Claude H. Van Tyne and the National Security League 1914-1920

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THE NATIONAL SECURITY LEAGUE
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BY
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In most American historical studies of World War I the National Security League, although frequently mentioned, receives scant attention. Historians generally dismiss the League as just another preparedness organization. But the League was far more than that: it was staffed by some of the most prominent men of its day, it was financed by the nation's most powerful commercial interests, it was influential enough to essay the control of national elections, its programs defied both the President and Congress, and it drew up and attempted to implement a blueprint for post-war American society. The organization's programs were designed to mold America into an imperialistic, authoritarian, military oriented order subservient to the League's militant supporters. In implementing these proposals the League sought to generate public sentiment that favored its plans, thereby forcing the President and Congress to enact its programs.

In the pursuance of its objectives the League received powerful support from some members of the academic community. The alliance between the educators and the militants is a paradox. The supposed libertarian proponents of an unencumbered democratic system joined the dogmatic advocates of a regimented order in an effort to purify American society. The League's supporters, in working for their objectives, resorted to coercion, censorship, oppression, and intimidation.
These methods were employed in the name of Americanism. The militant Security League officials and the educators, in working to purify American society, sought to rid the United States of all alien and radical elements.

Some of the personnel, programs, and methods of the National Security League are treated in the following pages. The preparedness activities of Claude Halstead Van Tyne, Professor of History at the University of Michigan, depict the alliance between the League and the academic community. Van Tyne was devoted to preparedness and he played a significant role in promoting the programs of the League. This thesis presents a limited view of these preparedness activities.

Much of the material necessary for a definitive study of the League has either been destroyed or is not yet available for public use. There is, however, enough data to give measurable insight into the character of the organization and its backers.

In pursuing this study of the National Security League I have become indebted to many individuals. Foremost among these is Robert David Ward, my academic advisor and Professor of History at Georgia Southern College. He was the first to suggest this topic and during the past two years his assistance has been invaluable. During this period he has always been available for consultation and has given much more time to directing this thesis than I had a right to expect. Without his guidance and criticism this study would have been
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James David Wilkes
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. The National Security League, Origin, Structure, and Programs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Professors and Patriotism</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Patriotism through Education</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. The Demise of the National Security League</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
THE NATIONAL SECURITY LEAGUE,
ORIGIN, STRUCTURE, AND PROGRAMS

In the summer of 1914, Americans were shocked by diplomatic developments which revealed the fragile nature of world peace and cast the major nations of Europe into World War I. The international crisis was of unprecedented magnitude and as the fighting burgeoned into total war, the non-aligned states found it difficult to remain neutral. The conflict generated forces which humanity had never confronted, forces which altered man's view of himself and his world. Few nations escaped these influences in an age of scientific development which made all men neighbors and isolation a fiction. Thus, in spite of a professed desire for neutrality, the United States failed to escape the ramifications of the war.

President Woodrow Wilson's exhortations to remain neutral in thought and deed were ignored. Many Americans fell victim to the propaganda that inundated the nation and they aligned themselves, if only in sentiment, with one belligerent or another. In significant numbers, citizens organized or joined societies which promoted their sympathies. Most of these organizations supported the Allied Powers, Britain, Russia, and France. As public opinion polarized, it became most unpopular to defend Germany.
from Massachusetts. Gardner was one of the more militant mem-
bers of Congress where he was already a spokesman for Theodore
Roosevelt's pro-Allied point of view. He sanctioned Menken's
plan and went on to become an ardent supporter of preparedness. 5
Encouraged by these favorable responses, Menken began
erecting the framework of the organization. By December, 1914,
this task was completed. 6 On December 1, the first meeting of
the League was held at the Hotel Belmont in New York City with
150 men present. Among the charter members were George Haven
Putnam, Herbert Barry, Lawrence F. Abbott, J. Mayhew Wainwright,
Franklin Q. Brown, and Colonel Charles E. Lydecker. They ad-
dressed themselves to military problems and announced that they
were initiating a movement to "arouse public opinion in favor
of putting the army and coast defenses in a state of prepared-
ness." In support of the militants in Congress, a resolution
was adopted which called for passage of Representative Gardner's
proposal for a congressional inquiry into the conditions of
the military services. 7

Although President Wilson and others in the administration
opposed these activities, the League experienced rapid growth.
On January 7, 1915, the organization incorporated in New York
State and within a few months had the support of many influ-
ential business and political leaders. By August, the League

6 Ibid.
nonpartisan position, but that was of small concern to Lyman Abbott, Wiser Ward Webb, and other League spokesmen who frequently attacked the President. League leaders also appointed a national committee representing "industrial, commercial, and financial interests" to impress upon Wilson the need for an immediate investigation of the nation's defenses.\(^{10}\)

As the League continued to cultivate public opinion, its leaders expanded their programs to include specific preparedness measures. Their proposals called for rifle practice in the schools and the establishment of a General Defense Board to oversee the nation's military policy. Menken, the League's Executive Chairman, consulted Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison and military experts in Congress on the needs of the armed services. In order to increase its own effectiveness, the organization proposed to create its own committees on the army and navy and to establish a League branch in every county of the nation.\(^{11}\)

This expansion was part of the League's drive for national endorsement of preparedness objectives. Only by broadening its basis of support could the organization influence the nation's military policy. In seeking support, Menken and other officials initiated a program to gain membership from the ranks of the National Guard, but army officers resented this intervention.


and attempted to block the effort.\textsuperscript{12} Despite opposition, the League's prestige grew in business and financial circles. With the nation's commercial interests, the organization worked to secure defense legislation from an unwilling President and Congress.\textsuperscript{13}

Throughout 1916, the League sought to place maximum pressure upon the Wilson Administration. Local branches transmitted resolutions to the President designed to convince him that the people wanted preparedness and that his policies of neutrality were ill-conceived.\textsuperscript{14} Menken announced a drive to "raise a defense army of 1,000,000 workers" dedicated to preparedness. These people would work for legislation to end waste in military appropriations, establish a suitable navy, improve the National Guard, bring mobility to the army, create adequate military reserves, and force the government to adopt "a definite military policy." In promoting these objectives, the League sought to focus national attention upon the need for preparedness. Letters embodying the military proposals were distributed throughout the country to business, political, and social leaders.\textsuperscript{15} Despite these efforts, the


\textsuperscript{13} New York Times, July 23, 28; May 4, 11, 1916.

\textsuperscript{14} Board of Governors, Montclair New Jersey Branch of the National Security League to Secord Wilson, June 23, 1915, R. G. 94, AGO Document file. NARS.

\textsuperscript{15} Tinsley, "Preparedness Movement," pp. 99-100, 135.
Wilson Administration refused to be intimidated by the militant forces and the public seemed content with neutrality. Nonetheless, League spokesmen remained undaunted. In the face of presidential opposition and a recalcitrant Congress, the League began its own inquiry into national defense.

During the spring and summer of 1915 the League's various committees of inquiry began reporting military conditions which alarmed the organization's officials. Menken was appalled at the "absolute unpreparedness" of the country during what he considered the most critical period of its history. The situation within the armed services, in Menken's opinion, manifested a lack of concern by the administration for national security and raised serious questions about the competence of the President and Congress to solve the nation's military problems. The League concluded that the failure of Congress to prepare the nation's defenses was a dereliction of duty which "red-blooded Americans" would not continue to tolerate.16

During the spring of 1915, a League committee composed of William G. McAdoo,17 Joseph H. Choate, Alton B. Parker, Henry L. Stimson, and Menken, produced additional information on the disrepair of the navy. Their revelations were embodied in a widely publicized report that the League sent to "all members of Congress and officers of the Federal and State Governments."18

17 Ibid., May 4, November 27, 1915.
18 Ibid., May 4, 11, 1915.
Through this action, the militants hoped to generate influ-
ential backing for their objectives and to bring pressure
on the administration for preparedness legislation. The
League's leaders wished to gain support from people of all
political parties. They wanted to build an image of politi-
cal independence which would make the League influential
in both the Democratic and Republican parties. This non-
partisan inclination was manifest throughout the organiza-
tion's early development as League spokesmen officially
endeavored to shun political party affiliations.

This official policy of political independence created
animosities within the League which were difficult to re-
solve. By the summer of 1915 it seemed clear to the nation's
militants that the Wilson Administration was ignoring pre-
paredness agitation and that the League's nonpartisan efforts
were ineffective. Clarence Smedley Thompson, the League's
Publicity Director, and the pro-Republican faction of the
organization decided that other methods were needed and moved
for an unlimited attack on the anti-preparedness factions
within the government. This would necessitate an open assault
on Wilson and, in reality, turn the League into a Republican
tool engaging in partisan politics.19

Menken, a professed Democrat who feared outright Republican

The pro-Allied societies voiced concern for the French and Belgians under German occupation and expressed fear less Germany overcome England and reap large gains in a peace settlement. This anxiety appealed to a public conscience which identified the Kaiser as the villain of the war. Another factor in the growing popularity of pro-Allied groups stemmed from the activities of the associations which promoted military preparedness.1 Some of the preparedness societies antedated the war and were civilian adjuncts of particular military branches. As fear of the war spread, these older societies were joined by new organizations formed specifically to prepare the United States for possible conflict with Germany.2

Officially, preparedness proponents did not take a stand on the question of American intervention into the war. What they wanted was preparation of the nation's armed forces because of the possibility of war with Germany. Preparedness spokesmen pointed to the derelict condition of the armed services and promoted drives to inform the public of the dangers of an inadequate military establishment. Their prime objective was to force Congress to enact legislation which would modernize the military and keep it ready for war.

1 During World War I, the word "preparedness" was used to describe the need for military readiness for war. Later, the term was expanded to include a host of factors necessary for the successful conduct of warfare. "Preparedness," in its later meaning, encompassed the military, industrial, educational, and psychological conditions needed to achieve victory.

The defense proposals were supported by many prominent Americans, some of whom assumed positions of leadership in the preparedness movement.

The most powerful of the new preparedness groups was the National Security League which was formed in December, 1914. It was organized by S. Stanwood Menken, a well-known New York attorney. When the war began, Menken was in England and had attended some of the Parliamentary debates concerning England's role in the conflict. During a visit in the House of Commons on August 5, 1914, his concern was aroused by the possibility of the United States being caught in the English dilemma. Menken believed that Britain's weak military position had been a factor in Germany's decision to attack the Allies. Menken resolved to do all he could to prevent a similar situation from overtaking America.3

Immediately after his return to New York, Menken took the first steps toward organizing for preparedness. He began by contacting Frederic R. Coudert, a New York lawyer whose clients included the governments of Great Britain, France, and Russia.4 Coudert was interested in Menken's proposal. Next, Menken approached Representative Augustus F. Gardner, Republican

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could boast Joseph E. Choate, United States' Ambassador to Great Britain, as honorary President and Alton B. Parker as honorary Vice-President. Other prominent League supporters included Cornelius Vanderbilt, William Howard Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, Philander C. Knox, Captain Ulysses S. Grant, John Wanamaker, James J. Hill, Luke E. Wright, Henry L. Stimson, William Gibbs McAdoo, and Elihu Root.

Undoubtedly, League activities portrayed the national anxiety engendered by the war. The organization thrived upon the fears that the nation was inadequately defended. Whether or not the alarm was justified, the intense emotions generated by the war aided the organization's expansion until it became "undoubtedly the most influential of the new organizations that were created to work for preparedness."

The desire for an "aroused public opinion" led the League into propaganda drives designed to move the nation from its "deplorable" indifference. The objective was to stir the people to action through attacks on peace societies and anyone who opposed preparedness. But in berating the non-militants' "treasonous" attitudes, the League was in effect attacking the policy of the Wilson Administration. This meant abandoning or violating the organization's supposed

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association, resisted any blatant assaults on Wilson which would prove advantageous to the Republican party. His stand caused a controversy which culminated over the distribution of printed copies of speeches delivered by Charles J. Bonaparte, George Von L. Meyer, Lyman Abbott, and Hudson Maxim at a League sponsored Peace and Preparedness Conference. These addresses reflected adversely upon the Democrats and Menken opposed their circulation. As a result, Thompson accused Menken of playing politics and resigned. He was followed by Cushing Stetson and John F. Hubbard, two of his colleagues on the Publicity Committee. These three dissenters severed all ties with the National Security League and formed the American Defense Society. This organization was anti-Wilson and represented the Republican branch of the Security League.

Internal controversy failed to impede the League's preparedness campaign which, by the fall of 1915, was beginning to receive the support of some congressmen. The depth of congressional support of preparedness was revealed in October when the League reported that it had secured endorsements from over two hundred congressmen. The support of this sizable minority was insufficient to pass preparedness legislation. As the time for the new congressional session neared, 

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the League redoubled its efforts. Menken, in the drive to
enlist the support of congressmen, secured the cooperation
of large Eastern business establishments with outlets in the
South and West. In their business letters, these companies
added notes on preparedness which alerted their correspond-
ents to the hazards of inadequate national defense.22

On November 27, 1915, the League called a general meet-
ing to review the year's work and to publicize the results of
the many investigations. Considerable confidence was placed
in the reports compiled by the organization's military com-
mittees which were staffed by Beekman Winthrop, Herbert L.
Satterlee, William McAdoo, Henry Wise Wood and other men who
the League considered national experts on military policy.
League officials took the recommendations of these commit-
teemen as the final word on defense needs. The committee
reports, like all former League revelations, decried the
state of the military services and called for expenditures
sufficient to construct a navy second only to that of Great
Britain.23

When Wilson presented his preparedness plans to the
country he undercut the League's emphasis on military prob-
lems. The President's announcement was interpreted by the
League as a step in the right direction, and lessened the

22 New York Times, October 18; November 1, 1915.
23 Ibid., November 27, 1915.
antagonism between the preparedness advocates and the Chief Executive. 24 But the League insisted that administration proposals provided too little training and too few reserve stocks of military supplies. As an initial step, however, they would suffice. 25

Wilson's military plans were a definite break with his past policies of neutrality. His call for preparedness was a response to increasing militancy at home and ominous developments in international relations. The growing alarm of many American's over the state of their nation's defenses in the face of the submarine issue and the Allied blockade forced the President to come up with a military program. Wilson now ably defended military preparedness as necessary to the security of the Western Hemisphere and the protection of American rights. 26 But his objective failed to satisfy the National Security League and it remained critical of administration proposals. Preparedness spokesmen complained because Wilson refused to help transform the United States into the world's foremost military power. In January, 1916, the demands for more positive action were made clear by Congressman Augustus F. Gardner in a speech before the League. In his address Gardner maintained that for the present the

24 Link, Woodrow Wilson, p. 180.
construction of a navy second to the mightiest afloat might suffice, but ultimately the United States would have to assume primacy over all powers.\(^{27}\)

The League always wanted stronger defense measures than the administration would support. When Wilson announced his military program, League spokesmen erroneously believed that he could be persuaded to accept the League's plans for national defense. Thus, the organization turned its attention on Congress, characterized by Joseph H. Choate as the primary obstacle to preparedness. The League felt that its propaganda had aroused the public and awakened the President. Now Congress had to be convinced of the necessity of passing the legislation necessary to repair the country's defenses.\(^{28}\) But despite the pressure the League applied, most congressmen remained oblivious to the demands of the militants. The League's problem was further aggravated when Wilson failed to become as belligerent as the militants had hoped he would. Consequently, the League withdrew its earlier sanction of the President's preparedness message and launched another propaganda assault on his "irresolute" defense policies.

Chagrined at its lack of success and frustrated by the President and Congress, the League made a concerted attack

\(^{27}\) New York Times, January 11, 1918.

\(^{28}\) Ibid.
on both Wilson and the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels. The policies of the latter were termed "weak and insufficient" while Wilson's foreign policy was characterized as so frail that the life of a "turkey buzzard" in Mexico commanded more respect than that of an American citizen. Those individuals who barred the way to a strong military establishment were portrayed as intent upon their own interests. Furthermore, Secretary Daniels, in proposing a naval program spanning ten years, was acting against the interest of national security. In advancing a remedy to the nation's military malady, the League proposed a system of universal military service on the Austrian and Swiss models as advocated by Theodore Roosevelt.29

The League had previously advocated universal military service as a panacea for inadequate defense. In the spring and summer of 1915, Charles E. Lydecker, Chairman of the League's Military Committee, had proposed a program that called for public school indoctrination which would stress the need for public service and emphasize sports and physical drills. Lydecker's plan called for colleges and universities to establish mandatory programs of theoretical military training which involved maneuvers. Finally, all male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years who were fit for military duty would be classified. This system, according

to Lydecker, would assure that an "eye and a finger" would be kept on the citizen from the "cradle to the grave." The supporters of this measure claimed it would lead to physical fitness, the engendering of a national spirit, and bring benefit to the individual. 30

The League appointed Luke E. Wright and Robert Bacon to head the committee to conduct the campaign for universal military training. They were charged with formulating concrete suggestions for a program of universal military service to be submitted to Congress. 31 Public attention was called to the need for such training through a propaganda drive which pictured universal service as an insurer of the American tradition and a deterrent to the German menace. Moreover, the League's zeal for the idea developed into an absolute commitment, and universal military training became a fundamental tenet in the preparedness catechism.

The national crusade for preparedness reached its peak in the winter of 1915-1916, and found the League engaged in its first genuine political conflict. By this time, Wilson had issued his call for preparedness, and the League's only serious concern was the type of legislation that Congress would enact. Initially, the League worked for a defense bill sponsored by Senator George E. Chamberlain which provided for

a system of compulsory military training. This proposal had little chance for passage. Wilson backed the continental army proposal of Secretary of War Garrison, a measure that was the administration's answer to preparedness. But Congress, and especially the House Committee on Military Affairs, opposed the Garrison bill. Instead, Congress supported a plan sponsored by Representative James Hay, the Military Affairs Committee Chairman, and leader of the "small army" men in the House. Wilson was confronted with a political dilemma. The only solution, if he wanted a defense measure at all, was to accept the Hay bill. Hay's measure fell far below the demands of preparedness advocates, and Garrison resigned in anger and frustration. He was replaced by Newton D. Baker, supposedly an opponent of military preparedness.

Wilson's willingness to accept the Hay proposal momentarily dashed the League's hopes for stronger legislation. But the militants continued to fight. They launched a drive to scuttle the Hay bill. The League's position was stated by Frederic R. Coeart who charged Wilson and Congress with betrayal of the country. But at the moment the League's efforts appeared in vain, they were boosted by the Sussex incident of March 24, 1916. President Wilson threatened to sever diplomatic relations with Germany and Senator Chamberlain again

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33 Lank, Woodrow Wilson, pp. 186-187.
introduced militant preparedness legislation. Chamberlain, the Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee and the leader of the Senate preparedness forces, was able to obtain Senate passage of his bill which strongly resembled the discarded Garrison program. The League rallied behind the Chamberlain proposal, but to no avail. Eventually the House and Senate passed a compromise measure which lacked the fundamental League requirement of compulsory training.

The League denounced the new act. Some preparedness advocates maintained that it constituted an actual danger be creating a false sense of security. General Leonard Wood and Theodore Roosevelt maintained that it was one of the worst pieces of legislation ever enacted. These individuals joined other officials of the League and requested that Wilson veto the measure. The President ignored the militants and accepted the legislation as adequate for current defense needs.

Smarting from its lack of influence in the congressional debates, the League launched a new campaign with the aid of business leaders and professional baseball celebrities. The aim was to recruit at least a million new members. This was to be accomplished through a speaker's bureau composed of.

35 Link, Woodrow Wilson, p. 187.
37 Link, Woodrow Wilson, pp. 183-189.
volunteers who would canvass the country and talk on preparedness. The volunteers were mostly military men who toured the country lauding Theodore Roosevelt and demanding that Wilson rid the Cabinet of Navy Secretary Daniels. In January, 1917, this crusade was reinforced by a league sponsored "Congress of Constructive Patriotism," designed to educate the public on the problems of defense. This assemblage urged Congress to devote an entire session to fostering a "unified American spirit."39

The development of a patriotic public attitude became one of the League's foremost objectives and all segments of society were expected to avow their devotion to the nation. The League questioned Secretary of War Baker about the loyalty of the National Guard. Preparedness spokesmen were afraid that some members of the Guard might be called into service before they had taken the federal oath prescribed in the National Defense Act. Menken felt that the absence of this affirmation jeopardized the reliability of certain Guard units and endangered the nation.40 His alarm was quieted by a letter from the War Department assuring him that the National Guard was ready.41

39 *New York Times*, March 19; April 19; June 2; November 26, 1916.
Following the "Congress of Constructive Patriotism," the League moved to unite all preparedness societies into one unit. The objective was to achieve enough political leverage to force Congress to enact a universal military training bill. Another League effort in behalf of this legislation began April 1, 1917, when Henry L. Stimson and Coudert started a two week speaking tour in the West. They planned to promote universal military training before chambers of commerce and university audiences, but before they finished the tour, Wilson delivered his war message and asked Congress to enact conscription. This development cut short the League's campaign for universal military service. When Stimson and Coudert returned they were convinced that the country would support the President's move.

Although the nation was at war and conscription was a fact, the League continued its activities. It hoped to take advantage of the administration's bellicose mood and secure conscription as a "permanent policy." A poll of Congress revealed that this proposal had little support and virtually no chance of passage. The militants also assumed the responsibility of giving the people a "proper understanding" of the war. They proposed to accomplish this through the use of volunteer speakers from the academic and legal professions. These crusaders would be supervised by a Committee on


Patriotism Through Education under the leadership of Harvard Professor Albert Bushnell Hart. The plan was to blanket the country with propaganda defining the causes of the war, and the reasons for United States' participation.44

To implement this program, the League established a speakers' training camp where its agents were to be indoctrinated.45 After a brief period of instruction, they would be dispatched on lecture tours throughout the country to give the public the League's truths concerning the war. This effort was supplemented by a series of articles in The Independent, by such educators as Robert McNutt McElroy of Princeton University, Professor Hart, Theodore Gerald Soares of the University of Chicago, and William Herbert Hobbs of the University of Michigan.46 These men praised the national heritage, castigated the eternal Teutonic menace, and helped to promote a burgeoning crusade for unity of thought and action. The effort for a unified public opinion had far reaching implications and was an objective which eventually permeated every facet of the League's activities.47

During this period, the organization underwent a significant

internal change. On June 27, 1917, after Robert Bacon, the League President, went into the service, Menken assumed the organization's top office. Along with his desire to see the nation unified in sentiment, Menken began agitating for a war council that would supersede Wilson and the Cabinet in the conduct of the war. The President ignored this proposal. Meanwhile, the League concentrated its efforts toward eliminating all dissent. It attacked George Creel and the Public Information Committee of the government for distributing information which failed to engender patriotism, and it enlisted local government and civic groups in the fight against un-American attitudes. 48

In its zeal for one hundred per cent Americanism, the League, during the summer of 1917, attacked aliens living in the United States. It called upon German societies and persons of German extraction to declare their allegiance to the United States and its war effort. When these groups failed to respond satisfactorily to the League's demands, the organization publicly questioned their loyalty and inaugurated a drive to suppress German-language newspapers. 49

The League's insistence on an open confession of faith by German-Americans evoked a favorable response from some members of the academic community. Many educators rallied to the League and insisted that the teaching of German be

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48 *New York Times*, June 29; July 4, 9, 1917.
discontinued in the schools and universities. It was charged that the textbooks used in language instruction were filled with pro-German phrases which endangered the nation's internal security by creating a climate of toleration toward the Teutonic masses. The League applauded such proposals and assigned Educational Director McKilroy the task of formulating a plan to substitute courses on the causes and aims of the war in place of instruction in German.50

When the German-language newspapers defended their position, the League became more demanding and on June 2, 1918, announced a campaign to destroy the German-language press. The League claimed that the fostering of a foreign tongue was injurious to the goals and aspirations of the American people. Unity of language was essential to national unity. Hostile and alien traditions posed a serious threat to the nation and all loyal Americans were asked to boycott and use every means at their disposal to suppress these menaces. It is noteworthy that although the League failed to oppose the Espionage and Sedition Acts, it declined to press for laws to aid these efforts at suppression. Rather, the organization was content to rely upon the aroused sentiments of loyal Americans to eradicate the supposed dangers.51

Throughout the years 1917 and 1918 League projects continued under the banner of "Patriotism through Education."

51 Ibid.
Preparedness spokesmen concentrated their efforts in those areas of the country which seemed the most impervious to war propaganda. Teams of speakers were dispatched through the Midwest and South to arouse sentiments against the German menace and to inculcate a spirit of Americanism. Early in September, 1917, the crusade was boosted when Elihu Root announced that he would like to "participate" more directly in League activities. Root's desire for active association with the League was fulfilled when the death of Joseph H. Choate vacated its honorary Presidency. League officials realized that Root would be a great asset to the organization and they elected him as Choate's successor.

As League officials continued to flood the country with patriotic propaganda, they focused attention on preparedness programs by declaring the week of September 17-23, "loyalty week." State governors were asked to create special bureaus to conduct patriotic activities within their states. Discouraged by the governors' lack of response, the League turned to state educational circles and found the educators more receptive to preparedness exercises. In many cases, high ranking officials in state universities and colleges supported the League's efforts and used their offices to provide leaves of absence for professors who were willing to join in the preparedness campaign for a unified national

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spirit. In this manner the League gained a corps of distinguished recruits who were sent into the field to rally the people behind the war effort. These surveyors of patriotism expressed concern over the average citizen's "lack of individual responsibility" toward the government. To rectify this problem, preparedness spokesmen suggested a complete revision of the civics program in the public schools.53

The implementation of the new educational program required that public school teachers of civics and history return to school. The League argued that public educators needed to learn how to teach "Americanization." Teachers ought to be told of the need for patriotic education and they should learn how to teach Americanism effectively. These suggestions were accepted by many educational authorities. In New York City school officials required that teachers attend lectures under the joint sponsorship of the League and the boards of education. Preparedness spokesmen believed that if the teachers were converted to "Americanism" they would in turn indoctrinate their pupils. The students would then pass their knowledge of patriotism on to their parents. This educational phenomenon, according to the League, made the public schools the best tools with which to achieve national unity of thought.54

53 New York Times, July 17; September 15, 17; November 4, 1917.
54 Ibid., March 10, 1918.
In order to further these objectives, the preparedness forces distributed patriotic literature to public school pupils. This material was to be used in the loyalty courses that the League wanted instituted in the schools. In addition, students were instructed to have their parents read the preparedness literature. Through these educational endeavors, the League hoped to build patriotic sentiments in every American home. Preparedness spokesmen also recommended programs of physical conditioning for the elementary and secondary grades. The militants argued that a rigorous plan of physical exercise would produce healthy specimens for the armed forces. 55

With the public schools selected as the best medium for spreading patriotic teachings, League officials, during the summer of 1918, conducted the "Teachers' Flattsburg" campaign. This drive was designed to reach over 100,000 public school instructors through 254 educational training camps established throughout the country. The teachers were to be instructed in how to impart correct understandings of "Americanism" and "Citizenship" to their students. The League supplied the educational materials in these camps and secured some of the nation's top educators to conduct classes. R. L. Thompson of Princeton, M. F. Libby of the University of Colorado, Claude Halstead Van Tyne of the University of Michigan,

55 New York Times, January 27; February 8; June 16, 1918.
and William Bennett Munro and William Henry Schofield of Harvard were chosen to serve under McElroy. In addition to working in the summer schools, many of these men were assigned particular areas of the nation which they vigorously canvassed. 56

Among the prominent scholars joining the League's educational efforts was Professor Andrew C. McLaughlin of the University of Chicago. McLaughlin was dispatched to England to assure the Allies of America's devotion to the war and to give the reasons for her entry. Concern for the anti-British attitudes of many Americans prompted McLaughlin to announce a plan to cure this ideological malady. He advocated that certain historical interpretations be revised in a manner that would emphasize the affinity between the United States and the British Empire. This necessitated a revision of current histories. It also required that future history books be written with the new interpretation in mind. These League efforts at "attitude re-orientation" were stimulated when Theodore Roosevelt joined the educational crusade and began a tour through the Midwest. Roosevelt stressed the importance of winning the war quickly, maintaining post-war preparedness through universal military training, and the need for Americanization propaganda which would awaken the people.

to the realities of citizenship.57

The educational drive lasted throughout 1918 and was extended well into the post-war period. In the fall of 1918, when peace seemed imminent, preparedness spokesmen began agitating against a "premature" cessation of hostilities. Failing in this, the League nevertheless altered its programs to comply with peace time demands.58

During the educational campaign a noticeable shift took place in the League's objectives. From its earlier image as a preparedness organization promoting military programs, emphasis shifted to a drive for national unity in thought and action. Added to this was the integration of certain economic principles into its propaganda. This development created questions about the consistency of the organization's actual and professed goals. The economic orientation was also mirrored by a shift in League leadership in June, 1918, when President Menken was removed from office.59 The controversy which caused the change in League leadership arose over a statement printed in the newspapers of William Randolph Hearst. The statement, issued by Menken to Hearst, approved the latter's conduct during the war. The item portrayed the Hearst papers as champions of preparedness, an erroneous view

58 Ibid., September 23, 1918.
according to many preparedness advocates. Although Menken charged that his statement had been misused, the Executive Committee found his explanation unsatisfactory. Menken was forced to resign and the Executive Committee passed a number of resolutions condemning "the wrong and shameful policy of the Hearst Newspapers in defending the German Government in many of its atrocious acts and pronouncements." On June 27, Menken's resignation was publicly announced. Menken claimed that his resignation was voluntary and that it had been prompted by his conviction that only his withdrawal could repair the damage against the League. The Executive Committee then promoted Colonel Charles E. Lydecker, one of the League's founders, to the Presidency.

There is considerable evidence to refute the claim that Menken's resignation was voluntary. Elihu Root, the honorary President of the League notified Alton B. Parker on June 25, 1913, that if he, Root, were to remain in the organization, then Menken would have to go. Root absolutely refused to continue membership under a League President who had endorsed the actions of Hearst, a man who had sown discord and disloyalty among the people. Roosevelt joined in this attack on Menken, although he believed that Wilson was chiefly responsible for the "continuance of Hearst's noxious activities."

61 Ibid.
the League's Educational Director, Robert M. McElroy, best revealed the sentiment within the organization when he said that Menken had to go because he dared associate with the "most sinister figure in American life."\(^{64}\) Menken's removal was hardly voluntary. His expulsion was voted by the New York officers of the organization and the decision to demand his resignation was "unanimous save one."\(^{65}\)

Many League members viewed the Menken-Hearst affair as scandalous. There was talk among League officials that the educational campaign might have to forego further expansion and even be curtailed unless the organization could escape the Hearst stigma. Moreover, League members generally believed that demoting Menken to the Executive Committee failed to solve the problem. As long as Menken remained, the League's efforts would be hampered by his presence. Thus, Elihu Root concluded, "I would as soon be associated with the conduct of a campaign for Patriotism Through Education under the banner of the Benedict Arnold Club as under the banner of a National Security League in league with Hearst."\(^{66}\)

League efforts were only temporarily damaged by the

\(^{64}\) Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, July 1, 1913, Claude H. Van Tyne Papers, Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Hereinafter cited as Van Tyne Papers, MICH.)

\(^{65}\) Ibid.

\(^{66}\) Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, July 20, 1913, Van Tyne Papers, MICH.
Hearst-Mencken controversy. The organization recovered quickly and having cleaned its own house, set out to do the same for the United States Congress. Since its organization in 1914, the League had sought to bring pressure upon Congress. The organization had tried to coerce congressmen into supporting preparedness legislation and, later, measures for the successful conduct of the war. By the fall of 1915, many politicians saw the League as a potential force and some members of Congress sought the favor of the League by avowing their support of League proposals. On the other hand, some attacked the League's growing power. William Jennings Bryan branded the organization as a paid agent of ship builders and ammunition manufacturers. Replying to Bryan's charges, Menken called them absolutely untrue and asserted that the League's budget was furnished by its twenty thousand members who usually gave "contributions of $1." He contended that the League had never received "a penny" either directly or indirectly from munitions or shipping interests. 67

Such lively exchanges provoked Republican Representative Gardner of Massachusetts to introduce a House resolution on December 6, 1915, asking that a five man committee be appointed to investigate the preparedness movement. Gardner argued that public disclosure of the organization, membership, and financial records of the militant organizations would aid

the drive for preparedness. His resolution was intended as a challenge to those who either opposed the preparedness movement or questioned its motives and merits. A congressional inquiry into these societies, according to Gardner, would prove the worthiness of preparedness objectives. In addition, such an inquiry would give Gardner an opportunity to clear himself of allegations that his preparedness activities were motivated by corrupt reasons and that his interests in preparedness were economic.68

Although Gardner's motives for an investigation were largely personal, those of Representative Walter L. Bensley of Missouri were not. On January 7, 1916, Bensley called for disclosure of all preparedness activities. He introduced his resolution in the House under the conviction that commercial interests were backing the preparedness movement. This was followed in March with an attack on the militant groups by William L. Saunders, Vice Chairman of the Navy Consulting Board, who charged that the League was a partisan organization hostile to the administration. Saunders asserted that the League was devoutly anti-Wilson and that it was seeking to influence the independent voters by casting the President in the role of a pacifist.69

Some private citizens were also becoming aware of the

69 Ibid., January 7; March 25, 1916.
unsavory character of the National Security League. This was revealed in a letter from Peter H. James to Joseph P. Tumulty, President Wilson's secretary. James was a lawyer in Jersey City, New Jersey, where the League was establishing a branch. He and a group of fellow citizens were investigating the League. James claimed that his inquiry had revealed that the organization's higher echelons were filled with political personalities "whom I know to be bitterly antagonistic to the administration." He, therefore, presumed that the League had objectives other than "preparedness" and he was seeking any information that the administration or the various governing departments might have on the organization.

Throughout 1918, the League continued its partisan course. With the approach of the congressional elections it decided to work for the election of a Congress which would reflect League ideals in the prosecution of the war. This drive was announced in May, and the League stated its plan to analyze the voting records of all candidates for Congress. From this information the League would inform the public on the characteristics of the candidates. Implementation of the exercise required a platoon of speakers working through the 461 League branches. The drive received wide support within the League and from some journalists who applauded the organization's slogan, "Let none but loyal men go to Congress." "Loyal," as

70 Peter H. James to Joseph P. Tumulty, April 6, 1918, RG 94, AGO Document File. NASA.
defined by the militants, meant individuals who would prosecute the war with maximum rapidity and who accepted the League's definition of "Americanism." Preparedness spokesmen urged the voters to elect militant men to, what the League called, the first "war Congress." 71

Electioneering for a "war Congress" led the League to charge that individuals who had opposed preparedness were dangerous to the national interests. The organization's criteria for judging a candidates desirability were the congressional votes on eight war measures which the militants identified as essential to preparedness. To determine their position, new candidates were asked to submit answers on a questionnaire prepared by the League. According to League stalwarts like Theodore Roosevelt, no man less than "100 per cent" American should be elected. The League openly campaigned for the defeat of some congressmen and in some areas it called for "fusion" by Republicans and Democrats if necessary for the election of loyal men. The "fusion" idea was employed in the League's campaigns for the defeat of Senators Robert M. La Follette, George Norris, and Asle J. Gronna - all Midwestern Progressives. 72

These activities, openly designed to influence national elections, angered many congressmen. They were actually aware of what the League was doing and some members of Congress

71 New York Times, May 7, 30; June 10; July 5, 8, 1918.
72 Ibid., July 8, 10, 16, 24; August 5, 20; October 21; November 23, 1918.
began their own counterattacks. A number of representatives who were severely attacked by League spokesmen decided an investigation of the organization was needed. In the fall of 1918, the House moved for an inquiry into the League. The impetus behind the query came from Representative James A. Frear, Republican of Wisconsin. He was being attacked by the League for so-called "disloyal" votes on the eight issues used by the League as criteria for patriotism. On September 23, 1918, Frear asked that the House investigate the League's activities, but because of the Liberty Loan drive and the election campaign, the motion was delayed. Not until December 4, did the House again consider the Frear motion. The decision was made to proceed with a congressional inquiry.73

Congressman Frear charged the League with alleging that over three hundred members of the House and congressional delegations from forty-seven of the states were disloyal. These congressmen had been blacklisted and the League had worked actively for their defeat. The League concentrated its efforts against members of the House of Representatives. This made the House particularly hostile to the organization. Frear argued that it was time for the Congress to "haul before the bar of the House those responsible for malicious

slanders and to measure out adequate punishment.74

The resolution authorizing the investigation asked the Speaker of the House to appoint a special committee composed of nine members. They were to inquire and report on the "officers, membership, financial support, expenditures, general character, activities, and purpose of the National Security League." The committee was instructed to focus on the League's operations in the elections of 1918 and the manner in which these activities related to the Corrupt Practices Act. The committee was also requested to inquire into the reasons motivating the preparedness election activities and to find out who financed the League's drive for a "war Congress." Some representatives wanted even stronger action and urged the Attorney General's Office to investigate the organization on charges of treason.75

Although the Justice Department failed to respond to the suggestion, the House investigation revealed numerous irregularities in the League. The House committee reported that the League was the tool of Wall Street commercial interests. These interests dealt in chemicals, railroads, oil, rubber, steel, munitions, shipping, and foreign bonds. Not only did these enterprises have an economic interest in huge military expenditures, they had also stood to profit from a prolongation of the European war. This factor explained the

74 Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 3rd Sess., 99.
75 Ibid., pp. 103, 104. See also: New York Times, December 5, 1918.
League's agitation against a "premature" peace. Many of the backers of the League had commercial ties with England, France, and Russia and, had Germany won the war, they would have suffered huge economic losses. These revelations of the House report raised doubts about the motives and merits of the Security League. The graphic presentation of the organization's financial backing did much to discredit it before the public. The report removed the League's patriotic facade and established its sources of income as Northern business interests. With but one dissenting vote, the House committee found the League guilty of violating the Corrupt Practices Act, the "penalty for which is a fine of not more than $1,000 or imprisonment not longer than one year, or both." However, neither the League nor any of its members were ever punished under this law.

Following the House report, Charles E. Lydecker turned his wrath on the investigating committee and accused the members of everything from unfairness to malice. Lydecker avowed the rectitude of the League and its officers and said that they never realized or foresaw that their selfless toiling in the national interests would be rewarded by such congressional ingratitude. He was amazed that the League's nonpartisan effort to save the country would be subjected to the Corrupt Practices Act. Lydecker and other League officials

interpreted the investigation as retaliation against the League because it had dared tell the truth about some House members. 77

These cries of injustice were a reversal of the League's first reaction to the inquiry. Initially, the League's officials had announced they would welcome the free publicity that Congress would give the work they had done for the country. But with the airing of the organization's actual practices, this attitude changed. The League, shorn of public approval, was unable to continue promoting the interests of its clandestine backers behind a shield of patriotism. The information gathered by Congress had come from the League's records and the testimony of its officials. This data was indisputable. Despite these revelations, the organization attempted to continue as before, and in the post-war period, it turned its wrath on the advocates of Bolshevism. 78

League programs were continued against Bolshevism, and all other ideologies which League officials considered as alien to Americanism. In this respect, "Internationalism, syndicalism, communism, [and] socialism" were seen as the "antithesis" of Americanism. The latter was defined as all the ideals which could spring from the concept of individual liberty and "the right of individual possession of property as

78 Ibid., December 18, 1918.
guaranteed by the Constitution." If American principles were
to remain secure, according to League officials, their safety
would have to be guaranteed by the enactment of a program of
universal military training. League spokesmen saw this
training as "the best and cheapest form of preparedness," a
program which would render great benefits to "our young men."
Universal military training would build the nation's youth
"physically, mentally and morally." It was also evident to
the League that in a country such as the United States "the
splendid democratizing influences of this training" could
scarcely be ignored.78

These arguments were followed by appeals to both politi-
cal parties that they insert planks in their platforms in 1920
calling for universal military service.80 But by 1920 the
League was well along the road to oblivion and its most ar-
dent pleas fell on deaf ears. The revelations of the House
investigation had stripped away the organization's patriotic
veneer and after this, few people listened to its preparedness
arguments. Moreover, during the post-war period the people
were concerned with peace and jingoism had little appeal.

80 Ibid., June 9, 1920.
CHAPTER II

PROFESSORS AND PATRIOTISM

From 1914 through 1918 support for the National Security League and its blueprint for defense developed throughout the country. As Americans grew aware of World War I's pervasive ramifications they became more receptive to proposals for updating the military services and preparing the country for possible war. The preparedness agenda of the League received the backing of Eastern business interests and the more militant political circles. In addition, strong support for preparedness came from the academic community. Officers of the League were quick to recognize that the support of educators, if exploited, could be a major advantage to the League's program. League officials realized that the educational system offered the best possible avenue for inculcating the patriotic attitudes believed necessary for national unity.

Most of the educators associated with the League's program came from Eastern colleges and universities, but other sections of the country made significant contributions. In the Midwest, an area usually considered hostile to preparedness, faculty members and administrative officials at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor had organized a preparedness society and affiliated with the National Security League in the fall of 1915. This was a particularly active branch under the leadership of Professor of Geology, William Herbert Hobbs. Hobbs was a devout
supporter of armed intervention by the United States in beh-
half of the Allies, and he constantly attacked the Wilson
Administration for its isolationist tendencies. He was so
alarmed by attitudes in Michigan that he brought a number
of nationally known militants to speak at the University in
an effort to counteract the ideas spread by many "pacificists"
who had lectured there. Hobbs' strongest support in this
work came from Professor Claude Halstead Van Tyne of the
History Department. Like Hobbs, Van Tyne was a preparedness
stalwart who decried Wilson's reluctance to join the war
against Germany.\footnote{1}{Howard H. Peckham, The Making of the University of
Michigan, 1817-1967 (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan
Press, 1967), pp. 133, 135. (Hereinafter cited as Peckham,
University of Michigan.)}

As a young man, Van Tyne had pursued a career in banking.
During his early twenties he was employed by the Iosco County
Savings Bank in northern Michigan. Although he rapidly ad-
vanced to cashier, Van Tyne forsook a promising future in
finance for the academic profession. In 1896, at the age of
27, he graduated from the University of Michigan. For the
next two years, Van Tyne studied at the universities of Hei-
delberg, Leipzig, and Paris. He returned to the United
States and in 1900 received the Ph. D. from the University
of Pennsylvania. Van Tyne remained at Pennsylvania as a
senior fellow in history until January, 1903. After termi-
nating his position with Pennsylvania, Van Tyne worked with
the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D. C., where after six months he accepted an assistant professorship at the University of Michigan.²

When Van Tyne began his teaching duties at Michigan, he had already published his dissertation, The Loyalists in the American Revolution (1902). During 1904 he wrote two additional works, The Letters of Daniel Webster and A Guide to the Archives of the Government of the United States in Washington. In 1905 Van Tyne completed The American Revolution, 1776-1783, a volume in the American Nation Series. When Andrew C. McLaughlin left the University of Michigan for the University of Chicago in 1906, Van Tyne was promoted to professor and made head of the department of American History. His scholarly achievements were recognized further in 1911, when he was appointed head of the University’s department of History.³

Although administrative duties consumed much of his time, Van Tyne continued his scholarly activities. He wrote a number of articles for the American Historical Review and


³ Ibid.
in 1913-1914 he lectured in France for the Harvard Foundation. 4

From 1916 to 1921 Van Tyne was a member of the board of editors of the American Historical Review. 5 In 1921, he went to India, on invitation, as the guest of the English Governor of that country. 6 In India, Van Tyne made a study of the English colonial government which appeared in 1923 under the title of India in Ferment. During 1927, he held the Sir George Watson chair of American history, literature, and institutions in the universities of Great Britain. In this capacity, Van Tyne delivered a number of lectures which were published in 1927 as England and America, Rivals in the American Revolution. 7

In 1922 Van Tyne had published the first volume of a proposed three volume History of the Founding of the American Republic. This was to be his major scholarly undertaking and the first volume, The Causes of the War of Independence, was followed in 1923 by The War of Independence, American Phase. The former work was a synthesis of the existing data on the


5 Croas, "Van Tyne."

6 Claude H. Van Tyne to Jesse Reeves, December 15, 1921, Claude H. Van Tyne Papers, Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Hereinafter cited as Van Tyne Papers, MHC.) See also: Robert Wilberforce to Claude H. Van Tyne, May 2, 1922, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

7 Cross, "Van Tyne."
causes of the Revolution, whereas the latter was hailed as
a substantial contribution to American history and won a
Pulitzer Prize. Van Tyne never completed the third volume
of his proposed study of the Founding of the American Re-
public although he had most of the research completed when
serious illness interrupted his work.8

After 1911, as head of the Michigan History Department and
a scholar of note, Van Tyne's academic influence extended well
beyond the University of Michigan. University officials looked
upon Van Tyne's scholarly achievements and his prestige within
the academic community as an asset to the University. Van Tyne,
by 1911, had firmly ingratiated himself within the Michigan ad-
ministrative hierarchy and was one of the most influential mem-
bers of the University community. His stature at Michigan re-
sulted partly from his association with William L. Clements,
a member of the University Board of Regents. Shortly after
joining the Michigan teaching staff in 1903, Van Tyne had de-
veloped a close working relationship with Clements who was
interested in American colonial history. Since this was Van
Tyne's area of specialization, Clements began to consult him
on the colonial era. Van Tyne used this working alliance
with Clements to establish a lifetime friendship which was
most advantageous.9

In the decade preceding World War I Van Tyne had visited

8 Gross, "Van Tyne."
9 Peckham, University of Michigan, p. 99.
Europe a number of times and was in England when war broke out in August, 1914. 10 Impressed by English and French cultural achievements, Van Tyne had developed a genuine affinity for these nations. Van Tyne found a close personal friend in the English historian Sir George Otto Trevelyan, who aroused and personalized his concern over the Allied cause. The same was true of his French acquaintances who kept him informed on their determination to resist German aggression. 11

Van Tyne was convinced of the righteousness of the crusade against Germany, and his commitment to the Allies was complete. He argued that "Prussian militarism and German arrogance" had to be crushed, and that the United States should prepare itself for immediate intervention on behalf of the Allies. Such intervention, according to Van Tyne, could be easily accomplished. For only "a few Germans and Irish" diluted the intense hatred of the American people for the Teutonic menace. 12 But, if the United States failed to intervene, it should at least learn the lesson of preparedness demonstrated by the war. Germany would never have made its "wholly criminal"

10 American Consul, Southampton England to Claude H. Van Tyne, August 25, 1914, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

11 Claude H. Van Tyne to James H. Hyde, January 11, 1915, Van Tyne Papers, MHC. See also: Claude H. Van Tyne and Sir George Otto Trevelyan Correspondence, Van Tyne Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Hereinafter cited as Van Tyne Papers, WLC.)

12 Claude H. Van Tyne to James H. Hyde, January 11, 1915, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
assault if England, France, and Russia had maintained their defenses at a high level. 13

At the University of Michigan, Van Tyne's advocacy of preparedness as well as his desire to see the United States "aid the Allies" found favor with the other militants.14 He committed himself to the objectives of the National Security League and joined with Hobbs in spreading preparedness propaganda throughout the State of Michigan.15 No available channel for promoting preparedness was left untried, and during 1916, when Congress was debating the various defense bills, Van Tyne actively pressured his congressman to support the strongest defense measure possible.16

Disheartened when Congress passed the compromise National Defense Act of 1916, Van Tyne became even more frustrated as the national presidential election approached. He opposed President Wilson because he had "handled Germany too tenderly," but the Republican presidential nominee, Charles Evans Hughes, a "timorous, tabby politician," who sprang only at "small game," he believed unfit for the Presidency also. Hughes' brand of progressivism failed to appeal to Van Tyne. Hughes shrank from attacking the real menace of the war and preferred

13 Frederic L. Faxon to Claude H. Van Tyne, August 23, 1914, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
14 Claude H. Van Tyne to James H. Hyde, January 11, 1915, in Ibid.
15 Resume of Claude H. Van Tyne's activities prior to 1916, in Ibid.
16 Representative George A. Hud to Claude H. Van Tyne, April 15, 1916, in Ibid.
to talk on domestic evils, an attitude which Van Tyne said was "long characteristic of both great parties." After vacillating between Wilson and Hughes, Van Tyne, in October, came out for Hughes, on the grounds that Hughes was now showing courage in the face of the Prussian "Bugaboo." 17

Hughes' new bravery convinced Van Tyne that the Republicans would resolve international problems to the disadvantage of Germany. This confession of faith in Republicanism was congratulated by those who agreed with Van Tyne. Van Tyne and his preparedness oriented colleagues maintained that they held no personal prejudices against Wilson. The real issue, as they saw it, was the attitude which future historians would take toward an electorate that would return a timid individual like Wilson to the Presidency during a world crisis. The only moral thing, according to the League's militants, was to turn Wilson out of office. 18

These arguments of the preparedness forces failed to arouse the voters against the Democrats. Instead, the electorate responded to the cry "he kept us out of war" and re-elected Wilson. Van Tyne reacted to this setback by instituting a program in the History Department at Michigan to inform the voters of the German menace to mankind. This exercise was applauded by Andrew C. McLaughlin, historian and

18 E. Henry Lacombe to Claude R. Van Tyne, September 23, 1916, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
political scientist of the University of Chicago. McLaughlin agreed with Van Tyne on the need for anti-German propaganda. He, like Van Tyne, saw the job of the academic community as that of lecturing and writing in every way that would be of consequence in the effort against Germany.19

In the State of Michigan, Professors Van Tyne and Hobbs conducted a personal crusade to inform the public on the National Security League's interpretation of the war. They spoke in almost every town that could muster an audience, and under the sponsorship of the National Security League, Van Tyne addressed virtually all the students in the State's normal schools.20 His patriotic exertions were praised by many preparedness minded midwesterners. Special acclaim was given his efforts by persons in the Michigan educational system who were as intense in their hatred of "pacificists" as was Van Tyne.21

The activities of Van Tyne and Hobbs were favored by a number of people associated with the University of Michigan. Some of the officials of the University had been early supporters of preparedness defense measures. In 1915, a "straw poll" showed over sixty per cent of the faculty in favor of

19 Andrew C. McLaughlin to Claude H. Van Tyne, May 10, 1917, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

20 Resume of Claude H. Van Tyne's activities prior to 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MCL.

21 William L. Clements to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 22, 1917, Van Tyne Papers, MHC. See also: Northern State Normal School to Claude H. Van Tyne, June 28, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
military training for the students. On this same issue, the male students had been closely divided with a slight majority supporting on-campus military drill. In contrast to these attitudes, the Board of Regents in 1915, had opposed the implementation of preparedness programs by the University. Later, the Regents' attitude changed, and some of the Board became strong supporters of the National Security League's programs for unifying the people and preparing the country for war.22

Van Tyne and Hobbs were alarmed over the sizable minority of people at the University who, according to the "straw poll," failed to support military preparedness. In their propaganda activities, Van Tyne and Hobbs refused to tolerate dissent from the League's position on the needs for adequate defense. They were also critical of those who questioned the merits of the Allied cause. All who failed to uphold the Allies were pictured by the League partisans as traitors who endangered national security and who should be banished from respectable society. This attitude of hostility to those who opposed the war eventually pervaded the University and it became extremely noticeable in the higher echelons of the school.23

After war was declared, Van Tyne was among those leading a movement to discharge from the University all individuals whose attitudes savored of disloyalty to the Allies or pacifism. Van Tyne and his supporters were backed by Clements,

22 Peckham, University of Michigan, p. 123.
23 Ibid.
who maintained that the University should rid itself of persons who questioned the merits of the war against Germany. Some members of the press joined the movement to remove from the University people who opposed the war. A segment of the Michigan press agreed with Van Tyne’s allegations that certain individuals at Michigan would eventually regret their lackluster war records. Those newspapers praised Van Tyne for the forthright position he took in a statement of his views.

The first direct confrontation between the "militants" and the anti-war faction at the University of Michigan came late in 1917. Professor Carl Eggert of the German Department and Robbs, because of their continuing ideological vindetta, were called before the Board of Regents. Eggert’s sympathetic attitude toward the German Government had been challenged by Robbs. The latter, along with Van Tyne, found Eggert’s anti-war disposition totally unacceptable and a danger to the University. Van Tyne enlisted the aid of Clements, who used his influence with the Regents to call Eggert to account. Robbs presented the accusations against Eggert before the Regents in October, 1917. The Board upheld the charges and Eggert was dismissed. The National Security League then took up the case and, in support of Robbs and Van Tyne, asked that an inquiry

24 William L. Clements to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 22, 1917, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
25 Stuart H. Ferry to Claude H. Van Tyne, December 18, 1917, in Ibid.
26 William L. Clements to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 22, 1917, in Ibid.
be made into the loyalty of all University employees, a
motion "quickly tabled" by the Regents. 27

Van Tyne defended Eggert's dismissal as having been pro-
voked by the "very wild and extravagant" things he had said
against the United States. Eggert's release was fully jus-
tified since his sympathy for the enemy was, in Van Tyne's
opinion, a threat to the University and the nation as well.
Van Tyne and his pro-Allied colleagues at the University
resolved to be more watchful for such alien influences.
Their continued vigilance brought the release of five more
instructors of German. The official reason for these dis-
missals was the overstaffing occasioned by the decrease in
enrollment in German courses, but this was a subterfuge to
cover a further "cleaning up" of the German department. 28

Other departments at the University also suffered aca-
demic war casualties. A professor in the Architectural
Department was dropped because the militants believed that
he had reservations about the war against Germany. Even
Van Tyne thought it unwise to let him go, since there were
doubts as to his actual sentiments. 29 The problems at the
University of Michigan during World War I differed little
from those of other midwestern schools. These colleges

27 Peckham, University of Michigan, p. 132.
28 Ibid. See also: Claude R. Van Tyne to Frederic L.
Paxon, April 12, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, U.Mich.
29 Claude R. Van Tyne to William L. Clements, April 29,
1918, in Ibid.
were located in an area with a high concentration of Germans. The ethnic characteristics of the population, therefore, made the midwestern schools particularly suspect of pro-German sympathies.30

It was this high percentage of midwesterners of German extraction that provided Van Tyne a unique challenge and opportunity. He was able to work in an area considered hostile to preparedness and only lukewarm on the war effort. Realizing the opportunities offered by these conditions, Van Tyne worked with incessant zeal and achieved measurable success. His efforts at converting the Midwest to national preparedness pleased the leaders of the National Security League and he became one of the organization's most prized members. Van Tyne's accomplishments were praised by his League associates and in 1913 League officials added him as a full time staff member.31

In the fall and winter of 1917, the League prepared a major program for "Patriotism through Education," headed by Robert McNutt McElroy, the League's Educational Director. McElroy was a long time friend of Van Tyne and he believed that Van Tyne would be a great asset to the League's educational program.32 In November, 1917, McElroy asked Van Tyne

30 Peckham, University of Michigan, pp. 132-133.
31 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, January 4, 1913, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
32 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, November 21, 1914, in Ibid.
if he would join the drive for patriotism through education.

The plan was to secure Van Tyne as a full time worker, initially lecturing in New England. This work would be similar to Van Tyne's Michigan activities and would allow him to gain experience through a close association with the League's headquarters in New York City.33

Having secured Van Tyne's promise to cooperate, in January, 1918, McElroy addressed himself to the problem of getting Van Tyne a leave from his duties at the University. McElroy contacted Harry Burns Hutchinson, the President of the University, and he also asked Hobbs to use his influence in behalf of the League's request.34 But the plan for Van Tyne's release was only partially approved by the Michigan trustees.

The arrangements allowed Van Tyne to receive his full salary, but until the end of the school year in April he could work for the League only on a half-time basis. This limited Van Tyne's availability and forced him to select Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois as his official territory. Traveling costs and other expenses which Van Tyne incurred in achieving the "fullest possible success" for the educational program would be paid by the organization.35

The conditions of Van Tyne's release curtailed the effectiveness of the League's educational program in the Midwest.

33 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, January 4, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
34 Ibid.
35 Letter to Dr. M. F. Libby, January 24, 1918, in Ibid.
Under the circumstances, Van Tyne was unable to fully devote himself to League endeavors until April. In an effort to infuse more vigor into the crusade, McElroy began pressing Van Tyne to ask for an immediate release from his University duties. McElroy argued that the League needed him full time to speak outside the Midwest and to aid in drawing plans for the proposed revision of the nation's educational curriculum. League officials wanted a new type of universal education which would produce citizens loyal to the government. This system of education would render future patriotic propaganda drives during times of national crisis unnecessary. Due to the heterogeneous composition of the population of the United States, the task was one of constructing a national unity of ideas rather than relying upon a nationalism premised on ties of blood. In presenting this idea, the League asked labor unions, trade organizations, social groups, and churches to help implement its plans.

McElroy wanted to bring Van Tyne to New York where he would serve in organizing the patriotic educational program. After that task was completed, the League would dispatch Van Tyne to lecture throughout New England. McElroy regretted that Van Tyne would have to serve away from home, but he was needed elsewhere. Since many of the nation's young men were

36 Claude H. Van Tyne to Jesse Reeves, February 8, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
37 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, February 4, 1918, in ibid.
being called to serve overseas, Van Tyne's patriotic sacrifices were insignificant. Participation on the home front and the exactions it made on one's life, according to McElroy, presented the older, less physically fit, a glorious opportunity. These domestic labors were "the next thing to trench warfare" and, since both McElroy and Van Tyne were denied service in the trenches, they must make what contribution they could to the war effort.38

The University of Michigan was unresponsive to the efforts to release Van Tyne before April and he had to content himself with the part-time working arrangement. He continued to be active in preparedness work in the Midwest and boasted of the mileage he was covering in behalf of national security. During the first four months he traveled over six thousand miles throughout Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan and spoke to over thirty thousand people. Van Tyne was pleased at the public disgust evoked by his relations of German "atrocities" and he believed that the Midwest was awakening to the realities of the war. Van Tyne found the League work both enjoyable and rewarding. It was his consolation for having been denied "the splendid opportunity for direct [military] service."39

38 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, February 4, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

39 Claude H. Van Tyne to Jesse Reeves, February 8, 1918, in Ibid.
While working in the Midwest for the good of "civilization" and striving to enlighten public opinion on the war, Van Tyne remained involved in local preparedness activities. His contribution to national defense was recognized in February, 1918, when the Governor of Michigan appointed him to the War Preparedness Committee for his ward. This was a local committee and Van Tyne's appointment was made on the grounds of his devotion to national security. At this same time, Van Tyne involved himself in the persecution of Illinois residents suspected of disloyalty.

The situation in Illinois arose when McElroy was informed by Mrs. Cyrus Hall McCormick that Liberty Loan solicitors in some Illinois counties had their appeals met with guns. Upon learning of these events, McElroy contacted Van Tyne and told him the situation ought to be investigated. Hostility to Liberty Loan solicitors was, according to League spokesmen, traitorous. Van Tyne was told to visit these recalcitrant Illinois counties and to locate the traitors. McElroy then wrote to the President of the University of Illinois, informed him that Van Tyne was available for lectures in that State, and suggested that Van Tyne be given occasion to speak.

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40 L. A. Chase to Claude H. Van Tyne, February 9, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
41 Ralph Duff to Claude H. Van Tyne, February 23, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WILC.
42 Harriett Hammond McCormick to Robert M. McElroy, February 25, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
43 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, March 2, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WILC.
University of Illinois offered its full cooperation and assured McIlroy that it would aid the League in the drive for national unity. 44

In urging loyalty and patriotism upon the residents of Illinois and the other midwestern states, Van Tyne sought to create hatred for Germany and respect for the Allied Powers. Addressing himself to denunciations of the Teutonic race, Van Tyne tried to convince his listeners that the German people had been transformed into the unwitting tools of the iniquitous German leaders. He decried the political systems of Germany and Austria, where autocracy subordinated the individual to the state. Autocracy, in Van Tyne's opinion, transmuted the citizen into a demoralized servant of a despotic society. In contrast, he cited the importance of the individual in the democratic west, where the United States, England, and France offered hope to oppressed peoples everywhere. It was Van Tyne's conviction that two systems as diametrically opposed as democracy and autocracy could never coexist. The world, as Van Tyne saw it, was destined to become "all autocratic or all democratic." 45

The German people were pictured by Van Tyne as oppressed unconscious servants of an inhuman system. Innately, Germans were the same as all mankind. But Van Tyne argued that

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44 Chairman, Extension War Committee, University of Illinois to Claude H. Van Tyne, February 27, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
45 Lecture, October 5, 1917, Van Tyne Papers, WLCI.
centuries of subordination to the state had shorn the Germans of their humane instincts. This transformation had destroyed the moral inhibitions of the Teutonic race. Such dehumanization, according to Van Tyne, was the work of the absolute monarchs dating from the time of Charles V. For centuries, German kings had told their subjects that the Kaiser was chosen by God to rule over the Teutons. This concept demanded total obedience to the king and absolutely subordinated the individual to the state. Authoritarianism in this degree, in Van Tyne's evaluation, created a people willing to commit any atrocity on the command of their leaders. Van Tyne declared that the situation in Germany resulted from years of public indoctrination in education, press, literature, and philosophy. Other nations had stood idle while this monolithic danger was created in Germany, and now, the democracies had to destroy this menace or perish.46

Years of mental conditioning had convinced Germans that they should rule the world. Van Tyne told his midwestern audiences that the Allies were fighting to thwart German territorial aspirations in Africa, South America, and Belgium. Were the Kaiser to succeed in these areas, Germany would eventually rule every nation. Teutonic customs and methods would dominate the world. German would supplant English as the earth's foremost language and, according to Van Tyne,
"That threat alone is good enough reason for going to war."

Were Germany to win the war, Van Tyne believed that the United States would be threatened by external and internal forces which could turn the nation into a German puppet. It was Van Tyne's judgment that the external threat would be from Germany and its influences in South America. Internally, the American people, who admired nothing as much as they did success, might think the triumphant German system desirable and adopt it as their own. For the United States to come to this end would be, in Van Tyne's opinion, disastrous for mankind. 47

German achievements, when compared with those of the Allied powers, were, according to Van Tyne, inconsequential. A graphic illustration of the disparate intellectual and moral character between the French and the Germans was illustrated to Van Tyne by gifts that each of these nations had presented the United States. Germany had shown her good will with a bronze statue of Frederick the Great on horseback, while France, identified by Van Tyne as the cultural center of modern civilization, had manifest its friendship towards America by giving the Goddess of Liberty. Van Tyne saw the disparity between these gifts as a clear indication of the differences in the values of these two nations. 48 German material accomplishments

47 Lecture, October 5, 1917, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
48 Ibid.
were incomparably inferior to the virtues of the French. But now, France and its allies were locked in a struggle with Germany which would determine the course of civilization for all time. Since August, 1914, the Allies had been fighting the battles of all free nations. It was the duty of Americans to support their country's belated war effort and to see that the German plague on mankind was eradicated. Van Tyne concluded that when the final victory came it would be the responsibility of the United States to see that the crime of the Franco-Prussian war was redressed. This could be done by returning Alsace-Lorraine to France with assurances that never again could those provinces be taken by Germany.

These arguments were accepted by many of Van Tyne's listeners and the League was pleased with his success. The one objection which League officials voiced to Van Tyne's methods of operation was his concern over money. In his travel throughout the Midwest, Van Tyne had been "unnecessarily careful regarding personal expenses" and it was feared this would curtail his efficiency. In order to operate effectively, Van Tyne needed to spend money on luncheons, dinner engagements, and travel. Such costs were readily borne by the League which had ample funds for efforts that would gain publicity and support for its programs.

49 Lecture, February 25, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
McElroy noted that the League's money had been contributed for the purposes of informing the American people on the significance of the war, the risks involved in premature peace proposals, and the necessity for a public educational system which would make for an efficient democracy. Work conducted toward these ends should never be curtailed due to a concern over expenditures. The organization realized that nothing short of complete success was acceptable and, until that was attained, the League "must stop at nothing."\(^50\)

In achieving the League's goals, McElroy heartily endorsed Van Tyne's emphasis on creating favorable sentiment toward the English and French. In order to inculcate these pro-Allied attitudes the history of the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Napoleonic Wars, and Anglo-American relations would have to be recast. The history of these events would have to reflect pro-English and pro-French sentiments. McElroy encouraged Van Tyne to revise these historical interpretations. The League offered to publish any lecture which Van Tyne would write from this new historical perspective. McElroy pointed out that a published lecture of this type would be an excellent tract for distribution to public school teachers. It would present a pro-Allied historical interpretation to teachers and was

\(^{50}\) Robert M. McElroy to Claude M. Van Tyne, March 8, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLC.

suited for the League's patriotism through education programs. 51

As an historian Van Tyne believed, as did others, that he could do much to foster British-American friendship. 52 However, this would take many years and could be achieved only by recasting American history in a new, pro-British, perspective. Van Tyne assumed this task and, in his pro-English writings, questions of professional historical ethics failed to concern him. He voiced no apprehension over revising historical interpretations to conform with current exigencies, and he stood ready to suppress any opinions which differed from his own. Van Tyne argued that the suppression of hostile views was eminently justified. Intellectual objectivity during times of national danger was, to him, disgusting. It was Van Tyne's view that "only those who have cultivated mentality at the expense of moral fibre can at this stage take that attitude which they cynically call judicial." 53

In his preparedness activities Van Tyne became one of the foremost advocates of a new history that would portray England and France as ideal nations and cast the Germans as a vile demoralized people. Here, Van Tyne openly proposed to copy from the "German notebook." He wanted to convert

51 Robert M. McKelroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, March 3, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
52 F. J. Cockburn to Claude H. Van Tyne, January 28, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
53 Claude H. Van Tyne to J. Franklin Jameson, April 26, 1918, in Ibid.
"the most wonderful fact of the age" into a tool of "significance for our own educational system." This meant using America's public schools to produce loyal citizens devoted to the state. If accomplished, this would redirect the traditional course of American education along new lines that would glorify the national heritage and inculcate emotional patriotic ideals in the people.54

Other historians supported Van Tyne in his work and the National Security League secured "practically unlimited support" for the drive for patriotic education.55 Van Tyne and Andrew C. McLaughlin were so dedicated to the idea of rewriting the past to meet current formulae that they began a revision of their co-authored American history textbook.56 Although their professed goal was to bring the book up to date, their "Tory" treatment of Anglo-American relations provoked a controversy. Van Tyne and McLaughlin were accused of pro-English interpretations and even McLaughlin was concerned over Van Tyne's interpretation of World War I and the Wilson years.57 This was something of a new attitude for McLaughlin, who had been one of the foremost advocates of the need to rewrite history.58 His objection,

54 See single sheet resume on "The most wonderful educational fact of the age..." Van Tyne Papers, WCL.
55 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, March 2, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MRC.
56 Andrew C. McLaughlin to Claude H. Van Tyne, May 10, 1918, in Ibid.
57 Andrew C. McLaughlin to Claude H. Van Tyne, October 7, 1919, in Ibid. See also: New York Times, September 20, 1921.
however, came more from disagreement with Van Tyne on the merits of Wilson than from a concern over historical objectivity. It is also possible that McLaughlin had re-assessed his earlier attitude and in less emotional times decided he had been wrong. Nevertheless, during the League's educational drive he joined Van Tyne, Hobbs, McElroy and other advocates of patriotic education in a move to alter national sentiment along fundamental lines.

In the Midwest, Hobbs and Van Tyne were the surveyors of the new attitudes with Van Tyne alone reaching over fifty thousand people prior to April, 1918.59 He addressed the teachers of Cleveland, Toledo, Cincinnati, Indianapolis as well as the student bodies of Indiana University and Notre Dame. In his explanations of the "causes and issues" of the war, Van Tyne urged his listeners to spread his revelations to all "with whom they came in contact."80 On the University of Michigan campus, Major General Leonard Wood, Henry L. Stimson, and Frederic R. Coudert all spoke under the auspices of the League.61

At the University of Michigan, Van Tyne and Hobbs closely watched the college Reserve Officers Training Corps program and observed the surrounding area for intimations of disloyalty.

59 Claude H. Van Tyne to W. E. Grainger, April 12, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, NLCL.
60 Resume of the preparedness activities of Claude H. Van Tyne and William H. Hobbs, Van Tyne Papers, NLCL.
61 Feckham, University of Michigan, p. 128. See also: New York Times, April 8, 1917.
The University officials cooperated with these "militants" as much as possible and sought to create an image of unimpeachable support of the war. Undoubtedly, the University's attitude was partially due to the preparedness zeal of Hobbs and Van Tyne. Hobbs concentrated on local affairs while Van Tyne's mission was lecturing in the surrounding area. This arrangement between Van Tyne and Hobbs continued until Van Tyne's leave of absence was granted in April, 1918, at which time he left for the League's New York headquarters and its broader horizons.

62 Peckham, University of Michigan, pp. 131-136.

63 Resume of the preparedness activities of Claude H. Van Tyne and William H. Hobbs, Van Tyne Papers, MLCU.
CHAPTER III
Patriotism Through Education

The most ambitious project undertaken by the National Security League after the United States declared war on Germany was its program for "Patriotism through Education." This effort, designed to engender patriotism and inform the people on the issues of the war, began early in 1917. The program was supported by many of the nation's top educators who placed their prestige and educational skills at the disposal of the League. These men assumed a major portion of the responsibility for giving the public an education in patriotism and eventually they were granted control of the whole educational project.

The most significant development in the patriotism through education crusade was the overwhelming approval it received from the larger public school systems. Boards of education in a number of the major cities joined the drive for patriotic education and aided the program of the National Security League to transform the public school system into a purveyor of nationalism. Adult Americans were asked to give one or two nights per week to attend loyalty classes, under League sponsorship, and to do what they could to create a unified American spirit.\(^1\)

\(^1\) New York Times, February 9; March 10, 22, 1918.
Robert McNutt McElroy, the League's Educational Director, contacted Professor Claude Halstead Van Tyne of the University of Michigan on February 12, 1918, and informed him of the League's need for an individual to supervise the patriotism through education project. McElroy wanted one professor who could devote full-time to coordinating the activities of the drive. The task involved scheduling speaking engagements for the educators who had joined the campaign. In addition, the coordinator would have to gather research material from which the educators could write their lectures. Van Tyne had already been successful in earlier League activities in the Midwest and he was the professor that McElroy wanted.\(^2\) There was, however, little likelihood that Van Tyne could join the League full-time before April of 1918, and McElroy felt that the post of coordinator would have to be assigned before then.

For months Van Tyne had been pressing University of Michigan officials for a leave of absence that would enable him to devote his full energies to the preparedness movement. Unsuccessful in this, he had been granted a partial release from his University duties until the end of the 1917-1918 school year. This arrangement enabled him to work part-time for the League until April, 1918. Then he would be granted

\(^2\) Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, February 12, 1918, Claude H. Van Tyne Papers, Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Hereinafter cited as Van Tyne Papers, MHC.)
a leave of absence for the summer. Van Tyne exploited the part time arrangement to its limits and, concentrating on the states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, he launched a one man preparedness crusade. He lectured throughout these states and the League believed he was converting the Midwest to preparedness. The organization's hierarchy was grateful for Van Tyne's devotion and decided to bring him into their inner councils. Van Tyne revealed in this work. He desired to do all he could for the League and on March 27, 1913, he notified the organization that he would arrive in New York on April 8, to assume full-time duties.

Shortly before leaving for New York, Van Tyne learned that he was to assume the post of coordinator for the patriotism through education program. This was a radical departure from his expectations. McElroy had led Van Tyne to believe that the League wanted him to lecture in New England and the Eastern portions of the country. The post of coordinator made this impossible because it required Van Tyne's presence in New York and limited his speaking opportunities to that vicinity. But even so, his enthusiasm remained high. He seemed well satisfied with the arrangement and voiced no objections to his new assignment.

Van Tyne found the coordinating duties challenging. Although they differed from the activities to which he was

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3 M. E. Thomas to Claude H. Van Tyne, March 27, 1913, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
4 Ibid.
accustomed, they offered experience that he felt would be valuable. The objectives of his work were to destroy the effects of German propaganda by assuring the productivity of the League's lecturers. A number of these speakers were members of the organization's "Flying Squadron" who traveled around the country lecturing on patriotism. Van Tyne furnished this group with lecture materials and wrote pamphlets which were distributed wherever they spoke. These duties were less confining than Van Tyne had anticipated and he used the extra time for lecturing. League officials were happy to employ him as a part-time speaker and during April and May he spoke almost every evening in New York or vicinity.

These activities took Van Tyne on speaking engagements to Newark and Trenton, New Jersey; Richmond, Virginia; Harrisburg, Scranton, and Reading, Pennsylvania; Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester, New York; Bridgeport and Waterbury, Connecticut, and a number of smaller cities. Most of his audiences were composed of public school teachers and his lectures emphasized the need for patriotic education. Many educators responded to his pleas and signed cards stating their intentions to use the educational materials of the National Security League. The pinnacle of these campaigning endeavors came when he visited the University of Virginia

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5 Resume of the preparedness activities of Claude H. Van Tyne and William H. Bobbs, Claude H. Van Tyne Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Hereinafter cited as Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.)
where he delivered three lectures. These talks were well attended and Van Tyne was elated over the favorable responses of his audiences.  

Persistent campaigning brought Van Tyne the recognition that he sought. He loved to boast of speaking from the same platforms as "Governor Edge of New Jersey, Senator Harding and Senator Calder" as well as distinguished personalities from all the Allied nations. Van Tyne was also grateful for the praise given his efforts in behalf of Red Cross drives and was elated by his election to the Executive Committee of the National Security League.  

The latter honor, in recognition of the meritorious service he was rendering the preparedness movement, marked Van Tyne as a member of the League's elite. League officials had no doubts about his loyalty and recognized that his commitment to the organization was complete. Van Tyne was always mindful of the true nature of his work and boasted that "I do make everything bend to the one aim of arousing public opinion to the pitch that it cannot be turned towards a premature peace." This statement revealed a motive which, while played down by the League, was one of its primary objectives.  

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6 "Patriotism Through Education" in Michigan and Vicinity, April, 1919, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
7 Albert T. Tamblyn to Claude H. Van Tyne, June 10, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC. See also: Henry L. West to Claude H. Van Tyne, May 10, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
8 Claude H. Van Tyne to E. M. Carroll, May 8, 1919, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
The organization avowed, throughout the educational drive in 1918, that its purposes were to inform the public on the issues of the war and to promote a unified national spirit. These were the official objectives and any dangers inherent in premature peace were mentioned as lesser facets of the movement. Yet Van Tyne made it plain that the prevention of a premature peace was a primary objective of the League and his number one concern. He was convinced that the avoidance of an untimely peace was a worthy goal and he excoriated those with the audacity to question its merit. Furthermore, he argued that the League's agitation was a prime factor in keeping the nation's courage up and that the fate of the world hinged upon this work. The future of mankind, in Van Tyne's opinion, depended upon "the morale in the countries which are struggling for liberty," and no one had the right to criticize or act in any manner that was prejudicial to the public courage.9

This conviction caused Van Tyne to attack publications which sought to print objective accounts of the war. He denounced all nonpartisan commentary on the grounds that only "cold-blooded intellectuals" would assume "a lofty superiority to the aroused moral indignation of the world." An unbiased mental attitude was evidence of a decadent "moral fibre" and characterized those traitors who were determined to undermine the morale of the nation's youth.10

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9 Claude H. Van Tyne to J. Franklin Jameson, April 26, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLC.
10 Ibid.
identified the liberal magazine The Nation as the foremost
surveyor of such seditious propaganda and charged it with
giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Its anti-war arguments
were identified as efforts to undermine national determination
and bring defeat to the Allied Powers. Van Tyne believed,
however, that the efforts of The Nation would fail. He al-
leged that in less than six months the magazine's "pacifist
and anti-British attitudes" had cost it two-thirds of its
subscribers and that it was tottering on the brink of bank-
ruptcy. These statistics pleased Van Tyne and he admitted
that "it cannot go to ruin any too fast to suit me."11

Van Tyne did not confine his attacks to The Nation. A
pro-German article in the American Historical Review aroused
his anger and he wrote the publication's managing editor
"rebuking" him. The article, which contained passages that
Van Tyne felt were "anti-French and anti-British," showed
utter neglect of the "moral issues" of the war and was a
discredit to the historical profession. This placed the
Review in a category similar to that of The Nation.12

The determination to counter all propaganda which failed
to support the Allies was an extension of Van Tyne's official
League activities. In addition to coordinating the patriotism

11 Claude H. Van Tyne to Sir George Otto Trevelyan, June
13, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
12 Ibid.
through education drive and the nightly lectures, he was
writing pamphlets for distribution to public school teachers.
Van Tyne believed that by convincing the nation's teachers of
the merits in the League's programs the public schools could
be made the number one ally of the preparedness movement. 13
In pursuit of this objective Van Tyne contacted United States
Commissioner of Education P. P. Claxton, to inquire if the
government was dealing with the educational problems posed
by the war. He told Claxton that many public school text-
books were filled with data which discredited England and
France. Such information hurt the war effort by undermining
public confidence in the Allies. Therefore, Van Tyne be-
lieved it essential that these books be rewritten and made
to comport with present realities. History texts and readers
should be given first attention. They should be phrased to
inspire friendship toward the Allies and all mention of Ger-
man achievements ought to be deleted. Van Tyne felt it imper-
avative that references to German successes which were credited
to that nation's "brute policy of blood and iron" be omitted.
Information of this type created an image of German invinci-
bility which undermined the morale of the nation's youth. 14

Although Claxton agreed on some points, he refused to go

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13 Claude H. Van Tyne to A. M. Carroll, May 8, 1918, Van
Tyne Papers, WLCL.
14 Claude H. Van Tyne to P. P. Claxton, June 18, 1918,
in Ibid.
as far as Van Tyne thought necessary. He was willing to press for the elimination of all textbook phrases that glorified Prussia or degraded the Allies, but he was unwilling to support any movement to eliminate the teaching of German from the schools, colleges, and universities. According to Claxton, this was tantamount to throwing "out the baby with the bath," and to prove his point, he cited the current shortages of German speaking people in several departments of the government. Government agencies were in need of people trained in German, and as the war continued, this shortage was expected to grow.

He told Van Tyne that while the study of German declined in the United States, it was increasing in England and France. These nations were preparing for both current and post-war demands, and Claxton was convinced that the United States should do the same. Claxton, however, supported the League's inquiry into the content of German textbooks. He agreed with Van Tyne that many of the public school texts contained propaganda that could hurt the war effort. Claxton requested that the League make the results of its investigation available to the government.

In his efforts to obtain the revision of school texts, Van Tyne turned away opportunities to write textbooks which

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15 P. P. Claxton to Claude H. Van Tyne, June 19, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
16 P. P. Claxton to Claude H. Van Tyne, June 11, 1918, in Ibid.
met the League's specifications. C. L. Barstow, editor for
the Century Company, asked Van Tyne to write an American
history textbook which the League would recommend for the
public schools. Van Tyne refused to write such a book, but
he gave Barstow the League's outline for a text of this type.
He said that any American history book which Barstow's com-
pany published should be scrutinized for information that was
hostile to the Allies or favorable to Germany. The accounts
of the "American Revolution" and the "War of 1812" must be
"fair to the British." Van Tyne believed that interpreta-
tions of these events by American historians in the past
had created a national "antipathy" for the English which
hindered the war effort.17

J. F. McCullough of D. Appleton and Company requested
that Van Tyne write a patriotic history text for the public
schools. McCullough felt there was a "growing demand" in
the high schools for a history of modern Europe written from
an American perspective. The schools needed a modern account
of European history from the reign of Louis XIV through World
War I. Modern European history books used in the public
schools were "tinged strongly" with pro-German propaganda and
a new text was needed. McCullough suggested that his company
might hire someone to write the book and Van Tyne, after read-
ing the manuscript, could have it published under his name.

17 Claude H. Van Tyne to C. L. Barstow, July 2, 1918,
Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
This arrangement could be completed if Van Tyne would submit the "plans and specifications" for a text on modern Europe which would meet the requirements of the League's patriotic educational plans. 18

McCullough argued that the project would be under Van Tyne's supervision. The writer would be directed by Van Tyne and the book would conform to his standards. If the manuscript failed to meet his approval, it could be rejected. McCullough contended that the arrangement was perfect for the production of a text to which Van Tyne would be glad to "claim authorship." Van Tyne rejected this proposition. He refused to attach his name to a textbook which someone else had produced and McCullough's attempts to change his mind failed. 19

Van Tyne's position in the League's campaign for patriotism through education made it unwise for him to associate himself with the writing of any patriotic history text. But while Van Tyne refused to compose a new book, he was revising one of his earlier publications. In 1912, he and Andrew C. McLaughlin of the University of Chicago published a History of the United States for Schools. Since 1914, McLaughlin and Van Tyne had been revising their text. In the spring of 1918, when the League began asking for the revision of

18 J. F. McCullough to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 7, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
19 J. F. McCullough to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 14, 1918, in Ibid.
textbooks, Van Tyne and McLaughlin were pressed by the publisher to finish their work so that it could be placed on sale. An up-to-date version of their book would be competitive with other modern history texts and would yield substantial profit. 20

The revision of Van Tyne's and McLaughlin's History of the United States for Schools took five years. The length of time which the effort consumed was caused by disagreements between the authors over the way in which the Wilson Administration should be interpreted. Van Tyne felt that McLaughlin regarded Wilson too highly and believed that Wilson should be treated harshly. McLaughlin argued that the history text should be nonpartisan and that they should give an objective account of the subject matter. Van Tyne disagreed with this and said he intended for the book to be pro-war and anti-Democrat. 21

The chapters in the history which treated the Wilson Administration were finally written by McLaughlin and he refused to yield to the wishes of Van Tyne. McLaughlin portrayed Wilson as the leader of the Allies and gave a favorable treatment of Wilson's peace plans. These points were protested by Van Tyne. In addition, he argued that the

20 William I. Crane to Andrew C. McLaughlin, September 4, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MLCL. See also: Andrew C. McLaughlin to Claude H. Van Tyne, May 10, 1917, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

21 J. P. McCullough to Claude H. Van Tyne, December 18, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC. See also: Andrew C. McLaughlin to Claude H. Van Tyne, October 5, 1919, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
political implications of the Senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles should be omitted from their text and that Senators Henry Cabot Lodge, William E. Borah, and Hiram W. Johnson ought to be treated as patriots. Van Tyne felt that McLaughlin had treated these Senators as opportunistic politicians and that this interpretation was improper.22

Disagreements between Van Tyne and McLaughlin over the contents of the history text were settled in 1919. But, after their revised book was published, it was attacked as excessively pro-English and inaccurate. The account of the American Revolution was criticized because it praised the English at the expense of America's early patriots. Van Tyne denied these allegations and claimed that the portions of the text dealing with Anglo-American relations had never been revised. According to Van Tyne, he and McLaughlin, in their revision, had only added materials which brought the work "down to date." The book, except for the last chapters, was in the form in which it was first published and, it was, according to Van Tyne, unbiased. He denied that the text had been rewritten for "propaganda purposes" and avowed that it was an objective treatment of American history.23

While Van Tyne was working to eliminate anti-British,

22 Andrew G. McLaughlin to Claude H. Van Tyne, October 7, 1919, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
23 Claude H. Van Tyne to the Editor of the New York Times, September 20, 1921, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
anti-French, and pro-German material from textbooks, the League, in June, 1918, unveiled its major scheme for re-educating the nation's school teachers. In cooperation with public school systems, the organization intended to "establish a new branch of public education." Plans called for the creation of 254 teachers' training camps which would operate during the summer of 1918. In these summer institutes, "Teachers' Plattsburgs," school teachers and administrators would be taught the duties and obligations as well as the rights and privileges of public educators. The League would encourage school officials to re-orient educational activities toward "public, civic, and patriotic purposes" so that the local schools would become the centers of community life. Classroom instructors were to be given special attention. Because of their position, which gave them access to the minds of the nation's youth, the League planned to impress upon them their duty to "create a greater faith in and devotion to America and the basic principles of democracy."  

The Teachers' Plattsburg phase of the League's educational program was part of the effort to counteract criticism of the war and sympathy for the Germans. The objective was to create a national patriotic attitude. Although anti-war sentiment could be attacked in a number of ways, the League selected the public school system as the best tool for

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eradicating what, to the militants, was "un-Americanism." The reluctance of many Americans to support the war against Germany and the absence of a unified patriotic attitude which demanded the destruction of that nation were credited to past inadequacies of the public school curriculum. Public educators had failed to give students a correct understanding of Americanism. In a drive to correct these past errors, the League sought to transform the schools into purveyors of patriotism.

Van Tyne was completely devoted to the League's educational program and worked diligently for its implementation. A glance at his itinerary for the summer of 1918 reveals the depth of his commitment. Throughout April, May, and most of June he canvassed the Northeast and devoted many hours to the work of re-orienting the nation's educational system. In a pamphlet entitled "America's Educational Problem" he outlined some of the "lamentable faults" in the teaching of history and showed how "outmoded" interpretations seriously threatened Anglo-American relations. The League published this booklet and it made a favorable impression among militant circles.25

The League argued that if the deficiencies cited by Van Tyne were corrected, national propaganda drives during times of crisis would be unnecessary. All of the dangers stemming

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25 Resume of the preparedness activities of Claude H. Van Tyne and William B. Robba, Van Tyne Papers, WILC. See also Claude H. Van Tyne to Albert B. McKinley, July 16, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WILC.
from the war were the results of past errors which had to be rectified. The only corrective action possible was a program to re-educate the public, and it was necessary to act at once. McElroy cited the need for an educational propaganda which would illustrate to the public its duty to unite in the drive against Germany. The nation needed to be shown that only a concerted effort at home would assure victory on the battlefield. McElroy characterized the League's program for patriotism through education as an operation to unite the homefront and to illustrate to the world that only a total German defeat would satisfy the American people. The educational activities, which were to bring "mental and spiritual" preparedness, had been necessitated by public ignorance of the issues for which the country were fighting and by the pro-German propaganda that was undermining the nation's morale. To counter these forces of sedition and ignorance the League had initiated an educational program through the public schools as the best means of instructing, inspiring, and unifying public opinion.

When soliciting support for the war effort, League representatives used appeals other than those presented by McElroy. Each speaker in the patriotism through education campaign had a list of reminders, prepared by Van Tyne and other League officials, to guide them in achieving the

greatest effect from their lectures. The campaigners were to make their arguments in support of the war conform to the ethnic characteristics of each audience. Italians were to be reminded of the suffering and losses of Italy at the hands of Austria; Germans were to be told that the war was a moral crusade; the Irish were to be informed that Ireland's existence depended upon an Allied victory; and Jews were to be reminded that they had fared best in democratic countries, and unless the Allies won, their kinsmen in Russia were doomed. 27

In the minds of the League's supporters any measure which enhanced national unity was justifiable. Regardless of the costs, the world had to be awakened to the German threat. But sometimes the public failed to respond to the League's programs. When this happened, the preparedness crusaders momentarily despaired. At one time, Van Tyne felt that the future of the Allies was so gloomy that he found it necessary to "live on faith that right and morality cannot be overcome even by Teutonic autocracy." However, the awakening of the "pacifist world" to the German threat and the arrival of American armies in Europe gave Van Tyne encouragement. He was heartened by the performance of the "splendid young Americans" on the battlefields of Europe, and the defeats they inflicted upon the German armies convinced Van Tyne that the war would soon end. He was certain that the American and

27 Memorandum to the "Speakers on the general issues of the war..." Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
Allied armies would remove the Teutonic menace from the earth. Although the fighting courage of America's soldiers pleased Van Tyne, he was also proud of their conduct off the battlefield. His correspondence was filled with praise of the United States' expeditionary forces in Europe and expressed his belief that the American soldiers were unexcelled as promoters of good will between America and the Allies. Van Tyne frequently expressed the desire to be in uniform himself, and he showed special concern over the welfare of his former students who were in the armed forces. Their promotions in rank pleased Van Tyne and he encouraged them to do their best in the fight against autocracy. In letters to his military friends, Van Tyne assured them that they were preserving democracy and the future of mankind. The war was the greatest event in history and, after Germany was conquered, future generations would be indebted to those who had fought for the Allies. If the soldiers understood the significance of winning Van Tyne believed they would never surrender. They would resolve to see democracy prevail and cease fighting only when it was "again triumphant and marching forward." The Allied armies were capable of achieving this victory only as long as the American people supported the war. It was, therefore, the job of the League and all who cherished

28 Claude H. Van Tyne to J. R. Hayden, June 13, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WICL.
freedom to cultivate a public sentiment which demanded victory over Germany. By victory over Germany, Van Tyne meant an occupation of German soil and the crushing of that nation's capacities for war. This type of triumph Van Tyne promoted in his work for patriotism through education, and he claimed that there was indeed a rising sentiment for Germany's complete defeat.29

These optimistic tones pervaded the letters which Van Tyne wrote his European friends. His correspondence expressed concern for the French and English and lamented the absence of a leader like Theodore Roosevelt to "drive and push" the Allies to victory. But, since the United States had joined the Allies, Van Tyne believed the American people were becoming more patriotic. The nation was united in its hate for Germany. Van Tyne reported that at his lectures, whenever a listener had spoken out for Germany, the audience became restive and threatened violence to those who dared discredit the war effort. War sentiment, by June 1918, had reached the stage where it was unsafe for a "pro-German or pacifist ... to show his face or utter a word in public." This was a point beyond which, in Van Tyne's opinion, "nothing more could be desired."30

29 Claude H. Van Tyne to J. K. Hayden, June 13, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WICL.
30 Claude H. Van Tyne to Sir George Otto Trevelyan, June 13, 1918, in Ibid. See also: Claude H. Van Tyne to Monsieur Le Professeur Hauser, July 2, 1918, in Ibid. Claude H. Van Tyne to Monsieur Le Professeur Daudy, July 2, 1918, in Ibid.
Van Tyne’s attitude toward Germany reflected the official position of the League. Most League officials argued that nothing less than an absolute defeat of Germany would suffice. This meant, in addition to the total conquest of that nation, the destruction of its totalitarian political tradition. If the world were to live in peace, according to League spokesmen, German authoritarianism had to be destroyed and be replaced with democratic political institutions.

As public support for the Allies increased, Van Tyne reported that the League had reached the objective of stifling any dissent to the war effort. Actually, anti-German sentiment was never so strong that individuals or publications who the League identified as pro-German or pacifist feared to speak their views. The editors of both The Nation and the Review of Reviews continued publishing articles which the League called pro-German and openly defied those who wished their publications silenced.

The summer of 1918 was significant for the League in many ways. While the patriotism through education operation was being implemented, the organization underwent an internal controversy which almost destroyed it. This was the Menken-Hearst affair that led to Menken’s demotion and the election of Colonel Charles E. Lydecker as President.31 Several members of the League’s hierarchy regretted Menken’s demotion.

31 See above, Chapter I, pp. 27-29.
They believed he had rendered the preparedness movement great service and they hated to deprive him of his position in the League. They had, nonetheless, voted against Menken because they realized that, after endorsing Hearst, he either had to be removed or the League would have to "bid farewell" to its plans for service to the nation. In contrast to the League members who regretted Menken's demotion were the organization's intellectuals. The educators who were working for the League were pleased by Menken's removal from office. These men, primarily college professors, called themselves "idealists" and decreed that the "arc of education" must never be touched by hands that had "clasped those of William Randolph Hearst."32

Van Tyne's reaction to the Hearst-Menken affair typified the response of most of the educators who were associated with the League. He was "greatly pleased with the outcome of the matter" and believed that Menken's removal as President was the only logical consequence of the controversy. Any milder action would have been unacceptable to the "self-respecting members of the Security League."33 McIlroy, who agreed with Van Tyne, felt that the expulsion of Menken would strengthen the League. His removal permitted a reorganization without internal factions. Hydecker, the new President, was

32 Robert M. McIlroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, July 1, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
33 Claude H. Van Tyne to Robert M. McIlroy, July 16, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
expected to provide resolute leadership which, in McElroy's opinion, would make the League more effective.\textsuperscript{34}

The optimism which came after Lydecker replaced Menken was of short duration. Within two weeks of Menken's removal, McElroy informed Van Tyne that the Hearst controversy had split the League into rival factions. Disagreement was so intense that the League was foregoing expansion of the patriotism through education campaign and it was possible that the entire educational drive might be halted. McElroy's gloomy opinions were caused by his belief that supporters of Hearst had penetrated the League's hierarchy. After Menken's relegation to the Executive Committee, Hearst infiltrators were discovered in some of the League's high offices. The organization's Treasurer was found to be the executor of the Hearst estate and the League's anti-Hearst forces now claimed that Menken's presence on the Executive Committee impaired the organization's effectiveness. League officials, nonetheless, decided to continue the preparedness and educational operations at their current pace until the fortunes of the organization improved.\textsuperscript{35}

Outwardly, the League recovered quickly from the "scandalous conditions" revealed by the Hearst-Menken affair. While McElroy and Van Tyne were discussing the split within the

\textsuperscript{34} Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, July 1, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

\textsuperscript{35} Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, July 20, 1918, in \textit{Ibid}. 
organization, its New York office publicized an expansion of the program for patriotism through education. This public announcement was a diversion to hide the cleavage within the League. 36 Undoubtedly, McElroy and Van Tyne were concerned over the future of the organization and had doubts about the effectiveness of League propaganda after the encounter with Hearst. They believed Mencken's association with Hearst had undermined the organization's prestige and had raised questions about the merits of its leaders.

Even though the internal rift seemed to reduce the League's effectiveness, its officials expected significant results from the drive for patriotism through education. But this effort too received a blow late in June, when Van Tyne announced that he would have to be in Michigan during July and August, 1918. He failed to give any reasons for leaving New York although he did affirm that his membership in the League would continue. Van Tyne announced that he still supported the preparedness movement and that he would aid the League's educational drive all that he could. Conditions in Michigan, which he neglected to explain, required that he return to Ann Arbor. 37 Van Tyne did offer to return to New York in September if the League needed him. But, if he should return, he would only be

37 Claude H. Van Tyne to Robert M. McElroy, July 16, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL. See also: "Patriotism through Education" in Michigan and Vicinity, April, 1919, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
available for one month. When the fall semester began at the
University of Michigan he would have to resume his teaching
duties.

It was true that the History Department at Michigan was
understaffed because of the war. Ulrich Bonnell Philips was
the only professor of American history at the University
other than Van Tyne and Philips was on leave. In these circum-
stances, Van Tyne felt compelled to teach the American history
courses for the coming year. He noted that teaching American
history was the most important assignment at the University
because, through that subject, national unity could be achieved.
American history, therefore, "ought to be taught and taught
effectively." Undoubtedly Van Tyne was convinced that he could
use the courses in American history to inculcate a patriotic
spirit in his students and he admitted that this was his goal.
However, he informed McElroy that since teaching failed to con-
sume all of his time, he would lecture for the League three days
a week in the Michigan area. This arrangement would enable him
to devote as much effort to preparedness activities as he had
before his move to New York City. This was the arrangement Van
Tyne preferred. Although he had enjoyed his New York work with
the League, he refused to return East unless there was some job
that only he could perform and which was definitely in the na-
tional interests. 38

38 Claude H. Van Tyne to Robert M. McElroy, July 16, 1918,
Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
In the preparedness activities in the Midwest, Van Tyne was told to take the initiative and do "what was needed." The League's New York officers would accept any of Van Tyne's decisions concerning the educational campaign in his area. McElroy urged him, however, to concentrate on infiltrating the public educational systems and to try to enlist in the League's educational campaign "men connected with the public schools."

The success of the program for patriotism through education depended upon the willingness of public educators to spread the League's Americanization propaganda and, according to McElroy, if public school officials supported the League, the cooperation of the teachers would be assured. Van Tyne took McElroy's advice and asked public school officials in the Midwest to assist the League's educational project. He proposed a plan to Governor A. E. Sleeper of Michigan for instituting courses on patriotism in the Michigan schools.

Van Tyne wanted these courses to begin the coming school term and, in a letter to McElroy, Van Tyne reported Sleeper "heartily in favor of our whole scheme." The Governor agreed that if Van Tyne would write out the program the League wished implemented, he would see that it was executed.

With Sleeper's support assured, Van Tyne approached Fred L. Keeler, the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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39 Robert M. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, August 7, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
40 Claude H. Van Tyne to Robert M. McElroy, July 16, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
In a letter outlining the plans for teaching patriotism in the Michigan schools, Van Tyne informed Keeler that the League's objective was to have the essential facts of the war taught, on a compulsory basis, in the public schools. Two half hour sessions each week in grades seven and above would meet the minimum requirements. The text materials would be furnished by the National Security League and would consist of at least one pamphlet that had already been written at Keeler's suggestion. This pamphlet, according to Van Tyne, was the best that the League had and was suited for the Michigan schools.41

Although his first contacts were with educational administrators in Michigan, Van Tyne also asked public school officials in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois to cooperate in the League's drive for patriotism through education. The educational plan Van Tyne outlined for superintendents of public instruction in these states was similar to the program designed for Michigan. Students in grades seven and above would be required to take and pass courses on the facts of the war. Van Tyne reported that the League believed it essential that the public school curriculum include the "compulsory teaching of the war facts and issues," and that passing grades in these courses should be required for students moving into high school and for graduation. This

41 Claude H. Van Tyne to Fred L. Keeler, July 16, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
program should be supervised by the county school superintendents who ought to require that courses be taught from the League's patriotic literature. Van Tyne identified the "public school" as the best means for disseminating patriotic propaganda that would reach the "masses of the voters in the homes."  

The Germans, according to Van Tyne, had used their schools to train loyal citizens and it was incumbent upon the United States to do likewise. The German schools had taught loyalty to a totalitarian state, but the public schools in America would instill loyalty to the American tradition. Although the United States, by teaching patriotism in the schools, would be "taking a leaf from the German notebook," Van Tyne felt that mankind would benefit from the spreading of American democratic ideals. Whereas Germany had used its schools for an "ignoble purpose," the United States, by teaching Americanism, would be using its schools for "a very noble purpose."  

Van Tyne received favorable replies from Ohio and Indiana school officials. He was, however, chagrined by the lack of response from Illinois. In a letter to Francis G. Blair,
the Illinois Superintendent of Public Instruction, Van Tyne emphasized the importance of giving the people a "thorough appreciation of the justice of our national cause" and the necessity of eradicating the national "ignorance" concerning the war effort. These objectives could only be achieved through the institution of patriotic courses in the public schools. Van Tyne believed it incumbent upon the Illinois officials to join the League in explaining to the people "the injustice and unrighteousness" of the "autocracy with which we are engaged." Only if the Illinois educational administrators joined in the drive for patriotism through education could the League hope to "overcome the insidious propaganda of pro-Germans and pacifists" that was pervading the Midwest. 44

School administrators in Ohio and Indiana responded to Van Tyne's proposals and the program for patriotic education progressed in those states. In order to ascertain the quality of the war courses that were being taught in the Indiana public schools, Van Tyne requested that a detailed account of the Indiana patriotic educational program be sent to him. 45 In Ohio, as in Indiana, Van Tyne was pleased by the responses of educational officials to the plans for patriotic education. He was so interested in Ohio's program for patriotic education

44 Claude H. Van Tyne to Francis G. Blair, September 9, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
45 Claude H. Van Tyne to Horace Ellis, September 10, 1918, in Ibid.
that he offered to supervise the establishment of courses on
the war in that state's public schools.46

Van Tyne's plans for supervision of the patriotic educa-
tional programs in the Midwest were interrupted when he decided
to return to New York City. Van Tyne's decision to return East
came in August, 1918, and was prompted by pleas from the League's
hierarchy. League officials wanted Van Tyne in New York to help
expand the campaign for patriotism through education.47

The League had decided to accelerate the drive for re-
vision of the textbooks used in the nation's public schools.
Colonel Lydecker, the League's President, asked Van Tyne about
the problems involved in getting such textbooks rewritten and
he also requested that Van Tyne assist the League in the ef-
fert to remove from the public schools all materials which en-
dangered national interests. This was a project which Van
Tyne approved and he assured Lydecker that he would be "very
glad of the opportunity to give any assistance in getting the
needed changes put into the school text books." Van Tyne had
already investigated the dangers that unpatriotic public school
literature posed to the nation and he was ready to reveal his
findings to the League.48 The League's Educational Secretary,

46 Claude H. Van Tyne to F. B. Pearson, Esq., August 31,
1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL. See also: Claude H. Van Tyne to
William B. Guitteau, September 4, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.

47 Claude H. Van Tyne to Henry L. Thompson, August 19,
1918, Van Tyne Papers, NHC. See also: Thomas J. Preston to
Claude H. Van Tyne, August 22, 1918, in Iuid.

48 Claude H. Van Tyne to Charles H. Lydecker, September 4,
1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
Henry D. Thompson, also asked Van Tyne’s aid in preparing new literature for the public school teachers. Thompson wanted a booklet which would detail the "current methods for teaching patriotism," and again, Van Tyne offered to cooperate. His task, as outlined by Thompson, was to prepare a "short, terse, historical" handbook which, without seeming to do so, predicted "future" historical developments.49

During his second League tour in New York, Van Tyne spent his days editing and writing pamphlets for the League and at night he spoke in the New York area "exposing German propaganda." This latter activity consisted of attacking publications which Van Tyne thought to be hostile to the war effort. He was critical of liberal magazines which argued that war was immoral or which refused to become totally committed to the Allies. Van Tyne denied the validity of any interpretation of the war which differed from that of the League and he identified nonpartisan accounts of the conflict as pro-German propaganda designed to undermine the moral of the Allies. This disposition engaged Van Tyne and the League in a controversy with the Review of Reviews, a liberal magazine, and with George Creel, the Chairman of the government’s Committee on Public Information. The dispute was caused by an attack levied by Van Tyne and the League on the

49 Henry D. Thompson to Claude R. Van Tyne, August 19, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
book, *Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War*, which the *Review of Reviews* had published and for which Cressel had written an introduction. 50

This was not the first instance of the Security League attacking publications which it disliked and of engaging in activities akin to censorship. Since the League's formation in 1914, it had sought to judge what literature could safely be placed before the American public. Before 1918, these activities provoked few disputes. During May, 1918, the League requested that G. P. Putnam's Sons withdraw from sale the book, *War, Peace, and the Future*. League officials alleged that the author, Ellen Key, had condemned "all warring nations alike" and they felt this condemnation improper. Moreover, Key's opposition to "conscription" was an "unpatriotic" sentiment which damaged national unity. The League requested that the sale of *War, Peace, and the Future* be discontinued and that "the public libraries of the country ... withdraw the book from circulation." 51

League spokesmen, in their attack on *War, Peace, and the Future*, failed to consider that the book had been published prior to United States entry into the war. They also rejected the argument that the author had been expressing her sentiments about warfare in general. But League criticism

50 Resume of the preparedness activities of Claude R. Van Tyne and William H. Hobbie, *Van Tyne Papers*, MLCL.
of Roy's book was mild when compared to the organization's assault on Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War.

On September 9, 1918, Colonel Lydecker appointed Van Tyne chairman of a League committee to investigate and evaluate Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. The committee reported that the book had been compiled anonymously; that it was published by George H. Doran Company in cooperation with the Review of Reviews; and that George Creel, the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information, had written the publication's introduction. The rest of the report was an attack on the book and those who were associated with its publication. Creel was denounced by the League for having written the book's introduction. The report noted that Creel was a government official and that his introduction stamped Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War with the government's approval.

Van Tyne's committee described the book as a masterpiece of German deceit and presented quotations from its text to support these allegations. The League's report alleged that the book had been compiled by persons hostile to the Allies who wanted to undermine America's determination to defeat Germany, and that Creel's assistance to the originators

52 Henry L. West to Claude R. Van Tyne, September 9, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

53 "The National Security League," The Nation, CVIII (September 21, 1918), 312. (Hereinafter cited as "The League.")
of *Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War* was inexcusable. Creel, in the introduction, had called the monograph "a useful statement" of the war facts and had recommended that it be read by the public. Van Tyne felt Creel's statements to be inaccurate and, if his introduction represented his true opinions, that he should be removed as Chairman of the Committee on Public Information. According to Van Tyne, Creel's introduction reflected the views of the German Government and, if Creel still held these views, he and his committee endangered public morale.

Creel responded quickly to Van Tyne's attack. In an open letter to the League he protested the "singular dishonesty and indecency" with which the League attempted to suppress *Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War*. Creel charged that Van Tyne's report was a distortion of facts which had been "irresponsibly" released to the press. He admitted that he had neglected to read the manuscript carefully, but he noted that the book had been withdrawn from circulation "two months" before Van Tyne's report was issued. Albert Shaw, editor of the *Review of Reviews*, had discontinued the sale of *Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War* when Creel objected to parts of the book. Sale of the book was stopped until the objectionable portions were

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54 *The League.*

55 *New York Times*, September 13, 1918.
"All these facts," according to Creel, "were laid before Professor Van Tyne" before the report of the League's investigation of the book was made public. Van Tyne's committee had suppressed all of the information which Creel had given it and had made public an inaccurate evaluation of the circumstances concerning Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. This distortion of the truth caused Creel to conclude that Van Tyne's "sense of honor" was subordinated "to his weakness for a little cheap notoriety." 56

Van Tyne expected serious ramifications from the dispute with Creel. In an effort to buttress the position of the League, he asked Representative James C. McLaughlin, Senator William A. Smith, and Senator Henry C. Lodge to support the League if Congress entered the controversy. He also informed these congressmen that Creel's loyalty was suspect and that he should be dismissed from the Committee on Public Information. Van Tyne did admit that there were some omissions in the League report on Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. The portions of the text which showed the greatest pro-German bias were indeed stressed at the expense of the "honest things in the book." 57

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56 New York Times, September 13, 1918. See also: "The League."

57 Claude H. Van Tyne to Senator William Alvin Smith, September 14, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL. See also: Claude H. Van Tyne to James C. McLaughlin, September 14, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 27, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
The omissions and distortions in the report of Van Tyne's committee discredited the League's stand in the controversy with Shaw and Creel. Opponents of the League accused Van Tyne of willfully suppressing information which exonerated Creel and of misquoting from Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. Creel had already noted the inaccuracies in the Van Tyne report, but Van Tyne had dismissed Creel's allegations as an attempt to evade the guilt which the League had placed on him. However, when Creel's charges of inaccuracy and distortion against the League were proved correct, the organization had to defend its report. Both Van Tyne and Lydecker denied that they had wished to suppress Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. Rather, they had wanted the public informed of the book's true character. Van Tyne maintained that his concern was for the "unscholarly and dishonest" things of which Creel were guilty in the introduction to the book. He criticised Creel for writing the book's introduction before reading its text. When the supporters of Creel and Shaw began questioning Van Tyne's integrity, Lydecker came to his defense. Lydecker declared that "an educator and author" of Van Tyne's "attainments and reputation" would never intentionally distort the truth in order to gain notoriety.58

In distorting the League's report on Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War, Van Tyne incurred the enmity

58 New York Times, September 14, 1918.
of the nation's liberal press. He was attacked for giving out false information. The New York Times, usually a defender of the League, admitted that Van Tyne had committed an error. When the Times editorial staff placed Van Tyne's report and the book "side by side" if found that Van Tyne's quotations were indeed inaccurate. They were "paraphrases or summaries" which departed "widely from the language used by the author .. of the book." 59

Both the Review of Reviews and The Nation launched assaults on Van Tyne which showed both that he had quoted out of context and that he "utterly garbled and distorted" the actual material in Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. He was charged with omitting "essential portions" of the text and falsifying "quotations" which made the book seem pro-German. The Review of Reviews reported that it had given the League the facts concerning the book before the release of Van Tyne's report, and that the allegations in Creel's open letter were true. 60 The Nation, in its editorial assault on Van Tyne, presented cogent arguments against his honesty and intellectual competency. The magazine noted that Van Tyne's distortion of the truth was an inexcusable act which jeopardized his standing as a scholar. Van Tyne's report was called a "cowardly attack" which involved his reputation

59 New York Times, September 14; October 16, 1918.
60 Ibid., September 19, 1918.
as an historian and revealed "the methods of the League." In a letter to Oswald Garrison Villard, the editor of The Nation, Van Tyne disputed The Nation's account of the controversy. Villard replied that the facts were set forth accurately and, if Van Tyne disputed them, he would be making a statement "which is not correct."

Van Tyne received numerous letters supporting his position in the controversy. One of his admirers, William H. Allen, shared Van Tyne's belief that any tactic which discredited anti-League forces was justified. Another of Van Tyne's correspondents saw Creel as either "a knave or a damned fool" and thought that Van Tyne had "justly" held Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War up for public "reprobation." Van Tyne's supporters saw the Review of Reviews as the culprit which sought to foist on the public a book filled with pro-German sentiment. They believed that the magazine itself should be "shut down" because Shaw, the magazine's editor, was either a "defeatist" or a "pro-German" who was spreading "pernicious" literature throughout the country. The pro-League forces maintained that it was the

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61 "The League."
62 Oswald G. Villard to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 27, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
63 William H. Allen to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 16, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.
64 L. A. Chase to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 26, 1918, in Ibid.
responsibility of the "scholars of the country" to combat the "insidious ... German propaganda" and they congratulated Van Tyne for having incurred the wrath of both Shaw and Villard. 65

Amid this storm of controversy, for which he was directly responsible, Van Tyne left New York City on September 15, 1918, for Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he would assume his duties for the new school year. 66 Van Tyne believed that he had done an admirable job for the League during the summer and he was proud of his record. The summer of 1918 had been the period of the League's most intense activity and from April to September Van Tyne rendered his greatest service to the preparedness movement. Although he continued membership in the organization, this was the pinnacle of his participation.

65 C. A. Brownell to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 25, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC. See also: Virgil L. Jones to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 26, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, MHC.

66 Claude H. Van Tyne to Senator William Alvin Smith, September 14, 1918, Van Tyne Papers, WLCL.
CHAPTER IV

THE DEMISE OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY LEAGUE

Throughout World War I, the defense policies of the Wilson Administration were attacked by the National Security League. League members disliked the administration's refusal to support universal military training as a permanent policy and they condemned Wilson's reluctance to suppress sentiments within the country which, according to the League, were traitorous. League officials wanted the United States to become the world's foremost military power and they asked the government to support programs which would accomplish this goal. The administration was also asked to endorse projects which would unify the nation in thought.

League spokesmen persistently attacked public officials who opposed national preparedness. Criticism was hurled at those who questioned the League's motives or sought to discredit its objectives. League officials, convinced that they knew what military and foreign policies were best for the nation, worked to have their plans executed. These efforts inevitably involved the organization in political activities. Preparedness advocates worked for the election of candidates who supported the objectives of the League. This electioneering was largely restricted to congressional elections in which the League promoted candidates who supported its
programs. League officials believed that through the election of a Congress that favored the preparedness movement, the League could influence the nation's foreign and domestic policies. The organization wanted a Congress composed of men who would support legislation that would make the United States the world's foremost military power and who would insist that Wilson prosecute the war to the limits of the nation's war making capacities. League spokesmen argued that resolute leadership was required if the country was to defeat Germany and crush that nation's capacity to make war.

In May, 1918, the League began a campaign to elect a "war Congress." This political drive was conducted under the slogan "let none but loyal men go to Congress." League officials asked the electorate to defeat those Congressmen who failed to "measure up to statesmanship." The voters were urged to elect men competent to deal with the war crisis. League spokesmen were disturbed by the results of the primary elections which had been held before July. The nominations which had come to so many "unqualified candidates" indicated to the League's leaders that "neither the political managers nor the people ... [had] risen to their manifest duty."¹

During May and June the League revealed the methods through which it hoped to elect a "war Congress." The organization announced that the votes which had been taken in

¹ New York Times, May 7; July 8, 1918.
Congress on "war measures" would be tabulated. From this tabulation the League would compile a list of "good and bad" congressmen. A report would be drawn on congressional voting records and publicized through the organization's "281 branches." The League would campaign for the election of "good" congressmen and work to defeat those who were "bad." By promoting the candidacies of only "good" congressmen, the League believed that the election of pro-League legislature could be attained.2

League officials argued that the election of preparedness minded congressional candidates would increase the effectiveness of Congress. These men would have a militant attitude toward the war and they would agree on how the war ought to be conducted. Their legislative deliberations would be swift. Congressional debates would lack the opposition of those who were soft on Germany and this factor would speed up the legislative process. A loyal Congress, according to League spokesmen, would provide the leadership necessary for a swift and total victory over Germany; a victory which was impossible so long as the House and Senate were filled with "disloyal" members.3

The League insisted that its campaign for the election of a "war Congress" was "entirely nonpolitical." The organization merely wanted to elect "good thorough Americans," who would support the war. In this "nonpolitical" endeavor, the League sought wide publicity for its efforts and its officials attempted

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3 Ibid., May 7, 30; June 10, 1918.
to contact as many voters as possible. The organization used its "Teachers' Plattsburg," which were the teacher training camps used in the drive for patriotism through education, to contact voters and promote the election of "good" congressmen. The educators who were associated with the patriotic educational program were called into the League's electioneering activities. They were to poll the voters and record their opinions of congressmen who had been "lukewarm" in supporting the war effort.4

On August 2, 1919, the League released its tabulations of congressional voting records. The voting statistics were accompanied by a report which provided the public with information on how members of Congress had voted on military preparedness measures. The League's public statement which explained the report noted that a congressman's listing as either "good" or "bad" was determined by the way he had voted on "eight principal war measures." These congressional votes had been taken between March 7, 1916, and April 23, 1917, and, according to the League, they were on bills which would have enabled the United States to effectively wage "war against Germany." The League also furnished information on congressional candidates who were not members of Congress. Data on the "aspirants for Congress" was gathered from questionnaires which the League sent to all new candidates. These men were to fill in the information and

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return the questionnaire to the League. The League's questions inquired as to candidate's sentiments regarding the war and asked what factors entitled them to seats in Congress. From the questionnaires the League ascertained which new candidates deserved the support of the preparedness movement.5

In many congressional districts the League campaigned for the defeat of specific members of Congress. The organization explained that its electioneering was aimed at defeating "re-nominated Representatives" who had "consistently opposed the war" and who had voted against preparedness measures. Both Democratic and Republican voters were asked by League spokesmen to "fuse" their efforts and elect loyal men to the "war Congress." League officials felt that party affiliations were unimportant. The significant factor was the stand which congressional candidates took on the war.6

Throughout the summer and fall of 1918 the League promoted the election of preparedness minded candidates to seats in the House of Representatives. The Senatorial contests were largely ignored. In the drive to defeat those members of the House who, according to League tabulations, were unpatriotic, the organization created strong political enemies. The representatives against whom the League worked resented the interference in the congressional elections and they resolved to take action against

6 Ibid., July 15, 24; October 21, 1919.
Representative James A. Frear, Republican of Wisconsin, was the most outspoken critic of the League in Congress. Frear detested the intrusion of the preparedness forces into the congressional campaign and he wished to discredit the League, its spokesmen, and its objectives. On September 23, 1918, Frear introduced a resolution into the House of Representatives calling for an investigation of the League's activities in the congressional campaigns. He requested that the House Judiciary Committee be empowered to inquire into the membership, financial support, and expenditures of the organization. ⁷

While Frear opposed the principles of the League, he was no doubt directly motivated by the League's efforts to defeat him for re-election. The League had classified Frear among the disloyal members of Congress and had dispatched campaigners into his congressional district to work against his renomination. A folder entitled "Frear's record in Congress" had been circulated by the League among his constituents shortly before the primary. This brochure charged Frear with "abuse of the franking privilege" and disloyal votes on war measures. Frear charged that the information in the folder was "unqualifiedly false." The League had garbled and distorted his record in Congress and, in some instances, accused him of votes against

bills which he had supported. In one instance the League reported that Frear "voted against conscription," but the truth was that he "voted for the amended conscription bill." 3

Frear pointed out that since the United States entered the European conflict, he had supported "every war measure" which Congress had passed. But, according to the League, he was disloyal. League spokesmen based their conclusions on the tabulations of the "eight war measures" used by the League "to determine the loyalty of Congressmen and States." Frear noted that Congress had voted on six of these eight bills before war was declared. Only the two which came after the United States formally entered the war, in the Congressmen's opinion, had any bearing upon the conduct of the war. The League, however, had used these eight measures as a test of loyalty for both Congress and the states. 9

League spokesmen reported that "90 per cent" of the House and the congressional delegations from "47 of the 48 States" were disloyal. Of the members of the House, only forty-seven were loyal. Out of these forty-seven "perfect patriots," four were Democrats and forty-three were Republicans. Although Frear was a Republican, he resented the League's allegations that the Democrats were disloyal. He charitably said that the Democrats had supported the war as consistently


9 Ibid., pp. 10664-10668.
as the Republicans and that the League's charges against the Democratic party were false.10

The League also reported that congressional delegations from "47 of the 48 States" were disloyal, only Rhode Island was patriotic. This was an assertion which Frear disputed and he recommended that League spokesmen be forced to account for their statement. The organization's report was a wholesale indictment of the American government and action should be taken against the League. Frear suggested that the Attorney General prosecute a number of the League's officers, among them Elihu Root and Alton B. Parker. These League officials, according to Frear, were the tools of the war "profiteering patriots" of Wall Street and their false allegations against congressmen during war time endangered national security. Moreover, their statements undermined the people's confidence in elected officials and gave comfort to the enemy.11

Frear was particularly angered because the League's activities in the congressional campaign had caused the defeat of some congressmen. In Wisconsin, three of his colleagues had lost close elections for renomination in the primaries because of League opposition. Frear charged that preparedness spokesmen had deceived the Wisconsin voters and obtained the defeats of loyal men. He noted, however,

11 Ibid.
that he had been able to overcome the opposition of the League in his district because he had acquainted his constituents with the "falsity" of the charges made against him. Frear sympathized with those candidates who were less fortunate and who had been defeated because of the libelous charges of the "Root-Parker league." He was determined that the National Security League and its "war profiteering" supporters be called to account for their interference in the congressional campaigns of 1918.12

When Congress failed to act on Frear's resolution he continued to insist that the League be investigated. On December 4, 1918, he introduced a second resolution in the House calling again for a congressional investigation of the League. He declared that "the time ... [had] come for Congress to haul before the bar of the House those responsible for malicious slanders and to measure out adequate punishment." Frear believed that the League's electioneering for a "war Congress" had been motivated by reasons other than those publically announced. It was the duty of Congress to inquire into what had really inspired the League's political activities and to inform the public of the true character of the organization.13

During the two month interval between the introduction

13 Ibid., pp. 98-105.
of Frear's first and second resolutions in the House he acquired substantial information on the League's leaders. His second speech, delivered before the House on December 4, 1919, contained data which cast suspicion on the goals of the League and questioned the motives of its officials. Frear alleged that the League was "a creature of Wall Street, supporting big business dreams of national expansion." The pro-League forces intended to create an American military dominance that would place the world in the "commercial grasp" of Wall Street. The interests which backed the League planned to elect militant candidates to national office. The League wanted a President and a Congress that would use the armed forces to support the commercial objectives of Wall Street. Frear charged that the League members planned to "police" the nations of "Russia and China" as well as control South America "from Patagonia to Panama." Wall Street commercial interests intended to acquire command of Mexico, the Philippines, and other areas which they could use to an economic advantage. Frear believed that the men behind the League opposed disarmament, open diplomacy, and "any league of nations" which threatened their scheme for world domination. Instead of working for peace, the preparedness forces intended to establish, in the United States, a scheme of "universal compulsory military training" which
would furnish the manpower needed for world domination.  

Elihu Root and Alton B. Parker, the League's honorary President and honorary Vice-President, were again identified by Frear as the "leading sponsors" of the preparedness movement's economic objectives. Frear noted that Root was the chief council for the "railways of the country" and that he was working for the return of the railroads to private control. According to Frear, the nation's rail systems had over $17,000,000,000 at stake" and a "pliable" Congress, that was responsive to the League, would enable Root to obtain the return of the railroads to private ownership on favorable terms. Congress would determine the conditions for future operation of the rail systems and a House of Representatives controlled by the League would benefit Wall Street.

Frear charged that Alton B. Parker was, like Root, a lackey of Wall Street interests. Parker had first gained public attention in 1904 when he was the Democratic presidential candidate. Frear claimed that Parker "was defeated by over two and one-half million votes because of alleged subservience to Wall Street." In addition, he noted that in 1904 Parker advocated a reduction in the "American army and army expenditures." This was a stand which Frear found in sharp contrast to the support Parker gave the preparedness

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15 Ibid.
movement. As an officer in the League he was a "champion of preparedness," who promoted an American army and navy second to none. Frear believed that Parker's League activities were activated by his connections with New York commercial interests. The economic advantages which Parker and those for whom he spoke wished to receive from a Congress subservient to the League turned him into "a new apostle of preparedness and patriotism." 16

The corporate connections of Colonel Charles E. Lydecker, President of the League, were also aired by Frear. He alleged that Lydecker, along with Root and Parker, formed a "small army of homeguard corporation counsel." These preparedness spokesmen were interested in the economic gains which would accrue to big business from a huge army and large military expenditures. Frear saw Lydecker as the most absurd member of the League's hierarchy. The Wisconsin Congressman ridiculed the League President's self-assumed title of "Colonel." The only military connections which the Colonel ever had were with the New York Militia where he attained the rank of Major. Frear noted that Lydecker had severed these military ties during the Spanish-American war in order to "duck war service." Lydecker's prestige was self-acclaimed and Frear pointed out that never had the "Colonel" held "any military title or public office of moment." The Congressman was incensed that Lydecker,

while "wearing a gobbler strut and borrowed peacock feathers," had the audacity to charge some members of Congress with disloyalty and to campaign for their defeat. The electioneering activities of the League's officials during 1918 were interpreted by Frear as subversive to national interests and as an infraction of national laws which Congress should punish. 17

The League's educational activities were also a target of Frear's attacks. He was especially hostile to Claude Halstead Van Tyne and the organization's Educational Director, Robert McNutt McElroy. Van Tyne was described by Frear as "a corporation cook of canned patriotism" and the "colossal ectomist" of the Security League. Frear claimed that Van Tyne had made "dishonest and indecent" charges against George Creel and the government's Committee on Public Information in regard to the book Two Thousand Questions and Answers About the War. This libelous attack on a government agency revealed to Frear the type of person that Van Tyne was. The Congressman believed that the cast of Van Tyne's mind could be seen in the writings that he had done on the American Revolution. These writings reflected a "Tory" point of view and Frear believed they sought to discredit George Washington and John Adams.

In McElroy, the Wisconsin Congressman saw a corporate emissary of the first rank. On April 6, 1918, according to Frear, the League dispatched McElroy as a missionary to the "wilderness

of Wisconsin to save the old Badger State from wandering ... German tribes." When he returned to New York, McElroy reported that the people of Wisconsin were "a bunch of damned traitors." Frear challenged this assertion and said that only mental incompetence could have caused McElroy to make that statement. 18

Although several other League officials were attacked in Frear's House speech, his main assault was on the organization's leaders. He charged that Parker, Root, Van Tyne, McElroy, and Lydecker had spent over $1,000,000 in League funds in the congressional campaign, and Frear believed that Congress ought to find out who furnished this money. The League's hierarchy, in Frear's evaluation, was composed of "public character assassins" who worked behind a "patriotic camouflage." These preparedness spokesmen had fomented "distrust, discord and division" among the American people and they had excited the "suspicion of the world" against United States' public officials. Frear recommended that the League's acts, which were detrimental to the nation, be punished after Congress held an inquiry to give the public the facts on the organization. 19

On December 11, 1918, the House passed Frear's resolution. Seven representatives were named to a committee charged with

18 Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 3rd Sess., 101.
19 Ibid., p. 102.
investigating the League. These congressmen were to report to the House on the "membership, financial support ... expenditures, general character, ... and purposes" of the organization. The resolution of investigation also called for disclosure of the League's activities in the congressional elections of 1918. In the committee's inquiry, Representative Edward King of Illinois testified on the methods employed by the League's forces in the political campaign. In 1918 King had been a candidate for election to a third term in the House of Representatives. On August 23, 1919, the League's Chicago branch requested that King submit to questioning by its "special congressional committee." This committee was composed of preparedness workers from Illinois who had been appointed by League headquarters in New York City. The Chicago committee was to evaluate Illinois candidates seeking election to Congress.

King agreed to appear before the League's committee in Chicago. He was to be questioned by Cyrus A. McCormick of International Harvester, James A. Patton the "Corn King," Edger A. Bancroft the head of the Harvester Trust, and Barry H. Merrick the head of the Chicago Chamber of Commerce. Several other representatives of Illinois commercial interests were listed as members of the League's special congressional

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21 Congressional Record, 65th. Cong., 3rd. Sess., 139-144.
committee. When King appeared before this group, he was told that the hearing would be secret and he was denied permission to take notes on the proceedings. The League's interrogators were primarily concerned about King's views on domestic economic policies rather than his attitude toward preparedness. He was asked to state his position on labor unions and if he favored government ownership of the railroads. The League's committee wanted to know if he were a socialist and insisted that he prove that he was a good American citizen. According to King, these men forced him to bare his "very soul" and to establish that neither he nor any of his ancestors had un-American tendencies.22

The Chicago experience convinced King that the League served purposes other than military preparedness. Moreover, the Illinois Congressman had proof that the organization's Chicago branch was associated with the meat packing interests. In a House speech in 1915, King had accused the Chicago meat packers of unethical conduct during a hoof and mouth disease epidemic in Illinois. The packers had purchased livestock from quarantined areas at seventy per cent of their value. These animals had been butchered and sold to the public at the retail market price. The Chicago packers, according to King, made a million dollars from the transaction. When King was interrogated by the League's Chicago committee, he

was asked to explain his allegations against the meat packing industry. The nation's wealthy individuals, according to King, wished to use patriotism as a blind from which to attack those members of Congress with the temerity to "stand for the rights of common people." 23

Other aspects of the League's political activities were revealed by Representative Fred A. Britten of Illinois. Congressman Britten asserted that the League was nursed in New York by "foreign interests" who hid their hypocrisy behind that "much-abused word 'Loyalty.'" Out of the forty-seven members of the House which the League had said were loyal, Britten noted that forty-five represented congressional districts along the Atlantic seaboard with high concentrations of commercial wealth. 24

In the congressional campaign League spokesmen had professed to be conducting a nonpartisan drive for a loyal Congress. They claimed to be motivated by the desire to see the war ended quickly. Britten disputed these claims and alleged that the League's political activities had been controlled by factors other than patriotism. The organization was concerned with the demobilization which would follow the war. League spokesmen were anxious over how congressional attitudes would affect the nation's commercial interests.

23 Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 3rd Sess., 142-143.
24 Ibid., pp. 253-262.
during the post-war "reconstruction period." They wanted a Congress that would enact legislation favorable to big business. The interests that worked through the League to influence the elections, according to Britten, dealt in "steel, oil, Russian bonds, rifles, powder, and railroads." The agents of Wall Street, in working to elect a Congress favorable to big business, had done irreparable damage to the reputations of loyal congressmen.25

Britten's allegations were sustained by the report of the House committee which investigated the League. Its report stated that the organization was backed by Wall Street and that an early end to the war had not been one of its objectives. The commercial interests which backed the League had used patriotism and loyalty as a facade to cloak the economic aspirations of big business. The House report listed the largest contributor to the League as the Carnegie Corporation which had vast holdings in United States Steel. Andrew Carnegie was the corporation's president and Elihu Root was its vice-president. Their foundation contributed $150,000 to the League. John D. Rockefeller, the oil king, had donated $30,000 and J. Pierpont Morgan had contributed $2,300. Among the numerous other contributors were Bernard Baruch, W. K. and P. W. Vanderbilt, Arthur J. Curtis, Daniel Guggenheim, and Henry Clay Frick.26

26 Ibid., p. 4922.
The House report contained the names of other lesser known backers of the League, all of whom would benefit from a pro-League Congress that favored big business. The League's major contributors had profited from the war and would continue to gain from large peace-time military expenditures. The backers of the League would reap economic gains from military contracts for steel, rubber, oil, chemicals, armaments, and rail transportation. They would also profit from a demobilization that would turn the country back into the hands of Wall Street. Such a demobilization would entail returning the railroads to private ownership, removing government controls on private enterprise, and destroying the gains that organized labor had made during the war.27

The House committee reported that the connections of the officers of the League were as significant as were the organization's contributors. S. Stanwood Menken, the League's founder, was an attorney for the London Globe Insurance Company of England. Lydecker was a New York attorney but he refused to identify his clients for the House committee. The League's Secretary, Franklin Remington, was connected with the Great Western Chemical Company, and he was also a director for several large corporations. Frederick R. Coudert, a prominent League spokesman and a member of the Executive Committee, had connections in the oil industry and was

vice-president of at least six New York corporations. Another member of the League's Executive Committee, Robert Bacon, was a director of United States Steel. Franklin Q. Brown, a director of the League, was also a director of at least seven corporations dealing in sugar, public utilities, and railroads. Numerous other corporate interests were represented by the League's leaders, all of whom, the report charged, used the preparedness movement to cloak their commercial objectives.28

The money which the League had collected since 1914, mostly came from New York City. Between December 1, 1914, and September 30, 1918, the organization's New York office raised $619,165.28. Of this total, 94.4 per cent was collected in New York City. In the congressional campaign of 1918, the organization spent $255,667.56. Most of this sum was expended shortly before the elections to defeat candidates for the House who the League found undesirable. The House investigating committee concluded that the expenditure of this amount and the League's other political activities had been motivated by reasons other than patriotism. The committee concluded that the call for greater military preparedness was a deception. By 1918 preparedness, in the name of national security, was a dead question in the United States. Congress, by that time, had appropriated "billions of dollars" to arm the country and the nation was prepared. The United States had updated coastal

defenses, a huge army, a powerful navy, and further military expansion was unnecessary.29

The League, in the opinion of the House committee, was unconcerned with national security and its activities constituted "a serious menace" to representative government. It was a subversive organization which concealed its real purposes from the public and exploited the people's patriotic sentiments. Under the terms of the Corrupt Practices Act, which League officials had ignored, the organization was required to file with the Clerk of the House of Representatives an itemized statement of its expenditures in the political campaign of 1918. The League had failed to comply with this law, and the House investigating committee judged that its officers were guilty of violating the Corrupt Practices Act. However, the government failed to prosecute and the penalty prescribed by the Act was never applied to any of the League officials.30

Undoubtedly the revelations of the League's activities by the House committee discredited the organization before the public. Its officials were put on the defensive and, in trying to justify the League's operations, they could only attack Congress for the disservice it had rendered the preparedness movement. Lydecker accused the House committee of "malice" in its report on the League and said that the

30 Ibid., p. 4925.
committee had an "unusual capacity for unfairness." The investigators were accused of employing "third degree" tactics and Lydecker termed the investigation a "prosecution" rather than an "inquiry." He announced that the League was determined to overcome the opposition of Congress and that the organization would "continue doing business." 31

Although the League's operations proceeded, the congressional investigation hurt it severely. The unfavorable publicity which came with the inquiry caused a number of League stalwarts to slacken their activities. Both McElroy and Van Tyne were disturbed by the revelations of Congress. McElroy believed that the House had thrown the League into "the melting pot" and that it had emerged as either "a golden calf or a brazen jackass." If he became convinced that it was the latter, McElroy said he would sever his connections with the organization. He thought, however, that the investigating committee should have allowed the educators associated with the League to reveal to the country the purity of their motives. 32

After the League was discredited by the House investigation, neither McElroy nor Van Tyne broke their connections with the organization. McElroy continued working full-time for the League until September, 1919, at which time he resumed

his teaching post at Princeton University. He concluded that
the propaganda drives he had conducted had been of "enormous
interest and value" and he believed that he had attained the
objectives of the preparedness educational programs. He
expressed "great satisfaction" at having had Van Tyne's as-
sistance in the educational drives; this aid had lightened
his duties as head of the League's educational division. 33

Van Tyne's association with the League after the congres-
sional investigation was less conspicuous than that of McElroy.
He continued membership in the organization but directed his
patriotic activities along other channels. As a member of
the League, Van Tyne had promoted friendship between the United
States and Great Britain. After he ceased active partici-
pation in League activities, he continued promoting anglo-
American accord by joining the English-Speaking Union of the
United States. The purpose of this organization was to foster
friendly Anglo-American relations by creating closer associ-
ation between the American and British peoples. Van Tyne
was never as active in the English-Speaking Union as he had
been in the League, however, he fully supported the Union's
programs. Until his death on March 15, 1930, he continued
to work for greater unity between the peoples of the United

33 Robert H. McElroy to Claude H. Van Tyne, September 29,
1919, Claude H. Van Tyne Papers, Michigan Historical Collec-
tions, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Here-
inafter cited as Van Tyne Papers, MHC.)
States and England.34

The programs of the National Security League reflected that organization's desire to mold America into an imperi¬

alistic, authoritarian, military oriented society subserv¬

tient to the interests that supported military preparedness.

Universal military training, a large army and navy, and pa¬

triotic education were all ingredients of the social order
desired by the League. The League's members wanted a nation
powerful enough to impose its will on its adversaries and a
unified public opinion that would support any policy that the
President and Congress deemed beneficial to national interests.

By trying to forge a society united in thought and action, the
League worked to transform the idea of national unity into
reality.

The career of the League may be divided into three dis¬

tinct phases. Initially, the organization emphasized the
needs for modernizing the armed services and preparing for
war with Germany. After war was declared, League officials
advanced programs geared to total war. These plans included
a drive for patriotic education, a call for the total mobi¬
lization of the nation's resources, and efforts to unite the
country in the crusade against Germany. The third stage of
the League's agitation came late in 1918. In this phase the

34 John Daniels to Claude H. Van Tyne, January 18, 1927, Van Tyne Papers, MHC. See also: Claude H. Van Tyne's death notice in the American Historical Review, XXV (October, 1929—July, 1930), 941.
organization began working against a premature peace and advancing plans for post-war organization. These proposals included a continuation of patriotic education, a permanent system of universal military training, and the suppression of alien ideologies. All ideas in conflict with the values of the League's financiers would be suppressed. Demobilization, in the minds of the League's supporters, required the removal of government from all phases of private enterprise. However, government programs which promoted national loyalty were to be continued.

The military preparedness agitation which the League conducted from 1914 through 1917 was, in part, justifiable. There was much validity in its early reports on the derelict condition of the United States' armed forces. In asking the government for large military appropriations and working for an overhaul of the army and navy League members reflected the conviction that war with Germany was inevitable. This belief was held by many Americans. Only when the League began emphasizing the needs for a permanent system of universal military training did it begin losing its identity as strictly a World War I preparedness organization.

With the airing of the proposal for universal military training, the League indicated the type of society it desired for America. Under its plans, all able-bodied men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years would receive some
The objectives of this system were two-fold; first, it would guarantee the nation a trained army with a substantial manpower reserve; second, it would assure that an "eye and a finger" would be kept on the citizen from the "cradle to the grave." In addition, universal military training would break down ideological social barriers and make the nation more democratic. Men from all social classes would mingle in the army camps. They would be comrades in arms and ideology and this phenomenon would mold a society free of divisive influences and ideas.

The League's desire for national unity represents the ideas which arise from total war. Most prevalent among these is the belief that only a united national effort will bring victory. The national commitment must be complete and free from dissent. By building a society unified in thought and obedient to its leaders, disagreement could be eliminated. Since the nation lacked this degree of unity during World War I, League officials thought it a worthy goal.

National unity was also promoted through the League's program for patriotism through education. By teaching patriotism in the public schools, all educated American's would agree on the fundamentals of government. Patriotic education would produce citizens who were devoted nationalists eager to render public service. The educational program, as well as
the plans for universal military training, was designed to mold a society devoted to patriotic ideals and stereotyped after the League's brand of Americanism. Absolute obedience to authority and thought control were fundamental elements of these programs.

Evidence of the League's commitment to thought control may be seen in a number of its programs. The call for revision of American history texts, the campaign to destroy the German-language press, and the drive to eliminate the teaching of German in the schools portray the organization's efforts to manipulate public thinking. Censorship was another of the League's favorite tools. By attacking liberal magazines and suppressing "pro-German" publications the League sought to control national opinion on certain issues. Although the militants conducted their attacks in the name of Americanism, at times their methods were questionable.

Foremost in the employment of these questionable methods was Claude Halstead Van Tyne. His devotion to the League and its programs was complete. Early in the war he came out for the Allies and committed himself to a total German defeat. Van Tyne has been classified with those historians who, during World War I, "broke loose from their intellectual moorings" and forsook objectivity.35

Throughout his professional career Van Tyne claimed to be guided by scientific historical principles. His writings, which concern the American Revolution and English, American, and French relations, have been praised for their objectivity. He argued that patriotism should be subordinated to objective truth and a number of historians claim that Van Tyne produced unbiased interpretations of the American Revolution. One writer asserts that Van Tyne's search for objectivity led him to an "almost complete detachment from national prejudice." Moreover, that "of all the ... treatments of the Revolution, there is none that surpasses his in impartiality." This evaluation is questionable. During World War I Van Tyne advocated that history be rewritten and made to reflect favorably upon England and France. The new interpretations were to be taught in the public schools and, through this, history would become patriotic propaganda.

During World War I, when Van Tyne was advocating the use of history for propaganda purposes, he was firmly committed to the concept of total war. He believed that all German institutions should be destroyed. A thorough German defeat hinged upon a complete national effort at home and abroad.


37 Davidson, "Van Tyne," pp. 349-351.
abroad. Total war required the elimination of all forms of dissent. This was necessary before the nation could fully utilize its war making capacities. In Van Tyne's evaluation, Germany was the culprit in the conflict and any means that would bring that nation's defeat was justifiable. This possibly explains his zeal for preparedness.

Other elements which illuminate Van Tyne's League activities include his personal ties with the English and French, his conviction that he was participating in history's most significant epoch, and the praise he received for his preparedness work. Coupled with these was his desire to see western democracy triumph over Teutonic autocracy. Van Tyne felt that he must do his part in helping defeat Germany. By working with the League he was aiding the war effort and insuring the triumph of democracy. American culture was, to Van Tyne, an outgrowth of that of England. The United States had its genesis in English institutions and Van Tyne believed that the battle against Germany was to preserve the Anglo-American democratic heritage from autocracy.

There are a number of other factors that contributed to Van Tyne's zeal for preparedness. His work for the League brought him public recognition. League officials, generally men of prestige, praised Van Tyne's patriotic devotion. His association with these League stalwarts identified him as a leader in the domestic fight against Germany. Moreover,
in the League, Van Tyne worked with Theodore Roosevelt, Elihu Root, William Howard Taft, and a number of other prominent Republicans. These were all men that he admired. Robert McNutt McElroy was also a long time friend of Van Tyne and the leader of the patriotic professors associated with the League. Most of the pro-League educators were important members of the academic profession and Van Tyne enjoyed associating with them. Since Van Tyne was unable to participate actively in the military action against Germany, he served as best he could on the home front.

Regardless of the reasons for Van Tyne's League activities, many of his actions were inexcusable. A number of League projects of questionable merit were supervised by Van Tyne. In promoting League programs Van Tyne and his colleagues were conscious only of their point of view. All opposition was ruthlessly suppressed. This attitude was conspicuous in the League's 1918 congressional election activities. In an effort to force the League's post-war programs upon the nation, the militants worked to defeat anti-League congressmen. The objective was to elect men who would support post-war programs of patriotic education, military preparedness, universal military training, and enact laws favorable to the commercial interests that financed the League. This latter element was extremely important in the organization's post-war plans for American society. Because of the methods
employed by the League in working to have its programs implemented, the organization ran afoul of Congress. This encounter caused a controversy which discredited many of the League's objectives and destroyed it as an effective organization.
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