

Question

One of the ironies of World War I was that in a war 'to make the world safe for democracy,' the government attacked the civil liberties that make democracy possible.

Assess the validity of the statement above.

Document A

We ask that good Americans...uphold the hand of the government at every point efficiently and resolutely against our foreign and domestic foes, and that they constantly spur the government to speedier and more effective action. Furthermore, we ask that, where government action cannot be taken, they arouse an effective and indignant public opinion against the enemies of our country, whether these enemies masquerade as pacifists, or proclaim themselves the enemies of our allies, or act through organizations such as the I.W.W. and the Socialist Party machine, or appear nakedly as the champions of Germany. Above all, we ask that they teach our people to spurn any peace save the peace of overwhelming victory in the war to which we have set our hands.

SOURCE: Theodore Roosevelt's Pledge of Loyalty, September 11, 1917.

Document B

On the morning of June 16, Emma Goldman...was brought before the United States Commissioner Hitchcock..."These two Anarchists," he said. "are the leading spirits in this country in a countrywide conspiracy to spread anti-registration propaganda."...attorney for the defendants, made a motion for dismissal on the ground that advising anybody not to register is not a violation of law. "Failing to register, no doubt, is a crime, said Weinberg, "but telling people not to do so is certainly not a violation of the law." ...the members of the jury filed out of the court-room...Judge Mayer came into the court-room...The clerk called the roll of the jury, and then...asked him if a verdict had been agreed upon...the jury had agreed. "What is your verdict?" the Clerk asked. "Guilty," the foreman replied... "I move," Emma said, "that this verdict be set aside as absolutely contrary to the evidence." "Denied," replied Judge Mayer "I then ask that sentence be deferred for a few days, and the bail be continued in the sum already fixed in our case," Miss Goldman added. "Motion denied," said the Judge.

SOURCE: The arraignment and verdict of Emma Goldman, 1917.

Document C

Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports of false statements with intent to interfere with the operations or success of the military or naval forces of the United States, or to promote the success of its enemies, or shall willfully make or convey false reports, or false statements....or incite insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or...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 of the United States...or shall willfully display the flag of any foreign enemy, or shall willfully...urge, incite, or advocate any curtailment of production...or 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....

SOURCE: The Espionage Act, May 16, 1918.

Document D

This is an indictment under the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917....The defendant was found guilty and was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment on each of the two counts...The main theme of the speech was Socialism, its growth, and a prophecy of its ultimate success. With that we have nothing to do, but if a part or the manifest intent of the more general utterances was to encourage those present to obstruct the recruiting service and if in passages such encouragement was directly given, the immunity of the general theme may not be enough to protect the speech...who had been convicted of aiding and abetting another in failing to register for the draft...

There followed personal experiences and illustrations of the growth of Socialism, a glorification of minorities, and a prophecy of the success of the international Socialist crusade, with the interjection that "you need to know that you are fit for something better than slavery and cannon fodder." ...that is to be found in the usual contrasts between capitalists and laboring men, sneers at the advice to cultivate war gardens, attribution to plutocrats of the high price of coal, &c., with the implication running through it all that the working men are not concerned in the war, and a final exhortation...

SOURCE: *Debs. v. United States*, 1919.

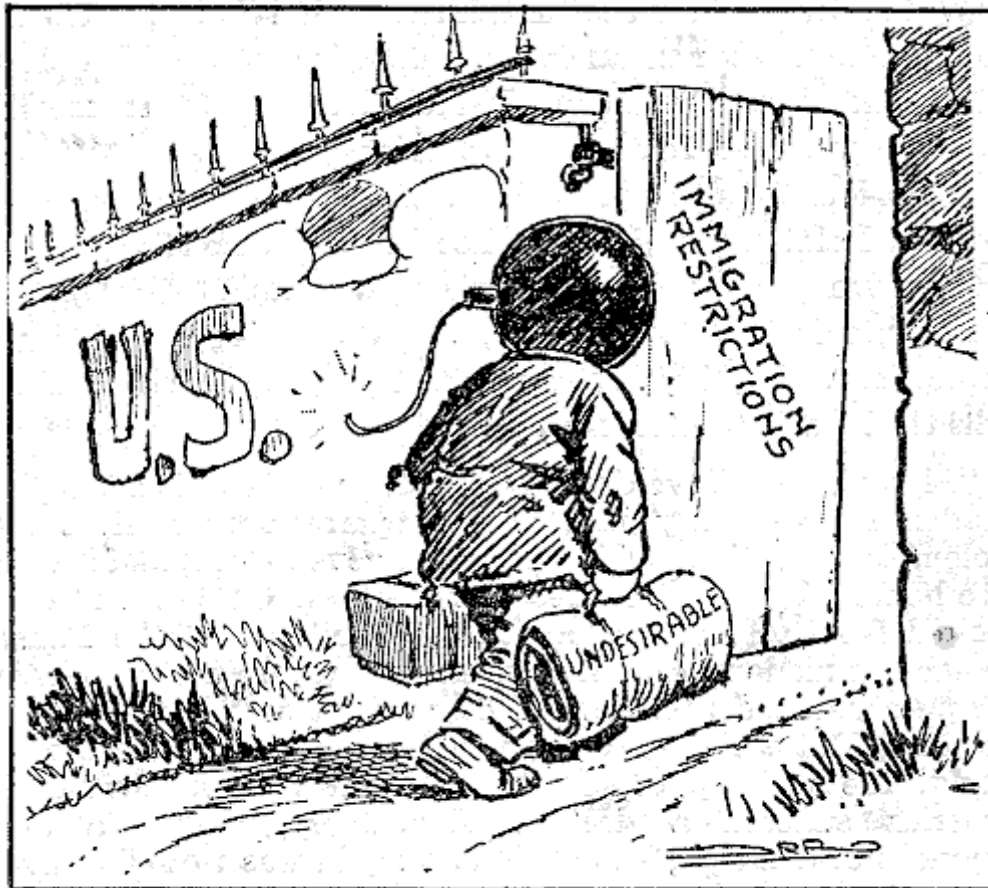
Document E

This is an indictment in three counts. The first charges a conspiracy to violate the Espionage Act...by causing and attempting to cause insubordination...in the military and naval forces of the United States, and to obstruct the recruiting and enlistment service of the United States...when the United States was at war with the German Empire...that the defendants willfully conspired to have printed and circulated to men who had been called and accepted for military service under the Act of May 1917....The count alleges overt acts in pursuance of the conspiracy, ending in the distribution of the document set forth...According to the testimony Schenck said he was general secretary of the Socialist party and had charge of the Socialist headquarters from which the documents were sent....leaflets...to be mailed to men who passed exemption boards, and for distribution. Schenck personally attended to the printing....Of course the document would not

have been sent unless it had been intended to have some effect, and we do not see what effect it could be expected to have upon persons subject to the draft except to influence them to obstruct the carrying of it out....The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent....When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right. It seems to be admitted that if an actual obstruction of the recruiting service were proved, liability for words that produced that effect might be enforced. The statute of 1917...punishes conspiracies to obstruct as well as actual obstruction. If the act, (speaking, or circulating a paper,) its tendency and the intent with which it is done are the same, we perceive no ground for saying that success alone warrants making the act a crime....

SOURCE: *Schenck v. United States*, 1919.

Document F



Close the Gate

SOURCE: Orr in *The Chicago Tribune*, 1919.

Document G

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Like a prairie-fire, the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution of law and order a year ago. It was eating its way into the homes of the American workmen, its sharp tongues of revolutionary heat were licking the altars of the churches, leaping into the belfry of the school bell, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes, seeking to replace marriage vows with libertine laws, burning up the foundations of society.

Robbery, not war, is the ideal of communism. This has been demonstrated in Russia, Germany, and in America. As a foe, the anarchist is fearless of his own life, for his creed is a fanaticism that admits no respect of any other creed. Obviously it is the creed of any criminal mind, which reasons always from motives impossible to clean thought. Crime is the degenerate factor in society.

Upon these two basic certainties, first that the "Reds" were criminal aliens and secondly that the American Government must prevent crime, it was decided that there could be no nice distinctions drawn between the theoretical ideals of the radicals and their actual violations of our national laws. An assassin may have brilliant intellectuality, he may be able to excuse his murder or robbery with fine oratory, but any theory which excuses crime is not wanted in America. This is no place for the criminal to flourish, nor will he do so long as the rights of common citizenship can be exerted to prevent him.

SOURCE: A Mitchell Palmer, "The Case Against the 'Reds,'" *Forum*, 1920.

Document H

The indictment is found wholly upon the publication of two leaflets...The first count charges a conspiracy pending the war with Germany to publish abusive language about the form of government of the United States...The second count charges a conspiracy pending the war to publish language intended to bring the form of government into contempt...The third count alleges a conspiracy to encourage resistance to the United States in the same war and to attempt to effectuate the purpose by publishing the same leaflets. The fourth count lays a conspiracy to incite curtailment of production of things necessary to the prosecution of the war and to attempt to accomplish it by publishing the second leaflet....In this case sentence of twenty years imprisonment have been imposed for the publishing of two leaflets that I believe the defendants had as much right to publish as the Government has to publish the Constitution of the United States....

SOURCE: *Abrams v. US*, 1919.

Document I

The night before [Wilson] asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany he sent for me [Frank Cobb, of the New York World]. I was late getting the message somehow and didn't reach the White House till one o'clock in the morning. "The old man" was waiting for me, sitting in his study wit the typewriter on his table, where he used to type his own messages.

I'd never seen him so worn down. He looked as if he hadn't slept, and he said he hadn't. He said he was probably going before Congress the next day to ask a declaration of war, and he'd never been so uncertain about anything in his life as about that decision. For nights, he said, he'd been lying awake going over the whole situation -- over the provocation given by Germany, over the probable feeling in the United

States, over the consequences to the settlement and to the world at large if we entered the melee.

...He said he couldn't see any alternative, that he had tried every way he knew to avoid war..."What else can I do?" he asked. "Is there anything else I can do?"

...He said war would overturn the world we had known; that so long as we remained out there was a preponderance of neutrality but that if we joined with the Allies the world would be off the peace basis and on to a war basis.

It would mean that we should lose our head along with the rest and stop weighing right and wrong. It would mean that a majority of people in this hemisphere would go war-mad, quit thinking, and devote their energies to destruction. The President said a declaration of war would mean that war would mean that Germany would be beaten and so badly beaten that there would be a dictated peace, a victorious peace.

...He went on to say that so far as he knew he had considered every loophole of escape, and as fast as they were discovered Germany deliberately blocked them with some new outrage....He thought the Constitution would not survive it, that free speech and the right of assembly would go. He said a nation couldn't put its strength into a war and keep its head level; it had never been done.

...The President didn't have illusions about how he was going to come out of it, either. He'd rather have done anything else than head a military machine. All his instincts were against it. He foresaw too clearly the probable influence of a declaration of war on his own fortunes, the adulation certain to follow the certain victory, the derision and attack which would come with the deflation of excessive hopes and in the presence of world responsibility. But if he had it to do over again he would take the same course. It was just a choice of evils.

SOURCE: John L. Heaton, Cobb of *The World*, 1920.

Document J

CHICAGOANS CHEER TAR WHO SHOT MAN Sailor Wounds Pageant Spectator Disrespectful to Flag.

Universal Service

Chicago, May 6 - Disrespect for the American flag and a show of resentment toward the thousands who participated in a victory loan pageant here tonight may cost George Goddard his life. He was shot down by a sailor of the United States navy when he did not stand and remove his hat while the band was playing the "Star-Spangled Banner."

Goddard had a seat of vantage in the open amphitheater. When he failed to stand he was the most conspicuous figure among the throng. When he fell at the report of the "sailor's" gun the crowd burst into cheers and hand-clapping. When Goddard failed to respond to the first strains of the national anthem Samuel Hagerman, sailor in the guard of honor asked him to get up.

"What for?" demanded Goddard.

"Hagerman touched him with his bayonet.

"Get up. Off with your hat."

Goddard muttered and drew a pistol.

With military precision Hagerman stepped back a pace and slipped a shell into his gun.

Goddard started away. As the last notes of the anthem sounded the sailor commanded him to halt. Then he fired into the air.

"Halt!"

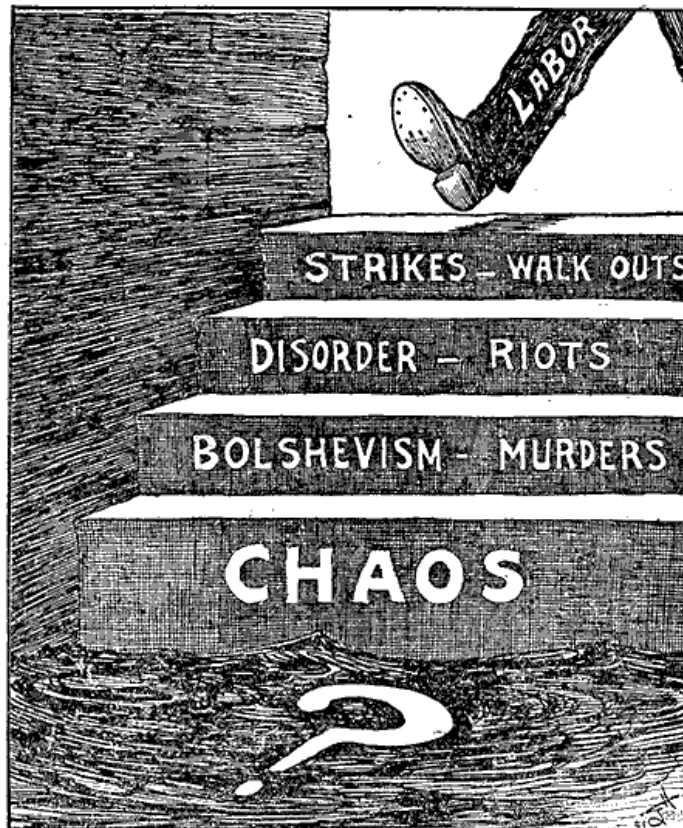
Goddard paid no attention.

The sailor aimed and fired three times. Goddard fell wounded. Each shot found its mark.

When he [Goddard] was searched, an automatic pistol, in addition to the one he had drawn, was found. Another pistol and fifty cartridges were found in a bag he carried. He said he was a tinsmith, out of work. Papers showed he had been at Vancouver and Seattle and it was believed by the authorities he had come here for the I.W.W. convention.

SOURCE: *Washington Post*, May 7, 1919, p. 2.

Document K



Step By Step

SOURCE: Greene in *The New York Evening Telegram*, 1919.

Document 1

STATEMENT OF MR. W. M. MINK

Senator STERLING. What is your name?

Mr. MINK. W. M. Mink.

Senator MCKELLAR. And what is your position?

Mr. MINK. I have charge of these mills here. . . .

The CHAIRMAN. Well, will you give us your view of what this strike is about?

Mr. MINK. We think it is entirely the Bolshevik spirit.

The CHAIRMAN. Why do you think that?

Mr. MINK. Well, because they was gathering up the aliens; they have been practically alien, in my opinion, very few American citizens.

The CHAIRMAN. They worked among the foreigners, do you say?

Mr. MINK. They worked among the foreigners entirely.

The CHAIRMAN. And most of the foreigners are out?

Mr. MINK. Most of the foreigners are out; 99 per cent of the foreigners that are striking here—that is, the strikers that are out are foreigners.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, does this Bolshevik tendency that you speak of, do they get any literature from any sources?

Mr. MINK. Well, we have not seen any literature, but only stuff like this, they say that if the mills are not running - we do not see this ourselves, but we get it from other sources - that they are going to get a dollar an hour and are going to get the best jobs.

The CHAIRMAN. Are they going to man the mills themselves?

Mr. MINK. Yes, they are going to man the mills themselves.

The CHAIRMAN. And you really believe that there is a great deal of that Bolshevism about, do you?

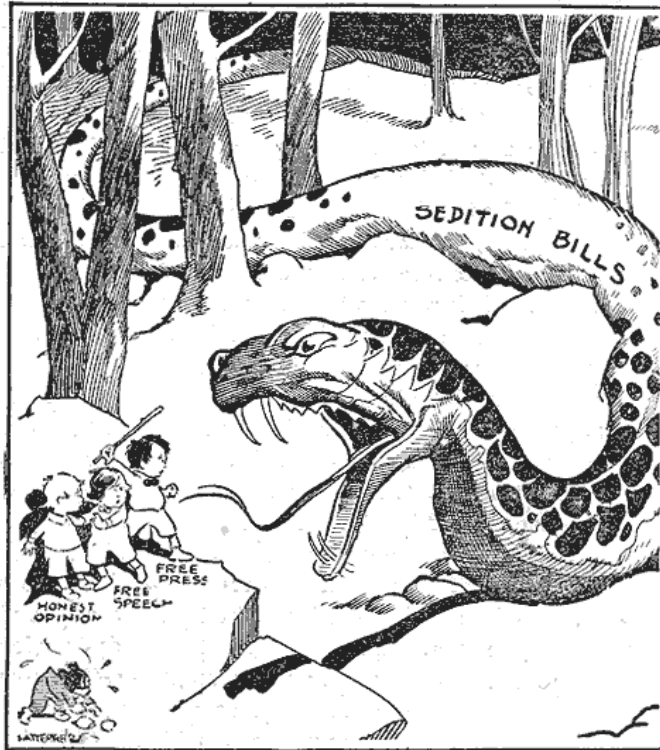
Mr. MINK. Yes, I think there is. It is not a question of wages. They have never been getting more money than they have got, and the conditions are good.

The CHAIRMAN. How about their living conditions? How are they?

Mr. MINK. The living conditions are just what the men want. A lot of them have good jobs and they make good money, and they could live a whole lot better.

SOURCE: *Investigation of Strike in Steel Industries, Hearings before the Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. Senate, 66th Congress, 1st Session, 1919.*

Document M



As Gag Rulers Would Have It.

SOURCE: Satterfield in the *Jersey City Journal*, 1920.

Document N



Five Socialist Assemblymen Suspended by the New York Legislature
[Charles Solomon, Louis Waldman, Samuel Orr, August Claessens, and Samuel Dewitz]

SOURCE: *Literary Digest*, 1920.