

should be borne by the railways themselves. The court cannot say that the cost of such an experiment was improperly thrown upon the railroad. Once concede that placing the cost of the experiment upon the railroads is not confiscatory, and that such an experiment is a proper subject of legislation, so that the act may itself be "due process," then throwing this cost on the railroads is not different from placing on the railroads the cost of new safety appliances, the cost of new methods of keeping accounts, and the cost of many other regulations, the validity of which has been sustained. The railroad is protected, as far as it can be by the courts, through the rule that the cost of the experiment shall not be confiscatory.

## To the Congress of Constructive Patriotism

SOME will ask why you felt the need of putting the word "constructive" in front of the word "patriotism." They will ask to know why patriotism needs any qualifying adjective. You will answer that here as in so many other places the corruption of the best things has often produced the worst, that patriotism has been the mask of the jingo, the jobber, and the reactionary, that it is only too often used to befuddle the mind, to conceal aggression, to serve partisanship. You will say you recognize that the word has of late been prostituted meanly, that in the minds of many it has become a substitute for honest thinking. You will insist that you had to distinguish your purposes somehow, and this is then your excuse for qualifying a high-sounding word. You did not wish to be confused with those who hope to swagger across the face of the globe, nor with those who are accustomed to describe a sordid quest of commercial monopolies as national honor, nor with those who dream of empire, nor with those who foment international discord for journalistic or partisan or business ends, nor with those who would turn America's military needs into a chance to drill the population for an automatic obedience.

You have come together recognizing that it is the very depth of folly to arm a nation without clarifying its foreign policy. You recognize that a sound diplomacy is the essence of national preparedness, that a nation which does not know what are its purposes, its rights and its duties in respect to other Powers can buy guns and train soldiers, but cannot possibly regard itself as ready. You know only too well that armament without candid public statement of purposes merely frightens other nations into increasing their armaments. You know that great navies and great armies do

not in themselves make for security. Germany has taught you that. She has shown the world that the preparation of a superb military machine brought into existence a grand alliance against her, a coalition of those who feared her power because they mistrusted her purposes.

You are not under the illusion that we can repeat her experience without in the end paying the same penalty. That is why you are assembled in Washington. You have come to formulate a foreign policy which will justify to the American people and to the western world the heavy increase of military force which most of us advocate. That is what you mean by the word "constructive."

But it is not all that you mean. You have learned the other lesson of the European war: that a nation split into hostile classes, undisciplined, badly educated, led by conventionally minded men, is a weak nation, whatever its numbers or its wealth. Therefore you will earnestly set to work drawing plans for the sincere nationalization of American industry, radical improvement in education, and the promotion of scientific research. As constructive patriots you will be as ready to conscript wealth as men. You will plan largely and fearlessly in spite of prejudice, tradition, group selfishness, and private interest. You will insist not only that the young must be trained, the newly arrived assimilated, but that the middle-aged and elderly who direct business and government and all our institutions, shall enlarge their understanding, think more clearly, face facts more courageously, and alter their habits more readily. You would not have come together did you not know that the long years of slack and dull leadership must end. If you were not prepared to make great sacrifices as well as to ask them of others, you would not have assembled.

## The New REPUBLIC

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# The Problem of Northcliffe

LET an American imagine that New York is not only the largest city in the Union, but that it is also the seat of the national government; and that the government has absorbed to itself most of the functions now exercised by the governments of the states, so that state politics have ceased to have any real interest or importance, even in the states themselves. Let him imagine further that participation in the politics of this centralized government is a mark of social distinction, so that politics are largely in the hands of the socially prominent, and the city is also the country's artistic and literary center—in short, the only capital that counts. Let him imagine further that this centralized government holds office, not for fixed periods, but at the pleasure of a legislature split into five or six distinct groups; that the legislature itself is not elected immovably for fixed periods but may by the fortunes of politics find itself confronted at any moment by a general election, or by a by-election which may affect party fortunes; may, in other words, find itself at the mercy of the popular feeling of the moment.

Then let the American's already overtaxed imagination conceive that New York can be reached from the remotest corner of the Union in a few hours, so that newspapers of the capital can appear almost simultaneously in Boston, Washington, Baltimore, New Orleans, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Denver, Omaha, Los Angeles, and San Francisco—which cities, having no state or local politics that matter, would be mainly interested in those of New York. Then let him imagine that of these New York papers, the *Times*, the *World*, the *Tribune*, the *American* and *Journal*, together with a score of weeklies like *Collier's* or the *Saturday Evening Post*, domestic publications like *The Ladies' Home Journal* and a few monthly magazines, amounting to some sixty publications, were all, together with forest and paper mills for their manufacture, owned by one large trust, so entrenched by its vast capital resources and its facilities for economical and reciprocal publicity as to be able instantly to steam-roller any real competition; and, finally, that the controlling shareholder of this trust is also its active head, a man combining unusual administrative capacity and relentless energy with an incomparable genius for the understanding of the popular state of mind. The American who can in imagination grasp all those various factors will understand something of the influence exercised by Alfred Harmsworth,

first Baron Northcliffe, in English opinion and politics.

I have, of course, for purposes of clarity exaggerated somewhat the contrast of conditions. It is obvious, for instance, that Manchester and Edinburgh are in some degree centers of intellectual and political life offsetting the influence of London. But the general truth of the contrast remains. The problem of Northcliffe is the problem of capitalistic industry with its tendency to centralization and combination applied to newspaper production. I have put the case in this way because the American who thinks of it in terms of existing American conditions will not realize its gravity in England. The conditions I have just described are found in any other great country to a lesser degree, but in England they are very acute. Yet the decisions which they will affect do not concern England alone; for the political decisions of England, by reason of her historical, geographical, and economical circumstances, affect the whole world. They will necessarily determine in large part the course of the Allied Powers during the next few years, and so the character of western civilization for, it may be, generations. If, as someone has said, "no man nor government can hold office, nor policy succeed in England save by the grace of Lord Northcliffe," can that individual determine by his personal will the future of western civilization?

The question receives commonly two answers in England; both, in my view, dangerously false and misleading. The first is to the effect—and this was until a year or two since the almost universal one—that the influence of the Northcliffe press is far more apparent than real. That what it does is intelligently to anticipate what in any case will take place—the German war, conscription, or what not—advocate it, and then appropriate the credit for having brought it about; that as its influence depends upon faithfully reflecting public opinion it cannot lead or control it; that, like a barometer, it registers the weather and has no part in determining it. The opposed school is typified by those whose one suggestion for the maintenance or making of peace, for the success of a league of nations, for the improvement of relations with America or what not is "the conversion of Northcliffe." If Northcliffe would but will it, the aspirations of mankind throughout the ages would at last be realized. English reformers and friends of peace have on many occasions plaintively urged this upon the present writer.