal law in existence at the time regarding kidnapping, and the State of Arizona refused to investigate its own part in the case, federal prosecutors dropped the charges. Ultimately, no one was held accountable, and no one faced justice for their involvement in the deportations.⁷⁹

In Montana, the MSCD “legalized” the unofficial organization of locally formed county and community Home Guard companies in February 1918. Unsanctioned local militias had been appearing around the state since the passage of the Selective Service Act in May 1917, and rather than leaving them unregulated or simply disavowing their formation, the MSCD legitimized and subsumed them as an element of the state’s mobilization effort. County defense councils in Montana started the process, inspired by other states in the region which had experienced success

⁷⁶ Albert and Palladino, *The Samuel Gompers Papers*, Vol. 10, 148-150.

⁷⁷ Felix Frankfurter to Dwight B. Heard, October 25, 1917, box 3, folder 44, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; Bing, 56, 248-250.

⁷⁸ “Report of President Wilson’s Mediation Commission on the Bisbee, Ariz., Deportations,” *Official Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 170 (November 27, 1917): 6.

⁷⁹ *Report of the President’s Mediation Commission*, 4-9; Dubofsky, 221-222.

in using their Home Guard companies “to curb seditious talk and disloyalty.” Montana’s farmers seemed to be the main supporters of the local Home Guard units, whose mere presence in the agricultural districts of the state had the intimidating effect of keeping IWW organizers away and keeping the floating population of migratory laborers relatively compliant and far less willing to stage strikes, slowdowns, or other forms of labor agitation activities.⁸⁰

Spanish-American War veterans were among the first Montanans to organize county and community Home Guard companies and they were the first to have their companies formalized by the MSCD. The previous experience of military veterans lent an aura of credibility and accountability to the formation of Home Guards companies, as was the case with the establishment of most Home Guards in the American West. Unlike California, Washington, and Arizona, the MSCD did not appear overly concerned about unsanctioned community-organized Home Guards. In fact, the MSCD and Governor Stewart encouraged the formation of local self-defense militias, whether they would eventually become absorbed into the state’s defense council system or not. Montana’s Home Guards operated in a very democratic manner, with volunteers voting for their officers, evincing a desire to retain their associational modes of organization.⁸¹

Washington Governor Ernest Lister established the Washington Home Guard in June 1917 to supplant the state’s National Guard companies that had been mustered into active duty by the federal government. Similar to the manner in which most state defense councils in the western states organized their guardsmen, Governor Lister handed all organizing and mobilizing duties to the state’s various county defense councils. The operational management of the Home

⁸⁰ C.H. Bentley to Governor Stewart, February 26, 1918, box 1, folder 6, Montana Defense Council Records; “County Guard May be Formed,” *Glasgow Courier*, December 7, 1917, 1.

⁸¹ Karl Knudsen to Attorney General, March 17, 1918, box 2, folder 1, Montana Defense Council Records; “Missoula Veterans Will Serve Again,” *Daily Missoulian*, December 22, 1917, 5; Charles Greenfield to Frank C. Hughes, July 28, 1918, box 1, folder 17, Montana Defense Council Records.

Guards, as tasked by the WSCD, permitted the counties to control their own local militia forces. While the state defense councils and governors had the ultimate authority over the Home Guards, county defense council officials in Washington mustered and deployed their Home Guard companies as they saw fit, without prior authorization by the WSCD or the Governor.⁸² By the fall of 1917, the formation of Home Guard companies by the county councils had become so popular that the WSCD permitted the counties to allow for the formation of Home Guard companies, at their discretion, at the community defense council level as well. Washington's most populous county, King County, formalized the creation of twenty-six community-level Home Guard companies by the end of the year.⁸³

In northeast Washington, the Stevens County Council of Defense (SCCD) designated residents to organize the local Home Guard companies in each of Stevens County's twenty-two communities. "In towns of 1,000 population and less," according to SCCD regulations, "the governing power of the [Home Guards] will rest in the hands of an advisory board of three men, in towns over 1,000, five men will constitute the board." Residents of the various small communities democratically elected the board members who then appointed the officers and drillmasters for the local Home Guard companies. Through their cooperation with the county sheriff, Home Guards in Stevens County prevented several attempts of labor agitation by the IWW. In the town of Springdale, the community defense council mobilized the local Home Guard to protect the Phoenix Lumber Company where the IWW had declared a strike a week earlier. The mere presence of the armed guardsmen kept the union from interfering with the

⁸² *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 53-55; "Yelm Home Guard in Charge," *Washington Standard*, July 6, 1917, 7.

⁸³ "Home Guards," *Vashon Island Record*, September 20, 1917, 3.

hiring of replacement workers at the mill, which had the effect of preventing any significant work stoppages from occurring at the mill throughout the period the war.⁸⁴

Home Guard responsibilities in the American West blurred the lines between public and private. In small communities like Springdale, separating private interests from the public welfare proved to be a complicated and nuanced endeavor. As a requisite for enlistment, the SCCD required Home Guard volunteers to sign a pledge that stated:

“We, the undersigned, hereby organize ourselves as a (name of town) home guard for the protection of life and property and the conservation of health and foodstuffs, and do agree to work together under direction of the proper offices of this home guard, and to answer any call made by the executive committee thereof, placing duty ahead of private interests.”⁸⁵

In addition to being the local representative for the SCCD and organizer of Springdale’s Home Guard company, E.F. Cartier Van Dissel also owned the Phoenix Lumber Company. The appointment of people like Van Dissel to head community Home Guard units afforded them the opportunity to further their own private interests in direct opposition to the pledge. However, as a prominent local employer and significant contributor to the economy of Springdale, Phoenix Lumber also maintained a high level of public importance to the community.⁸⁶

In California, the CSCD, under the supervision of Adjutant General, J.J. Borree, oversaw the organization of fifty-two Home Guard companies with nearly 12,000 volunteer enlistments between April and October of 1917.⁸⁷ The CSCD’s process of forming Home Guard companies was representative of how the process worked in several western states. Once any given company of National Guardsmen had been federalized and mustered by the federal government for active duty, the corresponding county defense council immediately went to work to replace

⁸⁴ “County Defense Council,” *Colville Examiner*, July 21, 1917, 3.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Larry Hasse, *E.F. Cartier Van Dissel and Sawmill Phoenix: The Logging of Old-Growth Timber and the Making of a Small Farm Community, 1897-1943* (Victoria, B.C.: Friesen Press, 2019), 65-68.

⁸⁷ “11,786 Men Enlist from Golden State,” *Morning Echo*, October 20, 1917, 7.

the departing company with a volunteer Home Guard unit. The process of accepting volunteers and commissioning officers varied from county to county. Home Guard companies were most often comprised of teenagers and older men – those who were either too old or too young for conscription. County defense council officials in California appointed veterans with combat experience as Home Guard officers to lead each company. California’s Home Guardsmen drilled twice weekly, usually at local public high schools.⁸⁸

California’s Home Guard companies, like nearly all Home Guards throughout the country, were financed almost entirely through local community donations. Because of the financial demands of the war, convincing the federal or state governments to provide the funds needed for rifles, ammo, and uniforms often proved difficult, if not futile. Veterans donated old National Guard and US Army uniforms to be worn by the Home Guard volunteers and occasionally, county defense councils were able to procure the financing needed to purchase new uniforms. On rare occasions, county governments or county defense councils would be able to provide their respective Home Guards with rifles, however, the most common means of arming them was through the enlistment of volunteers who already possessed their own firearms.⁸⁹

The World War I-era emergence of the local Home Guards, as organized by the DCS, reignited the country’s passion for militias and local community defense, especially out West. According to former University of California Professor of History and CSCD appointee, William McDonald, “Pioneer Americans have carried the torch of good government out West where they have attempted to maintain the principles of the Founders ... not the industrial politics of East

⁸⁸ Edith Daley, *War History of Santa Clara County* (San Jose: Santa Clara County Historical Society, 1920), 5-6; “Home Guard to Protect City in Case of Emergency,” *Modesto Evening News*, October 10, 1917, 2.

⁸⁹ “Uniforms for State Home Guard Planned,” *Santa Ana Register*, July 7, 1917, 1; *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 11; “Home Guards Need Support of City,” *Oxnard Daily Courier*, October 5, 1917, 1.

Coast elites and corporate capitalism.” That “torch-bearing,” as indicated by McDonald, included maintaining the significance of private-sector social organization in the form of community defense units.⁹⁰ As explained by Montana Governor Samuel V. Stewart, the Home Guards were “an aggregation of citizens banded together for the general good, and as such they constitute themselves the sole judges of the rights and powers of the organization.”⁹¹

Home Guards were, in essence, prime examples of the associational state at work – locally-organized communities that promoted self-governance and self-defense at the county and community levels of government, unhindered by a centralized federal bureaucracy that might not have had the community’s best interests at heart. However, as evinced by the Arizona Home Guard’s role in the Bisbee and Jerome deportations, placing such high levels of trust into local militias proved problematic on more than one occasion, especially in reference to tactics of violent coercion and civil rights violations. By placing that trust into the hands of inexperienced and unregimented men while also providing them with authority and little-to-no accountability, the probability for increased conflict was extremely high. The newfound ability of employers to manipulate local militias for their own economic desires demonstrated the threat that Home Guards posed to not only the labor movement in general, but to constitutional law as well.⁹²

⁹⁰ William McDonald, “The West and the War,” *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1917, 18.

⁹¹ State of Montana, *Messages and State Papers of Governor S.V. Stewart of Montana, 1913-1920* (Helena: Independent Publishing Co., 1920), 68-69.

⁹² Bruere, *Following the Trail of the I.W.W.*, 11-12, 14-16; Capozzola, 128-131.

–Chapter Eight– **Readjusting Regional Employment Practices**

Through the development and implementation of “labor readjustment” policies in the American West, the DCS had a profound impact on the region’s labor radicalism trajectory. The wartime coordination between the organized labor movement, businesses, and the state defense councils of the West increasingly marginalized the IWW and labor radicalism in general as the war moved forward. State labor federations, many of which still maintained some small level of solidarity with the IWW, completely abandoned it in exchange for guarantees that the AFL and affiliated craft-labor organizations would continue to see modest gains in wages and workplace safety. Socioeconomic adjustment through labor and business regulation policies provided an excellent opportunity for the DCS to solve longstanding problems, including voicing support for a standard eight-hour workday and by setting industry-wide wage standards in several industries. At the same time, the application of those policies effectively de-radicalized the itinerant worker population in the West, increased overall wartime production, and gave traditional craft-labor unions a more influential voice within the regulatory and policymaking process. AFL-affiliated unions and federations leveraged labor’s wartime participation in the DCS to eliminate organizational competition by the IWW and become the most dominant labor federation in the country. Mobilization for World War I killed the mainstream movement for industrial democracy and cemented the AFL’s conservative brand of bread-and-butter unionism.

I: Labor Procurement and Replacement

One of the most important elements of the wartime mobilization process was found in how the DCS interacted with organized labor and how those interactions shaped policies either in support of or in opposition to labor union activities. When the IWW declared a massive general strike in the late summer of 1917, right before the first wartime grain harvest, defense councils in

the region scrambled to stop it. However, the ideological underpinnings of the DCS, carefully molded by Wilson's CND appointees, were deeply rooted in progressive politics, which, when taken in combination with the rising significance of labor as a voting bloc, necessitated the use of non-violent tactics of repression. Still mindful of the blowback they received following the 1916 Everett Massacre, local government officials, state policymakers, and defense council officials in the Northwest looked towards devising different methods of dealing with the IWW to prevent it from interfering with wartime production and mobilization. Not only did the Everett Massacre demonstrate the rapaciousness with which the IWW was treated by local law enforcement, but it also served to increase support for the union by other segments of organized labor and the general public. When confronted with the general strike threat, the governors and state defense councils of Washington and Montana made on-the-fly policy decisions which had never been attempted before, altering the manner in which state governments handled labor radicalism and class-conflict, both during and after the Great War.

Labor Replacement and Union-Busting in the Northwest

The federal government and lawmakers in the western states considered the region's reliance on migratory workers to sustain the labor needs of the extractive industries to be a serious problem that needed remediation. Wartime mobilization provided the impetus for which to reform that traditional economic reliance on a cheap, easily radicalized, and increasingly demoralized workforce. For many Americans in the western states, migrant workers were an often unseen, yet vitally important demographic in relation to the economic sustainability of the region's extractive and farming industries. They were, in many respects, the economic backbone of the West. As the IWW ramped up its organizing campaigns in the forests, farms, and mining districts of the region following its 1905 inception, the invisible population of itinerants that

came and went with the seasons became much more vocal about their treatment and subsequently, much more noticeable. Considering that many Americans insultingly referred to them as “hoboes,” “tramps,” and “bums,” it was not surprising that migrant workers had become upset with their treatment, not just by employers, but by American society in general.¹

The IWW established the AWIU in 1915 to organize the tens-of-thousands of migrant farmhands in the US West; the “unskilled” workers that the craft-labor-focused AFL had refused to organize for decades. In the period preceding the mass-mechanization of agriculture, farmers hired crews of farmhands to harvest their crops, making them an indispensable facet of regional agricultural production. On one hand, with its expanding influence over the state’s farm laborers combined with the high fixed prices of wartime grain, the IWW was in a position to be a commanding labor presence in the region’s farming districts. On the other hand, that influence also put the union in a position to be considered a serious threat to wartime production and mobilization if it failed to participate in a sufficiently patriotic capacity. In other words, if it did not cooperate with the state’s plans of increased wartime production as did the majority of craft labor union leadership it could very well experience the full force of the DCS’s emergency powers.²

While the IWW initiated a new round of organizing drives in the region’s farming communities in 1917, state defense councils were busy encouraging farmers to increase food production for the war effort. The two forces would soon clash in climactic fashion. James Rowan, district secretary of the IWW’s Eastern Washington branch and head of the Lumber Workers Industrial Union No. 500 (LWIU), was determined to use the planned food production increases as leverage to facilitate an expansion of IWW influence in the region. Rowan, fellow

¹ Wyman, *Hoboes*, 40-41.

² Hall, 3; C.W. Heath to Ernest Lister, n.d., box 114, folder “I.W.W.,” Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

LWIU organizer Nils Madsen, and AWIU Secretary James Smith, formulated a plan to organize a massive “general strike in the forests, farms, orchards, and all construction work of the Northwest” during the late-summer harvest when most migrant workers would be on the job. A sudden work stoppage in those industries in the midst of the nation’s first wartime harvest could, as warned by the Spokane City Council, create “widespread distress among the people ... food would go beyond the reach of millions of wage-earners and their families would suffer hunger.”³

On August 14, 1917, Rowan personally sent telegrams to the governors of Montana, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon, threatening to call a general strike on August 17 if they did not meet the various demands that Rowan had set forth. Aside from the basic bread-and-butter issues of higher wages, a basic eight-hour workday, and improved working conditions, the telegrams also demanded “the immediate release of the more than one-hundred political prisoners” arrested during a raid by the federal government on the IWW’s Chicago headquarters a few months prior. Rowan appeared to have expected his demands to be met with a rapid capitulation by the state and by employers, thereby advancing the cause of rank-and-file Wobblies and that of the IWW’s ideological crusade in general. Not only did that not happen, but Rowan’s strike threat brought the full weight of the DCS in the region onto the heads of not only area IWW leadership, but onto those of the rank-and-file members as well.⁴

The reactions by the governors of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana were swift and decisive, especially that of Washington Governor Ernest Lister, who immediately mustered the WSCD into action. The WSCD had only been in existence for two-months when Rowan issued his general strike call, testing both the resolve and the capabilities of the state’s new

³ “Appeal to Patriotism of Workers in the Inland Empire,” *Spokesman-Review*, August 18, 1917, 1, 2; Ernest Holland to Ernest Lister, August 16, 1917, box 16, folder 497, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

⁴ Ernest Lister to Ernest Holland, August 16, 1917, box 16, folder 497, Ernest O. Holland Collection; “Ask State to Defend Crops,” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 18, 1917, 1.

wartime administration with a possibly catastrophic production stoppage. As the regional hub of IWW activity, Spokane felt the most immediate reaction to Rowan's strike threat. Ernest Lister, using his emergency executive powers as governor, declared martial law in Spokane. Lister coordinated with the Governor of Idaho, Moses Alexander, to send the Idaho National Guard to downtown Spokane to occupy the commercial hub of the city, intimidate any prospective strikers, and bolster the city's police force sent in by local authorities to arrest IWW members. Spokane Police arrested twenty-six men and women in the raids.⁵

In response to the WSCD's reaction to the general strike threat, the Spokane Central Labor Council (SCLC), an AFL-affiliated labor organization with around 5,000 members, initially condemned the raids and arrests. After the SCLC's rank-and-file passed a unanimous vote denouncing the raids, A.S. Nowka, Secretary of the SCLC, sent a telegram to WSCD Labor Committee Chairman, Ernest Marsh, demanding his resignation, as well as those of Governor Lister and Idaho National Guard Commander, Maj. Clement Wilkins.⁶ The SCLC's criticism of the WSCD's actions came as a complete surprise to both Governor Lister and Ernest Marsh. Due to the AFL's long-standing conflict with the IWW, and the WSFL's involvement on the WSCD's Labor Committee, Ernest Marsh was taken aback by the SCLC's rare show of solidarity with the IWW prisoners. As soon as Marsh read the SCLC's disparagement of the raids and arrests, he immediately traveled to Spokane to discuss the matter with Secretary Nowka. The meeting garnered quick results in favor of the WSCD. After "a careful investigation of the facts" by Nowka, the SCLC retracted their original statement, reporting in area

⁵ Henry Suzzallo to Chairman of Councils for Patriotic Services, August 16, 1917, box 114, folder "I.W.W.," Governor Ernest Lister Papers; Ernest Lister to Maurice Thompson, August 16, 1917, box 114, folder "I.W.W.," Governor Ernest Lister Papers; "Soldiers Patrol Streets," *Tacoma Times*, August 20, 1917, 1, 4.

⁶ "What's Wrong with the Spokane Central Labor Council?," *Labor Journal*, August 24, 1917, 2.

newspapers the next day that “[we] fully justified all that was done by the State authorities ...[and are] repudiating our previous resolution.”⁷

James Rowan clearly understood the significance of the DCS and how its recent formation represented an emergent transformation in the regulatory authority of government in relation to the private sector. Had he desired a more traditional negotiation process with area employers – in this case farmers, orchardists, contractors, and lumber companies – then he would have likely dealt with them through the normal channels of communication, either directly or through his organizers. The fact that he sent the strike threat to the executive heads of the region’s state governments demonstrated that the wartime harvest of 1917 held much more importance than that of the standard employer-employee conflict. Rowan realized that the administrative capacities of government had experienced an upward shift. Rather than relying on traditional methods of negotiation, sending a general strike threat to the state governors themselves implied that the IWW grasped the rapidly transforming nature of the dynamic between and among government, business, and labor. However, James Rowan grossly miscalculated the level of the WSCD’s wartime authority and the willingness of area employers to use mobilization as a justification to attack the IWW.⁸

The WSCD had little in the way of precedent to refer to in dealing with the first wartime strike threat to the region’s food supply, so it did what most state defense councils had been doing since day one – it improvised. There would be little acquiescence from the state government in dealing with the IWW during the Great War and area employers were persuaded by their local defense councils not to negotiate with the IWW unless the WSCD was also

⁷ “[WSCD] Labor Report,” 1918, box 136, folder “Council of Defense Labor Reports,” Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁸ James Rowan, *The I.W.W. in the Lumber Industry* (Chicago: IWW Publishing, 1922), 46-48.

involved.⁹ With the Idaho National Guard occupying downtown Spokane and most of the IWW's regional leadership arrested and facing treason charges, the WSCD could more freely coordinate to ensure that the harvest commenced without ideological rhetoric complicating the effort. First, the WSCD mobilized area newspapers, an active partner of the DCS in general, to help push the conventional narrative of wartime patriotism to shame the remaining IWW members in the countryside into not heeding the strike call. Next, in cooperation with the Extension Service and county agents of Washington State College (WSC), the land-grant school in Pullman, the WSCD organized "patriotic volunteers" in women and children to replace the IWW farmhands.¹⁰

Throughout 1917 and 1918, county and state defense councils of the Northwest transformed the youth of the region into de facto pools of prospective farm labor during the harvest seasons. Groups like the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), the YMCA and YWCA, and the Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA), emerged as prominent contributors to the replacement of migrant laborers. More often than not, children volunteered themselves for service as replacement laborers at much higher numbers than adult volunteers did.¹¹ After reading about the IWW's strike threat in local newspapers, several youth organizations and individuals contacted A.L. Rogers, head of the WSCD's Farm Labor Committee, to offer assistance with the food production emergency. J.H. Piper, Executive Director of the BSA for Western Washington, enlisted entire troops of Seattle's Boy Scouts as volunteer farmhands. He also helped organize training camps in conjunction with WSC, "to get city boys in condition to do real work on the

⁹ Ibid., 34-36; Governor Ernest Lister to E.O. Holland, August 20, 1917, box 17, folder 549, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

¹⁰ E.O. Holland to Governor Ernest Lister, August 16, 1917, box 16, folder 497, Ernest O. Holland Collection; R.B. Coglán to L.M. Lampson, August 17, 1917, box 10, folder 321, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

¹¹ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 46-50; "Students to Help Solve Labor Problem," *Pullman Herald*, April 20, 1917, 3.

farm.”¹² Rogers directed Piper and his Boy Scouts to WSC’s Extension Service where they would be trained to assist with the upcoming harvest. Through Piper’s efforts in 1917, 200 Boy Scouts from the Seattle area traveled across the state to Pullman for a crash-course training session in working with farm equipment and caring for farm animals. Upon completion of the training camp, Extension Service employees and county defense council officials placed the boys with summer harvesting jobs through WSC’s various job placement partnerships.¹³

Before World War I, college students were the main beneficiaries of the YMCA’s farm labor employment programs, linking students from WSC with area farmers for summer employment opportunities. Due to wartime labor deficiencies, which were only made worse by the IWW’s strike threats, the YMCA extended its employment efforts to Spokane and Seattle to recruit teenage volunteers. Working through their local county defense councils, the YMCA organized the young men who volunteered for farm labor employment under the Boy’s Working Reserve (BWR), while the YWCA mobilized its female volunteers into the Women’s Land Army (WLA).¹⁴ In May 1918, J.C. Scott, WSC’s county agent for Whitman County, informed WSC President Ernest Holland that the YMCA was “busily engaged” enrolling all available farm labor to be called upon in case of another farm labor emergency.¹⁵

The YMCA and the Extension Service exploited the youthful volunteers for WSCD propaganda as children were given an “opportunity to help win the war,” or even “serve in the Army” by volunteering to help bring in the harvest. In a letter to Governor Lister, Ernest Holland mentioned that the “boys and girls can render important service in helping to stabilize seasonal labor.” Wartime labor scarcity precipitated the use of children as farm laborers, but as IWW

¹² A.L. Rogers to M.P. Goodner, October 24, 1917, box 18, folder 565, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

¹³ A.D. Decker to Robert Moran, April 25, 1918, box 27, folder 835, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

¹⁴ “The Agricultural Army Plan,” 1918, box 17, folder 534, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

¹⁵ A.L. Rogers to M.P. Goodner, October 29, 1917, box 18, folder 565, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

organizers grew more desperate in their agitation attempts, the young farmhands came to be used as replacement labor, or “scabs,” to help eliminate the region’s reliance on migratory seasonal workers. The children and young adults organized to replace migrant farmhands proved to be an effective means to fight against possible labor agitation. The WSCD’s experience in defeating the 1917 strike through the mobilization of women and children was so successful that it planned to use the same methods of replacement for future harvests. The WSCD’s experience in 1917 prepared it for how to react for the 1918 harvest.¹⁶

The first official farm labor training camps for the young BWR volunteers opened in the Palouse farming region in March 1918. The purpose of the camps was to properly introduce “city boys” to the physically demanding world of farm labor. The Extension Service established the camps on and around the WSC campus in Pullman where the participants, ranging in age from thirteen to eighteen, went through a fairly rigorous conditioning process. The university provided them with retired National Guard uniforms and put them through two-weeks of extensive physical training. The boys awoke at dawn, ate breakfast, fed and groomed the horses, and were taught basic maintenance and operation of various farm equipment implements by WSC employees and volunteers. The boys entered the camps “rather pale and not particularly athletic,” but over the two-week period, according to the volunteers who ran the camps, “a great transformation took place, and the boys came out hardened physically.” Executive Secretary of the WSCD, M.P. Goodner, regarded the BWR as “very necessary,” adding that “when turned out on the farm under good men and women the child laborers made a good minimum of trouble and expense.” Goodner’s statements about the BWR confirmed the effectiveness of the WSCD’s

¹⁶ A.L. Rogers to M.P. Goodner, October 29, 1917, box 18, folder 565, Ernest O. Holland Collection; WSC Extension Service, “How the Boys and Girls of Washington can Serve in the Army,” box 17, folder 534, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

labor replacement program. He had initially doubted the practicality of A.L. Roger's plan from the outset, but after he witnessed the results of their work, he supported the program indefinitely.¹⁷

Some farmers expressed dissatisfaction with the young farmhands, but most testified to the effectiveness of the BWR labor program. Near the town of Steptoe, where the Whitman County Council of Defense had helped mobilize more than 100 children for the late-summer grain harvest, local farmer E. Kreager criticized the high school kids brought in to help him harvest 1,500 acres of wheat. Kreager complained that "school boys cannot do farm work," and that they were "consumed with loafing and horseplay." Kreager's comment was quickly snubbed by other local farmers who also utilized the help of the boys. One of Whitman County's most successful farmers, Roe Martin, defended their work ethic, stating "he had more experience than anyone in hiring help," and that the boys did well enough for him to ask several to work for him the following season. Colfax farmer Harry Roberts said the boys made fine hired help and "if they were all put to work it would solve the labor problem." Another Steptoe farmer, B.R. Pratt, stated that some of the best help he ever hired were school boys.¹⁸

While the BSA, YMCA, and YWCA were significant contributors to the enlistment of thousands of youth volunteers for seasonal farmhand work in Washington, the BGCA facilitated some of the most impressive numbers. From 1917-1918, the coordination between WSC's Extension Service and the WSCD applied the assistance of nearly 1,946 various BGCA clubs from around the state, with a total of 16,153 participants. The combined labor power of the BGCA volunteers

¹⁷ M.P. Goodner to A.L. Rogers, October 24, 1917, box 18, folder 565, Ernest O. Holland Collection; A.L. Rogers to M.P. Goodner, October 29, 1917, box 18, folder 565, Ernest O. Holland Collection; US Department of Labor, *Proceedings of the National War Labor Conference* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 62.

¹⁸ "Lack of Grain Bags Serious," *Spokesman-Review*, January 17, 1918.

was represented by nearly \$131,173 in crop value returns.¹⁹ Rogers explained to Governor Lister that the children “were infinitely helpful” as farm labor problems became more acute, and that utilizing the labor of school boys would “do away with the need for transient labor.” His statement represented the progression of the status of replacement laborers from being used as emergency reserve labor in 1917, to becoming union-busting scab laborers by 1918.²⁰

The farmers of the western states were perhaps the most satisfied recipients of their DCS’s wartime labor adjustment activities, as many of them had been in conflict with the IWW since the union initiated its first organizing drives of the region’s farmhands in the years preceding World War I. In Washington, the WSCD put the IWW’s general strike threat down before it even started, and area farmers recognized the role played by their state and county defense councils in doing so. “It would seem that the labor situation is being handled satisfactorily in this vicinity,” mused the *Pullman Tribune*, “thus far, not a farmer has been handicapped for the want of competent help.”²¹ One Washington wheat farmer expressed his pleasure with the defense council’s work in helping him “rid his fields of that IWW menace” by enacting and enforcing vagrancy statutes and other idleness laws. “Such laws,” observed the farmer, “puts the idler in a conspicuous position in a patriotic community, and that is often more effective than force.” The efforts of the WSCD instilled confidence in the farmer “that the IWW will not nag him as it did last year. The basis for this promise is a greatly enlarged Secret Service and a greatly shortened public patience.”²²

¹⁹ “Extension Service Activities for the Year 1917-1918,” box 21, folder 638, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

²⁰ A.L. Rogers to M.P. Goodner, October 29, 1917, box 16, folder 497, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

²¹ *Pullman Tribune*, September 7, 1917, 3.

²² “What are the Remedies?,” *The Country Gentleman*, Vol. 83, No. 2 (January 12, 1918): 47.

With extensive tracts of farmland, mountain forests, and important manufacturing and mining districts, the states located within the Intermountain West proved to be significant contributors to the process of wartime mobilization. Interior states with smaller, more rural, and more dispersed populations demonstrated what could be accomplished through the administration of individual state defense councils when coupled with decentralization, motivated leadership, and an actively organized citizenry. With a concerted focus on agricultural production, a booming timber harvesting industry, increased lumber production, and some of the nation's most extensive copper mining operations at its economic core, the State of Montana exemplified the significant wartime contribution of the northern Rocky Mountain and Northern Great Plains states. The wartime emphasis on restructuring Montana's lagging agricultural industries necessitated an adjustment of how the state regulated its labor market and how it dealt with its itinerant worker population, whether they were affiliated with the IWW or not. By neutralizing the IWW's presence in the state's farming districts, the MSCD, similar to the WSCD, provided a valid reason for farmers to trust the regulatory power of the government.²³

Similar to the WSCD, the MSCD accomplished IWW neutralization and displacement through a concerted labor replacement campaign. The MSCD and its various county defense councils, with the aid of the state's county agents, mobilized high school children, women, retirees, and unemployed veterans as "patriotic" and relatively compliant farmhands. Over the course of the 1917 harvest season alone, Montana's county agents, working through MSC, the state's land-grant university in Bozeman, helped area farmers procure 3,565 "patriotic and

²³ Berman, *Radicalism in the Mountain West*, 280-282; M.J. Mershon to Charles Greenfield, April 23, 1918, box 1, folder 24, Montana Council of Defense Records; "Draft Able-Bodied Men to Harvest," *Roundup Record*, July 26, 1918, 1.

enthusiastic” laborers throughout the state to replace the itinerant workers who normally brought in the harvest.²⁴

The state and county defense councils of Washington and Montana, in response to the general strike threat, went far beyond simply using replacement workers as a quick solution to a complex problem. State and local governments used those replacement workers to displace as many migrant laborers as possible for the foreseeable future, regardless of IWW affiliation. Ridding the region’s farming districts of not only the Wobblies, but of its traditional reliance on migratory labor constituted an important strategy as part of the larger socioeconomic adjustments being attempted through the efforts of the DCS.²⁵ The volunteers recruited to work as farmhands became, in essence, state-organized scab laborers used to permanently displace union and non-union migrants both during and after the war. By deploying a barrage of patriotic and anti-IWW rhetoric in area newspapers, defense councils devised methods of procuring replacement labor, not through overt compulsion or threats of violence, but through a concerted campaign of nationalistic coercion which encouraged volunteers to work not for so much for wages, but for the love of their nation and for a decisive military victory in Europe.²⁶

Immigrant Labor in the Southwest

The need to fill the western labor void brought on by radicalized and/or striking workers and military conscription forced the CND and the state defense councils to reconsider the

²⁴ Charles Greenfield to Willard Johnson, April 1916, box 1, folder 1, Montana Council of Defense Records; Clarence Ousley, *Women on the Farm: An Address Before the Women’s Committee of the Council of National Defense*, May 13, 1918 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 3, 9; “Summary of County Agent Activities: War Activities Report, 1917,” box 92, folder 23, Montana State University Extension Service Records; “State to Enlist High School Boys for Farms,” *Butte Daily Post*, April 20, 1917, 1.

²⁵ O.L. Waller to Governor Ernest Lister, August 17, 1917, box 16, folder 497, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

²⁶ W.S. Murdock, “Special Supplementary Report, 1917 (War Work of County Agents),” August 1917, box 92, folder 23, Montana State University Extension Service Records.

country's discriminatory policies regarding Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican laborers. Aside from the more well-known Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, federal immigration laws also restricted the importation of Japanese and Mexican labor as an amendment to the Immigration Act of 1917, passed in February that year, two months before Congress declared war on Germany. The 1917 act did not ban Mexican immigration into the US outright. Instead, the law required that Mexican immigrants pay a head tax of \$8.00 per person and pass literacy exams before they could enter the country. The taxes and exams played a very particular purpose in keeping non-European immigrants from gaining entry and even Mexicans who spoke English well could easily be denied entry due to the nature of the exams. In addition, the Mexican Revolution, which had caused a severe economic depression in the country, prevented many prospective farmhands from being able to collect the money needed for the head tax.²⁷

The exclusion of Mexican laborers created a real problem for the mobilization effort, especially in the Southwestern border states where the hiring of Mexican nationals as farmhands had been considered an economic necessity by area employers due to the low wages they accepted for their labor. By denying the entry of a vast majority of the Mexican laborers that had been making their way to and from the US for decades, the federal government, ironically enough, hindered the ability of the state defense councils to meet the increased food production requests. Chambers of Commerce, farmers, and state and county defense council officials throughout the region opposed the banning of those workers. The Los Angeles County Council of Defense (LACCD) was quite vehement in protesting the ban. In November 1917, the LACCD, in coordination with the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, passed a resolution which

²⁷ C.C. Huff to Judge O.E. Dunlap, May 18, 1917, box 2J355, folder 2, Texas War Records Collection; William B. Wilson, "Departmental Order No. 54261/202," July 10, 1918, box 2J355, folder 2, Texas War Records Collection; S. Deborah Kang, *The INS on the Line: Making Immigration Law on the US-Mexico Border, 1917-1954* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 16-22.

“prevails upon Congress to suspend, without reservation, until the end of the war, those sections of the immigration law which now stand in the way of temporarily relieving the basic labor conditions of the Pacific States.”²⁸

The rising demands for the suspension of the Mexican labor ban by various business associations, individual employers, and defense councils was overwhelming and could not easily be ignored by federal authorities. Defense council officials and employers in the Southwest seemed the most adamant about maintaining their surplus of cheap immigrant labor. Some of the loudest protestations came from the ASCD, which understood that their agricultural industries would likely suffer as a result of the indirect ban on Mexican labor. “Various committees of farmer and business organizations ... seek relief from the present enactment of the Immigration Law in regard to illiteracy tests and head tax of eight dollars,” ASCD Labor Committee member, E.L. Manning, informed the CND’s Labor Committee. “[Arizona] as well as other states in the West ... rely a great deal on Mexicans as seasonal labor. We need at present three-thousand.”²⁹

Arizona employers’ associations not only demanded a lift of the Mexican worker ban, but they also insisted that the US State Department do more to improve its relations with the government of Mexico to ensure a labor surplus in the state, thereby making it easier for employers to control wages. Those associations insisted that the same kind of cooperative-based mobilization processes taking place within the US should be extended into international territory in relation to economic coordination with Mexico and the free movement of laborers across the border. In a letter from the Arizona Cotton Growers Association (ACGA) to ASCD chairman Dwight Heard, which Heard forwarded to Labor Secretary William B. Wilson, the ACGA

²⁸ “Says Mexican Labor is Indispensable to the State,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 4, 1917, 13; *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 22-23.

²⁹ E.L. Manning to Council of National Defense, April 28, 1917, box 3, folder 46, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

emphasized “the need for cooperation between the State Department in this country and the State Department of the Republic of Mexico ... in bringing attention to the idle agricultural laborers of northern Mexico the opportunities of employment in the Southwest.” The cooperation mentioned by the association and supported by Heard was part-in-parcel of the growing chorus of American business associations in the border states who wished to see the government take a more active part in socioeconomic matters. In this case, demands for employment regulations extended across the border and invited the Mexican government to coordinate along with it, laying the foundation for the diplomatic accords that resulted in the future Bracero Program.³⁰

Only two months after the passage of the short-sighted ban, at the behest of the CND’s Advisory Commission and the NWLB, the Wilson Administration rescinded the amendment to the Immigration Act of 1917 that restricted Mexican workers, albeit temporarily. The ASCD inferred that its petitions to the federal government to allow the entry of Mexican farmhands to help increase cotton production, helped lift the ban. “Through the efforts of the State Council,” according to the ASCD’s final report, “the suspension of the alien labor immigration clause and the per capita tax on Mexican labor for agricultural purposes was effected [*sic*].”³¹ The temporary lifting of the ban for wartime production “resulted in bringing in thousands of much-needed laborers into the agricultural communities,” which freed up American workers for employment in industrial factory work or other more specialized wartime industries. Between 1917 and 1921, the federal government permitted 73,000 Mexican workers entry into the United

³⁰ Dwight B. Heard to William B. Wilson, February 4, 1918, box 3, folder 46, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; President’s Commission on Migratory Labor, *Migratory Labor in American Agriculture: Report of the President’s Commission on Migratory Labor* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), 37-38.

³¹ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 21-22.

States under the wartime amendment waiver, most of whom worked on the farms and railroads of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.³²

The lifting of the Mexican labor ban lasted throughout the remainder of the Great War and was reinitiated in 1921 with the ratification of the United States-Germany Peace Treaty and again reinforced with the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924 with its strict ethnic and racial quota system.³³ The racist and xenophobic immigration policies of the United States during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries effectively placed the unsustainable economics of white supremacy and nativism over more sensible economic policies that placed financial concerns over racial ones. Coordination between local defense councils and area employers demonstrated an ability to reverse those policies through economic motivation and sustained protest. But the federal government still had limits on who it would allow into the country, regardless of the level of dissent it received from defense councils and employers' associations. With such a large population of Latinx residents in the southwestern states, overlooking the presence of Mexican workers seemed to be far less of a problem than overlooking the presence of Asian immigrant workers.³⁴

Even in consideration of the spillover of the Mexican Revolution into the United States and Pancho Villa's border raids, Mexican workers fared much better in gaining entry into the country than did Chinese and Japanese immigrants. In other words, American border states had far more to worry about in regard to a Mexican invasion, empirically speaking, than that of a Chinese or Japanese invasion, making anti-Asian racism a more important consideration than

³² *Report of the President's Commission on Migratory Labor*, 37.

³³ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 7-11.

³⁴ Committee for Immigrants in America, *Memorandum to the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense Concerning a War Policy for Aliens* (New York: National Americanization Committee, 1917), 23-25; Van Nuys, 71-72.

that of the economy for large swaths of the American public. The immigrant labor importation debate among federal and state policymakers, as well as employers and ordinary American citizens, had a completely different and more overtly racialized tone when discussing the importation of Asian labor relative to the discussion of permitting Mexican labor.³⁵

During a state defense council meeting in January 1918, the CSCD's Labor Committee advanced a proposal "that oriental labor, preferably Chinese, be imported into this country." However, the rest of the CSCD's Executive Committee members quickly shot down the proposal without any serious consideration after the federal government informed them that it would not sanction any such proposals whatsoever. Proposals for the importation of Asian laborers would not have been brought forth had employers not been asking for them and many employers felt that their own financial interests should not be overshadowed by racialized immigration policies. Instead of importing Chinese labor, according to CSCD officials, the defense council should first consider "passing compulsory labor laws ... shorten the school term to give teachers and pupils an opportunity to work on farms ... [and to] substitute women for men wherever possible."³⁶

II: Government Employment Agencies and Unions

Ending the traditional reliance of hiring labor through private employment agencies constituted another significant element of the DCS's socioeconomic readjustment agenda. Not only did private employment agencies fail to keep up with the high wartime labor demands of employers, but they also had a habit of charging both employer and employee a relatively substantial fee for their job placements. Those agencies had been tolerated by the federal and state governments and most employers for years, all of whom considered private job placement to be a predatory yet an unfortunately necessary evil during a time when administrative

³⁵ "No Coolies for the Farms of the Pacific Coast," *Californian*, January 9, 1918, 1, 8.

³⁶ "Import Mexican Labor, Close Saloons for the War," *San Bernardino County Sun*, January 9, 1918, 1.

bureaucracy had been frowned upon and traditional associationalist practices reigned supreme. The administrative shift of the World War I years found the federal government emerging as an active participant within the private sector, becoming not only a mediator for labor conflicts, but also a facilitator of employee procurement and a regulator of contractual obligations agreed upon by employers and employees.³⁷

US Employment Service

Private-sector employment agencies were incredibly inefficient in the early-twentieth century and policymakers within the federal government saw them as actively harming the nation's socioeconomic development. "As is quite generally known, these agencies operate with slight or no consideration for the welfare of the country," lamented Leif Fredericks, Examiner-in-Charge of the US Employment Service's Missoula District, "their sole purpose being limited to the collection of fees."³⁸ While the fee-based existence of private employment agencies may have been tolerable during peacetime, those practices were, thanks to the wartime production increases and labor shortages, seen as pervasively un-patriotic and predatory by the general public. That feeling spread to the state and local defense councils who, in their need to mobilize their locales for the war effort and ensure that all wartime industries maintained proper levels of employment, reconsidered their reliance on inefficient associationalist-based hiring practices. Along with employers, state defense councils looked to the nascent administrative bureaucracies of the federal government for assistance.³⁹

Throughout the first half of 1917, the US Employment Service had, for the most part, left the private sector to its own devices in regard to hiring practices. The standard mode of operation

³⁷ US Department of Labor, *Annual Report of the Director General of the U.S. Employment Service to the Secretary of Labor, 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 97, 114, 141-142.

³⁸ Leif Fredericks to C.H. McLeod, August 30, 1918, box 2, folder 9, Montana Defense Council Records.

³⁹ Breen, *Labor Market Politics & the Great War*, 89-92.

since the creation of the service in 1907 was for employers to seek the service out themselves if they wished to use it, and it was most often desperate employers who utilized the service. By the summer of 1917, defense council officials at the federal, state, county, and community levels realized that they could no longer rely on private employment agencies, most of whom had not been able to procure even remotely sustainable levels of employment in various industries. As additional rounds of conscription commenced in 1918, further hobbling the private-sector's ability to find reliable employees, the US Employment Service took control of the private-sector hiring process in nearly all war-related industries. In the American West, farm labor, timber harvesting, and mining were the most common forms of war-related labor obtained through the coordination of regional state defense councils and employers.⁴⁰

In Arizona, the ASCD, in coordination with the state legislature, created the Arizona Board of Control in 1917 to establish free employment offices around the state. Working in direct cooperation with and under the federal oversight of the US Employment Service, the State Control Board completely bypassed the use of private employment agencies. The federal government provided Arizona with an annual stipend of \$2,500 for the "Free Employment Office Fund" to help with the hiring of employment recruiters. With the involvement of the US Employment Service in the western states during World War I, private employment agencies became erroneous as their traditional practice of charging both workers and employers for job placement could no longer compete with the free and far more efficient services offered by the federal and state governments.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Ibid., 92-95; US Department of Labor, *Annual Report of the Director General U.S. Employment Service to the Secretary of Labor, 1919* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 5-7; Howard M. Davis to State Council of Defense, October 21, 1918, box 42, folder 1, Charles McLeod Papers.

⁴¹ US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Legislation of 1917* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 38, 61-62.

The utilization of the US Employment Service in Arizona was so crucial for the ASCD's mobilization plans that in August 1918 it passed an official resolution that stated: "Be it resolved that all employers are urged to list their opportunities with the United States Employment Service, and all workers are urged to secure their jobs through the [US] Employment Service."⁴² The ASCD also instructed all of the state's county defense councils to avoid the use of private employment agencies "for public works during both the period of the Great War and the period of reconstruction." The ASCD also instructed the county councils to "encourage all employers within the individual counties to avoid the use of private employment firms."⁴³ Throughout 1918, the US Employment Service provided 1,608 Arizonans with work in various industries.⁴⁴

In Montana, the MSCD's coordination with the US Employment Service was a crucial element to not only the state's mobilization plans, but to its post-war employment practices as well. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry and the state's employers relied heavily upon the agency to procure workers. During the first seven months of 1919, from January 1 through June 30, the state-federal coordination facilitated by the Employment Service registered 43,919 people seeking work and 32,179 employer requests for employees. Through its various offices around the state, the US Employment Service placed 24,037 Montana workers with jobs during that relatively brief period.⁴⁵

Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen

In May 1918, the federal government became an official labor union organizer. With the blessings of the Department of the Army and the Wilson Administration, Col. Brice P. Disque of

⁴² "Council Supports Employment Board," *Arizona Republican*, August 18, 1918, 8.

⁴³ "Minutes of the Labor Committee," May 17, 1917, box 3, folder 43, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

⁴⁴ *Annual Report of the Director General U.S. Employment Service to the Secretary of Labor*, 16.

⁴⁵ *Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States*, 178-179.

the US Army Signal Corps formed the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen (4L) to organize, or reorganize, the lumbermen of the Northwest. Col. Disque established the 4L as a direct response to the concerns of area employers about the IWW's successful organizing drives in the logging camps of the Northwest and the tie-ups the union had created in the production of spruce and fir timber. With aviation emerging as the newest aspect of warfare, the logging of spruce, which was then being used to manufacture airplanes, suddenly became a major military industry in the forests of western Washington and Oregon. The region's logging industry experienced a burst of not just increased economic significance, but of military significance as well. The involvement of Col. Disque and the 4L furthered the demonization of the already heavily marginalized IWW-organized timber harvesters of the Pacific Northwest.⁴⁶

One of the most glaring and consistent complaints that the federal and state governments had about the treatment of workers by employers was their refusal to do more to assuage labor, thereby feeding the appetite of the radicals among the working-class. Better pay, safer working conditions, and recognition of unions were, as the PMC Report stated, the main reasons behind the proliferation of labor radicalism. It was the refusal of most employers to compromise with their employees and associated unions which caused much of the industrial strife happening in the early-twentieth century. "The unlivable conditions of many of the camps has long demanded attention," the report mentioned in reference to the region's logging industry, "It is in these unhealthy social conditions that we find the explanations for the unrest long gathering force."⁴⁷

The IWW movement gave voice to such working conditions, which at its heart was really just a demand for human dignity by the workers. If the employers in the logging industry refused

⁴⁶ US Army Department, *History of the Spruce Production Division and United States Spruce Production Corporation* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1923), I-V.

⁴⁷ *Report of President's Meditation Commission to the President of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 13.

to address the issues with seriousness, then the federal government would. Col. Disque was sent by the Army Department in May 1917 to investigate the working conditions in the region, and he was not happy with what he discovered. Like the PMC, Disque found that the IWW easily made headway in their organizing drives because the lumbermen were so dejected with their treatment on the job. “Labor conditions were indescribably bad,” Col. Disque lamented, “conservative estimates placed the labor turnover at ... the figure of 600 percent ... the situation was one made to order for the propaganda of the I.W.W.”⁴⁸

Following Disque’s departure from the region in the summer of 1917, the IWW called a large strike in all regional industries, which included the forests of western Washington and Oregon where the union’s LWIU No. 500 operated. The WSCD had a vested interest in ensuring that the state’s forests were able to maintain production for mobilization purposes, but with men like William Boeing on the WSCD’s Executive Committee, spruce production also meant airplane production, which meant government contracts and profit. The WSCD, with all of its success in the quelling of labor unrest in the farming industry, was unable to settle the LWIU strike, so it asked the federal government to help. “After numerous interchanges, conducted by the Chairman of the State Council of Defense [and] by mutual agreement between the War and Labor Departments,” the WSCD’s final report stated, “the whole question of the adjustment of wages, hours, and working conditions in the lumber industry was left to the decision of General (then Colonel) Brice Disque.”⁴⁹

Disque and WSCD Chairman, Henry Suzzallo, maintained a close working relationship during the war. It was through the assistance of Suzzallo and his role in the WSCD that Col. Disque was able to organize the lumber operators of the state to sit down and discuss the possible

⁴⁸ *History of the Spruce Production Division*, 15, 16.

⁴⁹ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 45.

militarization of the Pacific Northwest forests. In addition to convincing lumber outfits to participate with as little conflict as possible, Suzzallo also used the contacts he had gained as WSCD Chairman to call upon various journalists and bankers to spread word that such a plan would not be an attempt by the federal government to expand its regulatory outreach. Through Suzzallo's efforts, not only was Col. Disque's job made much easier in his dealings with the private sector, but it also had the effect of giving the plan the visage of patriotism. With the establishment of patriotism as the motivating factor, the lumber companies found it increasingly difficult to object to Disque's militarization plans in the midst of a wartime emergency.⁵⁰

During the strike, Col. Disque returned to Seattle and, after meeting with the WSCD Executive Committee and the area's sixteen biggest logging companies, he devised his plan to militarize the region's forests, which would place full control of regional lumber harvesting operations into the hands of the US Army. With the IWW to some extent dictating the production of spruce timber, the logging operators not only gladly agreed with the plan, but they might not have had much of a choice; either the Army would take over and kick production back up, or the IWW would continue to dictate production to the detriment of the operators and the mobilization effort. After meeting with CND officials from the Wilson Administration, Secretary of War Newton Baker approved Disque's militarization idea and insisted that he immediately commence with the plan.⁵¹

Representatives from the US Army's recently formed Spruce Production Division traveled throughout the logging camps of the region informing lumbermen that the federal government had recently militarized the forests and that the IWW would no longer be welcome.

⁵⁰ Harold M. Hyman, *Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen* (Los Angeles: Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, 1963), 193-197.

⁵¹ Robert L. Tyler, *Rebel of the Woods: The IWW in the Pacific Northwest* (Eugene: University of Oregon Books, 1967), 102-106.

The Army also informed the lumbermen that, while they would no longer have to deal directly with lumber companies, they would be beholden to and employed under the auspices of the United States Government. They encouraged IWW members to remain at their jobs and join the 4L, which would have no dues payments. Army representatives promised to provide wages adjusted to meet the highest industry standards, guaranteed the eight-hour workday, and greatly improved work safety and living conditions. 4L officers placed in charge of the camps required loyalty oaths of the workers, which emphasized their allegiance to the United States of America, not to abstract ideas of classism, a derivative of the CND's focus on non-partisan nationalism. Within six-months of its founding, the 4L boasted 80,000 members. By late-1918, the total membership plateaued at nearly 120,000, greatly exceeding the number of LWIU members ever found in the region's forests.⁵²

The formation of the 4L ended up being far more than just a wartime expedient to increase lumber production. Through the efforts of the 4L and its partnership with civilian lumber outfits, the federal government was able to, as historian Harold Hyman explains, “transcend a fruitless past and open new paths leading to a temporary solution of rancorous labor-management difficulties.”⁵³ The 4L's “progressivism in khaki” not only ended the 1917 strike and provided lumber workers with better pay and better working conditions, but it staved off the rise of western labor radicalism. It also highlighted the intricate nature of administrative associationalism and the bureaucratic expansion of government during the World War I years. The 4L government union remained in operation until 1938, when it was ultimately

⁵² Robert L. Tyler, “The United States Government as Union Organizer: The Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (December 1960): 448-451.

⁵³ Hyman, *Soldiers and Spruce*, 13.

decommissioned and absorbed by various AFL and CIO-affiliated unions, mostly through the AFL's International Woodworkers' Union, which had been established in 1936.⁵⁴

III: Conscription of Labor

Even with the administrative involvement of the US Employment Service helping state and county governments assist their area employers in finding workers, some state defense councils still found their respective labor supplies to be inadequate. To supplement the labor procurement process, several defense councils passed laws which “drafted” workers into their area labor forces. On April 22, 1918, the MSCD passed Order Number 2, which stated that any “able-bodied man not currently engaged in essential war work,” eligible for the draft, or “without good and sufficient reason for continued idleness” must register with their local county clerk and their respective county defense council for a “draft-labor index.” Order Number 2 provided the MSCD with its new slogan – “Work, War, or Jail” – which it officially adopted the same day that the ordinance passed. Coordinating with the US Employment Service to attain workers for its area industries, although useful, was not enough to fill the vast labor needs of Montana, so the MSCD took it a step further, coercing “idlers, slackers, and vagrants” with fines and jailtime as a way to force compliance.⁵⁵

Order Number 2 declared that “all able-bodied men in the state must work at least five days in every week if employment is offered ... and disability is the only ground upon which anybody may escape from it.” Anyone found to be in violation of the order would be subject to a fine of no more than \$500 and jailtime not exceeding one year. Like most state defense council activities, the MSCD placed the responsibility of relaying and enforcing the order into the hands

⁵⁴ Tyler, “The United States Government as Union Organizer,” 450-451.

⁵⁵ US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Legislation of 1918* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 64; “Every Man Who Can Work Must Take Some Task,” *Independent-Record*, April 23, 1918, 1, 7.

of the state's county and community defense councils and the process varied depending on the location. For example, the Silver Bow County Council of Defense appointed community defense council "captains" to scour Butte and the surrounding communities, looking for "possible labor slackers, idlers, and vagrants." The captains then reported their findings to the county defense council, "which has been vested with authority by the [MSCD] to act." The men who had been listed by the captains as "idlers, vagrants, or the unemployed," would be placed on the local US Employment Service registry, or, if they refused, placed under arrest for violation of the order.⁵⁶

Some county councils used Order Number 2 to adjust other labor concerns, including the attempted elimination of the local sex-work industry. In July 1918, J.B. Collins, Chairman of the Custer County Council of Defense (CCCD), wrote Charles Greenfield to express his confusion surrounding the order, as the notion of what was considered "essential wartime work" seemed much too subjective and needed clarification. "It seems unjust that a clerk in a store ... should be obliged to give up his position and attempt another for which he is not at all suited," Collins lamented, "shall such men just quit what they are doing and wait until they are called for some productive work?"⁵⁷ Greenfield replied that as long as they were working at least five days a week, they were not in violation of the order. Collins and the CCCD subsequently used the order to tackle other forms of "unproductive" or "non-essential labor," specifically targeting "houses of prostitution [and] that class of male citizens who live in and about such houses."⁵⁸

⁵⁶ "Idlers Must Work Orders Defense Council," *Anaconda Standard*, April 23, 1918, 9; "No Leisure Class in City of Butte," *Anaconda Standard*, June 13, 1918, 7.

⁵⁷ J.B. Collins to Charles D. Greenfield, July 6, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁵⁸ Charles Greenfield to J.B. Collins, July 9, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records; Custer County Council of Defense, "Resolution," July 29, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records.

Following the passage of the MSCD's wartime labor law, the defense councils of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nevada, also passed similar ordinances to coerce their respective migrant populations to find work on area farms. Shortly after the passage of Order Number 2, the Nevada State Council of Defense (NSCD) drafted its own compulsory labor ordinance. The NSCD agreed on "the adoption of an 'anti-loafer law' modeled after that of Montana ... and a strict law which would enable local authorities to deal effectively with sedition." NSCD officials explained to Nevada Governor, Emmet Boyle, that "there are fully a thousand men in Nevada, well dressed loafers, who have not performed an actual day's work in years. Other states have adopted special laws to make them work ... if they do not get jobs [they] may be arrested, convicted, and their labor sold by contract or used upon public works."⁵⁹ The North Dakota State Council of Defense (NDCD) also sought "to emulate some recent actions of the [MSCD]." "These have proven excellent measures for Montana," state policymakers insisted, "why would they not be equally applicable in North Dakota?"⁶⁰ On July 22, 1918, exactly three-months after the passage of Order Number 2, the NDCD drafted and passed its own compulsory labor law, known as the "Anti-Loafer Act."⁶¹

On May 28, 1918, the South Dakota State Council of Defense (SDCD) passed Order Number 5, a compulsory labor law similar to that of Montana, which criminalized "idleness" and enforced the registration of labor for use in the grain fields of the state. Order Number 5 declared that "there exists now a shortage of labor that has already seriously imperiled the increased production of food, which is virtually necessary to a successful prosecution of the war." The

⁵⁹ "Want Anti-Loafer Law," *Eureka Sentinel*, April 27, 1918, 2.

⁶⁰ "Montana Sets Example for North Dakota," *Bismarck Morning Tribune*, May 7, 1918, 5.

⁶¹ "Anti-Loafer Act May be Hard on League Men," *Grand Forks Herald*, July 22, 1918, 2; US War Department, *Compilation of War Laws of the United States and Insular Possessions* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 136.

SDCD ordered the county governments of South Dakota to adopt a registration system for “all idle and unemployed citizens or persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years, both inclusive, and from age thirty-one years and up.” Those thought to be in violation of the order were subject to arrest and prosecution for vagrancy under the SDCD’s emergency wartime powers.⁶²

Labor conscription efforts in the states were soon bolstered by Newton Baker’s declaration of the Work or Fight Order in May 1918. The Work or Fight Order, decidedly similar in its language to that of Montana’s Order Number 2, declared that all Americans not engaged in work in “essential wartime industries” could be drafted into whatever local industry the government considered to be essential war work, most often affecting migratory workers in the agricultural and extractive industries of the West.⁶³ Like the labor orders found in Montana, Nevada, and the Dakotas, violators of the Work or Fight Order could be rounded up and conscripted into military service. Secretary Baker then handed responsibility of enforcing the order to the Provost Marshal, General Enoch Crowder. By placing that authority into the hands of the US Army, Newton Baker, working in his official capacity as an executive member of the CND and as the Secretary of War, made private-sector employment and hiring practices just as much a public concern as it was a private-sector matter.⁶⁴

Compulsory labor orders were not always focused on migrant workers, those often stereotypically referred to as “idlers,” “loafers,” “slackers,” and “vagrants.” Although the orders disproportionately targeted migrant workers, men who worked in non-labor intensive industries like office jobs and delivery routes also felt the weight of labor conscription laws. On June 24,

⁶² South Dakota State Council of Defense, *Report of the South Dakota State Council of Defense* (Pierre: State Publishing Company, 1919), 75-76, 174-175.

⁶³ “Work or Fight, Warning to All,” *New York Times*, May 24, 1918, 1, 14.

⁶⁴ Shenk, *Work or Fight!*, 155-158.

1918, the MSCD drafted Order Number 10, which, in anticipation of an even greater need for labor to bring in the 1918 harvest, aimed to coerce delivery drivers into performing farm labor duties. The order “recommended” that during the general grain harvesting season, from early-August through early-October, all retail and wholesale merchants in Montana must coordinate with the MSCD to limit their deliveries to only once per day, “to the end that teamsters and motor-truck drivers be released for service in the harvest fields and other necessary war activities.”⁶⁵

Order Number 10 did not specify the details of how that coordination would be organized in practical terms, nor did it specify punishments for those who refused to participate. The fact that the order’s language emphasized it as a “recommendation” made it far less serious and coercive than Order Number 2. But the newer order was not aimed at vagrants or anyone who might be organized by the IWW, evincing the MSCD’s preference for non-unionized or AFL-organized labor. That was perhaps even less surprising when considering that Governor Stewart, as per the MSCD’s rules, appointed merchants, in addition to bankers and farmers, to head the state’s individual county defense councils.⁶⁶

Montana’s merchant-class may have been safe from wartime labor coercion, but that was not always the case in other western states. In the states that did not draft compulsory labor orders, state and county defense councils often employed gender-shaming tactics to browbeat “city men” and “Willie boys engaged in women’s work” into filling the ranks of labor in the agricultural industries. Rather than drafting compulsory work laws, the CSCD tried to shame office men into finding jobs considered to be “men’s work.” For example, in California’s Imperial Valley farming region, the Imperial County Council of Defense notified area residents

⁶⁵ “Order Number Ten,” June 24, 1918, box 4, folder 36, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; Fritz, 11-12.

that “if the local [defense council] deems their work effeminate, not useful, or if they have a ‘Susie job,’ [those men] will be given an opportunity to change their jobs or be certified to camp.” The courtesy also extended to merchants in farming communities who sometimes found themselves the victims of rhetorical attacks if they could not be induced to participate voluntarily.⁶⁷

In Washington, the WSCD employed similar tactics to that of the CSCD, publicizing misogynistic rhetoric and emasculatory shaming in area newspapers and bulletins to coerce men into working their vacation time or weekends in the state’s farming districts. WSCD Farm Labor Committee Chairman, A.L. Rogers, often complained that, while wholly appreciative of their efforts, he had better luck recruiting women for emergency farm labor than he did recruiting “city men.” However, he considered their willingness to volunteer for farm labor to be a kind of masculinity lesson for male migrant workers.⁶⁸ “They will either educate or shame the ignorant and discontented labor classes into a real sense of appreciation of the functions and duties of citizenship,” Rogers exclaimed to WSCD propagandist Welford Beaton, “they will eliminate the menial side of this necessary work and [they will] dignify labor.”⁶⁹

Newton Baker’s Work or Fight Order and the various other labor conscription orders and methods of the state defense councils, such as Order Number 2 and Order Number 5 were extremely unpopular among the working-class. The migratory working-class particularly derided the compulsory labor orders, where, in the western states especially, they were the predominant targets of the ordinances. Among employers in the industries that struggled to find steady labor, like agriculture, the orders were exceedingly popular. While there were a few exceptions, most

⁶⁷ “Work or Fight, What it Means to Registrants,” *Imperial Valley Press*, June 24, 1918, 4.

⁶⁸ “Need Women to do Men’s Work Says Suzzallo,” *Seattle Times*, January 6, 1918, 4.

⁶⁹ A.L. Rogers to Welford Beaton, January 29, 1918, box 28, folder 874, Ernest O. Holland Collection.

employers found the orders to be an efficient method of attaining workers and they rarely expressed remorse at the loss of the traditional use of private employment agencies or in directly dealing with the IWW. Farmers, ranchers, orchardists, and timber harvesting outfits had been asking their defense councils for assistance in finding workers and they received their answer in the form of coercive, forced labor laws, which workers pejoratively referred to as “the new slavery.” The people who had typically admonished administrative governance, such as employers and the politically conservative, now had ample reason to reconsider their opposition to state involvement in matters of business, especially when it benefited them economically.⁷⁰

Washington’s working-class community took particular exception to the WSCD even considering the idea of compulsory labor laws such as the Montana, Nevada, and the Dakotas had done. “The initiation of a bill of this kind is dangerous in the extreme,” declared Fred Hudson, a representative of the Olympia Trade Council, “the real purpose of the law is to bear down upon the unfortunate and to check the ‘labor agitator’ in his efforts to gain better conditions for the creators of all wealth.”⁷¹ Labor unionists in Washington had thought that they proved themselves to be loyal and patriotic Americans by working so vehemently in cooperation with the WSCD’s Labor Committee and for the war effort in general. Even James A. Duncan’s radical SCLC had worked in cooperation with the WSCD. Labor union leaders from around the state implored the WSCD not to pass any such laws and the tactic worked.⁷²

Like many state defense councils, the WSCD did not pass its own compulsory labor ordinance, opting instead to rely on the federal government’s Work or Fight Order, which acted

⁷⁰ Christopher L. Ward, “The New Slavery,” *Atlantic Monthly*, January 1919, 72.

⁷¹ Fred Hudson, “Commissioner Advocates a Compulsory Labor Law,” *Washington Standard*, July 26, 1918, 3.

⁷² Ward, “The New Slavery,” 72-73; *Report of the Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, 1918*, 279.

as a lightning rod for the ire of those who otherwise would have opposed the creation of compulsory labor laws at the state level. Plausible deniability was a simple way for state defense councils to absolve themselves of policies that their citizens may have objected to, especially those active in the labor voting bloc. In the case of compulsory labor orders, when the organized labor community complained about the state overstepping its bounds on labor-related issues, the WSCD simply placed the blame on the federal government's Work or Fight Order.⁷³

Conscription of Inmate Labor

Another popular and equally effective method of procuring cheap or even free labor came from the city and county jails of the American West. The conscription of inmate labor was perhaps the least controversial, yet one of the more questionable means of finding workers to help fill labor needs during the wartime emergency. At the national level, the CND considered inmates of any correctional institution, whether they served time in prisons or county jails, to be "wasted manpower" and "wasted material." In his 1917 report, Grosvenor Clarkson, Secretary of the CND, found that "if thoroughly reclaimed ... the use of waste labor [prison labor] would represent a savings of a billion dollars annually." Clarkson and the CND used the estimate to persuade the state and county defense councils to interest their local authorities in the promotion of inmate labor. Clarkson remarked in his post-war report that "with the assistance of local authorities and, in some states, of special laws regarding vagrancy and idleness, thousands of tramps, bums, and loafers were put to work."⁷⁴

On September 9, 1918, the MSCD passed Order Number 16, a compulsory labor order directed at the inmates of the state's various county jails. The ordinance gave authority to all

⁷³ "Work or Fight, Warning to all on Draft Rolls," *New York Times*, May 24, 1918, 1; "Colfax Patriots Urge Ostracism," *Spokesman-Review*, November 30, 1917, 1; "Forecast Manpower Bill Without 'Work or Fight' Amendment," *El Paso Herald*, August 20, 1918, 1.

⁷⁴ Clarkson, *Industrial America in the World War*, 279.

county attorneys in the state to be able to release any inmate from incarceration for work in “some essential occupation,” as long as they were convicted of a misdemeanor. Accordingly, convicts approved to work outside of the jail walls, regardless of the type of work, were promised a reduction in their sentence relative to the time spent laboring. Inmates were not simply let out for the day and brought back to their cells after work. They were actually released by the county attorneys under the contingency that they maintained employment in “some essential industry” and provided proof of said employment. Those who did not maintain their employment or left for work in an industry deemed by the local county defense council to be “unessential,” served the remainder of their sentences in their cells.⁷⁵

In Washington, the WSCD did not even discuss the compulsion of inmate labor. Because it was such a well-organized defense council, the WSCD successfully organized labor replacements in the form of women and children without needing to procure inmate labor. During periods of labor unrest, especially in the state’s farming districts, the WSCD and the county councils found success in motivating the residents of the farming communities to “rally ‘round the harvest,” placing patriotism and community before demonstrating any kind of solidarity with IWW-organized “hoboes.”⁷⁶ The WSCD, being such an effective and well-organized operation, was a glaring exception within the DCS to some extent. Just because the WSCD did not draft compulsory labor orders like the MSCD did not mean that they did not engage in coercive tactics meant to act as tools of compulsion. They just devised different tactics to reach the same results. The early wartime experiences of the DCS in the American West

⁷⁵ “Order Number Sixteen,” September 9, 1918, box 4, folder 36, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁷⁶ “Save Crops and Avert Calamity,” *Spokesman-Review*, August 18, 1917, 2.

demonstrated a need for greater regulatory involvement by the federal and state governments within the region's employment practices, especially in the agricultural industries.⁷⁷

Convict labor, as organized by the DCS in the western states, was most often used for significant infrastructure-building projects throughout the region during the war, most prominently on road and highway construction. California was a major beneficiary of the results of convict labor throughout the period of the Great War. Austin B. Fletcher, chairman of the CSCD's Highways and Routes of Travel Committee, urged Governor Stephens for permission to use inmates from state prisons and county jails to construct new and improve existing state highways. Upon Stephens' blessing and the Executive Committee's approval, Fletcher and his committee set about coordinating with the county defense councils and county sheriffs of the state to organize a force of inmate laborers for work on state highways. County highways would also be included in the program, with local defense councils mobilizing groups of convict laborers for their use, providing the counties paid for the projects themselves. Most often, inmates received little or no remuneration for their labor.⁷⁸

In Arizona, a state with a severe need for an increased buildup of highway construction due to its underdeveloped infrastructure and rapidly growing population, the ASCD's Committee on Highways and Routes of Travel, headed by Arizona State Highway Engineer, Lamar Cobb, used convict labor to construct hundreds of miles of much-needed roads.⁷⁹ Cobb and the ASCD touted the completion of the Bisbee-Tombstone Highway in 1918 as a successful example of the

⁷⁷ Gordon S. Watkin, *Labor Problems and Labor Administration in the United States During the World War* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1920), 128-134; US Department of Labor, *Labor's Relation to the World War: An Address by William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 18-20.

⁷⁸ *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 52; "Road Work for Convicts Urged," *Van Nuys News*, April 13, 1917, 6;

⁷⁹ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 15.

good that could be accomplished through the compulsion of inmate labor. The vast majority of the inmates used on the highway's construction, around eighty percent, were Mexicans, while the remaining twenty percent were an even mixture of Black and white convicts, demonstrating the disproportional racial disparities of the convict population in a state that, at the time, was overwhelmingly white and Anglo in its racial composition.⁸⁰

Aside from the IWW, there were rarely any instances of labor unions speaking out against the use of inmate labor, unless of course the convicts were being used by local governments for strike-breaking duties or to compete with unions for labor contracts. Even though the AFL had put a clause in its constitution opposing the use of convict labor, that opposition was only in reference to "the direct competition of free wage-earners."⁸¹ Because the IWW was still, at that moment, the most dominant labor organizing presence among the region's unskilled workers, and the AFL had yet to make any relative headway in its organizing attempts of those workers, the AFL and AFL-affiliated labor federations had little reason to fear the conscription of labor by convicted criminals. The IWW had been so demonized by the press that, as the only voice within the organized labor movement willing to speak out against the use of inmate labor, proponents of the compulsion of convict labor considered the IWW's opposition a

⁸⁰ "Bisbee-Tombstone Highway Reported to Government as an Example Prison Labor," *Bisbee Daily Review*, August 4, 1918, 4; M.D. Eldridge, "Road Building in the Southwest," *Public Roads*, Vol. 2, No. 15 (July 1919): 15-18.

⁸¹ "War Workers are to be Protected," *Arizona Silver Belt*, May 10, 1917, 3. One month after the declaration of war, Naval Secretary Josephus promised American unions, namely the AFL, that the federal government would not utilize convict labor if it were to lower the standards of organized labor or interfere with legally binding contacts between unions and the government or unions and government-contracted employers. This was however only in regard to federal projects. At the state level, governments still had a good amount of freedom to use convict labor if it suited their wartime labor needs. As long as inmate labor was not directly competing with organized labor for lucrative job opportunities, then the AFL did not seem to mind. On the other hand, once they did come in direct competition with "free labor," then conflicts arose and arbitration needed, but only after the war.

victory. Even for the AFL, speaking out against the practice could be seen as unpatriotic or even seditious.⁸²

IV: Wage-Scale and Workday Regulations

From the nation's earliest forays with the reliance on wage labor in the late-eighteenth century up until World War I, wages for labor had predominantly been determined by employers based upon their own economic desires and often with little consideration of how it might affect the labor force or even their own long-term profit-making ability. In addition, most employers failed to adhere to a consistent scale of wages, paying by the hour, day, or week, depending on the levels of profit or for purely fabricated reasons. With the rapid rise of the organized labor movement during the late-nineteenth century, wage scales in many industries started to be determined more through processes of negotiation between employers and the unions that represented their workers. However, that was only within the shops and industries where labor unions had made headway, not within industries that did not have union representation. Even then, employers still tended to resist what they considered to be intrusive outside parties telling them what to do with their own businesses. The absence of unions combined with a weak regulatory presence of the local or state governments to prevent such economic abuses, employers had a far greater ability to control wages and violate contracts with little-to-no corrective measures taken by government officials, many of whom simply considered it a private-sector matter to be ameliorated through private-sector channels.⁸³

The need to maintain a unified populace with as little workplace or class-conflict as possible signified a huge element of the DCS's mobilization effort, which led to the development

⁸² Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor: An Autobiography, Vol. Two* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1925), 84-85.

⁸³ *Labor Legislation of 1917*, 13-16.

of fixed wage-scales by state and county defense councils in the region. The increased production rates of World War I and the corresponding wage increases offered in many industries to motivate those increased production rates, would not be readily sacrificed by organized labor. In November 1918, following the ceasefire, the AFL announced that any plans by employers to reduce the wages of their workers would be stiffly rejected. “Regardless of the wishes of individuals,” declared AFL Secretary, Frank Morrison, “any reduction of present wage scales in this country will be opposed by the workers ... the right to live comes first, and workers will resist any attempt to reduce their living standards.”⁸⁴ Through their part in determining and securing industry-wide wage-scales in the region, the DCS in the American West ushered in a significant change to how employers, local governments, and unions interacted with one another moving forward into the reconstruction period and beyond.

Mining Industry

One of the most immediate concerns of state and county defense councils out West was in preventing labor conflict in the mining industries of the region. Eliminating the threat posed by the IWW was one thing but ensuring that non-IWW-organized miners received a living wage also remained a serious concern. With the rising instances of labor agitation in the mining districts of the West throughout 1917 and early-1918, the DCS worked in cooperation with mining corporations to establish reasonable wage scales and prevent further conflict. Much of the reason that state and county defense councils adopted wartime wage-scale adjustments in the mining industry was directly related to the 1917 deportations of IWW members in Jerome and Bisbee. The obstinance of mining companies in Montana and Arizona necessitated the federal government’s involvement in establishing set wages for miners, unionized or not.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ “Morrison Talks of Conditions,” *Bisbee Daily Review*, November 26, 1918, 4.

⁸⁵ *Report of the President’s Mediation Commission*, 4-9.

In Montana, the MSCD had a strange relationship with the Anaconda Copper Mining Company (ACM), the state's largest and most politically influential employer, and one of the wealthiest corporate interests in the West. On June 8, 1917, a fire spread through the underground shafts of the Speculator Mine in Butte. It was the worst mining disaster to have occurred in the United States, taking the lives of 168 miners. Unsurprisingly, the Metal Mine Workers' Union (MMWU), which represented thousands of organized miners in Butte and at the smelter plant in nearby Anaconda, called a strike to protest the dangerous conditions in the hardrock mines and to ask for better wages. The MSCD, which did not have a committee related directly to the state's mining industry such as the ASCD, had more difficulty in getting the ACM to cooperate with the DCS's attempts to adjust labor conflict through state-negotiated wage-scales. Even with the level of influence wielded by the ACM, the MSCD's Labor Committee, in coordination with the MMWU and the PMC, secured wage increases for all the company's union-organized miners.⁸⁶

The walkout strike following the Speculator Disaster caused the sudden stoppage of nearly all mining activity in Butte and Anaconda from June 18-December 18, 1917, although hundreds had returned to the job by October. In solidarity with the MMWU, Butte Local No. 65 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) was the first union to call a strike after the incident, which quickly spread to other local industries. By June 29, an estimated 15,000 workers in Butte, Helena, and Anaconda had called to strike. Increasingly desperate to put an end to the wartime agitation, the MSCD contacted representatives of the MMWU and the IBEW in late-July to arrange a meeting with the unions and ACM management to negotiate a settlement. During the meetings held over several days, Mortimer Donoghue, C.J. Kelly, and

⁸⁶ State of Montana, *Third Biennial Report of the Department of Labor and Industry, 1917-1918* (Helena: Independent Publishing Co., 1918), 17-25, 35-36.

William Campbell, executive members of the Labor Committee, successfully negotiated a substantial wage increase for the IBEW, raising their daily wage from \$5.25 to \$7.00 per day.⁸⁷

The process of negotiation for the MMWU worked differently and the result not as fruitful as what the IBEW experienced. The MSCD operated in a much less progressive and worker-friendly manner than, for example, the ASCD did under Governor George Hunt, who took greater pains to appeal the Arizona's working-class community. Montana simply did not have such concerns and the ACM was far too powerful to coerce forced participation. In addition, the IWW had been trying to establish a working relationship with the MMWU, which made the MSCD's mediation efforts problematic because the CND did not wish to see states negotiating with the IWW and because the ACM also had an issue working with IWW-affiliated unions. Even though ACM offered the MMWU a wage increase of \$.75 a day, which the union's rank-and-file agreed to, the MMWU rejected the offer and was soon locked-out by ACM.⁸⁸

In Arizona, the second iteration of the ASCD, led by Governor Hunt, worked hard to secure generous wage-scales for the state's miners. The Jerome and Bisbee deportations of July 1917, which had occurred under the watch of Governor Campbell, forced the federal government's direct involvement in the regulation of wages. When the Arizona Supreme Court reinstated Hunt as governor in December 1917, he made the adjustment of wages for the state's miners a priority throughout most of 1918, doing so with the direct assistance of the federal government. Through the coordination of the CND's Labor Committee and the PMC, Hunt and the ASCD's Labor Committee employed patriotic rhetoric to publicly coerce the Consolidated Copper Mining Co. and the Phelps-Dodge Co., Arizona's two largest mining corporations, into

⁸⁷ Ibid., 36, 143; "Butte Labor Problem Grows More Involved," *Daily Missoulian*, June 26, 1917, 3.

⁸⁸ "So the People May Know," *Helena Independent*, February 10, 1918, 13; B.B. Thayer, "The Butte District," *Engineering and Mining Journal*, Vol. 105, No. 2 (January 12, 1918): 57.

meeting with them to negotiate set wage-scales for their miners. In July 1918, after a series of meetings with ASCD Labor Committee Chairman and state labor federation secretary, John L. Donnelly, Phelps-Dodge agreed to raise the daily wage an additional \$.15 a day. The sliding scale of pay relative to rises in the price of copper, as had already been determined by the NWLB, forced Phelps-Dodge to pay its workers an extra \$.12 per day, but after the company's meetings with Donnelly, the company agreed to add the extra three-cents per day.⁸⁹

Aside from the ASCD and Governor Hunt, ordinary citizens of Arizona also desired to see a readjustment of the wages miners received. On May 6, 1918, in the town of Arizona in Gila County, the Arizona City Council, Mayor F.A. Gordon, and the Gila County Council of Defense cooperatively drafted Resolution 7-B, which insisted that the state "endorse and approve the proposition that the minimum wage scale of the employees of the copper industry of the state of Arizona be substantially increased." The townspeople of Arizona had expressed concern to the local government that the poverty-level wages of the state's miners had forced them into "disloyal organizations" like the IWW and that the constant refusal of the mining companies to recognize AFL-affiliated unions was the real problem. Americans not only desired to see a more equitable share of wages for the average worker, but they also clearly desired an end to the constant class conflict and labor strife, as represented by greedy corporate interests and labor radicals, respectively.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ "Mediation Commission Settles Strike in District," *Copper Era and Morenci Leader*, November 2, 1917, 1; "Phelps-Dodge Company Announcement of Wage Raise," *Mohave County Miner*, July 27, 1918, 2; "Brief Resume of the Executive Committee," August 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

⁹⁰ "Town Council Pleads for Higher Wages," *Arizona Silver Belt*, May 11, 1918, 1; "Community Councils of Defense," *Arizona Service Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (August 1, 1918): 3.

Timber and Lumber Industry

The most successful and well known example of the CND facilitating wage scale determinations in the forests of the American West occurred through the organizing work of the 4L. When Col. Brice Disque effectively took control of and militarized the fir and spruce forests of the Pacific and Inland Northwest in late-1917, one of the first actions he took was to gather the area's lumber operators to determine concrete and consistent wages. The massive lumber workers' strike that had tied-up production in the region since the summer of 1917 was, after all, a direct result of the refusal of timber companies to negotiate with either the AFL or the IWW – a derivative of their refusal to provide decent wages or an even remotely safe workplace in the remote logging camps of the region's vast, cold, and soggy forests.⁹¹

The timber industry of the American West was some of the most backbreaking and dangerous work found outside the underground hardrock mining industries. Falling and collecting timber was only the first step for the production of lumber. Once Disque's Spruce Production Division (SPD) workers felled the trees, the next and most difficult step was in getting the timber to the mills through a dangerous and complex combination of overland and waterway travel. In the days before highways and logging roads, horse teams dragged the logs to streams where the "river pigs" would navigate the logs by riding atop of the slippery morass, guiding them from tributaries to lakes where tug boats could haul the timber to the lumber mills for processing and shipping. Mill workers, working around enormous saw blades, could easily find themselves torn to shreds. Col. Disque understood that such virulent employer-employee conflicts would continue to endure unless the government intervened and forced employers to meet their workers somewhere in the middle. He quickly came to the conclusion that the

⁹¹ "Their Finish," *Industrial Worker*, February 17, 1917, 3; Henry Schenkofsky, *A Summer with the Union Men* (San Francisco: Harr Wagner Publishing Company, 1918), 65-67,

problems were less ideological or political and more socioeconomic in nature. By fixing long-standing economic disparities in the timber industry, Disque and the 4L assumed that the discontented rumblings of the IWW would fall to the wayside. He was not wrong.⁹²

Disque and the SPD established the eight-hour workday in all avenues of the Northwest timber industry, which went into effect on March 1, 1918. Prior to the 4L's creation, lumberjacks and millers worked no less than ten hours and usually no more than sixteen hours per day. Wage scales were determined by the 4L through a process of negotiation and compromise between operators and 4L worker delegates, highlighting the willingness of the private sector to cooperate with the government in exchange for eliminating IWW influence from the camps. The process also highlighted the 4L's adoption of using AFL-inspired delegations and districts to negotiate with employers, even though Disque insisted that the 4L was not a union.⁹³ Before the SPD's intervention, lumber workers received, on the high-end, an average of \$2.00 in daily wages. Disque eschewed the idea of setting a minimum wage for his men, opting instead for a "maximum wage" accumulated on an hourly schedule, not a daily one. Depending on the particular job, the new wage scales bottomed-out at forty-cents an hour for the less dangerous greenhorn positions and topped-out at eighty-cents an hour for the more dangerous jobs. Cooks received a flat monthly wage of \$100.00, nearly twice as much as they received before the 4L's intervention.⁹⁴

Problems with cleanliness and safety in the logging camps was yet another contentious issue which had helped to further the goals of IWW leadership and a became a crucial element Disque took into consideration. Conditions were bad in the camps, almost indescribably bad.

⁹² Hyman, 333-334.

⁹³ *History of the Spruce Production Division and United States Spruce Production Corporation*, 17-22.

⁹⁴ "Regulations for Lumber Industry," *Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen Monthly Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1918): 5; "Loggers Wage Scale is Adjusted," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 24, 1918, 4.

Most timber harvesting operations deducted charges from their employees' wages for housing and bedding in the camps, which were really nothing more than dilapidated ramshackle shanties. There were no showers or bathing areas, and in some instances, workers were forced to share a single towel between several dozen men. For example, at one logging camp in western Oregon where eighty men shared a bunkhouse, most of the workers contracted gonorrhea in their eyes after having to share a filthy towel with one of their infected bunkmates.⁹⁵ The 4L rejected the requests of the employers to charge workers one dollar per week for lodging and bedding. Disque informed the operators that they would have to eat that paltry amount as an intrinsic feature of their particular capitalistic enterprise.⁹⁶

The results of the 4L's efforts in the logging camps of the Northwest were almost immediately noticeable, not only by the workers or the government, but by the regional timber operators as well. Aside from the wage-scale determinations and improved conditions, turnover decreased markedly, from conservative estimates of 600%-1000% before 4L intervention to an average of below 500% during the first year. By 1921, that number had dropped to a 200% turnover in the sawmills of the West and below 300% for the region's logging camps.⁹⁷ Only two-months after gaining approval for the militarization of the region's forests, Disque's 4L facilitated the construction of new bunkhouses at eighteen logging camps in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, with many more planned. At the request of the 4L delegates, timber harvesting companies built new wash rooms and sinks, purchased new bedding, drained stagnant pools of water that bred mosquitoes, and installed electric lights. Some companies, in

⁹⁵ Erik Loomis, *Empire of Timber: Labor Unions and the Pacific Northwest Forests* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 18.

⁹⁶ *History of the Spruce Production Division*, 20-21.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15-16; "Some Real Turnover Statistics," *Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen Monthly Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (March 1922): 6-7.

“hearty and patriotic cooperation with Uncle Sam,” built libraries and stocked them full of books for their workers to read between shifts.⁹⁸

Agricultural Industries

As crucial as agriculture was to the national economy, agricultural labor was, relative to all other forms of industrial labor, an exception in regard to the regulatory involvement of the federal government. When the CND directly involved itself in mobilization issues pertaining to labor, such as strikes, slowdowns, stoppages, etc., it was almost exclusively in relation to industrial manufacturing. The production of munitions and other defense or military related manufacturing claimed a majority of the CND Labor Committee’s time early on in the war. As far as labor problems experienced within the agricultural industries, the CND, as it did with many local labor conflicts, expected the state defense councils to devise solutions to prevent problems that might negatively impact wartime production and mobilization. Neither the NWLB nor the WIB regulated wages for farmhands, whereas they did regulate wage-scales for most industrial extraction, smelting, milling, or manufacturing operations. The CND made it the responsibility of the state defense councils to determine wage-scales for their respective farming industries. The CND did not mandate wage regulations, but it did suggest that states work with employers’ associations to set wage-scales to help reform regional labor conflict.⁹⁹

State defense councils throughout the American West considered local control to be the best method of determining wage scales, relying upon their county and community defense councils to lead negotiations between farmhands and employers. The process of determining wage scales for farm laborers varied from state-to-state and county-to-county, but in the mean, it

⁹⁸ “Morale Rises with Flags in the Forests,” *Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen Monthly Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (May 1918): 12.

⁹⁹ McCartin, 77-80.

appeared rather similar with some differences in wages depending on the location. In Montana, the Sheridan County Council of Defense (SCCD), in coordination with the Sheridan County Food Administrator and the local Extension Service county agent, invited the county's wheat threshers to sit down and negotiate set wage-scales to be utilized indefinitely. Around 150 threshers answered the call for the July 1918 meeting, where the attendees discussed setting a minimum wage for their services. The threshers and the SCCD agreed to set the minimum wage scale at seven-dollars a day for each man on the crew or five-dollars an hour for "ten bundle teams." Additionally, the meeting determined the minimum price that the crews could charge farmers for grain threshing at ten-cents per bushel of oats, barley, and speltz, and thirty-cents for each bushel of wheat and rye. The SCCD set the agreed upon wage-scales and enforced the regulation of the new wages through the Sheridan County government, making its area wheat threshing crews some of the highest paid in the region. SCCD officials drafted contracts which the participating farmers and threshers signed to seal their agreement.¹⁰⁰

In Southern California's Imperial Valley, the serious wartime labor shortage in the region's cotton farming industry plagued farmers throughout 1917 and much of 1918, necessitating an adjustment to how much they paid their laborers for what was incredibly backbreaking labor. Because most of California's cotton pickers were Native Americans, Southeast Asians, African Americans, and Mexicans, white cotton farmers felt justified in paying them wages relative to how much cotton they picked, not hourly or daily wages. In 1917, harvesters of short-staple cotton in Imperial County earned an average of around \$2.00 for every one-hundred pounds they picked. The low wages and racialized employment policies of

¹⁰⁰ "Threshers' Meeting," *Producer's News*, July 26, 1918, 1.

California cotton growers led to several walkout strikes in 1917, leading to the CSCD's intervention in 1918.¹⁰¹

Similar to how most state defense councils engaged with farm labor wages, the CSCD handed the state's county defense councils the job. In August 1918, the Imperial County Council of Defense (ICCD), in coordination with the Half-Century Association, a local agricultural improvement organization, arranged and mediated wage-scale negotiations between the county's cotton pickers and the farmers who employed them. ICCD Chairman, Phil D. Swing, insisted that cotton growers should pay their pickers by the pound, not every one-hundred pounds. He also suggested that pickers should not receive less than \$2.50 per day. After several hours of negotiations, both sides agreed to pay cotton pickers two-cents per pound for their labor. While the cotton farmers rejected the \$2.50 daily minimum suggested by Swing, the compromise of wages per pound, rather than per one-hundred pounds, was met with praise by the representatives for the workers. As a result, workers decreased their labor agitation efforts in the cotton fields of Southern California.¹⁰²

In Washington State, the WSCD and the county defense councils facilitated transformative alterations to the hours and wages of the state's agricultural workers. Like every other regional state defense council, the WSCD avoided setting wage scales in the agricultural industries, preferring instead to leave it up to the county councils. In southeast Washington's Whitman County, one of the most productive wheat growing counties in the nation, the Whitman County Council of Defense (WCCD) set local wage scales for almost every facet of labor

¹⁰¹ "Strike of Pickers," *Imperial Valley Press*, November 30, 1917, 1; "Cotton Picking Wages," *Corona Independent*, November 23, 1918, 3; "Cotton Picking Pries Should be Fixed Now," *Imperial Valley Press*, August 18, 1917, 1.

¹⁰² "Cotton Growers to Determine Wage Scale," *Imperial Valley Press*, August 1, 1918, 1; "Imperial is Picking Cotton Crop of Fullness," *Humboldt Times*, July 5, 1918, 6.

involved in the wheat farming process. Upon its formation in June of 1917, and in the spirit of wartime cooperation, the WCCD had established a Farm Laborers Committee, a Farmers Committee, and a Threshers Committee to better coordinate wartime farm production with the county and state defense councils and WSC.¹⁰³

In Central Washington's orchard districts, the Wenatchee County Council of Defense (WCCD) adopted wage scales very early on in the mobilization process. Apple and cherry orchards comprised a major element of the local economy and fruit pickers were a significant feature. In order to jump ahead of any prospective labor agitation that might prevent the fruit harvests, the WCCD, in coordination with the Wenatchee Harvester's League, set "a maximum rate of 30 cents per hour ... for all orchard work except box making, sorting, and packing." Prior to the formation of the WSCD and the WCCD, orchard workers in the Wenatchee Valley earned an average of \$2.20 a day for twelve-hour shifts. Only one-month after the DCS reached the county, fruit sorters would receive thirty-five cents an hour and box makers would earn one-cent for each apple and pear box, raising the average daily wage of orchard workers in the Wenatchee Valley to \$4.25 – an increase of \$1.05 per day.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ "Ten-Hour Day for Harvest Workers," *Pullman Herald*, July 12, 1918, 1; "Adopt Schedules for Harvest Labor," *Pullman Herald*, August 10, 1917, 6.

¹⁰⁴ "Wenatchee Valley Growers Offer Orchard Wage Scale," *Leavenworth Echo*, July 12, 1917, 1.

Section V: Two-Party Consolidation

–Chapter Nine–

Squelching Radical Politics in the Northwest

Another transformation to occur in the American West during World War I as a result of mobilization and the creation of the DCS was the reconsolidation of the traditional American Two-Party Political System and the elimination of populist politics in the region. Prior to 1917, especially in the western states, the country had experienced a surge in the rise of viable Third and Fourth Party challengers who threatened the prospective political dominance of the Republican and Democratic parties. Even after the dissolution of the Progressive Party in 1916, Republicans and Democrats still nominally identified as either “progressive-Republicans” or “progressive-Democrats.” The growing acceptance of alternative political parties in the American West, namely populist parties like SPA, Prohibitionists, Suffragists, and the NPL, threatened to weaken the partisan grip that the Republicans and Democrats had traditionally held on national, state, and local politics.¹

The creation of the DCS and the rise of non-partisan nationalism, even if it was an abstract creation meant to reify a tentative pro-war consensus, provided Republicans and Democrats an opportunity to reconsolidate political power and deny prospective challenges to the political and socioeconomic status quo. That consolidation was most evident in the American West, where populist factions held the greatest chance of electoral victory than they did anywhere else in the country. It was then no coincidence that none of those once-popular partisan alternatives survived the World War I years intact. The SPA and the NPL were damaged beyond effective repair in the midst of a budding wartime hyper-nationalism, never again seeing the

¹ Lansing, *Insurgent Democracy*, 248-250; Berman, *Radicalism in the Mountain West*, 26-32.

same level of engagement or influence they had experienced prior to the Great War. The efforts of the DCS in the US West in eliminating populist political factions reinvigorated the traditional Two-Party System in the region, setting the stage for the First Red Scare and helping to develop the modern left-wing and right-wing partisan binary.²

Political populism developed and thrived in the American West in the late-nineteenth century, leading to the formation of the Populist Party in 1890. The eventual dissolution of the Populist Party in 1909 pushed former Populists, as well as many former Republicans and Democrats attracted to the promise of reform, towards the Progressive Party after its 1912 formation. The dissolution of the Progressive Party only four-years later created yet another partisan vacuum that single-issue parties like Prohibitionists and Suffragists, as well as the more radical parties like the NPL and the SPA, tried their best to fill. As those smaller, relatively less effectual political parties took to the regional political stage, even if they had never experienced the same level of popular engagement as the two major parties did, Republicans and Democrats considered their very existence to be a serious threat to the mainstream political influence of the Two-Party System.³

Republican and Democratic policymakers in the western states considered the emergence of the DCS in 1917 to be an excellent tool for the elimination of the influence of populist political party candidates who threatened to derail the historic dominance of the Two-Party System. They used the advent of non-partisan nationalism as a trojan horse of sorts, deploying hyper-patriotic rhetoric devoid of class issues to galvanize the American public's support for mobilization and against the designs of alternative parties that, ostensibly, refused to fall in line with the nascent pro-war political consensus. The economic and political populism proffered by

² Johnson, *They're All Red Out Here*, 158-159.

³ *Ibid.*, 107-108; Lansing, 105-108.

the NPL and the SPA, much of which included the public ownership of essential services and the increased regulation of corporations and trusts, pressured those who had a stake in maintaining the socioeconomic status quo and who also had the ability to manipulate public opinion through media, employment, and propaganda agencies like the CPI. In the western states, the declaration of a wartime emergency and the broad powers it afforded state and local governments, provided opportunities for Republicans and Democrats active within the DCS to eradicate populist political influences to expand and consolidate their respective bases of support. Splitting up the organized labor vote and drawing workers away from the further-left parties played a key role in how officials within the state defense councils of Washington and Montana accomplished their partisan goals.⁴

I: Non-Partisanship and Socialism in Washington State

As an important aspect of its organizational rubric, and similar to the kind of wartime consensus experienced by the CND at the federal level, the WSCD benefitted from a statewide political consensus in support of its existence, which bolstered and facilitated success in its activities. From 1916-1919, the Washington State Legislature and the state's federal delegation contained a majority of Republican representatives and senators, and, even with the election of a progressive reformer in Democrat Ernest Lister as Governor, political opposition to the WSCD from within the state government amounted to almost nothing. The lack of political opposition was less a testament to Lister's across-the-aisle bipartisan appeal than it was a testament to his ability to galvanize both major parties against the popular support of the SPA's Washington State branch, the Socialist Party of Washington (SPW), and against the IWW's agitation efforts. With

⁴ Berman, *Radicalism in the Mountain West*, 105-108, 262-263; Johnson, *They're All Red Out Here*, 124, 128-130; Woodworth Clum, "Making Socialists Out of College Students," *Southwestern Purchasing Agent*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (December 1921): 18-19.

such overwhelming bipartisan political support for the WSCD, the wartime mobilization of Washington State proceeded efficiently and without any significant political backlash by either Republicans or Democrats.⁵

Non-Partisan Nationalism, Bipartisanship, and the SPW

In regard to mobilization and the promulgation of non-partisan nationalism, the WSCD was one of the most efficient state defense councils in the West. Governor Lister appointed an almost even number of Democrats and Republicans to head the WSCD's committees and he often expressed how proud he was to have experienced such little partisan conflict throughout the period of mobilization. "I must commend the patriotic dedication and co-operation with which the State Government has worked with the [WSCD]," Lister exclaimed before the State Legislature in a 1919 address, "it has truly exemplified the co-operative non-partisan spirit we as Americans should strive for."⁶ He voiced his pleasure at the work of the WSCD and the state's policymakers with how they avoided engaging in partisan conflict and wished to see a permanent policy of "non-partisan elections for state, county, and city offices." While his wish for "the establishment and permanent maintenance of a non-partisan form of political organization within Washington" never came into fruition, his commitment to the Progressive Era ideal of non-partisanship presented an encouraging display of political idealism by the Governor.⁷

When Ernest Lister first formed the WSCD and appointed members to its Executive Committee, he did so in the standard non-partisan fashion just as the CND had expected and asked of every state defense council. Lister formed fifteen committees and appointed fifteen

⁵ Chester, *Free Speech and Suppression of Dissent during World War I*, 293, 296-298; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 71, 74-75.

⁶ "Governor's Reconstruction Address," January 3, 1919, box 137, folder "Demobilization," Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁷ "Needs of State are Reviewed by Governor," *Washington Standard*, January 12, 1917, 1.

chairpersons to lead them; seven Democrats, six Republicans, one Independent, and one self-identified “non-partisan.” Most of the WSCD appointees identified as progressives at some point in their lives, and even after the dissolution of the Progressive Party, many of them still considered themselves as either “progressive-Democrats” or “progressive-Republicans.” Even with the popularity of alternative political parties in Washington, such as the SPW, the SPA’s Washington State branch, Lister and his appointees never seriously considered anyone other than Republicans and Democrats to chair the WSCD’s committees or to lead any of the state’s thirty-nine county defense councils.⁸

The SPW represented a relatively small, but still significant number of Washington’s voters. To choose who would be appointed to lead the county-level defense councils, the Executive Committee handpicked a group of WSCD members to appoint one county defense council leader for each of the state’s thirty-nine counties. Each county defense council head would then form committees and appoint chairpersons however they saw fit. Even though some of the Republican county defense council appointees selected fellow Republicans or even Democrats, and vice versa, they never appointed Socialists. Lister appointed Independents and self-described non-partisans to the WSCD’s Executive Committee, such as Women’s Work Committee Chairwoman, Ruth Carr McKee, and WSCD Chairman/Director, Henry Suzzallo. However, he never appointed members that would be representative of actual political parties that fielded candidates in state and local elections.⁹

⁸ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 5; Allen, *Poindexter of Washington*, 168-171, 190-193.

⁹ “Club Women Proves Vote’s Value,” *Maryland Suffrage News*, June 13, 1914, 85; Jack Van de Wetering, “The Appointment of Henry Suzzallo: The University of Washington Gets a President,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (July 1959): 100, 105.

The lack of balance in the partisan composition of the WSCD relative to the partisan balance of the citizenry evinced an effort by Lister and the rest of the Executive Committee to deny other partisan actors from participating. Even though the SPW consistently came in third in vote tallies after Republican and Democratic candidates for statewide offices, the conscious decision to avoid the appointment of any who identified as a Socialist could have been seen, in theory, as going against the grain of the non-partisan nationalist sentiment propagated by the DCS. However, as demonstrated by the DCS's rejection of non-traditional, non-Two-Party actors, the notion of non-partisan nationalism appeared to be less about Progressive Era non-partisanship and more about strengthening bipartisan ties to decrease political conflict among the two major parties and formulate an anti-radical consensus. The DCS, as designed by the CND and the Wilson Administration, encouraged the participation of specific actors at the expense of others.¹⁰

The SPW, 1917-1918

On January 24, 1918, L.E. Katterfeld, a member of the SPW, was in the town of Davenport, the seat of Lincoln County, for a stump speech as part of a statewide speaking tour. While at the podium, Katterfeld was only able to utter a single sentence before Jim Goodwin, an executive member of the Lincoln County Council of Defense (LCCD), leapt from his seat and demanded that “every patriotic American citizen in the hall who is opposed to such speech please leave the hall as a protest. Those in favor will remain, and we will take their names and hand them to the proper authorities for investigation.”¹¹ Neither the attendees nor Katterfeld had violated any laws, but the wartime atmosphere of paranoid patriotism was tense enough that when the local defense council officials made such ominous threats, there was no reason to

¹⁰ Ibid., 9-10; Johnson, *They're All Red Out Here*, 89-91.

¹¹ “Katterfeld Meeting Broken Up by Patriots,” *Cooperative News*, January 24, 1918, 4.

believe that they would not be investigated for something as seemingly innocuous as attending an SPW meeting. Myers and the LCCD succeeded in disrupting the meeting, sending those in attendance home and Katterfeld out of Davenport.¹²

One week later, and in direct response to the incident, W.A. Peters, Chairman of the WSCD's Home Defense Committee, informed all state and county defense council members that "we cannot attempt to repress socialism or put out of business those who lecture upon it." However, Peters also went on to say that he thought "the people of Davenport treated the matter in a highly patriotic and altogether wise manner, and ... we should follow this man up ... if he becomes dangerously disloyal, we can turn him over to the federal authorities."¹³ Peters understood that the WSCD did not have the legal authority to declare the SPW a treasonous organization or prevent their activities unless they said something that could be construed as disloyal speech. But even then, without the existence of a state espionage or sedition law, the WSCD would have to coordinate with the federal government to help suppress the state's socialist partisans. Henceforth, the WSCD worked closely with federal investigators to go after the SPW throughout the remainder of the Great War, demonstrating the efficacy of cooperative federalism within the DCS and how it helped eliminate the influence of alternative political factions in the region.¹⁴

As a result of the emergent wartime political consensus, in combination with federal-state cooperation, the WSCD attacked political dissenters and radicals with greater focus and frequency, but in a much more covert and indirect manner than how it commenced its attacks on the IWW. The Republicans and Democrats of Washington State maintained an impressive

¹² "Patriotic League for Davenport," *Spokesman-Review*, January 25, 1918, 6.

¹³ W.A. Peters to M.P. Goodner, January 30, 1918, box 136, folder "Council of Defense Correspondence, Jan. 1918," Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

¹⁴ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 32, 61-62.

partisan truce during the period of the war, seemingly happy to support the notion of non-partisan nationalism as a means for facilitating a cooperative mobilization process. With such an optimistic lack of partisan conflict between the two major parties and a high level of Republican support for two-term governor and reform crusader, Ernest Lister, WSCD officials trained their political guns on the still significant political influence of the SPW. Washington Republicans and Democrats both considered the SPW's political platform to be far more of a threat to the state's socioeconomic and political traditions than they did one another's.¹⁵

Aside from its foundational principles of abolishing private property, establishing industrial democracy, and creating state-funded essential services, socialism opposed many mainstream American political and socioeconomic traditions, such as imperialism, colonialization, and of course, war. On April 7, 1917, one day after Congress declared war against Germany, the SPA adopted an emergency political platform which strictly opposed military conscription and supported the use of a general strike to protest the war, but it never advocated for revolution or violence.¹⁶ The anti-war platform of the SPA worried officials working within the DCS, fearing it might negatively impact mobilization. Perhaps the most troublesome accusation lobbed at the SPW was that it was working in tandem with the IWW, whose disloyalty had already been predetermined by the mainstream press. "While [the IWW and the SPA] are together in a minority, they are obeying the laws the capitalists make," according to the United Press Association, "but when the Socialists become the majority, they will insist, EVEN WITH BULLETS that the capitalist obey the laws that the Socialists make."¹⁷

¹⁵ Goldstein, 82-84.

¹⁶ Socialist Party of America, *Proceedings of the Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party of America* (St. Louis: Allied Printing, 1917), 24-28.

¹⁷ J.D. Bacon, *A Warning to the Farmer Against Townleyism: As Exploited in North Dakota* (Grand Forks: J.D. Bacon, 1918), 40.

With the IWW's influence effectively neutralized during the war, thanks in part to the refusal of traditional craft-labor unions to side with the Wobblies and through their active defense council support and participation, the WSCD went after the SPW. The IWW was not a political party whereas the SPA was, making its demise a priority for the two major parties while the IWW was dealt with more successfully in the court of public opinion, through newspaper propaganda, and at the local defense council level. Washington's Republican and Democratic partisans may have disagreed on a host of particular political issues affecting the state, but in regard to the perceived threat posed by socialism, specifically the ostensible threat it posed to individual freedom and private property, both parties maintained a steadfast anti-radical alliance. Wartime mobilization quickly became the impetus with which to dislodge Washington's well-organized and deeply rooted community of political radicals and dissenters once and for all. The state and county defense councils were in an excellent position to tackle the perceived partisan threat to non-partisan nationalism, or put another way, the bipartisan pro-war consensus.¹⁸

The SPW may not have been as popular as the Democratic or Republican Parties, but it still boasted a solid base of support within the state's large working-class and immigrant communities, rarely placing worse than third in most statewide and local elections. During the 1916 election, Allan L. Benson, Socialist Party candidate for President of the United States, garnered 22,800 votes among Washington voters, pulling in six percent of the SPA's nationwide totals. Even though it had lost a considerable number of supporters since Eugene Debs' defeat in the 1912 election, the SPA still maintained an active support base in Washington State, one of the most significant in the entire American West. The SPW's anti-war dissent was a cause for consternation for members of the WSCD, who saw the continued support of the SPW as a major

¹⁸ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 8; Goldstein, 84-87.

obstacle to achieving its goals of discouraging anti-war dissent and disloyalty, and for increasing overall wartime production.¹⁹ “The mere existence of such a threat,” according to WSCD Committee Lumber Chairman, Everett Griggs, “constituted a threat to the state’s ability to mobilize for the War.”²⁰ Although they were likely used to the verbal assaults by the traditional political parties and the nation’s conservative element, the SPW did not anticipate the intense punitive and sometimes violent backlash to their anti-war dissent.²¹

1918 would be the first election year since its 1901 formation that the SPW did not receive enough public support to even field a candidate for any statewide offices. In the first half of 1918, before the SPW officially dissolved, the party boasted 2,110 dues-paying members. Wartime mobilization impacted the ability of the SPW to properly organize for political primaries for a variety of reasons, including the Party’s vocal opposition to conscription and the reactionary barrage of attacks on the loyalty and Americanism of Socialists that came as a result. Subsequently, many Socialist partisans either went underground or simply fled the party as to avoid being accused of disloyalty.²²

Even some union leaders and labor newspapers expressed anti-socialist sentiments. According to WSCD Labor Committee Chairman and WSFL President Ernest Marsh, the SPW represented a nascent threat to the state’s political status quo and its socioeconomic stability. Considering Marsh’s years as a labor leader and his willingness to work with labor’s more radical elements in the past, his appointment to the WSCD seemed to have pushed him more into the moderate category with the likes of Gompers. “Working with the I.W.W., the [SPW] insists

¹⁹ Alexander Trachtenberg, ed., *The American Labor Year Book, 1917-1918* (New York: Rand School of Social Science, 1918), 337.

²⁰ “West Coast Lumbermen in Monthly Session,” *Lumber World Review*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (September 10, 1918): 37-38.

²¹ Johnson, *They’re All Red Out Here*, 144, 166.

²² “Socialist Candidate Running for Congress,” *Colville Examiner*, November 2, 1918, 2.

on infiltration to gain the union man's ear," Marsh complained in his newspaper, the *Labor Journal*, "yet their message insists upon division and subterfuge ... their brand of fellowship would lay waste the nation's economy through an unwinnable conflict with capitalism."²³

The anti-radical consensus pursued by the DCS not only sought to eliminate the threat of labor radicalism, but also that of political radicalism and the threat posed by viable populist parties to the well-established yet still credibly challenged power of the Two-Party System. It was during World War I when that rising threat to the established political and socioeconomic order was effectively wiped-out by a coordinated attack led by a coalition of competing craft labor unions, federal and state governments, and the business sector. "At the very moment American Socialism appeared at the verge of significant organizational and political success," historian Gabriel Kolko observed, "it was attacked by the combined resources of the federal and various state governments."²⁴ Such attacks during peacetime had failed to garner the desired results, but the declaration of a wartime emergency and the subsequent creation of the DCS provided the ingredients needed for Republican and Democratic partisans to mobilize society against all things "un-American." Such accusation of disloyalty included political factions widely propagandized as being inherently oppositional to the nation's mode of industrial capitalism.²⁵

A resolution put forth by the SPW on June 3, 1917, openly declared the Party's disapproval of the passage of the Selective Service Act. The resolution stated that "We are opposed to involuntary servitude, being contrary to the Thirteenth Amendment ... We refuse to

²³ Ernest P. Marsh, "Socialism, the IWW, and the AFL," *Labor Journal*, May 14, 1917, 1.

²⁴ Gabriel Kolko, "The Decline of American Radicalism in the Twentieth Century," in *For a New America*, James Weinstein and David W. Eakins, eds. (New York: Random House, 1970), 210.

²⁵ *Proceedings of the Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party of America*, 23-25; William T. Hornaday, *Awake! America: Object Lessons and Warnings* (New York: Moffat, Yard & Company, 1918), 109-112.

sanction the mass murder of the worker in the interest of the capitalist class ... Therefore, we are opposed to conscription.”²⁶ The resolution, printed in several Socialist and labor newspapers distributed throughout the state, typified the attitude of the SPA towards the war and especially towards military conscription. It also symbolized the impetus behind the state government’s reasoning to initiate federal surveillance operations on the “disloyal and treasonous [SPW].” With the absence of an espionage or sedition law in Washington State at the time, the WSCD requested that the Seattle offices of the US Department of Justice (DoJ) work to file criminal charges against SPW leadership for its anti-war protestations and perceived disloyalty.²⁷

After a meeting with Governor Lister and WSCD Chairman Henry Suzzallo in November 1917, DoJ officials conducted a series of raids on the SPW’s headquarters in Tacoma and Everett over the proceeding months to find evidence that could be used to bring federal charges against the SPW and silence their anti-war dissent.²⁸ In April 1918, one particular raid netted what the DoJ considered to be enough evidence to indict Emil Herman, State Secretary of the SPW, for violating federal wartime laws aimed at discouraging dissent. During the raids, DoJ agents discovered and confiscated mailing lists, stickers expressing support for author Jack London, and copies of the SPA’s 1917 anti-war resolution. The wartime coordination between the WSCD and the DoJ demonstrated how radicalism and anti-war dissent more resolutely galvanized state and federal governments to utilize wartime modes of cooperative federalism as a means to eliminate anti-war dissent.²⁹

²⁶ “Washington Notes,” *Northwest Worker*, June 7, 1917, 1.

²⁷ “Emil Herman is Indicted,” *Cooperative News*, May 18, 1918, 1; Johnson, *They’re All Red Out Here*, 133.

²⁸ “Bostrom is Freed, then Re-Arrested,” *Tacoma Times*, November 9, 1917, 1; “Arrested, Quits Socialist Party,” *Tacoma Times*, September 14, 1917, 3; “Patriots After School Teacher,” *Cooperative News*, February 1, 1918, 4.

²⁹ “Herman Case on Trial,” *Cooperative News*, May 23, 1918, 1.

Clarence Reames, head of the Seattle branch of the DoJ, subsequently ordered the arrest of Emil Herman for violation of the Espionage Act, a law which had only recently been passed by the federal government as a means to stifle anti-war dissent throughout the country. The kind of state-federal coordination in attacking anti-war dissenters in Washington State encapsulated the idea and practical implementation of cooperative federalism. With the old adage of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend” as an illustration; Democrats and Republicans in Washington State set aside their partisan differences long enough to come together to eradicate the political threat of the SPW for good, using the federal government as a cover in which to do so while claiming plausible deniability in the raids and in Emil Herman’s arrest.³⁰ In a 1919 bipartisan proclamation by Washington’s leading Democrats and Republicans, as vocalized by US Senator Miles Poindexter (R-WA), proudly declared that “without the efforts of the [WSCD], such a patriotic disruption of the Bolshevist agitators during the wartime emergency would not have been possible.”³¹

Before Congress passed the Sedition Act in 1918, federal officials used the broad definition of “espionage” as articulated in the Espionage Act, passed into law on June 13, 1917, to accuse anti-war dissenters of obstructing the military recruitment process and/or speaking critically about the United States Government. One simply stating their objection to the draft, especially when that statement could be found in print, often established enough liable evidence for an indictment. Emil Herman, Eugene Debs, and other Socialist Party leaders not only verbalized their dissent, but they often organized anti-war rallies and sent hundreds of letters to state and federal policymakers protesting the nation’s involvement in the war. While never

³⁰ “Herman Nabbed En Route East,” *Seattle Star*, August 6, 1918, 1; Johnson, *They’re All Red Out Here*, 153.

³¹ Allen, *Poindexter of Washington*, 198-199.

actually treasonous or revolutionary in their passive anti-war activities, the SPW maintained a vigorous radical ideology within the state, which stirred the socioeconomic and political sensibilities of most Democrats and Republicans.³²

SPW activities never actually incited violence, nor did they ever physically obstruct military recruitment, but simply encouraging dissent or speaking critically of the US government during the Great War constituted enough of a threat to the WSCD's mission of wartime mobilization that they took drastic measures to stop it. Federal sedition and espionage laws helped the mobilization efforts of the DCS immeasurably by eliminating dissent through legal intimidation, thereby removing possible opposition to their activities. That left only the tepid pro-war consensus bolstered by the notion of non-partisan nationalism as the mainstream political modes of thought. Non-partisan nationalism was designed to be bereft of meaningful alternatives left to challenge the political authority of the Two-Party System, and subsequently, its authority and influence over socioeconomic matters. As a result, ideas of class consciousness rooted in working-class Americanism began to fall out of favor with increasing speed, helped along by a constant barrage of pro-war, anti-radical propaganda that encouraged nationalist sentiment over class sensibilities.³³

For the crime of voicing dissent and for having encouraged others to do the same, a federal judge slapped Emil Herman with an extraordinarily harsh sentence of ten-years of hard labor at Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Kansas. The WSCD-led attack on the SPW, and the DoJ's coordination with it, proved so demoralizing that it persuaded even the SPA's most ardent supporters to completely abandon the party for fear of offending the pro-war status quo and

³² "Emil Herman Unlawfully Held," *Cooperative News*, June 13, 1917, 1; Ernest Freeberg, *Democracy's Prisoner* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 1-4.

³³ Goldstein, 69; "Anti-War Meeting Next Saturday Evening," *Northwest Worker*, February 15, 1917, 1.

finding themselves in a similar position to that of Herman. Following Herman's sentencing, Upton Sinclair, a prominent muckraker and longtime Socialist, left the party in July 1917 after predicting that "the Socialist Party will be wiped out if it endeavors to carry out its formally declared policy of mass opposition to conscription."³⁴ Sinclair's prescient comment about the party's downfall could not have been more correct. By the end of the Great War, the SPW was but a mere shell of its former self. Due to the extreme levels of wartime repression, it did not even bother to nominate any candidates for state or local offices from 1918 to 1922. By 1919, it could only claim a paltry amount of 633 members in the entire state.³⁵

The concerted and determined attack on nearly every form of radicalism during the World War I years, which not only nearly vanquished various radical movements throughout the nation during the period of World War I was made possible in part by the process of wartime mobilization and its emphasis on cooperative federalism. The struggle between the anti-radical, pro-war, non-partisan nationalist consensus within the national and state governments and the SPA/SPW was demonstrative of the aggressive reinforcement of the political status quo in the form of an almost militant political centrism. The reification of the American Two-Party Political System also ushered in the rise of political conservatism in mainstream American politics. The rise of political conservatism in Washington was helped along by labor's internecine struggle among conservative and radical elements within the labor movement.³⁶

Bolshevism and American Labor

The wartime attack on the SPW by the state and federal governments and their desire to reinvigorate and consolidate Two-Party Politics among Washington's workers had two main

³⁴ "Sinclair Quits Socialist Party," *Tacoma Times*, July 17, 1917, 1.

³⁵ Johnson, *They're All Red Out Here*, 158.

³⁶ Dembo, 126; Kolko, "The Decline of American Radicalism in the Twentieth Century," 210.

driving factors. The first factor was the victory of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution in October 1917. The United States Government had previously signaled its willingness to work with and recognize the Kerensky Government of the Menshevik reform faction if it had won out, but with consolidation of political power by the Bolshevik's radical Communist faction, the fear of a similar revolution in the US added a more pronounced anti-radical component to the DCS's mobilization efforts. The second factor was the unwillingness of large segments of the American labor movement to support the SPA and the movement's more radical elements following the Russian Revolution.³⁷ The wartime partnership between business, labor, and government was not going to be a successful endeavor if labor declared its fealty to socialism, which the mainstream American media had directly equated with Bolshevism. The IWW and the SPA were both accused by conservative labor, Republicans, and Democrats of being the "American Bolsheviki."³⁸

The radical Seattle Central Labor Council (SCLC) endorsed the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, while the WSFL put its public support behind Alexander Kerensky's more moderate, anti-Bolshevist bloc. In late-1917, with the SPW and SCLC's support of the Bolsheviks, the radical anti-war crowd expanded its influence among radical segments of Washington's working-class population. Meanwhile, WSFL leadership, especially Ernest Marsh and the AFL labor conservatives, as historian Jonathan Dembo explains, "looked on in horror." The idea frightened Marsh not so much because he feared or derided the Bolsheviks, which he likely did, but rather because he and his WSFL allies understood what that endorsement implied for maintaining the wartime cooperation between labor, business, and government as realized

³⁷ Dembo, 160-161, 184-189.

³⁸ Huntington Wilson, *The Peril of Hifalutin* (New York: Duffield & Company, 1918), 43-46.

through the WSCD.³⁹ The gains made by organized labor through its partnership with the DCS, like the eight-hour workday and collective bargaining agreements, could easily be taken away if the government-business end of the partnership felt that Washington's working-class community was siding with revolution instead of patriotism and nationalist concerns.⁴⁰

Marsh's apprehensions ultimately proved correct as the pro-Bolshevist supporters within the SCLC, one of Washington's largest labor union councils and an AFL-affiliate, faced-off with the WSFL's more conservative, anti-radical strain. The internecine political struggle effectively divided the state's organized labor community into two distinct ideological camps: radicals in one and conservatives/moderates in the other. That division only served to assist the state's anti-union employers and business associations, who used the political division of Washington's organized labor movement as an opportunity to marginalize the labor vote and consolidate their own political influence within state government. Employers' associations. Minority Republicans further manipulated the intra-labor division following the Seattle General Strike of 1919. By 1920, "the Democrats were a spent force" and union laborers in Washington began flocking to the Republican Party in large numbers.⁴¹

II: Farmer Populism and the Nonpartisan League in Montana

Ever since Arthur Townley first established the NPL in 1915, Montana's Republican and Democrat officials frequently complained about the organization's progressive move westward from North Dakota and Minnesota into eastern Montana's share of the Northern Plains region. Any support for the NPL was, by 1917, increasingly seen by the state's political establishment as

³⁹ Dembo, 160-161.

⁴⁰ Neiberg, 213-215.

⁴¹ Dembo, 166-168; Andrew George Strouthous, "A Comparative Study of Independent Working-Class Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Third Party Movements in New York, Chicago, and Seattle, 1918-1924," PhD Diss., June 1996, *University College of London*, 141-142.

a growing threat to the domination of Montana's Two-Party System and to mobilization. Washington's political establishment had expressed similar concerns about the SPW, which threatened to continue to divide the support that both major parties had received from the labor prior to 1916. The significance of union labor voting blocs within the western states had increased exponentially since the creation of the Progressive Party in 1912, which provided even more room for alternative political factions to compete for labor's partisan loyalty. Since the SPW's platform appealed to the dejected working-classes and the NPL teamed-up with labor unions, the threat of losing the votes of workers in labor strongholds like Washington and Montana highlighted the nascent political threat felt by Republicans and Democrats. The establishment of the DCS became the vehicle through which the two major parties cooperating together within the system could affect strategies to regain labor's political support by marginalizing groups like the SPW and the NPL.⁴²

The Case of J.A. McGlynn

On April 7, 1918, twenty-one "prominent citizens" of Miles City, a small farming and ranching town in southeast Montana, kidnapped local NPL organizer, J.A. "Mickey" McGlynn. While eating dinner at a local restaurant, a man approached McGlynn and informed him that the sheriff needed to speak with him. He assumed it was only going to be a quick lecture from the sheriff about the importance of not making unpatriotic utterances while in town. As soon as he walked out of the restaurant, he was forced into an awaiting vehicle and driven to the Miles City Chamber of Commerce by his kidnapers. They brought McGlynn to the basement where nearly two-dozen men "grilled him" about his local NPL activities and questioned his loyalty. After the

⁴² Herbert E. Gaston, *The Non-Partisan League* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920), 164, 220, 262; Fred E. Haynes, *Socialist Politics in the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), 208.

impromptu interrogation, members of the group drove McGlynn to the train station, put him on the Milwaukee No. 17, gave him a warning to never return, and sent him out of town. He departed the train at a stop seventy-five miles west of Miles City and eventually made his way back on foot.⁴³

Several weeks later, in mid-May, Montana Attorney General Samuel C. Ford, positively identified several of McGlynn's attackers through reliable witnesses. He ordered the Custer County District Court to investigate the men McGlynn had identified, and in response, the county attorney charges twenty-one men in connection to the kidnapping. Ford later mentioned that the reason behind the county attorney's decision "was for the purpose of discrediting the proceedings and defeating the ends of justice."⁴⁴ In commenting on the defendants, Ford charged that "these men were setting a flagrant example of the very Kaiserism against which the United States is warring today."⁴⁵ The group of vigilantes was not some ragtag bunch of misfits, it included some of Custer County's most well-known citizens, businessmen, and government officials. McGlynn accused local rancher and Republican Montana State Senator from Custer County, Rolla Heren, of having drove the vehicle that brought him to the Chamber of Commerce building. Others involved included J.B. Collins and Karl Johnson, both executive members of the Custer County Council of Defense; George Farr, Custer County Attorney; and H.M. Robinson, secretary of the Miles City Chamber of Commerce. The trial was seen by most objective observers as a complete farce, or, as the *Nonpartisan Leader* put it, "a burlesque." The presiding judge quickly dismissed the charges against all twenty-one men, and to add insult to injury, he

⁴³ "Mob Tactics in Many States Defeat Gang," *Montana Nonpartisan*, October 26, 1918, 6.

⁴⁴ "Communication from State Attorney General Samuel Ford to the Joint Session, May 27, 1918," box 5, folder 34, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁴⁵ "Shoulder to Shoulder in Montana in Spite of all the Prosecution," *Nonpartisan Leader*, June 17, 1918, 15; "Facts Concerning Outrages at Miles City," *Producer's News*, May 24, 1918, 1.

also had McGlynn arrested in the courtroom immediately following his testimony for having made “seditious utterances” during his makeshift interrogation from a month earlier.⁴⁶

Due to its close proximity to North Dakota – the birthplace and political support base of the NPL – and the region’s heavy reliance on agriculture, Eastern Montana held the greatest numbers of NPL supporters in the state per capita.⁴⁷ “Prominent citizens” in places like Miles City, most often bankers and businesses connected to railroads and grain storage, formed the political base of the state’s Republican and Democrat opposition to the NPL. As seen in the participation of people like Rolla Heren, J.B. Collins, and Karl Johnson, that political opposition also came directly from elected and appointed government officials whose political livelihood was likely directly threatened by the growing popularity of the NPL. McGlynn, in the Miles City case, personified that political threat to someone like Heren, a Republican who feared losing ground to a nascent farmers movement which, due to the NPL’s popularity in the area, could have very well removed him from office and replaced him with one of their partisan nominees.⁴⁸

McGlynn was not the first NPL organizer to be forcibly deported from Eastern Montana, nor would he be the last. In total, four NPL organizers were kidnapped, interrogated, and shipped out of town on trains in 1918. The McGlynn case, however, most clearly demonstrated the complexities of the relationships between businessmen, politics, and the state and county defense councils. The executive leadership of the MSCD reacted in a complicated and nuanced manner to the presence of the NPL and to the reactions of local government officials and citizens in dealing with the NPL. The MSCD was mostly unwilling to directly protect NPL organizers’ right

⁴⁶ “Communication from State Attorney General Samuel Ford to the Joint Session, May 27, 1918,” box 5, folder 34, Montana Defense Council Records; “Montana Farmers Losing their Rights,” *Nonpartisan Leader*, May 6, 1918, 13.

⁴⁷ Gaston, *The Non-Partisan League*, 227.

⁴⁸ Lansing, 60-61.

to free speech and free assembly from local government and area residents, but it did make several indirect attempts to prevent them from doing so. At the same time, MSCD officials left the NPL issue to be dealt with by the county defense councils, and even when charges were filed against vigilantes by the state, relatively nothing ever came of it.⁴⁹

In the months following McGlynn's kidnapping, county defense councils from around the state began sending letters to MSCD chairman, Charles Greenfield, inquiring how to proceed when NPL organizers visited their respective counties. On August 1, 1918, the Fergus County Council of Defense (FCCD) wrote Greenfield, informing him that "the Non Partisan League are advertising a picnic for August 12th to be held on a farm five miles from here ... our local officers advise us that there is danger in permitting this meeting to be held and request that we issue an order preventing it ... we would like to have your views on the matter."⁵⁰ Greenfield's response likely disappointed the FCCD. Greenfield promptly replied to the request, telling them that the MSCD "does not deem it wise to interfere with any of these Nonpartisan League meetings, whether they were picnics or otherwise." He ended his correspondence by stating that he thought "it would be most unwise ... to in any way interfere with the proposed picnic."⁵¹

NPL's Effect on State Politics

The sudden shift in the MSCD's attitude towards how the county councils handled the NPL signified an interesting partisan development in Montana. Farmers, of which Montana was replete with, were the predominant target of and the most receptive to the NPL's populist message. With that in mind, defense council officials did not wish to insult and alienate their

⁴⁹ "Wibaux Departs Nonparty Leader," *Ward County Independent*, May 30, 1918, 1; D.O. Lamar to J.A. McGlynn, May 3, 1918, box 1, folder 14, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁵⁰ Fergus County Council of Defense to Charles Greenfield, August 1, 1918, box 1, folder 22, Montana Defense Council Records.

⁵¹ Charles Greenfield to Fergus County Council of Defense, August 5, 1918, box 1, folder 22, Montana Defense Council Records.

prospective supporters and constituents in the farming districts of the state who had been more than supportive of the MSCD's wartime efforts. When the state and county defense councils went after the IWW, they had little concern for political blowback because most Wobblies in Montana were itinerant migrant workers who came and went with the seasons and very few were registered voters.⁵² The NPL, on the other hand, maintained a strong support base of farmers rooted in their local communities, and more importantly, those farmers could and did vote and they engaged in local civic activities. Montana's Republicans, who nominally downplayed the importance of political and economic reform, had less to worry about in regard to NPL support, as Montana's farmers and their union allies, more often than not, voted for Democrats. Democrats had to walk a finer line when balancing the political support of farmers and calls for reform with that of the state's corporate influences.⁵³

The political platform of the NPL, which was a purely economic one, was drafted by populist-minded farmers and laborers to counteract the socioeconomic and political domination of corporate business interests in the American West. Railroads, grain storage, insurance companies, private banks, and the politicians accused of having been kept in their pockets, were the main targets of the NPL's reform positions. Realizing that the rapid growth of the NPL in Montana threatened to pick-off supporters of both the Republicans and Democrats, the MSCD started looking with more seriousness at the NPL's desired economic reforms in an attempt to

⁵² Wyman, 238. Wyman explains that, due to the very nature of the migrant worker's lifestyle, and their inability to stay grounded in any one community for more than a few months at a time, a vast majority of them could not vote without a permanent address. Because of that lack of political engagement, migrant workers "were unable to bring pressures for governmental protection at any level."

⁵³ Gaston, 164; Andrew A. Bruce, *Non-Partisan League* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), 85. As Bruce explains, the NPL's political strategy in North Dakota and Minnesota was to attempt to control the Republican primaries, while in Montana, "where the Democratic Party was in the ascendancy, the members of the League and Socialists voted in Democratic primaries." That strategy, which, in Montana, made the Democratic Party an accidental "big-tent" party, allowed for the growth of both Democrats and the NPL-backed candidates.

ameliorate the economic problems that drove so many farmers to support the movement in the first place. During the 1919 legislative session, and with a good deal of prodding from the MSCD, Governor Stewart implored the legislature to draft and pass laws that would, to some extent, mirror the same agricultural reform platform of the NPL.⁵⁴

The 1919 legislative session passed several laws designed to alleviate the economic pressure felt by Montana's farmers, oftentimes as a result of mother nature and market idiosyncrasies that the individual farmer had no control over. Many of the new laws reflected the exact same programs that the NPL touted as necessary to help farmers and were the foundation of the NPL's socioeconomic platform of agricultural reform. The legislative assembly passed *Senate Bill No. 9*, the State Farm Loan Act, which provided state funds to be loaned to farmers at a fixed interest rate of six percent, avoiding the traditionally exorbitant adjustable rates that many local private banks charged. The State Farm Loan Act also served to continue the MSCD's wartime agricultural expansion loans in perpetuity, using the Agricultural Finance Committee's template for wartime relief in the post-war period. The session also established a State Hail Insurance Division with H.B. No. 12 as an administrative economic safety net for Montana farmers whose crops were damaged or destroyed by frequent hail storms.⁵⁵

Another important regulatory move influenced by the MSCD was House Bill No. 14, which established the Montana Trade Commission (MTC) to regulate flour mills and grain elevators as a subdivision of the Board of Railroad Commissioners. Creating state-regulated boards for the grading, storage, and shipping of grain constituted a major aspect of the NPL's political agenda. The Montana State Legislature, heavily influenced by the MSCD's

⁵⁴ Montana State Department of Agriculture and Publicity, *The Land of Opportunity: Edition of 1920* (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1920), 108.

⁵⁵ State of Montana, *House and Senate Journals of the Extraordinary Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly, July 29, 1919, and Ending August 11, 1919* (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1919), 98-104.

administrative policies of 1917-1918, sought to provide economic assistance to its farmers but in a manner that looked a lot like the same administrative-based economic reforms the NPL had successfully implemented in North Dakota. The MTC supervised grain-grading enterprises to maintain the quality of Montana's wheat and monitored grain dealers to avoid overcharging and under-grading, another major complaint of the NPL. As a division of the state's Railroad Commission, the MTC also regulated the storage of grain storage elevator industry, which was dominated by railroad companies like Great Northern, Chicago-Milwaukee-St. Paul, and Northern Pacific. Governor Stewart signed into law all of the bills related to farmer relief and agricultural regulation during the 1919 session, which was greeted with enthusiasm by the state's farming communities. Even the NPL praised the efforts of the Montana government.⁵⁶

The NPL experienced enough success in local elections through its manipulation of the state's direct primary system by nominating their own candidates for either of the two major party tickets that Montana's "traditional Republicans and Democrats" began fighting to eliminate the state's primary system altogether. They attacked the primary system during the same 1919 legislative session that saw that passage of the farmer relief bills. To further obfuscate matters, the session was called by Governor Stewart as an "Extraordinary Session of the State Legislature," which met in the midst of the late-summer grain harvest season, leaving many farmer legislators unable to attend, completely defeating the purpose of meeting only once every other year and always in late-winter/early-spring, never during the harvest season. NPL organizers accused Stewart of having called the session during the harvest to minimize the ability of farmer legislators who might be in sympathy with the NPL from attending the session.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 105-110, 133; Lansing, 244-246.

⁵⁷ *House and Senate Journals of the Extraordinary Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly*, 69-71; E.B. Russell, "League Fights to Save Montana Primary," *Nonpartisan Leader*, July 21, 1919, 4-5; N.S. Davies, "Montanans are Betrayed Again," *Nonpartisan Leader*, September 1, 1919, 4.

Several high-ranking Republicans and conservative Democrats in Montana worked in unison to create S.B. No. 124, which would end the direct primary system in Montana and stifle the growth of the populist parties, namely the NPL. The bill was also supported by both the Democratic and Republican National Committees. J. Bruce Kremer, Democratic National Committee Chairman; and T.A. Marlow, Republican National Committee Chairman, both vocalized their support for the bill to eliminate the direct primary in Montana and to get similar repeals in other western states that used the direct primary method of choosing candidates. After several days of debating the issue, the legislature eventually passed the bill, effectively defeating the direct primary which had been a popular referendum passed by voters in 1912. It was not, however, met without objections from reform Democrats and the NPL.⁵⁸

In response to the legislature's passage and Governor Stewart's signing of S.B. No. 124 into law, the NPL, in alliance with a minority of Montana's political reformers went to work collecting signatures from the state's voters to repeal the repeal of direct primaries with its "Save the Primary" campaign. Under Montana state law, only fifteen percent of the state's registered voters needed to sign the petition to reject the bill. It did not take long for signature collector to garner over 40,000 signatures from thirty counties, nearly eighteen percent of the state's approximately 223,000 registered voters. The message to the legislature was abundantly clear. Samuel Ford, in maintaining his promise to uphold state laws, informed the legislature and Governor Stewart that, because of the great number of signatures collected in opposition to the bill, the legislature would be forced to instead put it up to a vote of the people. Ford's opinion

⁵⁸ *House and Senate Journals of the Extraordinary Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly*, 94-98; *State of Montana, Attorney General Opinions: Vol. 9, 1920-1922*, "Opinion of Attorney General, April 23, 1920," 403-405.

rendered Senate Bill No. 124 null and void, and thanks in part to the NPL's organizational effort, Montana kept its direct primary system of choosing candidates.⁵⁹

The NPL continued to grow steadily during the war years and into the early post-war reconstruction period. By 1920, Montana contained 22,007 registered members. Nationally, the NPL contained 255,000 members in ten states. However, the increase in membership numbers did not correlate to electoral victory for the NPL or their Democratic allies, even as it attempted to piggyback onto the Democratic Party ticket that year. The NPL's fight to save the primary did not seem to help much either. The MSCD and county defense council attacks on NPL organizers throughout 1918, combined with the defense council's propagation of several agricultural relief bills passed in 1919, served to both frighten and assuage large segments of the farming population from continuing to support the NPL.⁶⁰

Both the Republicans and Democrats had their own progressive wings of their respective partisan factions, but by 1920, with larger numbers of former populist party supporters voting for reform Democrats, the Republican Party of Montana was able to further consolidate its own political support base and its ideological direction moving forward. With the help of conservative Democrats who had grown tired of labor radicalism and political dissent, a coalition of anti-reformer conservatives from both major parties managed to create a sweeping victory for Republicans, or to put it another way, a sweeping victory against the NPL and their leftist allies. Republicans also branded the 1919 general election as "the fight of Americanism vs. Socialism," which proved to be an effective tactic among Montana's voting public, equating the NPL's

⁵⁹ S.C. Ford, "Explanation of the Primary Laws," *Wolf Point Herald*, August 12, 1920, 5; "Romney Tells Story of Fight," *Montana Nonpartisan*, July 5, 1919, 2.

⁶⁰ Bruce, *Non-Partisan League*, 8.

“Townleyism” with Bolshevism, Socialism, and the IWW.⁶¹ The World War I years saw the Democrats dominating Montana’s political machine, the exception being Republican Attorney General Samuel Ford, and a slight Republican advantage in the state senate. From 1909-1919, Montana’s House of Representatives maintained a large majority of Democrats. Following the 1919 election, that balance had nearly flipped, with Republicans maintaining an even larger majority in both houses until 1933. Joseph Dixon, elected as governor in 1920, was the first Republican governor in Montana to have been elected since 1895.⁶²

The *Wolf Point Herald* called the overwhelming electoral victory of the Republicans “a reactionary tidal wave such as this country has seldom if ever seen.”⁶³ While technically correct, the quote fails to include the details as to why such a sudden partisan transformation happened in Montana. The NPL’s plans essentially backfired. Instead of galvanizing a big-tent, left-wing, Democratic coalition to victory, and even with its dedicated fight to save the state’s direct primary, the NPL’s efforts actually served to galvanize the conservative wings of both major parties against the burgeoning farmers’ movement. As the conservative wings of the Republican and Democratic parties formed unofficial across-the-aisle alliances to stave off the rise of their progressive colleagues, they formed a majority. Aided by the wartime policies of the MSCD, county defense councils throughout the state took advantage of wartime ordinances related to political activity to further consolidate their local political power, going as far as to commit kidnappings and violate civil rights in order to do so. Conservative Democrats appeared to care less about losing to their Republican counterparts than they did to their progressive and populist-

⁶¹ US Senate, “Document No. 260,” *Americanism versus Socialism* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 3-4, 11-14.

⁶² Ellis Waldron, *Montana Politics Since 1864: An Atlas of Elections* (Missoula: University of Montana, 1958), 160, 162-166, 170, 178-184.

⁶³ “Republicans Win, Nation and State,” *Wolf Point Herald*, November 4, 1920, 1.

supporting colleagues which, in Montana, was represented by the rising political star of the NPL and its threat to the socioeconomic hegemony of the state's corporate character and its super trust in the Anaconda Mining Company.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Bruce, 219.

–Chapter Ten–
Intra-Partisan Conflict and Progressivism in the Southwest

While the defense councils of Washington State and Montana both focused their political efforts during World War I on reigning-in the partisan influences of the SPW and the NPL, other states in the region looked to consolidate their traditional Two-Party partisan factions into even stronger political forces. California, which was a predominantly Republican state with a Republican supermajority in Sacramento throughout the period of the war, used the CSCD to further embed the domination of the GOP within the state's government. Governor Stephens and the mostly Republican CSCD used the mobilization effort to eliminate intra-partisan conflict among the Party's progressive and neo-progressive elements, leading to the ultimate destruction of the Progressive Movement and the rise of conservative Republicanism in California.

In Arizona, the opposite partisan effect occurred from the mobilization effort. The Democrats ran a supermajority in Phoenix, and mobilization and the formation of the ASCD opened an opportunity for the Democrats to attempt to further consolidate their partisan power of state politics. While the attempt worked for a few more years during the period of mobilization, it also led to the post-war rise of the Republican faction, which would become dominant in Arizona politics for the next decade. The rhetorical and practical application of non-partisan nationalism, which the Democrat-led ASCD tried its best to utilize, worked to its detriment, accidentally providing their partisan challengers the political influence needed during mobilization to damage their own partisan ideals among the electorate. The experience of the ASCD and the CSCD in trying to consolidate their respective brands of partisan power demonstrated the DCS's ability to impact local, state, and regional politics.

I: Partisanship and Reform in Arizona

In 1912, Arizona became the forty-eighth state to enter the Union, which occurred only two years before the Great War started in Europe. As a new state with a different political trajectory than most of its regional counterparts, Arizona's World War I mobilization effort came to define the young state's struggles to enjoin the national body politic and its attempts to shake off decades of corporate dominance over local and state politics. Unlike Montana, Arizona's Democrats were much more aligned with one another in their political ideology, leading to the party's near total control of state politics. While conservative Democrats did exist and exerted influence in Phoenix, the more populist, reformer-wing dominated the party's composition until the early-1920s. Arizona's Republicans on the other hand, while maintaining their own progressive-wing of the party, were still a nominally conservative group and did more to appeal to the area business community and national corporations that the sparsely-populated desert state had been relying to build-up its basic infrastructure and its economy. While the Democrats also appealed to the desires of the business community, they tried much harder to balance the needs of the state's citizens and workers with its need to increase local economic development, rather than acquiescing to one side or the other.¹

Consequently, the ASCD was born during a time when Arizona was still trying to figure out its role as one of the newest American states and how it would comport its conflicting partisan ideals with the immense economic and political power of corporations and the rising demands of labor unions and populist ideologues. Ultimately, it was Governor Campbell's formation of the ASCD in 1917 and its mobilization efforts that would force the state's Democratic and Republican partisans to come together and formulate a political consensus in the

¹ Berman, *Reformers, Corporations, and the Electorate*, 1-7.

name of non-partisan nationalism. Although there were several episodes of disruptive partisan bickering during the life of the ASCD, Republican and Democratic policymakers came to an unofficial agreement to put mobilization at the forefront of the state's wartime activities. As a result, the Democrats dulled their progressive reform character while Republicans slightly sharpened theirs, essentially meeting in the middle. In 1919, for the first time in its territorial or state history, Arizona started to become much more amenable to selecting Republican candidates for state and federal offices. As the progressivism and populism of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries waned in Arizona, effectively eliminated by 1920, Republicans took the lead in the state's partisan politics for the next several decades.²

Historical Background

In 1863, the Republican-controlled Civil War-era Congress carved Arizona Territory from the western half of New Mexico Territory. That same year, Abraham Lincoln appointed John Goodwin, a Republican ally, to serve as the new territory's governor. With its budding cotton farming industry and a disproportionate population of Confederate sympathizers and Democrats relative to the surrounding states and territories, Arizona proved to be a partisan outlier and a complicated case of wartime factionalism. Arizona's strong Democratic influences within the state's economic and political reform movements grew even stronger after Congress legislated statehood in 1912 through the Organic Act. Democrat retained their majority in the state legislature and elected Progressive-reformer, George W.P. Hunt. With the exception of 1919-1932, which saw a surge of public support for Republicans for statewide offices, a red wave swept through Arizona, abruptly ending with the Great Depression and election of Franklin

² Berman, *Governors and the Progressive Movement*, 126, 245-249; Berman, *Arizona Politics & Government*, 46-47.

D. Roosevelt. Arizona remained steadfastly Democrat until the early-1960s when it reverted to a Republican stronghold for the foreseeable future.³

Like other western territories during the Civil War years, the Republican-controlled federal government appointed Republican partisans almost exclusively as territorial governors for territories of the American West. Arizona went from having a federally appointed and administered, predominantly Republican-controlled territorial government from 1863-1912, to an overwhelmingly Democrat-controlled state government. As witnessed in both Arizona and Montana, territorial governments had not been demonstrative of popular political manifestations of the people who lived in those territories. For better or worse, territories were purely partisan means of federal governmental control. Once voters within those former territories had the ability to vote for a popularly elected government as allowed under the federal Organic Act, they made their preference abundantly clear by rejecting Republican politics. As the nineteenth-century bled into the twentieth, Arizona's voters increasingly embraced the political and economic reform platform of the Democrats – a consequence of regional populist movements.⁴

Corporate Supremacy vs. Progressive Reform

From the first year of statehood in 1912 until the general election of 1919, Arizona's state government contained an overwhelming Democrat majority, with voters having only elected a handful of Republicans to statewide offices during its first years in the Union. During that period, voters in the state never elected more than fourteen Republicans at any one time to the forty-nine seat bicameral legislature. Considering Arizona's past as the territorial epicenter of Confederate support in the West during the Civil War, its particular partisan majority was

³ Berman, *Arizona Politics & Government*, 48-50, 194-197.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 195-199.

perhaps not that surprising.⁵ Arizona was so solidly Democrat that when voters elected Republican nominee, Thomas E. Campbell, as their governor in November 1916 by a margin of only thirty votes, Democratic incumbent, George W.P. Hunt, refused to vacate the office with the understanding that his loss must have meant election fraud in such a dependably Democrat-run state. Less than a year into Campbell's term and at the behest of Hunt's campaign, the Arizona Supreme Court intervened and demanded a recount. Ultimately, the courts declared George Hunt the rightful winner of the election, having won by a margin of only forty-three votes. Thomas Campbell vacated the office on December 25, 1917.⁶

The episode of electoral partisan conflict provided the political context from which the ASCD developed over the course of World War I. The partisan power struggle and the manner in which it manifested through the state's defense council system was indicative of how the Democrats dominated Arizona politics. It was also demonstrative of how the state government engaged with the powerful corporate mining interests active in Arizona. During the early twentieth-century, Arizona was a politically progressive state whose Democrats ran serious political and economic reform campaigns that sought to eliminate the considerable amount of economic power the mining and railroad interests held over the state.⁷ According to historian David Berman, "Arizona's reformers picked up on themes found in the Populist and Progressive movements in calling for democratization of the political system to ward off corporate control,

⁵ L. Boyd Finch, "Arizona in Exile: Confederate Schemes to Recapture the Southwest," *Journal of Arizona History* Vol. 33, No. 1 (Spring, 1992): 57-84. Confederate ideologues held a strong influence within the sparsely populated New Mexico Territory, and later, with its creation in 1863, Arizona Territory. Even though the federal government had appointed mostly Republican governors to run the Arizona Territory from 1863-1910, Democrats maintained a great deal of political power over the smaller, marginalized Republican Party upon Arizona's 1912 statehood. Refer to Finch's article for further reading on the subject of Confederate history and its political legacy in New Mexico/Arizona territory.

⁶ "Tom Campbell Legally Wins Governorship of Arizona," *Bisbee Daily Review*, May 3, 1917, 1; "An Old Dispensation Reiterated," *Daily Morning Oasis*, December 27, 1917, 4.

⁷ Berman, *Arizona Politics and Government*, 12.

increased taxation and regulation of large corporations, and ... government protections for working people.”⁸

Mining, especially silver mining, had been an important mineral resource for the region for centuries; going back to the first mines opened in the region by the Spanish, and, after 1820, the United States of Mexico. By the time the region became a US territory in 1848 following the Mexican-American War, the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, and the 1853 Gadsden Purchase, the silver mining industry had long been in disrepair. After the discovery of massive copper veins in various parts of the territory in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Arizona quickly became one of the world’s leading copper-extracting regions. With little else available in the way of natural resources, the vast majority of Arizona’s economic livelihood, from territory to state, was disproportionately controlled by a handful of copper mining interests based in the American Northeast or in England. The discovery of copper in Arizona occurred at the same time that the Edison Electric Light Company was marketing and mass-producing the incandescent lightbulb. The need for copper in order to produce the filaments and wiring for lightbulbs skyrocketed the market value of the mineral. The rise and expansion of the state’s copper industry would act as the catalyst for political and labor reform movements in Arizona, which peaked right as the country started mobilizing for the Great War.⁹

As Arizona’s most productive copper mining operation, the Copper Queen Mine in Bisbee was symbolic of how absentee corporations consolidated economic and political power in

⁸ Ibid., 45. Berman’s research on the history of Arizona’s state government highlights the progressive nature of Arizona’s early years of statehood and how the state constitution, drafted in 1910 and passed in 1911, was rooted intrinsically in the era’s populist and progressive influences. Arizona’s progressive reform period, from 1890-1919, has often been ignored due to the state’s otherwise conservative and Republican political majorities in both the state and federal governments.

⁹ Carlos Schwantes, *Vision & Enterprise: Exploring the History of Phelps Dodge Corporation* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000), 111-112, 114-116.

the state. The Copper Queen Stake, originally claimed by George Warren, began operations in 1880 and the rapid financial success of that particular copper vein convinced the Connecticut-based Phelps-Dodge and Company, then a mid-level shareholder in other regional mining operations, to purchase the neighboring Atlanta Mine. In 1885, Phelps-Dodge initiated a merger of its Atlanta Mine with the Copper Queen, forming the Copper Queen Consolidated Mining Company, one of the most successful copper mines in the world. To aid in their consolidation of the region's extractive industries, faceless corporations, such as Phelps-Dodge, Detroit Copper, and Calumet, developed regional infrastructure capabilities to assist in their mining activities, including the construction of railroads and telegraph lines. Soon enough, those mining corporations had leveraged their wealth to corrupt the territorial political machine to ensure they continued amassing more property and political influence. Mining would henceforth not only become the most significant economic activity in Arizona, but it would also act as the socioeconomic foundation for the Democratic consolidation of political power immediately following statehood in 1912.¹⁰

Arizona's first state governor-to-be, George W.P. Hunt, was the acknowledged leader and ideological compass of the dominant progressive-wing of the state's Democratic Party, leading the charge for the fight against corporate control and championing the cause of organized labor. Following Congress' 1910 passage and President Taft's approval of the Enabling Act, the federal government permitted the Arizona Territory to draft a state constitution in its first step towards statehood. Congress determined that county conventions would be the best method for how the territory would choose delegates to send to the constitutional convention to determine by popular vote who would represent the people. Voters in Arizona's fifteen counties elected forty-

¹⁰ Ibid., 51-52, 116; Berman, *Governors and the Progressive Movement*, 246-247.

one Democrat and only eleven Republicans to the 1910 Constitutional Convention in Phoenix. Hunt, who had served in both houses of the territorial legislature, was selected as president of the convention by the Democrat majority, his progressive bona fides and willingness to take on the most powerful corporate interest in the state having preceded him.¹¹

The final, congressionally approved draft of the Arizona Constitution contained a series of progressive reforms aimed at curbing political corruption and the relatively unchecked power of mining corporations. Among the most significant and populist-informed features of the new constitution was the approval of the recall of any public official, except for judges. The exclusion of judges from the recall provision had been forced on the convention by President Taft, who promised to veto statehood if Arizona included it in the constitution. Full participation within the Union was important enough for Arizona that voters reluctantly approved the provision, passing the draft constitution by a vote of 14,963 to 1,980. In the first general election held in Arizona after statehood in February of 1912, voters again put the recall of judges on the ballot and approved the measure. In response to Taft's dictatorial expectations regarding what could be put into the constitution, Arizona handed the incumbent Republican a resounding defeat for the 1912 general election, with more voters choosing Eugene Debs than Taft. Woodrow Wilson received the state's three electoral votes that year, and the rejection of Republican partisan politics evinced fifty-years of resentment for the perceived intrusions of the federal government stretching back to the early territorial period.¹²

Influenced by the convention's "Laborites," the constitution provided protections for workers and placed greater regulations on corporations and improved working conditions. Hunt

¹¹ Berman, *Politics, Labor, and the War on Big Business*, 110-115; Berman, *Arizona Politics and Government*, 32-37.

¹² Berman, *Politics, Labor, and the War on Big Business*, 133-134; "The Constitutional Convention," *Arizona Republican*, November 6, 1911, 7; Berman, *Arizona Politics and Government*, 34-36.

and his Democratic allies passed measures that guaranteed an eight-hour workday for public employees, outlawed blacklisting, and eliminated caps on compensation allowances for on-the-job accidents. The Democrat majority also established the Mine Inspector's Office, managed by an elected official who acted as the state's top mining regulator with wide-ranging powers over mine safety and business transactions. Labor organizers formed Arizona's first labor federation in 1912, a right that had been denied to them during the territorial period, which became a powerful lobbying force in Phoenix during Hunt's time in office as the state's first governor.¹³ Hunt's support for the state's working-class found him and his partisan allies labeled by their Republican opponents as "anarchists, dynamiters, and socialists," but, as Hunt later recalled, "we went ahead and fulfilled our obligations to the people."¹⁴

As progressive as the constitution and the Democratic majority was in Arizona, the vestiges of Confederate ideology lingered. Racial segregation continued along Southern lines and the white Anglo majority marginalized the state's sizable Hispanic population. Even though Arizonans of Mexican descent constituted over thirteen percent of the population, they had no representation in the state government and had successfully been kept from political engagement since the 1870s. In comparison, the Republican-controlled states of California and New Mexico, also with substantial Hispanic populations, contained several Hispanic policymakers and government officials within their respective state government structures.¹⁵

The era of progress and reform in Arizona peaked in late-1916/early-1917, just as the Preparedness Movement began to gain mass social traction. In November 1916, Hunt's

¹³ Jay J. Wagoner, *Arizona Territory, 1863-1912: A Political History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1970), 464-466.

¹⁴ Joseph Morris Richards, *The Birth of Arizona: The Baby State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 29.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 34-35, 45; "Segregation Sustained by High Court," *Arizona Republican*, July 16, 1912, 1.

Republican opponent, Thomas E. Campbell, won the election by a very slim margin as the next governor of the state. During that same election, the lower chamber went from thirty-five Democrats to thirty-one, with the addition of four Republican representatives. The upper chamber also lost four Democrats and gained four Republicans. The Republicans made modest gains that year, but the Democrats still had a large majority. The ASCD, initially established by Campbell in April 1917, four-months into his term, came into being while the state was mired in a partisan dustup that would see Campbell ousted less than year into his term and replaced with George Hunt.¹⁶ Coincidentally, it was that electoral conflict that would lay the groundwork for how the ASCD helped to reconfigure the state's lopsided partisan composition, leading to greater public support for Republican candidates during and the war. Hunt's desire to maintain the Democrat's domination of the state government flew directly in the face of non-partisan nationalism. In expressing his willingness to cooperate with the ideal more and more as the war stretched into 1918, Hunt unwittingly opened the door for Republicans to increase their influences within Arizona's state political machine.¹⁷

Non-Partisan Nationalism in Arizona

During the nearly two-years of the ASCD's existence, two distinct versions of the Council were in operation. The first and shortest iteration, from April 18, 1917, through December 25, 1917, was led by Republican Governor, Thomas E. Campbell. The second iteration, from December 25, 1917, through June 11, 1919, was led by Democrat Governor George W.P. Hunt. With such high levels of partisan conflict between the two parties, each version of the ASCD had to deal with its own set of political problems depending on which

¹⁶ Dwight B. Heard to Governor George W.P. Hunt, May 21, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

¹⁷ "Suggestions for a Statute Creating State Council of Defense," 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

governor was in charge at the time. Regardless of the partisan squabbling, both versions managed to have the same overall mobilization goals in mind: agricultural expansion, eliminating the IWW in the mining camps, and demonstrating to the CND that Arizona could be counted on to cooperate with the federal government to help the nation in times of crisis. The basic understandings of non-partisan issues which affected all Americans regardless of party affiliation, acted as the socioeconomic foundation on which the ASCD could construct a more nationalistic form of political cohesion while doing away with its severe bouts of class conflict.¹⁸

When Governor Campbell established the ASCD on April 18, 1917, he formed seven committees and appointed the chairpersons, ostensibly, along partisan lines. However, the actual partisan composition of the Council appeared to be very partisan and in opposition to the general CND expectation of non-partisan nationalism. Of the eleven members of the ASCD's Executive Committee, Campbell appointed seven Republicans and four Democrats. With Campbell's position as *ex officio*, the composition of Republicans to Democrats on the council was eight-to-four; hardly a partisan balance, especially in consideration of the Democratic majority among the electorate.¹⁹ In response to Campbell's apparent partisan maneuvering of the ASCD, George Hunt accused the governor of having "failed to convince all the public of its non-partisanship, probably for the sufficient reason that the Executive Committee ... consists of members of a single political party in the ratio of about two to one."²⁰

After Campbell's removal from office on Christmas Day of 1917 following the unanimous Arizona Supreme Court decision that handed the gubernatorial victory to his

¹⁸ George W.P. Hunt to Allen B. Jaynes, April 5, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records; Arizona State Council of Defense, *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense, April 18, 1917, through June 1918* (Phoenix: Republican Print Shop, 1919), 4-7.

¹⁹ *The Arizona Council of Defense: Its Purposes and a Brief Statement of its Work*, 1-4.

²⁰ George B. Heard to Governor George W.P. Hunt, May 21, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

Democratic opponent, George Hunt immediately went to work reforming the ASCD. Although Hunt frequently criticized Campbell for his inability to organize a more balanced partisan composition of the defense council, once he was back in office, Hunt looked to remove some of Campbell's Republican appointees and replace them with his own supporters. Hunt's political opponents, including some conservative Democrats, seized the opportunity to attack him and they considered the ASCD an excellent platform from which to weaken the strident reformer's influence by exposing him as an overtly partisan, pro-radical labor demagogue.²¹

The first accusation regarding Hunt's management of the ASCD was that he had designs to further embed the Democratic Party within the state's political system, using the state's county defense council system to do so. When the ASCD's Executive Committee began forming its county defense council system, Hunt contended that "counties which heretofore have been Democratic by substantial majorities should have Democrats named on the defense council ... or where Republicans sometimes come out ahead, should be represented by Republicans." With a large Democratic majority in almost every one of Arizona's fifteen counties, Hunt's declaration ensured that his party would retain near total control of the not only the ASCD but the county defense councils as well, thereby dictating the state's mobilization activities along strictly partisan lines.²² The editor of one of the state's Republican mouthpieces, *the Winslow Mail*, accused Governor Hunt of ignoring the CND's expectation that state defense councils would operate in a non-partisan and cooperative manner "for no other reason than to put a lot of his particular friends in office and to make the council a cheap political machine."²³

²¹ Ibid.; George Hunt to C.E. Addams, July 29, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Defense Council Records.

²² "Hunt Man or None Wanted by Guv.," *Weekly Journal-Miner*, July 10, 1918, 4.

²³ "Disgusting Cheap Politics," *Winslow Mail*, June 21, 1918, 2.

Hunt's partisanship was also evident in the manner in which Thomas Campbell's defense council appointees were either dismissed or asked to resign immediately following the Arizona Supreme Court's ruling that declared Hunt the ultimate winner of the election. Rather than being satisfied with the ASCD committee members Campbell had appointed, Hunt, as was his right as the council's *ex officio*, demanded their resignations forthwith. As a result, four committee chairmen resigned in protest rather than fighting to retain their positions within a hostile partisan administration. Hunt's advisors and some of his Democrat allies deemed the forced resignations as "too blatantly partisan," running counter to the kind of non-partisan nationalist cooperation being touted by the CND as the cornerstone of an efficient and rational mode of mobilization. Republican appointees on the ASCD's Executive Committee quickly took Hunt to task for his superficial desire to enact political revenge on his gubernatorial foe's defense council appointments.²⁴

In a letter to Governor Hunt from ASCD Chairman, Dwight Heard, who former governor Thomas Campbell had appointed to head the ASCD and who was retained by Hunt, Heard emphasized how absolutely essential it was to maintain the non-partisan integrity of the defense council. He reminded Hunt that "the council can only be hampered in its efficiency by taking part in any partisan controversy ... as our boys go across the sea to fight for us it seems particularly deplorable that anyone's activities should be diverted to partisan or personal controversy."²⁵ While Heard did not place all of the blame on Hunt, he did make it clear that the governor was part of the problem. As brave as it may have seemed for a non-elected political appointee like Heard, the owner of one of Arizona's leading Republican newspapers no less, to

²⁴ Governor Hunt to Dwight B. Heard, May 9, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

²⁵ Dwight B. Heard to George P. Hunt, May 9, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

tell a Democratic governor to keep his head out of partisan politics during the war, Hunt heeded the warning. Heard understood the nature of the kind of non-partisan efforts of the CND and felt it his duty to keep the governor focused on the task at hand. He likely knew that any major partisan conflict within the state could negatively affect the state's mobilization progress and, concomitantly, how the federal government might perceive Arizona's political system.²⁶

Dwight Heard's risk in calling the governor out actually came with incredible reward. Not only did Hunt discontinue his partisan attacks on Thomas Campbell's Republican appointees, but he also extended an unexpected olive branch. On December 27, 1917, less than a week after the Arizona Supreme Court declared him the rightful winner, Governor Hunt magnanimously appointed Thomas Campbell – Hunt's avowed political enemy – to a ranking position on the ASCD's Executive Committee. When Hunt reorganized the ASCD in early-1918, the Executive Committee was actually far more balanced in its partisan composition than Campbell's appointees had been. When Campbell first organized the ASCD in April 1917, he had appointed four Democrats and eight Republicans (including himself) to lead the Council's committees. Hunt, on the other hand, ended up appointing six Democrats (including himself), five Republicans, and two self-described "Independent non-partisans for good measure."²⁷

George Hunt still found himself in political conflict with some of his predecessor's appointees following his about-face on changing the ASCD's partisan composition and acting in a more non-partisan manner. Chairman of the ASCD's Committee on Publications and owner of the *Arizona Citizen* newspaper, Allen B. Jaynes, ran afoul of Hunt and other members of the

²⁶ Dwight B. Heard to Gustav Becker, December 27, 1917, box 1, folder 17, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

²⁷ Dwight B. Heard to George P. Hunt, May 21, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona State Council of Defense Records.

Council for an editorial he had published in his paper in April 1918.²⁸ Jaynes, a Republican and original Thomas Campbell appointee, went public with his outspoken opposition to compulsory influenza vaccine policies. Hunt and Heard both felt that such criticisms ran counter to the DCS's wartime mobilization efforts in general, as well as unnecessarily dividing the state's citizens on important health matters. Shortly thereafter, Governor Hunt demanded Jayne's resignation, telling him that "your efforts to obstruct the State Board of Health in its program of cooperation with the United States Public Health Service ... [is something] I consider exceedingly detrimental to the best interests of the state and the nation."²⁹ Jaynes resigned a few days later and Hunt replaced him with Col. James H. McClintock, a reliable partisan ally, as Chairman of the Committee on Publications.³⁰

Emerging Partisan Balance in AZ

By late-1919, not long before the US-German Peace Treaty and the CND's subsequent dissolution, the ASCD's wartime mission of injecting a sense of non-partisanship and nationalist sentiment within the state's political character had finally caught up with Arizona's traditional partisan culture. While the Democrats managed to maintain political dominance during the period of the war, 1919 signaled a coming change for the historically one-party-power state. More Republicans were elected to statewide offices that year than ever before in Arizona's state or territorial history, or that would be elected again after 1922. The rise of the Republicans and of political conservatism following World War I and into the 1920s was a national phenomenon,

²⁸ "Jayne's Resignation Accepted by Gov.," *Bisbee Daily Review*, April 18, 1918, 4.

²⁹ Governor Hunt to Allan B. Jaynes, April 15, 1918, box 6, folder 82, Arizona Council of Defense Records.

³⁰ *Report of Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 24-25.

but the reasons for why so many states suddenly switched to a Republican partisan preference often had varying regional, state, and local political connotations.³¹

In the American West, the inability of progressive policymakers to push their agendas through state legislatures during the early-twentieth century, such as they had done with relative success since the 1880s, played a key role in the public's disengagement with progressivism. The decreasing confidence among the general public in the capability of Democrats to effectively pass political reform policies had much to do with that waning disengagement. Internal migration shifts that brought more politically conservative middle-class Americans to the region's cities, along with the patriotic fervor stirred up by the country's military incursion into the Great War, all coalesced to create a politically untenable situation for the region's progressive Democrats.³²

The inclusion and participation of the DCS in the wartime mobilization effort played a significant role in building the conservative partisan coalitions that would further the marginalization of the progressive movement. At the national level, Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic National Committee could not have foreseen the damage that the federal government's propagation of non-partisan nationalism would cause to the Democratic Party. Yet, in the American West, the political ideal helped reshape traditional regional political practices for decades to come. Even though George Hunt and the Democrats would make a comeback in the 1922 elections, the Party had been thoroughly de-progressivized and was nearly unrecognizable from the pre-war and wartime progressive Democrats Hunt represented.³³

³¹ "Fifth Arizona Assembly to Open Session at Noon with Much Work Planned," *Arizona Republican*, January 10, 1921, 1.

³² Dawley, 326-330; Berman, *Politics, Labor, and the War on Big Business*, 233-235.

³³ Berman, *Reformers, Corporations, and the Electorate*, 128-131.

II: Republican Consolidation and Neo-Progressivism in California

California had always been a more politically divergent state in contrast to its regional peers. Having been formed as a free-soil state in 1850 as a direct political manifestation of the debates surrounding the westward expansion of slavery during the late-Antebellum Era, California evolved to maintain an overwhelming progressive-Republican character by 1899. Republicans enjoyed a supermajority in the state assembly until 1912 when Teddy Roosevelt formed the Progressive Party. The formation of the California Progressive Party had the effect of dividing the Republican Party and strengthening the relatively small Democrats. By 1914, Fourth-Party and Independent challengers further complicated the partisan nature of California's political landscape. California was one of the only states in the country to have elected more Fourth-Party candidates than one of the two major parties. In the 1914 midterm elections, The California electorate sent thirty-three Republicans, twenty-eight Progressives, three Socialists, one Prohibitionist, and fifteen Democrats to represent them in the state assembly. With the dissolution of the Progressive Party in 1916, many Progressive partisans flocked back to the Republican Party, helping to recreate a Republican majority in the state's legislative assembly that lasted until the late-1950s when the Democrats began to take over again.³⁴

Progressive Power Struggle

Like the CND, individual state defense councils did not manage to evade scrutiny by either their citizens or by elected officials. Similar to the ASCD, the CSCD endured and weathered political conflict very early on, perhaps slowing, but never completely halting their mobilization progress. In the case of the CSCD, those challenges did not bring into question the

³⁴ California Secretary of State, *Statement of Vote at General Election Held on November 7, 1916, in the State of California* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1916), 2-6; Stacey L. Smith, *Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 7-8.

Council's legitimacy, but rather, the partisan manner in which it operated. Almost immediately after the CSCD's formation, John Francis Neylan, a prominent California lawyer, member of the State Board of Control, ardent Progressive, and newly appointed member of the CSCD's Executive Committee, came into direct conflict with newly elected Governor, William D. Stephens, over California's DCS involvement.³⁵

In December 1917, only nine-months after his appointment to the Executive Committee, Neylan resigned from the CSCD. Although Neylan insisted that he had himself resigned, Governor Stephens argued that he had actually removed him from his post. Neylan was an "avowed supporter" of Governor Stephens' longtime political rival, former Governor of California and recently elected US Senator, Hiram Johnson. Johnson, a prominent progressive-Republican reformer who vacated the governor's office in 1917 following his electoral victory to the Senate, represented a vocal sector of the state's GOP officials who objected to DCS activities as unnecessary and wasteful. Even with such an overwhelming majority of Republicans in California's government at the time – Democrats had never collected more than eleven seats at any one time in the state legislature between 1917 and 1937 – the state's politics were rife with intra-partisan conflict among the Republicans. Bitter rivalries within the party subsequently exploded into the open with the election of Stephens. The CSCD was the impetus of those contentions, even though the struggle for domination of the GOP lay at the heart of those conflicts. As a result, the state's ability to contribute to the nation's mobilization got off to a slow and unpromising start.³⁶

³⁵ "Senator's Shadow on Fracas in this State," *Oakland Tribune*, December 30, 1917, 27.

³⁶ "Neylan is Called Big Disturber," *Oakland Tribune*, December 30, 1917, 28; John Neylan to Hiram Johnson, May 26, 1917, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

Much of John Neylan's contention came from the fact that the DCS revolved around the leadership of private-sector actors in the mobilization effort. Neylan insisted that "the state council of defense has not accomplished a single thing that could not have been better accomplished by the regularly constituted agencies of the state government."³⁷ He charged the CSCD with fiscal irresponsibility, pointing to the hefty salary given to several members who he believed should have been working in a strictly voluntary capacity, similar to how nearly every other state defense council operated. More than half of the \$100,000 appropriated by the legislature for defense council activities was spent on administrative salaries. Neylan especially took exception to the salary given to Executive Committee Vice-Chairman, A.H. Naftzger, who received \$3,400 annually between April and October of 1917, a more than generous compensation for the time. Neylan characterized Naftzger as "incompetent" and his salary as "indefensible." Nearly all state defense councils avoided such conflicts of interest as a way to avoid looking like economic remuneration held more importance than the task of patriotically organizing the homefront for the Great War. Progressive reformers like Neylan, a close friend and political ally of Hiram Johnson, considered the private-sector-led effort as having signaled a return to pre-Progressive Era problems of political graft.³⁸

On top of the exorbitant administrative salaries, Governor Stephens also brought forth a bill to provide 1,000 men a \$90 per month stipend for "defensive home guard duty." Meanwhile, American soldiers fighting and dying in the trenches of Europe only received \$35 per month for their services. Section Four of the legislative bill creating the CSCD specified that "Members of the State Council of Defense shall serve without pay ... however, that the vice chairman shall devote his entire time to the work of the [CSCD] and shall receive such compensation as the

³⁷ "Neylan's Peppery Talk is Reigning Sensation," *Santa Cruz Evening News*, December 29, 1917, 1.

³⁸ *Ibid*; John Neylan to Hiram Johnson, May 29, 1917, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

Governor may determine.”³⁹ The entire incident highlighted the larger national debates between interventionists and isolationists and the role played by the DCS in wartime mobilization. It was also demonstrative of the importance placed upon voluntarism and national service during the period. But, perhaps even more significant was how the episode revealed the intra-partisan conflict stirred up among California’s Republican majority as a result of preparedness and mobilization. Governor Stephens quickly learned that stifling internal dissent within the Republican Party was as vital an aspect for solidifying his power over the CSCD as it was for eliminating political dissent among the state’s radical left-wing population. Squelching dissent within the party he represented as the state’s executive was also necessary for Stephens’ ability to govern efficiently and without partisan conflict. Eliminating intra-partisan dissent was also important for maintaining partisan cohesion during a period when placing partisanship over the practicality of non-partisan nationalism appeared antithetical to what the CND was trying to accomplish during the wartime emergency.⁴⁰

Even though a tentative pro-war consensus emerged following the United States’ declaration of war, policymakers in the federal and state governments sometimes quarreled over how mobilization should be accomplished. No state in the West represented that conflict more than California and the fight between supporters of US Senator and former governor, Hiram Johnson, and those of Governor William D. Stephens. Prior to his election to the US Senate in 1917, Johnson had been a very popular Bull-Moose governor for five years. Stephens, former State Treasurer, state representative, and Mayor of Los Angeles, had been appointed as

³⁹ *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 5.

⁴⁰ “Why Neylan was Ousted,” *Long Beach Telegram*, December 31, 1917, 11; “Seems Neylan was Fired, Resigns Besides,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 30, 1917, 4.

Lieutenant Governor by Johnson in July of 1916.⁴¹ Even before the fateful appointment that placed them both in the governor's office that year, the two men were never fond of each other. In fact, the two hated one another. Johnson's hatred, however, seethed, often referring to Stephens as "swine" and "possessing a low cunning." Johnson, an old school reformer in the mold of Teddy Roosevelt, had been an ardent Progressive Party leader for many years, while Stephens appeared to have jumped on the Progressive bandwagon just enough to be elected to the California State Legislative Assembly in 1911.⁴²

Former Lieutenant Governor, John Morton Eshleman, appointed in 1914 by Johnson as a fellow Progressive, was a strong ally of Governor Johnson and Teddy Roosevelt, and a shining-star among the state's progressive element. Eshleman died of tuberculosis in 1916, leaving the office open for Governor Johnson to appoint his successor. Johnson chose William Stephens with the assumption that he would act as a non-threatening Republican figurehead with little influence over policymaking. Johnson did not anticipate that Eshleman, his handpicked successor, would die before he left for Washington DC. In 1917, with Johnson's senatorial election victory secured and Stephens' somewhat accidental elevation to the governorship, political bickering among the state's Republicans erupted into public view. For progressive "Johnsonite" Republicans, Stephens represented the rise of neo-progressivism – that special interests had infiltrated and corrupted the party and marginalized the traditional progressive ideal of nonpartisanship and its significance in propagating political reform. The CSCD henceforth became a lightning rod for the political ire of Johnson and his supporters, and, as a result, the

⁴¹ Tom Sitton, "John Randolph Haynes and the Left Wing of California Progressivism," chapter in *California Progressivism Revisited*, 26-27.

⁴² Hiram W. Johnson to Chester H. Rowell, May 31, 1918, box 1 (film), Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

CSCD became a symbol of Governor Stephens' recently consolidated political power and a sign of the impending downfall of progressivism and economic reformism in California.⁴³

Following the 1916 dissolution of the Progressive Party, Hiram Johnson identified nominally as a Republican for the 1916 general election. Johnson was an avid, longtime opponent of Woodrow Wilson, and established himself early on in his political career as a maverick and a contrarian. Whoever was in power at the time, whether nationally or in California, there existed a very high probability that Hiram Johnson would be against that person in both principle and action. He was for preparedness when Wilson was tepid in his preparedness efforts, but when Congress declared war, Johnson decided he was against sending American troops overseas, standing firm in his isolationist stance for a brief period. However, once Johnson's son was conscripted in 1918, he became a vocal proponent for intervention in the war, evincing the less partisan and more personal attributes of how mobilizing for the Great War affected political agendas resulting from the draft. He also became less as vocally critical of the Wilson Administration throughout the remainder of World War I than he had been prior to his son's conscription into the Army.⁴⁴

As the individual states organized their defense councils and ironed-out the various details during the first year of the DCS's existence from May 1917 through May 1918, it proved to be rife with disorganization and conflict in several states. In California, where a single political party all but completely dominated the state's political machine and intra-partisan conflict already existed prior to the creation of the CSCD, the ensuing disagreements often

⁴³ Ibid., 247-250; John Neylan to Hiram Johnson, April 12, 1917, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Hiram Johnson to Charles McClatchy, April 7, 1917, box 1 (film), Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III; Michael A. Weatherson and Hal W. Bochin, *Hiram Johnson: Political Revivalist* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1995), 59-61, 75-77.

centered on whether or not to support or condemn the fiscal and political power exercised by the CSCD. Significantly, the defense council-focused debates were among the Republicans who wished to maintain the party's progressive reform trajectory and the "neo-progressives" who, as it was understood by the Johnsonites, wanted to use the CSCD to rollback labor protections and political reforms in a more business-friendly manner.⁴⁵ When Johnson first heard of the CSCD's establishment, he feared the implications for California's flailing progressive character. "I think the council of defense bunk has been put over" Johnson wrote to John Neylan two-weeks after the CSCD's formation, "the members of the council of defense, in my opinion, have not the courage" to prevent Stephens from "using the Defense Council to play politics."⁴⁶

For some California state policymakers and even for defense council members like John Neylan, the CSCD in general embodied an uncomfortable level of overreach by the state government in its regulatory principles, its coordination with the federal government, and its undemocratic mode of appointing its leaders. After Stephens forced his resignation from the Council for "making untoward remarks regarding the [CSCD's] efforts," John Neylan complained that "the [CSCD] ... was dictated without consultation ... and to every progressive, it is a slap in the face."⁴⁷ It mirrored the larger national debates about the balance of power between federal and state governments and that of public and private institutions. Neylan understood the CSCD as a governmental body without any democratically articulated power and almost wholly managed by private-sector actors. As a result of the lack of public involvement in

⁴⁵ Jackson K. Putnam, "The Progressive Legacy in California: Fifty Years of Politics, 1917-1967," chapter in *California Progressivism Revisited*, 250-251; H. Brett Melendy, "California's Cross-Filing Nightmare: The 1918 Gubernatorial Election," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (August 1964): 319-320.

⁴⁶ Hiram W. Johnson to John Francis Neylan, April 24, 1917, box 1 (film), Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

⁴⁷ John Francis Neylan to Hiram W. Johnson, April 12, 1917, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

the CSCD, the Council managed to exert tremendous control over the citizens of the state through its regulatory activities in local politics, farming, petroleum extraction, and labor union matters. Fearing that the neo-progressives would upend the socioeconomic and political reforms that the Johnsonites had previously instituted, the traditional Progressive clique doomily foresaw the destruction of California's socioeconomic livelihood and its progressive reform character.⁴⁸

As far as William Stephens was concerned, and perhaps with good reason, Hiram Johnson no longer needed to concern himself with how he ran the office. The ideological direction of the state legislature and the California Republican Party was, beginning with his election to the US Senate, no longer Hiram Johnson's legislative concern. Even if his intentions were well-meaning, Johnson's divisive rhetoric only served to damage the CSCD's chances of propagating non-partisan nationalism within the state. For Stephens, the time for partisan consolidation and the punishment of recalcitrant party members was at hand and he envisioned a kind of political purge to oust them, not from the party itself, but rather to remove their ability to interfere with his wartime duties and retain political influence within the GOP. He strongly felt that the real threat to developing non-partisan unity for the purpose of wartime mobilization was not the Democrats or any other faction but was in fact his own party. To successfully organize and inspire Californians to mobilize for war, Stephens removed the CSCD members he deemed a menace to mobilization and to the direction he sought to take the Republicans, even though he had appointed those members to those position himself.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ "Defense Body Upheld by Naftzger," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, December 29, 1917, 3.

⁴⁹ John Francis Neylan to Hiram W. Johnson, April 12, 1917, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III; John Francis Neylan to Hiram Johnson, August 3, 1917, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers; John Francis Neylan to Hiram Johnson, January 9, 1918, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers.

“A New Regime”

The efforts of California’s neo-progressives to use the CSCD to consolidate partisan power into the hands of Governor Stephens by removing his Johnsonite detractors appeared to be a successful endeavor. In December 1919, Hiram Johnson and John Neylan lamented that the “old-guard” progressive-Republican camp within the State Assembly and the most vociferous critics of the ostensible “fake progressivism” of Stephens and his allies had been “replaced with a new regime by the People of California.”⁵⁰ With the elimination of intra-partisan Republican competition within the structure of the CSCD – namely the removal of John Francis Neylan and his replacement by Stephens’ political ally, Marshall DeMotte – Stephens successfully consolidated his partisan control of the state’s mobilization program. By using California’s mobilization effort to eliminate intra-partisan criticism and ensure a more compliant and subordinate partisan composition within the CSCD, Stephens all but guaranteed Republican domination of the state’s wartime political machine, setting the standard for the national rise of conservative Republicanism in the 1920s.⁵¹

While most former Progressive partisans rejoined the Republican Party following the 1916 dissolution of the party, so too did a number of former Progressives join the state’s Democratic Party. Democrats would not have anything close to a majority in Sacramento until 1959, but the steady increase in their numbers, especially in the state’s upper chamber between 1926 and 1936, demonstrated Californians’ continuing rejection of Third and Fourth Party Politics.⁵² When the new legislature convened in early-1919, California voters chose the major

⁵⁰ Hiram W. Johnson to John Francis Neylan, December 2, 1919, box 63, folder 1, Hiram Johnson Papers, Part III.

⁵¹ J. Casey Sullivan, “Way Before the Storm: California, the Republican Party, and a New Conservatism, 1900-1930,” *Journal of Policy History*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2014): 568-571.

⁵² John L. Shover, “The California Progressives and the 1924 Campaign,” *California Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Spring, 1972): 61-64; Bernard L. Hyink, Seyom Brown, and Ernest W.

party tickets, a trend that continued for many decades. Aside from a Republican majority and a Democratic minority, voters also sent one Independent to the state senate that year. The most stridently popular Fourth Party presence in California for years, the Prohibition Party, essentially folded as a result of the passage of a state prohibition law in 1919. Independents would henceforth constitute the only Third Party candidates to occasionally experience victory, and since Independents were not members of any particular party, they still had the ability to caucus as either Republicans or Democrats, making their involvement nothing more than a modern derivative of the Two-Party Political System.⁵³

Between 1912 and 1916, before World War I and the establishment of the DCS, Californians demonstrated a propensity to be a bit more independent and less partisan in their selection of state representatives and senators. Of course, the Progressive Party was still fielding candidates at that time, which complicated the partisan dynamic, but during that brief period, Californians still elected more Democrats than had previously been sent to the state assembly and which would not happen again until the late-1950s. From 1915-1916, the California State Legislature contained twenty-five Democrats, with ten in the lower chamber and fifteen in the upper chamber. Additionally, California also sent Democratic nominee James Phelan to the US Senate, handed Woodrow Wilson the state's electoral votes in 1916, and elected nearly as many Democrats as they did Republicans to the US House of Representatives. The period of mobilization eliminated the nascent rise of California's Democrats, even if it was merely a trickle, preventing their ability to gain a strong political foothold until well after the Great

Thacker, *Politics & Government in California, Ninth Edition* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1975), 140-145.

⁵³ Melendy, "California's Cross-Filing Nightmare," 320-323.

Depression and World War II. But it also signaled the abrupt demise of the progressive experiment in California, one of the American West's most prized bastions of political reform.⁵⁴

Neo-Progressivism, Nonpartisanship, and the CSCD

Representative of the Progressive Movement in general, California's progressives sought to eliminate the power and influence of "special interests" in order to return local democratic control to the people, not just wealthy business interests and political cronies. While people like Hiram Johnson, who embodied the progressive political ideal for many Californians, never succeeded in implementing the level of political and socioeconomic reforms that they had hoped, the first two decades of the twentieth-century in California saw a host of reforms that ended the political power exerted by the railroad industry and greatly improved public utilities.⁵⁵ Direct democracy, a regional phenomenon of the American West, was born from the region's progressive political reform policies. One of the most fundamental aspects of the Progressive Movement was its ideological rejection of partisan politics, even though it was used more rhetorically than anything else as evinced by the creation of an actual political party based on progressive ideals. With the emergence of the DCS, non-partisan nationalism then became an excellent political foundation from which to cement progressive political ideals in practical terms. At least that was the hope of the CND's Executive Committee and of most state defense councils in the western states, many of which had governors who were elected on a platform of instituting political and socioeconomic reform policies.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Hyink, Brown, and Thacker, *Politics & Government in California*, 145; H.J. Haskell, "A Vote of No Confidence," *The Outlook*, November 17, 1920, 12-13.

⁵⁵ Berman, *Governors and the Progressive Movement*, 202-206.

⁵⁶ Jackson K. Putnam, "The Progressive Legacy in California," 247-251. Putnam's definition of "neo-progressivism," which includes four basic elements – nonpartisanship, pragmatism, moderation, and activism – were all set into motion during William Stephens' tenure in office, when "the neoprogressive style seemed to hit its natural stride." But, as Putnam mentions, the nonpartisan aspect never really mattered, in terms of practicality and implementation, to those in office. Once one's party was in control,

Because of the political strength of the Republicans and William Stephens' subsequent hold over state politics, the CSCD did not always appear to be an altogether non-partisan organization. However, even some prominent Democrats spoke to how the CSCD signaled California as a beacon of non-partisan politics and progressivism in the American West. In March 1918, Ed E. Leake, owner and editor of the *Woodland Daily Democrat* and a man with "an unflagging zeal for the success of the Democratic Party in California,"⁵⁷ admonished "any efforts to rejuvenate partisan politics in California." "The Republicans have enough internal turmoil roiling the [CSCD]," remarked a frustrated Leake, "as Democrats, our duty is, first and foremost, as Americans ... let us not add to the mire and help our Governor Stephens and the efforts of the [CSCD]."⁵⁸ With an understanding that the Democrats were, in 1918, a minority party by good measure in California, Democrats like Ed Leake either realized the futility of engaging in hardnosed partisan politics with the more dominant Republicans, or they truly believed in the non-partisan ideal as a legitimate means for overcoming political conflict. Regardless of the reasoning, California's Democrats subscribed to the practice of non-partisan nationalism nonetheless, especially staunch Wilson supporters such as Leake who saw the defeat of German imperialism and helping ensure an Entente victory as more immediately important than partisan consolidation.⁵⁹

it only became natural to want to maintain and consolidate that power with other like-minded individuals, making non-partisan nationalism more of a pipe dream and a rhetorical olive branch than a practical ideal that could work effectively in the years following the Great War and demobilization. Peacetime politics were less cohesive and more conflicted than the kind of wartime political consensus enjoyed among both major parties during the war.

⁵⁷ Thomas Jefferson Gregory, *History of Yolo County, California* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1913), 850.

⁵⁸ Ed E. Leake, "Defense Council Duty and Our Patriotism," *Woodland Daily Democrat*, August 12, 1918, 3.

⁵⁹ Ed E. Leake, "Not Time for Petty Politics," *Woodland Daily Democrat*, March 20, 1918, 1, 8.

In California, the notion of non-partisan nationalism was used by Governor Stephens, the Republican Party, and the CSCD as a smokescreen to further consolidate their already considerable influence into an even more insulated citadel of political factionalism. Publicly, they denounced partisan factionalism and espoused non-partisan nationalism, which made it appear as if the CSCD was more concerned with mobilization duties and the war effort than that of political consolidation. In private and within the legislative assembly in Sacramento, the CSCD experienced a great deal of internal conflict, which often spilled over into area newspapers and exposed the kind of political tension consuming the state. Without a competitive party to challenge the Republicans' grip on California's politics, their partisan alignment faltered, and they were left to fight amongst themselves regarding the ideological direction that the state's GOP should be taken. The intra-partisan conflict that emerged during World War I prevented Republicans from agreeing on partisan or policy matters, let alone being able to come together in agreement for legislative matters. Without the further drafting and passage of reform bills, California's progressive element contracted considerably, paving the way for the conservative wing of the party to begin consolidating its influences, slowly driving the progressive wing out. In 1922, Californians elected Friend W. Richardson, a conservative, pro-business Republican as their new governor. In 1924, the state handed Calvin Coolidge, the Republican presidential nominee, their electoral votes and the presidency, signifying the invariable end of progressivism in California state politics.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Glenn Gendzel, "The People Versus the Octopus: California Progressives and the Origins of Direct Democracy," *Siècles*, Vol. 37 (2012), <http://journals.openedition.org/siecles/1109>; Shover, "The California Progressives and the 1924 Campaign," 59-61, 64; Sullivan, "Way Before the Storm," 575-580.

Conclusion

Demobilization, Reconstruction, and the Interwar Period

On November 11, 1918, the Great War unofficially ended. After more than four-years of intense fighting, the death and displacement of tens-of-millions in Europe, Africa, and Asia, and the loss of 117,466 Americans, the belligerents agreed to a ceasefire that ended the hostilities. The conclusion of the fighting brought an abrupt end to the life of most state defense councils around the country, but several of them chose to remain in existence for as long as possible, especially at the local level. Through wartime mobilization, the DCS developed an effective and transformative new mode of governance, especially out West, and that fact that the private sector led the effort made it difficult for those actors to freely abandon the wartime authority handed to them by the government. Neither the CND nor the Army Appropriations Act which established it had ever stipulated when the system would disband, if ever, leaving DCS's post-war retention up to interpretation and debate. Congress never ratified the Versailles Treaty, choosing instead to draft a separate treaty with Germany that was not ratified until August 26, 1921, permitting the maintenance of the DCS within the states that chose to retain it.¹

The state councils that did continue their activities after the ceasefire agreement did so in the name of “demobilization,” “reconstruction,” and/or “industrial readjustment.” Most of their post-war activities focused on returning the country to a peacetime economy, but within the context of the regulatory transformations that resulted from the pronounced wartime involvement of the DCS within the region's private sector. On December 2, 1918, the CND passed a resolution declaring that the “[DCS] be continued in the national interest for the continued

¹ Richard Striner, *Woodrow Wilson and World War I: A Burden too Great to Bear* (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2014), 169-171; Kennedy, 231-232; *Third Annual Report of the United States Council of National Defense*, 14-17.

purpose of cooperating with and supplementing the federal agencies in meeting the exigencies and emergencies incident to post-war readjustment, and especially for bringing about a normal demobilization of soldiers, sailors, and war workers.”² Putting the nation back into a peacetime mode of production, but in a manner that reflected the modes of administrative associationalism developed and practiced during the mobilization period, was an important task for the DCS’s post-war reconstruction effort. Very few of those appointed to lead the various units and committees wished to see their wartime efforts completely dismantled.³

I: Demobilization and DCS Continuation

Washington State’s defense council system was one of the first in the region to disband. Governor Ernest Lister dissolved the WSCD on January 9, 1919, by executive order. The WSCD Executive Committee and Governor Lister decided during the last regular meeting in November 1918 that “in view of the signing of the armistice and probability of an early close of the war, there remained no good reason for [the WSCD’s] further continuance.”⁴ Even though the WSCD ceased to exist as a body of the state government after January 1919, Lister retained and utilized the WSS until its eventual dissolution and subsequent reformation as the WSP in 1921. C.B. Reed’s Secret Service agents continued to monitor and surveil the activities of the IWW around the state during the period of reconstruction, steadfastly maintaining the WSCD’s anti-radical policies under the direction of the State Legislature. The WSS also began infiltrating AFL and WSFL-affiliated unions in the state as well, keeping tabs on the WSCD’s former wartime

² “Council of Defense,” *Winslow Mail*, December 13, 1918, 2.

³ Edwin Wildman, *Reconstructing America: Our Next Big Job* (Boston: The Page Company, 1919), v-ix; Council of National Defense, *Fourth Annual Report of the Council of National Defense* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 16-17, 29-35.

⁴ Washington State Senate, *Senate Journal of the Sixteenth Legislature of the State of Washington* (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn, Public Printer, 1919), 50.

partners for signs of “Bolshevism” or other “rabid revolutionary ideas.”⁵ WSS agents made very few remarks in their reports regarding IWW activity in the post-war years, evincing the radical labor union’s wartime downfall. The post-war issue with labor, as far as the State Government was concerned, was the possibility of the Russian Revolution and the 1919 formation of the American Communist Party emboldening and intensifying class conflict.⁶

In California, an act of the State Legislature dissolved the CSCD on January 31, 1919. Even after its dissolution, the CSCD influenced the state’s post-war activities more extensively than most other states in the region.⁷ With an appropriation of nearly \$1,000,000 a year between January 1919 and December 1921, California reserved more funds for reconstruction work than any other state defense council in the American West, and one of the highest in the country. Only New York appropriated more funds than California for reconstruction work.⁸ The State Department of Horticulture was especially interested in retaining many of the CSCD’s wartime programs meant to aid agricultural development in the period of reconstruction. With the state government’s continued financial and logistical support of its farming population, including additional funding for the State Land Settlement Board, farm loan assistance, and labor procurement, California’s farming industries received a lion’s share of the state’s reconstruction activities. Much of the rest of the reconstruction budget was spent on veterans’ programs.⁹

⁵ D.F. Costello to C.B. Reed, January 27, 1919, box 129, folder “Secret Service Correspondence, 1919,” Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁶ D.F. Costello to C.B. Reed, February 8, 1919, box 129, folder “Secret Service Correspondence, 1919,” Governor Ernest Lister Papers.

⁷ “Last Day of State Defense Council Near,” *Oakland Tribune*, January 15, 1919, 8; *Report of the Activities of the California State Council of Defense*, 48-52.

⁸ State of California, *Biennial Report of the State Controller for Sixty-Ninth Fiscal Year* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1919), 17-19; State of California, *California Senate Final History, Forty-Fourth Session, 1921* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921), 239-241.

⁹ *Eighth Annual Report of the California State Commissioner of Horticulture to the Legislature, 1917-1918* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1919), 16-20; “Farm Center a Community Council,” *Santa Ana Register*, February 12, 1919, 11; H.E.B. to Edward A. Dickson, May 5, 1919, box 1, folder F3197-1, War History Communication Files.

The Arizona State Legislature disbanded the ASCD on June 11, 1919, with the passage of Senate Bill No. 8. Thomas Campbell, Arizona's newly-elected Republican governor, along with several of his Republican colleagues who had been elected to the state legislature in November 1918, cheered the ASCD's dissolution.¹⁰ Perceived as a manifestation of the state's enduring Democratic majority and representative of its unabated partisan conflict, Arizona's Republicans considered the ASCD to be "a needless expenditure of money," and thought that "the state will be equally well off without it."¹¹ Almost immediately upon Thomas Campbell's gubernatorial victory in November 1919, he and his political allies broke off the unofficial wartime truce with the Democrats to focus on their recent consolidation of political power in Phoenix. They accused former-governor George Hunt of corruption while he was *ex officio* Chairman of the ASCD and worked diligently to tear down many of his wartime regulatory policies, especially those considered to be "too pro-labor." While nothing came of the political smears on the former governor, the attacks evinced a return to pre-war levels of partisan conflict in Arizona.¹²

In Montana, the MSCD remained active until August 26, 1921, when Governor Stewart dissolved the Council with an executive order following the ratification of the United States-German Peace Treaty. According to its founding documents, the MSCD was to maintain its existence and its involvement in the state's political and economic affairs "until the termination of the war," which proved to be a vague declaration that only served to prolong its authority. The MSCD was one of the only state defense councils in the country to remain in existence for so long, as most state units had disbanded by the summer of 1919. Like California, Montana

¹⁰ *A Record of the Activities of the Arizona State Council of Defense*, 50; "Wants Council of National Defense to 'Carry On,'" *Arizona Silver Belt*, February 14, 1919, 2.

¹¹ "Disband Councils of Defense," *Arizona Copper Camp*, December 14, 1918, 3.

¹² "Gov. Hunt Made Merry with the State's Cash," *Weekly Journal-Miner*, January 22, 1919, 5; "Hunt's Withdrawal May Draw Wiley Jones into Toga Race," *Weekly Journal-Miner*, August 6, 1919, 5.

focused much of its reconstruction activities on the continued improvement, mechanization, and expansion of the state's farming industries, retaining the administrative structures built by the MSCD to do so. As a result of those efforts, Montana focused on the further development of its agricultural economy, emphasizing farming and ranching over the state's hardrock mining and timber extraction. The legislature kept the MSCD's labor readjustment policies during its post-war years, including its divisive compulsory labor ordinances.¹³

Local Defense Councils in the Post-War Era

Throughout the period of World War I, federal, state, and county governments in the American West expressed a sincere desire to retain the local organization of the DCS upon the war's conclusion. A post-war study on the practicability of continuing the use of community defense councils by the CND determined that "during the war, democracy received an impetus ... in the United States where we have seen the earnest cooperation of both organizations and peoples who have been unfriendly and hostile [towards government]." Conducted by the CND's Educational Section, the study concluded that "the work of the councils should by all means be continued."¹⁴ In July 1919, eight-months after the declaration of the ceasefire agreement, the CND's Reconstruction Division sent out survey forms to the governors and executive committee members of all forty-eight state defense councils to inquire what they planned to do with their councils in the post-war period. Nearly all responded that they intended to maintain their county

¹³ Ibid., 177-178; "Montana's Defense Council is Abolished by Governor's Act," *Daily Missoulian*, August 27, 1921, 1; State of Montana, *Laws of the State of Montana Passed at the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly* (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1918), 4-5.

¹⁴ Robert E. Cavanaugh and Walter S. Bittner, *School and Community Service: Experiments in Democratic Organization* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1919), 17, 18.

and/or local defense council units after the war, but that most of the state councils would be kept on hiatus to be called on in case of another emergency.¹⁵

The formation of county and community defense councils during the war was not simply a practical wartime expedient, it was an attempt by policymakers at the federal and state levels to restructure American society in perpetuity. Policymakers were confident that the system in general could become an instrument for the reorganization, or “readjustment,” of American political and socioeconomic practices even long after the Great War. Woodrow Wilson expressed optimism regarding the positive impacts that localized defense council units might have in post-war American society. In a circular issued to all state defense councils one month after the November 1918 armistice agreement, Wilson extolled the prospective role of the local defense councils in post-war reconstruction. “In extending the national defense organization by the creation of community councils,” the President explicated, “[they] will build up from the bottom an understanding and sympathy and unity of purpose ... welding the nation together as no nation has been welded before.”¹⁶

In California, the CSCD expanded even further upon Wilson’s message, insisting that “every community in the state should organize in order to help solve the social and economic problems that come with the reconstruction and readjustment period following the war.”¹⁷ Elected and appointed officials throughout the state supported the prospect of maintaining the organization of the county and community defense councils to some extent. Along with government officials, private-sector actors also understood the benefits that the new form of

¹⁵ Council of National Defense, *Readjustment and Reconstruction Information: Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 14-15.

¹⁶ *Handbook on Community Organization*, 3-4; *Second Annual Report of the National Council of Defense*, 13-15.

¹⁷ *Handbook on Community Organization*, 5.

governance could provide in peacetime, just as it had done in wartime. The DCS was in no way destined to fade away into obscurity once the war ended. There existed a very real possibility to keep it operating indefinitely, or at least something similar. As a result of local participation in the mobilization effort, the chance of a practical reconfiguration of socioeconomic and political practices seemed fully within reach, if even for a brief moment.¹⁸

Before its dissolution, the CSCD formed a Reconstruction Committee to continue its work into the post-war years. The Reconstruction Committee encouraged the maintenance of the state's county and community defense councils indefinitely. Californians had established more than 3,000 community councils during the war, and as they had proven to be practical and useful means of local socioeconomic organization, most counties and towns hoped to retain them for as long as possible.¹⁹ On December 27, 1918, Governor William D. Stephens publicly declared the day to be known as "Community Day," to "preserve the cooperative spirit" demonstrated by Californians during the Great War. "In order to weld our people into a more perfect democracy," Stephens proclaimed, "I call upon all ... public spirited citizens to join in the movement, and to urge their friends and neighbors to join in the movement inaugurated by the State Council of Defense, to the end that on that day a community council will be organized in every community district in California."²⁰ Not only did Californians want to maintain the system, but they also wanted to expand it. California was not alone in how it understood the prospective post-war significance of local defense council units.

¹⁸ Ibid., 6-7; Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 48-49; Cavanaugh and Bittner, *School and Community Service: Experiments in Democratic Experimentation*, 18-19; Scherer, 209; "Reconstruction Movement is Now on in all States," *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, May 30, 1919, 8.

¹⁹ Ibid., 24-25.

²⁰ California Historical Survey Commission, *California in the War: War Addresses, Proclamations, and Patriotic Messages of Governor William D. Stephens* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921), 80.

The Idaho State Council of Defense (ISCD), established by an act of the state legislature in September 1917, continued to exist as a significant government body after the ceasefire. Idaho Governor David W. Davis, the ISCD's Executive Committee, and the Idaho State Legislature all agreed to retain the state's community defense council system following the Governor's dissolution of the ISCD in March 1919. Governor Davis felt that the ISCD and its respective county and community defense council units had worked so efficiently during the period of mobilization that they wanted to see those local councils maintained as an innovative form of local organization. Idaho's Republican supermajority in the state legislature concurred with Governor Davis's articulation of the need for the post-war retention of the local defense council system, writing it into law with Senate Bill 28 on March 11, 1919. "It appears desirable that the council of defense system be given express legal recognition and be made available ... not only ... to postwar readjustment, but also at any future time of need, either national or state."²¹

In Washington State, the WSCD did not put forth any official plans to continue the use of county or community defense councils after the war's end. However, like most defense councils, the WSCD urged the county and municipal governments of the state to retain their local defense council units "to begin all new work possible so as to give employment to the citizens of the State in order to avoid a depression of business."²² The WSCD's Women's Committee also expressed a desire to maintain its existence into the reconstruction period. Although the Women's Committee disbanded in January of 1919 with the rest of the WSCD, many of the women involved in wartime activities brought their mobilization experience back into the private sector. The post-war continuation of the Women's Committee, as represented in the work of

²¹ *General Laws of the State of Idaho Passed at the Fifteenth Session of the State Legislature, 1919* (Boise: Government Printer, 1919), 363-365.

²² "Holds Spirit-Rousing Session," *Labor Journal*, February 7, 1919, 1; "May Continue Organization," *Colville Examiner*, January 25, 1919, 1.

affiliated organizations like the Red Cross, the YWCA, the Women in Industry Committee, and the Women's Victory Loan Committee, engaged mostly in Americanizing immigrants, food conservation, food preservation, and soliciting victory loans – extensions of the wartime duties deemed “women's work” which had become indispensable facets of mobilization.²³

In Arizona, the ASCD did not attempt to continue the use of county or community defense councils into the period of reconstruction. Rather than relying on government administrations to help do the social organizing that reconstruction would require, Thomas E. Campbell, the state's first Republican governor, chose to retain modes of administrative associationalism for that purpose. Shortly before Campbell disbanded the ASCD in 1919, the Executive Committee formed the War Veterans' Association (WVA) to help secure employment for returning soldiers and sailors. The WVA was organized and funded in part by the state and in part by private donations, but entirely operated by private-sector actors appointed by a legislative committee appointed by the Governor. Similar to the various “private” associations created by governments during the war for mobilization purposes, the WVA appeared to be a creature of the private sector but was in fact a telling representation of a burgeoning administrative state. The administrative associationalism practiced by the DCS continued into the post-war era.²⁴

II: Socioeconomic Adjustment during Reconstruction

In 1919, President Wilson and the NWLB tasked the National Industrial Conference Board (NICB) to investigate workers' compensation laws and to create a nationwide cost of living index. Even though the NICB – an associational conglomerate formed in 1915 and comprised of the eleven largest trade associations in the United States – was represented by

²³ *Report of the State Council of Defense to the Governor of Washington*, 115-117; *Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States*, 335; Blair, *The Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense*, 126-130.

²⁴ *Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States*, 14-15.

powerful corporate interests, the organization coordinated with the AFL to devise solutions to solve labor conflicts, a process the NWLB referred to as “industrial readjustment.” The NICB defined “industrial readjustment” as “a constructive attempt to smooth the way for a return to conditions, with such adaptations to changes affected during the war as may be conducive to the welfare of labor, the prosperity of industry, and the interests of the public.”²⁵ Upon presenting its findings to the NWLB, the NICB voiced support for a federal cost of living index, which would determine consistent minimum wage increases relative to rate hikes for goods and services. It also supported the establishment of new federal labor laws, including workers’ compensation, unemployment insurance, and a minimum wage standard. In addition, the NICB also advocated for the standard eight-hour workday in most industries.²⁶

The methods of wartime cooperation and coordination practiced by the DCS facilitated a drastic change in how businesses, especially corporations, interacted with their work forces. The insistence by employers’ associations that businesses recognize the interests of their workers, and that “the wartime wage-hikes and increased standards of living be maintained even after the war,” evinced a new dynamic between boss and worker. Initiated by the private-sector-led DCS, which had worked with employers throughout the nation to safeguard the rights and wages of workers, the post-war business-sector determined that maintaining those wartime gains would be in their own best interests. Quelling labor agitation had been one of the foremost goals of the DCS, which, for many, made the decision by American business associations to support a higher

²⁵ National Industrial Conference Board, *Problems of Industrial Readjustment in the United States*, “Research Report Number 15,” (Boston: NICB Publications, 1919), 2.

²⁶ National Industrial Conference Board, *The Cost of Living Among Wage-Earners*, “Research Report Number 22,” (Boston: NICB Publications, 1919), v, 1-3; Council of National Defense, *An Analysis of the High Cost of Living Problem* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 5-10.

standard of living for the working-class a relatively simple economic conclusion that would assist in increasing industrial efficiency.²⁷

The AFL continued to coordinate with businesses and employers' associations after the war to readjust existing labor problems and find ways to ameliorate new ones. Radical labor groups like the IWW may have labeled Gompers a politically-conservative "jingo," but the AFL's wartime policy of cooperating with businesses and governments was an intrinsically pragmatic one. Business-labor-government coordination helped organized labor make tremendous gains for workers' rights. Organized labor would not see the kind of government support it had truly hoped for until 1935 with the passage of the Wagner Act. But, during the twenty-one year interregnum between the 1914 Clayton Act and the Wagner Act, the American union labor movement experienced better relations with state labor departments and gained increasingly higher numbers of new members, solidifying the support needed to properly persuade Congress to pass the Wagner Act, which would all but guarantee the AFL's continued growth and accumulation of political prestige over the proceeding decades.²⁸

AFL and IWW in the Post-War American West

The DCS accomplished most of its wartime goals regarding the readjustment and efficacy of labor and employment practices in the American West. Thanks to the efforts of and cooperation among the various state and county defense councils, the federal government, employers, and labor unions; labor adjustment policies in the western states effectively transformed the region's pre-World War I socioeconomic status quo. The most dramatic reconfigurations to the regional labor landscape was in the ideological shift in direct action

²⁷ *Problems of Industrial Readjustment in the United States*, 2; Bing, 151-154.

²⁸ Taft, 369-372; "Mr. Gompers and His Enemies," *New York Times*, October 27, 1919, 10; *Report of Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor*, 184.

methodology. Rather than relying on strikes, slowdowns, boycotts, etc., to gain leverage over businesses, AFL-affiliated unions began to rely more on political methods of action and the willingness of labor-friendly administrations to help them reach their goals. Meanwhile, labor eschewed the more radical tactics of direct action as espoused by the IWW, wholly sacrificing the notion of industrial democracy for patriotism and bread-and-butter unionism.²⁹

While the IWW and the AFL had always been in competition for the hearts and minds of the American working-class, World War I drove an even larger wedge between the two groups. In 1917, the federal government had asked for the full participation and unquestioned loyalty of organized labor to help make mobilization a success, which labor agreed to in exchange for certain guarantees. For labor's part in the bargain, the government demanded that the AFL disavow the radicalism of the IWW and, by proxy, their own radical proclivities and direct action methods. In agreeing to the terms put forth by the government, the AFL emerged from the Great War as the nation's premier labor organization, and it would remain nominally unchallenged until the appearance of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1935. As a blanket labor federation that focused its organizing drives on "unskilled" workers in the industries that the AFL had traditionally refused to organize, but that the IWW had, the CIO arose as a kind of less radical, more institutionalized derivative of the IWW.³⁰

The IWW did not survive World War I intact. The union had experienced a surge in membership numbers, peaking in 1917, but by late-1918, the IWW's membership rolls dipped dramatically. The two largest branches of the IWW – the AWIU and the LWIU – failed to recover from the wartime onslaught they were forced to endure in 1917 and 1918, becoming more of a legal defense organization for its persecuted members, as opposed to an actual labor

²⁹ McCartin, 221-227; *Fourth Annual Report of the United States Council of National Defense*, 59-69.

³⁰ McCartin, 187-191.

union. The 4L arose as the foremost antagonist to the LWIU in the forests of western Washington and Oregon. The military-fashioned form of union organizing forced logging companies to adapt to the situation and ejected IWW organizers from the region, bringing a drastic forced change to the labor conditions that attracted the LWIU in the first place. In the farming districts of the West, the AWIU was effectively replaced through non-unionized local labor sources and increased mechanization. The AWIU's numbers ebbed and flowed after the Great War, but by the mid-1920s, the IWW's most dynamic branch could not find new members to join. By the 1930s, most migrant workers in the West were of Mexican or Asian descent and IWW organizers had little luck in convincing them to join. The automobile had also displaced the need for so many migrant workers, with trucks and tractors steadily replacing the traditional farmhand.³¹

Socioeconomic Assistance for Veterans

The period of post-World War I reconstruction in the United States ushered in a new era of relations between military veterans and the federal and state governments. The Great War was the first military conflict that the United States had conscripted soldiers for since the Civil War. The US Military conscripted millions of American men between 1917 and 1918, bringing the federal government's authority into the personal lives of Americans at a level that most had never experienced. At the federal level, the CND established programs to not only help reemploy veterans, but to also help them recover from their mental and physical wounds. Those programs, however, were discontinued before they even started, leaving it to the states to devise similar veterans' assistance policies.³²

³¹ Hall, 222-224; Dubofsky, 255-259.

³² Matthew Woll, "American Labor Readjustment Proposals," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (February 1, 1919): 186-187.

In California, the Governor Stephens and the CSCD developed one of the nation's most efficient and comprehensive programs designed to reintegrate Great War veterans back into the employment sector. As one of its final acts as a wartime body, the CSCD established the State Committee on Reconstruction, an extension of the Council's Committee on War Donations, which solicited funds from Californians to put towards defense council activities. The Committee on Reconstruction similarly solicited funds from residents to help finance the state's plans to settle and reintegrate war veterans, evincing the post-war maintenance of administrative associationalism. The state government's organization of a "quasi-governmental" association that was managed by private citizens and backed by private donations exemplified how wartime shifts in modes of governance continued after the war.³³

The popularity, practicality, and overall successes of the CSCD's wartime Land Settlement Program inspired other defense councils to consider similar plans. The main difference between California's settlement program and those found in other states in the region was that, while California's original settlement plan was focused on providing land ownership opportunities to non-military working-class Americans, other settlement programs focused exclusively on veteran-specific farming settlements. Encouraged by the federal government, several state defense councils experimented with veteran-exclusive homesteading policies. With the possibility of repopulating the region's farming districts and improving local infrastructure, such veteran-friendly policy ideas were welcomed by the state governments of the American West, especially when US Congress was willing to divvy out federal funds for that purpose.³⁴

³³ *Report of the State Committee on Soldier's Employment and Readjustment* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1920), 3-5; *California Senate Final History, Forty-Fourth Session, 1921*, 111.

³⁴ *Readjustment and Reconstruction Activities in the States*, 16, 34-35, 180-181, 342-343; Elwood Mead, "Placing Soldiers on Farm Colonies," *The Annals of the American Academy*, Vol. 71 (January 1919): 62-72.

In 1919, shortly before it disbanded, the ASCD, in cooperation with the Arizona State Legislature, passed the Soldier Settlement Act, which established the Soldier Settlement Board. The purpose of the Board was to make land acquisitions and determine the level of appropriations that would be needed for determining plots of farmland or ranchland for veterans settlements. Inspired by the success of the CSCD's land settlement experience, the ASCD wanted to not only make sure that the state's returning veterans would be placed with employment, but it also sought to provide landless veterans "an economic stake in the land."³⁵

On March 8, 1921, Governor Thomas Campbell signed the Senate Bill No. 90, a series of amendments to the 1919 Soldier Settlement Act that, with an annual appropriation of \$50,000, provided land, homes, and financial assistance for "soldiers, sailors, marines, and other military veterans." By passing the bill into law, Arizona also formed the basis for its plans to increase the economic viability of the state's agricultural industries by building irrigation systems, roads, and other essential infrastructure, attracting more Americans to the desert state. State and federal funds for such large projects would not be available if the region was not populated and working the land, making the settlement idea less about helping veterans and more about making general readjustments to the state's socioeconomic character.³⁶

With recommendations from the MSCD and Governor Stewart, the Montana State Legislature established the Veterans Welfare Commission (VWC) in 1919, pre-dating the creation of the federal government's Veterans' Bureau by two years. The VWC appointed Charles E. Pew, Commander for the Montana Department of the American Legion, to take charge of the new administration. In 1921, the VWC constructed the state's first veterans'

³⁵ US House of Representatives, Sixty-Fifth Congress, *Hearings Before the Committee on Irrigation of Arid Lands* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 266-270; "Land-Settlement Laws," *The Vocational Summary*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (September 1920): 66.

³⁶ "Soldier Settlement Act One of Eleven Signed by Governor," *Arizona Republican*, March 9, 1921, 2.

hospital at Fort Harrison near Helena.³⁷ Pew understood that, because of the mental anguish suffered by Great War veterans, the typical methods of treating visible wounds would not suffice. “It was found that instead of the men becoming well and the need for hospitalization terminated,” Pew informed Congress, “the disabled men of Montana ... would be the subject of hospitalization for an indefinite period” making “intensive rehabilitation” necessary for reintegration.³⁸ Montana’s first post-war legislative session also passed Senate Bill No. 35, which required “public officers and boards of commission and control to give preferential employment to disabled soldiers and sailors of the United States.”³⁹

Agricultural Contraction and Depression

America’s military involvement in the Great War lasted only nineteen months, even though the CND and the state defense councils had pushed the narrative early on in the conflict that it would last a minimum of three to five additional years. The patriotic coercion used by DCS officials to promote agricultural expansion made many farmers blind to the long-term consequences of their wartime activities.⁴⁰ Most farmers were, by and large, making good money and their state and county defense council units praised them for their efforts, ensuring them that their work contained a purpose that went far beyond pecuniary interests. A 1918 poem, “Song of the Patriotic Plowman,” written by an unnamed Montana farmer to extoll the patriotic virtues of farming during the Great War, perfectly encapsulated how farmers understood their wartime role and how that could have affected their lack of economic foresight:

³⁷ *House and Senate Journals of the Extraordinary Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly*, 160; State of Montana, *The Revised Codes of Montana of 1921, Part VI* (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1921), 2086-2088.

³⁸ US Congress, *World War Veterans’ Legislation: Hearing before Subcommittee on the Hospital Building Program* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928), 223.

³⁹ *House and Senate Journals of the Extraordinary Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly*, 149-150.

⁴⁰ S.V. Stewart to Charles Herbert McLeod, May 25, 1917, box 42, folder 1, Charles McLeod Papers.

“The world cries out for food, and the marshaled farmers reply. As they join their teams to the plows and across wide fields they ply ... Behold, from the sea to the sea, from Mexican Gulf to the Lakes; the arm of the sturdy farmer in the battle for right partakes. Each shining furrow is gain for the forces of freedom at war; each busy plow is adding to liberty’s full store ... The fertile soil of harvests for the saving of the free! The furrows! Everywhere furrows like the waves of an endless sea! And the plow that makes for plenty will likewise make the grave of freedom’s evil foeman and every royal knave.”⁴¹

The rapid and massive expansion of western farmland acreage in such a brief period of time came with some severe, yet predictable consequences. The high, fixed prices of foodstuffs encouraged farmers to expand their businesses, making some of them very wealthy in the process. But the high commodity rates were only meant to be a temporary expedient, not a long-term expectation. The dissemination of patriotic rhetoric and the development of an overzealous wartime fervor effectively obfuscated the temporary nature of the fixed-price scheme. Once the federal government announced the ceasefire in November of 1918, food prices fell rapidly, in effect plummeting by late-1921/early-1922. In 1923, the United States would see some of the lowest commodity prices for agricultural products in the nation’s history. The wartime demand for increased food production rates was more than a success. It was in fact so successful that it created a devastating supply glut, dropping commodity rates considerably and leaving farmers throughout the country worried about how the drop in prices would affect their recent purchases of additional land, farming implements, etc.⁴²

In addition to the commodity rate decreases and inflation of farmland prices, the wartime expansion of agriculture led to severe environmental degradation throughout much of the West. The degraded soils were especially harmful in the Great Plains which, combined with a severe ongoing drought, greatly contributed to the Dust Bowl of 1930. Lands that were once productive

⁴¹ “Song of the Patriotic Plowman,” *Sanders County Independent*, June 27, 1918, 4.

⁴² H. Thomas Johnson, *Agricultural Depression in the 1920’s: Economic Fact or Statistical Artifact?* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985), 1-8.

farms went unused following the agricultural depression, especially dryland farms in the Plains, as farmers either went bankrupt or were otherwise unable to plant additional acreage due to the lack of demand which resulted from the post-war food surplus glut. As the quantity of those lands continued to increase into the 1920s, millions of acres of once-fertile soil sat unfarmed, unreplenished, and exposed to the dry heat of the region. Monocrop culture in relation to wheat, corn, and oat farming also played a part in that degradation as soils that could have been used for continued farming lacked the necessary nutrients. Many inexperienced or greedy farmers had ignored crop rotations to keep up with high demand for high-priced grains, leading to toxic levels of alkalinity in the soil.⁴³

By demanding such high rates of agricultural expansion in combination with the high cost of produce, the DCS had unwittingly set the stage for a period of extreme indebtedness for a wide swath of American farmers. Many farmers could no longer net the same prices for their produce after 1921 as they were able to do between 1917 and 1920. Millions of farmers were unable to pay off their loans on additional land or mechanization, leading to bankruptcy and property liens, causing a calamitous economic meltdown in the ensuing years. Farmland acreage contracted and banks foreclosed on millions of farms. The sequence of economic unsurety, environmental degradation, and unchecked speculative practices laid the foundation for catastrophe, beginning with the Agricultural Depression of the early-1920s, and then, the fatal stock market crash of October 29, 1929. Farmers already felt the economic pressure long before the stock market crash crippled Wall Street. The Agricultural Depression of the 1920s acted as a precursor to the massive, global financial meltdown that proceeded it. The environmental and economic problems of the 1920s did not happen because farmers sought to expand their

⁴³ Giovanni Federico, "Not Guilty? Agriculture in the 1920s and the Great Depression," *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (December 2005): 962-966.

farmlands as an organic economic process, it happened because of the somewhat reckless encouragement of the DCS, its private-sector leadership, and the various respective socioeconomic and political whims of those actors.⁴⁴

III: Rise of Radical Conservatism and Death of Progressive Populism

The efforts of the DCS effectively hobbled mainstream populism during the period of World War I and the period of reconstruction. The wartime marginalization of populist partisan factions forced them to the fringes of American political culture. Although the United States mostly avoided the horrors of war domestically, the nation would experience some of the most violent sprees of political radicalism it had ever before witnessed in the years following the 1918 ceasefire. A spate of anarchist bombings and assassination attempts reached a fever pitch in 1919, echoing some of the worst of such violence from the 1880s, which the country thought it had left behind. Thirty-six mail bombs were sent to various recipients across the country, including John D. Rockefeller, A. Mitchell Palmer, William B. Wilson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Seattle Mayor, Ole Hanson, among many others. 1920 saw even higher levels of political violence, exemplified by the Wall Street bombing on September 6, which killed forty people. The Great War and the Entente's victory over the Triple Alliance brought a renewed sense of optimism to the US, but that elation would be short-lived as the flurry of political violence from both the left and the right shattered the once-promising, Progressive Era ideal of non-partisan nationalism.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Michael P. Malone and Richard W. Etulain, *The American West: A Twentieth-Century History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 87-90.

⁴⁵ Joseph T. McCann, *Terrorism on American Soil: A Concise History of Plots and Perpetrators from the Famous to the Forgotten* (Boulder: Sentient Publications, 2006), 54-61, 62-68.

The American Legion

As a derivative of both the era's radical atmosphere and the World War, the American Legion formed a unique understanding of class-conflict, nationalism, and political conformity. Established by Great War veterans in 1919 and chartered by Congress in 1920, the organization emerged during a turbulent period in the United States as class-conflict and political radicalism had reached a breaking point. The national Steelworker's Strike, the Seattle General Strike, the Centralia Massacre, the Boston Police Strike, and a series of bombings across the country all revealed the intense societal malaise of 1919. But, for many American veterans of the Great War, left-wing violence was represented not so much by domestic radicalism but by the rise of the Bolshevik Communist faction during the 1917 Russian Revolution and what the Soviet consolidation of power meant for Russia's American military allies fighting in Europe.⁴⁶

The Russian Revolution, more specifically the provisional Russian government, took Russia out of the war on March 3, 1918, with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. As the brainchild of Leon Trotsky, the treaty secured a ceasefire agreement between the Central Powers and Russia, concluding Russia's involvement in the war. With the cessation of fighting on the Eastern Front, Germany sent nearly one-million battle-hardened troops to the Western Front to fight the remaining Entente troops in the trenches of Western Europe. The introduction of more German troops lengthened the conflict, adding to casualties on both sides and frustrating Russia's American, British, and French allies. Regardless of the validity of Trotsky and Lenin's motivations for pulling out of the conflict, for millions of Doughboys, left-wing political radicalism would henceforth become synonymous with disloyalty and betrayal under fire. The

⁴⁶ William Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989), 10-13; Beverly Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in the First Age of Terror* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1-8.

American Legion's complex notions of patriotism developed in that collective wartime trauma and consolidated itself under a banner of anti-communism and hyper-patriotic American nationalism.⁴⁷

Following the American Legion's formation, Legionnaires across the country organized attacks on political dissenters and labor unionists of all stripes. They assaulted Communists in Cincinnati, raided their offices, and stole membership lists. In Washington State in 1919, Legionnaires initiated a violent gun battle with the IWW's Centralia branch, resulting in the deaths of one Wobbly, four Legionnaires, and a deputy sheriff. Legionnaires even volunteered for strike-breaking duties during the 1920s and 1930s. The Legion made adversaries of Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, the IWW, the NPL, and even the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The post-war activities of the American Legion influenced the First Red Scare of 1919. Although it never explicitly advocated for a policy of political violence, the Legion frequently took the initiative to go after those perceived as a threat to the American socioeconomic order and its traditional Two-Party Political System. Legionnaires even went after elected government officials accused of harboring un-American attitudes and sympathizing with left-wing radicals. Most of the American Legion's post-war violence occurred out West.⁴⁸

Reactionary Political Violence in Montana

On June 30, 1920, Burton K. Wheeler, former US District Attorney from Butte and the NPL's gubernatorial nominee for Montana, was in the town of Dillon, the seat of Beaverhead

⁴⁷ Roscoe Baker, *The American Legion and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1954), 13.

⁴⁸ Christopher Nehls, "The American Legion and Striking Workers during the Interwar Period," chapter in *The Right and Labor in America*, Nelson Lichtenstein, ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 79-84; Samuel Walker, *In Defense of American Liberties: A History of the ACLU* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 47, 109; Kim E. Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1999), 18-22; Hapgood, 56-63.

County, for a meeting with his local supporters. While most state defense councils had already been disbanded by 1920, the MSCD and its county councils were still active. Members of the Beaverhead County Council of Defense (BCCD) and the Dillon City Council still maintained the MSCD's wartime policy of banning any political speeches not endorsed by local Republican or Democratic Party Chairpersons. Even though the NPL and the Farmer-Labor Party both endorsed Wheeler, he had filed to run as a Democrat as part of the NPL's new tact of getting its candidates on a major party ticket to increase their chances of victory. Due to the opposition from establishment Democrats in Dillon against Wheeler, his decision to run as a Democrat, whether legitimate or not, mattered little to local Party officials.⁴⁹

Because he did not want to be arrested by overzealous law enforcement officials, nor did he wish to raise the fur of the BCCD, Wheeler rescheduled the event to take place at the Sorenson Ranch, just outside of the city limits. When Wheeler stood atop a parked vehicle to speak, a group led by American Legionnaires from Beaverhead Post No. 20, along with some "well-known area businessmen," threatened him. Wheeler later remarked that he heard one of the men tell another to "get the rope." A melee broke out and during the fray, Edward Cushing, one of Wheeler's supporters, stabbed Frank Jones, a Legionnaire. Wheeler escaped unharmed, but only because Great War veteran, Frank Mauritz, held the Legionnaires off with his rifle. Wheeler hid in a boxcar while Mauritz stood guard, promising to "drill a hole through anyone who attempted to molest [Wheeler]."⁵⁰

Beaverhead County, a heavy grain farming and ranching region, contained a good number of NPL sympathizers who felt that the violent dispersal of a legitimate political gathering

⁴⁹ Marc C. Johnson, *Political Hell-Raiser: The Life and Times of Senator Burton K. Wheeler* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), 30-32.

⁵⁰ Ibid.; "Beaverhead Officials Allow Lawless Crowd to Attack Candidates," *Butte Daily Bulletin*, June 30, 1920, 1, 2; "Boxcar is a Refuge for Politician," *Anaconda Standard*, July 1, 1920, 1.

by area business interests was a perfect example of why the NPL received their support.

Witnesses alleged that John D. Ryan, President of the First National Bank of Dillon, a subsidiary of the Anaconda Mining Company (AMC), had organized the Legionnaires with the intent to use violence to intimidate Wheeler and the NPL. Several residents demanded that the known members of the mob be arrested and charged. Later that day, the ringleader of the emboldened mob threatened to tar and feather Harlow Pease, Dillon City Attorney and NPL-endorsed candidate for State Supreme Court Justice.⁵¹

The use of the American Legion as political muscle for corporate interests and establishment politicians evinced a new and frightening element to the consolidation of Two-Party Politics in the American West. When patriotic rhetoric and nationalistic sentiment failed to elicit results, DCS officials chose violence. Democrats and Republicans in Beaverhead County, supported and shielded by the BCCD, used the same tactics of violent repression that the AMC engaged in whenever it hired strike-breakers. Right-wing radicalism had emerged from within the political sphere, in this case among war veterans and businessmen, as a violent conservative reaction to left-wing political populism and labor militancy. Just as left-wing radicalism had roiled the United States between the 1880s and World War I, violent right-wing radicalism similarly materialized in the 1920s, emboldened by the presence of military veterans.⁵²

IV: Final Analysis

Americans who lived in the western states from the time of the Preparedness Movement in 1916 through the ratification of the US-German Peace Treaty in 1921 easily recognized the various transformations that wartime mobilization had brought to the region. While the modern

⁵¹ “Seek Murder of Wheeler at Dillon,” *Butte Daily Bulletin*, July 1, 1920, 1, 2; “Frank Jones is Stabbed,” *Dillon Examiner*, June 30, 1920, 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*; “Bulletin Story is Analyzed,” *Dillon Examiner*, July 7, 1920, 1.

cosmopolitan standard of urban life in the American West had not yet been established, the cities and towns of the region emerged from the Great War looking much more like modern urban areas. Wartime and post-war infrastructure projects in rural communities improved travel and communication, helping to increase their socioeconomic viability and plugging them in more directly to regional and national markets. States drafted compulsory school laws for children and eliminated most forms of industrial child labor. Urban farming helped to decrease the food dependence of cities on industrial agriculture while also limiting urban blight. Additionally, local laws drafted by DCS officials in most western states ended the long-standing practice of permitting livestock to roam freely within the city limits, removing frontier stigmas, improving sanitation, and greatly improving the western aesthetic.⁵³

More importantly however, were the changes that resulted from the DCS's wartime ordinances aimed at eliminating or curbing the labor agitation efforts of the IWW and the related problem of vagrancy in the American West. Through the practical application of vagrancy laws, the creation of government unions, use of coercive labor policies, wage-scale adjustments, non-violent forms of labor replacement, and hearty cooperation by the AFL and area businesses, the state and county defense councils of the region created an untenable situation for migratory laborers and the IWW. Migrant workers, no matter how crucial they were to the development of the western American economy, represented the frontier stereotype in just about everything they did. They hopped on trains for transportation, carried everything they owned in a bindle, slept under the stars, represented a multi-ethnic cross-section of society, and were thorns in the sides of employers everywhere.⁵⁴ The Wobblies were, in effect, the counterculture of the period. In an

⁵³ "Changes in the West," *Cottonwood Chronicle*, January 24, 1919, 4; "Territorial Tattle," *Hyder Alaska Miner*, June 23, 1920, 3; "Ordinances Regarding Livestock and Sanitation," *Bonnors Ferry Herald*, July 27, 1920, 3.

⁵⁴ Wyman, 5-8; Malone and Etulain, *The American West*, 5-7.

era of increasing expectations of conformity and desperate attempts by the government to stifle dissent, eliminating the reliance on such easily radicalized working-class Americans held symbolic connotations of modernization as well as socioeconomic ones.⁵⁵

In 1916, many Americans in the West would have considered the region to be more of an extractive colony for East Coast business interests than as a politically and economically independent place. In that sense, the West did not look much more different in 1916 than it did in 1890. By 1921, the changes wrought by wartime mobilization were not just noticeable in an abstract sense, they were in fact quite palpable.⁵⁶ California's post-war economy represented that change. "Before the war, California was dependent largely upon the outsider ... [and] this is not a good economic situation," noted Watt Moreland, President of the California Chamber of Commerce, "the great world war and the work of reconstruction has altered this view materially."⁵⁷ The Chamber of Commerce used its wartime partnerships with the CSCD and the county councils to increase government support for the construction of new factories by resident industrialists, leading to the Chamber's support for and eventual passage of the controversial *King Bill* in 1921. The bill raised the state's corporate income tax by 35% and encouraged local development with tax incentives for prospective California citizen business owners.⁵⁸

Afterward: The New Deal and World War II

The experimental, trial-and-error, and oftentimes haphazard organization of the DCS experienced a major evolution over the course of its relatively brief existence. With its various

⁵⁵ Wyman, 271-275; Hall, 224-229; "Labor Welcomes Modern Methods," *Imperial Valley Press*, November 12, 1920, 1.

⁵⁶ Malone and Etulain, 7; "Give the West a Chance," *Northern Wyoming Herald*, July 7, 1920, 2.

⁵⁷ Watt L. Moreland, "Southern California's Industrial Future," *California Southland*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1919): 13.

⁵⁸ Franklin Hichborn, *Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1921* (San Francisco: James H. Barry Company, 1922), 107-114; Jackson K. Putnam, "The Progressive Legacy in California," 251.

appointed leaders steadily working to perfect the system through the application of administrative structures devised and commandeered by private associations, the DCS formed the foundation for the coming bureaucratic revolution in federal administration. Following his election to the presidency in 1932, Franklin Roosevelt's Administration utilized the experience of former CND-organized bureaucracies to establish new agencies like the War Resources Board (derived from the WIB), the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (derived from the Farm Loan Bureau and the US Food Administration), and the National Labor Relations Board (derived from the NWLB). In addition, Roosevelt greatly deemphasized the importance on voluntarism in wartime mobilization, refusing to place nearly as much trust in the private-sector or even in state governments as Woodrow Wilson had during World War I.⁵⁹

As the United States crept closer to joining the Allied Powers in World War II, the federal government resurrected a refashioned, more ardently administrative model of the DCS in 1940 to help mobilize the nation for another prospective war in Europe. Because the basic structure for World War II mobilization was already in place, with the DCS essentially resting in stasis until it would be called upon for another emergency, the country did not have to go through the trial-and-error experience that it did in 1917. With the resurrection of the DCS, states once again engaged in cooperative federalism to mobilize their citizens, but in a far less independent manner. The rise of the administrative state in 1932 with FDR's New Deal policies ensured that homefront mobilization would not be led by the private sector. Federal government officials and powerful new administrative bureaucracies organized and operated the World War

⁵⁹ Conner, 183-186; Skowronek, 195; Byron Fairchild and Jonathon Grossman, *The Army and Industrial Manpower* (Washington: Dept. of the Army, 2002), 18-19; Polsky and Tkacheva, "Legacies Versus Politics: Herbert Hoover, Partisan Conflict, and the Symbolic Appeal of Associationalism," 210-213.

II version of the DCS, not influential private-sector actors appointed by a nominally business-friendly government trying to keep the administrative state at bay.⁶⁰

The purposeful omission of private-sector leadership and the use of more administrative modes of homefront mobilization during World War II played a major part in the rejection of FDR's New Deal policies by corporations and trade associations in the decades following 1945. When the CND tapped the private sector to lead the effort during the First World War, Woodrow Wilson and his Administration understood the historic significance of associationalism to American society. That fundamental awareness led directly to the development of more administrative modes of associationalism, organized as a unique mode of governance by private-sector actors. Even though it was the appointed leadership of various groups and individuals during World War I that shaped the associationalist impulse into a more administrative existence, corporations and employers' associations a generation later could not or did not want to identify that influence. Corporate America led the charge against the New Deal and the organized labor movement from the 1950s through the '80s, never fully grasping the irony of having attacked the government for the rise of administrative governance without having recognized their own role in that development.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Maury Klein, *A Call to Arms: Mobilizing America for World War II* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013), 5-9; Alan L. Gropman, *Mobilizing U.S. Industry in World War II: Myth and Reality* (Washington: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1996), 31-33, Skowronek, 234-235.

⁶¹ Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009), x-xii, 56-58; Tami J. Friedman, "Capital Flight, 'States' Rights,' and the Anti-Labor Offensive After World War II," chapter in *The Right and Labor in America*, 79-83.

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