

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Abstract:

During World War I, Mennonites, in the Kansas counties of Marion and Harvey, had to find ways to publically demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America. Through the Mennonite paper, the *Tabor College Herold*, and the two county newspapers, the *Marion Record* and the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, the debate over the loyalty and patriotism of Mennonites came to a head. The Mennonite paper, the *Tabor College Herold*, spent the years 1917 and 1918 arguing that Mennonites could maintain their nonresistant beliefs while still serving their country in ways that would not lead to killing. For the *Marion Record*, Mennonites were patriotic citizens who should be respected and treated well even though they believed differently than the majority of Americans, but that Mennonites still had to find a way to publically demonstrate their loyalty to their fellow Americans. The *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, though, cast the war as a religious crusade against an evil empire, and that refusal to participate in any aspect of the war effort, whether joining the army or purchasing war bonds, bordered on treason

and, thus, deserved to be suppressed. These different approaches to the question of loyalty and patriotism during America's involvement in World War I (1917-1918) help provide a glimpse into how the war affected both the Mennonites and American society as a whole.

Keywords: Mennonites, patriotism, civil liberty, conscientious objectors, nonresistance, loyalty

“WE ARE ALL AMERICANS:”  
KANSAS MENNONITES AND PATRIOTISM DURING WORLD WAR I

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## **“We Are All Americans:” Kansas Mennonites and Patriotism During World War I**

### **Introduction**

During the Great War, two counties in Kansas, Marion and Harvey, witnessed one of the major struggles on the home front. The home of Mennonite settlers, the conflict in Marion and Harvey counties centered on the ideals of two different groups. One group was the Mennonites who held to the ideals of nonresistance/pacifism and nonconformity. The other group was that of non-Mennonites who held to the ideals of patriotism, nationalism, and conformity. These two ideals came into direct conflict during the war. Could a Mennonite refuse to take part in any way in the war and still be patriotic, or did this refusal to participate constitute treason? To answer this question, this thesis examines three newspapers from various viewpoints, along with a background of key Mennonite history and beliefs providing valuable insight into why these two groups came into conflict. By exploring how these three different newspapers treated the principle of patriotism in contrast to the Mennonite principle of pacifism, a clearer image can emerge of this debate in Kansas.

The three major newspapers of Marion and Harvey counties took a variety of approaches to the Mennonite refusal to join the military or to buy war bonds. A Mennonite newspaper in Hillsboro, the *Tabor College Herald*, argued that the Mennonites were patriotic citizens willing to serve their country as long as that service did not lead ultimately to the taking of a life.<sup>1</sup> Taking the opposite position, the major newspaper of Harvey County, the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, argued that if Mennonites refused to serve in the military or buy war bonds, then they were traitors who deserved to

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<sup>1</sup> The *Tabor College Herald* was published by the Mennonite Brethren Tabor College. Half of the paper was printed in German and the other half in English. *Herald* is the German spelling for the English word herald.

be jailed and possibly expelled from the United States. In the middle of these two positions, the *Marion Record* in Marion County argued that Mennonites could find a way to serve the nation while remaining true to their pacifist beliefs. These three views generated a running controversy between the newspapers and among the public as a whole.

By exploring how these Kansas newspapers treated Mennonite pacifism, one can delineate a clearer image about the significance of the debate in the development of the ideal of American patriotism and nationalism. This controversy over the Mennonite refusal to join the military fueled a national discussion about just what patriotism and service to the country looked like. How could a country at war honor the pacifist beliefs of a minority, while still mobilizing the entire nation to the war effort? Should the government allow Mennonites to remain exempt from any type of military service so as to placate their consciences? Or should the government force the Mennonites to serve in the military in some function, even if that meant violating their pacifist beliefs? Was there a middle route that could satisfy both sides of the dispute?

Naturally, the three newspapers mentioned above took different approaches to these questions. The *Tabor College Herald* argued that while military or financial service in the war violated their pacifist beliefs, Mennonites could perform other forms of service, such as raising crops to prevent food shortages on the home front. In opposition to this, the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* of Harvey County argued that patriotic service must include some form of military or financial service to the country and that the refusal to do both led to treason. They argued that if Mennonites escaped military service and just raised crops, the Mennonites became war profiteers and were making money off of



the war while refusing to fight in it. If the Mennonites made money off of the war, they should also fight in it. On the other hand, the *Marion Record* argued that the public and the government should honor Mennonite pacifism, while still seeking a form of service that Mennonites could perform. All three newspapers argued that the war necessitated some form of service from everyone, but the form that service needed to take to demonstrate patriotic sentiment remained open to debate.

One of the overriding issues in the United States during World War I, and in the press, was the drive for 100% Americanism. Patriotism, conformity, obligation, voluntarism, and coercion all played a role in and helped define this drive for 100% Americanism. During the war, this drive became a crusade that pushed conformity while attempting to suppress any forms of dissent. As this drive for 100% Americanism played such a major role in the American war effort and dominated the pages of the three newspapers mentioned above, a brief outline of the importance, history, and effects of this drive would help place these newspapers in their context within the war and nation.

Unlike the countries of Europe, America lacked the primary motivators for mobilization in early 1917. American towns, families, or farms were not under constant threat of destruction and there were no long casualty lists published daily to encourage the desire for revenge. The remoteness of the war made it necessary for the government to create urgency and drive within the American people that would make the people willing to make any sacrifice in time, money, or lives.<sup>2</sup> In many ways, the war became an affair, or perhaps even a war, of the mind.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Meirion and Susie Harries. *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 164.

<sup>3</sup> David M. Kennedy. *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 46.

To create this sense of urgency, the government relied on pushing the drive for 100% Americanism. In order to do this, the private sphere, such as the work place, home, school, and church, became fundamental to the government's plan for the mobilization of the country. Thus the state became involved with and interfered in private bedrooms, kitchens, and congregations.<sup>4</sup> Without this drive for conformity, the government feared that America's war effort would suffer from a lack of urgency and support from the American people.<sup>5</sup>

One of the major methods of creating this urgency came through the American traditions of voluntarism and conformity. Before World War I, voluntarism was viewed as expressing consent or approval of the government, organizing activities and organizations outside the auspices of the government, and providing unpaid volunteer labor to a cause or government.<sup>6</sup> While the winning of the Great War required support of the hearts and minds of the American people, it also required the voluntarism that would lead American citizens to provide the government with unpaid services. According to the government, it was a privilege to provide unpaid labor and services to the war effort. Ironically, this voluntarism became an obligation and duty required of the American

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<sup>4</sup> Christopher Capozzola. *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 8.

<sup>5</sup> Before and during the war, there were a number of individuals and groups that refused to conform to the government's call for total support of the war effort. While a number of historians have explored this topic, two historians have written histories of opponents of the war that deal with this topic expressly. Ernest A. McKay, in his book, *Against Wilson and War, 1914-1917* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Co., 1996), looks at prominent men and women in politics, society, and church that opposed to the policies of President Wilson which they feared would lead to America's involvement in the war. H.C. Peterson and Gilbert C. Fite, in their book, *Opponents of War, 1917-1918* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1968), examined the major individuals and groups that opposed the war during America's involvement. Peterson and Fite, while devoting a good share of their space to religious objectors, also devote much of their time discussing labor groups, like the IWW and socialists, who opposed the war effort and experienced persecution at the hands of super-patriots.

<sup>6</sup> Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*, 85.

people by the government, voluntary associations, and individual patriots.<sup>7</sup> It became an obligation to voluntarily support the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., war bond drives, food conservation drives, and various other war drives. Voluntarism became a method of enforcing conformity within American society.

A patriotic citizen not only had to hate the enemy, but to show complete loyalty to the United States. As the war progressed, the war itself became a means of enforcing 100% Americanism on the home front. The conservation of food, the purchase of war bonds, and registration for the draft became the means of measuring the Americanness and loyalty of your neighbors.<sup>8</sup> Many patriotic groups and individuals tried to silence and condemn anyone, whether pacifist, ethnic minority, labor union members, etc., within their ranks or in American society that failed to conform or measure up to the required level of Americanness.<sup>9</sup> As the war progressed, the government and patriotic citizens created different methods of enforcing this obligation of voluntarism, conformity, and 100% Americanism.

One of the major methods of creating conformity and the drive for 100% Americanism came through propaganda and the creation of the Committee for Public Information (CPI) headed by George Creel. The goal of the CPI was to use voluntarism rather than government coercion and censorship. Creel and his committee wanted the compulsion and coercion to conform to 100% Americanism to come from within the American people, rather than from without by the government.<sup>10</sup> Many Americans were uncertain what America's aims or motivations were in the war, the CPI feared, so the CPI

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>8</sup> Harries, *The Last Days*, 301.

<sup>9</sup> Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*, 14.

<sup>10</sup> Kennedy, *Over Here*, 61.

used propaganda to create the correct and desired view of the war in the minds of the American people, as well as condemning and subduing dissenters.<sup>11</sup> Another important aspect of the CPI was that it controlled just what war information passed to the newspapers.<sup>12</sup> In other words, the CPI controlled what information on the war was passed on to the public and was, thus, able to influence what Americans thought of the war.

The government also passed laws that made dissent practically a crime and enforced conformity in American society. President Wilson's signed the Espionage Act into law on June 15, 1917. The Espionage Act stated that a person who purposefully "makes or conveys false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military...or to promote the success of its enemies and whoever...shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty in the military...or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the U.S....shall be punished" with up to a ten thousand dollar fine and/or up to twenty years in jail.<sup>13</sup>

On May 16, 1918, President Wilson signed a bill into law, which would become known as the Sedition Act, that increased the government's crackdown on dissent. The Sedition Act, while restating the section from the Espionage Act quoted above, adds that:

...whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces..., or the flag..., or the uniform of the Army or Navy of

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 62.

<sup>12</sup> Harries, *The Last Days*, 165. For further background on the CPI, see the article by Stephen Vaughn, "First Amendment Liberties and the Committee on Public Information." *The American Journal of Legal History*. 23:2 (April 1979): 95-119.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Congress. Espionage Act of 1917. 65<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1917, H.R. 291. National Archives. <http://research.archives.gov/description/5721240>. (accessed October 16, 2012), 3.

the United States... , or shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any language intended to incite, provoke, or encourage resistance to the United States, or to promote the cause of its enemies... , and whoever shall willfully advocate, teach, defend, or suggest the doing of any of the acts or things in this section enumerated, and whoever shall by word or act support or favor the cause of any country with which the United States is at war or by word or act oppose the cause of the United States therein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both.<sup>14</sup>

Another method of enforcing 100% Americanism came through the activities of voluntary associations, such as the American Protective League (the largest voluntary association in America during World War I) and local and state councils of defense. Often the government relied on voluntary associations to enforce 100% Americanism and to suppress dissent. It was cheaper and easier for the government to use voluntary associations, like the American Protective League, to enforce conformity and suppress dissent than for government agents to do it.<sup>15</sup> Voluntary associations not only provided free labor for the government, but they also provided the government with a method of enforcing conformity on the local level that the federal government could not accomplish.

Voluntary associations provided a number of services to the government, not all of them legal. They watched their neighbors and reported perceived seditious remarks to the authorities. These groups also passed out propaganda for the war effort and enforced conformity in aiding war drives (liberty war bonds, Red Cross, Y.M.C.A., etc.). Sometimes their activities left the realm of legal methods. Among the extra-legal methods used by voluntary associations, like the American Protective League, were the cases of members breaking into houses or businesses to gather information, tapping phone lines and bugging offices, interrogating preachers and teachers to learn about their members and pupils, looking into private bank accounts and medical records, and even

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<sup>14</sup> U.S. Congress. Sedition Act of 1918. 65<sup>th</sup> Congress, Public- No. 150, 1918, H.R. 8753.

<sup>15</sup> Harries, *The Last Days*, 304.

confiscating and censoring mail.<sup>16</sup> Another extra-legal method employed by voluntary association and individual citizens was vigilantism and mobs.

It became an obligation, during World War I, for the American people to police each other's words and actions.<sup>17</sup> Often this policing involved some form of coercion at the hand of a group of vigilantes. While President Wilson and George Creel of the CPI publicly condemned vigilantism, both had helped create the atmosphere of hysteria and violence that spread throughout the United States in 1917-1918. In many cases, this hysteria led to vigilantism and mob violence. Vigilantism even became viewed, by some, as a beneficial practice, in that it aided the law in rooting dissenters and trouble makers out of society. Mob violence did not violate the law, according to some proponents of vigilantism, but vindicated it.<sup>18</sup> During the war, proponents of vigilantism argued that vigilantism, while operating outside the realm of the law and the legitimate holder of authority (the state), upheld and strengthened the law, as well as enforced social order in the state's name.<sup>19</sup> Mob violence became a justifiable method of enforcing conformity within American society and dissenting groups, like the Mennonites, received the brunt of this vigilante justice.

This push for conformity and 100% Americanism helped destroy, for a time, the tradition of openness, trust, and tolerance in America. Unity, obedience, and unquestioning loyalty were the watchwords of the time.<sup>20</sup> Government propaganda, voluntary associations, and vigilante mobs all played their role in the drive for 100% Americanism. Also important in this drive for 100% Americanism were the editorials

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 304.

<sup>17</sup> Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*, 119.

<sup>18</sup> Kennedy, *Over Here*, 79.

<sup>19</sup> Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*, 120.

<sup>20</sup> Harries, *The Last Days*, 302.

and articles of newspapers across the nation. In the following pages, the efforts of three different newspapers in Marion and Harvey counties to create a definition of patriotism and the requirements for complete loyalty will be documented.

## Chapter 1: Mennonite History and Beliefs

A brief history of the Mennonites and their key beliefs of nonresistance and nonconformity helps demonstrate why Mennonites acted the way they did during the Great War. By refusing to carry guns, buy war bonds, or even serve at a desk, the Mennonites just tried to stay true to those principles handed down since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In many ways, Marion and Harvey County Mennonites tried to live out a belief system forged by a group of radical reformers during the Protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. To aid the war, even by donating money, meant Mennonite involvement in taking the life of someone God commanded them to love. This not only violated their belief system but also the very core of Mennonite identity.

Mennonites can trace their roots to a group of radical reformers who broke off of Ulrich Zwingli during the Reformation in the 1520s called the Anabaptists.<sup>1</sup> Anabaptists (which literally means re-baptizers) gathered in Schleithem, Switzerland on February 24, 1527 to set up those key doctrines that they felt set them off from the rest of the Protestant Reformation. These Anabaptists wrote a confession of faith made up of seven articles called the “Brotherly Union of a Number of Children of God Concerning Seven Articles” (*Brüderlich Vereynigung etzlicher Kinder Gottes, Seiben Artikel Betreffend*), more commonly known as the Schleithem Confession.<sup>2</sup>

The Schleithem Confession, while covering seven articles of importance to these Anabaptists, sets up two of the key beliefs of the Mennonites: nonconformity and

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<sup>1</sup> For two different interpretations of Mennonite history see: C. Henry Smith. *The Story of the Mennonites*. (Newton, KS: Mennonite Publication Office, 1964.) and Cornelius J. Dyck *An Introduction to Mennonite History*. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1993.)

<sup>2</sup> “The Schleithem Confession of Faith.” *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*. 19:4 (October, 1945). Tr. John C. Wenger. PP. 243-253. P.243. [A translation of the original Schleithem Confession by John C. Wenger.]



nonresistance. Christians, according to this confession of faith, must refuse to conform to the practices of the world. According to the writers of the Schleithem Confession, everything that is not of God is an abomination and thus Christians needed to shun worldly things. Worldly/sinful abominations included anything to do with the state churches, visiting bars and taverns, and participating in civic and governmental affairs.<sup>3</sup> These abominations, while “highly regarded by the world,” remain unrighteous and in contradiction to God’s commands. Therefore, Christians needed to refuse to participate in these worldly things so as to remain true to Jesus who freed the Christian from slavery to the flesh for service to God.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the practices of the world lead to unrighteousness and evil, and thus the Christian must obey God by separating themselves from the world, including non-Christians, governmental offices, and state churches. To participate in any of these worldly practices meant partaking in the abominations of the world. Nonconformity, as defined above, meant refusing to get involved in any worldly affair that contradicted God’s commands.

Stemming from this belief in nonconformity and separation from the world is their belief in nonresistance. If the Christian must remain separate from the world and the world is full of violence, then the Christian must refrain from partaking in this violence in any way. Non-Christians and government officials maintain their citizenship in the world but Christians maintain their citizenship in heaven.<sup>5</sup> Christians, in other words, have their citizenship in heaven while the worldly officials have their citizenship in the world and thus both have different weapons.

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<sup>3</sup> “The Schleithem Confession of Faith.” 249.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 251.

For the non-Christians and government officials “the weapons of their conflict and war are carnal and against the flesh only, but the Christians’ weapons are spiritual, against the fortification of the devil. The worldlings [sic] are armed with steel and iron, but the Christians are armed with the armor of God, with truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God.”<sup>6</sup> While the world relied on violence and war to maintain order, the Christians, due to their call of nonconformity, must follow Christ’s call of love and peace. The Christian must respond in all situations with love, peace, righteousness, and faith. Since the world is evil and full of violence and Christians must not conform to the world’s model, the Christian must rely on nonresistance and the modeling of God’s love to demonstrate their faith.

In 1536, an Anabaptist leader by the name of Menno Simons, emerged in Holland and Germany to help consolidate the movement and its beliefs. While under constant threat of capture and martyrdom, Simons worked to strengthen the movement and defend its core beliefs. By doing this he helped the Anabaptists to set up a clear belief system that the Mennonites still maintained in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He served as the leader of the Anabaptists from 1536 to 1561 while working from the Netherlands.<sup>7</sup> After Simons’ death, a large number of the Anabaptists took on his name and became known as the Mennonites.

Of all of his teachings, two points made by Simons shaped the cornerstone of Anabaptist, and later, Mennonite, beliefs. On nonconformity or separation from the world, Simons wrote clearly on how the Anabaptists should approach the world.

According to Simons, Satan, the prince of darkness, ruled the worldly kingdom through

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Gerlof D. Homan. *American Mennonites and the Great War: 1914-1918*. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994), 29.

murder, tumult, and blood.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, Simons portrayed the kingdom of heaven and its prince as completely opposite.

Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, rules the kingdom of peace which meant that His church, teachings, followers, and rewards all belonged to the kingdom of peace. Peace reigned through Christ so that “everything that is seen, heard, and done is peace.”<sup>9</sup> While violence dominated the kingdom of the world, peace ruled over the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, since the Christian belonged to the kingdom of heaven and not the world, Christians must live peacefully as a demonstration of their citizenship in the kingdom of heaven/peace.

This belief in not conforming to the world directly shaped his portrayal of nonresistance. According to Simons, Jesus commanded every Christian to love their enemies and do good toward those who persecuted them. Simons questioned how a Christian commanded by God to love their enemies could “defend scripturally retaliation, rebellion, war, striking, slaying, torturing, stealing, robbing and plundering and burning cities, and conquering countries?”<sup>10</sup> If the church became involved with the world and its violence, then the church tacitly supported war, murder, and “devilish works.”<sup>11</sup>

Once the church accepted worldly violence, the church made the body of Christ (the church) “an inhuman, cruel, rebellious, bloody, rapacious, noisy, unmerciful, and unrighteous people.”<sup>12</sup> Therefore, a Christian must live peacefully and nonresistant if they wanted to follow Christ while avoiding all murder, violence, and war. For a

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<sup>8</sup> Menno Simons. “Reply to False Accusations.” *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons: 1496-1561*. Tr. Leonard Verduin. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1966), 556.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 554.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 555.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 557.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

Christian to participate in any form of violence or warfare meant to tarnish the name of Christianity and subvert its very core beliefs.

While the Christian, according to Menno Simons, must remain separate from the world and maintain their nonresistance, the Christian must also obey the government. Just because the Christian needed to remain separate from the world and government, it did not give Christians the freedom to ignore the government's laws. According to Simons, God ordained the governmental leaders and thus the Christian must obey the governmental leaders as part of their service to God.<sup>13</sup> As part of this obedience to the government, the Christian must willingly pay taxes, pray for the government, and honor its officials.

Menno Simons did attach an important qualification on the duty of the Christian to obey the government. The Christian must obey the government as long as obedience to the government did not run "contrary to the Word of God."<sup>14</sup> In other words, the Christian must obey the government as their duty to Christ, unless the government acts contrary to the word of God. If the government acted contrary to God's Word, then the Christian had the duty to obey God rather than the government.

The next major declaration of Mennonite beliefs came in April 1632 in Dordrecht, Holland. On April 21, 1632, a conference of Dutch Mennonites<sup>15</sup> adopted a confession of faith that proved to be the most influential statement of Mennonite beliefs among the

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 549.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Many of these Dutch Mennonites later migrated to Russia during the reign of Catherine the Great and then later migrated to the United States during the 1870s. Many of the Mennonites in Marion and Harvey County could ultimately trace their roots to these Dutch Mennonites. This partially explains why the Dordrecht Confession remained so influential, even during World War I. James C. Juhnke argued that Kansas Mennonites, in the years leading up to the Great War, still relied on the articles of the Dordrecht Confession to inform their conference statements on peace and nonresistance. James C. Juhnke. *Vision, Doctrine, War: Mennonite Identity and Organization in America 1890-1930*. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1989), 215-216.

Mennonites from 1632 through World War I. The Dordrecht Confession came about as a result of a move for union between all the various Mennonite groups in the Netherlands. After the death of Menno Simons, the Mennonites fragmented and the Dordrecht Confession largely succeeded in unifying these different groups throughout Europe, and eventually America.<sup>16</sup> In fact, Mennonites continued to rely on the Dordrecht Confession during World War I as their major defense of their beliefs.

While the Dordrecht Confession sets out eighteen key beliefs of the Mennonites, two of them established key beliefs towards nonresistance and the government. Article Thirteen of the confession argued that God created the government to punish the wicked, protect the good, and maintain worldly order.<sup>17</sup> Therefore the Christian must obey and honor the government. As part of this obedience, the Christian must pay taxes as Christ demonstrated while also praying for the government constantly. Christians, according to the writers of the Dordrecht Confession, must obey the laws of the government unless those laws go against God's laws or commandments.<sup>18</sup> In other words, the Christian must obey the government in order to remain obedient to God, as long as obedience to the government did not conflict with the Christian's duty to obey God first. God's commands took precedence over the commands of the government.

Article Fourteen of the confession argued that God forbade Christians from committing any act of violence or resistance. The Christian should not return evil with evil but instead return evil with good. Christians must serve everyone and work towards

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<sup>16</sup> John C. Wenger. *The Doctrines of the Mennonites*. (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1952), 77.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 83.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*.

their salvation.<sup>19</sup> According to the writers of the Dordrecht Confession, the Christian must not resist but instead accept suffering and persecution. If the Christian could no longer stay in one place without wronging or offending others, the Christian needed to flee from that city or country to another.<sup>20</sup> Through all of this, the nonresistant Christian needed to pray, feed, and house his or her enemies in an attempt to bring about their salvation.<sup>21</sup> In other words, Christians must demonstrate nonresistance in all of their actions towards those who persecute them. A Christian could not hope to bring his or her enemies to salvation through a violent response, while peaceful nonresistance allowed the Christian to work towards the salvation of everyone by following Jesus' example.

In the years following Menno Simons and the Dordrecht Confession, the Mennonites tried to live out this program of nonconformity and nonresistance. These Mennonites withdrew into separate, isolated communities throughout the Netherlands, Prussia, and Austria in an attempt to maintain their beliefs in a peaceful manner.<sup>22</sup> This withdrawal from the world encountered some major problems during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This century witnessed the domination of nationalism and militarism, which led the Mennonites to emphasize their refusal to fight through their doctrine of nonresistance.<sup>23</sup> During the rise of nationalism and militarism of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Mennonites had to strengthen and maintain their nonresistant faith amongst growing tension with the governments that demanded their service.<sup>24</sup> To maintain their belief in

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> James C. Juhnke. *A People of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites*. (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1975), 10.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

nonresistance, the Mennonites sought a home where they could not only maintain this belief but settle in self-contained, isolated communities.

Mennonites, in 1788, found this sought out home in Russia at the invitation of Catherine II (also known as Catherine the Great).<sup>25</sup> The Mennonites came to Russia because Catherine the Great “promised complete religious freedom, exemption from all military service and perpetual land possession, a legal basis of entry which virtually ensured the erection of a self-contained community.”<sup>26</sup> Catherine II gave the Mennonites the freedom to practice their nonconformity and nonresistance with the expectation that Mennonite farmers had the ability to turn the land in present day Ukraine into a fertile farm land for Russia.<sup>27</sup> In other words, Mennonites received a deal that allowed them to remain true to their beliefs for very little cost to them. It was almost a deal too good to be true.

Less than one hundred years after the Russian government first granted the Mennonites the freedom of religion and military exemption, the Mennonites faced a major challenge as the Russian government began to rescind some of the privileges given to the Mennonites. When the Russian Government instituted a comprehensive nationalization program in 1866, the next decade saw the emigration of over eighteen

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<sup>25</sup> For an in-depth look at the Mennonites in Russia see Peter M. Friesen. *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910)*. Tr. J.B. Toews, Abraham Friesen, Peter J. Klassen, and Harry Loewen. (Fresno, CA: Board of Christian Literature General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1978). Friesen’s book was originally published in German in Russia in 1911 but was not translated into English until 1978. While Friesen gives an in-depth history of the Mennonites in Russia, he also provides numerous primary document supplements that not only strengthen his arguments but also allow the reader to hear what contemporary Mennonites in Russia were actually saying about certain key events.

<sup>26</sup> John B. Toews. “Nonresistance Reexamined: Why did Mennonites leave Russia in 1874?” *Mennonite Life*. 29:1&2 (Mid-Year 1974). (Newton, KS: Herald Publishing Co.) 8-13. P. 9. [Centennial Double Issue. Special issue of magazine celebrating the centennial of Mennonites in the United States.] [Catherine the Great’s promise to the Mennonites became known as “the czarist *Privilegium*.”]

<sup>27</sup> Juhnke, *A People*, 11.

thousand Mennonites to the United States or Canada.<sup>28</sup> This nationalization program introduced national military conscription and the pressure to become fully Russian on the Mennonites. Russian nationalism and universal military conscription threatened the destruction of the Mennonite world for the first time since the Mennonites came to Russia.<sup>29</sup> The Mennonite response to this threat came through emigration during the 1870s.<sup>30</sup>

These eighteen thousand Mennonites came to the United States and Canada to maintain their beliefs in nonconformity and nonresistance. While the Mennonites, in the end, received less generous terms from the United States government than they had received from Russia in 1788, the Mennonites came to the United States in an attempt to preserve their Russian Mennonite culture, education, and religious world.<sup>31</sup> The Mennonites who came to Marion and Harvey County Kansas attempted to not only maintain their two key beliefs but also the lifestyle that they felt protected those two key beliefs.<sup>32</sup> By trying to maintain this German/Russian lifestyle, though, the Mennonites

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>29</sup> Toews, "Nonresistance Reexamined," 9.

<sup>30</sup> The 18,000 Mennonites who left Russia made up close to a third of the Mennonites living in Russia. 10,000 of the Mennonites who left Russia came to the United States (Kansas, Nebraska, Dakota, and Minnesota). The other 8,000 or so went to Canada (Manitoba). Of the 10,000 Mennonites that came to the United States, around half of those settled in Kansas. The majority of the Russian Mennonites that came to Kansas joined the General Conference Mennonites. A minority of these Russian Mennonites, though, was made up of Mennonite Brethren, who largely settled in the Hillsboro and Buhler areas. Wally Kroeker. *An Introduction to the Russian Mennonites*. (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2005) 41, 50. [This book gives a short, but decent overview of the experiences of the Russian Mennonites in Russia, the causes of their emigration, and where they settled after leaving Russia.]

<sup>31</sup> Toews, "Nonresistance Reexamined," 9.

<sup>32</sup> The state of Kansas even made concessions so as to attract these Mennonite emigrants, who were well known for their farming productivity. On March 9, 1874 the Kansas state legislature revised an 1865 law that exempted conscientious objectors from military service as long as they paid a thirty-dollar tax every year to the state. In March 1874, the legislature dropped the thirty-dollar tax, which then allowed a conscientious objector, like the Mennonites, to claim military exemption without any negative consequence imposed by the state. This action, in the end, helped attract Mennonites to the state of Kansas. Unfortunately for the Mennonites, this law did not have any jurisdiction over a federal draft as was instituted during the Great War. C. Henry Smith. *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites: An Episode in the Settling of the Last Frontier 1874-1884*. (Berne, IN: Mennonite Book Concern, 1927) 266. [Smith's



placed themselves in a difficult situation during World War I when American society became stringently anti-German in every respect. When American society attacked the Mennonite German/Russian lifestyle, they also attacked the core Mennonite beliefs. Kansas Mennonites had to find a way to maintain their beliefs, while slowly becoming more American.<sup>33</sup>

Just thirty years after the Mennonites emigrated from Russia to Kansas, they published a new confession of faith for their homeland that reflected those beliefs first spelled out in the Schleithem Confession and the teachings of Menno Simons. In 1904, the General Conference Mennonites published a book setting out the major articles of faith of the Mennonite church.<sup>34</sup> The book, *Mennonite Articles of Faith* by Cornelis Ris, directed Kansas Mennonites to continue to follow the Mennonite beliefs of nonconformity and nonresistance. Ris stated that Mennonites should obey the government since it was ordained by God, but only if this obedience did not conflict with obedience to God.<sup>35</sup> The Mennonites also needed to avoid government service because the government used oaths and violence to maintain order. Government service, according to Ris, was “at best dangerous service.”<sup>36</sup> As for nonresistance, Ris stated that Mennonites should act like “lambs of God” and overcome all evil with good.<sup>37</sup> Do not resist evil with violence but “suffer repeated wrong; rather put up with material loss and

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book also explores the history of the Mennonite settlement in Russia, the events that led to the Mennonites emigrating out of Russia, and the areas of Mennonite settlement in the United States and Canada.]

<sup>33</sup> James C. Juhnke addresses the acculturation of the Mennonites in Kansas and America in his two books: *A People of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites*. (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1975) and *Vision, Doctrine, War: Mennonite Identity and Organization in America 1890-1930*. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1989). Both books explore how Mennonites adapted their lives and beliefs to the United States during the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>34</sup> The General Conference (G.C.) Mennonites first began as a denomination in 1860. It was the most progressive of the Mennonite churches and focused on evangelism, education, and unity. G.C. conference headquarters was centered in Newton, Harvey County, Kansas.

<sup>35</sup> Cornelis Ris. *Mennonite Articles of Faith*. (Berne, Indiana: Mennonite Book Concern, 1904), 51.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 52.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

injustice than to be quick to quarrel....”<sup>38</sup> Kansas Mennonites found themselves doing just this upon the United States entry into the Great War in 1917.

Four years before the United States entered World War I, the Mennonite Church released a catechism. This catechism served as a major tool to teach young Mennonites the core Mennonite beliefs so that they could become full members in the church. The catechism of 1913 was originally written in German in Elbing, Prussia in 1783 as an attempt to clearly set out Mennonite beliefs for the younger generation of Mennonites.<sup>39</sup> From Prussia, this catechism worked its way to Pennsylvania in 1844 and eventually was published in English in 1848. Then in 1896 the Mennonite Church general conference board (which met at the Alexanderwohl Church in Kansas) ordered this catechism to be widely spread throughout the church.<sup>40</sup> In other words, the Mennonite Church used this catechism widely as a means to instill the core Mennonite beliefs into the younger generation that lived through the trials of World War I.

The catechism sets out the key Mennonite belief of nonresistance and attitudes towards the government. To address the key beliefs of the Mennonites, the author of the catechism approached the issues by asking a question and then providing a verse of scripture as the answer. For nonresistance, the author quotes John 13:34 (“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”); Matthew 5:44-45 (“But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”); I Peter

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> *The Catechism or Simple Instruction from the Sacred Scriptures, as Taught by the Mennonite Church.* (Berne, Ind.: Mennonite Book Concern, 1913), 3.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

3:9 (“Do not repay with evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”); I Peter 2:21 (“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.”); Matthew 10:22 (“All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”); and Matthew 5:11-12 (“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”).<sup>41</sup> As for how Mennonites should treat the government, the author quotes Romans 13:1 (“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God”).<sup>42</sup> In essence, the anonymous author of this catechism listed the major scriptures that the Mennonites used to defend those beliefs set out in the Schleithem and Dordrecht confessions. The author attempted to list the key Mennonite beliefs by only using the words of scripture.<sup>43</sup>

The Schleithem Confession, Menno Simons, the Dordrecht Confession, Cornelis Ris, and the 1913 *Catechism* all have one thing in common. Each tried to clearly set out a unified set of beliefs that bound the Mennonites together. All of them, from 1527 to 1913, largely repeated the same core beliefs, though in different ways and in different length. In other words, the Mennonites in Marion and Harvey County of 1917 could trace their beliefs to the Schleithem Confession of 1527 through the Catechism book of

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 23-24. Quotes from the Bible come from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2005).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 24. Bible quote comes from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> For a list of scriptures used by the Mennonites and other conscientious objectors during World War I to defend their nonresistant beliefs in military camps, see Appendix 1.

1913, with very little change. Kansas Mennonites still held to a core set of beliefs that differed little from those beliefs originally taught by Menno Simons. These core beliefs of nonresistance and nonconformity, as expressed in the above sources, help demonstrate how Mennonite approached World War I and how these key beliefs set them in opposition to patriotic Americanism.<sup>44</sup>

The Mennonites of Marion County and Harvey County, while both tracing their roots back to the group of Anabaptists of the 1500s, had different backgrounds and a slightly different focus. While the following newspapers tend to lump all Mennonites together, a wide diversity of Mennonite groups existed throughout the United States, especially in Kansas. These various groups may have all held to the same core beliefs in nonresistance and nonconformity, but each interpreted a little differently just how to apply those key beliefs in the outside world.

Most of the Mennonites in Marion County belonged to the Mennonite Brethren branch.<sup>45</sup> The Mennonite Brethren traced their beginnings back to 1860 in Russia, where a group of reformers began an evangelical reform movement within the Mennonite settlements of Russia.<sup>46</sup> This group of reformers attempted to reform and purify the Mennonite church. Pietist subjectivism and the fundamentalist movement's biblical literalism served as the two strongest outside influences for the Mennonite Brethren.

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<sup>44</sup> In the years following World War I, the Mennonites put together a new and extensive book on the Bible doctrines held by the Mennonites that differed little from the various sources discussed above. Daniel Kauffman Ed. *Doctrines of the Bible: A Brief Discussion of the Teachings of God's Word*. (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1929). Kauffman gives an in-depth discussion of the major doctrines held by the Mennonites towards the Bible in relation to God, man, Satan, sin, salvation, church, Christian life, nonresistance, nonconformity, judgment day, hell, and heaven. Even after the trials of World War I, the Mennonites still held to their major doctrines passed down from the 1500s.

<sup>45</sup> For an in-depth exploration of the development and early history of the Mennonite Brethren see Peter M. Friesen. *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910)*. Tr. J.B. Toews, Abraham Friesen, Peter J. Klassen, and Harry Loewen. (Fresno, CA: Board of Christian Literature General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1978). Friesen devotes a good share of his book to the history of the Mennonite Brethren in Russia, as well as their emigration to America.

<sup>46</sup> Juhnke. *A People*, 23.

What made them different from other Mennonite groups rested on their focus on personal conversion, immersion baptism, and mission work.<sup>47</sup> Once in the United States, the Mennonite Brethren largely settled in the mid-west, making Hillsboro in Marion County Kansas their central hub. With the founding of Tabor College in 1908, the Mennonite Brethren further established Hillsboro as their cultural and intellectual center.<sup>48</sup> Due to their fundamentalist and Pietist influences, the Mennonite Brethren attempted to maintain their separation from the outside world and other, more Americanized Mennonite groups (like the General Conference Mennonites), even well into the twentieth century.

Most of the Mennonites in Harvey County belonged to the General Conference Mennonite branch. The General Conference Mennonites traced their beginnings back to 1860 in Iowa to a group of progressive Mennonite leaders who sought to renew the church through evangelism, education, and unity.<sup>49</sup> These reformers wanted to unite the many diverse branches of Mennonites once again into one group. Though the General Conference Mennonites never succeeded in uniting all Mennonites, they did attract many Mennonites to join their group, especially the incoming Mennonite immigrants from Russia during the 1870s. By the time World War I had broken out in Europe in 1914, the General Conference had established Newton in Harvey County Kansas as their cultural and administrative center.<sup>50</sup> This fact was largely due to the founding of Bethel College in Newton by the General Conference Mennonites. As time went on, the openness of the General Conference Mennonites to a diversity of Mennonites and traditions also made them more open to the influences of American culture. When compared with the

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

Mennonite Brethren, the General Conference Mennonites had Americanized more quickly, especially by the time America entered World War I.

## Chapter 2: The *Tabor College Herald*

One way to explore how Mennonites approached World War I is to explore the articles published in the Mennonite Brethren school newspaper of Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas, the *Tabor College Herald*.<sup>1</sup> The *Tabor College Herald* editors split the paper into two sections, one in German and the other in English.<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, only the English section was used. Throughout 1917 and 1918, the *Herald* focused on the nonresistance stance of the Mennonites, and how Mennonites could demonstrate their patriotism during war. Overall, the *Herald* tried to help the Mennonites in Marion County cope with the challenges the war brought to their core values of nonresistance and nonconformity.

Before the United States entered the war, articles published in early 1917 in the *Herald* focused on how the actions of the Mennonites on domestic issues related to the ideal of true patriotism. In the first article of 1917, the *Herald* looked at what issues really threatened America, and how Mennonites needed to react. The author (the article lists no author) began by arguing that:

America is the land of the future....Yet our country finds itself confronted with some serious impending dangers. We are in a critical situation in spite of the

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<sup>1</sup> Hillsboro, which was founded in 1879, had a population in 1915 of 1,223 (which probably did not change too much by 1917-1918). Marion County, overall, was founded in 1865 and had a population in 1915 of 21,577. William E. Connelley. *History of Kansas Newspapers*. (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1916), 233-234. Conelley's book, sponsored by the Kansas State Historical Society and Department of Archives, provides valuable information on almost all the major newspapers published in Kansas as of 1916. It is a good source not only on the newspapers themselves (it provides publishing history, the editor(s), political leaning, etc.) but also on the counties and cities (it provides population statistics, founding dates, the background behind the name of the counties and cities, elevation, major industries, etc.).

<sup>2</sup> The *Tabor College Herald* was co-edited by H.W. Lohrenz, who also served as Tabor College's first president from 1908 through 1931. Due to his position as president, Lohrenz played a major role within the Mennonite church in helping the Mennonites deal with the challenges of war. The *Tabor College Herald* was published from 1912 through 1931. By 1931, the *Herald* largely printed its articles in English, but did include a few German articles for its older alumni. In the years following World War I and before 1931, the *Herald* had also changed the spelling of its title to *Tabor College Herald*, to reflect its shift towards the English language.

apparent prosperity. We are not without enemies. Intrigue and cunning foes threaten to ruin our country and rob our citizens of their legal birthright....It is not a foreign foe that threatens our existence. There is not a nation in the world strong enough to conquer America....Our patriotism is too great to let a hostile vessel ever near our shores. Our foes are of a different kind. Social and moral evil are the powerful enemies that gnaw the very life of our nation away....The greatest of these social evils is strong drink. King Alcohol with his gigantic army of brewers and liquor dealers wages a hotly contested bloody war against American justice and liberty.<sup>3</sup>

Alcohol, not Germany, threatened to destroy America and deserved an immediate response from the patriotic citizens of America.

According to the *Herold*, the American people needed to act quickly to destroy the menace of alcohol before it could destroy them. For the *Herold*:

[The problem of alcohol] is of tremendously greater importance than the tariff question, trust legislation, conservation of natural resources, or military preparedness....Every American in whose bosom grows a spark of patriotism, a love for liberty, should exert the utmost effort in this significant struggle....The saloon must be forever banished from our shores. We must create an atmosphere free from all vice and all moral degradation in which American sons and daughters may grow up. We must develop a better type of citizenship. Shall America endure? Shall it survive? The forces of evil are our enemies, their conquest is our task. A complete victory over them warrants a glorious future for America. I therefore appeal to every liberty loving citizen of our country to volunteer for this great fight. It can be done! It must be done!! It will be done!!!<sup>4</sup>

This article reads like a call to war against a national enemy. In some ways, it used appeals to the emotions, patriotism, and religion of the readers, much in the same way as appeals were made in the *Marion Record* and the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, to support the war in Europe after the United States entered the war. For Mennonites, though, this was a call to war against what they saw as the true threat, and one that they could fight against wholeheartedly.

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<sup>3</sup> "America's Future." *Tabor College Herold* 6:1 (January 1917): 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 24.



The February issue of the *Herold* printed an article written by Marie N. Krause.

She began by arguing that:

True patriotism is a virtue of only those that are worthy. It is more than sacrificing our life to the war god in behalf of one's country. Besides this it is living for one's native land....If patriotism is rooted so deeply, we must look further than only to the heroic effort and sacrifice of the soldier. True patriotism is broader....Nobody can pay a higher tribute to his country than to live a high, noble life. The man who cultivates his abilities to the utmost fills his responsibilities and duties with conscientiousness and dignity, and guards his acts against dishonorable flaws, helps to raise his countries worth and credit....We can, therefore, place the altruistic soule [sic] unhesitatingly in the ranks of the true patriots. Their aim is preventive rather than cure. In the soldier we find the last purpose. We honor both; we need both; the latter to save us in peril and give us a new chance, but we revere the former, for the sacrifices and lives for the maintenance of the wholesome life of the nation or if need be to cure the wilting power of humanity before a deadly crisis comes.<sup>5</sup>

Mennonites could show their patriotism by working to maintain the virtues of the nation, which benefited the nation more than any war could do in the long run.

A true patriot also maintained a respect for other nations and recognized the merits and weaknesses of his or her own country.<sup>6</sup> Unlike in America, the European nations instilled loyalty to the nation, while ignoring patriotism, allowing hate to seep in and bringing war to the world.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, true patriotism pushed for material, intellectual, and ethical improvement for all nations, even if that nation was a rival.<sup>8</sup>

"True patriotism," according to Krause, "is, also, intensely devoted, as well as just and impartial....Many believe that fighting for his country is the only patriotism, but this view is a very narrow one."<sup>9</sup> In many ways, true patriotism benefited the world and put selfish and unjust motives aside. If truly patriotic, an individual and the nation needed to

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<sup>5</sup> Marie N. Krause. "Korrespondenz=Department." *Tabor College Herold* 6:2 (February 1917): 27-28. [Krause's article is placed in the correspondence section of the paper.]

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 28-30.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 28.

avoid a war that was driven by selfish and hateful motives. Krause argued here that the United States should work to instill the virtues of patriotism both in America and around the world. To do this, America needed to avoid the European war, which was driven by selfish and hateful motives.<sup>10</sup>

On April 6, 1917 Woodrow Wilson declared war on Germany, forcing the *Herold* to treat America's involvement in the war. In the May 1917 edition, one article demonstrated that not all of the Mennonite students at Tabor College held strictly to nonresistance. The article stated that:

'Happy Janz proved to be more patriotic than all the rest of the Taborites and a good deal more patriotic than the average American. He could not wait for registration day, so he secretly boarded a flyer to the Dominion of Canada. As we have not heard much of 'Happy' since his departure we guess that he is by this time fighting the Germans in the trenches of France. With such men as 'Happy' in the army, the Allies are sure to win.<sup>11</sup>

While the article did not pass any judgment on the actions of Janz, it did imply that Janz went overboard in his reaction to the war. This lack of reaction to Janz joining the army, while interesting and somewhat puzzling, demonstrated that Mennonites did not all have a united view towards the war.

Nearly a year after first reporting on 'Happy' Janz's flight to Canada, the *Herold* gave an update on Janz in April 1918. According to the *Herold*, "He who was well known as 'Happy' while in Tabor, but whom others know as Mr. H.P. Janz, has been serving humanity in the capacity of an evangelist in Manitoba, Canada."<sup>12</sup> Rather than going to Canada to join the military as first reported in May 1917, H.P. Janz actually went to Canada to preach. What most likely happened, though, was that Janz fled to

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<sup>10</sup> For a similar argument see Homer Hoch's editorial "A Great Ideal," published in the *Marion Record* on January 25, 1917.

<sup>11</sup> "Locals." *Tabor College Herold* 6:5 (May 1917): 19.

<sup>12</sup> "Alumni Notes." *Tabor College Herold* 7:4 (April 1918): 40.

Canada to escape having to serve in the American military. Janz chose to uphold his Mennonite belief in nonresistance by fleeing from the draft.<sup>13</sup>

For the first edition of the fall semester, the September 1917 *Herold* helped illustrate the problems that the war brought to the Mennonite college. The article remarked that:

Tabor College has begun its tenth year with the slogan, ‘none but the very best will do.’ In spite of the war and the general feeling of unrest we are looking forward with courage and hope for a prosperous school year. The effects of the war have not made themselves felt here as much as in some other schools, and the enrollment is now almost at the normal, even though not quite what it was a year ago.<sup>14</sup>

While the war had caused some social unrest, Tabor College had escaped, so far, any serious negative repercussions.<sup>15</sup>

Professor of History and Physics P.F. Wall, in an article in the September 1917 issue of the *Herold*, argued that “confronting the American nation today are many great problems that should be solved, problems that really imperil the future of our great

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<sup>13</sup> Canada was home to a large population of Mennonites where Janz would have found a welcome home. Also, Canada was much more lenient on the conscientious objector than the United States and Mennonites there experienced fewer problems over their refusal to fight. According to J.S. Hartzler, in *Mennonites in the World War or Nonresistance Under Test*, Canadian Mennonites received special exemption by the Canadian Government from military service. Mennonites in Canada, who mostly lived on farms, were left to raise their crops as their service to the war effort. While some Canadian Mennonites ended up in military camps, the majority of these received indefinite leaves of absence so that these Mennonites could remain at home and work on the farm. Hartzler argued that the Canadian Government, as compared to the United States, had reached a better and more humane solution to the problem of the nonresistant conscientious objector during war time. J.S. Hartzler. *Mennonites in the World War or Nonresistance Under Test*. (Scottsdale, PA.: Jerome S. Ozer, Publisher, 1972), 82-83. [Hartzler’s book was originally published in 1922 under direction from the Mennonite General Conference. Hartzler spent World War I working with Mennonites held in military camps.]

<sup>14</sup> “Locals.” *Tabor College Herold* 6:7 (September 1917): 10.

<sup>15</sup> This was most likely due to Tabor’s location in Hillsboro, Kansas. Unlike many other locations where Mennonites had settled, Hillsboro had a large population of Mennonites that dominated much of the town, which helped insulated them from the war hysteria that swept the rest of the nation. James C. Juhnke argues this point effectively in his article, “Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918.” *Kansas Historical Quarterly*. 43:3 (Autumn 1977): 346-347.

nation.”<sup>16</sup> He began by stating that many men continued to work to bring peace in Europe, that men and women continued to sacrifice time and money to fight for prohibition, and women continued to neglect the home and their duties there to fight for women’s suffrage.<sup>17</sup> “All these people,” he argued, “have high ideals in mind, they struggle for a good cause....But why do they never venture to discover the underlying cause of these great evils?...This problem consists in teaching the Bible to the young people. What makes this problem so great and important is the fact that the great religion of the omnipotent God, which is taught in the Bible, is the basis of all civilization.”<sup>18</sup> The true problem, which threatened America and even civilization, resulted from the lack of Biblical teaching among American youth.

To Wall, the Bible served as the centerpiece of civilization. He argued that:

If the religion of the Bible has nothing to do with civilization, why then is there such a contrast between the heathen Mongolians and the Christianity confessing Europeans, between the cannibals of Africa and the cultured Americans?...Take Christianity out of our own country and what would be left? There would be no regard for the neighbor’s rights, honesty would be no virtue, immorality would be indulged in to the fullest extent, and the laws, no matter how good, would be ineffectual to prevent crime.<sup>19</sup>

Wall argued that without the Bible, civilization could not exist and that the evidence of this existed throughout the earth.

For Wall, the World War served as a punishment on Europe and America for their failure to teach the Bible. Historical examples demonstrated that this was the case.

Is it not evident beyond doubt that the Almighty God has hurled Europe and America into such a horrible catastrophe in punishment for deserting the true

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<sup>16</sup> P.F. Wall. “Our Nation’s Greatest Problem.” *Tabor College Herald* 6:7 (September 1917): 11. [See a similar argument put forth by Will Palmer in an article printed in the *Marion Record* on January 4, 1917. Palmer, Will. “A Layman’s Sermon.” *Marion Record* 47:13 (January 4, 1917): 3.]

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 12.

Christian religion? We find examples all through history illustrating that inevitable destruction must follow where the doctrines of the Bible are disregarded. Israel was carried into captivity because she disobeyed the laws of God. Rome fell because her people, after accepting Christianity, neglected to teach the Bible to their children and substituted their own formal rites for the true religious principles. The great revolution in France was an indirect result of the materialistic ideas that gained control of the people. Yea, millions of people have paid the penalty for the crime of disregarding the teachings of the Bible. Before our nation already looms the black thunder cloud of the awful tragedy that must surely come if our people do not reform.<sup>20</sup>

Wall likened the European war to a black cloud of doom that threatened to overtake America if it failed to reform.

Without the Bible, Wall argued that the foundations of America would crumble. America could still avoid this doom. According to Wall, “There is but one effective method to solve this problem, the only method that will adequately cover the field. This is by teaching the Bible in our public schools....Since we have received our ears to hear the approaching thunder, lets us then do our duty in this matter to the best of our ability, so that we may finally stand before the judgment throne as faithful servants who have done what they could.”<sup>21</sup> If America failed to go back to the Bible, it would fall just like Israel and Rome.<sup>22</sup> In this argument, true patriotism was the duty of Christians to instill the Bible in the youth of the nation. Without this, Wall argued, America’s fighting in the war was doomed.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 13-14.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>22</sup> For a deeper exploration into the Mennonite view of history, especially as related to Christianity and war, read Guy F. Hershberger *War, Peace, and Nonresistance*. (Scottsdale, PA: The Herald Press, 1944). Written in the middle of World War II, Hershberger’s book gives an overview of the Bible’s treatment of peace and war, how the church throughout its history treated war, and how Mennonites have reacted to war from the Reformation through the Great War. Hershberger argued that nonresistance was not only part of that moral law as shown in the Bible, but a way of life that followed the will of God (Pg. X). He then went on to demonstrate how the practice of nonresistance or the failure to practice nonresistance affected the Christian church from the time of Constantine (who, by “Christianizing” the Roman Empire, helped to unite the church to the state which then led to the abandoning of nonresistance by the church [PP. 64-65]) to the Mennonites during the Great War (who attempted to maintain their nonresistance in a nation that had little understanding or tolerance for those who rejected the crusade against evil Germany [P. 124]).

On April 30, 1918, Tabor College burned to the ground, threatening the college's continued existence.<sup>23</sup> In the April edition of the *Herold*, President H.W. Lohrenz described what the fire meant for the college. Lohrenz stated that:

Our conscientious and punctual furnace-man had in his usual customary way made the fire, so that teachers and pupils would find warm rooms when they appeared for work. He had already seen to it in all rooms, whether the steam had filled all the 'radiators.' Everything was in good order, and he went to the café for breakfast. Yet he was there only a short time when someone noticed that thick smoke was rising from the college. The cry 'the college is burning' and the ringing of the fire alarm soon brought the fire equipment and a large crowd of men together. Yet everything was lost. The fire spread with such speed that one could not think of extinguishing it and only a little could be saved.<sup>24</sup>

The burning of Tabor College not only saddened the teachers and students of Tabor but also the entire Hillsboro community. Soon after the fire, many businessmen in Hillsboro gathered with friends of the college to determine how to rebuild. As a result of this meeting, fund-raising for a new college began in earnest.<sup>25</sup> Lohrenz made an appeal to the reader to donate money to the school. "God has richly blessed you with earthly goods. In spite of the threatening war clouds each of us still has shelter, clothing and nourishment. And when we now see what sacrifices have been contributed during this time for different purposes, this should spur us on to new zeal in this work."<sup>26</sup>

While a faulty furnace ultimately received the blame for fire, not all Mennonites agreed that the fire was an accident. Some Mennonites felt the fire was the act of an arsonist. The fire came during the peak of war hysteria and the hatred of anything linked with anything German. In fact, April 1918 experienced the peak of the war hysteria that

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<sup>23</sup> As of 1918, Tabor College only had one building where all classes were held. Tabor College did not expand to more than one building until the 1920s.

<sup>24</sup> H.W. Lohrenz. "To Our School Friends Near and Far." *Tabor College Herold* 7:4 (April 1918): 1. Translated into English out of the original German by Peggy Goertzen, director of the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

swept America and witnessed the formation of vigilante mobs. These mobs often took out their hatred of Germany on Mennonites who spoke German and refused to avidly support the war effort. Thus some Mennonites wondered if a vigilante had started the fire to punish the Mennonites for refusing to buy war bonds or fight in the military.<sup>27</sup> No proof ever came to light that the fire was anything but an accident, but this suspicion does help highlight the general atmosphere of unrest in America during the war.

The April and May 1918 editions of the *Herold* related the story of two former Tabor students drafted by the army and serving their time at Camp Funston.<sup>28</sup> “N.J. Thiessen,” according to the *Herold*, “who was called to the colors a few weeks ago, has given us good hopes for a report to the annual meeting of the Alumni. He is now at Camp Funston, standing on an immovable foundation and battling for the right. At his last report he was employed in the kitchen.”<sup>29</sup> “Our brother, G.S. Klassen,” the May issue argued, “who is now at Camp Funston, is determined to be loyal to his convictions

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<sup>27</sup> Orlando Harms. *The Journey of a Church: A Walk Through 100 Years of the Life and Times of the Hillsboro Mennonite Brethren Church, 1881-1981*. (Hillsboro, KS: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1987), 120. and Peggy Goertzen. “Birth of a Vision: Our Own School (1908-1931).” *Tabor College: A Century of Transformation 1908-2008*. (Hillsboro, KS: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 2008), 26-28.

<sup>28</sup> For a study of the treatment of Mennonites at Camp Funston, see Sarah D. Shields. “The Treatment of Conscience Objectors During World War I: Mennonites at Camp Funston.” *Kansas History*. 4:4 (Winter 1981): 255-269. Shields argues that the main cause of the mistreatment of Mennonites and other conscientious objectors at Camp Funston was the confusion (over the lack of instructions provided by the federal government on how to deal with conscientious objectors), ignorance (on what the Mennonites actually believed), prejudice (towards pacifists and those of German descent), and frustration (over the difficulty of dealing with a few conscience objectors that refused to conform to military protocol) of the military officers (pg. 256). For all of this, Shields argues the Mennonites received fairly good treatment at the hands of military officers. Any abuse that did occur went against national policy and was a result of local disregard of that policy (pg. 257). For an exploration of the Mennonite experience in military camps in general, see J. S. Hartzler. *Mennonites in the World War or Nonresistance Under Test*. (Scottsdale, PA.: Jerome S. Ozer, Publisher, 1972.) and Norman Thomas. *Is Conscience a Crime?* (New York, NY: Vanguard Press, 1927). Norman Thomas also gives a good description of the experiences of other conscientious objectors (such as socialists, labor groups, Molokans, Quakers, Church of the Brethren, and various other smaller groups) during the war that helps place the Mennonites in a wider context. Mennonites were not alone in experiencing hardships in prison, military camps, or at home.

<sup>29</sup> “Alumni Notes.” *Tabor College Herold* 7:4 (April 1918): 40.

and to his country.”<sup>30</sup> Thiessen and Klassen remained true to their nonresistant beliefs while also finding a way to serve their country. One did not rule out the other.

Mennonites could find ways to satisfy both their convictions and their nation.

An article in the October 1918 *Herold* developed this argument further:

In these days, when men and women are called to do their utmost and to give their all, every noble instinct impels one to serve where he can make his life count for the most. . . . But is there not danger that men may make unwarranted distinctions as to the comparative value of service in different fields and as to which is the most heroic sacrifice? Is the man who serves in the trenches any more necessary or noble than the man who makes munitions, if he does not do it for selfish reasons? Is the Red Cross nurse any more self-sacrificing than the woman who trains her children at home? Is the pastor who serves abroad any more essential than the one who faithfully leads his people at home? Who is wise enough to estimate which will be the greatest factor in winning the war- the soldiers, the sailors, the statesmen, the munition workers, the financiers, the physicians, the Y.M.C.A. workers or those who save, give, work, suffer and pray in the homeland.<sup>31</sup>

Everyone in America, according to this article, could find a meaningful and effective way to serve the nation, even without having to pick up a gun.

The article ended by arguing that the greatest work in the world was to serve God.

Which is the Greatest Work in the World? All service which helps to carry out God’s program is His work; and the greatest work for any individual is the work for which God has fitted him, and in the place to which He has called him. . . . The greatest, most noble work for any man is that to which God assigns him. If every man and women were under divine orders, there would be no shortage of workers in any sphere of service.<sup>32</sup>

In other words, the Christian must serve in the way God called them to, rather than as the world called them. For the Mennonites, this meant remaining true to God’s call to remain nonresistant while serving the nation in ways that remained consistent with that

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<sup>30</sup> “Where the 1918 Class Goes.” *Tabor College Herold* 7:5 (May 1918): 20.

<sup>31</sup> “The Greatest Work in the World.” *Tabor College Herold* 7:8 (October 1918): 13. [This article was reprinted from the paper, *The Missionary Reverend of the World*, which was published from 1900 through 1939.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 14.



nonresistance, even if that went against the grain of society. The *Herold* aimed to justify the Mennonite view that God's call transcends the call of the world. Unfortunately, many in American society did not see eye to eye with the Mennonites on this issue.<sup>33</sup>

For the *Tabor College Herold*, true patriotism, as defined earlier, was a complicated issue. While true patriotism did support the government and the nation, it had many other aspects too. True patriotism meant the protection of the morals and virtues of the nation (like nobility, unselfishness, devotion, justice, and impartiality) and fought those social evils that threatened the nation from within (like alcohol). It meant teaching the nation's youth about the Bible rather than joining a war begun by nations controlled by sin and hate.

True patriotism benefited the world, even rivals, and avoided the hate and selfishness that leads to war. For the *Herold*, true patriotism allowed everyone to serve the nation in the way they knew best, and in such a way that remained consistent with their beliefs. To do otherwise was to fail to protect the religious freedom of the nation, and brought back religious persecution. A true patriot protected not only the virtues of the nation and the nation itself, but also those beliefs central to each and every American. By doing this, America would become stronger and serve as a means to uplift all mankind.

Patriotism also meant serving God as well as the church. While the war effort called for financial sacrifice, the Mennonite also needed to sacrifice financially for the mission of the church. Rebuilding Tabor College called for financial sacrifice to allow

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<sup>33</sup> As will be explored later on, many Americans equated the call of the nation to serve the war effort in any way with the call of God to save the world. Serving in the war became equated with serving God. *Preachers Present Arms* (Scottsdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1969) by Ray Abrams effectively demonstrates this fact.

Tabor to once again effectively train students to serve God and man. Another important aspect of patriotism for the Mennonite came through finding the method of service that God's call for Christian nonresistance allowed.

### Chapter 3: The *Marion Record*

America's entrance into the Great War dominated another major news source in Marion County, the *Marion Record*.<sup>1</sup> Hardly a week or two went by that it did not comment on some aspect of the war, even before the United States entered the conflict. It covered such issues as the need to keep the peace, what being an American stood for, freedom of speech, conscription, the draft, the duties of all Americans, and the loyalty of Mennonites. The *Marion Record* explored what every American needed to do to demonstrate his or her patriotic duty.

In the first three months of 1917, before America entered the war, the *Marion Record* argued that the United States needed to seek an end to the conflict in Europe through peaceful means, if at all possible. In the January 4, 1917 issue, the *Record* reprinted an article from an editor in Jewell City, Will Palmer, and argued that Palmer's editorial provided key advice on how Americans should respond to the war in Europe.

Palmer argued:

Jesus taught the brotherhood of man, but Europe substitutes the iron law of caste....The rulers of Europe in spite of their outward proclamations, have been sowing trouble, and the harvest time has come. This war marks not a result, but a need of Christianity. There is an eternal law in this universe that sin brings suffering. This law never fails to work. Sometime, somewhere, sin always brings suffering. Every man is in some degree conscious of it in his own experience. Men try to teach this truth to their sons. God tries to teach it to his children. When sons refuse to be taught fathers have to let them find it out by their own experiences. God lets men and nations find it out in the same way. Babylon, Egypt, Rome, the Jews, all had their lesson. The United States took a short course for her sin against humanity [through the Civil War]. Now Europe is getting hers....Thus cometh the kingdom-kingdom of God, the kingdom of love.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Marion Record* was edited by Homer Hoch (1879-1949), who often commented on the war through his editorials. During World War I, Hoch served on the Marion County Council of Defense. From 1919-1933, Hoch served in the United States House of Representatives. From 1939-1949, Hoch served as a Justice on the Kansas Supreme Court. He was also active in the local Methodist church. The city of Marion was founded in 1860 and had a population in 1915 of 1,951. William E. Connelley. *History of Kansas Newspapers*. (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1916), 233.

Someday it shall dominate the earth and the skies, and there shall be no war. This is our creed, this is our faith, this is our hope.<sup>2</sup>

As for the United States, its role became one of aiding the world to learn to obey God and love one another. If America could accomplish that, then war would end forever.

On January 25, 1917, Homer Hoch, editor of the *Record*, responded to President Woodrow Wilson's "Peace without Victory" speech before the United States Senate and argued that patriotism dictated that America must help unite the world in a common purpose. President Wilson argued that the European nations needed to meet together and end the war as soon as possible. To do this, Europe needed to join with the United States in an international organization to prevent conflict from happening again. Hoch stated:

In the midst of this world insanity of war it is well that the President of the United States, the one great neutral country, should voice the sentiment that that lies deep in the heart of humanity- the sentiment that the spirit of selfish nationalism must one day give way to the spirit of a common internationalism...that peace must rest, not upon a balancing of power, upon a holding in leash of mad rivalries; but upon a common purpose to keep open the avenues of natural, normal development for all nations, whether great or small. In order to approach anything of this sort of a world situation there will be necessary a common, international police force.<sup>3</sup>

President Wilson's goal would allow America to play an important role in bringing about world peace.

Hoch argued that the United States could no longer avoid the problems of Europe, since it had become a world power. "The principle objection urged to the proposition," according to Hoch, "is that the United States has pursued a policy of avoiding 'entangling alliances' and that if we enter a league of nations, to do international police duty, we may

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<sup>2</sup> Will Palmer. "A Layman's Sermon." *Marion Record* 47:13 (January 4, 1917): 3. [See a similar argument by P.F. Wall. "Our Nation's Greatest Problem." *Tabor College Herald* 6:7 (September 1917): 11.]

<sup>3</sup> Homer Hoch. "A Great Ideal." *Marion Record* 47:16 (January 25, 1917): 4.

become involved in controversies with which we have no concern.”<sup>4</sup> While this objection reflected the traditional view of America on its relationship to the world, Hoch argued that America’s role in the world had to change. According to Homer Hoch, “We are a world power. We must take our share of the responsibility that will come, in the concerted effort to put a stop to such awful catastrophes as that which is now prostrating civilization.”<sup>5</sup> In many ways, patriotism meant using the new found power of the United States to end world conflict.

In an editorial on February 8, Hoch explored the issue of loyalty and unity within the United States. He began by arguing that “prayers are ascending that the blight of war may not come. But should it come, the world will witness an America united. Differences of blood, political differences, will be lost in a common patriotism.”<sup>6</sup> One of the major differences was between Americans of English descent and those of German descent. According to Hoch, “In this county there are many hundreds of German Americans. They are splendid citizens. They are law abiding, earnest, patriotic. It is true that as between the cause of the Allies and that of the land of their nativity they have had some very strong feelings. That is natural. It is no more a discredit to them than is the fact that citizens of English lineage have leaned toward the side of England.”<sup>7</sup> In Marion County, the vast majority of the German Americans were Mennonites. Hoch essentially argued that Mennonites had every right to favor Germany in the conflict between Germany and England.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Homer Hoch. “Americans.” *Marion Record* 47:18 (February 8, 1917): 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

The fact that German Mennonites demonstrated some positive feelings towards their ancestral home did no discredit to them or meant that they were a potential source of disloyalty. Hoch argued that “It is time for all Americans to keep cool, to encourage every effort toward honorable settlement of the dispute without war, and to emphasize our common patriotism and common Americanism.”<sup>8</sup> This theme repeated itself throughout many of his editorials after the United States joined the war. No matter which side of the conflict Americans had supported before America joined the war (whether Germany or England), every American had the patriotic duty to support the country once it joined the war.

On April 5, one day before America entered the war, Hoch established a creed for how Americans should approach the European war.

The Patriotic American creed at this hour might run something like this: . . . I believe that it is the duty of America to do all in its power to avoid war, if it can be honorably avoided, but that if it cannot so be avoided the duty to bear the burden and to discharge the obligation is equally clear and equally sacred. I believe that as between Germany and England I was entitled to a leaning either way, but that as between the United States and Germany there is one course and one only- unwavering loyalty to my country. . . . I believe that it is the solemn duty of every American of German blood steadfastly to remember that this is the land of his adoption, to which he has pledged his loyalty, and that whatever the ties of blood, and that whatever the cost, he must be true in thought and word and deed. I believe that it is the duty of every American to do all in his power to discountenance unfairness to the great body of Americans of German blood in this country. I believe that they are loyal citizens; that they are a people of splendid qualities.<sup>9</sup>

As long as the war remained between England and Germany, any American had the right to favor one or the other, but if America entered the war, patriotism obligated every American to demonstrate their loyalty to America only. In the case of the German Mennonites, by coming to live in the United States they remained duty bound to pledge

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Homer Hoch. “Credo.” *Marion Record* 47:26 (April 5, 1917): 4.

loyalty to their new country, no matter where their blood ties came from. Once again Hoch argued that German Mennonite sympathy towards their fatherland only came naturally, but to question their loyalty to America was unfair. To question the loyalty of Mennonites and any other German-American only created division and disunity within America, and this hurt the ability of the United States to carry out its mission to produce a spirit of internationalism.

After the American declaration of war on Germany a new phase developed in which the *Record*, and America as a whole, had to determine what true patriotism needed to look like.<sup>10</sup> Hoch argued in an editorial on April 12 that every American had the right and duty to make their honest and patriotic convictions known, even if those views conflicted with the views of the majority.<sup>11</sup> To call anyone a traitor for speaking his or her convictions against the war demonstrated an undemocratic and un-American spirit.<sup>12</sup> In many ways, to deny the rights of others to hold their own opinions or beliefs was to show disloyalty to the free institutions that America fought for in Europe. He argued that “to deny [anyone this] right would build up the very sort of autocracy against which the face of the world is set.”<sup>13</sup> This minority opinion (like the case of the Mennonites) only demonstrated that the minority had a different view on how America should approach a difficult situation, and was not proof of disloyalty.

On June 5, Registration Day, Homer Hoch’s views of patriotism, and the beliefs of the Mennonites, were tested. On that day, all men between 21 and 30 were required to

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<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth exploration into the American war effort both at home and in Europe during World War I, see Meirion and Susie Harries. *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918*. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1997) and Thomas Fleming. *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I*. (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2003) and David M. Kennedy. *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982).

<sup>11</sup> Homer Hoch. “A Fundamental Right.” *Marion Record* 47:27 (April 12, 1917): 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

register for the military draft. For Mennonites, Registration Day proved problematic since it put them in a position of being drafted, and they did not believe in serving in the military. Most Mennonite leaders urged their men to follow the law and register, and then claim exemption if called up to serve. A few Mennonite leaders, though, urged Mennonites to resist registration.

On June 7, Hoch assured his readers that, even though a few Mennonites advocated disobedience to the law, the majority remained law-abiding, patriotic American citizens. Hoch wrote that, “The war is here and it is the patriotic duty of every American citizen to be absolutely loyal to the government.”<sup>14</sup> Americans had the patriotic duty to support the nation and its government, even if in disagreement concerning the war. According to Hoch,

we have talked with many of the German-Americans in this county, and while they were intense in their feelings as between England and Germany, while the contest was between England and Germany, we believe they will be found steadfastly supporting America in the great war now that America is involved. They have always been patriotic, law-abiding citizens. And we do not believe that the few here and there among them who counsel disobedience to law and refusal to co-operate as American citizens in any degree represent the great body of the German-American people.<sup>15</sup>

Instead of working themselves into a craze about the supposed disloyalty of Mennonites, Hoch demonstrated why Americans should take it slow and learn what most Mennonites really believed (this view seemed to be lost as the war progressed, especially in 1918 with the persecution of Mennonites who refused to buy war bonds).

On June 21, Hoch examined the difference between true patriotism and false patriotism. “It is one thing to ‘support the government,’ ‘to stand by the President;’” Hoch wrote, “it is a mighty different thing to oppose fair and frank criticism of

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<sup>14</sup> Homer Hoch. “Mr. Ewert Writes.” *Marion Record* 47:35 (June 7, 1917): 4.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*



governmental methods, or to seek to keep graft and favoritism under cover. The first is the work of the patriot, the latter may very easily be the work of the traitor. And it seems necessary in these days to keep the two things clearly defined, for there are a lot of self-heralded patriots who are claiming for the brand of disloyalty to be placed upon every man who presumes to think for himself and who refuses to accept governmental abuses in silent submission.”<sup>16</sup> In other words, true patriotism supported the government and the nation through thick and thin. False patriotism opposed, and labeled as traitors, those who held a different viewpoint. According to Hoch, a person could still support the government and nation, while criticizing its policies or methods.

Hoch continued:

There is and must be in this country no tolerance for the man who would undermine the faith of the people in the integrity of our national motives, or who would do anything to cripple the government in the tremendous work at hand. But taking advantage of this high patriotic doctrine every corrupt contractor, every crooked one-by-three politician, every incompetent who happens to have a little official power, will seek to end all public discussion of the way the war and war preparations are conducted. And all in the name of Patriotism!...This is the people’s business, and there must be no intimidation of honest and frank criticism, no muzzling of the sources of public information.<sup>17</sup>

False patriots used patriotism to muzzle legitimate criticism and benefit themselves. True patriotism, while showing little tolerance for acts of treachery, allowed for the open discussion of a variety of opinions and criticisms.<sup>18</sup> If Hoch’s argument was applied to the Mennonite situation, then Mennonites were still true patriots as long as they supported the nation, even though they criticized the war policies of the government. Determining how Mennonites could support the government would prove difficult.

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<sup>16</sup> Homer Hoch. “Patriots and Others.” *Marion Record* 47:37 (June 21, 1917): 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> For an in-depth look into free speech and civil liberties during World War I, see Stone, Geoffrey R. *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime From the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism*. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2004).

The selective service system, beginning in late July and early August, marked the next phase of the war in 1917. Homer Hoch's editorials took on a different character after the beginning of the draft. Prior to August, Hoch focused on creating a unified America and defining true patriotism. Beginning in August, Hoch began to focus more on issues surrounding the draft and the economic issues facing America. Now that the draft had started, Hoch's theory of true patriotism faced its toughest challenge. Could Hoch's ideas of a true patriot hold up to the challenge of how to treat the Mennonites refusal to fight?

On August 2 forty-five Marion men were called up by the draft board and went through a medical examination, but only fifteen were needed to fulfill the number required of Marion County.<sup>19</sup> Of the first forty-five Marion men to report for the draft, three failed the examination and all but one claimed exemption from military service (either due to religious convictions, dependent family members, or other reasons).<sup>20</sup> Since only one man out of forty-five did not claim any exemption or fail to pass the medical exam, Marion County had to call up another forty men in an attempt to reach the required fifteen.<sup>21</sup> Although forty-one men may have requested exemption, this did not mean that each would get it. The draft board could either grant full exemption, partial exemption (for a limited time), or deny exemption based on the needs of the military. It would be some time, though, until exemption requests went through the board, so Marion County had to produce forty more men for the process.

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<sup>19</sup> "First Draft Call." *Marion Record* 47:43 (August 2, 1917): 1. [No author is given though Homer Hoch may have written it.]

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

Marion finally reached its required fifteen men by August 16. Hoch listed in the paper the names and reasons of those who claimed exemption from military service. Of the fifty-eight names listed, thirty-one claimed exemption due to dependents at home (spouse, children, elderly parents); nine put down their faith as a Mennonite; six failed the physical exam; and three were already in the military somewhere else. The final nine reasons were of a miscellaneous nature.<sup>22</sup> On September 27, Hoch stated that of the eighty-five Marion men called up during the first round of the draft, sixty-four were exempted from military service.<sup>23</sup> It is interesting to note that the vast majority of the exemptions given during the first round of the draft came from those claiming dependents. The nine Mennonites who claimed exemptions, though a minority of those who claimed exemption in the first round of the draft, caused problems for the local and for the national government.

By August 23, the issue of Mennonites and the draft was still unsettled. According to Hoch, the local draft board, acting on what it felt Washington ordered, had already exempted the nine Mennonites from military service.<sup>24</sup> Hoch stated that Washington changed its stance and now required that all Mennonites receive certification for military service like anyone else and then receive noncombatant duties (to be defined by President Wilson).<sup>25</sup> This created a problem for the local draft board on how to deal with those nine Mennonites it had already exempted.

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<sup>22</sup> "Called to Service" *Marion Record* 47:44 (August 9, 1917): 1; "More Men Chosen." *Marion Record* 47:45 (August 16, 1917): 1. [see Table 1.1 in appendix 2].

<sup>23</sup> "Draft Notes." *Marion Record* 47:51 (September 27, 1917): 1. [Not sure why Hoch lists 64 Marion men as exempt here, when he only lists 58 on August 9 and 16. There must have been another six men that did not gain exemption until after August 16.]

<sup>24</sup> "The War Draft." *Marion Record* 47:46 (August 23, 1917): 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

If the Mennonites were no longer exempt, then the draft board needed to re-determine which fifteen men would be drafted again. Due to this issue, the Marion County draft board decided to let their decision stand and let the nine Mennonites remain exempt.<sup>26</sup> In future cases, though, Mennonites would no longer be considered for exemption. Local Mennonite leaders had argued this very point from the beginning, and requested that Mennonites should not be exempted totally, but just from bearing arms.<sup>27</sup> If the Mennonites did not resist losing full exemption, then the issue was solved. Hoch, who likely wrote this unsigned article, may have been alluding here to the idea that if the Mennonites are willing to serve in some capacity as noncombatants, they are still patriotic Americans doing their duty to help the nation.

Homer Hoch clarified this issue in an article on August 9. He began by arguing that “while there is a marked honor to be accorded to those who volunteered, the government has all along emphasized the point that to be drafted under the present system in no sense involves a reflection [on the patriotism of the draftee].”<sup>28</sup> An American man, called to service by the draft, still received a mark of honor and patriotism. “And on the other hand,” according to Hoch, “there is no dishonor in claiming an exemption, if it is honestly done, under the provisions of the law. For those who dishonestly claim exemption and distort the facts and seek to escape a duty there can be only condemnation on the part of all loyal Americans.”<sup>29</sup> Claiming exemption from military service was not dishonorable as long as it was done appropriately under the law and conscience. To claim exemption only because one did not want to fight made one a

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> “Called to Service.” *Marion Record* 47:44 (August 9, 1917): 1. [Likely written by Homer Hoch]

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

traitor to the United States. Mennonites, on the other hand, claimed exemption due to their convictions and conscience, and thus remained honorable American citizens. While joining the army brought special honor, it was no dishonor to remain true to ones convictions.

By the fall of 1917, there was a major debate over the patriotism and loyalty of Mennonite schools. The sticking point centered on the use of German in Mennonite schools and whether the use of German fermented disloyalty within the Mennonite community. Did the teaching of German in school just serve as a means to instruct the Mennonite children in the traditions of their community or did the teaching of German serve as a subversive method of indoctrinating the student against the United States? This debate helped shed light on how the demands for patriotism conflicted with the Mennonite German tradition.

Homer Hoch began the debate in his paper by summarizing the two charges that Mennonite German schools faced. The first charge stated “that a number of schools in this county have been having only five or six months of English school, and two or three months of German school, whereas the law requires seven months of English school.”<sup>30</sup> For the second charge, critics charged “that ‘the public schools curriculum has been almost entirely set aside’ and ‘Kaiser schools’ substituted; that the boys and girls are taught to honor the Kaiser and other German leaders and are taught nothing about American statesmen.”<sup>31</sup> In other words, the German schools served as institutions that instilled disloyalty to America and loyalty to America’s enemy. Hoch argued that the German schools admitted that charge one was largely correct and that many of the

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<sup>30</sup> Homer Hoch. “German School Question.” *Marion Record* 47:49 (September 13, 1917): 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

schools had already acted to address that. As to the other charge, Hoch stated that “we believe that it is not only untrue, but that its publication does great injustice and has a very harmful effect in this time calling for less and not more racial antagonism.”<sup>32</sup> He then invited proponents of each side to defend their positions through letters to the newspaper.

The first response to Hoch came from F.R. Kreuger who argued that both charges had their basis in fact. According to Kreuger:

Inasmuch as I started the charge against school law violations in this county myself at the beginning of last years campaign in an open meeting at Aulne very much in the same manner as stated in charge number one in last week's *Record* [September 13, 1917] and of which the writer pleads guilty, while at the same time he declares charge number two as utterly false and without any foundation, and seems very much offended at such an outrage....Now I think myself that the statement made in charge number two are extremely overdrawn, but you must remember that if charge number one was not in existence charge number two would have never been born, therefore practically speaking the two charges are parent and offspring and for that reason are very closely related, and must of necessity be investigated together.<sup>33</sup>

In other words, the alleged fact that German schools failed to teach the required number of months of English meant that the outlandish charge of disloyalty and “Kaiserism” in the schools became more reasonable to Kreuger. If the German schools, which were largely attended by Mennonites, wished to shed the charge of disloyalty, then they needed to follow the law to the letter by focusing on the English portion of their curriculum. As in most parts of the country, the teaching of German came under suspicion and disapproved of as nearing disloyalty to the country.

James A. Ray, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Marion County, wrote the paper in defense of the German schools. Superintendent Ray first responded to the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> F.R. Kreuger. “Mr. Kreuger’s Letter.” *Marion Record* 47:50 (September 20, 1917): 4.

charge that German schools taught “Kaiserism” by briefly exploring the history of the Mennonites in America. He argued that:

the so-called German population of Marion County consists of ninety-two per cent former Russian subjects, who have no more knowledge of the German Kaiser nor sympathy with him than do we of English descent. These people are the children of the Mennonites who originally emigrated from Holland to Germany and from Germany to Russia two-hundred years ago, to escape from the rule of the German Kaiser. They colonized in Russia and were given the privilege of conducting model farms for the education of the Russian peasants, in lieu of military service which their religion forbade. When in 1870 the czar attempted to force them to bear arms, agents from the United States invited them to come to America. They read our constitution, and being assured that it offered them civil and religious liberty, they came.<sup>34</sup>

This very history, Ray argued, demonstrated the absurdity of F.R. Kreuger’s claim that Mennonites instilled support of Germany through their schools.

The fact that the German schools spent time teaching German did not serve as evidence of disloyalty but rather of religious devotion. Superintendent Ray argued that:

all the instruction these children have received in the German language has been enough merely to enable them to read the German Bible and Bible history, and to understand the religious services conducted in German....There are among these people many older people who did not have the opportunity to learn to read and speak English sufficiently to receive benefit from religious services held in English. They are a deeply religious people, and when they go to church, they take with them the entire family, from grandmother down to the baby....These people have felt it to be necessary for their children to have enough German education to take part in the religious life of their elders who have an insufficient knowledge of English and for this reason and no other, have they taught their children enough German to secure the results stated.<sup>35</sup>

So, according to Ray, for the German schools to stop teaching German would hurt the unity of the Mennonite churches and harm their deeply held religious beliefs.

Superintendent Ray finished his defense of the German schools by arguing that:

in view of these facts, I desire to express my candid opinion, that if anything has ever approached the acme of poltroonery, un-Americanism, and treason, it is the

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<sup>34</sup> James A. Ray. “From Supt. Ray.” *Marion Record* 47:50 (September 20, 1917): 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

launching of this entirely uncalled for, and unjustified issue in so prejudiced and offensive way, at the present time, when the only possible result to be obtained is the creation of bitterness and misunderstanding between two good classes of American citizens who have always lived together in harmony, and who are both anxious to work together to further the cause of democracy.<sup>36</sup>

These charges reeked of the very treason and disloyalty that they charged the German schools with. By falsely charging the Mennonites with disloyalty, these few patriots created disunity within the community during the time the nation needed unity.

The above letters serve as a case study for the tensions between the German-American Mennonites and American patriots. For Kreuger, the teaching of German in school deprived the students of the English education that they needed while instilling disloyalty to America among the students. Superintendent Ray, on the other hand, argued that the teaching of German in school only served as a means to allow the students to partake in the church services that meant so much to their community and that English education still received their full attention. At stake for both sides of the argument was whether the teaching of German served as a vehicle for disloyalty or as a purely religious function. This tension between Mennonites and non-Mennonites continued throughout the duration of America's involvement in the war.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> For a more thorough discussion of the issue of the German language in America during World War I, consult Frederick C. Luebke. *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I*. (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 250-254.; Christopher Capozzola. *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 190-197.; and Justine Greve. "Language and Loyalty: The First World War and German Instruction at Two Kansas Schools." *Kansas History*. (37:3. Autumn 2014): 130-147). Luebke argues that the teaching and continued use of German was viewed by many Americans as not only the means of instilling disloyalty to America and love of the Kaiser, but also as the means of spreading German propaganda and maintaining the German Kaiser's control over Germany's former subjects living in America. To combat this, many patriotic citizens viewed the banning of the German language from the schools, as well as in public places (including churches), as not only necessary but the only patriotic action available (Luebke, 250-251). According to Capozzola, this pressure to end the use of German eventually got to the Mennonites. Thirty percent of Mennonite schools in the fall of 1917 still taught their Bible classes in German. By November 1918, none of the Mennonite schools still taught German in their classes. Even Bethel College in Newton, Kansas, which was run by the General Conference Mennonites, took German out of their curriculum during



While Homer Hoch made allowances for the Mennonite refusal to fight in the war, he gave no exemption on the home front. In an editorial on October 4, Hoch argued that it was every American's duty to meet the financial needs of the country. Each and every American, he argued, needed to give money through "Liberty Bonds, the Red Cross, Army YMCA, Books for Soldiers, and Company Funds."<sup>38</sup> The financial situation would only get worse as the war went on, Hoch stated, and everyone would have to make a financial sacrifice to see it through. According to Hoch, "there will be a lot more appeals, and the appeals will have to be met. And the man who is not willing to do his full share towards meeting them cannot long be classified as a fairly good citizen—he will be listed with the slackers."<sup>39</sup> If men sacrificed their lives in the war, then every American needed to sacrifice some money to support these men. This very argument, though, caused problems for the Mennonites. Mennonites felt that to buy Liberty Bonds was to support the killing of men in Europe and was in conflict with their conscience. For non-Mennonites, though, this refusal to buy war bonds was to show disloyalty to the United States. In many ways, this issue remained unsolved through the end of the war.

The final issue of the *Marion Record* in 1917 provided an interesting view of a prominent figure in Marion County. Hoch printed a letter written by Frank Doster, who served as a judge in Marion County (Hoch most likely dealt with Doster regularly through his practice of law). Doster wrote that he was pleased to see the many "Bohemian and German names" found on the roster of Marion men in the military.<sup>40</sup>

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the war (Capozzola, 199). Justine Greve states that Bethel College eliminated German out of its curriculum in September 1918 (at least for the school year of 1918-1919) out of fear of charges of disloyalty (Greve, 143-144).

<sup>38</sup> Homer Hoch. "What Next?" *Marion Record* 47:52 (October 4, 1917): 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

<sup>40</sup> Frank Doster. "Not a Party War." *Marion Record* 48:12 (December 27, 1917): 5.

According to Doster, “Bohemia as a part of Austria is of ‘the enemy’ and while many of the German young men were filtered as it were through Russian nationality before coming to this country yet in lineage and language, as we know, they are of the ‘fatherland.’”<sup>41</sup> Thus Doster was pleased to see that these German-Americans were going with those “of other racial affiliations” (English-Americans) to fight against Germany.<sup>42</sup>

For Doster, being of a German “lineage and language” automatically tied Mennonites to the enemy. To show that this common “lineage and language” with the enemy meant nothing to them, Mennonites needed to prove their loyalty to the United States. The best way to prove this loyalty, then, was to join the military or serve in some other way. Failure to do so cast suspicion on Mennonite loyalty to the United States. While Hoch did not comment on Doster’s letter, Doster’s letter conflicted with the previous statements on loyalty made by Hoch.

Nineteen-eighteen witnessed the further intensification of the American war effort, as well as the tension between Mennonites and non-Mennonites. The year began with a controversy over a statement published in a Mennonite newspaper in Hillsboro. The Hillsboro newspaper, the *Vorwarts*, published this statement in regards to some American soldiers captured by the German army: “The American soldiers were sent over that they should go to Berlin, and they are already there sooner than they expected.”<sup>43</sup> The *Marion Record* called this statement insolent, un-American, and an insult to Americans and German-Americans alike.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> “Let Vorwarts Declare Itself.” *Marion Record* 48:14 (January 10, 1918): 1.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

The *Record* called on the *Vorwarts* to clarify the issue.<sup>45</sup> The *Vorwarts* did the average loyal German-American an injustice by casting a disloyal image upon the Mennonites.<sup>46</sup> According to the *Record*,

We believe we understand the attitude of the bonafide Mennonites who are opposed to war. For four hundred years the Mennonite church has held to the doctrine of non-resistance, and has been willing to suffer for that belief. For any who merely seek the cover of that faith at this time for the purpose of escaping service involving danger, we have the same lack of respect as for those who for other reasons dishonestly seek to escape service. The bona-fide ones, reared in that faith and firmly believing it, are not in that class, and the government has made large concession to them. And no true Mennonite can have any sympathy with the militaristic rulership [sic] of Germany....And any man in America, whatever his religious convictions about war in itself, who has enjoyed the protection of American institutions and the large privileges of American life, who does not earnestly desire America to win and to win speedily, has no place under the American flag.<sup>47</sup>

Opposition to war did not mean freedom from the duty of supporting the American war effort.

On January 24, 1918, the *Record* reported the response of the *Vorwarts* to the *Record's* call for clarification. According to the *Vorwarts*, the statement in question had simply been copied from an English source reporting a statement from a paper in Germany. The *Vorwarts* had failed to cite its source due to lack of room on the page.<sup>48</sup> For the *Record*, the *Vorwarts* had made the unfortunate mistake of failing to cite its source, which had the unfortunate consequence of the questioning their loyalty.

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<sup>45</sup> For an exploration into the history of the *Vorwarts* during World War I, see: Gregory J. Stucky. "Fighting Against War: The Mennonite *Vorwaerts* From 1914-1919." *Kansas Historical Quarterly*. 38:2 (Summer 1972): 169-186. According to Stucky, the *Vorwarts*, which was run by Abraham L. Schellenberg, a Mennonite, attempted to counter-act the bias towards Britain by the English-language newspapers by openly supporting the Germans and opposing America's entry into the war from 1914 through 1916 (pg. 169). The *Vorwarts* even raised funds for the German Red Cross through its pages prior to 1917. Due to this open support of Germany, the *Vorwarts* placed itself in a sticky situation once the United States had joined the war. While the *Vorwarts* largely stopped printing support for the Germans after America's entry into the war, accusations of disloyalty did not stop, as is demonstrated in the above controversy.

<sup>46</sup> "Let Vorwarts Declare Itself," 1.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> "Vorwarts Explanation." *Marion Record* 48:16 (January 24, 1917): 1.

Unfortunately for the *Vorwarts*, their explanation of the statement did not fully satisfy the *Record*.

The *Marion Record* still questioned the full loyalty and patriotism of the *Vorwarts*. According to the *Record*, the *Vorwarts* remained silent on how it supported the war effort, while some Marion citizens claimed that it had failed to show any support for the war effort.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, the *Record* challenged the *Vorwarts* to disprove this charge of disloyalty and that the citizens of Marion County had the right to know where the *Vorwarts* stood on the war effort. “The *Vorwarts* is a paper published in America, under the protection of American law,” argued the *Record*, “it is a beneficiary of American institutions and a sharer in the large privileges of American life. Is it for the United States or against it in this life-and-death struggle against Prussian militarism?...the *Record* calls upon the *Vorwarts* to state its attitude in plain words that all can understand....Will the *Vorwarts* stand up and be counted?”<sup>50</sup> The *Vorwarts* could not just ignore the war effort, but instead it had to demonstrate its loyalty throughout its pages.

On February 21, 1918, the *Marion Record* printed one final article on the *Vorwarts* controversy. While the *Vorwarts* still had to fully prove its loyalty to America, the Hillsboro newspaper had made great strides in demonstrating its loyalty. According to the *Record*, “The Hillsboro *Vorwarts* devoted a whole page last week to the Red Cross and also gave considerable space to the Food Conservation matter. The *Vorwarts* has made no reply to the *Record*'s inquiries, but in justice to it we are glad to note this

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<sup>49</sup> “Questions Not Yet Answered.” *Marion Record* 48:16 (January 24, 1917): 1.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

evidence of its desire to be of help in these important matters.”<sup>51</sup> This showed evidence, according to the *Record*, that the *Vorwärts* was willing to aid the war effort. By no longer remaining silent and printing material on the war effort, the *Vorwärts* could finally prove its patriotism. Loyalty and patriotism, in the end, called for public demonstrations of support for the war effort, while silence demonstrated apathy at best and disloyalty at worst.

An article in the *Record* on March 7, 1918 attempted to prove that the German Kaiser had the mark of the antichrist, 666. A newspaper in Georgia had made a number of calculations that the article’s writer argued were either a puzzle, superstition, or truly significant.<sup>52</sup> For the first example, the article argued that the German Kaiser began the war while the war began in Servia.<sup>53</sup> Both have six letters and when the first and last halves of each are put together, an interesting effect is witnessed:

Kai	ser
ser	via

.<sup>54</sup> In France, the French were led by Joseph-Jacques Joffre, who commanded the French Army. When French and Joffre were put together, another interesting effect is witnessed:

Jof	fre
fre	nch

.<sup>55</sup> For a final example, the article argued that German Kultur<sup>56</sup> and Turkey, allies in the war, when put together also have an interesting effect:

Kul	tur
tur	key

.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>51</sup> “Town and Country.” *Marion Record* 48:20 (February 21, 1918): 1.

<sup>52</sup> “Got His Number.” *Marion Record* 48:22 (March 7, 1918): 7.

<sup>53</sup> The article spelled Serbia as “Servia” for some reason. While the reason for this spelling is unknown, this spelling of Serbia as “Servia” did not just show up here. Laurnence Lafore, in his book, *The Long Fuse: An Interpretation of the Origins of World War I* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, INC, 1997), quotes a couple different British sources that used the “Servia” spelling of Serbia. On page 209, Lafore quotes a British newspaper as saying “To hell with Servia.” Then on page 221, Lafore also quotes a British ambassador as saying the “Servian Government.” While Lafore did not give a reason for this spelling, this does, at least, show that “Servia” served as an accepted alternate spelling for Serbia at this time.

<sup>54</sup> “Got His Number,” 7.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> This is the German spelling of culture.

<sup>57</sup> “Got His Number,” 7.

This article also argued that the German Kaiser had the mark of the antichrist, 666. According to the article, the number of the Kaiser could be determined by writing out Kaiser, then printing the number assigned to each letter by its place in the alphabet by each letter of Kaiser, and finally printing the number six by these:

K	-	11	-	6
A	-	1	-	6
I	-	9	-	6
S	-	19	-	6
E	-	5	-	6
R	-	18	-	6
<hr/>				
666				

Through these calculations, the German Kaiser had the number 666 all over him<sup>58</sup> The above calculations did not serve as the only proof. When the war began the Kaiser was fifty-five years and six months old, which equals out to 666 months.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the German Kaiser had the number of the antichrist and thus America had the moral duty to defeat him. In the end, this article gave the war a moral, crusader overtone to convince Americans that they needed to do their all to defeat Germany.

On April 18, 1918, just a little over a year since the United States entered the war, Hoch wrote an editorial on the causes of the war and America's purpose in fighting. Hoch began by stating that "the strengthening thought, that shines through tears, the thought that gives faith to breast the storm, is a deep belief in the holiness, the righteousness of the cause for which the boys have gone forth, beneath the flag."<sup>60</sup> Through this article, Hoch cast America's war effort as a holy cause, if not as a crusade. The holiness of the cause justified every sacrifice made to bring success to the American

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. [As further evidence that article argued that Revelations 13:4-5,18 ("Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, 'Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?' The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months....<sup>18</sup>This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666." *Holy Bible, New International Version.*) from the Bible gave further evidence that the Kaiser was the antichrist. Also the fact that the Kaiser had six sons served as a sign of this.]

<sup>60</sup> Homer Hoch. "The Holy Cause." *Marion Record* 48:28 (April 18, 1918): 1.

war effort. In the end, this belief of in America's holy, righteous cause strengthened the war effort by helping the American people remain enthusiastic supports of the various war programs.

At the beginning of the conflict in Europe in 1914, and even when America joined the conflict in 1917, Hoch believed that some German-Americans failed to grasp the righteousness of America's cause. Hoch argued that "for those who did not see it at first, there was need, not for abuse, not for outbursts of mock patriotism, but for patience, for the spirit of fairness and of helpful leadership. Oftimes [sic] they were victims of indiscriminating attacks, wholly unfair and wholly un-American. But neither for the Americans of German blood or of any other blood has there been or can there be any room for disloyalty, for half-hearted support of the government."<sup>61</sup> Patriotic Americans needed to enforce patriotism through patient leadership, rather than through violent methods. Indiscriminate and violent actions against German-Americans accomplished little, while failing to recognize the patriotism of many of them.

An editorial on April 25, 1918 clearly defined those actions that deserved the label of pro-German and anti-American. According to the editorial, there were eight categories that fell under pro-German actions: 1.) Acted and talked in opposition to America; 2.) Failed to make personal sacrifices for the war effort; 3.) Caused bitterness and division by falsely accusing others of disloyalty; 4.) Labeled German-Americans unfairly as disloyal due to their ties to Germany; 5.) Failed to aid the Red Cross and YMCA; 6.) Failed to conserve food; 7.) Spread disloyalty rather than unity through their words and actions; and 8.) Failed to aid the war effort through their actions and words.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> "Who Is He?" *Marion Record* 48:29 (April 25, 1918): 4.

In other words, an American was pro-German if he failed to support the war effort in every way or by spreading disunity within America. Only through unity and patriotic service could America come together and defeat Germany. The mistreatment of German-Americans, in many ways, was just as bad as not supporting the war effort because the mistreatment caused division, which then hurt the war effort. By mistreating German-Americans, American vigilantes only hurt America and its need for unity.

On May 9, 1918, the *Record* responded to charges made in the *Kansas City Star* that claimed that Hillsboro had finally just held its first patriotic meeting.<sup>63</sup> This claim is labeled by the *Record* as a malicious falsehood. According to this article, these false and unfounded charges of disloyalty only caused strife and disunity in America. For the *Record*, “any man who goes about making unfounded charges of disloyalty, whether he does it maliciously or just carelessly, and thereby stirs up strife and bitterness is also ‘pro-German.’ He is a menace to the country and the country’s cause.”<sup>64</sup>

While the *Star* may have committed a disloyal act through false accusations, the *Record* did warn the reader of the consequences for true disloyalty. According to the *Record*, “This is no time for pussy-footing, for polly foxing. Nothing short of clean-cut, straight-out, whole-souled, aggressive Americanism is sufficient.”<sup>65</sup> This “aggressive Americanism” required that every American participate in aiding the war effort. The article ended by stating that “the course of any man or set of men who do not put their loyalty and their Americanism above question is going to be increasingly dangerous in

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<sup>63</sup> “False Charges.” *Marion Record* 48:31 (May 9, 1918): 4. According to Herbert L. Pankratz, in his master’s thesis, *Loyalty-Disloyalty in Kansas During World War I* (University of Kansas, 1970), numerous federal authorities, Kansas counties, and individuals considered Marion County as one of the most disloyal and unpatriotic counties in Kansas, due partially to their large population of Mennonites (108).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*



this country.”<sup>66</sup> Every American needed to prove their loyalty beyond question through participation in every war service. To fail to demonstrate loyalty to American, could lead to strife and danger.

On May 16, 1918, the *Record* reported the actions of a vigilante against a German Baptist Church that highlighted the danger of not clearly demonstrating loyalty to America. Early in May, someone had spread yellow paint over the corner stone of the German Baptist Church in Marion County. The article called this act “cowardly, unfair, and un-American.”<sup>67</sup> By throwing yellow paint onto the church, a patriotic citizen was publicly charging the church, along with its members, with disloyalty to America. This act unfairly charged the church with disloyalty, according to this article, even though the church and its members were recognized for their generosity to the Red Cross and other war activities.<sup>68</sup>

The article went on to argue that disloyalty and unfounded charges of disloyalty should not be tolerated by Americans. Both of the above were forms of pro-Germanism.<sup>69</sup> “Whoever is disloyal, no matter to what church, to what organization he belongs, no matter whether he be of German, English, French, Irish, Italian, or other blood- let him be singled out for attention, under the law. But such irresponsible and cowardly wholesale attacks as the one above mentioned should be utterly condemned by every true American.”<sup>70</sup> Vigilante justice had no place in America and disloyalty did not rest in one ethnic group. Instead, disloyalty could originate anywhere, among anyone no

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> “Random Notes Here and There.” *Marion Record* 48:32 (May 16, 1918): 1.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

matter his or her faith or cultural background. Unfortunately, vigilante justice often attacked German-Americans wholesale, based just on their cultural ties to Germany.

An editorial on June 27, 1918 argued that the war effort demonstrated the need for the prohibition of alcohol. While the call for prohibition had existed for a long time prior to the war, the war gave the prohibition movement greater strength. Through this editorial, the *Record* called for the government to take the next step and criticized the government for failing to enact prohibition willingly.

It was Postmaster General Burluson, we believe, who told the Senate Committee the other day, in opposing national prohibition, that he feared 'revolution' if this 'interference with personal liberty' is put through by Congress. Let's see. Believe that conscription is some little interference with personal liberty- but haven't heard of any revolution....We are told how much flour we can use, how much and what kind of meat we can use, how much sugar we can use, and we are told what we must buy and practically told what price we must pay for it....And yet we haven't heard anything about any 'revolution' because of this 'interference with personal liberty.' But with booze, of course, it is different. It must be treated with far more consideration, for fear there might be a 'revolution.'<sup>71</sup>

The *Record* ridiculed the idea that enacting prohibition would cause a revolution when larger restrictions on personal liberty were enacted with no threat of revolution.

According to the *Record*, the government had called on all of society to aid the war effort by reducing food waste and that prohibition would greatly aid in this effort.

The *Record* argued that:

The War Department, the Food Administration, the President all tell us that 'food will win the war,' that there is a food crisis which vitally affects the military situation; that the housewife who does not save wheat and meat and sugar, that the little child who does not call for corn products instead of wheat products...is helping to prolong the war and is adding to the casualty list of American soldiers....But the breweries can go on using millions of bushels of grain for booze which is worse than waste- which does harm and harm only! And we mustn't 'interfere' with the 'personal liberty' of any of the people engaged in this traffic, or in consuming this grain needed to help win the war, for fear they will start a 'revolution.' What a cheap bluff and what shallow Americanism!...Call the

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<sup>71</sup> "The Booze Bluff." *Marion Record* 48:38 (June 27, 1918): 4.

bluff. And if anybody starts to revolute, treat him just like any other pro-German traitor!<sup>72</sup>

By continuing to brew beer, breweries harmed the American war effort and bordered on treachery. To end this waste, the American people needed to push for prohibition as their patriotic duty to aid the conservation of food for the soldiers fighting in Europe. In many ways, the push for prohibition became another facet of the patriotic call for service to the country. This call for prohibition not only called for ridding the country of a moral evil, but also aiding the war effort (killing two birds with one stone). Once again, the war effort had taken a moral overtone.

On October 3, 1918 the *Record* printed an article urging Marion County citizens to purchase a liberty loan during the up-coming fourth liberty loan drive.<sup>73</sup> A. E. Hawkinson, chairman of the Marion County District Liberty Loan Committee during the war, urged Marion County citizens to purchase a liberty loan to help Marion County reach its quota of the drive of \$860,000 due on October 6. According to A. E. Hawkinson, “No one should wait for a canvasser to call on him. It is your duty to go to your bank at once and subscribe for every dollar you can afford. All persons who fail to support the government will be known by their neighbors and also by the boys who return from across the water. They will be despised and hated for all time.”<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> 1918 was an election year in the United States and many seats in congress were up for re-election. This election dominated the news between June and October, especially in the *Marion Record*. While the *Record* did address the war often, the political races dominated the editorials. While these editorials on the political race provide a glimpse of the political atmosphere of America at that time, they would provide very little pertinent information on the topic of this paper. For a discussion on the political atmosphere in the United States during the World War, see Thomas Fleming’s book, *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I*. (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

<sup>74</sup> A.E. Hawkinson. “An Appeal to the Loyal Citizens of Marion and Surrounding Townships.” *Marion Record* 48:52 (October 3, 1918): 4.

With the surrender of Germany on November 11, 1918, America celebrated its victory effusively. On November 14 the *Record* described how Marion County celebrated the victory. The celebrations began on Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> in Marion with the ringing of bells and phones beginning at 3:00am. From there a bonfire was lit with the Marion city band playing for entertainment. All schools and businesses closed for the day while a parade was given in both the afternoon and evening. A town-wide barbecue was held and the celebration lasted well into the night.<sup>75</sup> This celebration swept the county and the citizens celebrated America's victory over the militarism of Germany.

The November 14<sup>th</sup> article continued by arguing that this celebration of victory was worldwide and that bells rang proclaiming "peace on earth to men of good will."<sup>76</sup> November 11<sup>th</sup> "was a day of world celebration and like the only other day which the whole Christian world celebrates, that is the birth of Christ, it proclaimed the peace of Christian goodwill, triumphant over the hatred of frightfulness of Prussian paganism."<sup>77</sup> The celebration of the defeat of Germany was depicted as second only to the celebration of the birth of Christ. Both celebrations celebrated peace on earth and Christ's triumphant victory over paganism.

Then on November 21, the *Record* recorded just what the Allies had accomplished through war and needed to accomplish through peace. According to the *Record*,

A great victory for Democracy has been won. And that means, in the last analysis, a victory for the Christian conception of Brotherhood....Democracy fails unless vitalized by the spirit of Brotherhood....This means that if the victory for Democracy won by blood upon the field of service and sacrifice is to have its full force in the world the principles of individual right, of the sanctity of human life,

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<sup>75</sup> "World Peace." *Marion Record* 49:6 (November 14, 1918): 5.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

of political, governmental morality, of brotherhood, must be woven anew into the life of the world.<sup>78</sup>

Failure to do this, argued the *Record*, meant that “those who suffered and those who died will have been denied the full measure of their victory.”<sup>79</sup> In other words, the United States and the Allies needed to ensure that the world not only became more democratized, but also more in line with Christian Brotherhood. If America and its Allies failed to accomplish this through the peace conference, then those who had given their life might have given them in vain. Only time would tell if America had achieved full victory through the war.

For the *Marion Record*, patriotism was a complex and multi-faceted subject. While patriotism meant supporting the nation and its government, patriotism was also made up of the right to hold to a different opinion and critically evaluate the policies of the government. Another part of patriotism was the responsibility to respect differences in beliefs and opinions. In the end, the goal of patriotism was to unify these variances in beliefs and opinions behind the nation.

Disloyalty and traitors were those who created disunity within America. To cause strife by labeling everyone of opposing beliefs or opinions as traitors was a mark of false patriotism. True patriotism respected these differences of belief as a matter of the right of free speech. On the other hand, the attempt of false patriots to extinguish opposing viewpoints could only lead to the very autocracy the United States was trying to end in Europe. According to the *Record*, true patriotism respected Mennonite nonresistance and recognized their loyalty, while false patriotism labeled Mennonites as traitors and caused

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<sup>78</sup> “Carry On.” *Marion Record* 49:7 (November 21, 1918): 4.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

disunity between Mennonites and the rest of America. Mennonites, though, could not remain silent as to how they saw true patriotism.

While the *Record* defended the right of the Mennonites to hold to their pacifism and criticized over-zealous patriots, the Mennonites still needed to publicly demonstrate their loyalty. Patriotism also meant purchasing liberty bonds, conserving food, banning alcohol, and participating in other war activities. Failure to participate in any of these activities demonstrated disloyalty to America, no matter which faith or ethnic group one belonged to. The *Record* tried to apply the same standard of patriotism to every faith and ethnic group. The *Record* may have tried to take a moderate approach to the war, and while some of its articles did take on some of the war hysteria spreading throughout America, the major newspaper in Harvey County took a different approach towards patriotism in a time of war.

#### Chapter 4: The *Weekly Kansan-Republican*

The *Weekly Kansan-Republican* of Newton, in Harvey County, also explored what constituted patriotism and loyalty during the Great War. Newton served not only as the county seat but also as a central point for the General Conference Mennonites in Kansas, who had settled in and around Newton in the years prior to World War I.<sup>1</sup> The General Conference Mennonites had established their denominational headquarters in Newton, as well as their major college, Bethel College. These Mennonites and the fellow citizens of Newton lived and worked together for many years prior to the beginning of the war in Europe in 1914. With the onset of war with Germany the relationship of the Mennonites to the other citizens of Newton came under serious strain. Newton's newspaper, the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, reported and argued over the question of Mennonite loyalty throughout the war.<sup>2</sup>

On February 1, 1917, the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* responded negatively to Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare. According to the *Republican*:

The sudden and startling move of Germany in virtually laying down a principle of defiance to the world in her avowed revival of submarine warfare, which she states would become effective today, constitutes the gravest international situation in history. It certainly means that Germany has declared her intention to absolutely repudiate promises made to the United States regarding submarine warfare in diplomatic exchanges of last year. There is but one course open to America, and that is a vigorous reply and a re-assertion that this nation intends to stand by the repeatedly stated attitude of demanding absolute rights of the sea to neutral nations under recognized international laws. The focus of the world lens

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<sup>1</sup> Newton was founded in 1871 and had a population in 1915 of 7,620. Harvey County, overall, was organized in 1872 and had a population in 1915 of 18,663. William E. Connelley. *History of Kansas Newspapers*. (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1916), 203.

<sup>2</sup> The *Weekly Kansan-Republican* was edited by Jesse Lewis Napier (1874-1965) who began as editor of the paper not too long after his move to Newton in 1904 and then retired in 1953. Napier also served various roles in government and organizations like in the Kansas State Legislature from 1911-1912, the Newton Chamber of Commerce, the president of Kansas Press Association, and the director of the National Editorial Association. He was also an active member of the First Congregational Church, where he served as choir director and on the board of trustees. [Mary Ann Crans. "Napier, Jesse L. and Flora E." *Harvey County History*. Ed. Linda C. Smurr. (Dallas, Tx: Curtis Media Corporation, 1990), 217-218.]

## Conclusion

Unfortunately for the Mennonites, the combination of the call for conformity and the use of religious justifications for the war directly challenged their core beliefs. The Mennonites taught conformity to the Bible and their traditional belief in nonresistance, while the community taught conformity to the war effort as defined by the government and the newspapers. By trying to remain true to their traditional beliefs, Mennonites failed to conform to the image of patriotism held to by the surrounding community and thus came under direct suspicion for disloyalty. The Mennonites also used religious justifications for why they could not support the war effort, since they believed that Jesus had taught his followers to reject all violence and live a nonresistant lifestyle.

Through their rejection of war by religious justifications, the Mennonites also rejected, in many ways, the religious justifications for the war that many patriotic Americans held to. This angered many in the community and the newspapers discussed above spent a good deal of time trying to prove the Mennonites wrong. Mennonites found that their attempts to remain true to their nonresistant beliefs put them at increasing odds with the surrounding community. Both the Mennonites (and their publications) and the non-Mennonites (and their publications) approached the war from a different vantage point, and this led to conflict and misunderstanding as the war went on. In many ways, the war helped bring to light the divide between the Mennonites and the surrounding community.

One proponent of war has argued that:

No sane person, after all, is opposed to peace as such. The question is, peace at what risk? Peace on whose terms? Peace for how long? Looked at this way, war is not only sometimes a moral option- as theologians have long argued. Sometimes it's the only moral option we have...The issue is therefore not whether



to start a war. It is whether to end one by rewarding the aggressor and simply ignoring his infractions of the truce. Such a policy, inasmuch as it clearly rewards unprovoked violence, is immoral and imprudent... This isn't so much a 'rush to war,' as some have bizarrely called it. It's an endless, painstaking, nail-biting crawl... If we can do so with a minimum of civilian casualties, if we do all we can to encourage democracy in the aftermath, then this war is not only vital for our national security. It is a moral imperative. And those who oppose it without offering any credible moral alternative are not merely wrong and misguided. They are helping to perpetuate a deep and intolerable injustice.<sup>1</sup>

While this argument for war differs little from others previously mentioned, there is one major difference. This statement was printed in a *Time* magazine article by Andrew Sullivan on March 3, 2003 over the debate on whether to go to war with Iraq. In language similar to that used to support America's involvement in World War I, Sullivan portrayed the invasion of Iraq as a just war for the defense of democracy and ending the reign of an evil tyrant. While using slightly different language, Sullivan used the same basic arguments that patriots used during World War I. An evil tyrant on the other side of the ocean was oppressing innocent men, women, and children and it was America's moral duty to defeat that tyrant while spreading democracy around the world. Different war, different country, different circumstances, but a similar approach was used in both to justify the war to the American people. World War I may be long gone, but the language and definition of patriotism it employed still impacts America today. By exploring how Americans defined, defended, and spread patriotism and conformity during the First World War, more light can be shed on subsequent episodes of war hysteria in America.

Another similarity between Andrew Sullivan's language and the language used to support the war effort during the Great War rests in both labeling the war a moral war against an evil tyrant. In doing this, both wars took on the mantle of a crusade. The war against Germany became not only a crusade against the evil Kaiser, but also a crusade

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Sullivan. "Yes, a War Would Be Moral." *Time*. 161:9 (March 3, 2003).

against perceived enemies within the United States, the German-Americans. As the above example demonstrates, a more recent war took on a similar crusade mentality. America went to war against Iraq out of a moral obligation to defeat an evil tyrant, a member of the “axis of evil.” This “crusade” against this new evil across the ocean also became a “crusade” against a newly perceived enemy within America, the Muslim Americans. Both wars used moral overtones to justify the war and deal with perceived nonconformists or outsiders living within America. Unfortunately, in both wars the moral crusade led to war hysteria and the mistreatment of a minority group that failed to conform.

During the involvement of the United States in World War I, the three newspapers explored above, *Tabor College Herold*, *Marion Record*, and *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, all attempted to define and explain how true patriotism looked like in a time of war. Each took a slightly different approach to patriotism. The *Tabor College Herold* attempted to reconcile the traditional belief of nonresistance of the Mennonites with the call for patriotic war service. For the *Marion Record*, it attempted to take a moderate approach to the patriotic war service by encouraging active participation while also defending the rights of the Mennonites. As for the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, it ardently turned the war effort into a moral crusade while urging conformity and suppression of dissent.

The Mennonite view, as passed down by tradition and defended through the pages of the *Herold*, placed ultimate loyalty to God and His teachings before the nation, which put them in direct conflict with many of the patriotic arguments of the other two newspapers. Traditional Mennonite beliefs, as found in their traditional writings and argued by the *Herold*, taught that Mennonites needed to remain true to their nonresistant

beliefs as commanded by God, rather than bowing to outside pressures. To bow to this outside pressure to put the state first by abandoning nonresistance meant demonstrating disloyalty to God. Disloyalty to God meant committing a sin against God.

On the other hand, Mennonite nonresistance did not mean that Mennonites were disloyal to the nation but that Mennonites could only serve the nation in ways that were compatible with their nonresistant beliefs. The failure of other Americans to recognize and respect this led to the possibility, according to the *Herold*, of the loss of the protection of religious liberty within America and religious persecution of those who fail to conform to the majority. In many ways, failure to recognize the loyalty of Mennonites and respect their beliefs by persecuting them as nonconformists demonstrated the very autocratic nature that Americans claimed to fight against. Patriotism, in the end, meant serving God first, then the nation in ways compatible with one's religious beliefs while also respecting the religious beliefs of others that differed from you.

This divide between the Mennonites and American society came as a result from lack of understanding and intolerance between the two groups. Unfortunately, this divide led to persecution, mob violence, and disunity in the local community. The Mennonite belief in nonresistance and nonconformity led them to place their ultimate loyalty to God, while treating the nation as secondary. Patriotism was a worldly, and thus a secondary, affair. Obedience to God's commands, especially in reference to nonresistance, called for the Mennonite to serve God first, and then the state in such ways as remained compatible with their beliefs.

For many in American society, though, while God deserved the primary loyalty of every citizen, the state also had a call on the loyalty of all its citizens. The United States

government, by protecting the religious and political liberty of all of its citizens, had the right to call every citizen up for patriotic service. Besides, if God fought on America's side, then the citizen's demonstration of loyalty to the state became a demonstration of loyalty to God. Patriotism became the primary affair of both the worldly and religious aspects of an American's life.

Mennonites and American society as a whole approached the issue of patriotism in two, vastly different ways. This difference, though, brought them into conflict and dispute. The lack of understanding of both sides for the other led both sides to fail to respect or tolerate any difference. In many cases, the Mennonites of Marion and Harvey counties were doomed to fail to live up to the patriotic bar set for them by American society. By failing to conform due to their religious beliefs, the Mennonites became sitting targets for a society under war fever that understood little of their beliefs or tolerated little nonconformity. Unfortunately for the Mennonites, this lack of understanding or tolerance led to persecution, harassment, and mistrust.

Through their pages, the *Tabor College Herold*, *Marion Record*, and the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* attempted to define patriotism and defend their values. All three of these newspapers pushed for patriotism, but in different manners. The *Tabor College Herold* tried to defend Mennonite beliefs while determining how Mennonites could still demonstrate their patriotism. For the *Marion Record*, it attempted to take a middle route in defending the Mennonites while ensuring a sense of conformity around the patriotic ideal. As for the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, it zealously defended patriotic war fervor and the religious justifications for going to war. Their arguments help demonstrate the currents running through the United States during its involvement in World War I. This

period of war, as demonstrated through the newspapers discussed above, provides an interesting and educational demonstration of the debate over and development of the idea of patriotism in American society.

is shifted back from efforts to bring about an everlasting peace, to the words, 'strict accountability.'<sup>3</sup>

Just how America needed to respond to Germany's actions remained a matter of debate and contention.

An editorial on February 8, 1917 explored the issues of loyalty among ethnic groups within the United States. "The thing that makes America a great nation, above all things," according to the *Republican*, "is that spirit which dominates the conduct of her citizens-...all line up together for America when necessity for the preservation of the principles on which the republic rests demands."<sup>4</sup> Americans were made up of "the Irish and the Germans, the English and the Russians- the people from all corners of the globe who have come to America to enjoy her freedom and liberties. While rising from the melting pot comes the partisan cheers for the old home team, whenever the contest is on, and the game is close, yet when your Uncles Sam's nine walks out on the diamond to face the foe, the team from the old home town will have to give way while we boost for the boys in the uniform of red, white, and blue."<sup>5</sup> Through the use of a baseball metaphor, the *Republican* argued that ethnic groups (like the Mennonites) had the right to support their old home in the war when the war remained solely a European concern, but once America became involved (either diplomatically or militarily) the various ethnic groups needed to fully support the United States. Loyalty to America trumped all former ethnic ties.

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<sup>3</sup> "Strict Accountability." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:25 (February 1, 1917): 4.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:26 (February 8, 1917): 4.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

On February 15, a Mennonite spokesperson, Christian E. Krehbiel, responded to President Wilson's severing of diplomatic ties with Germany.<sup>6</sup> Krehbiel argued:

This is to be regretted. President Wilson and his advisors doubtless considered this the best way to meet the new situation. While it seems to be a step in the direction of war, out of which the present administration, is supposed to have kept us- without doubt it seemed the smallest step in that direction and appeared to our government the most promising to a just and peaceable adjustment of an intricate problem. It is incumbent upon every citizen to do and say only that which will support our government in its every effort toward justice and peace.<sup>7</sup>

While severing diplomatic ties with Germany might seem like an act of war, Americans still needed to support their government in its efforts to stay out of the war.

Krehbiel then explored the issue of the right of neutral Americans to travel the seas.

Granted that it is not compatible with the dignity and honor of our nation to submit to conditions imposed by any foreign power under which we may or shall use the seas; is it not equally incompatible with good citizenship for any citizens of the United States to jeopardize the peace of our nation by insisting now on travelling in the war-zone on any ship, on any sea, at any time?<sup>8</sup>

The proper response of America to Germany's actions remained controversial and up in the air. Krehbiel argued that:

There may be those citizens who honestly think that the only patriotic thing to do now is to join in the carnage with the Allies. They should be privileged so to think, to state their reasons impassionately [sic], and to live up to their convictions. You may think they are wrong, but be slow to challenge their patriotism. They are Americans. Then there may be those who feel that the extremity of the combatants is so great that they are really defending their right to life and liberty and that no really neutral nation should still insist on strict observance of all conventions and rights. They, too, are entitled to think so and impassionately [sic] to say so. You may think they are wrong, but be slow to challenge their patriotism. They are Americans.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Christian E. Krehbiel served as the editor of the General Conference Mennonite newspaper in Newton, *Der Herold*, which was published in German.

<sup>7</sup> Christian E. Krehbiel. "We Are All Americans." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:27 (February 15, 1917): 3.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Two different views, two different approaches to the European conflict, but both were strictly between two patriotic groups of Americans.

A third view, which C.E. Krehbiel explored, was that of the Mennonites.

According to Krehbiel:

There are those in this section, who came to America for the same reason that the pilgrim fathers came- in search of religious liberty. As they understand the Gospel and the teachings of Jesus these do not sanction war. Because of militarism they left various countries in Europe attracted by the constitutional guarantee of liberty of conscience in the United States....While they do not set themselves up as judges of others, they do not believe in bearing arms, but as those in Canada, Germany, Austria, Russia, and France are doing now so those here will support their government in such ways as their faith permits and will not fail thus to show their gratitude and patriotism to the land that promised and gave them religious freedom. You may think they are wrong, but be slow to challenge their patriotism. We may not all think alike, but we are all Americans.<sup>10</sup>

Pacifist Mennonites and Americans for war might sit on opposite sides of the spectrum but both remained truly American. If America remained tolerant at home and sought a peaceful solution to the international situation abroad, then America had the ability to rise above the militarism of Germany.

Another article published on February 22, 1917 attempted to defend the loyalty of German-Americans to the United States.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> The issue of German-American loyalty during World War I did not begin overnight but had its roots in the years leading up to the war. During World War I, the tension between the German-Americans and American society stemmed from tensions going back to the 1800s when Germans began coming to the United States in large numbers. This tension between the German-Americans and American society is explored by John A. Hawgood in his book, *The Tragedy of German-America: The Germans in the United States of America during the Nineteenth Century- and After*. (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1940). The causes of the rampant patriotism and nativism during World War I did not just pop out of nowhere, but had their root in a cause that went back well into the 1800s. For Hawgood, this was a tragedy which shaped much of the history of the Germans in America. Hawgood argues that the true tragedy of German-America is that German immigrants did not cooperate with Americans and vice versa. This lack of cooperation alienated both groups from each other and fostered misunderstanding that culminated in the internal turmoil of World War I (52). By trying to be both German and American, German immigrants could not be fully either and this caused problems for them.



No better defenders of the United States ever existed than the German citizens of this country. They are not separate from the support of the flag and they have no desire to be. They are as much a part of the public life of the community, as any other person or any other nationality. They will be found staunch, standing for their home in America. The people of the United States have never in the past doubted the German-American citizen and they refuse to allow doubt to creep in now.<sup>12</sup>

This voice of moderation and calm argued that if German-Americans had demonstrated their loyalty to America in a time of peace, then war would only strengthen that loyalty

On March 8, 1917 the *Republican* commented on the deaths of Americans at sea by the hands of the belligerents. According to the *Republican*, “Literally scores of neutral and non-combatant Americans have been ruthlessly killed by the acts of belligerents in the war, and this country is not yet mixed up in it. The self-restraint of the American people and statesmen during the great conflict will be recorded in history as one of the important phases of the era.”<sup>13</sup> The fact that America had refused to join the war after so much provocation, clearly demonstrated America’s love for peace and patience.

This patience began to run out as war drew nearer and the *Republican* began to show this trend on April 5, 1917, one day before the United States entered the war. Newton planned to hold a Loyalty Day, and the *Republican* told its readers that it was everyone’s business to participate. “We frequently hear that what is ‘everybody’s business is nobody’s business.’ There is one instance where in what is everybody’s

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<sup>12</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:28 (February 22, 1917): 4. [untitled editorial reprinted from the *Hutchinson News*.]

<sup>13</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:30 (March 8, 1917): 4. For an in-depth exploration of the causes leading up to America’s entry into World War I, see Justus D. Doenecke. *Nothing Less Than War: A New History of America’s Entry into World War I*. (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2011). For a description of the causes of World War I, see Donald Kagan. *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace*. (New York, NY: Anchor Books Doubleday, 1996) and Laurence Lafore. *The Long Fuse: An Interpretation of the Origins of World War I*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, INC, 1997).

business is ‘everybody’s’ business. That is participation in Loyalty Day. You are not going to be extended a personal invitation, or given a bouquet of sweet peas for showing your colors on Wednesday, April 11. It is up to you, and the eyes of the community are upon you.”<sup>14</sup> No invitations or rewards were going to be given for participating, but one needed to participate voluntarily. Here the *Republican* used peer pressure to encourage everyone in the community to do their patriotic duty.

Another article printed on April 5, 1917 warned the citizens of Newton against disloyal speech. The *Republican* commented that it received reports daily of disloyal comments made by someone in the community.<sup>15</sup> According to the *Republican*, “there is no more serious crime than disloyalty to the country under whose flag you find home and protection as a citizen. Neither is there any crime the punishment for which is more severe.”<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, the *Republican* did not define just what constituted disloyal speech or action, but instead left it open to interpretation. Once the United States became involved with the war, the *Republican* and the surrounding community became even more vigilant for any sign of disloyalty.

Harvey County, according to the *Republican* in an article published on April 12, 1917, had a large population of citizens of German descent.

It is a well-known fact that a very large percentage of Newton and Harvey County residents are of German descent. Many of them even speak the German language in their homes, no doubt, and nearly all are educated in that language. Many are now in the second and third generation on American soil, and nearly all are naturalized American citizens. Also it is well known that many of them, when the European war was a contest between European nations, naturally sympathized largely with the Fatherland....If not well and generally know, it is time a valuable and most important lesson is learned- that so far as can be ascertained without

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<sup>14</sup> “Everybody’s Business.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:34 (April 5, 1917): 3. [Loyalty Day ended up being moved to April 19 due to rain.]

<sup>15</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:34 (April 5, 1917): 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

exception, every citizen in Newton and community of German ancestry or nativity is most loyal to America....If there is one who is not, the fact should be reported to the authorities, and not bandied about in the form of gossip at back doors or on the streets....Now is no time for shootmouth [sic]. Now is no time to provoke heated argument, and certainly now of all times, is no time to peddle gossip.<sup>17</sup>

False rumors not only portrayed German-Americans wrongly but also damaged the image of the community as a whole.

One victim of this gossip was a W.A. Kreuger, whom the *Republican* interviewed. Kreuger argued that he had naturally supported Germany during America's neutrality, but that since America had joined the fight, he fully supported the United States.<sup>18</sup> He felt that America deserved his full loyal support because it gave him a home full of peace and comfort. According to Kreuger, these vicious rumors could hurt his business and cause some "hot-blooded citizen" to hurt him.<sup>19</sup>

On April 19, 1917, the *Republican* again tried to demonstrate the loyalty of the German-Americans in Harvey County.

This week at least four more young Germans enlisted for service with Uncle Sam's army. What people do is the best evidence of their ideals. The ideals of the German people of this community in the way of a government is a democracy such as Uncle Sam's affords, and they are willing to defend such a government against all comers. Furthermore they know that they are helping to bring to their own country men in the Fatherland the blessings of the same sort of rule.<sup>20</sup>

The surest sign of loyalty to America came through public displays of patriotism, while failure to publicly display patriotic fervor called into question the loyalty of a citizen. For the Mennonites, this demand for public displays of patriotic fervor placed them between a rock and a hard place. Mennonites had to figure out how they could remain true to their

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<sup>17</sup> "Absolutely No Truth in Tales." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:35 (April 12, 1917): 8.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:36 (April 19, 1917): 4.

nonresistant beliefs while also clearly demonstrating their patriotism to the surrounding community.

Some Mennonites (a small minority) responded to the call for public displays of patriotism by joining the military. According to the *Republican*, on April 19 three current and former Bethel College students had enlisted in the United States Army hospital corps.<sup>21</sup> Each of these Mennonites had grown up around Newton and had grown up in the tenets of the Mennonite faith.<sup>22</sup> These Mennonites, felt that they could still serve in the army without violating their nonresistant tenets. Their action did not represent the attitude of most Mennonites. In fact, most Mennonites ended up rejecting service in the hospital corps as aiding too closely in the taking of lives.<sup>23</sup>

On May 31 the *Republican* warned Newton that the war might call for plenty of sacrifice by every citizen before the end. A patriotic citizen needed to “accept any hardship or pinch that may come to you out of the myriad circumstances that arise from the war. If it is an extra tax pay it with good grace. If it is to accept an arbitrary ruling

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<sup>21</sup> “Young Mennonites Enlist For Service.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:36 (April 19, 1917): 6.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> For an examination of how Kansas Mennonites reacted to the war and the various calls for service, see Arlyn John Parish. “Kansas Mennonites During World War I.” *Fort Hays Studies*. (History Series. Nr. 4. Hays, KS: Fort Hays Kansas State College, 1968). (Parish’s master’s thesis began a new period of study on the Mennonites in World War I. Many of the articles and books on the Mennonites in the Great War that came during the 1970s and after cite and quote liberally from Parish’s thesis.) Parish argued that the many challenges faced by Kansas Mennonites during World War I brought on a slow change in the position of the Mennonites towards nonresistance from their official doctrine proclaimed by the church. Kansas Mennonites failed, in many ways, to rigidly uphold their principle of nonresistance by buying war bonds, donating to the Red Cross, and serving as noncombatants. This came about because many of the Kansas Mennonites had strong economic, political, and social ties to American society. Kansas Mennonites now had two loyalties: one to their Mennonite faith, and another to American society. World War I brought these two loyalties into conflict and the Mennonite loyalty to the United States sometimes won over their loyalty to the Mennonite faith (55). On the other hand, another Mennonite historian, Gerlof Homan, argues that while Mennonites may have spent little time focusing on their nonresistant teachings prior to World War I, they had an adequate grounding in their church’s beliefs to stand strong through persecution and hardships. Mennonites may have grown slightly lax in their nonresistant teaching prior to the war, but the war forced them to defend their beliefs more stridently. Instead of destroying their beliefs, Homan argued that World War I forced the Mennonites to once again take up the defense of those beliefs that they felt defined them. Gerlof D. Homan. *American Mennonites and the Great War, 1914-1918*. (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1994), 24.

that affects your business, take your medicine. If it calls you to get behind the plow, line up. If it is that supreme sacrifice which bares men's bosoms to enemy bullets, it means even that."<sup>24</sup> In other words, every American had to demonstrate his or loyalty by accepting whatever the government deemed was needed to win the war. Patriotism and loyalty meant not questioning the actions of the government or refusing to participate in the war effort in any way.

The male citizens of military age in Newton had to register for the draft on June 5. On June 7, the *Republican* reported the statistics of those who enlisted. For Newton, 713 whites, 56 blacks, 59 aliens, and 4 enemy-alien (832 men total) had registered for the draft.<sup>25</sup> Harvey County as a whole saw 1,608 whites, 57 blacks, 111 aliens, and 11 enemy-alien (1,807 men total) register for the draft.<sup>26</sup> While the *Republican* did not list how many of these claimed exemption, it did say that the majority of the claims of exemption came through claims of dependents rather than for religious beliefs.<sup>27</sup> These 1,807 Harvey County men now faced the possibility that their country might call them to military service. In the coming months, the *Republican* would have to support and justify the war effort as part of its attempt to convince these men and their families of the need for total support of the war effort.

Part of this call for total support of the war effort resided in how Americans should think about the war. According to Preston W. Slosson, a professor at Columbia University, there were a few ideas that patriotic Americans might hold. Slosson argued that no American should say "my country right or wrong" because America was not

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<sup>24</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:41 (May 31, 1917): 4.

<sup>25</sup> "Harvey County Has 1,807 Names." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:42 (June 7, 1917): 8. [Enemy-Aliens were those of German descent who had failed to take out naturalization papers.]

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

wrong.<sup>28</sup> To say otherwise meant questioning the government's motivations for going to war, and that bordered on disloyalty. The justification for going to war did not rest on national honor but on "national necessity and international justice."<sup>29</sup> Universal training or military service did not smack of Prussian militarism, just as it did not come from the "French, British, Argentine, Japanese, or Australian."<sup>30</sup> When they (Germany) do it, it is militaristic and wrong, but when we (America) do it, it is only natural and right. Finally, America did not owe France any aid for what Lafayette did during the American Revolution. America only joined the war because the war was for a righteous cause.<sup>31</sup> In other words, America went to war justly for a righteous cause and no patriotic citizen should question the government's motivation for going to war.

Another article on June 21 attempted to give a Biblical justification for total support of the war effort.

Jesus Christ said: 'He that is not for me is against me. Ye cannot serve two masters,' and other expressions conveying the same idea. That is to say, there are conditions where there is really no neutral ground. That condition now exists in this country. We are at war with Germany and every word spoken and act committed that interferences [sic] any way with the prosecution of the war is giving aid and comfort to the enemy, and giving aid and comfort to the enemy in time of war is treason. Treason is an ugly word, but is the only word in the language that fully expresses the offense.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Slosson, Preston W. "Don'ts For Americans." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:43 (June 21, 1917): 4.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> "Kansas Comment." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:43 (June 21, 1917): 4. [The scripture quoted here comes from Matthew 12:30 and Matthew 6:24. Matthew 12:30 came as part of Jesus' response to the Pharisees claim that he drove out spirits in the name of the devil. Jesus argued that he could not be driving out demons in the name of the devil since a house divided could not stand. Matthew 6:24 takes place in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Here Jesus is teaching that a person could not serve both God and worldly masters. Where one places their treasure is where their heart is. It is interesting that this article takes part of these two verses and mashes together to form a Biblical justification for suppressing all dissent against the war.]

You are either for us or against us. For the Mennonites, their refusal to fight or buy war bond due to their beliefs, was interpreted as indirectly supporting Germany and was guilty of treason.<sup>33</sup> By quoting Jesus (no matter how out of context) the *Republican* tried to give religious justification for total support of the war. If Jesus, our Savior, said no neutral ground existed in certain circumstances, then every American had the responsibility (both religiously and patriotically) to fully support the American war effort.

On June 28, the *Republican* printed a sermon by local Pastor Fred C. Rufle that not only attempted to give further religious justification for the war effort but also to disprove the nonresistant teachings of the Mennonites. Rufle argued that the world war meant that the American “church must lead the way in these dark and trying days as she has led in the past. She is now at the crossroads. One path in which she may lead us is called the path of nonresistance. The other path, and the only other path, is the path that is called resistance. The Church must either become pacifist or militant, or else she must stand still....Let us lay down the premise that neither non-resistance nor resistance are essentially Christian. Two incidents in the life of Christ will substantiate that premise.”<sup>34</sup> According to Fred Rufle, the Bible did not support one response above the other and neither response was more Christian than the other.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For a study on the suppression of dissent against the Great War in Kansas, see: Herbert Pankratz. “The Suppression of Alleged Disloyalty in Kansas During World War I.” *Kansas Historical Quarterly*. 42:3 (Autumn 1976): 277-307. Pankratz argued that loyalty was measured during World War I through the words and actions a person did to help support the war effort. To fail to help the war effort in any way meant to be branded as disloyal and pro-German. To enforce a common sense of loyalty and suppress any alleged disloyalty, actions were taken by the government (federal, state, and local), private organizations, and mobs (277). In other words, loyalty was measured by your public actions and words while government and private entities were waiting to suppress any action or language that failed to conform to their measurement of loyalty.

<sup>34</sup> Fred C. Rufle. “The Christian’s Attitude Toward War.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:44 (June 28, 1917): 6.

<sup>35</sup> Throughout the history of the Christian church there have been a number of views towards the teachings of the Bible on resistance or nonresistance. Roland H. Bainton, in his book, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation* (New York, NY: Abingdon Press, 1960)

Rufle's first proof of his thesis comes from cleansing of the temple by Jesus. In this episode Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple. Jesus used violence, in this case, through righteous indignation. Another proof of his thesis comes from Jesus' trial and crucifixion. This episode clearly demonstrated Jesus' use of nonresistance in the face of mistreatment and death. According to Rufle:

Shall we not say, then, that the reason for Christ's forbearance among the soldiers [at his crucifixion] was this, that He was thus spending Himself in the service of others? Had He struggled and fought to free Himself from these brutal captors He would have been spending Himself in His own behalf....The world would never had the supreme example of self-sacrifice in the service of others which Christ has given to the world....Nonresistance vindicates the principle of love....In striking and scattering the traders [at the temple] did He not likewise spend Himself in the service of others?...Violence and physical force were the only means at the disposal of Jesus in the attempt to cleanse the Temple and clear the honor and sanctity of God's Name....Non-resistance here would not have been an act of self-sacrificing service for others.<sup>36</sup>

For Fred Rufle, both of these examples demonstrate that Jesus practiced both resistance and nonresistance depending on the situation. To hold to just resistance or nonresistance, brought on the danger of making Jesus' actions inconsistent.

Jesus used nonresistance and resistance as methods of demonstrating love and self-sacrifice to the world depending on which method could best achieve His goal. The lesson that America needed to take from Jesus' example was that: "The high duty of the Christian life is to spend one's self in the service of others. Sometimes we can best fulfill that duty by adopting the attitude and the method of non-resistance; at other times we can

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explores the historical views of the church towards war and peace from the early church to the cold war. He also provides the historical background from the Old and New Testaments that provided much of the material for the debate over nonresistance or resistance. According to Bainton, there were three Christian attitudes towards war: pacifism, just war, and crusade (pp. 14-15). During the first half of the 1900s, Bainton argued that all three Christian attitudes towards war were present. World War I represented the crusade attitude, the period between the two World Wars represented the pacifism attitude, and World War II represented the Just War attitude (15).

<sup>36</sup> Rufle, "The Christian's Attitude," 6.



only fulfill that duty by adopting the attitude and the method of resistance.”<sup>37</sup> America needed to follow His example in its dealings in the war.

While the war in Europe centered on the fight between autocracy and democracy, Rufle argued that “the democracy which we believe to be the will of God for all men, has been attacked and stands in peril of its life.”<sup>38</sup> America’s response, in light of Jesus’ example, could only take one path.

There is but one path to choose, and that is the path of resistance. Non-resistance...would be an act of supine cowardice by which we would save ourselves at a cost to the world of the priceless jewel of human liberty...Resistance here embodies the truly Christian principle of self-sacrifice in the service of others...the high duty of Christian men in this land of ours is to become militant for democracy...For a war, entered in this spirit and for this high purpose, is not only not un-Christian, but exemplifies the true spirit of the Christ who lived that men might have life- and have it more abundantly.<sup>39</sup>

America, in effect, followed in the steps of Christ by going to war against Germany. The war essentially became a religious crusade where Americans fought under the war banners of Christ and America.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, the Mennonite belief in nonresistance bordered on complete heresy and treason, when compared to America’s religious crusade in Europe.

The *Republican*, on July 5, continued this religious crusade language in urging the support of the Red Cross. According to the *Republican*, many “tightwads” in Newton gave nothing or too little in the Red Cross war drive.<sup>41</sup> These “tightwads” gave little to the cause, while spending much on themselves. For the *Republican*, “hell is not needed

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> For an exploration into the religious and crusader aspect of the war, see Richard M. Gamble. *The War for Righteousness: Progressive Christianity, the Great War, and the Rise of the Messianic Nation*. (Wilmington, DE.: ISI Books, 2003) and David Traxel. *Crusader Nation: The United States in Peace and the Great War 1898-1920*. (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006). Both books also give a good overview of the role and views of the Progressives during World War I.

<sup>41</sup> “Old Bill White on the Red Cross Tightwad.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 45:45 (July 5, 1917): 2.

for the thief or the harlot or the brute who takes his brother's life. Hell is chiefly needed for the tightwad to fry the greed out of his soul when he sputters around on the devil's skillet like a flea in the soup kettle."<sup>42</sup>

On September 13, 1917, the *Republican* took up another issue relating to the Mennonites pacifism. The *Republican* defined pacifists as "a person who desires peace and under that construction it would include all real Americans. But of late the term has been adopted as a description of a class of persons who make a business of decrying the action of the United States entering the war to resent the insults and depredations Germany was making on our rights, and to help protect the rights of small nations the world over. In the latter sense, a pacifist is one of the most despicable individuals imaginable."<sup>43</sup> Patriotic pacifism meant loving peace while remaining willing to go to war when America's honor or freedom came under unjust attack. Disloyal pacifism, on the other hand, meant putting the love of peace ahead of the nation's honor and defense. To reject all war, rather than only rejecting war theoretically, placed an American in opposition to the patriotic war service position and thus equated to disloyalty. Pacifism only remained patriotic if only held to during a time of peace.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:1 (September 13, 1917): 4. For a study of the psychological make-up of the pacifists and conscientious objectors during World War I, see Mark A. May. "The Psychological Examination of Conscientious Objectors." *The American Journal of Psychology*. 31:2 (April 1920): 152-165. [This article resulted from a report prepared by Mark May back in December 1918 for the Surgeon General over the intelligence and sincerity of conscientious objectors.] May's thesis is that conscientious objectors did not possess inferior intelligence like some claimed, but that conscientious objectors actually possessed, on average, higher intelligence than those serving in combatant units. Conscientious objectors, like the Mennonites, defended their refusal to fight through intelligent, well thought out reasoning rather than through unquestioning submission to church or creed. According to May, most of the conscientious objectors, like the Mennonites, lived in a clannish type of community, interpreted scripture literally, based their objections on religious grounds, did not participate in society (like voting), and worked on the farm for a living (PP. 160-161). In other words, the majority of conscientious objectors, while coming from isolated, rural, and religious backgrounds, objected to war based on well thought out and sincere reasoning rather than insincere, mentally deficient reasoning like some public figures proclaimed. Once the war hysteria ended, clear thinking revealed that conscientious objectors had reasonable, intelligent motivations for their refusal to fight.

Another major issue relating to the Mennonites was the teaching of German. On October 4, 1917 the *Republican* argued that:

Patriotism is one thing and common sense is another. The teaching of the German language in the schools of America has nothing to do with the war for democracy which we are fighting. Any attempt to force the German language into the rightful place belonging to the English tongue which is recognized as the national language of America would be a menace to American institutions, and the German family that refuses to educate its children in the language of the country of which they are citizens, not only fails to measure up to the standards of good citizens but are also proving themselves ignorant chumps. But to be able to speak and write the German language is an educational accomplishment, a commercial asset, and an embellishment of the mind.<sup>44</sup>

While English needed to remain the primary language of all United States citizens, German remained a good second language. Speaking German did not equate to being un-American yet, according to this moderate view.

The place of the church in a nation at war served as another important issue for many. For the *Republican*,

The most important of all is the church. When times and conditions try men's souls, then the old yet ever new story of the Nazarene, that perfect man, is the only solace that never fails to hold fast as an anchor to struggling humanity....The worship of your God has not advanced in price. It is the most valuable privilege vouchsafed to you even in free America. Why not take advantage of it? Is an hour a week too much to devote to meditation on religious things?<sup>45</sup>

Citizens of Newton needed to look after their own physical, mental, and spiritual welfare by going to church, even as they participated generously in the war effort. Attending church became another patriotic act because of the churches ability to serve as sources of nurture, comfort, and unity.

As the war in Europe progressed, the *Republican* continued to explore the issue of Mennonite loyalty to America. "The Mennonites of this section," the *Republican* argued,

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<sup>44</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 33:206 (October 4, 1917): 4.

<sup>45</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:5 (October 11, 1917): 4.

“require no defense for their attitude toward the war, nor toward serving the government. Doubtless there is an occasional ‘slacker’ among them, just as there are slackers among members of other church faiths.”<sup>46</sup> There was no monopoly on slackers. According to the *Republican*:

The Mennonites here have answered the call of the American government cheerfully and freely. Many of the young men volunteered for service in the hospital corps and other branches of the non-combative service before the draft law became effective....Mennonites believe it wrong for them to kill human beings. Members of the faith in this locality have pledged themselves as publicly, however, time and again, to support the government in the present war in any other way than actually bearing arms and killing men. So far as the *Kansan* knows they are making good on the pledge to the letter.<sup>47</sup>

This vision of the Mennonites as patriotic and active in the war effort served as a method of setting up a standard from which the community could judge the loyalty of the Mennonites.

On November 1, 1917, the *Republican* reprinted an article by Reverend W.A. Sprague that defined the purposes of all of the previous wars that America had fought. First, the Revolutionary War was fought for political liberty. Second, the War of 1812 served as a war for commercial liberty. Third, the Civil War served as a war for industrial liberty (“freeing the white laborer from competition with the slaves”). Fourth, the Spanish-American War served as a war for human liberty. Finally, the war in Europe served as a war for national liberty.<sup>48</sup> Every war that America had fought in had served as some sort of fight for a different liberty that was endangered. In each conflict America had fought for the cause of liberty, and thus America had always fought on the side of

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<sup>46</sup> “Need No Defense.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:6 (October 18, 1917): 4.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Sprague, W.A. “Always For Liberty.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:8 (November 1, 1917): 4.

righteousness. The current war in Europe just served as another war for another form of liberty and thus deserved the full support of every patriotic American.

With the beginning of 1918, the *Republican* started including a page dedicated to and written by Bethel College students. This page was called *The Bethel Breeze* and was published weekly. Through this weekly page, the Mennonites of Bethel College were able to expound on their views on the German language, patriotism, and loyalty to the general public. On January 22, 1918, *The Bethel Breeze* took on the issue of the teaching of German during the war.

The students of Bethel College have not yet lost interest in the Deutsche Verein [student organization]. They still consider this as one of the important organizations of the school. It is the purpose of this organization to study the German language and literature. The Verein would indeed think it unwise to drop all German at this time, agreeing most heartily with the decision recently made at the meeting of college presidents at Topeka, that there should be no interference with existing high school and college provision for the teaching of German, that a knowledge of that language is more important now than it was before the war. 'If Germany is to desirable to read her thoughts [sic].<sup>49</sup> If she is to be our enemy, it will be indispensable.' In order, therefore, to be better citizens of the United States now and after the war let us continue our study of the language and literature of Germany.<sup>50</sup>

Teaching German became, according to this article, a patriotic act that allowed Americans to gain an insight into the German mind that would aid America in defeating Germany.

Then on February 12, 1918, *The Bethel Breeze* attempted to further demonstrate its loyalty and patriotism.

Last week the faculty decided that the chapel was woefully lacking in a display of national colors. On first thought they decided to buy the flags themselves but on

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<sup>49</sup> This sentence was incomplete in the original. Not sure what the author intended to say but the sentence might have been meant to read like this: "If Germany is to [be our friend it will be] desirable to read her thoughts."

<sup>50</sup> "Deutsche Verein Not Germany." *The Bethel Breeze* 1:3 (January 22, 1918). Printed in the *Weekly Kanan-Republican* 33:298 (January 24, 1918): 6.

later consideration it was made known that the student body would like to help in this cause and that not only the chapel but also the library be decorated. A collection was held and the flags are now draped in their places. Bethel College has been very loyal in support of the various movements such as the Red Cross, Red Cross Stamps, and Y.M.C.A., especially the latter cause. Hence it is not mere outward show when our national colors are hung but is rather sentiment backed by action.<sup>51</sup>

This article also demonstrates how the increasing pressures for patriotic conformity finally started to wear down the Mennonites.

In 1918, the *Republican* continued to expound on the patriotic duties of every citizen of Newton. On February 7, the *Republican* reported that Fred Robertson, the district attorney, “recommends the formation of local vigilance committees to investigate and report on any disloyal utterance or conduct, and to serve the government in any way that presents itself...Its members or its activities need not be a public matter.”<sup>52</sup>

Vigilance committees, in many ways, could serve as a secretive force that was not accountable to the public or under the same restrictions as the government. Enforcement of loyalty and patriotism rested at the local level. This, in turn, encouraged members of the local community to watch each other for any sign of disloyalty. By doing this, the government could rely on American citizens to police themselves and enforce conformity within the local community.

How these vigilance committees could enforce patriotic conformity remained up for debate. The *Republican*, on February 21, argued that “administering tar and feathers, making them kiss the flag, and that sort of thing may coincide with the manner of doing things in some localities, but Newton has another way. She makes ‘em [sic] give to the

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<sup>51</sup> “Our National Colors.” *The Bethel Breeze* 1:6 (February 12, 1918). Printed in the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:24 (February 14, 1918): 3.

<sup>52</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:23 (February 7, 1918): 4.

Red Cross and like it.”<sup>53</sup> What means of enforcement the citizens of Newton used, the *Republican* did not say. There were other means of enforcing patriotic conformity than through vigilante justice.

On March 7, 1918, the *Republican* printed a sermon by Reverend C.M. Chilton of Newton that explored the religious justification for the war. Chilton argued that:

The church has ample justification to pray for an allied victory in the great world war. We are justified in this war just as certain victors in other great crises before have been compelled to bring a decision by force for the world good. We are as much justified as the victors in the battle of Thermopylae or as at Waterloo, and as in our own Revolution. And so now we are engaged in settling another great world crisis where the ends justify the means, where only force can conquer force.<sup>54</sup>

As in major battles of the past, America had right on their side. Christians and the church in America had every justification and responsibility to pray for America’s victory in the war.

America had to go to war since the world war centered on the using of force to bring about good for the entire world. Not only was Christ with America, but the force of history was also on America’s side.

Another important service to the war effort came through the planting of a victory garden. According to the United States Food Administration, administered by Herbert Hoover, the backyard garden had the ability to help the United States win the war.

Gardens not only conserve food but they conserve transportation, and at this time of railroad congestion anything which frees cars to distribute food stuffs or transports soldiers, is a patriotic service. So plan at once for this patriotic service, and encourage your children and neighbors to plant gardens.... ‘the hoe as well as the gun’ must defend the flag.... You may never be called upon to use a gun but

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<sup>53</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:5 (February 21, 1918): 4.

<sup>54</sup> Chilton, C.M. “Justification To Pray For Victory.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:6 (March 7, 1918): 8.

you are called with all the stress and urgency that the government can call forth, to use a hoe.<sup>55</sup>

While the gun fought the enemy in Europe, the hoe could fight the enemy on the home front. Money and guns might have dominated the spotlight in the war effort, but the conservation of food allowed the government to feed the armies of the Allies and thus continue the war effort.

As the war in Europe continued to rage, patriotic war fervor began to boil over and those who failed to conform began to feel the wrath of the surrounding community. On March 21, 1918, the *Republican* reprinted an article from the *Claflin Clarion* of Barton County which argued that pro-Germanism had gone on long enough in Kansas. The *Clarion* argued that “the loyal citizens of the county feel like joining a mob to tar and feather the disloyal skunks who have piled up comfortable fortunes here under the protection of the United States laws and are now enrolling among the slackers, quitters, and traitors by refusing to support the government.”<sup>56</sup> Pro-Germans were those who failed to participate in any aspect of the war effort, even though they enjoyed the freedom guaranteed to them by the United States. According to the *Clarion*, these pro-Germans deserved “internment till the war is over, confiscation of all property except what they brought with them to this country, and deportation to Germany at the end of the war....”<sup>57</sup> If the *Clarion* had its way, these nonconformists faced a severe punishment for their failure to fully participate in the war effort.

Failure to conform and participate actively in the war effort also brought severe condemnation from the federal government. C.P. Johnson, the post office inspector, sent

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<sup>55</sup> “Help Fight Kaiser By Using Your Hoe.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:7 (March 14, 1918): 4.

<sup>56</sup> “Must Be a Bad Lot.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:8 (March 21, 1918): 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*



a letter to newspapers across the United States in response to the failure of many American citizens to purchase war bonds due to their religious beliefs. He argued:

The policies of a democracy are determined and properly so by a majority of the electorate, and when in its wisdom and its patriotism that majority has decided by proper methods and has spoken in legal and proper manner, every loyal member of the minority should become one with the majority and do all in his power to carry out the policies decreed by the majority. Permit me to suggest that any other course, be it only lukewarm indifference, in the present situation, is giving aid and comfort to the enemy in a negative, but very effective way.<sup>58</sup>

Just as there was no neutral ground, there could also be no minority opinion or group.

The minority group or opinion had to merge into the majority group in support of the war to demonstrate their patriotism. To hold an opinion that went against the majority bordered on disloyalty.

Johnson argued that while the government did release the conscientious objector from active military service, the government did not release them from their duty to purchase war bonds and participate in other aspects of the war effort.<sup>59</sup> “Any man who has throughout his life enjoyed the blessings conferred upon every American citizen by the beneficent laws and institutions of this country, who does not openly declare himself and stand shoulder to shoulder with every other loyal citizen, no matter to what church he belongs...does not deserve the protection of the laws under which he has thriven. He deserves to become the political slave of the autocratic, unspeakable Hun of the Junkers who would rule the world and who will enslave everyone who shall oppose them if America does not win this war.”<sup>60</sup> Religious liberty only meant freedom to worship as a citizen saw fit, not the freedom to reject participation in the war effort based on religious belief.

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<sup>58</sup> Johnson, C.P. “Carrying It Too Far.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:9 (March 28, 1918): 4.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

Another article in the *Republican* on March 28, this time in *The Bethel Breeze* section, demonstrated the approach of the Mennonites at Bethel College took towards the call for increased financial support of the war.

The War Saving Stamp campaign is a success everywhere even here on the campus. The campus has not as yet been [fully] canvassed, altho [sic] sales have already been made to the amount of \$140.45....The campus agent is pleased to report that everyone thinks that the War Saving Stamp scheme is a good one and stamps is a fine 'stunt.' The only objection raised when asked to take some 'Baby Bonds' is 'the same thing over and over again.'...Before school closes Miss Mattie Alberson and Alfred Liascheid will take a canvas of the entire student body and of all campus residents.<sup>61</sup>

Mennonites at Bethel College, either enthusiastically or reluctantly, became active in the War Savings Stamp drive of spring 1918. Public pressure for patriotic conformity continued to bear down on the Mennonites.

An article on April 11, 1918 denounced the teaching of German in America during war with Germany. According to the Commission of Public Schools in Rhode Island, the United States needed to wage a war against the German language within America because the German language waged war against the United States.<sup>62</sup>

When [the German language] is used to propagate among our children a belief in German superiority, to cover German hate, brutality, and insolence with the beauties of German literature and to undermine our cherished ideals of freedom, human rights and democratic civilization...then the German language becomes a spy in the school and should be treated as a spy. Disloyalty to American democracy must have no place in our schools, especially in this war of democracy against autocracy. If the protection of our schools and country against an insidious German propaganda requires the discontinuance of teaching the German language in our schools, we should not hesitate to sacrifice for a time the benefits of such teaching among the many sacrifices our people are making. This is certainly not the time for loyal Americans to give comfort to the enemy by pleading a German cause.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> "War Saving Stamps." *The Bethel Breeze* 1:12 (March 26, 1918). Printed in the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:9 (March 28, 1918): 7.

<sup>62</sup> "German In The Schools." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:71 (April 11, 1918): 4.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* [The article does not give any examples or show any proof of its claim that the teaching of German served as a propaganda service for Germany.]

Another important aspect of the war effort, according to the *Republican*, resided in the participation of the church. The *Republican* argued that “one way to do your bit to help your country is to get in the habit of going to church a couple of times Sunday. The best patriotic addresses you can hear anywhere in America today are proceeding from the pulpits of the American churches, as a rule.”<sup>64</sup> Preachers provided moral support and justification behind the war effort that no other institution in America could match.<sup>65</sup> As for the preachers themselves, they needed to remain above reproach and free from suspicion of disloyalty.<sup>66</sup> According to the *Republican*, “There is no excuse for any preacher to allow himself to fall under such suspicion [of disloyalty] and if he does he should no longer be a preacher. The American pulpit should be incompatible with any man whose utterances and conduct leaves the least room for suspicion. Of all public positions, that of the preacher must be above suspicion.”<sup>67</sup> The pulpit had the ability to directly influence the thinking of the citizenship of America in regards to the war, and any disloyal remarks made by preachers had the potential to harm the war effort. A pastor, in many ways, had to give moral support and justification behind the war effort as part of his patriotic duty to the government.

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<sup>64</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:13 (April 25, 1918): 4.

<sup>65</sup> For a deeper look into the role of preachers and churches during the Great War, see Ray H. Abrams. *Preachers Present Arms: The Role of the American Churches and Clergy in World Wars I and II, with Some Observations on the War in Vietnam*. (Scottsdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1969). (The first edition covering just World War I came out in 1933. The edition used here was published in 1969 with very little changes to the original material and addressing issues that came up in World War II and the early years of the Vietnam War.) Abrams explored how social control affected the church and also how the church, itself, became an organ of social control. Abrams argued that during World War I, many Christian churches served as propaganda organs in support of the war and encouraged patriotic conformity throughout American society. Often this social control came through labeling the war a holy, moral, religious war against evil while equating Christianity with patriotic Americanism. Prominent preachers, according to Abrams, used their pulpit and writings to portray the war as a Christian endeavor to destroy the evil that threatened God’s kingdom on earth (273). To oppose the war meant not only receiving the label of traitor, but also the label of heretic.

<sup>66</sup> Editorial. *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:14 (May 2, 1918): 4.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

Then on April 30, 1918, *The Bethel Breeze* section of the *Republican* explored the controversial issue of what role the Mennonites should serve in the military.

Saturday morning in the chapel hall the students heard an excellent talk by a graduate of Bethel College. Ernest Penner who has left his position as principal of the Buhler High School to answer to his country's call for men. He said, 'I have the privilege of living in this country and enjoying the benefits of our system of government. My country has done a great deal for me and now when she needs me I feel that it is my duty to go. Of course as a Mennonite I cannot go out and kill people, but I can do other kinds of work and as long as my conscience tells me I am doing no wrong will faithfully and consistently do the work that is given me. I will go in the front lines if necessary and work as long as I am not required to kill. It's not myself I care about, it's the other fellow.' We feel that Mr. Penner has the right view of the subject and we are glad to know that many of our boys feel the same way about it.<sup>68</sup>

Through this article, the Mennonites at Bethel College were attempting to further demonstrate their patriotism by stating that they had no problem doing their duty to their country, even in the military, as long as their nonresistant beliefs were respected.

On May 2, 1918, the *Republican* explored the recent third liberty loan drive and its effects in Newton.

Patriotic men and women...have gone about the matter systematically and have listed carefully every citizen who is able to buy one \$50 bond. They have not only listed them, but have looked up their records and have found out how much more than a \$50 bond they are able to buy. This record is going to be kept and in the future, it is going to be known who has done his patriotic duty, and who has not done it. When the boys return victorious from across the sea, these records are going to be available to them.<sup>69</sup>

As the war progressed, it became the business of everyone in the community to know where everyone else in the community stood in regards to the war effort. Peer pressure was a legitimate tool in the arsenal of the patriotic community.

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<sup>68</sup> "Going to Camp in Right Spirit." *The Bethel Breeze* 1:16 (April 30, 1918). Printed in the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:14 (May 2, 1918): 6.

<sup>69</sup> "In The Future." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:14 (May 2, 1918): 4.

The *Republican* then argued that those who failed to do their duty needed to receive their just punishment. For the editors:

A brand of Cain is going to be placed upon every man who did not do his full and patriotic duty during these times when the very life of our country is at stake....You are going to do your duty now or your children will curse you in the future. For they will be considered children of shame by their associates because their fathers refused to do his patriotic duty. In considering this matter of Liberty Loan bonds, do not forget the future.<sup>70</sup>

Once again, the *Republican* attempted to use intense peer/public pressure to enforce conformity within in the community.

*The Bethel Breeze* responded to the continued pressure for patriotic conformity on May 21, 1918 by encouraging Bethel College students to participate in the war savings stamp drive.

It will not be many days before Bethel will have closed its doors for the school year 1917-1918. Let's all do our share in the 100 per cent loyalty campaign during the next two weeks. Every student should secure at least one war savings stamp or one thrift stamp before the 7<sup>th</sup> of June. Buy now!<sup>71</sup>

Once again, Mennonites at Bethel College had to publicly demonstrate their patriotic loyalty to America by bowing to public pressure to buy war bonds and war savings stamps.

On May 23, 1918 the *Republican* printed a speech by former United States Senator Lafayette Young from Iowa at a meeting of the Missouri State Bankers Association in Kansas City that put pressure for conformity on the use of English. Through his speech, Young attacked the continued use of the German language in the United States. Young argued that "Germany is the most overestimated country in the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> "100 Per Cent Loyalty." *The Bethel Breeze* 1:19 (May 21, 1918). Printed in the *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:17 (May 23, 1918): 7. *The Bethel Breeze* was discontinued for the summer due to summer break at Bethel College. *The Bethel Breeze* did not start again until November 1918 and then focused on school activities with little to no mention of the war or its end.

world, overestimated in intelligence and character and in every other desirable quality....Germany has not made an important invention since Guttenberg invented movable type in 1444.”<sup>72</sup> America, on the other hand, had invented many of the technologies that were driving the modern world like the cotton gin, telephone, submarine, airplane, electric light, and many others.<sup>73</sup>

Due to Germany’s barbarism and uncivilized character, America needed to have no relations with Germany for a minimum of fifty years, and possibly forever.<sup>74</sup> For

Young:

The nation cannot exist half foreign and half American. I would prohibit the printing of newspapers in the German language. I would prohibit public speeches in German. I would stop the use of German over the telephone. I would require every man to pay his taxes and transact business at the bank in the English language. These are not spiteful things to do. They are simply the necessary things. Any man who has lived under the protection of our laws and has accumulated wealth and is now disloyal should be deprived of every dollar he possesses, and he should be interned in a stockade until the end of the war, and at that time his fate should be considered carefully....No ordinary victory will do us any good. The German armies must not only be defeated, but destroyed. The allies must cross the Rhine and march through Germany.<sup>75</sup>

Anything to do with Germany, its culture, and its language needed to be avoided and destroyed within America as part of the patriotic war effort of every American. To hold onto anything that related to Germany, such as the continued use of the German language by many Mennonites, automatically received the label of disloyalty worthy of the most severe punishment available.

The loyalty of the Mennonites, through their use of the German language and refusal to fight, remained under strong suspicion. To prove the loyalty of the

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<sup>72</sup> Young, Lafayette. “Stand Up For Home.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:17 (May 23, 1918): 4.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Mennonites, the *Republican* printed an article on June 20, 1918 by Peter Jansen from *The Mennonite*, which was published by the General Conference Mennonites. Jansen argued that “As regards the three occupations designated by the president as being non-combatant, I myself would prefer the first one, that is, service in the medical corps wherever performed. It certainly cannot be against the conscientious scruples of anyone to help alleviate suffering. On the contrary, we should be glad and thankful to be permitted to help in this Samaritan service....Our government has taken great pains to meet the scruples of really sincere conscientious objectors, and we should feel grateful toward it and show our loyalty by performing our non-combatant duties faithfully and cheerfully.”<sup>76</sup>

On July 25, 1918, the *Republican* once again turned the war effort into a religious crusade against evil. The United States Senate had recently passed a resolution that called for a daily prayer from each American citizen for the nation and its war effort.<sup>77</sup> This resolution asked that every citizen, of every faith, commit a prayer to God at noon every day. For the *Republican*:

There will be those who will speak scornfully of this proposal. Let them keep to themselves their unbelief. Millions of Americans will welcome the idea because it gives national expression to the truth that spiritual values are the supreme concern in this war and that spiritual forces must have their part in winning it....The vital thing is recognition of the spiritual significance of this great conflict. With few exceptions, all of us, whatever be our creed, can find common ground here.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> “Non-Combatant Advice.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:21 (June 20, 1918): 4. While Peter Jansen may have advocated noncombatant service, many, more conservative Mennonite leaders, called for the rejection of noncombatant service. For many conservative Mennonites, noncombatant service still served as part of the taking of lives and thus wrong. This divide within the Mennonites on whether to accept noncombatant service promoted confusion within the Mennonite groups themselves and with the government as well.

<sup>77</sup> “A Barrage of Prayer.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:26 (July 25, 1918): 4. [This editorial was largely reprinted from the *Chicago Post*.]

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

By praying for the war effort, the American citizen could help America to receive the aid of God to win the war.

Another article in the *Republican* on August 8, 1918 continued the religious crusade theme of the war effort. According to the *Republican*, “‘Forward with God’ says the Kaiser of Germany to the Kaiser of Austria.... ‘Forward with God!’ to the downfall of civilization and the enslavement of humanity. Who is this God who is thus associated with deeds of cruelty unparalleled in the world’s history...?...We do not know this God.”<sup>79</sup> Germany may claim that God supported their cause, but Americans knew that the real God could never support Germany’s barbaric and cruel militarism.

Instead, “Our [America’s] God is not a God of hate, but of love; not a God of cruelty, but of humanity; not a God of destruction, but of construction.”<sup>80</sup> For the

*Republican*:

We, too, have our visions of a divinely guided nationalism, a vision of a people created for a purpose, created by him and led by him....If America is somehow to save the world, it is not by chance, but by direction. ‘There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how he will’ ....We believe that its process, however slow, however strange, are superior to chance and inevitable in their results....Which God is the true God, the God of progression, of constructive purpose, of benevolence and love here visioned [sic], or the God of destruction, of cruelty, of frightfulness, of hate, glorified by the Kaiser? We know, America knows, civilization knows, Christianity knows, and whatever the part we are called upon to play under his leadership we shall not ‘decline the burden,’ nor deny their inspiration.<sup>81</sup>

The war in Europe became a religious crusade that God had called America to fight so as to save the world and spread democracy. Thus every American had the religious duty to support the war effort.

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<sup>79</sup> “Under Which God.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:28 (August 8, 1918): 4. [Most of this article came from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.]

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*



With all of this focus on patriotic war service and conformity, the *Republican* took a step back to explain the role of the newspaper during war time. On September 19, 1918, the *Republican* printed an editorial from the *Iola Register*, which argued that newspapers served as a major war supporter. According to the *Iola Register*:

The war board classes newspapers as fourth or fifth in the line of necessary war industries. The unvarnished truth is that without the newspapers, the government never could have got started with this war. It was the newspapers that educated the public mind to the acceptance of the draft. It was the newspapers that made possible the success of the drives for the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A....And it was the newspapers that put across the first and second and third Liberty Loan drives. Let the newspapers of America oppose this coming Fourth Liberty Loan campaign, let them even lie down on the job and say nothing about it, and all the other agencies the government can command could not sell these six billions of bonds in six billion years....The simple truth is that a very considerable number of things are essential to the winning of the war and the loyal newspapers of America rank right up in the front row of these essential things.<sup>82</sup>

The *Register* and the *Republican* felt that the government needed to recognize the newspapers as one of the key, necessary industries for the successful prosecution of the war effort.<sup>83</sup>

After a year and a half into the war effort, the *Republican* argued that peace with Germany was not possible and incompatible with America's war aims. The *Republican* argued that:

America, unless we repudiate civilization and abandon humanity and put a premium on savagery and brutality, can make no covenanted peace, no peace by agreement or negotiation with Germany. It would be a covenant with hell, a partnership with infamy. Nor would such a peace secure peace, except so long as it suited Germany....Germany's whole history is a record of national treachery, national bad faith, national dishonor, national murder, and national infamy....The best answer to German peace propaganda is sinking more U-boats, sending more

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<sup>82</sup> "Newspapers and the War." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:34 (September 19, 1918): 4.

<sup>83</sup> During World War I, the newspapers played a significant role in reporting and pushing the war effort. There was no national radio broadcasts or television available for the public to turn to for news. For the most part, the newspapers were the public's only means of learning about the war, which meant that the newspapers had the potential to shape how everyone saw the war effort. It was the newspaper that could most easily spread governmental propaganda and advertisements to all of their readers.

men to France, speeding up our work along every line, and a heavy subscription to the Fourth Liberty Loan. Peace must mean the triumph of right and justice, the defeat of Germanism [sic], not a truce with it, not a compromise with it.<sup>84</sup>

While America did not like war, it needed to continue to fight so as to prevent Germany from ever threatening the peace again.

Just days after the armistice on November 11, 1918, the *Republican* reported an incident of mob violence that occurred in the neighboring town of Burrton. On November 14, the *Republican* stated that a Mennonite farmer, John Schragg, of Burrton received rough treatment at the hands of a Burrton mob. According to the *Republican*:

The blue book of the county shows that he owned no Liberty bonds prior to the Fourth drive, and had contributed practically nothing to the Red Cross or any war activity. He is one of the conscientious objectors to supporting the war....It was stated that several auto loads of Burrton people went to his home yesterday and brought him to the Main Street of the town, placed a flag in his hands and told him he had to lead the parade. It is stated that he refused and was roughly handled by the crowd. The Burrton folk evidently thought he had not done his duty. He is said to have told the crowd yesterday that he would give them \$500 for the Red Cross but that he would not carry the flag, as he would put 'no flag ahead of his God.' Burrton parties were said to be ready to make affidavit that the old man threw the flag on the ground and stamped on it. This he denies. Be that as it may, he was handled pretty rough, was smeared with yellow paint, and thrown in the hold-over to protect him from the crowd.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> "No Covenanted Peace With Germany." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:35 (September 26, 1918): 4.

<sup>85</sup> "Joseph Schragg, Sr. Roughly Handled." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:42 (November 14, 1918): 8. [In this article, the *Republican* misidentified the victim of the mob violence as Joseph Schragg, Sr. The actual victim was Joseph Schragg's son, John Schragg. The *Republican* corrected this mistake in the November 21 issue.][The *Republican*'s account of the treatment of John Schragg presented here is not totally accurate. James C. Juhnke in his article, "Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918," explains that after the mob doused Schragg in paint, someone in the mob went for a rope to lynch him by. Fortunately a police man stepped in and placed Schragg in jail as a means to protect Schragg from the mob. The *Republican* left out the part that would make this mob action look even more unacceptable. According to James Juhnke, the treatment of Schragg had lasting effects on the community. Mennonites, following the war, boycotted numerous businesses in Burrton, which caused some of Burrton's businesses to close. While the Mennonite refused to react violently to the mobs, they did find another effective means of responding. The near-lynching of Schragg and the Mennonite boycott of Burrton businesses caused a long-lasting rift within the Burrton community. [James C. Juhnke. "Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918." *Kansas Historical Quarterly*. 43:3 (Autumn 1977): 334-350; 343-344.]

John Schragg experienced firsthand the dangers of refusing to support the war effort to the fullest. He did not conform to the patriotic war fervor, and thus suffered at the hands of a mob.

Another article on November 21 continued the coverage of the John Schragg incident in Burrton. John Schragg, according to the *Republican*, “was said to be worth fully \$250,000....” Schragg’s wealth, among other things, meant that he was supposed to contribute that much more to the war effort, but his failure to do this demonstrated disloyalty. The *Republican* reported:

It was also stated that the only contribution he has made during the war was \$150 to the Red Cross. He is quoted as having said to the committee handling his case that the Stars and Striper was ‘not my flag’ and he would not have anything to do with it. Burrton people insist that his conduct is absolutely disloyal, and not merely that of a slacker.... ‘we are in no sense sorry for any conduct of our people,’ said Jerome [editor of the *Burrton Graphic*], ‘but we want to be placed in the right light....’ [According to W.W. Jerome] ‘a charge of desecrating the flag will be placed against him....To many the serious occasion seemed to justify the strenuous action and serves as a pungent and durable reminder that loyalty is a necessary requisite to life in this community. We must all be Americans.’<sup>86</sup>

John Schragg’s mistreatment at the hands of the mob was justified due to the fact that he had the means to amply support the war effort but had refused to do his duty. Even after the war was over, a citizen still had to demonstrate their patriotism.

Then on November 28 the *Republican* reported a final update on the Schragg incident. According to the *Republican*:

There was a well defined rumor about the court house this forenoon that a case was being prepared for filing in the federal court for the purpose of taking American citizenship from Schragg. The report could not be confirmed. Should such action be taken and the case successfully prosecuted against Schragg, it would undoubtedly mean the confiscation of his property and his deportation.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> “Federal Agents on the Schragg Case.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:43 (November 21, 1918): 6.

<sup>87</sup> “Another Chapter in Schragg Case.” *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:44 (November 28, 1918): 1. [According to James C. Juhnke, in his article, “Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918,” the John Schragg case eventually went nowhere in the courts and his case was dropped in 1919. James C. Juhnke.

John Schragg's failure to conform to the patriotic war fervor had the possibility of costing him his citizenship, wealth, and property.

In a response to the mob action in Burrton, the *Republican* printed an editorial on how to properly deal with the slacker. On November 14, the *Republican* commented that:

The pressure is being placed...on those few citizens who are commonly placed, and undoubtedly correctly characterized as slackers....In most cases it is said they are really wealthy people, or at least well to do. In some quarters 'strong arm' methods are openly advocated with this class of slackers....Those who favor drastic measures point out that the neighbors of these people have been carrying the slackers' share of the load long enough, and they propose to see by whatever means necessary, that decency and fairness in support of these activities is displayed by one and all.<sup>88</sup>

Strong-arm methods, like the use of yellow paint and tar and feathering, leveled the playing field and were only fair, according to some patriots.

The *Republican* condemned unauthorized strong-arm tactics in dealing with the slackers, but advocated letting the authorities deal with them.<sup>89</sup> While mob tactics were wrong, strong-arm tactics used by the government were legal and acceptable. According to the *Republican*:

The *Kansan* is utterly and unalterably opposed to unauthorized drastic action even against a slacker, and does not believe any such thing is necessary, warranted, or would achieve any remedial results. It is of course possible for several men to take money away from one man or women, but is that what this community wants to do? First try every friendly means. If they fail, go to the proper authority. If there is no authority, the case is hopeless. But the *Kansan* does not control the

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"Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918." *Kansas Historical Quarterly*. 43:3 (Autumn 1977): 334-350; 343-344.]

<sup>88</sup> "Pressure Put Upon the Non-Supporter." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:42 (November 14, 1918): 8. [This editorial most likely arose as a response to the dumping of yellow paint on the Mennonite, John Schragg of Burrton, as discussed above. Here the *Republican* condemned the use of the strong-arm tactics used against Schragg, but also refused to defend the rights of John Schragg or other Mennonites of similar mind. The *Republican* officially condemned strong-arm tactics while implicitly approving their use by refusing to defend the victims of mob violence.]

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

opinion of others, and to the fellow or woman who is knowingly a slacker, the paper has no word of comfort. You will simply have to take the consequences of your own conduct.<sup>90</sup>

If a citizen refused to do their patriotic duty, then they brought the strong-arm responses on themselves. The *Republican* editors did not feel the need to defend those who suffered from the abuse received from angry mobs.

On November 21, 1918, the *Republican* suddenly took an about face on the issue of mob violence and strong-arm tactics. The *Republican* printed an editorial from the *Muncie (Indiana) Evening Press* that argued that mob violence, while committed under the guise of patriotism, was still unlawful and wrong. According to the *Muncie Evening Press*:

Mobism [sic] is no less such because its acts are committed in the name of patriotism. Rather, outlawry under such circumstances is more to be condemned than the kind for which no excuse is offered, since in the former case the outlaws appeal to fine sentiments while shocking decency....If there are any laws on the statutes worth enforcing, they should be invoked against those who have committed these wanton acts, not only as a punishment to the evil-doers, but as a warning to other not to make patriotism the mask to hide personal animosity. There has come to be too much of this dictatorial spirit since the war began that includes the assumption of authority by persons without warrant who, quite customarily, are even incompetent...to govern themselves. And terrorism is not patriotism, however it may be disguised.<sup>91</sup>

By using strong-arm tactics, mobs had used the very methods of the German dictator that America had fought to rid the world of. Unfortunately for the Mennonites and other groups, this condemnation of mob violence came too late to make any significant contribution to prevent mob violence. With the war effectively over, mobs had increasingly fewer reasons for going on the war path against nonconformists like the Mennonites.

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> "Mobism Can Never Be Patriotism." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 34:43 (November 21, 1918): 4.

As 1918 came to a close, the *Republican* explored just what path the peace process needed to take. On December 19, 1918, the *Republican* argued that:

It cannot be doubted that the American people favor punitive justice, but the frequent pronouncements of the president for 'justice tempered with mercy' give ground for the fear that he will thrust aside the demands of the people he is supposed to represent and refuse to stand with the allies for proper punishment of individuals....Those acts against civilization were entirely apart from the waging of war, served no military advantage, and were crimes quite as much as if they had been committed in times of peace. The perpetrators should be apprehended, tried, and punished exactly as though no war had occurred.<sup>92</sup>

While war naturally brought devastation and suffering, Germany's actions during the war, such as sinking civilian ships and targeting civilians in Belgium and France, had blatantly gone beyond what was needed to prosecute the war.

The *Republican* argued that, while America and her allies needed to avoid using cruel and unusual punishment, Germany still deserved to be punished for their crimes against humanity.

The American people are lovers of justice. Their constitution says that 'cruel and unusual punishment' shall not be inflicted. At the same time they insist that offenders against society shall be made to pay the penalty for their acts. Americans see no reason why the principles they apply to themselves should not also be the guide in the judgment of others. If Mr. Wilson has the hardihood to advocate a wholesale pardoning of the German arch conspirators against peace, decency, and civilization in general, he will be the most despised man in this country.<sup>93</sup>

For the *Weekly Kansan-Republican*, patriotism called for complete conformity to the American war effort. In many ways, the *Republican* relied on the use of emotional and even religious language to enforce patriotism in the Newton community, just like other newspapers did. Patriotism meant participating in every activity of the war effort, like joining the military or participating in loyalty day exercises, Liberty Loan drives,

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<sup>92</sup> "Hun Punishment." *Weekly Kansan-Republican* 46:280 (December 19, 1918): 4.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

Red Cross drives, food conservation, and many other activities. While participating in all of these activities imposed hardship on some within the community, the *Republican* argued that the eyes of everyone in the community were on each other to ensure conformity. Peer pressure became an important method of ensuring conformity and patriotism on the local level, which allowed the community to police itself while allowing the government to focus their energies elsewhere. Your neighbor, rather than some anonymous governmental official, was monitoring your words and actions to determine if you met the patriotic seal of approval.

The *Republican*, while it did spend most of its time trying to define how to serve the war effort, it also attempted to demonstrate how to view the war effort. Much of this justification of the war effort came through the use of religious language. America joined the war to fight for the cause of righteousness and liberty. By doing this, America fought on the side of Jesus, and therefore Jesus fought on the side of America. During America's involvement in the war, the war slowly became a religious crusade against evil. Jesus may have taught peace, but He also taught Christians to sacrifice themselves through love for a righteous cause. If America fought the war out of self-sacrifice to save the world, as God had destined it to, then God supported America's war effort. Even the church itself became part of the war effort as the conveyor of patriotic war addresses and supporter of the nation's morale.

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Appendix 1<sup>1</sup>

## NON-RESISTANCE AS TAUGHT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus came to save, not to destroy. Luke 9:56.  
 I am born again. I Pet. 1:23.  
 Resist not evil. Matt. 5:38, 39.  
 I am a new creature. II Cor. 5:17.  
 I am a citizen of heaven. Eph. 2:19.  
 I am dead; my life is hid in God. Col. 3:3.  
 My warfare is not carnal. II Cor. 10:3-5.  
 Thou shalt not kill. Matt. 5:21, 22.  
 I should love my enemies. Matt. 5:44.  
 Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Matt. 7:12.  
 I am not to avenge my adversary. Rom. 12:19.  
 I am to overcome evil with good. Rom. 12:21.  
 Live at peace with all men. Heb. 12:14.  
 I am not of this world. Jno. 15:18, 19; 18:36.  
 I am an ambassador for Christ. II Cor. 5:20.  
 I am to have a conscience void of offense. Acts 24:16.  
 I am to shew forth meekness. Tit. 3:2.  
 I am to be merciful. Luke 6:36.  
 I am a light of the world. Matt. 5:14.  
 I am to obey God rather than man. Acts 4:19.  
 Recompense not evil for evil. Rom. 12:17.  
 Love worketh no evil to his neighbor. Rom. 13:10.  
 God's kingdom in me is peace. Rom. 14:17.  
 Love beareth all things. I Cor. 13:7.  
 I am to forgive my fellow men. Eph. 4:32.  
 If I hate my brother I am a murderer. I Jno. 3:15.  
 I do not want to forfeit eternal life. I Jno. 3:15.  
 I am to provoke to good works and love. Heb. 10:24.  
 Sin bars me out of the kingdom of God. Gal. 5:19-21.  
 What the fruit of the Spirit is. Gal. 5:22, 23.  
 What a man sows he will reap. Gal. 6:7.  
 Keep yourselves in love. Jude 22, 23.

<sup>1</sup> William Clarence Orpurt diary, January 1-December 25, 1918. Brethren Historical Library and Archives, Elgin, IL. This list of scriptures in defense of nonresistance was found in the diary of William Clarence Orpurt, a conscientious objector during World War I from the denomination of the Church of the Brethren. Orpurt spent the war at Camp Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, where he kept a diary from January 1, 1918 through December 25, 1918. While there is no information on who printed this slip, it likely was published by the Church of the Brethren or Mennonites (both denominations worked together closely during the war) to aid their young men to remain true to their nonresistant beliefs in military camps.

## Appendix 2

<b>Dependents</b>	31
<b>Mennonite</b>	9
<b>Failed Physical Exam</b>	6
<b>Already in the Military</b>	3
<b>Married</b>	1
<b>Postmaster</b>	1
<b>Student for the Ministry</b>	1
<b>Citizen of Mexico</b>	1
<b>Failed to Appear</b>	1
<b>No Action</b>	2
<b>Case Pending</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	58

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<sup>2</sup> “Called to Serve.” *Marion Record* 47:44 (August 9, 1917): 1. “More Men Chosen.” *Marion Record* 47:45 (August 16, 1917): 1.

I, Andrew Pankratz, hereby submit this thesis/report to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, digitizing or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author. I also agree to permit the Graduate School at Emporia State University to digitize and place this thesis in the ESU institutional repository.

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