



Put the War Through

By Theodore Roosevelt

ALL Americans who were both thoroughly patriotic and well informed lifted their heads with pride when at last this nation did what it would have been infinitely better to have done two years previously—when at last it went to war. There were patriotic men who had been misled as to our duty, or who lacked vision, and who in consequence were even at that time against our going into the war. But the great majority of these men are now as patriotic as any one else; and all patriotic and farsighted Americans must now sternly insist that the war be carried through to a completely victorious conclusion, at no matter what cost of blood and treasure, and no matter how long the time. All those who now ask for an indecisive peace, all who now assail our Allies or directly or indirectly apologize for or give aid and comfort to Germany, all who do not insist upon the utmost speed and thorough efficiency in the conduct of the war, are false to America, and false to all the liberty-loving nations of mankind.

THERE still appear from time to time suggestions that what the Allies need from us is only money, food and ships, and that it is not necessary, and indeed not advisable, to send over our troops. Occasionally, even, men who represent our Allies give this bad advice; in their case it probably means merely that they are discouraged with the long delay in our starting to put through a shipbuilding program, and our slowness in getting troops to the front. But whatever the reasons actuating these advisers, whether they are our own fellow citizens or from friendly foreign countries, we should instantly reject their advice. In this matter we must consider our usefulness to the common cause; and we must also consider our self-respect, for unless we retain that we can neither be permanently useful to ourselves nor to anyone else. If we were persuaded, by our own people or by our Allies, to make this on our part merely a dollar war, a potato war, we should in the end earn the contempt and derision of everyone, including everyone who had given the advice. The fighting men, the men who face the strain, and who when the strain comes do the killing and stand the killing, are the men who in war time guard the nation's honor; and no other kind of effort or service replaces theirs. Kerensky recently said that Russia had spent her blood like water in the fight for our common benefit, while America remained safely neutral; and that now it was our turn to face the losses and do the deeds. Kerensky was right. We have long arrears to make up; and we must make them up by actual fighting, and not by paying or feeding other men while they fight for us. Uncle Sam must take the position of a soldier, not a sutler.

THEREFORE we must send our troops to the front as rapidly as possible; we must not leave a small number to do the fighting until they are all used up, before their own countrymen come in constantly increasing numbers to their rescue. We must with the utmost speed

furnish them with the best arms, equipment, clothing. We should visit with severest punishment any persons, public or private, who are responsible for faulty ammunition or gas masks, or for unnecessary shortage in warm clothing, or for needless delays of any kind. We should build ships at a speed never hitherto approached, literally working at full speed night and day. We must back up each liberty loan, and the movement for food production and food conservation, and the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. and Knights of Columbus, and all other organizations that are now supplementing the work of the government for the care of our soldiers. No man or woman, no well-grown boy or girl, in the country ought now to feel contented unless he or she is doing everything in his or her power to help win this war. It is our war. It is the people's war; the war of the free peoples against the powers of autocracy and despotism. The man who does not do his utmost to help win it is false to his country and to mankind.

LET us keep steadily in mind that Germany now feels a peculiar hatred for America, and that this feeling is largely based upon her contempt for us. Germany respects only force. She rightly considers the sentimentality (I am not talking of sentiment) which clamors for peace without punishing her brutality and perfidy, as a mere cloak for cowardice and lazy weakness. Every man in this country who now advocates Germany's cause, whether directly or indirectly, or who demands a negotiated, inconclusive peace without victory, is not only treacherously false to this country, but is earning Germany's utter derision for himself and for our country in so far as it is influenced by him. Recently Mr. A. Curtis Roth, United States Vice-Consul at Plauen, Saxony, until the outbreak of the war, has published accounts of the Prussian campaign of hate against this country which should be read by all good Americans—who ought then in their turn to realize the foul and dreadful wrong done this country by the Hearsts and La Follettes and their like who in this country have acted as the apologists for German wrongdoing and as the foes of the Allies who have stood between us and the German horror. Mr. Roth sums up by saying that "the average German hates this country today with a hatred far more venomous, far more implacable, far more unreasoning than the hatred he has visited upon any other people." Remember that this hatred has come upon us because for two years and a half we were neutral, because by failing to stand up for our own rights we lost the respect of Germany, because by our failing to prepare we incurred her utter contempt, because she despised and despises us for our weakness in dealing with her and our weakness in dealing with the pro-Germans here at home. There is but one way to gain the respect of the Prussianized, militarist and autocratic Germany of the Hohenzollerns, and that is by beating her in war. And in order to beat her as thoroughly and speedily as possible we should treat with drastic severity the Hun within our own gates.