

The Economic Club of New York

44th Meeting
11th Year

Our Responsibility in the
Present War Situation

May 14, 1918

Hotel Astor
New York City

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Introduction

Frank A. Vanderlip, Presiding

Gentlemen: This is the 44th dinner of the Economic Club. We are bringing to the close our 11th year. Our guests will have to pardon us a few moments for a business meeting. At this meeting, a President is elected.

I want to tell you that the Club is in the usual fine condition of a full membership, 1200 members, a long waiting list, and \$3000 in the Treasure. (Applause)

Will Mr. Pulleyn, the Chairman of the Nominating Committee, read the nominations that he Nominating Committee has made?

MR. PULLEYN: I desire to submit the names of the following gentlemen who have been nominated to fill the various offices:

For President: Henry Morgenthau; (Applause)

For Vice-Presidents: George W. Wickersham and William Church Osborn; (Applause)

Executive Committee, for a term of 3 years from October 1, 1918 to September 30, 1921:

Theodore E. Burton, Clarence H. Kelsey, Kelsey H. Milligan, E. H. Outerbridge and Frank A. Vanderlip.

MR. VANDERLIP: If there are no other nominations, a motion to have the Secretary cast a ballot for this ticket will be in order.

A VOICE: I move that the report of the Nominating Committee be adopted and that the Secretary be authorized to cast 1 ballot for the nominees as read by the Nominating Committee.

MR. VANDERLIP: You have heard the motion. All those in favor, will please say “Aye.”

There are no “Nays.” It will be cast.

DR. ELY: The vote is cast, sir.

MR. VANDERLIP: I shall call upon Mr. Morgenthau to say a few words. (Applause)

MR. MORGENTHAU: Mr. President and Member of the Economic Club: I thank you most heartily for the great honor that you have conferred upon me. In electing me President for the coming year, I think -- I know that I shall do my best to serve you in the capacity and try to have as many nice dinners and meetings as we have had in the past.

We are discussing this evening “Our Responsibility in this War” and there are just two subjects that I wish to touch upon.

We have had quite a little discussion the last day or two about this fake telegram from Canada and the reason that that was sent, in my opinion, is that the Germans are beginning to realize what a tremendously important step we have taken in combining with the French. I doubt if

many of you realized how the Germans gloated and were happy that we, though possessed of the finest manpower in the world, had no well trained officers. The German Ambassador told me repeatedly in Constantinople that it takes from 30 to 35 years to train a General. He told me that neither England nor the United States could ever become a great military power because they missed the chance. He said it was just like in a great big enterprise. Take a bank like the City Bank, or the United States Steel Company, or the Standard Oil Company, these tremendous units, -- how could they find presidents and directors to manage them if they didn't train them from the beginning, to gradually develop in them that executive ability which they now possess. He told me that they didn't fear us.

But just see what's happened. Here we have in the entire United States but 1 General, living General, who has ever had charge of more than 25,000 troops at one time, and that is General Pershing, with his experience down at the Mexican border. (Applause)

When I was in Paris last August, Marshal Joffre told me, "When you go home, tell your Government to send over a lot of Officers and have them attend the school of the General Staff. You need them before you need anything else."

Now, my friends, this combination, of the American manpower, with the French General Staff, which is recognized as the best in the world, better than the Germans, is absolutely an unbeatable combination. (Great Applause)

I don't want to forget or overlook the great ability of the English, but they, like us, have neglected developing a large army in time. Any one of you business men knows that it takes years and years.

Now the only other thought as to our responsibility is this: Don't think for 1 minute, don't underestimate what Germany has accomplished. If the war were to cease now by negotiation, Germany would have had a greater victory than she ever expected to have. Even if she gives us Alsace-Lorraine, surrenders Belgium, gives them an indemnity and did whatever else we asked on the Western front, we, in the United States, do not fully realize what she has accomplished in the East. Germany would be in a position in 4 or 5 years to dictate to the world.

Therefore, it is our responsibility to never think, to never breathe, to never allow for a moment the idea to take root in our minds, that this war can be terminated before the German military prestige is destroyed. (Applause) And there isn't any doubt that it will take several years to do it, but there is no doubt of the final result.

The Germans realize that when we have our army over there, that then their retreat will begin. They are going to do their utmost to administer as severe a number of blows, and as hard and as determined as they can, until we get our people over there.

Therefore, it is our responsibility in this country to encourage our Allies. those poor nations have got to stand these fearful blows and they couldn't stand them if they didn't know that the moral backing, as well as the great physical backing that we are going to give them, is in the course of preparation and is going to be there in time to make up for the draft and the demands that are made on their reserve. The bravery of those men deserves every admiration we can give them.

So I merely want to say this to you: Let us realize that we have now an invulnerable combination, and that those men -- our Allies -- are going to keep the front until we get there and that it is our duty to do everything in everyone's power to hasten our preparation. (Great Applause)

MR. VANDERLIP: This club has always selected subjects that were pertinent and that were close to our heart, that we subjects we needed to hear men of authority to speak upon.

That has been done this time. In all of our hearts in this question of what is our responsibility, -- what is our responsibility as a nation, what is our individual responsibility.

Now, here in New York we feel that we are awake to the war, that we are closer to the war, that perhaps we understand more of its full significance that is the case elsewhere in the country, but I want to bring you just a word of testimony about the rest of the country.

I reached New York this morning from a tour, where I have met every State Director of War Savings in the United States. I have had an opportunity to gauge sentiment, and I want to tell you that this whole country knows that we are at war; this whole country is ready to shoulder a real responsibility. (Applause)

I have been out in the great Middle West; I have seen those communities subscribe to the Liberty Loan, 150%, 200% of their quota. I have seen the seriousness of the men there. They are not braggarts, they are not talking about how many Germans a Yankee can lick, they are awake as to how serious this job is, as to how long it may last, as to what sacrifices may be imposed upon this country and upon individuals and they are ready to make those sacrifices.

They are ready to do their part. They are in this thing, soberly, with their eyes open, fully committed to it and the spirit of this country is ripe -- I am perfectly confident of that. (Applause)

I was down South and I got a true story that shows how quickly a man can wake up to his responsibilities. There was a little town in Georgia where a mountaineer cracker came down. He hadn't been down to town for many months, he hadn't heard any news and he saw men in uniform and he wanted to know what was the matter. Why, they said, haven't you heard, we are at war. No, who are we at war with? Why, with Germany. Gosh, I wish I had known that. Two Germans went by my house last night and I would have killed them just as easy as not. (Laughter and Applause)

Now, if we will wake up to that determination, as quickly formed as was formed in that man's mind, there won't be trouble at all about our shouldering our full responsibilities.

We shouldered our responsibilities right at the start of this war in a way that by one act is going to do more to win it than certainly any other single thing and perhaps any number of other things that we did as a nation. When the question of conscription was up, when it first came before the Military Committee of the House, there were 8 members of that committee that stood for conscription, the rest stood for a voluntary system. Those 8 men were under the leadership of a New York Congressman. He was firm in his determination to lead to victory on that first battle and he did lead to victory, and you are to have the opportunity of hearing that man -- the Honorable George Lunn, a member of the New York delegation in Congress.

First Speaker

The Honorable George R. Lunn

Congressman from New York

Mr. Chairman and Ladies and Gentlemen: I suppose that the extension of Democracy in New York State has been so recent that you have not had time to revise your rules regarding this Club; therefore you have the ladies in the gallery instead of at the table with you. I am glad to see they are present with us tonight.

I am very glad, indeed, to leave for a very short while, some very important work to come here to New York from Washington and to talk for a short time on our responsibility in the present war situation.

Our responsibility is to see it through, regardless of time, regardless of cost. (Applause) We are beginning to realize -- I say, we are beginning to realize somewhat, the full meaning of the word Democracy. That is a familiar word in our vocabulary. It has been used time and again without the realization of its profound significance. We are now going through the tragic experience of having that word, all that it connotes, strenuously and brutally challenged.

Our Nation was sailing along, prosperous and happy, seldom realizing the richness of our blessing, or the inspiring grandeur of our principles. We somehow felt that never could the day arrive when the ideals and principles of Democracy could be seriously threatened -- I mean, threatened for the world.

It seemed to be the general thought of our people that the establishment of our Government settled forever the question of popular government for this Nation. Democracy was the settled principle of our fathers, accepted by their sons. There was the general conviction among our people that we would have no entangling foreign alliances. Our problems were here, not there. The sanguinary strife on battlefields might come to Europe, we might be more or less interested in

the result, but any definite relationship between the European troubles, however critical, and American destiny, seldom, if ever, entered their thought. Not even at the outbreak of the war, was the nation made conscious of the tremendous significance of that awful conflict, or just what it involved, or just what it meant. While the world fire raged in Europe, many of our people thought the conflagration could never reach our shore, our isolation, our non-dependence. I don't know how they reasoned, but that was in the minds of many worthy people, the war would have to cross the sea and that could not be, an army could not be transported in time to do any damage. I think Germany agreed with us in that, in our foolish ideas as to transporting armies.

Gradually time passed and tragic events began to stir our hearts, began to awaken our minds and enlighten our souls. We were shocked out of any possible self-complacency that we might have had. Still it seemed that the great contribution of America would be that of peacemaker.

Civilization in Europe was being destroyed. Many argued that the conflict must end or barbarism would be the unhappy heritage of the people of Europe. Gradually the warlords of Europe extended their fiendish operation. Thousands of innocent people were slaughtered by the assassins of the sea. We witnessed, to use the words of the President, "The wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of non-combatants, men, women and children engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate."

The murder of our citizens and the sinking of our ships were not all. Wilhelm II encouraged the incendiary to touch the torch to our factories, to our workshops and to our wharves, and the assassin was paid to lay the bomb in munitions plants, as well as in the holds of our ships. Every insidious mean known to autocracy was used to deceive many of our people with the selfish dream of peace, when there was no peace.

Our citizens were willfully butchered on the high seas, our commerce was deliberately destroyed, and our every right was ground under the iron heel of despotism, which sought to scare America by a diabolical policy of ruthless warfare.

Notwithstanding all this, notwithstanding that we were in a large measure determined, when on April 6th, we declared war against the Imperial German Government, yet there was a mass of worth American opinion, which regarded our entrance into the conflict as sure proof that the war would be of short duration. They felt that since American had pledged all her resources, it seemed incredible that with this added force to be associated with her Allies that the German Government would persist in their fatuous purpose of world dominion.

We, therefore, found, in addition to the gigantic and necessary material preparation for the conflict, there was a resource yet to be mobilized, of far greater importance than all the material efficacy, and that was a unified national purpose, of concerted mental attitude, national in scope. In other words, it was necessary to arouse the soul of America, without which the material

languishes, and I say that soul has been aroused, but it hasn't been completely aroused yet even in America.

I do not discount for a moment the splendid spirit that has been manifested in the East, and in the West, and in the South and in the North -- everywhere a splendid inspiring spirit, but the job hasn't begun yet and before any nation will sacrifice to the point of hurt, hurt, hurt, suffering, suffering, suffering, sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice, it must have its soul stirred, it must be a spiritual struggle, not a material one. (Applause)

Now this necessary education of the people and mobilization of opinion has been brought about and is being more and more brought about. But eh one great influence added to the tragic events, which always educated, -- the education of the event is unanswerable -- was that there was an interpreter. These events were interpreted in language simple yet grand, by that master mind which directs the nation as commander-in-chief of the Army and the Navy. (Great Applause)

I maintain that the mobilization of the American nation and heart and soul could not have been achieved had not the reasons for our entrance into the war been revealed as fundamentally spiritual, not material.

The President became the thought leader of America, and not only of America, but the thought leader for the world, and in the last analysis, it is the idea that goes on and on; to be conquered or

to overcome. In its own right, it is not enough to say we are at war, but for what are we at war and want that clearly and cogently put s that the humblest may understand and I leave it to you whether we are not to congratulate ourselves that that master mind has so stated in simple and dignified language the purposes of this war so as to win not only American but world opinion at this time. (Applause)

Our people began to realize more profoundly than ever before that the principle of Democracy is a spiritual principle and that no material cause, however great, is to be considered when that spirit is challenged.

I am not going into the large application of that principle. I am going to deal with it now as it affects the self-determination of government and the right of a people to choose their own government.

Now, we were, further made to realize that the principle of democracy is not geographical and that democracy in America is threatened as freely when threatened in Europe, as though it were attacked at the seaboard. Democracy killed anywhere is threatened everywhere. We began to realize that the frontier of Democracy was not the Atlantic Coast, but the Western front in France and that if it should be conquered on that front, it would be only a matter of time when America, alone, would have to face the brutal foe.

To my mind, the greatest accomplishment of the first year of the war for America was the mobilization of a unified purpose, the spiritual force essential to successful warfare.

Now we are waging war for the preservation of these sacred principles, principles without which life would cease to have any attraction for a loyal American heart or any heart believing in Democracy. That, which inspired the greatest heroism in all times passed, inspires us at this solemn critical hour. We are fighting that Freedom and Liberty may not die.

You say it is a truism. All great truth is simple and can be stated simply and there it is. We are fighting, France is fighting, Britain is fighting, Italy is fighting, that Freedom and Liberty may not die and they cannot live unless German militarism is overcome, not compromised with.

(Applause)

We did not enter this conflict for any self-aggrandizement. We did not enter when we offered to pour forth our treasure of men and wealth with any expectations of indemnity. It was a nation fighting for an ideal. Can a nation continue to fight for an ideal or will the time come when some will ask: "What do we get out of it?"

We get out of it all that makes life of value. We get out of it all that makes life worth living, namely, the supremacy and continued supremacy of our principle.

Now there has been much criticism and in spite of all criticism, America has accomplished more during this one year in material preparation than has been accomplished within a similar period by any nation in the history of mankind. (Applause) At the declaration of war, we had under arms, an Army and Navy, 200,000 men. At the end of the year, we had 2,000,000, fully equipped, ready for battle, men of the finest type, strong physically, keen mentally, and what is more to the point, fired with a holy purpose.

As I got on the car to come up here the other day, there were some marines staring for the front. They did not know who I was and I listened to their talk. One of them said to the other, “The happiest day of my life will be when my foot sets on the soil of France.” Was he being drive there? I congratulated him and told him who I was and then he complained and what was his complaint? He said, “The Government advertises “Join the Marines, the first to fight,” and I joined a year ago and I want to fight.” (Laughter)

Your chairman has referred to the great question of how we should raise our army. That was a serious problem. Our committee was divided, 13 to 8 when they voted. After the roll call was made, I asked the 8 of them to come into my office, to find out how far they were going to go in their determination for the selective draft. They were splendid fellows. Four them, including myself, had been volunteers in the Spanish American War and we knew what the volunteer system was and what it was not and it was principally what it was not, and we determined that never again, so far as we had any influence, would the nation follow the volunteer system, and

then it was decided by the 8 of us, under the leadership of the ranking member, Mr. Kahn, that we would make our minority report. We fought on the floor. The first two days, it looked like to offensive was going to win, and we were on the defensive the first two days and then it began, the battle began to turn and in our favor. I consider that if that had not been done, it would have been the greatest blow that could have been struck against the efficiency of America, industrially, in agriculture as well as in our military, and that law, in spite of certain injustices that will creep in, that law as fairly worked out as it is humanly possible for it to work out.

(Applause)

There have been men who sought deferred classification, but I have letters coming from all sorts of young men, pleading that their rejection might be overcome. One man wrote to me stating “they threw me out because I have false teeth, but I am sound physically.” I wrote to the Secretary of War and said, “If I was a Colonel, I would rather have that fellow with his spirit and false teeth, than somebody that I had to drive no matter how good his teeth.” But regulations are regulations and he cannot go. Perhaps later on he can go, for no one knows how long this thing will last. I know how long it will last, if I have any reason to interpret American thought and French thought and British thought and Italian thought, if I have any reason for interpreting my own country’s thought. It will go on 1 year, for two years, for five years, or 10 years, it will never stop with any compromise with German militarism -- never. (Great Applause)

Mistakes have been made. I know so, because I have seen it in the paper, (Laughter) and the papers always publish the news. I just found out today about a very distinguished man something I read a good many years ago, and I found out tonight that wasn't so. Mistakes have been made; mistakes will be made, because we are all human. Don't you see that we are not automatons? Maybe they don't make so many mistakes under German militarism -- got them all lined up chop-a-chop, everything goes lovely -- we make mistakes, we will make mistakes, but the mistakes will be fewer in number and the blunders that will follow will be remedied. I don't see how it is possible to avoid them all. But criticism -- criticism that is high-souled and constructive will advance our cause, but criticism that is merely carping political, is nothing less than treason. (Applause)

Partisanship has no part of patriotism. National issues must be supreme and there must be no attempt to bring in issues that are less than national in scope, no attempt to play petty partisan politics. There isn't a man here; there isn't a woman here that does not in their heart respond to that sentiment. We want national issues made supreme, because the national welfare is threatened.

These are days when we want America in common and Americans only. I will frankly admit that the last session of Congress was free from partisan narrowness. I regret that it has crept in and every once in a while shows its ugly face. Now, let there be a public opinion that will not stand

for anything less than unified effort, unified purpose, national issues, and the national welfare, nothing else.

Now I am not using an ordinary phrase when I say these are critical days. I say that these are days of peril for this republic, as well as days of peril for the Democracy of the world. The forces of Democracy now hold the line on the western front. Our enemies may bend that line, but they cannot break it. (Applause)

But take the worst possible view of it. Even if it were possible to break that line, if that were possible, the spirit of America, the dauntless spirit of France and Great Britain and Italy, they cannot break and it is not until the spirit is broken that defeat can come, it is not until Democracy's heart is broken, that disaster can come. Therefore, the importance of our continually putting the emphasis in this great struggle on the fact that it is a spiritual thing, they are principles worldwide, that they are held dear to our hearts and it is those principles for which we battle, therefore, if that be true, there can be no negotiating peace unless you call negotiations when the German warlords do not come to the peace table, but are told where they can sit. (Applause)

Now, our present force of 2,000,000 men is to be increased immediately to over 3,000,000 men, with no limit to be placed on the ultimate size of our army. I do not believe there is any difference of opinion in Congress as to the fact that we must have a tremendous army. Some say,

let us have immediately an army of 5,000,000. Why limit it? Five million may be too small. We may need 3,000,000 men in France; we may need 5,000,000 in France. The question for you, for America to decide is: Shall we refuse men for France in any numbers if the refusal means that we fail?

Just the opposite is true. Let it be 3 or 5, or any number of millions and if we place 8,000,000 of men -- I hope I am right and I am bringing this out of a somewhat obscure memory -- if I remember right, if we have 8,000,000 men in France, with our population, we will have no more than Australia has put on the firing front. We are strong. Are we willing? --- We are. (Applause)

Just as rapidly as we can mobilize and equip men, they will be rushed to the firing line France. We have over 500,000. It will only be shortly, not long, until the Secretary of War will add to that number. It will not be long when he can announce 1,000,000 in France and then announce a million and a half of men in France, and as these things become actualities, you will begin to feel this war. You don't feel it now. None of us feel it, I mean, to the point of sacrifice.

I would rather bury my children and be buried with them than to ever see the day when our symbol of Democracy and our flag was to be hauled down with what it would signify -- the collapse of democratic government for and by and of the people, the dreams of our fathers made out of mere figment of the imagination, all our hopes and all our ideals and principles simply the result of an over-heated brain. There is no limit to our ability and to our intention to see this thing

through to the successful finish. We will rush to the firing line in France hundred of thousands, millions. It will not be long until 1,000,000, as I have said, will be there, and then another million.

Those millions will be increased without stint, there is no limit to our resources, and there must be no limit to our sense of responsibility.

France has suffered and Britain has sacrificed, Italy has poured out her life. It remains for America, strong, able, resourceful and determined to give to our associates, limitless men and materials until the brutal militarism that threatens is overcome.

Peace we must have, peace we will have, but not until it is possible to have a peace that will endure -- a peace of righteousness and the peace of Justice. (Applause)

Now, I want to close with this word: that if what I have tried to develop is true, and I know it is true, and you know it is true, then let there be no talk about peace. Let there be no talk that in two years we will be through, for in two years we will not be through unless we are through with Germany.

Some of our people, as I was speaking to them on the East Side the other night, were carried away with the idea of the Russian peace and the Russian peace -- bless my soul -- it was a

Russian peace, it was a German peace, and the German peace is always the same -- a piece of Russia. (Laughter and Applause)

I have hopes still for Russia. I believe if they can gain economic control of Russia, they can fight on and on for years and years. Will we continue? Have we that spirit that when the rub comes and when the casualties multiply, when it means more and more of men and materials, will there come a cry, "Peace, Peace," when there is no peace? Let us hope not. Let us steel our hearts against anything that may arouse. Let us set our faces toward one ideal that all the bloodshed, by France, and poured out by Britain and Italy and to be poured out by America, shall not have been poured out merely as a preparation in the years to come for further sacrifices of human treasure. Let us make up our mind at this time, the powers of civilization in the world will so combine their interests that no military autocracy can walk with safety down the pathway of the future. Our determination based on the principle of which our government is based, a determination that will not hesitate at any kind of sacrifice, that is what we need to stir us on and we need to as carefully weigh the responsibility and the responsibility of men, who, without any constructive purpose, seek to criticize and bring on discouragements. We don't want mere optimism, but we do want hope, we want to feel that we are accomplishing. We don't want to feel that unless we are. We want to hear the nation is doing as never before have nations done, not to have represented that America is falling down. America is not falling down. America is going on and the departments at Washington may be making mistakes here and there, but as a whole, there is one purpose and one only, to do the job and to do it well. We have men there of large views, who

are giving their time, many of them, for a dollar a year, and I want to say to you that every man that is giving his time in Washington was suddenly to be dropped, you would know it by the lack of efficiency in Washington, and those men, I praise them, and I praise the workers throughout that are giving of their strength and of their spirit that America may go on and America may win. Some of them said the other day, "How can you go over that top?" and one of the men says, "Easy," - for we haven't seen our dead. We haven't seen many yet. I am not speaking from any pessimistic standpoint. We will see them by the thousand, and I want to see them as sacrifices to the holiest purpose that can induce a young man to give up his life, we want to see them as laid on the altar of our country and laid there in the cause of a might righteousness, a just and holy war, a war for Democracy, a war for the world, a war for all that is high and holy, if ever a nation was engaged in such a war.

We are thus engaged. We will give our money. Will we? Yes, of course, we will. If we don't give it, -- I now, I have been told not to say this so much -- if we don't give it, we will take it. I will take every dollar you got before I would let a single soldier go without ammunition, (Applause) and I will take my own dollars. I would take the coat off my back and I know I wouldn't have to take it off your back, you would take it off yourself, and so here we will go on and on and on, but never, never, never will we surrender to the German military. (Great Applause)

MR. VANDERLIP: you have applauded the man who had much to do with this conscription act. You have applauded Congress for that act. The whole country has applauded it, but doesn't that bring home to us our individual responsibility when we voted to send other men out to fight for us, for men to go into this Hell, for men to endure all that _____ endured? Don't we assume a responsibility, claim ____ responsibility that lies directly on our shoulders _____ everything that we can to support these men _____ to fight for us. I believe we are going to _____ responsibility _____ all the nation over -- that individual responsibility.

The next speaker is designated on this program as "formerly member of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. Now the last speaker has said that partisanship is no part of patriotism. The next speaker saw that. He had a patriotism above partisanship, a patriotism above his relation to his party and he withdrew from that Executive Committee, because he had, what he conceived to be, a higher patriotism than they represented, and I have great pleasure in introducing Mr. John Spargo. (Great Applause)

Second Speaker

Mr. John Spargo

Former Member National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Economic Club: It is for me a very great pleasure and satisfaction to be present here this evening and to participate in this self-communion and

analysis concerning our relation as individual citizens to the great struggle in which modern civilization is involved. In view of the very gracious and flattering undeservedly kind introduction of your President, it is perhaps proper for me to say that I come tonight, not as an ex-Socialist, but as a Socialist, as an Internationalist and as a lover of peace, I had almost said as a pacifist. And if pacifist is to be defined as one who loves peace more than anything else, save Honor and Freedom, I should not object to that designation. I am so much a lover of peace, that I am willing, if need be, to die in order that peace and freedom may be the common possession of mankind. (Applause) Because I am an Internationalist, I am proud to be a citizen of that nation, whose whole spirit is the spirit of Internationalism, for there is in our American tradition and in our institutions that fraternity and good will to all mankind, which is the essence of Internationalism, and because I am a socialist, believing that the time must come when equality of economic opportunity shall prevail, in this war I find myself compelled to give to this nation whole-hearted allegiance and to say that the great statesman who presides with so much dignity and courage and fortitude over the destinies of this nation, is the greatest living exponent of the world's ideals of Internationalism and of genuine social Democracy. (Great Applause)

As I conceive it, our responsibility in this war, wealthy as it is, great and growing as it is, arises from the fact that we are to a very large degree responsible for the war itself. We are in this nation to a very large degree responsible for the fact that in 1914, the world was called upon to face that supremely great challenge, that war in its inception, from the day when the government of the ramshackle empire of Austria-Hungary presented to the Imperial Government of Servia an

ultimatum unparalleled for brutality, for arrogance, for disregard of the conventions of civilizations in all the history of the relations of nations with each other in modern times. From that moment, when that ultimatum was sent, it became apparent that the war was a challenge on the part of barbarism to the civilization that had been attained in the world, that it was the challenge of the brutal spirit of Prussian militarism to that growing solidarity of nations in which we were so rejoicing, that it was a challenge on the part of the exponents and exemplars of Democracies to the Democracy already achieved in the world and because that was true, Ladies and Gentlemen, it was evident that we were responsible in common with the people of France, in common with the people of that great system of British Commonwealth, that constitutes what the world is pleased to call the British Empire, though indeed it has no imperial quality, but only the quality of a great democratic union of free peoples, for America that democracy that was challenged, that was assaulted, was a thing that we had helped to build, it was our possession as much as it was the possession of any people in the world. We had made our contribution to the building of that Democracy. Into that great building went the heart of Washington; into that building went the soul and the sacrifice of Lincoln; into that building went the great struggles of the Revolution and of the War of the Rebellion; into that building of Democracy that was assaulted by Prussian autocracy all the best of our American heart and brain had been lavishly poured and emptied, so I repeat, that that cause the despots of Central Europe feared that that cause -- they, too, desired a test of strength -- was of something that we had built, for which we had lived, for which we had struggled and to maintain which we were in duty bound, unless we were going to be recreant to all the principles of civilization, unless we were going to betray the

sires who had give us our being, then in that sense I claim that we were from the beginning responsible for the fact of the war.

There would have been no war declared were it not for the fact that throughout the world, east and west, north and south, the spirit embodied in our Declaration of Independence was growing and the doom of autocracy and militarism was being pronounced by increasing legions of the masses of the people. From the day when the Imperial Government of Austria-Hungary sent that brutal ultimatum to the Government of Servia, it became evidence that it was not a question of Servia's sovereignty, not a question of Belgium's independence, but finally and in its profoundest analysis, this was a question that the armies of the Central Empires had forced against the sky for all men to read.

Was the Declaration of Independence to be superseded by the Kaiser's fiat? Shall government of the people, by the people and for the people perish from the face of the earth, and we could not be blind to the challenge involved.

Diplomacy, statecraft, might require that we be admonished to be neutral, not only in action and speech, but in our hearts, but you and I know and we knew at the time that whatever statecraft might decree, humanity decreed, louder in volume and more irresistibly demanded that every American heart be pledged from that hour to the overthrow of the despotism of the Central Empires of Europe. (Applause)

It became necessary that the spirit and the will of Democracy should answer the spirit and the will of Imperial autocracy, it became necessary that the spirit, the brutal and degrading spirit of Bismarck should be answered by the gentle and fraternal spirit of Lincoln, it became necessary that the spirit, the challenge of the spirit of anti-Christ should be answered by the spirit of Christ, and because we understood that responsibility we entered into this war and when we entered into this war on that 6th day of April, 1917, we assumed not only our share of the responsibility for the fact of the war -- we assumed our share of the sacrifice for carrying that war on to a successful issue, no matter what the sacrifice, nor how long that struggle might be. (Applause)

I am one of those who believe that in the great calendar of free men for all the ages that are to come, the anniversary of our entrance into this war will be reckoned as one of the great letter days marking great strides in man's moving upward. It will be reckoned with the anniversary of the Magna Charta and the victory for freedom at Runnymede. It will be reckoned with the anniversary of the overthrow of the Bastille, it will be reckoned with the anniversary of the immortal Declaration of Independence, and when men and women, our children and our children's children in the future, which we may not enjoy, but which we may indeed for glean when they celebrate the conquest of the human spirit over the forces of darkness and of evil, they will know that when this nation entered into the war that was shaking the world to its very foundations, this nation contributed to the cause of civilization its most priceless contribution. For my part, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have no doubt at all as to the outcome of this great

struggle, but I am going to say to you that this is a time that particularly requires eternal vigilance. We have today less need to fear the armed legions of the Prussians making war, than we have the whispering monitors of the Prussians suggesting peace. (Applause) I am not nearly so much afraid of the Prussian making war, as I am of the Prussian breeding peace.

When the Prussian makes war, I know what we may expect. I know that there is no darkness of hell which the Prussian will not use. I know there is no perjury to which he will not resort. I know that if my boy goes to the front in France or in Flanders, it will not be to fight as men fight with men who fight as men, it will be as a soldier to face assassins who do not make war but whose business is murder.

But when I recognize that fact, I realize that there is peril more to be feared than the submarine, a peril more deadly than the poison gas, a peril from which we need shrink and against which we must guard ourselves even more than against the power that raped Belgium, that regarded international law as scraps of paper and that defied all the progress attained by our humankind, and that power is the power of the whispering suggestion, that if we can only get what we want on the western front, we can afford to let Germany get what she wants on the eastern front and so be assured of a hundred years of peace.

Those who talk that way, Ladies and Gentlemen, have not yet caught the meaning of this Great War. They have not yet sensed the significance of the struggle into which we have entered. AS a

matter of cold hard calculation, putting morality aside, putting aside our traditions, waiving for the moment that spiritual impulse to which my friend, Lunn, has referred, thinking only in terms of hard, cold political loss or gain, he must be blind, indeed, who does not see, that even if Germany gives up Alsace-Lorraine, if she evacuated Belgium and Servia the indemnities that international law would require, if she remained master of the economic resources of Russia, if she maintained that supremacy in Russia that she now holds, it would not be only Russia, it would not be only Russia that had become a vassal to Prussia, but America, too, in course inevitable would find herself under that same heavy yoke. There can be no freedom for this America of yours and mine unless that freedom comes out of peace that is built upon the broken ruins of the rule of the Hohenzollern and the Hapsburg dynasty. (Applause) There can be no security for the life, for the freedom of any American child unless we say to that power, no matter how long it may require, back, back, not only back from Belgium and back from France, back from Rumania, back from Servia, but back from Russia, too. Our cause today, Ladies and Gentlemen, the freedom of our sons and daughters and of all America that is to come after us, requires that effort, that service and that fidelity upon our part, so our responsibility is a responsibility, to war until victory.

There can no longer be in America any honest talk of peace without victory. There can no longer be in America any honest and sincere talk of peace by compromise, by bargain, by negotiation with the Central Empires. Instead, we must, each of us, in his own way, in our own speech, with whatever gift we may possess, we must determine that we will mobilize all our resources,

material and spiritual, all our human and moral forces until we have broken that power that not only menaces the freedom of all people outside of Central Europe, but denies freedom likewise to the peoples of Germany and of Austria themselves. (Applause) For mark you, it becomes increasingly evident as days go by, that no matter how much of promise an Allied victory may hold for France, for England, for Italy, for Russia, for America, it must hold an even greater promise for the people of Germany and of Austria-Hungary themselves. (Applause)

I remember nearly a quarter of a century ago hearing that greatest leader of the German social democrats, Wilhelm Liebknecht, father of the present Carl Liebknecht, the heroic sire of a no less heroic son, say: “Comrades of the International: You must remember that there will never be freedom for the German people until the German armies are beaten by the armies of some other power in open war,” and as the days go by, it becomes evident that there can be no freedom, no permanent and enduring peace anywhere in the world until that end is achieved.

Therefore, it is that we very fittingly say we have called a halt to partisanship in this country. We know in this crisis no division of creed or of party, we are Americans pledged to the whole-hearted endeavor to win this Great War for freedom, for democracy, for ourselves and for all mankind and to that end, we pledge, with due solemnity, but with the cheerfulness of strong men, all that we have, all that we are, and from this gathering tonight I hope there may go some word to the great commander-in-chief, whose leadership we all gratefully acknowledge in this hour, saying to him, “No matter what the sacrifice, we shall meet it; no matter what the cost, it shall be

paid, we shall not complain, we shall not rebel unless you fail to ask the sacrifice that victory demands. That is the only unpardonable sin for America today, failure to ask all that victory requires is the only sin that we Americans can find it impossible to forgive.” (Applause)

Meanwhile, whether it be for a longer or a shorter period, no matter, every mother in the land nursing her baby will nurse it proudly with the consciousness that if it is a son, he shall be ready in his day to carry on the struggle, and if a daughter, she shall be ready to stand with an American heart back of an American man in the struggle, that every wheel of our vast industrial mechanism shall move to that one end, of victory over the upstart autocracies of Central Europe, that every blade of grass growing upon an American hillside shall grow for that purpose, and every wind blowing from the Atlantic to the Pacific shall carry with it the message of doom for all that the Hohenzollern dynasty represent in modern life. (Great Applause)

I ask then that we recognize our responsibility for Russia's future. We have not been happy this far in our treatment of Russia. We have blundered; we have failed to perceive the insidiousness of Prussian propaganda there, but whatever her ill and darkness may be, I believe that the land of Tolstoy and the land of Dostoyevski, the land that produced the men that challenged forever the Romanoff dynasty, will yet emerge and take its place in the struggle of Democracy against militarism and autocracy throughout the world.

Finally, may I ask you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to recognize that there is still another obligation? That responsibility is the responsibility for continuing in the service of Democracy even after the war shall be ended and the responsibility for seeing that the country takes not the imagination of the Prussian here and so we do not permit the Prussian to gain the greatest victory of all. It would be a grim and mocking satire upon our efforts if when our sons have poured their blood upon the soil of France, of Flanders, and of Italy, mayhap, if when by our sacrifice we saw the ruins of the broken arch of Prussian military power, our victorious sons came back bringing only their dead, to find that while we had destroyed Prussianism abroad, we had established Prussianism in our land. Better for us that we bear the humiliation of seeing Prussian banners over the battlements of our seats of government than that we enthrone the spirit of Prussianism in our own hearts.

We are, I think, under a great and solemn obligation to recognize that when we undertook the responsibility of participation in this struggle, we undertook the responsibility, too, of seeing that we maintained our democracy as a growing and developing thing. If I may be permitted to say to this club of men, devoted to the study of economic problems, whose interest lies always in that right adjustment of our economic power to our economic requirements -- we are morally bound, bound by all that is most sacred in our history and in the challenge of the present hour, to see to it that the power we gain in this war to defend Democracy, is used to maintain and perpetuate the democracy that we have. We are in this position today. We see that with any of the nations it is possible to withdraw from productive service, from services that in normal times are regarded as productive and useful, armies of men, counted not by the thousands, but by the millions, it is

possible to send them to fight on foreign fields and it is possible to devote the labor of other millions to the production of the great implements of destruction that they require, we rejoice that that is possible -- if it were not possible then our doom would be sealed, but, ladies and gentlemen, peace hath her victories no less than renowned than war, and when these men come back again, shall we not realize that if it were possible to devote so much energy to a mere work of creating the machinery of destruction, it must be equally possible for us with this reserve, with the power of organization, to free this land of ours from agricultural poverty, to make equality of economic opportunity possible, to take our political democracy and extend it into the field of industry and of economic well-being, out of the welter of this great World War, with all its chaos, with all its struggle and its sacrifice, there must come, if it is to be justified, that condition in which we shall see the fair flower of freedom growing out of the soil of a generous equality of economic opportunity.

That I conceive to be the America we love, that the America for which we are willing to die and what is more significant still, for which we are willing to live, that is our responsibility, yours and mine, to take every opportunity that this great nation affords and say, by that spirit which laid the foundations of this nation, by the spirit which triumphed in the immortal utterance of Lincoln at Gettysburg, by that spirit which impels our sons to go gladly and freely into this great strife, we have made up our mind that just as through that sacrifice established the right of every people, great and small, to live its own life and in its own way, within the bound of international law, so we are going to make it possible, for every mother in this great land of ours to bring her

baby into the land and into the world, conscious that it is an equal heir with all others, to all the arts and resources of our civilization.

Here in this gathering tonight, you and I, my fellow-citizens, cannot render worthier service to America, to our brave Allies, than this: That we consecrate ourselves, that all that we have, that all that we are, body, mind and soul, not merely to the destruction of the power of darkness, but to the enthroning in our hearts, in our own lives, in our government of that great principle of a generous freedom and equality of economic opportunity for all mankind. I thank you. (Great Applause)

MR. VANDERLIP: If we are fully to understand our responsibility in this war, we must understand what war is. We must visualize the war. To visualize the war, we must do it through other eyes, in the main through the eyes of the newspaper correspondents. This small valiant band of American newspaper correspondents form our picture of war and among that band there is no man better known or more thought of by the American people than Mr. Will Irwin, whom I am glad now to introduce. (Great Applause)

Third Speaker

Mr. Will Irwin

War Correspondent at the Front

Ladies and Gentlemen: perhaps it is best for me to touch tonight in this question of the responsibility we owe in this war upon the debt of gratitude we owe to our valiant, weary and struggling Allies, to what they have done and to what we must do to repay the debt, and I suppose I had better begin with France -- immortal wonderful France. If I did not like the French people, which I do, I think I would want to take my hat off to them, to every Frenchman I ever met as long as I live, for what I have seen them do, what I have seen them endure in this war. I came back -- I had been on my last trip nearly a year away when I came back here in February. I was out of the country when we went to war and off in December and January Americans just arrived in France used to tell me how the country had changed, that I wouldn't know it. I came back here and the astonishing thing to me, who had seen war and seen a people in war, was how little it had changed.

Such an assembly as I am speaking to tonight would be impossible, would be unthought-of and unheard of in France. As I look you over and estimate your ages and physical condition, I know that two-thirds of the men here would be out somewhere on the front. I am not talking about slacking. That is not it. We have plenty of men; they are going as fast as we need them. I am only mentioning that to show you the strain that country is under. You don't perhaps know, not much was made of it at the time, but the first stand in front of Verdun and the vital rally that saved Verdun was that first stand made by several brigades of men, aged between 39 and 40, from a military sense, old men, gray-haired men, men with thick waist lines, men that were past the zenith of their fighting powers, long past it, old tradesmen and old peasants of interior France,

were the men that held and held in front of Verdun, until the French could mobilize 18000 automobile trucks, and get the supplies up that saved that city.

I haven't seen a dress suit in France for a year and a half. I haven't seen a woman in evening dress for a year and a half. There isn't a French woman of my acquaintance who has bought a dress for a year. There is hardly at present a private automobile running France. I cite these things in a scattering way to show you the strain that has been on that civilian population of France. They have been the glory of the world in this war and this I glory most of all. When you go among the French army you do not exactly get the sense of soldiers. You know, the French army in one way is a ridiculous looking little army. They are awfully poor. Their pay is 1 cent a day. France hasn't much to spend on supplies. The uniforms come in two sizes -- small, medium and large, and you take your pick. Usually for comfort, you pick one too big for you, so it bags all over you. They cannot afford much for transport and so the French soldier looks as though he was carrying a kitchen on his back when he goes forward. He carries an assorted mass of truck hanging all over his frame, a trench helmet and usually when he goes forward he is taking a trench pot.

When the Americans began to arrive in France and some of our regular army men saw the French army, there were a little shocked by them. They used to talk to me that it didn't fit the picture at all. They said their marching was awfully ragged, they didn't seem to keep in order on the march

at all, there was a shocking familiarity between the men and officers, and I always answered that they were not soldiers at all, but that the only thing they could do was to fight like hell. (Applause)

In my scattering memories of the war, I remember one evening spent in a dugout when Verdun was very hot. It was a very quiet night, but still there was a regular boom of guns from all the hills about us. Two or three times we could catch the roll for a few minutes of distant curtain fire and occasionally the burst of machine guns where there was a bit of attack. All that was going on outside, but in the dugout there was time for conversation and a dozen French soldiers sat around talking and I was an American and they were curious to know about America. They wanted to know if the men from England talked the same English as we did or a language like it. I had a time answering that question, and the conversation then turned to French politics and local politics and it was exactly a conversation that you would hear any night by an Indiana cracker-box in a corner grocery store on a quiet evening. They seem what they are, merely civilians, none interested in civilian purposes, who left their families and their job for a hard, disagreeable, terrible task, but they are going through with it and going through to the end, because France must survive.

I always tell this one thing in speaking of the French army as a contrast between them and their enemy. Early in the war I was at Calais, which was as near as we could get to the line without being arrested. We used to get up and get arrested and sent back. I had just been arrested and I was at Calais and it was during one of the heavy battles and the wounded were coming into

Calais at the rate of 8, 10 and 12 thousand a day. The thing got so bad that it had gotten beyond help of the Red Cross, of the Army and ambulance service. I worked a couple of days as a stretcher bearer and one morning with an Englishman I helped to clear out a train that had just arrived. We came to a French captain, very dangerously wounded. We had order to handle him very carefully. We started to lift his stretcher from the rack in the hospital train when he broke out into wild protest. My French was even worse that it is now and he was going too fast for me and I couldn't understand what he meant. We thought he was delirious and we started to let him down. I called to a Belgian, who spoke English. The Belgian listened to him and said, "He says he won't leave this train until everyone of his privates is taken away." So we cleared everyone there before he would let us move him.

By contrast, when I was at Verdun, an American ambulance was working there. They had received the postal honor, and one morning they had received the task of bringing back some German wounded prisoners. Now it is a rule always that the most heavily wounded come first. The surgeon arranges that generally. They lie in rows and the most heavily wounded placed the nearest for convenience. These little Ford cars our men drive handle 3 men. The first two were put in and they came to the third, which was a dangerously wounded officer. He protested in German, they didn't understand him and then he broke into French. Our men stooped to see what the matter with him was and he said, "I will not go into that ambulance with my privates, I will die. I am an officer and a baron," and our man said to him, "I am an American citizen and a plumber." (Laughter and Applause)

And then England, immortal wonderful England. The British will admit it themselves, that they entered the war inferior in military technique to the French and the Germans. They entered even less prepared than they ever admitted to the world, perhaps in some senses even less prepared than we were. They had just one thing: they had 100% courage. Perhaps when the war is over and we sum it all up and see it in perspective, we are going to realize that the most glorious feat of arms in all the glorious history of the war, was that action at Ypres, between the 21st of October and the 15th of November, 1914, when 110,000 Englishmen, having only one-third of the number of machine guns per company that the Germans had, having less than a third of the light artillery of the Germans, and against a considerable number of heavy artillery, having exactly one 1/8 inch howitzer, stood off 3 times their number of Germans by the rifle, by valor and by life. A man who went through the first battle of Ypres and came out whole is a curiosity. The third division that had been landed in front of Antwerp and landed too late went in a full division and they were only 1400 left at the end of the first battle of Ypres. The 5th of November was one of the days when the history of the world trembled in the balance, because the Germans had broken through 4 miles that day. An aviator came down from the air that day and nearly fainted when he got to the ground, telling of the numbers that were coming through and by night the British had them back where they came from. They are soldiers every inch of them. They do the thing with that British calm which covers really so much emotion.

I remember in those early days one little incident that may never have been reported. There were so many incidents that there wasn't time to report. It was that retreat from Mons, when the British held the left of that line, two army corps against five army corps of Germans. You know when an army is retreating it doesn't go down in one road, of course. It goes down many roads. There is a great science, of course, in retreating. That morning there was a cross-road where two roads crossed and it was necessary for two British armies to come down and cross out like this (indicating). That morning, the Germans got that very cross-road under long range shrapnel fire. A Big truck came along and the horses were killed and the truck blocked the road and they were piled up and blocked, with shrapnel flying everywhere and the troops began to waiver and it looked like a break at that moment. An Officer rode up and got some men together and ordered them to get that truck out of the way. Then he sat there on his horse exactly like a mounted policeman and called to this column to come on and to that wagon to come ahead. He called to the men whenever he saw them waiver, encouraged them. Two horses were killed under him, but he wasn't wounded. He stayed on there and got the army out. That man would have received the Victorian Cross, the Distinguished Service Order or anything within the power of the British Army, except that no one to this day has ever been able to find out who he was. He kept it a secret, and that is the English. There is nothing like the quiet, unostentatious, soft voice, cool and exceedingly glorious British Tommy. He is a wonder. You talk about a sense of humor. I hope you don't belong to that part of the human race that believes that the British have no sense of humor, simply because it is too subtle for you to perceive. Why, they keep themselves going on their quiet sarcastic manner. They came against heavy artillery and high explosive shells for the

first time in front of Ypres and within a half hour they were calling the things “Jack Johnson” and betting with each other on where they would fall.

And don't let us forget Italy. I have a warm place in my heart for Italy and for the Italian army, because I have seen them. I have seen more of the actual Italian front than I have seen of any other actual front. Austria may possibly be tottering just now, it is dangerous to indulge in such an idea, and if she is tottering, after all it isn't what she went through with Russia; it is what she has gone through with Italy.

There never was such fighting. I may tell you that in 1916 I was with the 4th Alpines on a glacier running about 10 or 11 thousand feet in the eternal heights of the high alps, where we had been for days and days working up, over peaks and across precipices, for which we had absolutely no equivalent in all this western continent, because our mountains are gradually sloped, while the Alps just shoot up, and it was just like fighting in Alaska. I have seen a 6 inch gun brought on that height, which had been two months getting up there and in getting up which 42 men had been killed by the avalanche, and I have seen the 4th Alpines go across against the Austrians and take it by frontal attack. How they did it, the Lord only knows. It has been that kind of awful struggling that has worn Austria out on the Carso, that two miles of rocky, hilly desert that runs down to the head of the Adriatic, an indescribable county and lying in hills running 1500 feet high perhaps, which is all of iron red rock, very hard, so hard that the trenches have to be blasted out. There has been nowhere on the western front such fighting or such positions to take as they

had to go through for two years. Inch by inch and foot by foot, by sheer valor and frontal attack, by brilliant maneuvers of the brilliant strategist Cadorna, they forced their way across 7 or 8 miles of that country when the Italian disaster came. The tragedy of that disaster was that when it happened, Italy had only one little peak to take and she would have gone over to the Austrian plains. Now in thinking of the affair in Italy, don't, I beg of you, think of cowardice, or military incompetency, because that isn't true. There is no better fighter anywhere than the Italian peasant. You know that Julius Caesar's army, the greatest little army the world ever saw, was made up of these Italian peasants and they haven't lost their skill. Don't think of them as a defective organization, for as a matter of fact there is no such intelligent organization on our side of the Allies as there is in the Italian Army. Contrary to many of our impressions, the Italian goes the Yankees one better for sheer practicality. Ask any engineer and many of them will tell you that the Italian engineer is the best engineer in the world and all will tell you that he is among the best in the world.

It was through a marvelous plot of propaganda, cleverly executed that the Germans suddenly broke two divisions of the Italian line and shock troops of Germany went through and caught the Italian second army in the rear. Yet with 220,000 taken prisoner and 2000 guns taken, it seemed impossible that she could ever recover. But the French and the English rushed troops instantly and in that connection I want to tell you a story that may interest the railroad men present tonight.

When the Italian disaster took place, the French General Staff realized that they must send help. They telegraphed to the manager of the P.L.M. railway, which has two lines direct to Italy and asked him how soon he could begin the transportation of several hundred thousand troops to Italy of continuous transportation. He telegraphed back, "18 hours." Three hours later came a telegram, "Get ready." In 50 hours along this line, trains were running at 7 minute headway along the two lines until they got all these troops and supplies into Italy, and if I told you that story about the Germans you would say, "How could we ever beat a people so marvelously efficient." But the Italians stopped them at the Piave.

Don't let the enemy with his whispering create any illusion in your mind about why Italy is in this war. Back of the old diplomacy is that Italy is in this war because this is a war of democracy and Italy is democratic. (Applause)

Germany is martyred by the soul of Bismarck. He was the devil of the 19th century and we are dying like sheep for having let that man live, but the martyr of Italy, the name that creates enthusiasm in Italy, that will raise up Italy, is still the name of Garibaldi.

It gave the motto to this war for Italy and it might be well the motto for us all. It was the day after he had raised the abortive revolution of 1848 and word was brought that Rome had fallen and he assembled his 5,000 soldiers before St. Peter's and sitting on his horse with his red shirt and white pinto, he said: "Soldiers of Italy: Rome has fallen, but Venice still holds out. I want

volunteers to go to Venice. I cannot offer you promise of more pay or quarters, I offer you hunger and thirst and want and ignoble death. Whoever likes the terms, let him follow me,” and the 5,000 Italians as a man followed Garibaldi to Venice.

And finally, while we are speaking of responsibility, let me say one thing more, I back up Mr. Spargo on this, let us not forget our responsibility to Russia. At the risk of making myself unpopular here tonight, let me say a word for one whose actions have gravely injured us all, but do not let us forget that in front of every movement, long in front of every movement of the human race is what I call myself, “the glorified damn fool.” Don’t forget John Brown, thinking he was going to overturn things with is 20 or 30 rangers, and don’t forget Watt Tyler, the fool, who started the thing that two centuries later was completed by Cromwell. Those people saw a vision. It was a vision that came out and they were fools or they wouldn’t have tried the things they did, but still they saw the vision, and the fact that she has made a fool of herself, is all the better reason why we should stand by her until she corrects her folly. She mad a fool of herself, most out of the goodness of her heart. There is a strong change yet and getting down to the practical side, I have to endorse what has been said by the other speakers, that if they gave up Belgium, and they gave up northern France and they gave up Alsace-Lorraine and they gave up the Italia Irredenta and we let them keep Russia in their grip, Democracy would be conquered, thoroughly conquered within 25 years and the German system and Kultur would prevail in this world. We have a responsibility to Russian but the responsibility is for ourselves also.

The last and final responsibility is to remember some of the things that Mr. Spargo said, because I know what is happening in Europe now. I should like some time to tell you economists about it. I know what is happening and I know if we haven't prepared ourselves for the change that is coming into the world, we stand to come out of this war not an advanced nation of the world, but the reactionary nation of the world. Our final responsibility is to prepare our minds for the change, even if they are against our own interest, because it may come, if we don't do that in the end the choice between the English regulations that they are putting into effect now and the disastrous Russian revolution. (Applause)

MR. VANDERLIP: I have to announce a disappointment in Mr. George Wickersham and tell you that I regret that he will not be present.

There will be 1 more speaker. If you could pick out the right sort of a man to finish this evening, I wonder if it wouldn't be something like this: We would want a man who has been in and of this war, who had seen it, who had performed a glorious part in it. Suppose that man were an Englishman, that he had been one of the very first to enlist when England called for men, that he enlisted in such a hurry that he enlisted as a private, he didn't wait for any commission, and then conducted himself with so much gallantry that he finally won a Colonel's commission, in doing that, wounded and wounded over and over again and on top of that gassed, performing feats of valor that led twice to his decoration by his own government and once by the government of

France. We would like to hear from such a man and I have the pleasure of introducing such a man -- Colonel Frank Evans of the Royal Artillery. (Great Applause)

Fourth Speaker

Lieutenant Colonel Frank S. Evans, D.S.O.

Of the Royal Artillery

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: The task given to me tonight is the task of telling you your responsibility in the war. You can appreciate this is a very difficult one. You have made it much more difficult by asking me to speak after 3 such men as have spoken to you tonight.

Your responsibilities in the war have been told to you with more potent expression than my words, by your boys and our boys over in France. To appreciate the measure of our responsibility, one must first appreciate the issue, and you have been told in much more eloquent language than I can use that you are fighting to save the soul of the world. I would like to nail that expression of opinion by making this statement: If you are going to save the soul, it is urgently necessary that each and every man and woman here present within the sound of my voice rise to the level of the task that lies ahead of you. (Applause)

Germany built mighty armies, German with constant thought, --- careful, cold, callous preparation, --- set out to dominate the world, to conquer the world. In 1914, she thought that this

machine she had built, this might of hers, gave her the right to spread out, to move on, disregarding of anything that had gone before, disregarding of any result that might accrue to her neighbors, disregarding of any treaty or obligation that she had entered into. And in 1914, she said to Belgium, "Make way for me to go through your country to attack France." Belgium said, "No. I can't do that, I have an arrangement whereby I remain neutral." "Neutral?" "What do you mean? Get out of the way. How dare you tell me that you won't make way for me," said Germany.

You know what happened to Belgium? Did she throw her hands up? Did she say, "You are strong, and I am weak?" Or did she find her soul -- this thing that we heard spoken of tonight --- yes, men, with the waters of these hordes of Germans swirling around her, climbing right up to her neck, almost drowned, she held on and the only thing she cried was, "Hurry up, hurry up, Great Britain, you promised you would come, hurry up," that is all.

Never once did she grumble, never once did she growl, never once did she complain -- just: "You promised you would help us, hurry up."

Men I don't want to worry you tonight. My country is in that position. We cry out to America, a cry from the battlefield, "America, you promised us you would come and you have said you would help us. For God's sake, America, hurry up, hurry up, hurry up." (Applause)

Now, that is not evidence of cowardice. It is just this: America has dilly-dallied. The fault, I have no doubt is ours -- my country. You know we Britishers are adverse always in the asking of help. We never like to ask for it and perhaps we were not guarded enough in our language when we told you to tae your time, but I suggest that you must hurry and that although much is being done by your governmental departments, your executive head of administration, in this country, very little is being done by you individual men making up the civilian population of this country.

Now, I don't want, God forbid, to touch upon anything, to say anything which will cause you to criticize me as an Englishman, and to say to me, "You had no right to talk to American in that way."

I am speaking from the depth of my heart when I say, "You have no conception whatever of sacrifice, you know only your duty." What do I mean? Look at it. Mr. Irwin has told you for a year he did not see a woman in France in evening dress, over a year and a half he never saw a man in evening dress. I am going to tell you something else. You fellows, every single one of you has got "safety first" for a slogan, every man Jack of you -- 'safety first'.

You will give up your money -- yes. You will buy liberty bonds, yes -- yes, and damn it, you will go to church, and you will put on well polished shoes, -- hallowed with shining linen, liberty bonds bulging out of your pockets, you go t church, and send your boys to France, and you play a band, you wave some flags, and you throw your caps up in the air, you shout out at the top of

your lusty voices, “Go on, boy, we are for you, every time we are for you,” and you are not for them once, not once. You do not grip hard the fundamental of life. You are too busy looking after ‘safety first.’ What do you think would happen in France if the slogan was ‘safety first?’”

Your boys, our boys, defy death, they hurl their bodies over the top, they have no regard for self, and they would rather die fighting than do anything else, every man Jack of them -- will you? Or will you continue to take your breakfast with audible grumbling and your lunches critically and your dinners with your nerves all on edge? That is what you do now.

Will you stop thinking about yourself, and will you adopt a constant thought throughout the whole range and breadth of this nation, a thought which is a thought for ultimate victory, not matter what the cost to me, to mine, to everything that I have? That is what we have got to have.

(Applause)

Come with me, all of you, to France. I will try and paint for you a word picture. My voice is very raw from speaking a lot in the open air, and it is hard on me. Try and get me.

It is very cold over there, yes, and it is very, very wet. There is mud everywhere, liquid mud, right up to your middle, and there isn't a living thing in sight. Everything is stricken down.

German thoroughness, frightfulness, ruthlessness has destroyed all the trees, everything that is living, and there is desolation. All the refining influences of modern life have been removed. No

home to go to, no possibility of dancing your youngster on your knee, no possibility of getting the refining influences of the home surrounding, and men live underground, underneath the ground, and yet they are happy, every single one of them is happy --why? They have learned the worthwhileness of slaughter, and they have learned the worthwhileness of sacrifice, and they have learned that to live is to be prepared to die, every one of them.

What have you learned? You still pamper and coddle a body, all of you. You still grumble and growl, you still give destructive criticism instead of constructive criticism. You haven't found your souls, and that is what you have got to do. You have got to learn that that thing that takes you around is only a carcass, and when you put him in the ground, the worms twirl around him, but this thing inside of you has got to be fed, not the thing that is outside.

You have got to feed you souls, and you have got to learn that it isn't enough to send your boys over to France, you have got to stand behind them, and you have got to learn this, you, you, you, every one of you, in the front line trench.

What caused the debacle in Russia? Have any of you thought as to what caused it? It was the front line trench caving in -- the civilian population of Russia caving in. What is Germany trying to do with you? What does she say about you? She says, "A conglomerated mass of beings without a soul, and without any hero worship. That is America." That is what Germany says about you, and she caps it all by saying, "A great big bluff." Is she right? (Cries of "No, No.")

Men, you must pull yourselves together. You must grip yourselves, and you must say that although it is urgently necessary there shall be an inequality of service, still there shall be no inequality of mind as far as America is concerned. (Applause)

You must stand shoulder to shoulder, prepared for whatever might come. To borrow an expression from one of your speakers tonight, you must steel your hearts, you must be prepared for larger casualty lists, you must be prepared for sacrifice, and you must be sure that you hold on to one another, no matter what the pain is, that might come to you, firm and steadfast, so that there is no danger of a message going over to France, “The frontline has caved in.”

Men, your boys and our boys, want above all other things to believe in you fellows. They trust you. Why, with hands covered in human blood, blood on their nostrils, on their breath, they are on their knees, praying for you, praying for freedom for liberty, for the thing that you sent them ‘Out There’ to do.

Are you on your knees? Is your prayer desperate, or is it fashioned with words very discreetly chosen, and is it a prayer for snugness, for security? I think, perhaps it is.

Anglo-Saxon mothers, on whatever shores they stand, are calling on sons and brothers, to avenge that corpse strewn land. So men, for the sake of your women, where unborn millions dwell, let us shackle this Prussian monster and hurl him into Hell. (Applause)

I suggest to you, gentlemen, that your responsibilities in this war are personal responsibilities. Every man must measure up the difference between the bit that he is doing and the all that he might do, and then he has found his responsibility in this war.

It used to be said that men must work and women must pray. Men, I am sorry to have to say this, but it is true: It is your women who are working and the men who are not praying. I find your woman working, hour upon hour, giving up, and I find your men measuring the amounts that they give up -- a difference with a distinction.

Now if you could only see, as I have seen, as Mr. Will Irwin has seen, devastated France and Belgium. Every mortal thing that they own has gone, -- not a brick upon a brick. German hordes not only moved on and conquered, but they terrorized the captured, and then forced them to house them. Not yet satisfied they ravaged and they plundered and they stole all that they could. Not yet satisfied, they deport the citizens from the cities that they ruined into slavery. If you can see anything, any mortal thing at all, why, why, why, do you takeunction to your souls for doing your duty? Isn't that the least of the things that you can do? Why don't you rather say, "Better

far, far better that my body should perish and my soul lives, for what does it profit me if I gain the whole world and lost my soul?”

Men, find out what you can do. Do it until it hurts, because you are up against the biggest thing in machinery that has ever been built. You can't break that machine in 24 hours. There is only one thing will break it, and that is a spirit of devotion to an ideal, because, as you build your machine, they will build their machine, and as you re-victual yours, they will re-victual theirs.

What held them in France, what held them in Italy? A spirit of devotion to an ideal. Over there, the Germans in cog-like formation came on, living soldiers jumping up from the midst of dead Germans, and our machine gunners have said, “Why, I am sick of killing them,” and yet they still come on, masses of them. This machine has been built with cold precision, and although it swept on and on everything in its path, many a time a handful of men, with a devotion in their spirit, a devotion to an ideal, stood there and held them up and they could not go on.

(Applause) Many times my countrymen, a handful against hordes, have held them up.

If we are going to beat them, that is what we have got to cultivate, and Anglo-Saxon men, I want to leave you this food for thought, food for reflection. Ask yourselves in the morning, “What can I do today to help win this war?” And at night go down on your knees and tell your Maker what you have done to help win this war.” (Applause)