

business meetings along. Gradually, these strategies evolved into something more manipulative.

Special interests know that only those controversial initiatives judged to be “in the interest of the state” and to have community support will survive. For example, the federal government is prohibited by law from becoming involved in determining curricula—unless some subject is deemed “in the interest of the state.” Teen pregnancy, school violence, sexually transmitted diseases, and a whole range of social objectives fall into that category—but not such basic subjects as spelling, math, or geography. Initiatives likely to be rejected by the public require careful nurturing. But by creating an impression of voter support, legislators and school officials can be convinced to implement projects that most parents dislike, even abhor.

Parents who balk are “Delphi-ed” out. Posing as unbiased moderators of a discussion, trained “facilitators” representing the special interest are sent to communities to engineer a phony consensus. After ascertaining the various factions within the target group, the facilitator deftly pits one against the other until only the preapproved view is left standing. Alternative opinions are rejected as backward, extreme, or reactionary—by “consensus.” Principle is dumped in favor of group-think, which is the adult form of “peer pressure.”

Consider what are characterized today as majority views on sex and cohabitation. The special-interest groups would have us believe that most people accept illegitimacy and sex outside of marriage and that modern birth-control methods have made abstinence and monogamy obsolete. According to Zogby International, however, by a 2.4 to 1 margin, parents disapprove of comprehensive sex education. Even more condemn the “safe-sex” curricula promoted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Two thirds of parents disapprove of telling children aged five to eight details of sexual intercourse or self-arousal, of telling youngsters between the ages of nine and 12 that homosexual relationships are satisfying, and of teaching 12- to 15-year-olds that cohabitation is as good as marriage. Parents feel strongly that “sexual or physical intimacy should occur between two people involved in a lifelong, mutually faithful marriage commitment.” They approve teaching abstinence as a primary response to epidemic STD’s, out-of-wed-

lock pregnancies, and abortions.

For years, groups such as SIECUS, Planned Parenthood, the Alan Guttmacher Institute, the National Education Association, the CDC, and Advocates for Youth, among others, have claimed that between 80 and 90 percent of parents support “comprehensive” sex-education programs for young children. How did these groups achieve such a misrepresentation of public opinion? By conducting manipulative focus groups and disseminating surveys that describe explicit sex education in vague, even compassionate, language.

Most people do not realize that self-determination is removed in the process of consensus-building. Those who oppose coercive surveys could shut down the process, take back the discussion, and reframe the debate—if they knew how. The less time our schools actually spend teaching, however, the less graduates can hold on to, or argue for, their personal beliefs—a self-perpetuating problem that becomes deadly for representative democracy.

This is the real tragedy of our declining schools—where “consensus” is sold as “empowerment.”

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AMERICAN EMPIRE

The American Myth of World War I

by Joseph E. Fallon

In 1917, two revolutions engulfed war-ravaged Europe. The first was America’s military intervention in France on June 26, which prolonged World War I and, thus, made possible the second: the communist seizure of power in Russia on November 7.

To win maximum public support for their respective revolutions, the two rivals, Woodrow Wilson and Vladimir Lenin, adopted the same tactic. Each declared his forces were fighting to establish peace, democracy, and national

self-determination in Europe.

A common rhetoric concealed a common goal. Despite ideological differences, Wilson the capitalist and Lenin the Marxist shared the same ambition—the destruction of the traditional cultural and social order of Europe. Each sought to convert World War I into a war against Western civilization. They differed only on which ideology—“democratic capitalism” or “democratic socialism”—would be the foundation for the New World Order they wished to impose upon Europe.

When Wilson militarily intervened in that war, he instigated a revolution against the traditional foreign policy of the United States. As George Washington emphasized in his Farewell Address: “The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is—in extending our commercial relations—to have with them as little political connection as possible.”

More prophetic were the words delivered by John Quincy Adams. In his speech to the U.S. House of Representatives on July 4, 1821, celebrating Independence Day, he warned against going abroad in search of “monsters to destroy” and foretold the consequences if the federal government pursued foreign adventures.

[America] has abstained from interference in the concerns of others, even when conflict has been for principles to which she clings, as to the last vital drop that visits the heart. . . . Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. . . . She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force . . .

Wilson ignored this warning. His revolution, however, only succeeded because of two previous events. First, Lincoln had shredded the Constitution, turning the United States from a voluntary union of states into a consolidated empire for the benefit of Northern business interests. Second, Theodore Roosevelt had used the Spanish-American War to expand Lincoln's continental empire into a full-fledged imperial regime presiding over a string of overseas colonies. As William Graham Sumner wrote in "The Conquest of the United States by Spain," "We have beaten Spain in a military conflict, but we are submitting to be conquered by her on the field of ideas and policies."

Mark Twain aptly labeled this period (roughly 1865-1900), when the Old Republic was replaced by a permanent kleptocracy with imperial pretensions, "The Gilded Age"—hypocritical and corrupt, cruel and flamboyant. By 1864, Lincoln's attorney general, Edward Bates, already lamented that "The abuse of official powers and thirst for dishonest gain are now so common that they cease to shock." The American Empire created by Lincoln

and Roosevelt had replaced Thomas Jefferson and Monticello with Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall.

American involvement in World War I, first as a neutral selling to the Allies and, later, as a belligerent fighting with the Allies, vindicated the words of John Quincy Adams—"individual avarice, envy, and ambition . . . usurp[ed] the standard of freedom."

In *War Is a Racket*, an exposé of profiteering, U.S. Marine Corp Maj. Gen. Smedley Darlington Butler wrote: "At least 21,000 new millionaires and billionaires were made in the United States during the World War."

Big businesses—particularly the iron, steel, and munitions industries—made a killing between 1914 and 1918. American Sugar Refining Company registered profits of 300 percent; Anaconda Copper, more than 300 percent; Bethlehem Steel, more than 800 percent; Central Leather Company, 1,100 percent; DuPont, more than 950 percent; General Chemical Company, 1,400 percent; International Nickel Company, 1,700 percent; U.S. Steel, more than 200 percent; and Utah

Copper, more than 400 percent.

Other industries, no matter how irrelevant or incompetent, also made handsome profits. For example, as General Butler notes, after entering the war, the U.S. government spent one billion dollars on airplane engines that were never used and \$635 million on ships made of wood that sank; purchased 60 million yards of mosquito netting for American troops in France, hundreds of thousands of McClellan cavalry saddles for an American army in France that had no cavalry, 35 million pairs of hobnailed shoes for four million American soldiers, and, in the age of the automobile, 6,000 buckboards.

By first selling the Allies food and such essential war materiel as rifles, howitzers, and explosives, then extending them loans when they could no longer pay in cash, the United States went from a net debtor to a net creditor. By 1917, the Allies owed approximately \$12 billion to the U.S. government, banks, and manufacturers. Of this total, the United Kingdom owed four billion dollars; France, three billion.

The war, however, was a two-edged sword. If the Allies had defaulted, which would have occurred if they had been defeated or if the war had ended in a stalemate, those same American businesses that had grown rich extending loans and credits to the Allies would have been ruined. In 1917, such a defeat or stalemate looked likely, as mutinies erupted in both the French and Russian armies.

This fear—that major American businesses were facing potential bankruptcy which, in turn, could trigger an economic depression in the United States—coupled with an increasing messianic belief in himself as creator of a new European order, persuaded Woodrow Wilson to intervene militarily in 1917.

Employing a series of clichés and double standards, Wilson and his supporters proclaimed American intervention a moral imperative. It was "the war to end all wars"—except those in colonial possessions; "the world must be made safe for democracy"—except in India, the Philippines, *etc.*; all nations had the right to "self-determination"—except Austrians, Croats, Germans, Hungarians, Slovaks, Slovenes, *etc.*

And, while declaring America's intervention would guarantee a peace based on the principles of "no annexations" and "no punitive damages," the Wilson administration annexed the Danish West

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Indies, and American businesses that had extended loans to the Allies backed punitive damages against Germany.

American intervention ensured an Allied military victory. But what exactly did American intervention accomplish?

First, it needlessly prolonged the war. By the spring of 1917, the Allied and Central Powers had been bled to death in such debacles as Jutland, Verdun, and Somme. Both sides were actively seeking an end to the war. Germany and Austria-Hungary had already offered several peace proposals, and ongoing attempts were being made by the Vatican, Denmark, Sweden, and even individual Americans to mediate a peace settlement. American intervention enabled the Allies to reject a negotiated settlement and to pursue a military victory. This prolonged the war by nearly two years.

Second, it needlessly increased the number of casualties and fatalities. By the time the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, the dead numbered 10 million; the wounded, another 20 million. More than one million soldiers were killed between 1917 and 1918. For the principal belligerents on the Western Front, the demographic impact was mind-boggling. Eleven percent of the population of France, nine percent of the population of Germany, and eight percent of the population of the United Kingdom had been either killed or wounded.

Despite the Armistice and knowledge that famine was sweeping across much of Central and Eastern Europe, the Allies continued their food blockade of Germany until July 11, 1919, in order to force the Weimar Republic to sign the Versailles Peace Treaty. The total number of German civilian deaths from starvation rose to nearly one million.

In addition, 1918 and 1919 saw the outbreak of the influenza epidemic in Europe. Recent historical research has traced its source to American troops from Camp Funston, Kansas. It mutated and was spread around the world by returning soldiers. The influenza killed 280,000 civilians in the United Kingdom; 400,000 civilians in Germany; 450,000 civilians in the United States; and more than 70 million civilians worldwide.

Third, American entry into the war needlessly destroyed the economic and social order of Europe. Woodrow Wilson, in his self-appointed role as creator of a new Europe, demanded institutionalized chaos as the price of peace. The cen-

turies-old monarchies of Austria, Hungary, Prussia, and the German states were abolished. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, which, over the course of centuries, had prevented a Turkish conquest of Western Europe and had provided stability in Central Europe, was dismembered. It was replaced by an assortment of unstable entities—truncated Austria and Hungary, multiethnic Poland and Rumania, artificial Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Along with these new states came the introduction of weak currencies, which exacerbated the economic collapse of Central and Eastern Europe. Germany was forced to pay war reparations of \$31 billion, plus ten percent of her national income annually, to cover Allied occupation costs and pre-war debt. The result was inflation, deflation, economic dislocation, economic depression, the collapse of the middle class in Germany, and political instability in much of Europe.

These were the consequences of America's intervention. Stripped of its political rhetoric, for truth is the first casualty of war, the reality of America's intervention was that patriotism provided the cover for profiteering; democracy was a euphemism for demagoguery; self-determination was a pretense for self-aggrandizement; and the only lasting peace was that of the dead and dying—of men, nations, and Western civilization.

The arrival of American troops in 1917 brought Europe damnation, not salvation. By funding and then waging a war that destroyed the traditional social order of Europe, the United States facilitated the rise of totalitarianism—Stalin in Russia, Mussolini in Italy, and Hitler in Germany. Without American intervention in World War I, there would have been no World War II.

Joseph E. Fallon writes from Rye, New York.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Attack of the Trotsky-cons!

by Justin Raimondo

Murray N. Rothbard must have seen the post-September 11 era in a dream to be able to sum it up as well as he did in his 1992 inaugural address to

the John Randolph Club:

Social democracy is still here in all its variants, defining our entire respectable political spectrum, from advanced victimology and feminism on the left over to neoconservatism on the right. We are now trapped, in America, inside a Menshevik fantasy, with the narrow bounds of respectable debate set for us by various brands of Marxists. It is now our task, the task of the resurgent right, of the paleo movement, to break those bonds, to finish the job, to finish off Marxism forever.

Rothbard foresaw our current predicament: We *are* trapped inside a Menshevik fantasy, a nightmare world of perpetual war and growing government power.

In a review of Eric Hobsbawm's memoirs, Christopher Hitchens remarked that Tony Blair is "at once the most radical and the most conservative of politicians. Very many of Blair's tough young acolytes received their political baptism in what I try to call the Marxist Right."

This ideological category—the Marxist right—is quite useful. It explains not only the policies that plunder our purses and wreak havoc on the world but the distinctly Soviet style of our rulers and their Amen Corner, as they demonize their enemies and seek to silence them.

Many of the top chieftains of the War Party are ex-leftists of one sort or another. They owe more to Hegel, Marx, and Leon Trotsky than to Russell Kirk, Friedrich Hayek, and Ludwig von Mises. The "godfather" of the neoconservative movement, Irving Kristol, was a Trotskyite in his youth, and the kibitzing that went on in Cubicle B at City College of New York has achieved the status of legend. The official line, of course, is that this was all just a youthful indiscretion and that any such allegiances have long since been put away in a trunk somewhere. The reality, however, is quite different.

The collaboration between social democrats of the Blairite variety and the official conservative movement represented by *National Review* has been going on since the Reagan years. By that time, a group of ex-Trotskyites associated with Max Shachtman—Trotsky's former chief American lieutenant—had wormed its way into the good graces of the American labor movement and into the office of Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson, whose