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PATRIOTISM AND DISSENT:

COERCIVE VOLUNTARISM IN WARTIME GEORGIA, 1917–1919

by

BILL WARHOP

Under the Direction of H. Robert Baker

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the culture of coercive voluntarism in Georgia during the First World War using studies of legislation and vigilance, the press, and the Georgia Council of Defense. Each of the themes studied demonstrates how organizations attempted to coerce support of the US war effort in Georgia. The study focuses on Georgia as a single state rather than simply as part of the South, as most other studies have done. The purpose is to challenge studies that have emphasized resistance only, which presents an incomplete picture of Georgia's domestic scene during the war. In fact, many elements within Georgia—at the state, local, and citizen level—actively supported the war, often with the same level of intention, if not the same results, as did other areas of the country. Georgia attempted to comply with federal imperatives while preserving its rights as a state.

INDEX WORDS: Coercion, Espionage Act, First World War, Georgia Council of Defense, Voluntarism, World War I

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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Georgia State University

2013

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2013

PATRIOTISM AND DISSENT:

COERCIVE VOLUNTARISM IN WARTIME GEORGIA, 1917–1919

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August 2013

DEDICATION

This thesis is gratefully dedicated to the hard-working, selfless, and infinitely helpful men and women at the Georgia Archives—all those from the past and the few who remain at the time of this writing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was born in a twentieth-century US history seminar at Georgia State led by John McMillian, who was supportive enough to allow me to do a literature-review paper when my initial attempts at original research ran into the wall of "someone else already did that"; his flexibility and guidance led to the paper that essentially gave me the core of this thesis.

I have the most sincere gratitude to the three members of the Georgia State history department who served on my thesis committee: my director, Rob Baker, whose knowledge of constitutional law was integral in helping me establish the legislative foundation of my thesis and its overall form; Larry Youngs, who guided me through the southern angles and tangles for this research project and also patiently served as my graduate adviser; and Joe Perry, professor of German history whose initially unnerving and extensive feedback ultimately made my final project edits fall neatly and painlessly into place. Though he wasn't on my committee, Clifford Kuhn's encyclopedic mental holdings on Georgia history were also of great help. I may never have discovered William Breen's landmark study on the National Council of Defense, which led me to study Georgia's state council, without the assistance of Steven Sabol, associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and editor in chief of *First World War Studies*, whom I was fortunate to meet when he spoke about World War I studies in spring 2012 at Georgia State.

I must thank archivist Sue Verhoef for her intimate knowledge of the James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center. Her extensive background in Georgia's World War I history stems from her own thesis on German POWs in the state during the war. Her research did not make it into my work, but my work wouldn't be possible without her help in navigating the Atlanta City Hall records, among others, at the AHC.

I dedicated this thesis to the men and women of the Georgia Archives, who have struggled to serve the Georgia academic community and the public at large amid annual and ever-more-damaging budget cuts for several years. During fall 2012, the majority of those who remained on staff were told they would be laid off in early November when the state decided it could no longer afford to maintain full-day operations on Fridays and Saturdays (the only two days left when the archive was open to the public). For most of September and October, I frantically tried to beat the November closure date by spending every weekend digging through the Georgia Council of Defense files at the Georgia Archives. While I pursued my own research, this dedicated staff continued at their posts and served selflessly and with absolute professionalism despite the knowledge of their imminent unemployment. These people are truly a treasure to the state of Georgia. I hope—for their sakes and for the sake of all scholars behind me—the state's decision to place the Archives under the better-funded umbrella of the University System of Georgia proves a lasting and secure means of ensuring the future accessibility of the state's vital records.

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INTRODUCTION

In June 1918, the United States was fighting a war overseas as well as on the home front. The previous month, Congress had toughened the Espionage Act with amendments that further limited Americans' abilities to speak out or publish against the government's war with Germany. It also endeavored to enforce loyalty among Americans. In this tense atmosphere, an editorial in the *Atlanta Constitution* asserted that "Pro-Germanism must be eradicated; it must be stamped out. Not a vestige of it must or can safely be tolerated."[1] The editorial highly lauded the civic actions of a local woman to maintain loyalty in the city. She had written the *Constitution* to complain about a German family who lived in a suburb close to downtown. A woman in that German household had refused to carry the writer's knitted article to a Red Cross station, "boldly" refusing to do anything "against the Germans." The same German woman also allegedly tried to get a neighbor to take down a proudly flown American flag. Adding insult to injury, the angry Atlanta woman wrote, the industrious but disloyal German family would "buy cheap material and make little war souvenirs and have the audacity to profane our flag by selling these things to our boys at Fort Gordon for $2 that cost them not more than 50 cents to make." The paper unequivocally supported the letter writer, and in fact stated that she was remiss in her duty by simply writing the paper about it: "If she knows this [German] woman or any other person to be disloyal to the American flag—or, in absence of proof, if she has knowledge upon which to base even reasonable suspicion—her own first duty to the flag is to report the facts to the federal authorities or to the police!"[2]

Before America's entry into the First World War, there was widespread resistance throughout the American South against the United States meddling in what was still at that time

[1] Editorial, "Disloyalty," *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 June 1918, C6.
[2] Ibid.

called "the European War." But after the United States became an Allied belligerent in April 1917, most of the country, including many in the South, rallied behind President Wilson as he led the country into war. Some did so out of patriotism; others did so to comply with restrictive laws passed to enforce war mobilization. The extent to which such laws were necessary, and what impact they may have had on overall support, is open to debate. Historian Jeanette Keith, for example, has extensively studied southern resistance and thinks historians overestimate the public's support of Wilson and the administration during the war. Restrictive laws were controversial, yet Keith concludes that government crackdowns on American rights were "not . . . silly. The national government reacted seriously to a rational fear that dissent, if allowed to continue, would grow until it impeded the war effort."[3] Resistance in the South especially focused on the Selective Service Act, which Congress passed to muster a deployable army to lead America's fight in Europe. This southern resistance has been chalked up to lack of concern for the war as well as ignorance.

As a southern state, Georgia is often lumped in with the history of the South in general, but Georgia's role in US mobilization cannot be overstated. Georgia was a staging ground for training and deployment of US troops, as well as host to camps that housed German POWs. Many Americans who were convicted of violating the wartime Espionage Act or the Selective Service Act were incarcerated in the federal penitentiary in Atlanta. The state's unique contributions to the war effort and its unique experiences have generally not been studied and shared.

The domestic scene in the United States on the eve of its entry into the First World War is a much-studied topic, as is the collective role of the American South in the conflict. In this study, I further explore the atmosphere of war support that overtook the country in World War I, and I

[3] Jeanette Keith, *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight: Race, Class, and Power in the Rural South during the First World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 136.

expand the southern theme by exploring the less emphasized cultural currents of acceptance and support, even in the face of resistance and dissent, to tell a fuller story of how the war was experienced in Georgia by Georgians.

In this thesis I argue that the spirit of coercive voluntarism that swept the country when it became a belligerent in World War I applied quite strongly in Georgia, as well, though many studies that discuss the state do so based on its geographical inclusion in the South and focus almost exclusively on resistance and opposition. Basically, coercive voluntarism is the action at some influential level—be it governmental, legislative, or social—to convince citizens or groups of the need for a certain set of behaviors or compliance and how best to express those behaviors. From 1917 into 1919, American citizens felt this coercive force to wholeheartedly support the war effort; coercion manifested in many ways and permeated day-to-day lives, whether through required draft registration, labor enforcement laws, or even the voluntary rationing of food. This study also defines the role Georgia played in the federal government's restrictions on civil liberties and suspension of constitutional rights and discusses how national and local events intersected, leading to coercive laws, civilian vigilance, and organizational drives to bring the Georgia populace into compliance with state and federal prowar efforts.

I also explore the press response to active political resistance—particularly that by Georgia's US Senator Thomas Hardwick and, to a lesser extent, Senator Hoke Smith—to expand the Georgia experience beyond the well-studied aspects of draft resistance and the antiwar antics of populist Tom Watson; this is important because it shows how the press helped to create a perception of what was expected of a patriotic citizen. I explore the discourse for influences that preceded decisions by local municipalities to pass ordinances related to wartime dissent, such as the "Bailey Anti-German law" cryptically alluded to in a 1918 *Atlanta Constitution* article about the

arrest of an Atlanta man on charges of disloyal speech.[4] For example, did newspaper accounts, which generally supported government restrictions on liberty, accurately reflect the attitudes of the general populace? For that matter, did what Georgia newspapers published in this atmosphere of paranoia and government restriction really reflect what newspapers themselves felt about the war and the war effort? Or did newspapers feel pressure to conform to forego the possibility of legalized censorship of the press (which was a very real threat before the passage of the Espionage Act in June 1917)? I also explore in depth the powers and accomplishments of the Georgia Council of Defense, which reported to the Council of National Defense and has hitherto been included as part of broader studies of the South rather than looked at individually. I use these themes to explain how Georgians interpreted federal, state, and local government decisions. These governmental responses impacted US citizens everywhere, including many who were often otherwise untouched in their daily lives by international events.

In Georgia, many citizens had valid reasons for opposing the war, as did Americans everywhere; like other Americans, those in Georgia who resisted the draft or opposed federal restrictions often did so in an environment of *local* official support. I present in this study cases of wartime coercion on local levels that can offer a new background for viewing arguments of resistance by showing that resistance and support were much more complex and intertwined than is indicated by many studies that view Georgia and the South from a northern or national perspective.

Historiography and Context

The nation overall rallied with Wilson when war came, but that doesn't suggest a blind following or imply complete support. It was, rather, a complex and rapid evolution from neutrali-

[4] "Jailed on Charge of Hoping Germany Will Defeat US," *Atlanta Constitution*, 4 August 1918.

ty to a war footing driven by events in the war itself. Though one must be cautious when discussing the "American public" lest the multitude of voices and opinions be lost in generalization, scholars agree that a majority of Americans viewed the war with sympathy for the Allies. This reflected the country's almost century-long alliance with Great Britain but also spoke to the success of British propaganda campaigns in the United States. Even before the war had officially begun in 1914, the British, in the hours before war was declared, had cut the trans-Atlantic cable connecting the United States and Germany, effectively cutting off US news sources from direct communication with the central powers. This allowed the British to manage and direct war news as well as disseminate anti-German propaganda. Common stories of German atrocities included the Kaiser's soldiers raping Belgian women and the even more savage stories of German soldiers cooking and eating Belgian babies.[5]

Before we transition to this active support however, we must look at Wilson's failed policy of neutrality. Aside from the obvious intention of not committing US troops to a European fight that killed hundreds of thousands in its first months, neutrality was generally twofold. First, Wilson's initial pacifism was geared at saving a place for America at the head of the postwar peace table. Wilson wanted America to be, as much as possible, a "disinterested party" to mediate peace when the European powers grew tired of slaughtering each other.[6] Only by remaining outside the fight could America accomplish that aim. Second, and perhaps most important given the prescience of the fear, Wilson "believed to the very end that participation in the war held out the greatest threat to the nation's democratic values and institutions," especially the sacred rights

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[5] Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 231.
[6] Robert W. Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War: Reconsidering America's Neutrality, 1914–1917* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 9.

of free speech and assembly.[7] Ironically, the Espionage Act, which the president pushed for after war began, would make Wilson's fears reality.

The US public generally wished to avoid war, although Germany challenged that neutral spirit when a submarine sank the passenger liner *Lusitania* without warning off the coast of Ireland on 8 May 1915. Almost 1,200 passengers drowned, including 124 Americans. This event is commonly cited as almost setting the United States to war with Germany almost two years before it actually did, but Robert Tucker, whose historical studies have included Wilson and neutrality for fifty years, complicates that argument. Tucker agrees the sinking was so repulsive to the American public that if Wilson had abandoned neutrality and sought a breaking of diplomatic ties or a declaration of war, the public would probably have backed him. Wilson, however, feared that history would judge him by asking, "Why didn't he try peaceably to settle this question with Germany?"[8] (Indeed, Wilson noted after the sinking of the *Lusitania* that "there is such a thing as a man too proud to fight," words that haunted him for the rest of his years.) More hawkish politicians, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, however, immediately judged Wilson for not asking for a declaration of war over the 1915 incident and later accused the president of hypocrisy when he *did* ask for war in 1917.[9]

The ensuing diplomatic uproar over the *Lusitania* lasted almost two months, mainly because Germany wisely ignored US demands, counting on American ire to cool over the incident (which it did).[10] By the end of July, Wilson's initial demand for a complete end to Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare on merchant vessels had dwindled to a call for Germany to accept that Americans traveling on belligerents' ships should be able to do so without fear of attack

[7] Ibid., 10, 202.
[8] Ibid., 109.
[9] Ibid., 197.
[10] Ibid., 110.

without warning; Wilson argued that in essence the United States and Germany were fighting for the same thing: freedom of the seas.[11] Tucker sees the possibility of war over the *Lusitania* as overstated and oversimplified by historians; he demonstrates that Wilson himself never seriously foresaw war as a possible outcome in the diplomatic furor that followed the sinking. Once he did realize the possibility, he became conciliatory and gave up the supreme fight for freedom of the seas in favor of maintaining American neutrality.[12] In fact, the sternest note by the Americans to Germany over unrestricted submarine warfare in 1915 was penned and sent by Robert Lansing, who replaced William Jennings Bryan as secretary of state, without the president's permission after the Germans sank yet another passenger ship, the *Arabic*, in August.[13] The *Lusitania* crisis, Tucker says, in effect destroyed Wilson's notions of neutrality and left the president "adrift, suspended between a past he could no longer recover and a . . . future he could not yet bring himself to accept."[14]

Still, in Tucker's view, war was inevitable. Wilson's 1916 reelection mantle as the man who kept America out of the war was destined to be short-lived. The issue of American rights on the high seas (combined with other factors such as the Zimmerman telegram) led to war in 1917. Wilson absolutely would not backpedal from his claim for Americans to safely travel on the ships of belligerents; doing so would have showed weakness. (This, in fact, was the reason William Jennings Bryan, a devout pacifist who realized early on that Wilson's tenacity in holding to

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[11] Ibid., 122.
[12] Ibid., 128.
[13] Ibid., 36–37. Lansing told Germany if it didn't promise to end "surprise attacks on vessels carrying passengers . . . the United States would certainly declare war on Germany." Germany did not call Lansing's bluff, and Lansing claimed he had done what Wilson would have wanted done if the president better understood the legalities of the matter.
[14] Ibid., 130.

this freedom-of-the-seas standard would inevitably draw the United States into the war, resigned as secretary of state over the US response to Germany over the *Lusitania*.)[15]

July 1916 presented another perspective on neutrality and a challenge to Wilson's usual anglophilia. In that month, an unarmed German merchant submarine designed to break the British naval blockade docked in Baltimore Harbor on a trade mission. This U-boat, the *Deutschland*, successfully crossed the Atlantic and evaded the British navy. An adventure-loving American public greeted the voyage and the trade mission with great enthusiasm. The U-boat captain, Paul König, recounted in a book published that year the warm reception afforded him and his crew by both the public and the Wilson administration, even claiming to have met with the US president.[16] Tucker's book doesn't address this visit specifically—in fact, the one great fault of his otherwise illuminating study is the unexplained absence of most of the summer and fall of 1916—but he does allude to the political atmosphere in which it occurred. During the summer of 1916, Wilson began to broaden his view of the Allied blockade on Germany, obtaining "from Congress authority to take severe retaliatory measures against any nation discriminating against American firms or interfering with American mail." Though Tucker doesn't mention the *Deutschland*, this declaration was in direct response to Great Britain's threat to blacklist American companies who traded Canadian nickel—integral to Germany's war effort—for German dyestuffs brought on the *Deutschland,* which the British considered a war vessel despite its apparent lack of armaments.[17] In fact, Wilson's diplomatic "back off" message to Great Britain over this incident is in many ways more harshly worded than the warnings to Germany after the sinking of the *Lusitania*.

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[15] Ibid., 140.
[16] Dwight R. Messimer, *The Merchant U-Boat: Adventures of the Deutschland, 1916–1918* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988), 70.
[17] Messimer, *Merchant U-Boat*, 51; Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 209.

Neutrality ended in spring 1917 when the United States declared war on Germany. It was a radical transition after the relatively warmer relations of the previous fall and early winter. Germany, in collusion with the Wilson administration, had offered a peace overture to the Allies in December 1916; the Allies promptly declined to deal. Britain and France refused to ease the naval blockade, despite the blockade's increasingly sour view by the United States. The Allies gambled, rightly, that if they refused Wilson's attempts at orchestrating peace, the naval blockade would either starve Germany into submission or force the Germans to restart unrestricted submarine warfare.[18]

Thus, Woodrow Wilson's administration had followed what the president deemed "strict neutrality" for the first thirty months of the European war, from late summer 1914 until late January 1917. On 31 January 1917, Germany, which had thus far attempted to keep America out of the war since fall 1915, declared unrestricted submarine warfare on the naval vessels of any nation supplying the Allies—in essence, unrestricted submarine warfare on the United States. Germany gambled that its U-boats would cripple Allied shipping and bring the war to conclusion before the United States had time to muster, train, and deploy an army to Europe. The ultimate tenet of Wilson's neutrality—that of Americans' freedom to travel and trade without harassment on the seas—was dismissed again by the Germans, so the United States went to war.

Wilson had barely won reelection in 1916 under the slogan "He Kept Us Out of the War." But confronted with the resurgent German U-boat threat, the president did a complete about-face and guided the United States into the conflict with a single-minded determination to mobilize every aspect of American society toward victory. The subsequent debates on how America raised its army (through a new selective service military draft) and suppressed constitutional guarantees of free speech and expression have dominated the domestic history of the Unit-

[18] Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 211.

ed States in World War I. It is very much a story about the coercion of "volunteerism" and the origins of civil rights in the United States. Regional differences offered multiple challenges to a government trying to mobilize an entire nation for war; opponents who claimed the right of free speech forced a constitutional reckoning of the First Amendment for the first time by the Supreme Court.

These episodes cannot completely explain the complexity of the rollercoaster ride that was American neutrality in the first years of the Great War. They do, however, illustrate the wide-ranging diplomatic lengths Wilson went to in order to maintain neutrality. And once neutrality was discarded, Wilson's subsequent war directives left no doubt that he had moved beyond the "too proud to fight" statement he had uttered after the *Lusitania*. A month after his second inauguration, the president reelected on the slogan "he kept us out of the war" asked Congress to declare war on Germany.

Particularly in the South, support for the war before America's entry as a belligerent was tepid at best. The South was still very rural in attitudes as well as demographics. Prior to America's march to war after January 1917 (and following the discovery of the Zimmerman telegram), southerners generally opposed the war, as Great Britain's very successful naval blockade of Imperial Germany hurt southern industry by restricting overseas markets for southern goods. Yet with the advent of war, the South mobilized both physically and psychologically in support of the war, as did the rest of the nation. Though strong pockets of resistance and dissent survived to nag the Wilson administration's attempts to silence dissent and crush opposition, in Georgia, resistance fought for voice among discourse that defended Georgia's patriotism and loyalty.

Of key interest to any study about the US domestic scene in World War I are two pivotal federal acts passed by Congress. The Selective Service Act was passed in May 1917 to erect a

framework by which the new Allied belligerent would mobilize a fighting force to deploy to the European theater. The Espionage Act passed the following month, laying unprecedented restrictions on war opposition and free speech.[19] In Georgia, the Populist icon Tom Watson was one of the most outspoken opponents of compulsory military service to be found in the nation and immediately came up against the new federal espionage law. (Georgia Senator Thomas Hardwick was another vocal opponent of war and the draft; I discuss his views and Georgia's response to them in chapter 2.) Watson's attacks on the Wilson administration and his vehement opposition to the draft resulted in the barring of his weekly political publication, the *Jeffersonian*, from delivery by the postal service under the Espionage Act. Watson's attacks threatened to land him in federal prison for violating the act, and in one case the United States put a man in prison for quoting a Watson speech.[20] Watson's opposition has been thoroughly documented, most notably in C. Vann Woodward's 1938 biography.[21]

A caveat is in order here. Due to the climate of suspicion fostered by the federally enforced repression that dominated in the United States at that time, it could be very difficult to find what one could term an honest media assessment or opinion on public figures who stood in opposition to the Wilson regime. Indeed, it could be difficult to even find reasonably reliable, objective newspaper accounts of what may have been said in opposition to the American government's execution of the war. The Espionage Act—especially after it was amended in May 1918 (hereafter, I refer to this amended act as the Sedition Act to conform to historical convention, but it was more accurately a series of amendments to the Espionage Act to strengthen gov-

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[19] The Espionage Act passed on 15 June 1917, and was amended on 16 May 1918 to further restrict the expression of views critical of the government or the war effort. The 1918 amendments are often referred to as the Sedition Act as they deal with seditious speech, but it is more accurately the amended Espionage Act. Throughout this thesis, I refer to this amended version of the Espionage Act as the Sedition Act.

[20] H.C. Peterson and Gilbert Courtland Fite, *Opponents of War, 1917–1918* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957), 154.

[21] C. Vann Woodward, *Tom Watson: Agrarian Rebel* (1938; repr., Savannah, GA: Beehive Press, 1973).

ernment powers) to include more restrictions on free expression of opinion as it related to the war—promised to punish individuals and organizations that "willfully utter, print, write, or publish any language intended to incite, provoke, or encourage resistance to the United States, or to promote the cause of its enemies . . ." [22]

In his book *Democracy's Prisoner*, about the trial of Eugene Debs, Ernest Freeberg notes that many newspapers protected themselves by only publishing summaries of alleged seditious or disloyal speech rather than reprint an accused's actual language, lest they expose themselves to accusations of disloyalty and potential prosecution under the "publish" rubric of the Espionage Act.[23]

The issue of civil rights is closely tied to any study of US domestic World War I history. Many who spoke out against the war claimed a constitutional right under the First Amendment; yet despite almost a century and a half of existence, the First Amendment by 1917 had not yet been substantially analyzed or defined by the Supreme Court.[24] Coercion from government and private citizens is generally argued as the psychological imperative that allowed the excesses of civil rights violations in this period. Background on the impact of the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act, as well as the consequences of the law and how it coerced citizens to follow the government, are provided by several important books. Paul L. Murphy's influential 1979 book, *World War I and the Origins of Civil Liberties in the United States*, explores the silence on civil liberties in the first 140 years of United States' history and the emergence of the surveillance

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[22] See appendix for full citation as well as a comparison of the text of the Espionage Act in June 1917 versus the Sedition Act in May 1918.
[23] Ernest Freeberg, *Democracy's Prisoner: Eugene V. Debs, the Great War, and the Right to Dissent* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 88.
[24] Lee C. Bollinger and Geoffrey R. Stone, eds., *Eternally Vigilant: Free Speech in the Modern Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

state during the war.[25] The best current tome on coercion and voluntarism is Christopher Capozzola's *Uncle Sam Wants You*. This book extends the argument of coercion to explore how it helped create the social and political obligations of a modern American citizen, highlighting "the primacy of political obligations to the federal government . . . [placing] law and legal process more firmly at the center of understandings of citizenship."[26] Richard Polenberg's *Fighting Faiths* explores the *Schenk* and *Abrams* cases, two significant challenge to the Espionage Act.[27] These cases were among the first the Supreme Court weighed in on in the postwar free speech debate; Polenberg's book illuminates how the highest court viewed the nascent subject of civil liberties and established the initial precedents of constitutional rights in trials that began after the war had already ended.

The historiography of the South in World War I is expansive; Georgia's specific place in this story, however, is sparse. Existing scholarship can be broken into several specific themes and lines of inquiry, including but not limited to race; gender; economics and labor; federal law and dissent; and political as well as popular resistance to the draft and to the free speech restrictions implemented by Congress. Previous scholarship tends to include Georgia in arguments about the South as a region rather than looking at Georgia in a specific and singular context. Jeanette Keith's book *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight* is a regional study of the South and its collective wartime experience.[28] Keith explores issues of race and labor but also delves quite deeply into the elements of resistance and opposition to the war and specifically the draft. She explores in depth the impact of Tom Watson's (and to a lesser degree, Thomas Hardwick's)

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[25] Paul L. Murphy, *World War I and the Origins of Civil Liberties in the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979).
[26] Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 53.
[27] Richard Polenberg, *Fighting Faiths: The Abrams Case, the Supreme Court, and Free Speech* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).
[28] Keith, *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight*.

opposition to the war and also provides detailed accounts of Bureau of Investigation (the World War I precursor to the FBI) reports by agents tasked with tracking down draft dodgers. *Rich Man's War* provides a springboard for further research into areas of Georgia significance that the book does not specifically address, such as local "Work or Fight" ordinances or prowar laws.

Many well-known works explore the national domestic scene in World War I, such as David M. Kennedy's *Over Here* and Ronald Schaffer's *America in the Great War*.[29] William Breen's exhaustive 1984 study of mobilization, however, took one of the first in-depth looks at the state councils of defense that fell under the authority of the Council of National of Defense.[30] Mostly a national study looking at mobilization from the top down, Breen does endeavor to cover the unique circumstances that befit the different sections of the country; he devotes an entire chapter to the South and Southwest. While the southern chapter mostly focuses on the less than zealous efforts by southern councils of defense (with the exception of Tennessee's state council and its chairman, who were "beacons of light . . . in the bleak southern landscape"[31]), he also points out that many northeastern states, which were generally very active, harbored suspicious and sometimes hostile feelings toward the national council.[32]

Breen has little to say about Georgia specifically; what is said about the state is sourced only from national council records, leaving the archive of Georgia Council of Defense (GCD) records in Morrow, Georgia, unexplored. Breen cites only reports and memoranda on Georgia

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[29] David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Ronald Schaffer, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[30] William J. Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home: Civilian Mobilization, Wartime Federalism, and the Council of National Defense, 1917–1919* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984).
[31] Ibid., 99.
[32] Ibid., 54. As readers will see in the third chapter of this thesis, the Georgia Council of Defense was notorious for not responding to queries about its activities and accomplishments from the Council of National Defense and from other federal departments. Breen explains in his chapter on the Northeast how "Maine, Vermont, and Rhode Island maintained 'an attitude of independence and self-satisfaction and occasionally even open hostility' to the Washington office." Massachusetts, too, "was always loath to reply to requests for information on its activities or to answer questionnaires" from the federal council.

made by those within the national council. Based on these reports, Breen says that Governor Hugh Dorsey, who in his role as state executive was also the chairman of the GCD, "kept a very tight rein on its activities" and "refused to permit the state council to act independently"; his "actions reflected the strength of the antiwar feeling in the state and his own political dependence on that group."[33] Breen concludes that "opposition to the war. . . . made the task of the southern state councils much more difficult and helps account for their limited achievements."[34] When looking at southern states, and specifically Georgia, from only federal records, it is easy to make such an assumption. True, war opposition was widespread, and southern councils' achievements did fall far behind those from other areas of the country. But as I explore in chapter 3, the GCD records indicate a state council of defense that is more involved, with less influence from the governor, than Breen's early study suggests.

In addition to these nationally focused studies, there are some interesting works on local support and resistance, including *Georgia Historical Quarterly* articles by Milton R. Ready and Gerald E. Shenk. Ready's 1968 article does an excellent job in chronicling how, and when, Georgia went from apathy toward war to full-scale support. He argues that in 1914 and 1915, the state was generally "unconcerned" about the affairs in Europe and "most Georgians looked to President Woodrow Wilson for direction."[35] Ready argues that Georgia's changing attitudes after the advent of war stemmed from a collective guilt and a determination to show its patriotism after the trial and lynching of Leo Frank in 1915. These events stole a great deal of thunder from the *Lusitania* sinking in 1915 that gripped the rest of the country; Frank's lynching drew national condemnation and threats by other states to boycott Georgia goods, as well as plenty of negative

[33] Ibid., 101.
[34] Ibid., 112.
[35] Milton R. Ready, "Georgia's Entry into World War I," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 52 (September 1968): 257.

press about Georgia after the event.[36] It is an intriguing theory that strives to explain the state's support of the war; however, it is not fully supported by the newspaper accounts Ready heavily favors to back up his argument.

More powerful in his argument is how the South collectively felt about the war and neutrality. Ready's article discusses the impact of US senator Hoke Smith's criticisms of Wilsonian neutrality, specifically the British blockade of Germany and the British seizure of southern cotton: "In practice Smith determined that England's constant seizure of American goods, especially cotton from Savannah, was more a violation of neutrality than the infrequent but spectacular sinkings of British ships with 'rich Americans' on board by German submarines."[37] (Historian Robert Tucker' analysis of Wilson and neutrality, discussed earlier, supports Smith's claims.) Much opposition to the war stemmed from these seizures as well as falling cotton prices, both of which were exploited by famed war opponent and Georgia populist icon Tom Watson.[38] Yet Ready's article clearly delineates a near-constant support for Wilson in Georgia newspapers. Wilson spent many of his formative childhood years in Georgia and was extremely popular both as a Democrat and an adopted Georgia son. Georgia's loyalty to the president and its full faith in his abilities directed the change to war support, though one cannot completely discount Ready's argument that the state wanted to redeem itself in the eyes of a critical nation. Still, in the matter of changing attitudes, it is more a story of how newspapers in the Solid South blew in whatever direction the political winds took the Wilson administration. This made newspaper editors and owners powerful and influential agents of coercion and compliance when US involvement in the war began.

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[36] Ibid., 260.
[37] Ibid., 258.
[38] Ibid.

Gerald Shenk, on the other hand, explores the draft in Georgia in terms of race, masculinity, and labor requirements; his article provides a solid background on race and gender and how these issues painted the skin color of soldiers Georgia supplied to the US Army.[39] The Georgia Council of Defense often responded to inquiries from other state councils about "Americanization" efforts with the fact that less than 1 percent of Georgia's population was foreign-born, therefore, Americanization efforts would have wasted time and resources.[40] In this light, Shenk's article reveals the local focus on race that seems to have superseded the national focus on anti-Germanism—although local laws were passed in Atlanta and elsewhere with the intent of diminishing "pro-Germanism" and antiwar activities.

Shenk's research reveals an interesting aspect of war support: self-interest. He recounts tales of Georgia sheriffs and local draft boards conspiring with wealthy white planters to intentionally delay delivery of draft notices to blacks so the sheriffs could round up the "slackers" and collect rewards from the army for delivering the supposed draft dodgers.[41] In such cases, Shenk argues, the planters and local sheriffs, who otherwise opposed selective service and "eyed the draft with suspicion as a threat to local prerogatives,"[42] were seen as complying but only "according to their own convenience."[43] Financial reward may be a questionable rationale for patriotic support and, in this case, a morally corrupt one, but it is nonetheless another reason why some Georgians chose to support the war while others dissented (or were simply oblivious).

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[39] Gerald E. Shenk, "Race, Manhood, and Manpower: Mobilizing Rural Georgia for World War I," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81 (fall 1997): 622–62.
[40] "Americanization" folders (total of three), Box RCB 56819, Georgia State Council of Defense Records 22-1-14 ("Defense—Adjutant General—misc. WWI Records—1917–1918"), Georgia State Archives, Morrow, GA. Hereafter, the boxes in this group of records will be listed as RCB and the group of records abbreviated "GCD."
[41] Shenk, "Race, Manhood, and Manpower," 631–33.
[42] Ibid., 628.
[43] Ibid., 632.

Chapter Outline

In the first chapter, I look at the realm of law and the spirit of vigilance in Georgia during the war. Within the abilities allowed by source availability, I analyze relevant laws and explore how these new federal (and in some cases, local) restrictions were violated (or perceived to be violated) by officials and the public. This chapter includes case studies to demonstrate the arguments used to convict or persecute those accused of violating wartime laws. This chapter also attempts to trace the lineage of local laws, such as the aforementioned anti-German ordinance passed by the Atlanta City Council in April 1918. What, for instance, inspired this local law, and how did it differ from the Espionage Act passed in 1917 or the Sedition Act passed in May 1918? Were local laws such as Atlanta's an impetus for the new additions to the Espionage Act or a reaction to it? The laws and vigilance activities explored here demonstrate how coercion informed actions that were supposed to be "voluntary."

Chapter 2 explores the Georgia newspaper press and its role in war support and how the press spun the events of the war and supported Wilson's leadership. This chapter offers details on Georgia's prewar opponents, specifically the reach and influence of Georgia's US senators, Hoke Smith and Thomas Hardwick. The press especially demonized Hardwick, who never ceased in challenging the government's infringement on personal liberties during the war. I investigate newspaper stories involving Hardwick to discover what editorial opinions as well as news accounts said about the opposition views of this public figure and his fellow senator, Smith, and how those articles helped to convince readers of the importance of war support and created a "Georgia" view of the war. (Georgia's most famous war opponent was populist Tom Watson; however, Watson's record on the war has been studied in great depth, so his influence is a minimal part of this study.)

The third chapter covers Georgia's transition to a wartime stance and how it sought to adhere to federal requirements and laws once federal restrictions were put in place. The Georgia Council of Defense records at the state archive in Morrow, Georgia, are integral to this chapter, demonstrating specific organizations and drives to support federal actions (such as Liberty Loan promotions) and the overall war effort. These records have not been used as extensively as federal records held by the National Archives. Though the GCD promoted the war in the face of some significant resistance, this chapter especially challenges previous studies in which scholars found the Georgia council to be weak and ineffective. I argue that GCD leaders, working within the main state agency in charge of implementing federal requests and disseminating information, actually took their roles very seriously. They sought creative ways to satisfy the federal government while preserving independence, and they worked on a mostly voluntary basis, with limited resources amid a significant labor deficiency.

The conclusion briefly looks at what these three areas of definitive war support say about Georgia in the First World War. In this final section, I address the overall atmosphere that succeeded the 1918 armistice in Georgia and what the end of the war meant for the state culturally and politically. As we will see, the predominant view of Georgia during the First World War as a realm of isolationism and antiwar sentiment is incomplete; coercion to support the war in a manner that would seem voluntary and patriotic took root in Georgia as it did throughout the United States. The state and many of its citizens supported the war in various ways, and for various reasons—to abide by federal laws, to support a popular president, for economic imperatives, and even out of sheer patriotism.

CHAPTER 1: ENFORCING PATRIOTISM: LAWS AND CITIZEN VIGILANCE

> It shall hereafter be unlawful for any person to speak or write or circulate matters or printed articles attacking or ridiculing the issues of Bonds or Thrift Stamps by the United States of America in aid of the prosecution of the present war, upon the streets or public places of this city.
>
> —Excerpt from the Atlanta City Council's anti-German ordinance, April 1918

Though the later chapters in this thesis will focus on hitherto less explored elements of Georgia support for the war effort, I must state here that it would be misleading and false to infer that the state as a whole was behind Wilson and war 100 percent. War opposition, particularly among rural farmers, was strong. As mentioned in the introduction, Jeanette Keith's *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight* documents widespread southern resistance to the draft; Gerald E. Shenk's research looks closely at the intent and effects of legislation passed locally to enforce draft adherence after Secretary of War Newton Baker issued the federal "Work or Fight" order in spring 1918, which in effect created a legal mandate requiring all sectors of civil and industrial life to mobilize in support of the war.

Clearly, it is an established and well-researched fact that many Georgians opposed the war; opposition was compounded by the labor problems caused by the drafting of agricultural workers as well as the migration of southern blacks to urban areas in northern states where industrial jobs beckoned. Yet war support was common throughout Georgia, too. It often manifested itself in local or regional laws that mirrored congressional legislation to enforce compliance with federal efforts or demonstrate Georgia's patriotism. Such laws help explain how coercive legal measures influenced, or at least intended to influence, the popular support of the war.

This chapter will explore how Georgia leaders responded to war dissent and the labor situation with legislation that targeted antiwar speech or activities and compelled "slackers" to

support the war and engage in war production or work of any kind. I will explore Work or Fight laws, by which cities and the state ultimately demonstrated the often subjective nature of law and how the law was used to reinforce white dominance in Georgia.[1] I will also show how the Sedition Act debate circa April 1918 impressed municipal governments, and will conclude with a brief study of how vigilance activities—by run-of-the-mill civilians as well as the American Protective League—demonstrate a willingness by many Georgians to fall in step with the Wilson administration's nationwide mobilization efforts. But first, in dealing with questions of laws, I will discuss the status of First Amendment rights and how Americans perceived the subject of civil liberties at the outbreak of US participation in the First World War.

Free Speech and Civil Liberties in the First World War: An Overview

During World War I, what many Americans now consider absolute rights of free speech and even free press were still relatively untested in federal courts and in the Supreme Court. The field of civil liberties was virtually a wide-open battlefield, at least at the federal level. Since the Supreme Court had not yet substantially engaged the subject of limits to these rights, once war began, the Wilson administration began a push to legislate these constitutional guarantees.

Though newspapers by and large patriotically supported the Wilson administration, federal laws restricting free speech, and the war, the press vigorously fought Wilson on one key piece of legislation that the president wanted in the Espionage Act: a mandatory censorship clause, which one newspaper called a "campaign to shackle the press while the war is being fought, to rob it of the right guaranteed by the Constitution."[2] To the press's delight, that provision was effectively defeated. The press had few if any qualms about the limits placed on

[1] Shenk, "Race, Manhood, and Manpower," 655.
[2] Editorial, *Washington Herald*, 24 May 1917, 1, quoted in Thomas A. Lawrence, "Eclipse of Liberty: Civil Liberties in the United States During the First World War," *Wayne Law Review* 21 (1974–1975): 41.

speech—protected by the same amendment that protects the free press—when the Sedition Act was passed in spring 1918. In Georgia, the *Atlanta Constitution* expressed the widespread sentiment that restrictions on free speech were acceptable:

> All traitors, all seditionists, all loose-tongued critics of the government's war policies had best beware, because this bill [the Sedition Act] provides precisely the authority that is needed to clip their wings and hobble them. . . . It is just such a law as the country needs; and the need for it is made all the more apparent by the fact that it has been pending for a year, during which time its enactment has been blocked by the aforementioned "little group" in the senate. . . . The law will do much good, and it can do no injury to any man who speaks and acts the part of a thorough-going American citizen.[3]

Many scholars have debated the status of American civil liberties in World War I. The Supreme Court developed its First Amendment jurisprudence after the First World War in response to cases involving violation of the Espionage Act. *Schenk v. United States* (1919), for example, established the famous "clear and present danger" aspect of limited free speech, in which Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote that any definition of free speech would not protect someone who falsely shouted "fire!" in a crowded theater, thus causing a panic and a possible stampede. In *Debs v. United States* (1919), the Supreme Court upheld American socialist leader Eugene Debs's conviction for violating the Espionage Act while giving a speech in Ohio. And in *Abrams v. United States* (1919), the court again upheld a conviction under the Espionage Act, only this time Holmes and Justice Louis Brandeis dissented in what Christopher Capozzola describes as an "epochal shift to the defense of free speech"; particularly, Holmes decided that the best defense of free speech was its credibility amid the "free trade of ideas . . . truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out."[4]

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[3] "Punishing Sedition," *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 May 1918, 8.

[4] Abrams v. U.S., 250 U.S. 616 (1919), quoted in Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 166. Capozzola also offers a succinct overview of the formative effects of *Schenk* and *Debs*, as well as *Abrams*, on federal interpretations of free speech; see *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 164–67.

Thomas A. Lawrence notes that the Committee for Public Information published a *War Cyclopedia* in 1918 with common war terms and phrases explained to laymen. The book claimed Congress's authority to pass "necessary and proper" laws in wartime meant the status of constitutional freedoms during armed conflicts "rests, therefore, largely with the discretion of Congress.'"[5] Lawrence concludes, "This statement was sufficient to convince most readers, for the Supreme Court had considered few first amendment cases before World War I, and it may be assumed that very few Americans knew of or understood the Bill of Rights."[6] Paul Murphy agrees with Lawrence in his groundbreaking works on civil liberties. Free speech, Murphy claims, was "largely outside the area of . . . legal definition from the adoption of the Bill of Rights until World War I," and Americans mostly considered it a tradition, "although it had few public guarantees. . . . Thus, freedom of speech was treated as a dearly won prize, but not used from day to day."[7]

Other scholars, however, such as Alexis Anderson, have revised the story of civil liberty development by emphasizing local and state legal developments from the period of Reconstruction until World War I, a time when, Anderson notes, "free speech ideals were first systematically repressed by arbitrary enforcement of municipal ordinances"[8]—such as the Bailey law against pro-Germanism in Atlanta (which will be discussed shortly). Anderson even cites an interesting

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[5] Lawrence, "Eclipse of Liberty," 47. Though Lawrence is discussing the free press specifically in this section, his argument encompasses civil liberties and the Bill of Rights in general.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Paul Murphy quoted in Alexis J. Anderson, "The Formative Period of First Amendment Theory, 1870–1915," *American Journal of Legal History* 24 (January 1980): 57.
[8] Anderson, "Formative Period of First Amendment Theory," 58. Anderson's study as a whole explores several state and federal appellate decisions concerning free speech cases prior to the First World War. Anderson particularly explores a complex evolution of cases that forbade "absolute prohibition of speech, [whereas] public order demanded its reasonable regulation" (71). In addition to Anderson's work, considerable literature exists on civil liberties development at the state level, and even at the federal level, before Reconstruction. See, for example, H. Robert Baker, *The Rescue of Joshua Glover: A Fugitive Slave, the Constitution, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2006); Michael Kent Curtis, *Free Speech, "The People's Darling Privilege": Struggles for Freedom of Expression in American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); and Sandra F. VanBurkleo, *Belonging to the World: Women's Rights and American Constitutional Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

free speech case in Atlanta in 1905, in which a socialist professor from South Carolina specifically set out to test an Atlanta ordinance. In a precirculated flyer, J. L. Fitts invited the public to come see what happened when he gave a public speech on socialism to challenge the Atlanta law prohibiting the "[lawful] assembling to discuss our condition and needs," and asked citizens to "come . . . early and get a good place. Don't block the sidewalk or streets."[9] The city accepted the challenge and shut Fitts down. The city court concluded the professor had "'confused in his mind the constitutional right of freedom of speech with an imaginary, though non-existing right to hold public meetings and make speeches in the public streets.'"[10] A mere thirteen years later, amid the crisis of world war, the federal government as well as state and local governments everywhere would be forced into another reckoning of "the constitutional right of freedom of speech." This was as true in Georgia as anywhere. In Atlanta, for example, the city council would debate whether constitutional guarantees trumped the city's own vested interests in supporting the draft and Liberty Bond fundraising drives.

Enforcing "Patriotic Fervor": National and Local Laws

Most any reckoning of civil liberties law during World War I begins with the passage of the Espionage Act in June 1917. At the federal level, Congress passed this act at the urging of President Wilson. While most historical references to the act tend to align it with a new martial spirit that pervaded the United States upon the declaration of war, the act was in fact conceived the previous year, when Wilson asked Attorney General Thomas Gregory to draft legislation against disloyalty. Congress received the draft in mid-1916; the Senate passed it before the declaration of war, but the House did not take up the bill until after the official war declaration on

[9] Fitts v. City of Atlanta, 49 S.E. 793, 795 (1905), quoted in Anderson, "Formative Period of First Amendment Theory," 71.
[10] Ibid., 72.

6 April 1917.[11] By the time active debate on the Espionage Act was over, both President Wilson and Attorney General Gregory felt the new law was too weak. As legal scholar Geoffrey R. Stone notes, the act was not intended by Congress to have the impact it did; it was intended to be limited:

> Congress took its constitutional responsibilities quite seriously and expressly rejected several key provisions proposed by the Wilson administration. . . . As the congressional debate suggests, the legislation, as enacted, was not a broadside attack on all criticism of the war. It was, rather, a carefully considered enactment designed to deal with specific military concerns. Although Congress's stance in enacting the Espionage Act could hardly be characterized as libertarian, its elimination of the press censorship provision (over the strong objections of the president) and its significant amendments to both the "disaffection" and "nonmailability" provisions reflected a genuine concern for the potential impact of the legislation on the freedom of speech, or of the press.[12]

That President Wilson and his attorney general would interpret the resulting legislation with wide latitude was to be expected. "As the war progressed, and the nation was whipped into a fever pitch of patriotism, the Wilson administration and the federal courts distorted the Espionage Act in order to suppress a broad range of political dissent,"[13] Stone writes. "Without firm precedent protecting the freedom of speech, few federal judges had either the inclination or the fortitude to withstand the mounting pressure for suppression. They, and the First Amendment, were swept away in a tide of patriotic fervor."[14]

The original Espionage Act's impact mostly came down to the wording in section 3, which consisted of a mere 122 words:

> Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies and whoever,

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[11] Geoffrey R. Stone, *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime from the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 146; Murphy, *World War I and the Origins of Civil Liberties*," 54–55.
[12] Stone, *Perilous Times*, 146, 152.
[13] Ibid., 146.
[14] Ibid., 160. For a thorough exploration of the courts' interpretations of the Espionage Act, see *Perilous Times*, 164–91.

> when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or of the United States, shall be punished by a fine of not more than $10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both."[15]

I do not discuss debate of the Espionage Act of 1917, because much of the act was written and debated even before the US entered the war. But it is important to look at how the federal Sedition Act the following year, which amended the Espionage Act, was viewed in Georgia. For example, the city of Atlanta passed its own anti-German ordinance in April 1918. The debate on *why* the city needed such an ordinance is not found anywhere in city council minutes, but other resolutions passed by the council, even before the declaration of war, indicate a general and fervent support of the US effort.[16] Timing is an important clue to the law's purpose; the city ordinance passed roughly three weeks before the Congress passed repressive amendments to the Espionage Act to create the Sedition Act. The Atlanta law clearly reflects locally the national debate on the shortcomings of the Espionage Act and a need for more restrictive measures. It also reflected widespread state discontent—at least among newspapers and politicians—with US Senator Thomas Hardwick of Georgia, who was making national news in early April for his well-publicized and often rebuked opposition to the Sedition Act. (For more on Hardwick and his opposition to the Wilson administration, see chapter 2.) Strangely, the *Atlanta Constitution*

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[15] See appendix.

[16] *Atlanta City Council Minutes* 25, March 15, 1915, to June 21, 1917; *Atlanta City Council Minutes* 26, July 1917 to May 1920, both at Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA. Examples include an 8 March 1917 resolution supporting Wilson's demand for a cloture rule in the Senate after the infamous "little group of willful men" opposed Wilson's endeavor for armed neutrality (vol. 25, 664); authorization for a leave of absence for city employees who wished to enlist, 16 April 1917 (vol. 25, 710); a resolution "heartily" supporting the Fuel Administration's order restricting fuel consumption on Mondays in recognition of "the need of some inconvenience among our citizens in order to hasten the war to a speedy and victorious conclusion," 21 January 1918 (vol. 26, 154); and a resolution in September 1918 requesting the chief of police take down license numbers of cars driving on Sundays and turning them over, along with the names of drivers, to local papers for publication because "we condemn, as unpatriotic, the conduct of owners of cars operating same on Sunday contrary to the request of the government in order that gasoline be saved necessary war purposes" (vol. 26, 367).

reported almost solely on the national debate on the Sedition Act at this time; it quietly reported the passage of the local bill in mid-April.[17] When Congress passed the Sedition Act, the *Constitution* ran an editorial called "Punishing Sedition," which outlined the new amendment's sharper restrictions on publishing and speech and never mentioned the city's own law passed the previous month.[18] Clearly, the Atlanta law was symbolic. Still, it was used on at least one occasion to arrest a man who was later convicted and sentenced for violating the federal Espionage Act.

The Atlanta ordinance was known as the Bailey anti-German law after the city councilman who sponsored it. The ordinance prohibited "manifestations of pro-Germanism" and, in language very similar to the Sedition Act (the text of which was currently publicized in news about the national debate, as the House had already passed the bill), made it illegal "for any person to *speak* or *write* or *circulate* matters or *printed* articles attacking or ridiculing the issues of Bonds or Thrift Stamps by the United States of America in aid o [sic] the prosecution of the present war, upon the streets or public places of this city."[19] (Emphasis added.) (For a comparison of the language used in the June 1917 Espionage Act and that used in the May 1918 Sedition Act, see appendix.) The Atlanta law mimicked the original Espionage Act's language that prohibited actions that might impact enlistment in the US armed forces; however, in anticipation of language used in the Sedition Act that Congress would pass the following month, the Bailey law also cracked down on those who criticized the armed forces, the government, or the president, and made it illegal to "give aid to the enemy by *words* or *writing* or *printing* or otherwise, in praising the work or progress or officers of the countries, with which our country is at war, or otherwise

[17] "Council to Investigate Power Company Petition Seeking Increased Rates," *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 April 1918, 1. The anti-German ordinance is mentioned briefly in the recap of the city council's meeting on power company rates.
[18] "Punishing Sedition," *Atlanta Constitution*.
[19] "An Ordinance . . . ," *City of Atlanta Ordinance Book* 22, 84.

holding them up for approval, upon the streets or public places of the City."[20] (Emphasis added.) The city law was remarkably lenient compared to the Espionage Act. The maximum fine for violating the new city law was $100 and/or a maximum of thirty days of community service ("work on the streets of the City"); the maximum penalty for violating the Espionage Act was $10,000 and up to *twenty years* in prison.[21]

How many times the Bailey law was cited or used to arrest slackers is unclear, but in August a 37-year-old cotton mill worker, Gilbert C. Carter, was arrested for "violating the Bailey anti-German law."[22] According to a witness and fellow tenant at the boarding house where Carter lived, Carter had said, "I hope the Stars and Stripes will be trampled under the feet of the Germans, and furthermore I don't count myself an American citizen." When arrested, Carter was held without bond pending a hearing. The complainant, a local firefighter, came too, and told police that if Carter hadn't been sitting down when making the statement, the complainant "would have knocked him down."[23] If the complainant was truthful in Carter's making the above statement, it is interesting for two reasons that when arrested, Carter told police "that as an American citizen he had the right to freedom of speech." First, of course, Carter supposedly didn't count himself a citizen, yet later claimed protection of his rights as a citizen. Second, when compared to citizens as described by scholars mentioned above—such as Lawrence, who

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[20] "An Ordinance . . . ," *City of Atlanta Ordinance Book* no. 22; relevant passages from the federal Sedition Act, section 3, define violators of the federal law as those who, "when the United States is at war, shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States, or the flag of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy of the United States, or any language intended to bring the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States, or the flag of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy of the United States into contempt, scorn, contumely, or disrepute, . . . or to promote the cause of its enemies, . . . or advocate any curtailment of production in this country of any thing or things, product or products, necessary or essential to the prosecution of the war in which the United States may be engaged, . . . and whoever shall by word or act support or favor the cause of any country with which the United States is at war or by word or act oppose the cause of the United States therein . . ."; see appendix.

[21] "An Ordinance . . . ," *City of Atlanta Ordinance Book* no. 22.

[22] "Jailed on Charge of Hoping Germany will Defeat U.S.," *Atlanta Constitution*, 4 August 1918, 8.

[23] Ibid.

surmised that "very few Americans knew of or understood the Bill of Rights"—Carter certainly seemed aware of a *constitutional* right to free speech, at least according to the Atlanta paper.[24] His interpretation of that right, however, predates the Supreme Court's discussion of the right, which wasn't readily acknowledged until long after the war was over. Perhaps this points to some public perception of speech rights that were independent of Supreme Court discussion.

Carter's prosecution was relatively swift, albeit in federal court under the Espionage Act rather than in Atlanta courts. He was in jail awaiting trial on the September 12 draft registration day; though prisoners were released to register, Carter declined to go, because he "'just didn't care to register.'"[25] He was sentenced to two years in federal prison, on four counts of violating the Espionage Act as well as for evading the draft. In a somewhat comical look at the trial —and an intriguing one, as I could locate no surviving records of trial testimony itself—the *Constitution* reported that Carter considered himself "the reincarnation of George Washington" and was "standing by the principles of Washington," whom he had read about and admired as a child.[26]

On one hand, based on the *Constitution*'s brief summary of the trial, Carter seems a remarkably observant and well-educated citizen for a "cotton mill worker and farmer": Carter claimed he was not able to "sympathize with any nation or group of nations who believes in placing Germany or any other government in a similar position to the one that England had placed the United States at the time of the revolutionary war." He claimed he would gladly fight for the country if it had been attacked by Germany "with the intention of placing her [the United States] under a yoke"; on the other hand, the article claimed Carter had read nothing about the war in newspapers, learning about the worldwide conflict "from a little girl in the cotton mills at

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[24] Ibid.
[25] "Carter Will Make His Future Disloyal Remarks in Prison," *Atlanta Constitution*, 23 October 1918, 9.
[26] "Saying He Is Washington, Reincarnated G. C. Carter Begins Term in Prison," *Atlanta Constitution*, 24 October 1918, 11.

Manchester."[27] The extent to which Carter truly felt he was Washington reincarnated is, unfortunately, a mystery. The *Constitution* article is vague on the actual statement; the federal penitentiary records contain warrants, indictments, sentences, and Carter's eventual commutation of sentence in March 1919 (reduced from two years to a year and a day), but no mention of anything remotely about the country's first president.[28]

The Sedition Act clearly had an influence on Georgia legislators. This Atlanta ordinance serves as one example of how local governments sought to support the Wilson administration and federal war activities with laws that either mimicked or reinforced legislation moving through Congress. Other federal actions spurred a more widespread response from Georgia and its municipalities, specifically the War Department's "Work or Fight" order.

Work or Fight: Enforcing Labor and Reining in "Slackers"

"Work or Fight" became a patriotic slogan—and a means of implementing antiloafing laws, especially in the South—after the phrase was coined to describe the new edict by Secretary of War Newton Baker that went into effect 1 July 1918. Provost Marshal Enoch Crowder, who headed the selective service, was in charge if implementing the new rule, which specifically targeted men of draft age.

As with the Sedition Act, regional debates and Work or Fight ordinances reflected a broader national concern for local labor issues. Georgia, already bruised and battered by the Great Migration and the draft, began looking at a statewide Work or Fight–type act at least as early as April 1918, when the Georgia Council of Defense's Labor Committee met in H. M. Stanley's office (Stanley was Georgia's Labor and Commerce commissioner) to consider "relief

[27] Ibid.
[28] Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, Inmate Case Files, 1902–1921, inmate no. 8926, Gilbert C. Carter, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Southeast Region, Morrow, GA.

of the acute labor shortage in the State."[29] Stanley explained the purpose of the meeting: "that some means be found whereby they ['slackers, or idlers'] may be rounded up and put to work in industries where they are best capable of serving and where their labor is most needed" rather than arresting them to be put "on the rock pile as vagrants."[30] A substantial portion of the debate concerned enforcement of labor participation, particularly closure of pool rooms, which was a complicated endeavor because pool rooms paid a high and lucrative state tax on licenses. Sam Slate, the game and fish commissioner who would by the end of the year be the hard-nosed and combative secretary of the Georgia Council of Defense, was "just as much in favor of closing the pool room in the Country Club of which I am a member as I am of closing the negro dive in any of our cities. . . . [T]he principle involved as to personal rights does not justify making any exemptions to the closing rule."[31] The commissioner of agriculture agreed, noting the extent to which Georgia farms were struggling, even abandoned, for lack of labor. "If the farmers are to suffer a decrease in income and production the pool rooms should be willing to do the same," Slate said. "If they [pool rooms] are not willing to do it, unessential as they are to the welfare of the general public, then they should be made to do it."

The representative at the meeting from Augusta, Ross Copeland, suggested what would become the basis for the state legislature's Work or Fight law. His city's mayor had implemented a card system for laborers to prove they were gainfully employed, a system that Governor Hugh Dorsey urged the other members to back.[32] Dorsey proposed to take up the matter of a similar state ordinance with the legislature; meanwhile, the committee approved the text of a work

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[29] "Memorandum of Proceedings of Meeting of the Committee of Labor," 23 April 1918, page 1 of 12, "Labor, 1917–1918," RCB 56820, GCD.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., 4 of 12.
[32] Ibid., 3 of 12; 8 of 12.

requirement ordinance to be disseminated to county councils of defense.[33] Dorsey's assessment of the legality of such ordinances is interesting. In response to Stanley's concern that "some pressure" would be required by the state to motivate cities to act on the recommendation, Dorsey responded, "Of course if the [county and local] councils do not want to do it, I expect they have good grounds to defend their action because it may be unconstitutional; *yet I think we ought to get it done and then let the courts decide as to the constitutionality of it*."[34] (Emphasis added.) In Slate's dismissal of "personal rights" and Dorsey's willingness to act despite the "good grounds" of constitutional protest, we see the same debates locally that were brewing nationally over what civil rights meant.

In addition to the work law in Augusta that was the source for the state law to come, the Atlanta City Council passed a municipal work ordinance on 20 May 1918, with basic wording almost identical to that suggested by the labor committee, demonstrating at least at the urban level a willingness to comply with state directives related to war labor.[35] A city council alderman proposed extending this ordinance to women in October (after passage of the state's Work or Fight law, discussed below), but the ordinance fell to defeat amid black opposition.[36] The *Atlanta Constitution* reported on the November debate: "Several [blacks] gave as their opinion that such a measure as that under consideration would provoke ill feeling between the races and would

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[33] Ibid., 9 of 12; 9–10 of 12. The sample ordinance reads: "Be it resolved by the Committee on Labor of the State Council of Defense that the various municipalities of the State be urged to amend their ordinance against idling and loitering by adding the following provision: 'Or to loaf around the hotels, pool rooms or other public places of the city; provided, that any such person found so loitering, idling or loafing may furnish evidence that he is regularly employed during the customary work hours by presenting a card signed by his employer showing that he has regular employment in which shall be punch marks placed by his employer at daily intervals certifying that he is engaged regularly in some kind of work; provided, further, that the provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to persons temporarily unemployed by reason of differences with their employers.'"
[34] Ibid., 10 of 12.
[35] *Atlanta City Council Minutes* 26, July 1917 to May 1920, 20 May 1918: 272, AHC.
[36] *Atlanta City Council Minutes* 26, 18 November 1918, 397.

tend to scatter the colored people in other parts of the country."[37] H. H. Proctor, the black reverend at the First Congregational Church of Atlanta, urged, "The thing to do is to build up a spirit of morale through" local organizations where blacks could "be permanently influenced." The reverend cited a recent example of such positive incentivism, in which the government ordered a large quantity of hard biscuits from a local producer, the Block Company; blacks responded positively so that no one could complain "that the colored people did not do their part to take care of the need."[38]

Proctor also opposed the state Work or Fight legislation in a letter to Governor Dorsey the previous July. He contacted Dorsey in response to an invitation to a state conference of black leaders on Negro organization.[39] Proctor accepted the invitation but offered a caveat, suggesting "one of the matters which ought to be considered in this conference is the proper application of the 'Work of Fight' law. Already I find that the discussion of this bill has stirred up the colored people throughout the state, and unless it is handled with tact and liberality, it will have the opposite effect from which it is intended. Already large numbers of people are speaking of leaving Georgia."[40] Another response to the negro organization invitation, from the leader of the Colored Men's Board of the Atlanta YMCA, similarly noted "the work planed [sic] out for such a conference will be greatly interfered with should the 'Work or Fight' bill now pending before the legislature be passed and become effective. . . . [S]hould this bill become a law at least one third, if not one half of the present Negro population of Georgia, will flee to states where protection is

[37] "Woman Work Card Plan Is Defeated on Negroes Plea," *Atlanta Constitution*, 9 November 1918, 5.
[38] Ibid.
[39] For more on Negro labor organization in Georgia, see Gerald Shenk, "Race, Manhood, and Manpower."
[40] Letter from Henry H. Proctor to Hugh Dorsey, 28 July 1918, Negro Organization folder 1 of 2, RCB 56823, GCD.

afforded."[41] Still, the full extent of influence by black resistance to defeat this specific bill (to expand Work or Fight to include women, which would have generally affected black women) is difficult to gauge. The ordinance was defeated in the first week of November, when rumors of an imminent end to the war were circulating nationwide. (The armistice began on 11 November 1918.)

After the April meeting in the labor commissioner's office, the statewide Work or Fight initiative made steady progress in the Georgia Assembly. The ultimate law was much more restrictive than the federal directive handed down by the secretary of war to be implemented by the selective service office. The legislature passed the law on 8 August 1918; Dorsey signed it shortly thereafter.[42] The law's final form followed a month and a half of debate in both houses of the assembly (bills were passed in both the senate and the house on the same day of the session, 26 June).[43]

As originally proposed, the law would "require all able-bodied male persons between the ages of eighteen and fifty years to be regularly and continually engaged in some lawful business or profession";[44] the final law had extended the age range from sixteen to fifty-five by the house (i.e., two years younger than the minimum draft registration age and ten years beyond draft age as these ages were extended for the third national registration in September 1918; prior to that

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[41] Letter from Young Men's Christian Association to Hugh Dorsey, 24 July 1918, ibid. The signature is not fully legible, but the first two initials are "H. H."; it is possible H. H. Proctor was the writer of this letter as well, but it is not certain.

[42] State of Georgia, "Work Required of Able-bodied Persons, Part I, Title IV, Civil and Penal Laws, No. 348," *Georgia Laws 1918* (Atlanta: Byrd Printing, State Printers, 1918), 279–82.

[43] Georgia General Assembly, *Journal of the Senate of the State of Georgia, Regular Session at Atlanta*, *Wednesday, June 26, 1918* (Atlanta: Index Printing, State Printers, 1918), 10; Georgia General Assembly, *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia at the Regular Session of the General Assembly at Atlanta*, *Wednesday, June 26, 1918* (Atlanta: Byrd Printing, State Printers, 1918), 9. Both titles available in the general reference section of the Georgia State Archives, Morrow, GA.

[44] *Journal of the Senate of the State of Georgia*, 10. The initial wording of the house bill is similar: "A bill requiring all able-bodied male persons between the ages of eighteen an fifty years, inclusive, to be regularly or continuously engaged in some lawful occupation"; see *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia*, 9.

registration, draft eligibility fell upon those twenty-one to thirty-one years of age); senate amendments extended the work period involved from five days to five and a half and replaced references to gender with "persons" or other nonspecific terms.[45] The house insisted upon, and won, an exemption for those "fitting themselves to engage in trade or industrial pursuits" and for "bona fide students during the school term."[46] (The senate initially tried to squelch these exemptions.[47]) The final bill required, as of 1 September, all unemployed men (though references to gender were eliminated in early drafts of the bill, the press understood that it applied mainly to men[48]) to register with the state labor commissioner, whose office was tasked with assigning work to those in need.[49]

The *Atlanta Constitution* again fell into lockstep with the government's priorities in a 27 August editorial fully supporting the "progressive and timely" new state law, calling it a "democratic measure" akin to conscription.[50] In response to a Sunday sermon by the leader of the Tabernacle Baptist Church—in which the pastor claimed he could find at any given time in Atlanta 2,000 "'loafers pure and simple'" between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five—the paper declared, "if there is one such man to be found in Atlanta . . . the number is too great by one." Further, the paper explained, farms and industries were hamstrung by labor deficiencies: "A part of the people is striving at the rate of 100 per cent of endeavor, either fighting or working . . . while another part is not only doing nothing to help, but actually hindering by its idleness." The editorial concluded with an appeal to the supposed fairness of the act, saying it applied equally to "rich and

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[45] "Work Required of Able-bodied Persons," *Georgia Laws 1918*, 279–82; *Journal of the Senate of the State of Georgia*, 104; *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia*, 348–50.
[46] *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia*, 348–50; "Work Required of Able-bodied Persons," *Georgia Laws, 1918*, 281.
[47] *Journal of the Senate of the State of Georgia*, 332–35.
[48] "Work or Fight Law in Effect on Sept. 1," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 August 1918, A6.
[49] "Work Required of Able-bodied Persons," *Georgia Laws, 1918*, sec. 4 (p. 279) and sec. 7 (p. 280).
[50] Editorial, "The 'Work or Fight' Law," *Atlanta Constitution*, 27 August 1918, 6.

poor alike, white and black. No one is exempted, and no one is favored; and, if properly enforced, no man can be done an injustice under it."

Walter F. White discussed Work or Fight laws in the South in a 1919 article in the *New Republic*. His article focused on how such laws in effect enforced labor participation in the face of labor shortages caused by the draft as well as black migration to the North; in many cases, the laws allowed employers to maintain wages at prewar levels as well as target blacks. White's examples cover the South, but the majority come from Georgia, with local ordinances cited for Wrightsville, Bainbridge, Pelham, Macon, and Columbia County, as well as the state law.[51] Most ordinances required citizens within a certain age group to carry cards signed by employers (not dissimilar to the "passes" required by blacks in pre-apartheid and apartheid-era South Africa). In Pelham, the article claimed, the town marshal—on orders from the county sheriff—informed a prominent black insurance salesman that selling insurance was not considered a valid job under wartime conditions (though Provost Marshal General Enoch Crowder's national directive said otherwise), and the black man must look for more gainful employment. This news was delivered to the man while he was in the hospital with influenza; he died the next day.[52] Another part-time salesman for the same insurance company, who also worked part time at Pelham's fertilizer plant, was notified by the same town marshal that he must quit selling insurance and go back to work full time at the fertilizer plant.[53]

In Bainbridge, an ordinance that attempted to force local black women to work (the facts of their husbands' employment and their own roles as homemakers were not deemed suitable excuses for not working outside the home) was rendered toothless when local black citizens pledged to resist the ordinance "'to the last drop of blood in their bodies'"; White notes that only

[51] Walter F. White, "'Work or Fight' in the South," *New Republic*, 1 March 1919, 144–45.
[52] Ibid., 145.
[53] Ibid.

black women were singled out by this law, and "no record could be found of any able-bodied white woman being molested."[54] White noted that, at the time of his writing, an estimated "500,000 to 1,500,000 Negroes have gone North," in what is now known as the Great Migration.[55]

Georgia and its city governments used Work or Fight laws for multiple purposes. As Gerald Shenk argues (see my discussion of this in the introduction), sheriffs and draft boards often colluded to prevent men from receiving draft notices so a bounty could be collected on the supposed draft dodgers. Such questionable deeds still demonstrated a self-serving purpose in following the federal orders. Similarly, though coerced by federal directives, cities often chose to voluntarily pass their own Work or Fight laws to supplement or adapt the federal order or the state law to local conditions.

"Without Reward, and with Abundant Zeal": Vigilance in Georgia

The Civil War may have turned brother against brother, but World War I turned many Americans against each other. The war ushered in an unprecedented level of suspicious and active vigilance among Americans. Though World War I inarguably gave the word *vigilance* a dark and sinister hue, the act of "policing" neighbors and communities was nothing new to most Americans. Christopher Capozzola argues that by the time of country's entry into the war, "Americans were accustomed to the idea that citizens had a positive obligation to police one another."[56]

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid., 146.
[56] Christopher Capozzola, "The Only Badge Needed Is Your Patriotic Fervor: Vigilance, Coercion, and the Law in World War I America," *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (March, 2002): 1356.

During the war, vigilance became intertwined with vigilantism in many parts of the country as wartime hysteria targeted those of German dissent or anyone perceived as foreign or not acting in an appropriately patriotic fashion. Therefore, it is important here to distinguish between the extreme acts that correspond to vigilantism, which are not a focus of this chapter, and the act of vigilance as a form of "political practice in which collective policing by private citizens contributed to community defense."[57] While mob violence—vigilantism—has been a focus of World War I scholars for a very long time, Capozzola recaptures the impact of vigilance itself as a longstanding duty to Americans; in other words, the extensive citizen coercion of the World War I period in the United States wasn't so much a sea change, but rather an extension of what proper Americans were already prepared to do.[58]

Examples of community vigilance in action are found in the *Quitman Free Press* in South Georgia. In May 1918, the Quitman paper noted the existence of a "vigilance committee" within the county council of defense, whose purpose would be to "interest itself in who is who in regard to purchasing bonds, supporting the Red Cross and working with the community."[59] In June 1918, the same paper ran an article by the chairman of the Brooks County council of defense, who sought to clear up rumors concerning two local citizens who failed to stand during the playing of the national anthem while enjoying a film at the Quitman Opera House. One, Mr. N. M. Rosenbloom, "a naturalized Jew" who became a citizen in 1897, defended his actions with dutiful chagrin: "I love my country, which is America. . . . I think Mr. Woodroow [sic] Wilson is the greatest of all Americans and consequently the greatest man in the world."[60] Rosenbloom

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[57] Ibid., 1357
[58] Ibid., 1382.
[59] "Dixie Citizens Community Council Patriotic Factor," *Quitman Free Press*, May 11, 1918, Box 934 (unsorted press clippings), GCD.
[60] "A Brief Statement of Facts in Regard to Many Rumors," *Quitman Free Press*, June 7, 1918, Though not specifically mentioned in the article, a contextual interpretation seems to indicate the national anthem was playing *within*

acknowledged his mistake, saying he was engrossed in the film and lost in his own thoughts; after several moments of oblivion while those around him stood up, he realized the anthem was on and "stood immediately" (though clearly not fast enough to avoid notice from his vigilant fellow moviegoers). "No law is needed to make me patriotic," the accused pleaded. "It comes from my heart. I have been greatly misunderstood in Quitman because I was a stranger and many thought I was an alien. . . . I understand this is a time when people are under a tense strain. I also realize strangers are under suspicion." Rosenbloom thanked the council chairman for giving him the opportunity to fully express his patriotism through the local paper.

The other gentleman, D. M. Martin, was "as loyal as an American can be," according to the council chairman who wrote the story. Martin excused his own seeming lack of patriotic zeal by prefacing his defense with a commitment "to be put to the extreme test—that of dying for my country." Martin said it was his first time seeing this patriotic film and was absorbed in "hating the Kaiser with all my heart and never dreamed I was sitting" when the anthem played. Once he realized it—a child behind him tapped him on the shoulder to alert him—he remained seated out of embarrassment, not "know[ing] what was expected of me." His decision to remain seated hardly mattered; Rosenbloom had stood the moment he realized his error and was still reported by observant Quitman citizens to the local council for investigation.[61] Neither ignorance nor tardiness was an excuse.

This fear of dissent was tied very closely to foreign population influences. For example, in a 1919 account of vigilance efforts, the official chronicler of the American Protective League (APL) singled the South out as a unique geographic and demographic region, worthy of the

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the film itself. If true, I believe this anecdote demonstrates a great degree of patriotic dedication by the Quitman citizens who reported these individuals, as tradition generally calls for rising for the anthem when it is played live and for a specific purpose, not when it is used as a plot device within a film.

[61] Ibid.

highest praise of its patriotism. Emerson Hough, author of *The Web*, wrote, "Had it not been for imported labor [in the South], the A. P. L. would have had no alien and sedition cases, no propaganda and no disloyalty to report, because it is absolutely true that our Southern States, which once thought themselves constitutionally justified in secession, today are more loyal to the American flag man for man, town for town, state for state, than any or all the remaining states in this Union."[62] On southern demographics, Hough noted the South "holds more of the native born Americans, fewer of the foreign born, and fewer alien enemies" than in other regions; he admired this "pure-bred American population" and said with reverence, "Would God that every state in the North and West had these men as the real inheritors of America, and not the snarling mob of foreigners who in the last few decades have come to be called American citizens."[63]

The APL has a colorful, troubled, and sketchy history. One of the most important vigilance groups during the war period in the United States, the APL fell under the authority of the Department of Justice. It was a secretive if not quite secret organization composed of civilian volunteers tasked with searching out disloyalty and suspected agents of sabotage. David M. Kennedy describes the group in *Over Here* as "a quasi-vigilante organization . . . which had managed to enter into an official relationship" with Attorney General Thomas Gregory's Justice Department.[64] At its peak at the end of the war, the APL boasted 250,000 members across the nation, all purportedly patriotic Americans whose duty it was to spy on their fellow citizens and report to the harried federal government on anyone making disloyal utterances or engaging in ill-described suspicious activities. Despite widespread knowledge of the APL among historians, individual state histories are much more difficult to explore. The National Archives purged the

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[62] Emerson Hough, *The Web: The Authorized History of the American Protective League* (Chicago: Reilly & Lee, 1919), 419, accessed 26 June 2013, http://books.google.com/ebooks/reader?id=IiY2AAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&pg=GBS.PP1.
[63] Ibid., 419.
[64] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 81.

APL records in the 1950s, destroying all but certain samples of the files of New York, North Carolina, Arkansas, California, and Kansas. This is a tragic loss for historians, which has forced scholars, as Jeanette Keith suggests, to "infer the activities of the APL in the South from the purged North Carolina and Arkansas files."[65]

The absence of official federal records does not mean unofficial records do not exist, but such an exploration is beyond the scope of this thesis. Still, certain references to the APL may lead to further study. An exploration of the *Atlanta Constitution*'s digital database reveals, in an article about a 1919 city hall investigation of possible disloyalty by a former firefighter, the name of an individual, A. M. Schoen, who is identified as the leader of local underwriters in Atlanta and who offers as credentials in the investigation a badge that reads "Chief, American Protective League, Auxiliary."[66] This seems to identify Schoen as the local leader of the APL in Georgia, or at least Atlanta. Schoen's name also appears in the *Constitution* in early 1918 as a Georgia Council of Defense speaker on increasing food production for the war effort.[67] Schoen's association with this group hints that he was affiliated not only secretly with the APL but also publicly with the GCD. Little more is known about Schoen, but his title and mention in the city hall investigation indicate an active APL cell existed in Georgia during the war.

What little else is known about Georgia's place in the APL history comes from Hough's *The Web*. His analysis of the state APL is brief, approximately one page of his book. (In comparison to the other southern states, Georgia's page of information is about average, though Kentucky's and Texas's APL histories each run two and four pages, respectively; Oklahoma gets two

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[65] Keith, *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight*, 152.
[66] "Attempt to Oust Member of Probe Board Is Beaten," *Atlanta Constitution*, 22 February 1919.
[67] "Cotton Seed Crushers Meet in New Orleans," *Atlanta Constitution*, 13 May 1918, 10. The article mentions "A. M. Schoen, Atlanta, representing the National Council of Defense." Schoen's affiliation with the Georgia Council of Defense (GCD) is mentioned, briefly, in the GCD records at the Georgia State Archive; see RCB 56824, GCD.

brief paragraphs.)[68] Hough says "all sorts of stories" are found in the Georgia APL files, though only two specific examples are offered. The first is cryptic, "regarding submarine bases" on the Georgia coast, and involved "a naturalized German" who "was outspoken in his sympathy for" his homeland. The man bought some land and somehow this led to his arrest and trial in Savannah's city court for "violating the prohibition laws" of the state. Before he could even finish his six-month sentence, US marshals took custody of the man on a presidential warrant. Hough cited this anecdote as similar to "many and many a case of naturalized Germans who became too loquacious in this country before and after we entered the war."[69]

The second Georgia example exemplifies the intrusive investigative techniques for which the APL is best known and is worth quoting at length:

> Atlanta, Georgia, had a nice scare about the report that a German U-boat captain had landed and was on his way to Atlanta, dressed in an American officer's uniform. Operatives were out and trailed every military or quasi-military looking man on the streets or anywhere else. Their first haul included a major from the Judge Advocate General's office and a Judge from the Federal Court. The next alarm came from two operatives who trailed an officer just off the train, who turned out to be a colonel of the Quartermaster's Corps, U. S. A. The latter was able to make his escape. The Chief [presumably of the Georgia or Atlanta chapter, which could be Schoen] adds: "Just how many suspects were held up that night it would be difficult to state. Operative No. 3 turned in a report of his activities the next morning. It seemed he had held up the following personnel: One Lieutenant-Colonel, sixteen Majors, twenty-three Captains, forty-two Lieutenants, one Lieutenant-Commander, three Ensigns, and seven Sergeants—a total of ninety-two suspects. He closed his report with the following heartfelt remarks: 'Well, I didn't know what kind of uniform the German had. Besides, every man I stopped was a blond. I didn't stop any other sort.'" D. J. [Department of Justice?] reported it was satisfied no German submarine officer had visited Atlanta.[70]

Whatever "scare" or event this entry refers to is unknown. The *Atlanta Constitution* seems to have no record of any such search; how APL operatives knew about it is also unknown since records no longer exist. What can be discerned from this is encapsulated in Attorney

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[68] Hough, *The Web*, 420–37.
[69] Ibid., 426.
[70] Ibid., 426–27.

General Thomas Gregory's preface to *The Web*: "The work of your organization will long be an inspiration to all citizens to render their full measure of service to their country according to her need, without reward, and with abundant zeal."[71] If other Georgia operatives were even half as zealous as no. 3—who detained 92 US service personnel in a single night to root out a German spy who was never caught, and perhaps never existed—it speaks to the patriotism of APL members and their determination to root out those who did not support the war effort.

Georgia was far from lax in supporting the war, whether we examine its state government or municipalities in action. In fact, while debates raged in Washington, DC, on strengthening the Espionage Act and creating a law to force those who weren't drafted to support the war through labor, Georgians in government took it upon themselves to create their own laws, whether to address a deficiency or to strengthen a federal mandate. Though such support was sometimes more self-serving—as in the case of the state Work of Fight law in response to labor shortages—rather than blindly patriotic, such voluntary actions were taken amid a coercive atmosphere that permeated the country as a whole. Many Georgians opposed the war, but many—at the government level and at the citizen level, too—went to special efforts to support the nation's war efforts. In the next chapter I turn to the coercive influence of newspapers upon the minds of Georgians, and how press coverage helped create and even enforce patriotic support of America's war overseas.

[71] Ibid., 9.

CHAPTER 2: "PATRIOTS OR TRAITORS": THE GEORGIA PRESS AND THE WAR CRISIS

Free Speech! How many treasonable utterances are made in thy name!
—*Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, 30 August 1917

When Woodrow Wilson addressed the special session of Congress on 2 April 1917, to ask for a declaration of war against Germany, he faced an organizational dilemma. Reelected by a slim margin the previous November as the president who "kept us out of the war," it was incumbent upon Wilson and his administration to prove to the American people why, after 30 months of war, the United States must enter the fight. In this address, Wilson laid out his indictment of German crimes against the nation and famously declared the US mission in the war was "to make the world safe for democracy." As the United States shifted toward imminent war, Georgia, like other southern states, faced the task of mobilizing a citizenry that heretofore had opposed American intervention in the European war. This chapter will discuss the important role played by Georgia's local presses in helping the United States government broadcast a hawkish mood to the masses and sell the war to a public that until quite recently had really wanted to stay out of it.

In the introduction, I looked at the political atmosphere in the country at various times during the two and half years (August 1914 to April 1917) the United States struggled with neutrality. In this chapter, I will show how war hysteria played out over the summer of 1917 as the state and the nation attacked "antiwar" advocates such as Georgia's own US Senator Thomas Hardwick. I will then compare the coverage of Hardwick's war opposition through several papers, including the *Atlanta Constitution*, the *Atlanta Independent* (a black newspaper and the

official record of the Georgia Odd Fellows association), and two rural Georgia papers, the *Thomasville Times-Enterprise* and the *Americus Times-Recorder*.

The power of newspapers to generate public opinion in this era cannot be dismissed. Radio was in its infancy and still a tool of military application rather than a medium of entertainment and edification; television was decades away. Only newsreels at the local movie house, played before a main feature and later augmented by propaganda speeches from America's volunteer Four Minute Men, offered a supplemental avenue for news and opinion. And in all cases, the dominant message coming across to readers and moviegoers was that anyone who opposed the war in any way was helping the Kaiser and putting American troops in danger.

Georgia Papers Back Wilson

Even before the declaration of war on 6 April, Congress in March had fought for, and the public endorsed, the arming of US merchant vessels against Germany's renewed campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare. Wilson's campaign for "armed neutrality" hit a significant roadblock, however, in the Congressional debate when several antiwar senators filibustered the measure, effectively killing it.[1] Senator Thomas Hardwick, the junior senator from Georgia, and senior Senator Hoke Smith both signed a Senate manifesto, along with 74 other senators, proclaiming their support for the armed neutrality measure, their intention to vote for it if it had been allowed on the floor, and condemning the filibusters of what Wilson had called a "little group of willful men."[2] The Georgia senators were counted by the *Atlanta Constitution* in a March 5

[1] After the defeat of the measure in Congress, Wilson declared an executive order to arm the merchant vessels anyway. However, before armed neutrality could be fully implemented, the Unites States declared war on Germany in early April. For a discussion on Wilson's motives in wanting armed neutrality as a steppingstone toward war, see Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War*, 200.
[2] "Armed Neutrality Killed by Filibusters: Twelve Senators Defied the Wishes of 76 Colleagues and Blocked Vote," *Atlanta Constitution*, 5 March 1917, 1.

article on the measure under a subheading that denoted "Senators Who Stood for American Rights."[3] This was to be one of the last times Smith and Hardwick would be called supporters of American rights, by the *Constitution*, Georgia newspapers, or the national press.

Other areas of the state demonstrated similar support for the president's policies. On 6 April, the day Congress voted for war, Hoke Smith placed in the congressional record the prowar resolution of University of Georgia faculty and students. The resolution cited "the institution's record of love for peace" but declared that "freedom, truth, and justice" mattered more; the school offered "loyal, patriotic, and unstinted service" toward the war effort—including acceptance of compulsory and universal military service and a vow to stand behind any other steps the administration saw fit to implement.[4] The *Constitution* noted the entry in the House record of the resolution of the city of Newnan supporting the defense of American rights and the offer by the editor of the *West Point News* newspaper to support the nation any way he could.[5] In Americus (in west central Georgia), the town's weekly *Times-Recorder* sent to its readers on 5 April "the urgent and insistent request" that patriotic Americans back the president and his administration in the imminent war against Germany "in defense of American rights."[6] Two weeks later, the *Times-Recorder* weighed in on the side of "universal selective conscription," beseeching Congress to adopt the draft and "provide the means of right, forsaking the proven failure of the volunteer system."[7] The draft would prove to be very unpopular in rural Georgia to those who actually had to register and muster, but in Americus and other Georgia towns, those with influence in the press strongly promoted the concept of sacrifice and duty. When war was

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[3] Ibid.
[4] "U. of G. Resolution in Congress Record." *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 April 1917, 11.
[5] Ibid.
[6] "A State of War," *Americus Weekly Times-Recorder*, 5 April 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.
[7] Untitled editorial in column 2, *Americus Weekly Times-Recorder*, 19 April 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.

declared, other papers throughout the state offered their unflagging support for the nation and for Wilson.

The African American community supported the war, too, seeing the war from a unique perspective and with some unique reservations. For example, the *Atlanta Independent*, a black weekly newspaper published by the Georgia chapter of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows and which focused on local news of interest to the black community, unreservedly supported the United States' entry into the war in its 7 April issue. The *Independent* addressed rumors that Germans were courting blacks in the American South to rise up against white oppressors and foment discord from within. The paper dismissed such rumors as unfounded, but did acknowledge the discrepancies in southern law and society that might cause blacks to feel such animosity as to consider rebellion. "The American Negro is oppressed, discriminated and proscribed against," the editorial said, "segregated, Jim Crowed and outlawed by many of the states of which we are citizens; but these are family affairs; these are affairs that we live and pray may adjust themselves in America, by Americans and for Americans." In the throes of conflict with a foreign country, it continued, Americans were colorblind: "[W]e forget our domestic troubles and lose ourselves in one patriotic endeavor to protect American life and interest; we forget that we are Negroes; we forget that we are white, and only realize that we are Americans first, Americans last, and tolerate no divided allegiance."[8] Another editorial in that same issue, however, offered a harsher indictment of Wilson's endeavor to make the world "safe for democracy." After printing Wilson's war message to Congress at length, the *Independent* wrote: "[W]e could not help from thinking that very much of the way in which President Wilson pointed out the manner in which German people were treated by the German government, Negro people are treated in

[8] "America First and Efficient," *Atlanta Independent*, 7 April 1917, 4. Available on Google News Archive.

this country. . . . If the American people who are so anxious about popular government for other people were as solicitous about ten million black people at home, their words would mean a great deal more."[9] The following week, the *Independent* expounded on its stance, seemingly in response to an actual or rhetorical question: Why should southern blacks support the war? "No one knows better than the *Independent* that we have much of which to complain; that we have not had a square deal; that our rights have been abridged; that we have had to play second fiddle, yet, as patriots, as true lovers of our country, let us present a solid front against the common enemy. Let us forget our grievances and the mistreatment, and only think of how to uphold the honor and dignity of this great and glorious country of which we are a part."[10]

The *Independent*'s stance, in April 1917, is remarkably prescient in its language to the better known (and more controversial) words of W. E. B. Dubois and his "Close Ranks" comments of summer 1918: "We of the colored race have no ordinary interest in the outcome. . . . Let us not hesitate. Let us, while this war lasts, forget our special grievances and close ranks with our white fellow citizens and the allied nations that are fighting for democracy. We make no ordinary sacrifice, but we make it gladly and willingly with our eyes lifted to the hills."[11] In both cases and in both years, they were words of hope that bore no fruit once the fighting was over and black soldiers returned to the United States.[12]

In this atmosphere of almost unreserved political and public support for war—even by groups with serious grievances against the government—Georgia's Democratic senators soon

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[9] "Popular Government, Spirit of the Age," *Atlanta Independent*, 7 April 1917, 4. Available on Google News Archive.
[10] "The Negro a True Patriot," *Atlanta Independent*, 14 April 1917, 4. Available on Google News Archive.
[11] W. E. B. Dubois, in Mark Ellis, "'Closing Ranks' and 'Seeking Honors': W. E. B. Dubois in World War I," *Journal of American History* 79 no. 1 (June 1992), 99. Ellis notes that Dubois's editorial, "Close Ranks," was seen by many blacks at the time as a betrayal of the civil rights cause.
[12] During the rest of the time studied for this paper, through July 1917, the *Independent* had very little to say in regard to the war and no comment on the ensuing controversy over Georgia's US senators. It instead concerned itself with local Atlanta news, such as the Fourth Ward fire in May, Odd Fellow news, and the flight of black laborers to the North in what later became known as the Great Migration.

found themselves on the losing side of public opinion. Hardwick was particularly vulnerable. He had earned the position as senator in a special election after his predecessor, Augustus Bacon, died in office in 1914. The White House had, in fact, supported Hardwick as the candidate to replace Bacon; Hardwick in turn had declared himself the president's man, "a Senator who can be depended upon to stand by that great Democrat in the White House, Woodrow Wilson."[13] Even in January 1917, four days before Germany announced unrestricted submarine warfare against neutral vessels bound for England and France—the event that prompted the United States' severing of diplomatic ties with Germany and the eventual entry into the war—Hardwick said in a speech that Wilson had only Americans' best interests in mind without thought for political parties, and so far had weathered domestic and international conflicts with "peace and honor," making "him equal to every problem that has so far confronted the administration."[14]

The first signs of a disconnection with the public emerged in April during the debate on the Selective Service Act. Though the *Constitution* reported on 7 April that Smith and Hardwick both supported selective conscription and only the House seemed willing to fight for an all-volunteer army, by the end of the month Hardwick emerged as one of the staunchest opponents of conscription.[15] On 27 April, the Atlanta paper reported Hardwick had decided to oppose the bill in the Senate on the grounds that the bill was undemocratic and misleading to those who thought they would be exempt from conscription.[16] Two days later the draft bill passed Congress, passing the Senate by 81 to 8 and the House by 397 to 24. Hardwick was one of the eight who voted against conscription.[17] He addressed the Senate, stating his support for the war only insofar as it was intended to punish Germany for its crimes against the United States. He opposed

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[13] "Senate Races in 33 States," *New York Times*, 14 July 1918, section 3, 1.
[14] "Wilson Is Extolled by Senator Hardwick," *Atlanta Constitution*, 27 January 1917, 5.
[15] "Ga. Congressmen Object to Draft," *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 April 1917, 1.
[16] "Hardwick to Oppose Administration Bill," *Atlanta Constitution*, 27 April 1917, 2.
[17] "Country Goes Under Conscription," *Atlanta Constitution*, 29 April 1917, 1.

alliances with the Allies, as well as Wilson's already clear postwar plan to put the United States at the head of the peace table. The conscription act, he said, reeked of "Prussianism" and "would be a reversal of the policy this country followed since the days of Washington."[18]

Local presses were mostly reserved in their criticism of the Georgia senators for most of May and June as Hardwick, and to a much lesser degree Smith, continued to oppose the Wilson administration's war footing. Most commentary on the senators was reserved for the first column of editorial pages, which in many papers was reserved for choice quotes from other newspapers' editorials and snarky or witty comments about events or people (these often lacked context without a presupposed knowledge of the subject). But hints of public dissatisfaction with the national politicians emerged here and there. In May the *Americus Weekly Times-Recorder* ran a blurb from the *Swainsboro Forest-Blade*, concerning a photograph Hoke Smith submitted of himself standing near Wilson at the president's recent inauguration. The *Forest-Blade* quipped that "a more interesting edition [sic] to our art gallery, however, would be a picture of Tom Hardwick, also 'standing by the president.'"[19]

By July, however, after the passage of the Espionage Act in June and the postponement of the vote on the pending food administration bill, Hardwick—and by association and default, Smith—were becoming Georgia Enemies no. 1 and 2. Hardwick opposed the Food Control Bill, primarily an amendment in it giving the president power to decide the terms of a war tax on foodstuffs, which would rob Congress of its constitutional mandate to control the federal purse strings. Hardwick would not condone passing a bill "delegating to another the power that has been confided to [Congress], . . . the power to levy taxes, a power . . . Americans have fought

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[18] "Georgians Split on Conscription," *Atlanta Constitution*, 29 April 1917, 2.
[19] "Standing By," *Americus Weekly Times-Recorder*, 10 May 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.

and bled and died [for] before they would submit to have it exercised by anyone else than the directly chosen representatives of the people themselves."[20]

July's Verbal Fireworks

The Fourth of July was a turning point in the war debate in Georgia as two speeches—one by Hardwick in Columbus, the other by a prowar advocate in Athens—captivated readers throughout the state. July was a busy month in general for war news. The political combat waged through Georgia newspaper editorials that month occurred amid the backdrop of several high-profile events, including the first draft lottery of men who had registered for the selective service in June. July was also a busy month for Georgia's Populist agrihero Tom Watson, whose influence in the press debate expanded in August, which I explore below in greater detail. In June Watson was busy pursuing his court opposition to the Selective Service Act and was actively fighting the banning of his weekly publication, the *Jeffersonian*, which two southern postmasters refused to deliver for disseminating antiwar views.[21]

On 4 July Hardwick was back in Georgia for the patriotic holiday and gave a speech at the Chamber of Commerce in Columbus, detailing his stance on and even his support for the war thus far. He approved punishing Germany for crimes against the United States, and though he opposed the shedding of blood by draftees, he supported sending "professional soldiers." He stood firm in the attitude he had taken since passage of the Selective Service Act, telling the audience he still disagreed with conscription, but since it was law, it should not be resisted. "If this be treason, make the most of it," he said to the mostly silent but generally courteous crowd.

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[20] "Hardwick Fights Control of Food," *Atlanta Constitution*, 2 July 1917, 6.
[21] Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 152–54. The papers were banned in Savannah and Tampa in June. Throughout July Watson belligerently pled his case, only to have Postmaster General Albert Burleson confirm the banning in August. Three days after Burleson's ruling, a federal judge also affirmed the banning. Watson attempted to continue publishing but gave up in September.

Hardwick called Wilson "a great man" but tempered his praise by reminding the audience the president was "mortal and makes mistakes, even as I make them." It was a mea culpa the newspapers would later exploit in their attacks against Hardwick. The senator also dramatically stood his ground on his right to oppose the president: "I shall not bow the knee, I shall not take orders from any man or set of men, but shall do my duty as God gives me the opportunity to see the light."[22]

Meanwhile, across the state in Athens, Judge Andrew J. Cobb gave a rousing and popular Fourth of July speech that resounded throughout Georgia for weeks to come. Cobb whipped up the patriotic crowd of 8,000 when he said, "In times of war there are only two classes. All men are either patriots or traitors. If a man lets one particle of disloyalty enter his soul, he is a traitor as a whole. . . . [I]n time of war, no man should be allowed to raise his voice or his pen against the government."[23] Interestingly, Cobb expended most of his invective on Senator Hoke Smith, who, unlike Hardwick, previously had escaped a great deal of notice since Smith's opposition measures in Congress were in almost all cases followed by his vote for the war legislation. The eventual vote was not a valid excuse for Judge Cobb. He invoked the recent commencement address given by Smith to University of Georgia graduates and pronounced, "We are tired of delay in the halls of congress on these war measures. . . . If a congressman cannot support the government and the people in this war let him resign and come home. . . . When we find a man who cannot support Woodrow Wilson, let us send him to Germany to his friends."[24]

Both speeches defined patriotism in polar opposite terms, and both created a furor in the Georgia press. The *Macon Telegraph* leaped on Hardwick's war record and the Columbus speech. Calling the speech "ill-timed, un-called-for and useless," the *Telegraph* labeled

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[22] "Hardwick Flays Administration for War Plans," *Atlanta Constitution*, 5 July 1917, 1.
[23] "Judge A. J. Cobb Nails Members of Congress Who Delay War Bills," *Atlanta Constitution*, 5 July 1917, 1.
[24] Ibid.

Hardwick a "copperhead," a reference to the group of antiwar Northern Democrats in the Civil War that had wanted immediate peace with the Confederacy.[25] Hardwick's hometown paper, the *Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, weighed in against the senator on 7 July, stating that any opposition to the US war effort harmed America's chances to win the war. Hardwick had explained himself in his Independence Day speech, the paper wrote, and "has cemented . . . opposition into still further efforts to discount laws made and in the making. In that respect it has done great injury in Georgia to the great cause we have espoused."[26] Ironically, Hardwick's speech had specifically indicated his current support for the draft law because it had become the law of the land.

A week after the holiday, the *Americus Times-Recorder* claimed Cobb's speech "brought about a crystallization of sentiment" throughout the state and the region that would unite people "against the insidious attacks of demagogues whose anarchistic utterances border close on treason."[27] The same edition called the junior senator "Thomas Hohenzollern Hardwick." ("Herr Hardwick" and "Thomas Wilhelm Hardwick" were other German-themed monikers that surfaced frequently in attacks on the senator; for examples, see note 41.) Under a separate editorial titled "A Political Corpse," the paper reluctantly defended Hardwick's dogged fight to the finish, only to conclude that such a finish would be a "bitter end" and a reelection defeat in 1918: "His hold on the people of Georgia is forever broken; their support has been forever alienated by the treacherous, vindictive attacks made by him upon the government to which he should lend every ounce of his support in this period of national stress."[28]

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[25] "Calls Hardwick 'Copperhead' for Opposing War Measures," *Macon Telegraph*, quoted in *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 July 1917, B4.
[26] "Hardwick's Recent Speech," *Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, 7 July 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.
[27] Untitled editorial in column 1, *Americus Times-Recorder*, 12 July 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.
[28] Ibid.

Hardwick retaliated on 8 July with a harshly worded open letter to the papers in which he defended his speech and accused editors across the state of intentional misrepresentation. "Certain of the cuckoo newspapers in Georgia and certain other people who are either misinformed or who put their desire for local encampment and other like pap above everything else have burst into a preconcerted and prearranged howl of criticism leveled at me," Hardwick claimed. He reiterated his opposition to conscription but said he supported the draft law because it was, indeed, the law; still, he believed the United States could defend its own interests without becoming embroiled in Europe's affairs. "If this is treason," Hardwick challenged, "then I stand branded traitor along with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson and almost every other statesman of any weight or consequence in this country until the advent of these latter-day prophets."[29] Hardwick then dismissed the *Macon Telegraph*'s criticisms specifically, labeling its editor (George Long) "an alien and unnaturalized foreigner," with "neither the right to vote nor the duty to fight."[30]

Judge Cobb's incendiary Fourth of July speech put Hoke Smith's feet to the fire of public opinion even as it solidified editorial opposition to Hardwick. Even as early as June, Smith was defending his voting record, mainly for forcing debate on the food bill (and other administration measures) rather than offering blind support. Congress, Smith maintained—against a growing sea of believers that felt anyone in Congress not fully and immediately supporting the president was aiding the enemy—was only prolonging the legislative debate to make laws "safe and strong" before enactment, not to stall war efforts.[31] The *Savannah Evening Press* chided Smith for apparently believing "that delay itself exercises some magic power to strengthen and make

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[29] "Bitter Reply Is Made by Hardwick to Critics," *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 July 1917, 8.
[30] Ibid.
[31] "Defenders of Congress," *Savannah Evening Press*, quoted in *Americus Weekly Times-Recorder*, 28 June 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.

safe"[32]—a somewhat non sequitur argument that dismissed Smith's claim that delay was for legislative debate that did, indeed, make for better law. (Newspapers, the *Savannah Evening Press* included, surely had no qualms about the extended debate in June that kept a mandatory press censorship clause, strongly desired by President Wilson, out of the Espionage Act.) The Savannah paper is but one example of the impatience exuded by communities and presses throughout Georgia to get the war up and running, even to the extent of distrusting fellow Georgians in favor of blind faith in the clearly idolized president.

The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) published its own indictment of Georgia's senators in newspapers in mid-July, accusing both senators of "failing to reflect [Georgia's] sentiments" and warning them "to change their attitude toward the government and mould [sic] their conduct in accordance with the wishes of the people of whom they are presumably the mouthpiece."[33] The *Atlanta Constitution*, citing the supposed nonpartisanship of the GHS as well as the vitriol coming from papers all over the state, bemoaned Georgia's lack of a recall vote: "Not a single newspaper of Georgia has raised its voice in defense of the two senators, or either of them, under attack. . . . [I]t is high time that our senators should heed the epigrammatic counsel of Murphy Candler [chairman of Georgia's railroad commission], and either 'Get right, or get out!'"[34]

Only an exhaustive search of *every* Georgia newspaper could confirm this claim that *no* paper stood at the defense of either senator, but there is no doubt that the voices against the senators was a unified chorus. Toward the end of July, the Georgia Weekly Press Association gathered in Thomasville for its yearly convention. Among the business accomplished by the GWPA was a "unanimous indorsement [sic] of President Wilson and its pledge to support him in every

[32] Ibid.
[33] "Get Right—Or Get Out!" *Atlanta Constitution*, 22 July 1917, D4.
[34] Ibid.

way possible to the end that the war may be pressed to a victorious and speedy conclusion."[35] An *Atlanta Constitution* editorial on 26 July notes that Wilson responded to the GWPA's message of support with gratitude and a "stern, but sad . . . lament that 'without its assistance he would not have known how to interpret the attitude of Georgia!'"[36]

Smith waged an impassioned counterattack against the Georgia Historical Society for disregarding his voting record and not differentiating between himself and Thomas Hardwick. Smith published a rebuttal to the GHS's accusations that spelled out the issues he opposed in the war bills—for example, he opposed the Food Control Act because it would have, among other things, established price maximums for cotton, an opposition Georgia cotton farmers must surely have appreciated. He also reiterated that his record of supporting the final war bills, in whatever shape they were in, was 100 percent. Any "opposition," he maintained yet again, was merely his effort to "perfect" the legislation before it became the law. Incidentally, Smith made no attempts to address the GHS complaint against Hardwick. In conclusion, the senior senator addressed the historical society directly: "You are officers of the Georgia Historical association. I cannot believe that as historians you would be guilty of such misrepresentation of the facts had you been familiar with them, and yet, your ignorance upon the subject is surprising." Smith requested that his letter be disseminated to all the same recipients the GHS's original letter of condemnation had been sent to.[37]

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[35] Untitled editorial, *Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, 31 July 1917, 4. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.
[36] "Is Another Recall Ahead?" *Atlanta Constitution*, 26 July 1917, 6. A dedicated search of these and other Georgia newspapers turned up no evidence of newspaper opposition to the president.
[37] "Senator Smith Makes Charge of Injustice," *Atlanta Constitution*, 24 July 1917, 5.

Interestingly, Hardwick's hometown paper in Thomasville actually accepted Smith's defense, at least this one time, but generally Smith's denials fell upon deaf ears.[38] The GHS president, Lucian L. Knight, laughed off Smith's defense. "The support which you have given to President Wilson has been soured by reluctance, and you cannot pass for cream what has turned to clabber," Knight wrote in a lengthy response that gave no quarter to Smith's argument. Knight stood by the GHS's previous statement. Virtually washing his hands of any culpability for attacking Smith's record, he added, "If we have done you any injustice, let us hear from the president."[39]

This accusatory back and forth made headlines outside of Georgia, too. On 26 July the *New York Times* ran an editorial on the GHS controversy. Throughout the war, the *Times* was vehemently prowar and antislacker, and its attitude—as well as, in this case, an occasional penchant for putting orthodoxy ahead of facts in its editorials—is evident in this early editorial. Recapping the discourse already noted above, the *Times* accused Smith of "persistent subordination of American rights to cotton." After quoting Hardwick's statement that Hardwick himself was "not willing to shed a single drop of American blood to determine what the boundary line of any European nation shall be"—a quote prudently plucked from its context—the *Times* added, "This is substantially Mr. Smith's defense also." Smith's congressional prowar voting record notwithstanding, the *Times* presented no evidence to support its assertion that Smith opposed war, on any terms. But the paper lauds the GHS for its "strong language from a dignified nonpartisan society" and concludes that with the GHS and the *Atlanta Constitution* holding the senators' feet to

[38] "Hoke Smith for Food Bill, Hardwick Against," *Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, 24 July 1917, 6. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia. The paper wrote, "It begins to look . . . as if the two senators from Georgia are not absolutely harmonious in opposing the war measures of the Wilson administration as some commentators have been endeavoring recently to show." Smith voted for the food bill and the aviation bill, while Hardwick voted against both. On the aviation bill, Hardwick opposed the provision that allowed men registered for the draft to be assigned to the air service for support (i.e., nonflight) roles.

[39] "Knight, in Reply to Senator Smith, Puts Him and Hardwick in Same Boat in Blocking the Administration," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 July 1917, 6.

the flame, "Georgia has vindicated herself," insinuating Hardwick and Smith were friendless and on the road to their eventual political doom.[40]

These examples come mostly from only four newspapers. Still, newspapers everywhere commonly ran condensed editorial comments from other papers, and a reading of these selections expands the view of support for Wilson and condemnation for Hardwick and Smith. The *Macon Telegraph* (noted above as a prominent thorn in Hardwick's side, particularly) listed on a single day the views of nine papers from throughout Georgia and including Chattanooga under the heading "Herr Hardwick: How Georgia's Junior Senator Is Viewed by the State Press." The *Brunswick News*, for example, urged Hardwick to repent his disloyalty "and crave forgiveness from a people who have always honored him and who might yet forgive and forget! Senator Hardwick does not look natural in the class with Tom Watson, and as a friend and well wisher, we urge him to break company with him and do so at once." Other editorials rained wrath upon Hardwick: "Resign, Herr Hardwick! Abandon your country that you admit has gone wrong! Go to your Kaiser while the going is good!," railed the *Quitman Free Press*; the *Swainsboro Forest-Blade* humorously noted, "Hardwick is objecting to so many things, we suppose he'll also object to getting licked for re-election." All the comments from the *Telegraph*'s summary condemn the senator's antiwar stance.[41]

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[40] "Georgia's Senators," *New York Times*, 26 July 1917, 9.

[41] "Herr Hardwick: How Georgia's Junior Senator Is Viewed by the State Press," *Macon Telegraph*, 9 July 1917, 4. In addition to those quoted in the text, other selections chosen from this *Telegraph* editorial are illustrative. From the *Brunswick News* ("Hardwick Blunders"): "It is indeed an impossible task to comprehend and explain [Hardwick's] unnecessary attack on President Wilson at Columbus on July 4. . . . Would he impugn the patriotism of those sturdy Americans—ten millions of them in round numbers—who answered the nation's call?"; from the *Quitman Free Press* ("The Hun at Our Door"): "Herr Thomas Wilhelm Hardwick, the friend of the Kaiser, has brought the German war into the confines of Georgia. Rolling sedition under his tongue. . . . [w]ith his Teutonic arrogance. . . . he has for the moment shocked the sensibilities of decent people. . . . Without attempting to discover by just what process he was alienated from his patriotism and his country and his pre-election pledges, let us suggest 'safe conduct' for this alien, who trifles with common decency, to the German Reichstag, where he will find a setting more congenial than will ever exist in 'The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave."; from the *Southwest Georgian* ("Not Surprised"): "If Hardwick expected his Columbus speech to make a hit, he must have gone back to Washington a disappointed man. People listen to and swallow a lot of foolishness and demagoguery in normal times, but these are

Newspaper readers had their say as well—at least, those readers whose views fell in step with the prowar editors. Whatever opposition existed was muted in editorials that selected patriotic missives as representatives of the voices at large; occasional letters expressing discontent with the war or a paper's coverage of antiwar politics ran exclusively as an opportunity for a paper to respond with its own brand of editorial superiority in the matter. Local papers had few extra pages and little extra space to devote to letters to the editor, be they prowar or against it; larger papers such as the *Atlanta Constitution* regularly ran letters from readers who were angry with antiwar politicians. After Cobb's speech in July, readers' sights were on Thomas Hardwick.

A Confederate Civil War veteran "who had to subsist on an ounce of lard and a pint of cowpeas per day, and finally on mule meat" during his own war wrote the *Constitution* and wondered, since draft dodgers could be punished for not going to war, "how much more ought Senator Hardwick to be punished if he leads [them] into disloyalty!" The same writer gave "all honor and praise to Judge Cobb. . . . What a grand thing it is to be a true man—a man among men!"[42] On 9 July, the *Constitution* ran three letters concerning Cobb and Hardwick, including one from a Demorest, Georgia, native claiming to represent a group of Georgians gathered for the summer term at Peabody College in Nashville: "Surely [Hardwick] does not represent the people of Georgia when he opposes pushing the war to a decisive and glorious victory for freedom and

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war times when men are doing their own reading and thinking"; from the *Pearson Tribune* ("No Time for Quibbling"): "Down with Hoke Smith! Down with Thomas Hardwick! Both are out of harmony with the pressing needs of the country. . . . Georgia doesn't need these men . . . to misrepresent her attitude toward the war, who pull back when an unbroken front to the enemy is needed. This is no time for quibbling over methods; the country is involved in a gigantic war and the enemy must be met and relegated to the rear. We must follow our leaders who are in supreme command if we would be true to our country"; from the *Chattanooga Times* ("Worth Making Note Of"): "We wonder if Senator Hardwick . . . noticed the vote of the Georgia House of Representatives—[unreadable numbers in original, but it is a three-digit number in favor and a single digit against]—on the resolution that was adopted indorsing [sic] President Wilson's war policy. His clap-trap use of the borrowed phrase, 'If this be treason, make the most of it,' in opposition to the war policy of the Government was too hollow and specious to be effective with the patriots of the great State of Georgia."

[42] "Veteran of Vicksburg Pays His Respects to Hardwick," *Atlanta Constitution*, 12 July 1917, 6.

liberty."[43] Another reader from Boston, Georgia, who represented and supported Hardwick at the state convention wrote that it "hurts me and grieves me . . . that I cannot take his part nor defend the record he has made in congress" with votes "against the best interest of the common people in Georgia . . ."[44] Yet another politely chastised the senator for overstepping his position, which was the crux of the current condemnation of the senator; the reader stated, "in all fairness to Mr. Hardwick," that Wilson's responsibility in leading the nation in war was "much greater" than Hardwick's.[45]

The *Thomasville Times-Enterprise* ran an editorial that summer that began with a request from a reader to cancel his or her subscription, complaining that "I don't want a partial paper."[46] The editors glibly assured their dissatisfied reader those wishes would be fulfilled "to the letter" and proclaimed, "We have never been accused of being partial on a side that was more to our liking than in aiding the government in every phase of its effort . . ." Aside from the inherent superiority that drips from this editorial, the most remarkable statement was in the explanation *why* they were happy to be partial: "We are doing our duty as a patriotic citizen: no deflections will make us swerve from that course . . ." The newspaper considered itself not only *acting* as any American citizen should, with a "sincerity of purpose and fealty to our nation"; the editors considered the paper was a citizen with the "duty" to stand behind the president and the war.[47] The attacks on Hardwick continued unabated at least through August, though Smith seemed to catch a break in the press as focus shifted to the unapologetic junior senator.

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[43] "Georgia Draft Boys Resent It," *Atlanta Constitution*, 9 July 1917, 4.
[44] "Hardwick Leader in Thomas Expresses His Amazement," *Atlanta Constitution*, 13 July 1917, 8.
[45] "Prefers President's Judgment to That of Senator Hardwick," *Atlanta Constitution*, 14 July 1917, 4.
[46] "Loyalty to Our Nation," *Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, 27 August 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.
[47] Ibid.

Another character under attack by editorialists throughout the state was Thomas E. Watson. A powerful former Populist, he had such reach and influence in the first two decades of the twentieth century that Georgia gubernatorial candidates had little hope of winning the office without the support of the "sage of McDuffie" County. Watson was known as the voice of the common agrarian in Georgia and had unsuccessfully run for president as a Populist. Despite making little political impact on the national scene, Watson's words were followed closely by farmers in rural Georgia. Watson was a vocal and adamant critic of the war as a whole, especially the Selective Service Act. Watson's influence on the war debate—his defense in federal court of two black draftees for failing to register as well as the banning of his weekly publication, the *Jeffersonian*, under the auspices of the Espionage Act in the summer of 1917—have been fully covered elsewhere, particularly by C. Vann Woodward and Jeanette Keith.[48] But Watson's attacks on the president and the war were noted in and opposed by the press for much of the summer of 1917. The Americus paper in early June conjectured that Watson's antiwar rhetoric had "stirred up the powers that be" in Washington, and then glibly dismissed Watson: "Our idea of something not to worry about is what will become of the Honorable Thomas if he falls into the clutches of Uncle Sam's indefatigable minions."[49]

Though this study offers little new evidence concerning Watson's nationally documented fight against the war and the draft, aside from this widespread ridicule he received from the press in his own home state, the newspapers' opposition to Watson became central to the editorial case against Thomas Hardwick after the first week of July. Especially in August, papers routinely referred to the "noisy and objectionable" "Tom-Tom" problem in the state—meaning Tom

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[48] For a full biography of Tom Watson, the go-to volume is still C. Vann Woodward's *Tom Watson: Agrarian Rebel* (1938); Keith's *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight* (2008) offers a concise summary of Watson's activities and opposition in the summer of 1917.

[49] Untitled editorial in column 1, *Americus Weekly Times-Recorder*, 7 June 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.

Watson's avowed opposition to the president and Tom Hardwick's roadblocking efforts against administration measures.[50] The linking of these two politicians with such a demeaning moniker is even more interesting given that Hardwick and Watson were professed political enemies; their volatile relationship went back to at least 1910.[51] Hardwick certainly did not endear himself to critics when, in August, he sought to defend his political foe with a resolution of inquiry in the Senate, demanding it investigate Postmaster General Albert Burleson's banning of Watson's weekly newspaper (as well as the banning of a socialist paper in New York called the *Masses*.)[52] The Thomasville paper said on 25 August, "We knew Hardwick was down the scale a long way recently, but we never thought he would descend to the point where he could defend the Masses [sic]."[53]

Hardwick's Downhill Battle

Though this chapter mainly explores criticism of Smith and Hardwick through summer 1917, Hardwick especially continued to be pummeled by the press through 1918. In January of that year, the former president of the Georgia Senate, G. Ogden Persons, denounced Hardwick in a speech at Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia. Persons recounted Hardwick's bitter opposition to the food bill and the selective draft. In a somewhat magnanimous gesture that few others had demonstrated in attacking Hardwick, Persons said the senator had a "perfect right" to oppose the president's policies until they became law (as previously noted, many attacks on Hardwick began with his opposition to war and the draft during the debate and ignored the fact that

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[50] "Georgia's Combination of Toms," *Savannah Press*, quoted in *Americus Times-Recorder*, 30 August 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia. This paper's reference is but one of many who linked Watson and Hardwick as "tom-tom."
[51] "Judge Speer to Hear Watson Cases Today," *Atlanta Constitution*, 18 August 1917,10.
[52] Ibid.; and "Hardwick Prodding Postal Department," *Atlanta Constitution*, 22 August 1917, 2.
[53] Untitled editorial in column 1, *Thomasville Times-Enterprise*, 25 August 1917, 2. Presented online by the Digital Library of Georgia.

Hardwick insisted the law must be followed after passage), but that Hardwick had "brought reproach upon the people of his state by making it appear that they were disloyal."[54] Persons further lumped Hardwick "in the class with La Follette, Stone, Vardaman, Gronna and Gore, who have been hailed in the newspapers of Berlin as German sympathizers and friends of the kaiser."[55] In May, William Schley Howard, a US congressman from Georgia, threw his hat into the ring to take on Hardwick in that year's Senate election; Howard called Hardwick a "rubber-stamp senator" in universal opposition to "that great, splendid, glorious, perfect example of democracy, Woodrow Wilson . . ."[56]

One cannot speak in universal terms about how Georgians felt about the war, but politicians do not get elected by sitting on the unpopular side of the fence. The rhetoric employed by Howard—both against Hardwick and for Wilson—is a strong indicator of the beliefs of Georgia's voters. In the end, Howard and Hardwick both lost the Democratic primary to William J. Harris, a pro-Wilson candidate—and Wilson's handpicked choice due to a new primary law[57]—who had jumped into the 1918 Senate race during summer 1917 when the heat was steadily turning up on Hardwick. Harris claimed the primary with 71,723 votes to Howard's roughly 42,000 and Hardwick's almost 40,000.[58] The *Constitution* firmly declared the election a referendum on

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[54] "Says Hardwick Is a Reproach to Ga.," *Atlanta Constitution*, 20 January 1918, 3.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid. Howard also did not spare Hoke Smith: "Mr. Howard made the unequivocal statement that in respect to Senator Smith's actions on the war measures he stood exactly as he did towards Mr. Hardwick, and if he was running against Smith in this race, he would 'take the hide off of him.'" Incidentally, the 1918 Georgia Democratic primary was carried by William J. Harris, who had announced his candidacy in the busy political summer of 1917.
[57] "William J. Harris Sweeps State with 112 Counties in Primary," *Atlanta Constitution*, 12 September 1918, 1. The paper refers to the "Neill primary law" and the state's complex unit system of voting districts; this law specifically would have allowed "a minority to capture the unit vote"—not dissimilar to the Electoral College in presidential elections. When Clark Howell, the state's Democratic committee chairman, notified Wilson that summer of the law and its potential to influence the state election, Wilson had "urg[ed] the loyal voters of Georgia to concentrate upon William J. Harris" in a letter the *Constitution* claimed "became the feature of the campaign during the closing month." The *Constitution* and many other Georgia papers, according to this article, had dutifully backed Harris.
[58] "Official Primary Vote Announced," *Atlanta Constitution*, 29 September 1918, 4. Though these results are for a primary, these were Democratic candidates in the solidly Democratic South, thus these primary results assured victory in the election.

support of the president and stated that Harris's win "has demonstrated the loyalty of the people of Georgia to the administration of President Wilson in the crisis of war" and "an equally overwhelming defeat of Senator Hardwick."[59] It is interesting to note that Governor Hugh Dorsey was reelected unopposed with 162,076 votes, about 4,000 votes more than the total cast for the Senate race. Whether this speaks to confusion about the differences among the senatorial candidates, a lack of faith in the candidates, Wilson's meddling,[60] or some other cause is unknown. Despite the Atlanta paper's declaration, it is impractical to assume all voters voted based on a prowar or antiwar stance; each candidate represented views on multiple issues. However, when looking at the support or opposition to Wilson alone, the two pro-Wilson candidates—Wilson's favorite, Harris, and Howard, who supported Wilson but had refused to leave the race when Wilson cast his lot with Harris—garnered a total of almost 114,000 votes to Hardwick's 40,000. The *Constitution* had predicted Hardwick would come in second, with 39 counties; in fact, Hardwick only took 18 counties, indicating that the otherwise "remarkable accuracy" of the paper's forecast overestimated opposition to the war.[61]

By 1918, and even much earlier, it had become clear that in Georgia, as in other states, dissent would not be tolerated by that most powerful voice, the press. Whether a wholehearted foe of Wilson's drive to war, like Hardwick, or a legislative tinkerer but ultimate supporter, like Smith, the newspaper press (and the public it chose to give voice to) declared a single opinion. One was for the war, or against it; either a patriot, or a traitor.

Trying to discern whether the press truly believed in the war effort to the extent spelled out in editorials is tricky, though some reasonable assumptions can be made. During the

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[59] "William J. Harris Sweeps State," *Atlanta Constitution*; see subsection titled "Uniting on Harris Won the Big Victory."
[60] Ibid.
[61] "Covering the State," *Atlanta Constitution*, 13 September 1918, 8.

Espionage Act debate, the press opposed President Wilson's attempt to have a press censorship resolution inserted, instead demonstrating through editorials how such a law was unnecessary given the *voluntary* censorship self-imposed by newspapers upon themselves. Ultimately, the censorship law was excluded from the Espionage Act, though Postmaster General Burleson took immediate action the day after the act was passed to warn local postmasters, in a secret memo, to be on the lookout for any publications that might instill in readers an opposition to the war.[62] Though Burleson effectively shut down several press operations—including the *Jeffersonian* and socialist Max Eastman's *Masses*—it is interesting to note that the Espionage Act passed in June 1917 did not specifically forbid the press from publishing antiwar sentiments. Such language was included later in the Sedition Act.[63] Such minutia of law did not prevent federal judges in 1917 from upholding the post office's case against the *Jeffersonian* and the eventual criminal prosecution of the editors of the *Masses*. The judge in the *Jeffersonian* case unsympathetically referred to Watson's antidraft stance as "poison," and the US attorney who prosecuted the case said Watson "should go in a hole and pull it in after him . . ."[64]

Thus, true press opposition to the war was clearly difficult to come by if opposition meant loss of distribution. After the banning of the *Masses* and the *Jeffersonian*, the press knew any antiwar statements could lead to loss of postal access and thus, possibly, the death of the publication with no affordable means of distribution. But it does not follow that because a publication did not run antiwar editorials it was in a paper's best interest to run extreme prowar/pro-Wilson editorials instead. Just because war opposition meant a fight with Burleson did not mean newspapers instead needed to pad their editorials with attacks on antiwar figures or fill them with

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[62] Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 152.
[63] See appendix. The applicable section in each act, section 3, is 122 words long in the original Espionage Act of June 1917; amended in May 1918, the sedition amendments are almost four times as long at 465 words. There are three references in the amended version to uttering, writing, printing, and publishing.
[64] Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 154.

prowar messages to show unquestioning support. It stands to reason that where one finds editorial attacks on Tom Watson and Tom Hardwick, for example, in Georgia papers and elsewhere, there is no reason to disbelieve the authenticity of the sentiments. Local papers knew their own communities and constituencies; what would it benefit them to become mouthpieces of propaganda that might inflame the passions of, and minimize readership or advertising by, the locals? Rural opposition to the war in Georgia and other southern states is well documented and not disputed here, but newspapers did offer an authentic and often unquestioning support for Wilson and thus the war. The full impact of that support in Georgia is still to be studied.

This chapter showed how the press in Georgia interpreted the war for Georgia citizens. To what extent editors and newspaper owners opposed the war is uncertain because strict rules against publishing were in effect at least from the passing of the Espionage Act and most definitely after the Sedition Act. But even before the Espionage Act, Georgia's papers followed self-imposed censorship. Newspapers throughout the United States were the primary means by which Americans perceived the war's events and consequences. In Georgia, the overriding support for the war and demonization of dissenters was no less strong than anywhere else. The manner in which editors condemned Thomas Hardwick and Hoke Smith (as well as Tom Watson) as figures of embarrassment to the state is powerful evidence of how the Georgia press informed its readers of what constituted proper patriotic behavior as well as behavior that could not be tolerated. In the next chapter, I explore an official organization whose responsibility was to encourage wartime support among Georgia counties and towns.

CHAPTER 3: "INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND CONDITIONS": THE GEORGIA COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

I should count myself a 'slacker' if I did not do all the Government asks of me.
— Newton County council of defense chairman, 10 October 1918

The Wilson administration tenaciously held to what it considered neutrality prior to February 1917. But even by 1916, while US soldiers reinforced the frontier with Mexico and General John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition crossed the border in a futile search for Mexican rebel Francisco "Pancho" Villa, the president realized that America was unprepared for large-scale military conflict and had come to support certain preparedness measures. In June 1916, Congress passed and Wilson signed the National Defense Act, which authorized the federalization of state militias and restructured the roles of National Guard units in times of national crisis. In August that year, the Army Appropriation Act created the Council of National Defense (CND), "the first formal 'preparedness' body within the administration" with the initial mission of mobilizing the economy in the event of war.[1] The CND provision also authorized the creation of state and community councils.

This chapter explores the hitherto little explored state records of the Georgia Council of Defense (GCD). The state archive holds some fourteen cubic feet of records concerning this organization, whose job during World War I was to disseminate information coming down from the federal level to county and even city councils. As I explained in the introduction, historian William Breen, who conducted one of the first intensive studies of the CND and state councils using federal government sources, concluded that southern councils were generally ineffective

[1] Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 4.

and exerted lackluster energy at best in conducting their official duties.[2] Using the Georgia state records, I explore the origins of the Georgia council and highlight an increasing focus on complying with national directives from the CND. These records do not necessarily contradict Breen's assertion completely, but they do complicate it. In fact, by summer 1918 Governor Hugh M. Dorsey had a vested interest in making his state's council more effective in its supplemental role to the federal government in order to garner federal support for a state canal project. What these Georgia-held records indicate is a frenetic effort by the GCD: sometimes apathetic, sometimes enthusiastic, and often fickle. They paint a picture of a state council trying to comply with certain coercive federal directives from the CND while also preserving Georgia's independence as a southern state.

Origins and Early Efforts

William Breen found that the top-down organizational methods used by the CND "fit neither the modernizing U.S. economy nor the territorial imperatives of federal government departments."[3] By the time the United States entered the war in 1917, economic mobilization was occurring at the federal level by sector (under new departments such as the Food Administration and the Fuel Administration) rather than by state. Jeanette Keith, whose work on southern attitudes toward the war is heavily influenced by Breen's work, argues that this left the national and state councils somewhat toothless for their original purposes; the councils wound up with the mission of organizing public support for the war.[4]

Of all state councils, southern and southwestern states were least likely to provide effective funding, according to Breen's study, but the reason is more nuanced than Breen concluded.

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[2] Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 112.
[3] Breen's study is discussed in Keith, *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight*, 137.
[4] Ibid., 137–38.

He does note that few southern states appropriated funds to their councils, instead raising funds through private donations. Breen also incorrectly states that the GCD only received from "the legislature . . . $2,500 for the state council work," whereas Louisiana's council received $25,000 in 1917 and Maryland gave $2 million; Keith reuses Breen's listed amounts.[5] But the $2,500 only accounts for the initial allotment of funds by the 1917 legislature, for fiscal year 1918.[6] The following Georgia Assembly session in summer 1918 appropriated, for the 1919 fiscal year, up to $20,000 to the GCD, "to be paid out only on the warrant of the Governor drawn for that purpose."[7] But with the war ending in November that year and the GCD disbanding two months into 1919, little of the $20,000 appropriation was used for GCD activities.[8]

Keith asserts that Breen's study "suggests that in Georgia and Mississippi the inefficiency may have been deliberate. Georgia governor . . . Dorsey had been elected with Tom Watson's support and well knew that many of his constituents did not support the war."[9] Indeed, Breen cites federal reports on Georgia from an agent of the CND's State Councils Section, Dr. James A.B. Scherer, who was president of what would become the California Institute of Technology; Scherer noted that populist Tom Watson "remained the master of the rural masses in Georgia and practically dictated the Democratic nominees for Governor from 1906 to 1920"—most likely a quote found in an appendix to an initial report, as the cited source is Scherer's "Report on Georgia" from 1917, which could not have included comments on gubernatorial elections in 1920.

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[5] Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home,* 98–99.
[6] State of Georgia, "Part I, Title 1, Appropriations, Council of Defense," *Georgia Laws 1917* (Atlanta: Byrd Printing, State Printers, 1917), 27.
[7] "Part I, Title 1, Appropriations, Council of Defense," *Georgia Laws 1918*, 16. By comparison, Governor Dorsey's salary was $5,000 (*Georgia Laws 1918*, 8). Of the $2,500 appropriated in 1917 for fiscal year 1918, all was used except for $9.12; see State of Georgia, "Treasurer's Report, Receipts and Disbursements for Years, 1918–1917," *Georgia Laws 1919* (Atlanta: Byrd Printing, State Printers, 1919), 1459.
[8] State of Georgia, "Treasurer's Report, Disbursements," *Georgia Laws 1920* (Atlanta: Byrd Printing, State Printers, 1920). No page number is given in this volume, but the Treasurer's Report immediately follows page 1800. The total GCD budget for 1919 was $20,000, of which $5,639.64 was disbursed for GCD activities. Of the remainder, $6,218.87 went to the state's new Illiteracy Commission. For more on this commission, see the conclusion.
[9] Keith, *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight*, 138.

Breen concludes, "Dorsey's actions reflected the strength of the antiwar feeling in the state and his own political dependence to that group. He refused to permit the state council to act independently and kept a very tight rein on its activities."[10] Breen further cites another Scherer report, dated July 1917, critiquing Georgia's council participation as "feeble though not wholly negligent in its cooperation with the federal government."[11]

Such statements—from reports originally dated in July 1917, a month before the Georgia Assembly even officially created the state council—inaccurately represent the GCD's overall efforts. Furthermore, as will be seen from a deeper exploration of the GCD records held by the Georgia state archive, there is a dearth of evidence supporting Dorsey's "very tight rein." His involvement in the GCD was actually relatively minimal and mostly symbolic, and other GCD members took on most of the administrative duties.

In Georgia, the General Assembly officially authorized the state council of defense on 21 August 1917, almost five months after the country had declared war. Governor Dorsey sat at the head of operations,[12] but within a year he was delegating day-to-day duties, such as they were, to Judge Price Gilbert, a justice on Georgia's Supreme Court who held the title of chairman of the central committee of the council. To round out the sixteen official members, four came from state departments of commerce and labor as well as agriculture; the state schools superintendent; the adjutant-general; and eleven others appointed by the governor to represent broad swaths of

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[10] Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 101. The source cited is from the Council of National Defense records in Suitland, MD, referenced in Breen's endnote no. 11 on page 231 in original.
[11] Ibid. See Breen's endnote no. 12, page 231 in original.
[12] The governor who preceded Dorsey, Nathaniel E. Harris, left office on June 30, 1917, when Dorsey began the two-year term won in the previous November's election. (Dorsey was reelected in November 1918 for another two years.) Early GCD documents, particularly those related to organization and establishment, contain Harris's name as the head of the council, but in effect Harris had no input or leadership in the council once Dorsey took office.

the population and industrial sector: "one representative of labor," "one . . . of the farmers," "one minister of the gospel," "one representative engineer," etc.[13]

Of almost immediate concern for the GCD was creating an atmosphere of support for the war, conscription, and Liberty Bond drives.[14] One of the ways the council did this was by supporting local chapters of the Four Minute Men, a group of speakers who gave patriotic, prowar, and progovernment speeches at public gatherings, particularly to audiences at movie theaters.[15] The Four Minute Men program was founded by the Committee for Public Information (which served as the United States' principle propaganda department) as a way to disseminate information to massed audiences who might otherwise not receive what the government felt was accurate (or useful) news about the war and its repercussions—or, in some cases, might not receive any information at all. Bertram G. Nelson, the associate director of the division, summarized the mission of these speakers during the war:

> "[T]heir sons must help do the fighting; their minds, wills, and hearts must become attuned to our national purposes. How can we reach them? Not through the press, for they do not read; not through patriotic rallies, for they do not come. Every night eight to ten million people of all classes, all degrees of intelligence, black and white, young and old, rich and poor, meet in the moving picture houses of this country, and among them are many of these silent ones who do not read or attend meetings but who must be reached."[16]

With commercial radio broadcasting still several years away, these volunteer speakers offered a wide network for disseminating official government doctrine. It was a perfect example of how voluntarism was coerced in the realm of popular culture.

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[13] "Part I, Title 5—Miscellaneous, Council of National Defense, No. 195," *Georgia Laws 1917*, 93–99.
[14] For a full analysis of the Liberty Bond campaigns, see Kennedy, *Over Here*, 99–105.
[15] The Four Minute Men moniker was both a reference to the Revolutionary War's Minute Men and an accurate description of the maximum length of time a speaker was to address an audience. This time was supposedly chosen to coincide with the time it took for movie theaters to change reels during an intermission. See Ronald Schaffer, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 6.
[16] James R. Mock and Cedric Larson, *Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information 1917–1919* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1939), 130.

George Creel, the journalist Wilson set in charge of the CPI, estimated after the war that his organization's volunteer speakers gave 1 million speeches to an aggregate audience of more than 400 million, all on a government bill of just more than $140,000 for what Creel estimated should have cost the government $9.3 million.[17]

The Georgia Four Minute Men were headed by Harrison Jones, an Atlanta attorney. As an example of the organization's work in Georgia, Jones sent a letter to Governor Dorsey in September 1918 outlining the group's achievements and requesting funds from the GCD for a stenographer. In the letter, Jones proudly detailed the state's thirty-nine local chairmen in thirty counties, with more than 300 speakers in total. Over a ten-month period, Jones wrote, speakers gave addresses on thirty-five subjects as directed by the Four Minute Men headquarters in Washington, DC: "In the Third Liberty Loan campaign Georgia Four Minute Men in three weeks made more than six hundred speeches and addressed audiences aggregating over 250,000 people."[18]

Impressive as this sounds, the total number of speakers statewide was quite small when compared to the total number of Four Minute Men in service in the United States: Georgia's representation was 0.4 percent of the 75,000 volunteer speakers nationwide; Georgia's thirty participating counties was only 19.7 percent of the 152 counties in Georgia at that time.[19] Whether this indicates a lack of interest in voluntarism in Georgia is not clear. The primary mission of this

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[17] Ibid., 125–26. This conceived amount included estimates of $4 million for 1 million speeches at $4 apiece, $2 million "rent" of theaters (in actuality, theater houses donated their space and time), and $750,000 of free press publicity, and $2.564 million for "contributed expenditures."

[18] Letter from Harrison Jones to Governor Hugh M. Dorsey, 3 September 1918, "Four Minute Men, 1917–1918," RCB 56819, GCD. Jones notes an attempt to organize in every county, but he blames the lack of response—"the usual reason for such failure"—on "failure to understand the significance of the movement and an inability to serve by those asked, due to other patriotic work . . . " Any analysis or judgment of Jones's success or failure must take into account the inordinate number of Georgia counties involved. Georgia's total number of counties is second only to Texas.

[19] Of the 159 Georgia counties incorporated today, 152 were incorporated in the state as of the date of Jones's letter to Dorsey; see http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/coundate.htm. Four Minute Men national statistics are from George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1920; reprinted by Arno Press, 1972), 85.

group was to speak in theaters (other venues were generally of secondary importance), and it is possible that some rural areas did not have a local movie house; any area without a theater might also have no need for Four Minute Men.

For most of 1917 and the early months of 1918, the GCD records indicate a dutiful collection and dissemination of bulletins and memos from the national council but little commitment to action. Georgia's inactivity during this period is evidenced by the lack of records concerning any discernible achievements as well as numerous filed, and apparently unanswered, questionnaires and follow-up messages about these questionnaires from the CND. For example, George Porter, the chief of the state councils section at the national council, sent a rather simple two-page questionnaire to Dorsey (and all other state councils) on 22 March 1918 requesting information on county and community council organization, agricultural coordination, Americanization efforts, and approved fundraising organizations.[20] In April, several CND communiqués followed, including two Western Union telegrams, one of which explains: "Are preparing reports on Southern States and feel we do Georgia injustice if complete record of activities is not available."[21] Again, in May, the CND sent a letter directly to Dorsey, stating, "Georgia is one of the four states that have failed to return the questionnaires sent to all State Councils on March 22."[22] There is no evidence in the GCD records to indicate whether the lack of response was a deliberate slight to the CND, an oversight, or something that the GCD simply felt did not warrant a response or because it felt its organization was insufficient to effectively answer. At any rate, a week after this request, it appears that Georgia did finally respond to the questionnaire of

[20] Letter and questionnaire from George Porter to Hugh Dorsey, 22 March 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, 1918, January–March," RCB 56819, GCD.
[21] Western Union telegram from National Council of Defense to Hugh Dorsey, 9 April 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, 1918, April–July," RCB 56819, GCD.
[22] Letter from Elliott Dunlap Smith, National Council of Defense, to Hugh Dorsey, 10 May 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, 1918, April–July," RCB 56819, GCD.

22 March. The records hold a handwritten copy dated 17 May with terse, penciled-in answers to all but the last two questions.[23] A letter from the head of the state councils section in October 1918 evaluated Georgia's response from mid-July 1917 through most of May 1918 and claimed "practically no action of any kind was taken by the Georgia State Council, even the acknowledgement of letters from this office."[24]

Summer 1918: Georgia Fights for Independence

While the GCD struggled to keep up with the general tracking efforts sought by the national council, the Georgia council fought outright the federal push for states to increase Americanization efforts. Over the summer of 1918 especially, Georgia and the CND went back and forth over the issue, with the CND and other national organizations gently pushing efforts to create an Americanization program and the GCD steadfastly but politely refusing on the grounds that it wasn't necessary in Georgia. The governing directive for this resistance actually came from Governor Dorsey, who in most aspects was rather hands-off in his role as chairman of the GCD.

Still, Georgia, and Dorsey in particular, had a vested interest in making the federal government believe the state and the state council were making dedicated, good faith efforts to

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[23] Filled-out questionnaire, "Activities Undertaken in Response to Recommendations of the Council of National Defense," 17 May 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, 1918, April–July," RCB 56819, GCD. Among the responses, the questionnaire indicates a 75 percent organization at the county level—though there is no evidence in the records that 75 percent had actually organized; that the state had organized with the state agricultural college with a focus on food crops; that legal councils to offer advice to departing soldiers were in the works but that the state would not be publishing a booklet on the subject; and that no efforts at Americanization were in progress. The unanswered questions concerned enrollment of shipbuilders and child welfare efforts. It must be noted this questionnaire is not a carbon copy; its existence does not prove the filled-out questionnaire was sent, but there are no further requests in the records from the CND asking for action on the 22 March questionnaire, which indicates some response was received at the national level.

[24] Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 101. Though Georgia's activities during this suggested timeframe was indeed lackluster, one must be cautious in overbroadly interpreting lack of communication as lack of effort. Breen suggests that even in the Northeast, where state councils were notoriously vigilant and active, could be "intensely suspicious of federal initiatives" and "loath to reply to requests for information on its activities or to answer questionnaires sent out by the Washington office"; see *Uncle Sam at Home*, 54.

comply with the national government. In June, Dorsey and the leadership of Florida and Alabama created a commission to explore the feasibility of a canal that would connect the narrow portions of Georgia and Florida between the St. Marys River on the Atlantic Coast and the Suwannee River, then down to St. Marks on the Gulf Coast of Florida. Such a waterway would offer a coastal and intracoastal shipping lane to link the Mississippi River and the Atlantic coast.

The canal project was Dorsey's brainchild. J.W. Oglesby, the president of the South Georgia Railway Company in Quitman, Georgia, who was also active in the state's labor commission, became chairman of the committee. "The value of a protected waterway for barge transportation and for vessels of light draft, connecting the Mississippi river with the Atlantic Seaboard, may be worthy of very serious consideration," Dorsey wrote in a statement on the canal project. "The recent activities of submarines along the Atlantic coast has brought home to us the dangers and horrors of this struggle. A submarine in a single day may sink ships and cargoes of a value more than sufficient to pay the entire cost of the proposed project."[25] Such an outlet for Mississippi River and Gulf Coast cargo on Georgia's southernmost port would inevitably mean revenue for the state and a legacy for the governor who dreamed it up.

The federal dollars required to build such a project would certainly be more feasible for a state that had proven its vital role in national defense efforts. The federal government did, indeed, show some interest in the project; the Georgia assembly found funds for the commission, which went to Washington in early September and even had a meeting with President Wilson.[26]

Perhaps it is no coincidence that in May, two weeks before the announcement of the canal commission, Dorsey submitted a general eleven-page letter to the CND with updates on the

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[25] "Gulf to Atlantic Canal Is Urged on Suggestion of Govenor [sic] Dorsey," *Athens Banner*, 12 June 1918, Box 934 (unsorted press clippings), GCD.
[26] Letter from Price Gilbert to Elliott Dunlap Smith, 5 September 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, Primarily Organization, July–September 1918," RCB 56820, GCD.

Georgia council's activities. In the introduction, the governor asked forgiveness for Georgia's lack of response on several fronts and assured the national council of Georgia's nationalist zeal: "The citizenry of our state is naturally patriotic, and are [sic] keenly susceptible and quick to seize upon and effectively execute suggestions coming from authentic sources."[27] On the final page, after itemizing Georgia's efforts, Dorsey offered what can only be described as a disclaimer, albeit a diplomatic one, asserting the state's rights to accept or decline national directives: "We would have you understand clearly that it is our desire to cooperate in every way possible with the Council of National Defense and that we shall promptly and effectively put into operation every feasible plan you suggest, reserving only the right to pass upon the feasibility of using them, in the light of our intimate knowledge of Georgia and of her individual needs and conditions."[28]

In other state councils around the country, "Americanization" efforts sought to indoctrinate foreign-born elements to accepted and patriotic norms in order to strengthen American war efforts and sever ties of support for enemy homelands. The GCD wasn't opposed to Americanization, at least in theory, and neither were rural councils. As Independence Day approached in 1918, the CND promoted the Fourth of July as an opportunity for foreign-born elements to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States; the task fell to county councils to implement celebrations of such caliber as to do justice to "the expression of unity of purpose which is welding nations together in the present struggle."[29] The GCD, through its assistant secretary, C. A. West,

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[27] Letter from Hugh Dorsey to Council of National Defense, 28 May 1918, page 2, "Bulletins and Correspondence: Primarily Organization, January–June 1918," RCB 56820, GCD.
[28] Ibid., page 11.
[29] "Community Council Circular No. 3," Council of National Defense, undated, "Fourth of July Celebration, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD.

dutifully disseminated the info and requested reports from the county councils of any such celebrations so it could send them on to the national council.[30]

The GCD files don't demonstrate how many counties or areas decided to follow up on the Americanization programs, but two cities, Adel in Berrien County and Waycross in Ware County, both in rural South Georgia, are examples of two regions that took up the standard. The editor of the *Adel News* wrote to West and included a clipping from his newspaper detailing the Fourth of July pageant to be held there; the "Patriotic Program" followed the CND recommendations almost to the letter, from a beginning with the singing of "America" by the audience, the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by the Boy Scouts, and then a pageant with locals playing characters such as Humanity, Justice, Freedom, and each Allied nation.[31] Ware County Council of Defense chairman V. L. Stanton wrote West and Dorsey on 5 July with details of his county's celebrations: "Our success was very great and the heart of our people were with our great Nation, in deepest interest and with a spirit of sacrifise [sic]. The meeting was attended by many from the rural districts. The Speeches … were great—no greater made anywhere"; "it was a great day and the Ware County Council of defense [sic] did itself PROUD."[32]

Not every rural county, however, showed the same enthusiasm. The chairman of the Webster County (located approximately halfway between Americus and Columbus) council of defense, J. R. Stapleton, replied to West and the GCD directive with an update on local conditions: "Relative to a 4th of July celebration, I beg to say that ours is a small agricultural county and we do not know of any foreign born citizen in the county. The farmers are [word is illegible]

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[30] "State of Georgia, Executive Department, Atlanta," 26 June 1918, undated, "Fourth of July Celebration, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD. The text in this memorandum to Georgia counties is mostly verbatim from the CND circular no. 3 mentioned previously.
[31] "Adel Is to Fittingly Observe the Fourth," *Adel News*, undated, "Fourth of July Celebration, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD.
[32] Letter from V.L. Stanton to Hugh Dorsey, 5 July 1918, "Fourth of July Celebration, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD; Letter from V.L. Stanton to C.A. West, 5 July 1918, "Fourth of July Celebration, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD.

with their work owing partly to the labor having been called into military service, and we think best to let people work rather than give the time to any demonstrations. We need the work badly."[33] (The farmers' plight concerning labor shortages is further revealed in the GCD records concerning the state's farm furloughs program for soldiers in training who had not yet departed overseas.)[34]

In late August, the Department of the Interior contacted the GCD, pushing Americanization programs for Georgia's four cities with populations that included 500 or more foreign-born citizens (per the 1910 census): Atlanta (4,501), Augusta (929), Macon (694), and Savannah (3,448).[35] Whether the GCD responded is unknown. In September, the Kansas state council of defense requested info from the GCD concerning Georgia's Americanization efforts, to which GCD Central Committee Chairman Price Gilbert replied, "The Georgia Council of Defense has issued no bulletins or literature on this subject. . . . The reason for this is that we have practically no foreign population. We have no trouble in regard to teaching German in the schools . . . [best to] exert our full strength along lines where work was really needed."[36] On 24 September, the executive secretary of the state councils section, Elliott Dunlap Smith, pushed the Interior Department's recommendation in an attempt to coerce the state with a compromise: Americanization efforts focused on Atlanta and Savannah from a small state committee. "It seems to us that the number of foreign born in [Atlanta and Savannah] is sufficient to justify some kind of Americanization work," wrote Smith. "Of course, you know local conditions better than we do, and

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[33] Letter from J.R. Stapleton to C. A. West, 29 June 1918, "Fourth of July Celebration, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD.
[34] For more on the farm furloughs program, see "Farm Furlough, June–September 1918," RCB 56819, GCD.
[35] Letter from Interior Department to Georgia Council of Defense, 29 August 1918, "Americanization (folder 2 of 3)," RCB 56819, GCD.
[36] Letter from F. H. Hamilton, Kansas State Council of Defense, to Georgia Council of Defense, 19 September 1918, "Americanization (folder 2 of 3)," RCB 56819, GCD; reply by Price Gilbert, Georgia Council of Defense, to F. H. Hamilton, 26 September 1918, "Americanization (folder 2 of 3)," RCB 56819, GCD.

you will be able to decide this question far better than we are, but we hope you will give the matter your most serious consideration."[37] Again, no reply is extant in the GCD records.

The national council occasionally made demands of state councils without providing recommended guidelines for execution, so states often asked each other for advice or updates on how others were organizing programs. The California Commission of Immigration and Housing wrote Georgia (and other states) in mid-October, requesting coordination of Americanization efforts to eliminate "counteracting and antagonistic influences" caused by the lack of a chief in charge of Americanization in Washington.[38] Price Gilbert reasserted the message he'd sent to Kansas: Since Georgia's foreign population was less than 1 percent, "we do not have enough to do to even attempt the americanization [sic] scheme. This matter should be thrashed out and left to the discretion of those States and individuals who have a problem on their hands and this State has practically no problem in this respect. I trust this explains the position of the Georgia Council of Defense."[39]

The Georgia records do not indicate whether the direct inquiries from the CND about Americanization were ignored, only that no responses to them are found in the records until 9 October 1918, when Gilbert, responding to Elliott Dunlap Smith on another matter, added, "I am decidedly of the opinion that as to the Americanization project in Georgia there is not sufficient need to warrant it. . . . Of course I have the highest respect for your opinions, but I wonder if you really know how many other requirements are coming from other officials in Washington. We

[37] Letter from Elliott Dunlap Smith to Georgia Council of Defense, "Attention Mr. Price Gilbert," 24 September 1918, "Americanization (folder 3 of 3)," RCB 56819, GCD.
[38] Letter from Simon J. Lubin, 14 October 1918, "Americanization (folder 3 of 3)," RCB 56819, GCD.
[39] Letter from Price Gilbert to Simon Lubin, 24 October 1918, "Americanization (folder 2 of 3)," RCB 56819, GCD.

occasionally get requests and suggestions that are not only without merit, but are fraught with possible evil, besides being wholly unessential from a war stand-point."[40]

What Gilbert found "fraught with evil" was probably the push by the national council for Georgia to finally fall in step with the rest of the country on the issue of building materials and permits, to be discussed in the following section. What is evident, however, is that on the issue of Americanization, the GCD persistently resisted efforts to create what the state felt was a superfluous and "unessential" drain on Georgia's already limited resources.[41] Fighting imperatives that directly related to the war, however, would result in a cracking of the federal whip, as will be seen in Georgia's resistance to the building materials permits in fall 1918.

Fall 1918: Georgia Falls Into Step

As mentioned above, Governor Dorsey was for the most part a figurehead in the GCD and generally delegated operations to others within the council. By summer 1918, however, the Georgia council (and thus the governor) was catching heat from the national council for its lack of action and enthusiasm concerning wartime efforts. Despite that eleven-page catch-up letter by Dorsey to the CND to illustrate what Georgia had done concerning wartime directives, accusations of Georgia's less-than-stellar responses to CND requests persisted. For example, sometime on 1 May or slightly earlier, Secretary of War Newton Baker wired Dorsey directly: "[T]he Georgia State Council has reported no action in response to telegrams of Council of National Defense April eighth and ninth asking on behalf of Provost Marshal General Crowder that your

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[40] Letter from Price Gilbert to Elliott Dunlap Smith, 9 October 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, Primarily Organization October–November 1918," RCB 56820, GCD.

[41] Ibid., and letter from Price Gilbert to Interior Secretary Franklin Lane, 18 September 1918, "School Garden Army, 1918," RCB 56824, GCD. Gilbert wrote to Lane: "[The GCD] will not have funds available to do the work required of it until after the first of January [when the Assembly's budget allotment would kick in]. We are running it practically on a philanthropic basis at present, and have been from the first."

State Council assist the local draft boards in preparing and transmitting the occupational cards. . . . Georgia lags behind every state in the union in performing this important work. . . . I urgently request that as Chmn. of your state council and as Governor you secure prompt action in this matter."[42] Given the timing of this telegram and the eleven-page letter mentioned above, the letter was most likely a belated response to the CND prompted by this pointed and accusatory telegram.

In July, Dorsey requested help. At a war conference on 11 July, Georgia Supreme Court Justice Price Gilbert was appointed chairman of a new Central Committee of the Georgia Council of Defense, becoming the point man for communications between the national council and the GCD.[43] One of Gilbert's first acts was to communicate the urgency to county councils to organize and report to the state council. The lesser local participation at the county level is evidenced throughout the GCD files (although that by no means insinuates that all counties were lackluster in their efforts; many took the responsibilities for organizing quite seriously). For example, a letter to the GCD in September 1918 from the US Labor Department requested the name of the Four Minute Men leader in Fitzgerald, the seat of rural Ben Hill County in South Georgia; the reply from Gilbert's office explained, "I am advised by Mr. Harrison [sic, Jones], Chairman, Four Minute Men Committee, State Council of Defense, that although he has tendered this Chairmanship to a number of gentlemen at Fitzgerald he has been unable to secure an acceptance and that in consequence he is without a Chairman at this point."[44] This is just one of many

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[42] "Copy of Telegram / Washington, D.C. 240P 27," to Hugh Dorsey, "Bulletins and Correspondence, Primarily Organization January–June 1918," RCB 56820, GCD. Dorsey's telegram in response to Baker on 1 May 1918 in the same set of files helps date the message.

[43] Letter from Price Gilbert to Arthur Fleming, Chief, State Councils Section, 14 August 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, Primarily Organization, July–September 1918," RCB 56820, GCD.

[44] Letter from H. O. Rice, representing the US Department of Labor, to Governor Hugh M. Dorsey, 2 September 1918, "Four Minute Men, 1917–1918," RCB 56819, GCD.

examples of county councils, particularly in rural areas, disregarding requests from the state council.

A month into his tenure as chairman of the central committee, Gilbert sent a letter to Arthur Fleming, the chief of the state councils section of the CND, in which Gilbert introduced himself and asked for "specific requests" of the Georgia council by the CND rather than "the mere sending of bulletins."[45] A week later, Gilbert's office distributed a form letter to all county councils of defense reprimanding those that were inactive or uncommunicative. "[A] number of [counties] excuse their inactivity and lack of organization upon the ground that they have never been specifically informed as to the duties required of them," the letter stated. "With all due respect for the opinions and judgments which differ from the plan outlined by the Government, you are urged to adopt the Government's plan. This embraces uniformity and has been well thought out by the Council of National Defense." A failure to report to the state council, Gilbert warned, "is a grave reflection on the governor . . . and upon our patriotic citizens as a whole."[46] Just as the national council was coercing compliance by shaming the state, the state in turn passed the shame onto its counties.

A flurry of activity followed as Gilbert cracked down on county organization and spearheaded the GCD's response on the many fronts it was receiving CND requirements. By the end of September Gilbert was trying to disengage from his GCD obligations to return to his Supreme Court duties, but he continued in an extremely engaged advisory role through the Armistice. Among the most pressing matters that came down the pike from the national council concerned conservation of building materials. This somewhat mundane topic proved to be the rallying point about which the national council pressed the Georgia council for compliance.

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[45] Letter from Gilbert to Fleming, 14 August 1918.
[46] Letter from Price Gilbert "to the county councils of defense," 21 August 1918, "Four Minute Men, 1917–1918," RCB 56819, GCD.

On 11 September 1918, the CND state councils section sent out Bulletin 113, which outlined the War Industries Board's (WIB) plan to curtail "proposed construction, in order that all building which is not absolutely necessary may be stopped."[47] The directive requested states create a "small committee" of "disinterested" men of "broad experience" to oversee the individual organization of county and local councils. Two days later, D. R. McLennan, the chief of the new Non-War Construction Section of the WIB, followed up with an impassioned plea to the state councils of defense explaining the importance of this new program: "[T]his nation's business . . . is WAR, and all other considerations must be subordinated to the paramount purpose of winning the war. . . . No loyal American can with any patience contemplate giving to our military authorities less than ALL of their requirements to enable them in the shortest possible time to mobilize and bring to bear against the enemy the concentrated force of splendidly equipped armies. This can only be accomplished through the strictest economies in war materials, labor, fuel and transportation."[48] McLennan's three-page missive seems geared to stir the patriotic spirit of readers to overcome any opposition to this new government directive. It ended with a plea: "The success of this plan is largely in your hands. . . . May I, by return of mail, have your assurance that you have unreservedly enlisted in this cause until the war shall have been won?"

Many state councils—for example, those in Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania—responded with efforts that William Breen, in his study of the Council of National Defense, calls "impressive."[49] Gilbert's initial response from Georgia, however, detailed the council's lack of money: The GCD had no funds and was operating without a budget until the first of January, when the Assembly's $20,000 budget allotment would be available. This time,

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[47] "Bulletin No. 113: Curtailment of Non-war Construction" from Council of National Defense, State Councils Section, 11 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[48] Letter from D. R. McLennan to the Several State Councils of Defense, 13 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[49] Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 183.

however, Gilbert was less coy in declining to take on the new responsibilities. "We are utterly unable to undertake this work," Gilbert wrote. "[W]e are at an utter loss to know how we can be of any service in this matter."[50]

The WIB and the CND pushed back, strongly. Several communiqués followed. Gilbert went so far as to return unspecified WIB documents to Edward Inman, the WIB representative in Atlanta, "on the ground that we have not received any official advices that the same are within our jurisdiction"—though such official advices were clearly contained in the text of the bulletins as well as D. R. McLennan's letter of 13 September.[51] (After the busy exchange described below, Gilbert explains in a letter to Arthur Fleming that Bulletin 113, which contained the details of the new directive, "was found mislaid in the Governor's office."[52]) The following day, Gilbert even told a county council representative from Griffin that "we have no official advices from Washington that constructions [sic] matters are within the jurisdiction of the Council of Defense."[53] Gilbert also wrote to Arthur Fleming, the head of the CND, in an attempt to clarify Georgia's position: "If it is a fact that jurisdiction has been conferred upon us I would deem the same to be very unfortunate. The Georgia Council of Defense already has more than it can handle with its present organization."[54] Gilbert then asks Fleming for an "official" request for GCD action, plus "full directions in regard thereto, otherwise many applications will accumulate and much confusion will arise, delays will be irritating and expensive to parties concerned."[55]

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[50] Letter from Price Gilbert to Edward H. Inman, Regional Adviser, War Industries Board, 16 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[51] Letter from Price Gilbert to Edward H. Inman, 18 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[52] Letter from Price Gilbert to Arthur Fleming, 26 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[53] Letter from Price Gilbert to David J. Bailey, 19 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[54] Letter from Price Gilbert to Arthur Fleming, 19 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[55] Ibid.

Not surprisingly given that the information and directions Gilbert was requesting were explicitly spelled out in the previous bulletins and letters, Fleming responded both to Gilbert and with a telegram to the governor. The telegram to Dorsey was blunt: "Will you not confer with him [Gilbert] in order that your state shall not fail in putting through probably biggest single job yet given State Councils Defense by any Federal agency."[56] To Gilbert, Fleming's telegram, and a letter sent the same day, was pointed. It stated clearly that the directives Gilbert requested were in Bulletin 113 and McLennan's follow-up letter. "Cannot understand failure receive these [sic]," Fleming wired. "If state councils were to be used at all in the plan it had to be on nation wide scale we shall rely on state of Georgia to hold up its end of national defense system which it can do only by giving adequate support to its state council." The telegram ends with a polite but stern request for Gilbert to acknowledge receipt of Bulletin 113 and the telegram itself.[57]

Though the tone of Fleming's responses indicates disbelief that Gilbert might have actually not received the information in question, there is nothing in the GCD records to indicate Gilbert was deliberately spurning the new responsibilities with disingenuous confusion. Some of Gilbert's correspondence with Edward Inman references letters he had received from Inman; the records don't include all of those letters to Gilbert from Inman, but it is possible these missing letters may have been the first indication to Gilbert that a new duty was required of the state council. If those letters did not explicitly state the information that was in the bulletin sent out on 11 September, which was purportedly lost at the governor's office for several weeks, Gilbert's befuddlement is understandable. However, McLennan's letter, sent two days later and presuma-

[56] Western Union telegram from Arthur Fleming to Hugh Dorsey, 23 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.
[57] Western Union telegram from Arthur Fleming to Price Gilbert, 23 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.

bly separately, is less easy to explain, as it detailed the manner of organization in almost as much detail as the original bulletin.

At any rate, Gilbert submitted a form letter to several individuals asking for their service on the new building permits council. He wrote McLennan in late September to express the GCD's intention "to do its best, in good faith, to carry out this new burden placed upon it."[58] Gilbert then addressed several questions concerning the approval/disapproval process—what cost limits were in place, what to do with existing construction versus new construction, etc. He decried the lack of the "franking" privilege—the free use of the mails for official purposes—in disseminating Washington's official memorandums to county councils (a valid concern given the lack of available funds for any official GCD work until 1 January 1919). "[I]t looks like nearly every other person working for the Government in similar ways has the franking privilege, even a negro employee of the Department of Labor . . . has the franking privilege." Gilbert's defensive tone diminished toward the end of the letter, where he wrote, "This may sound like an ill tempered snarl, but it is not so intended. It is simply intended to impress upon you the total inadequacy of our situation and what we must contend against." The solution, Gilbert concluded, was for Washington to extend the franking privilege or to send the information to Georgia's county councils directly. [59]

Gilbert continued in his capacity as chairman of the central committee throughout most of October, continuing his back and forth with McLennan over the details of the building permits program and continually requesting that Bulletin 113 be sent directly to the county councils,

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[58] Letter from Price Gilbert to D. R. McLennan, page 1 of 2, 27 September 1918, "Building Permits (folder 1 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.

[59] Ibid., page 2 of 2. Breen notes that the franking privilege was a major point of contention between states and the national council for most of the war. In October 1918, the Post Office Department altered its policy to allow the frank to a designated "Federal Field Secretary," a new position created by the restructuring of the State Councils Section into a more cohesive Field Division: "This removed a point of friction between the federal government and the state organizations and was an official recognition of the important work that the state agencies of the Field Division were doing." See Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home*, 182.

which were inundating the GCD offices in Atlanta with demands for information on how to approve or disapprove construction projects.

Sometime in late October, Gilbert handed over the reins to Sam J. Slate, who took over main correspondence with the national council as secretary of the Georgia Council of Defense. With this transition of power came a definitive change in attitude. Whereas Gilbert was a harried diplomat, Slate was an impatient bulldog given to peevish language and prone to accuse others of incompetence. Slate had been active in the GCD in other capacities, but as secretary, he demanded the national council recognize Georgia's unique situation, e.g., lack of funds to mail circulars to county councils and an apparently constant dearth of bulletins for the GCD to disseminate. He put the onus on the national council in a letter to McLennan in early November. "We have 152 Councils in Georgia and it is impossible for us to get this detail information out until you furnish us with the proper number for forms and circulars. . . . We have waited patiently for the applications which have been more than a month in coming and you sent us 8 - #21 circulars [a revised version of Bulletin 113] and state the balance will be forwarded in a few days."[60]

A few days later, Slate wrote again to McLennan, saying an insufficient number of circulars had been received, and the impetus was on Washington to supply the right documents if Georgia was expected to comply. "We are very short of help and we cannot undertake to supply your failure to have people who are unable to count to 152," Slate wrote. "We regret to have to talk so plainly about this but our office force is limited and if we expect to do any work we cannot take time to keep up with the blunders made on your end. . . . We cannot understand how you expect the State Council to continue to send out the Priority requests and not furnish the franked envelopes to do it, when little Agents in Washington who are simply 'beating their own little

[60] Letter from Sam J. Slate to D. R. McLennan, 4 November 1918, "Building Permits (folder 2 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.

drums' come here with all kinds of franking and telegraphic privileges, whereas postage alone nearly eats up our annual appropriation."[61]

Confusion persisted as Georgia's county councils submitted approval forms to the national council, which in turn sent them back to the GCD to be sent back to the county councils where they originated. Meanwhile, Slate demanded the national council supply the proper blank applications to be used in the approval process. Two weeks after the Armistice, as the Non-War Construction Section prepared to wrap up its duties and issue a final report, Slate responded testily to the request for a report from Georgia: "[W]e desire to state that Georgia has no report to make. You need not defer closing up the work of your Department waiting on this report as we are unable to compile same at this Office owing the delay in procuring the proper form at the right time."[62]

It would be overly simplified to state that these correspondences prove a general sentiment of support for the war. One also should not overemphasize aspects of state resistance to the federal push for compliance that intensified near war's end. The GCD operated within a complex realm of federal demands that required the state, with its limited budget, to seek voluntary compliance from its equally cash-strapped and often labor-strapped satellite councils. What these files show, then, are the complex struggles of the Georgia Council of Defense. Its leaders tried to maintain the state's sovereignty over its own affairs—and budget—while genuinely attempting

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[61] Letter from Sam J. Slate to D. R. McLennan, 7 November 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, Primarily Organization, October–November 1918," RCB 56820, GCD. Slate was equally caustic in a letter to the WIB's Boot and Shoe Section on the same date: "It is an extremely strange thing to us that you do not possess people in Washington who have time or patience to count. We are constantly receiving bulletins from you the number of which is always short from 15 to 20…. In our opinion this is inexcusable on the part of the Council of National Defense and is nothing but gross carelessness…. We cannot understand why you cannot see that there are 152 Counties in Georgia and send us sufficient bulletins and envelopes to cover the territory. We must ask that you let us have thirty (30) extra Bulletins and envelopes to complete our list of Counties." See letter from Sam J. Slate to Boot and Shoe Section, War Industries Board, 7 November 1918, "Bulletins and Correspondence, Primarily Organization, October–November 1918," RCB 56820, GCD.

[62] Letter from Sam J. Slate to Non-war Construction Section, 25 November 1918, "Building Permits (folder 2 of 2), 1918," RCB 56823, GCD.

to do what they felt was necessary for the nation in wartime and convince Georgia citizens to do the same.

Many of these exchanges do support the basic contentions of Jeanette Keith and William Breen: Georgia's state and local councils of defense, like those of other southern states, generally did not engage their missions with the same fervor as those in the west or the north, regions where the historiography has proven deep wartime support. The low number of Four Minute Men and the evidently low county participation in GCD endeavors indicate collectively that in some areas, the war and its requirements were less popular than was evidenced in the newspaper attacks on Smith and Hardwick.

Still, Keith's and Breen's conclusions do not take into account the dedicated efforts at Georgia's state level, particularly during the flurry of increased activity from late summer 1918 until the end of the war and into the new year. Gilbert's communications with local councils as well as with Fleming and McLennan at the national level indicate an effort to support national imperatives while maintaining Georgia's independence. As head of the press wing, Isma Dooly of the *Atlanta Constitution* consistently and doggedly worked to disseminate CND and GCD propaganda, which also indicates an authentic effort to share information and garner support for the war effort despite rural and local opposition or apathy.

In this chapter I challenged previous explorations of the GCD, particularly William Breen's comprehensive study that looked at the state's council primarily through federal records rather than records saved by the state itself. Given the limitation of those records, Breen looked at the South as a region rather than exploring Georgia as a singular state. The events shared in this chapter generally support the assertion that southern states showed very lackluster support for the domestic war effort. But as concerns Georgia, this argument only holds up for roughly the

first year of the GCD's existence. From spring 1918 on, the GCD's efforts ramped up considerably, yielding an eight-fold increase in budget allotment for the 1919 fiscal year. Particularly under Price Gilbert's leadership, who performed his official council duties voluntarily (at the governor's request) and by all accounts diligently, the GCD navigated rough bureaucratic terrain and tried to please more than one master: the federal government and its own citizens. It cracked down on slacker counties and tightened state control over community councils with coercive discourse that challenged local councils to either participate in council activities or contribute to the state's shame by inaction. The picture that emerges is less that of a state where "inefficiency may have been deliberate."[63] Rather, a blurry image emerges of a budget-strapped and labor-deficient state navigating a federal structure that was becoming more centralized and a federal economy that offered fiscal rewards to states that submitted to federal authority. Georgia was evolving, from merely a southern state with a need to protect its own self-interest into one with a more involved place within the Union.

[63] Keith, *Rich Man's War*, *Poor Man's Fight*, 138. Keith asserts that Dorsey may have intentionally withheld support of the GCD because he owed his governorship heavily to support by Tom Watson, who represented a large portion of the Georgia populace who did not support the war.

CONCLUSION

After the Armistice on 11 November 1918, the country turned to demobilization and the Treaty of Versailles. This study has shown that the atmosphere of coercive voluntarism that swept the Unites States during the First World War also swept Georgia, with strong pockets of support influencing the citizenry through various coercive means. Then troops started to come home and the long debate over the peace treaty and the League of Nations began. With the rise of the debate on how the United States would engage other world powers in the future, coercion to support the war effort evolved into a domestic crisis in many parts of the United States with the arrival of the nation's first Red Scare. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer fueled the fire of anti-Communism with a bellows of fearmongering rhetoric and a series of raids to root out spies that have ever since been known as the Palmer Raids.[1] In Georgia the targets of civilian vigilance, and vigilantism, were blacks, particularly amid the backdrop of a renascent Ku Klux Klan, which had risen from its Reconstruction era ashes in 1915 in Georgia and gained increasing membership in the postwar period. The Klan would gain and maintain a powerful influence on Georgia politics well into the 1920s.[2]

As Georgia slowly retreated from its wartime support of "100 percent Americanism" back to its prewar attitudes of white supremacy and isolation, a few of its wartime initiatives met with varying degrees of success. Dorsey's canal commission survived long enough to appoint commissioners and get tacit approval from Congress for surveys and a study. Wilson's successor, Warren G. Harding, opposed federal funds for water transportation development and killed

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[1] See in general Ann Hagedorn's study of the domestic scene in 1919 and her excellent interpretation of the Palmer Raids in *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007).
[2] For more on the Klan in the twentieth century, see Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

the early attempts at a St. Marks–St. Marys canal.[3] Interest in a canal surged again in 1929 and 1930, but the canal was never built.

Before the GCD dissolved itself in a final meeting in February 1919, the council launched a statewide literacy initiative. M. L. Brittain, the state schools commissioner and a longtime proponent of literacy expansion, suggested a drive to "eradicate adult illiteracy in Georgia" in light of "the Draft Law show[ing] that our State is weakened mentally, morally, physically and financially by the large number of adult illiterates."[4] All members of the meeting agreed to a resolution to allot $10,000 of GCD funds (out of the $20,000 the Georgia Assembly allotted for 1919) toward a commission to study the problem "to the end that every adult person in this State may at least know how to read and write before the next census of 1920."[5] The 1919 assembly eventually allotted the remainder of the unspent GCD budget, about $12,000, to that committee.[6] The results of that illiteracy commission are beyond the range of this thesis, but the war had clearly identified an embarrassing trend in Georgia's populace for which the state sought an immediate remedy.

Thomas Hardwick's Senate career ended in 1918 with his battering at the polls, but he was not dead politically. Despite a mail bomb addressed to him that exploded and maimed his maid at his home in Atlanta (one in a wave of unsolved domestic bombings or attempted bombings in April and May 1919 chalked up to radicalism and blamed on Bolsheviks),[7] Hardwick's political recovery was swift. In 1920, with the help of Tom Watson, Hardwick—that "friend of the Kaiser" and universal wartime opponent of Woodrow Wilson, hated by virtually every news-

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[3] Editorial, "Our Waterways," *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 November 1923, C6.
[4] "Report of the Meeting of the State Council of Defense, Held at the Dempsey Hotel," 11 February 1919, "Organization, 1917–1919," RCB 56824, GCD.
[5] Ibid.
[6] "Georgia's New School Laws: What They Are, What They Mean," *Atlanta Constitution*, 15 August 1919, 10.
[7] Hagedorn, *Savage Peace*," 184–85.

paper editor in Georgia—was elected governor on a platform to "return to the principles of government of Washington and Jefferson." Among these principles were opposition to the League of Nations and compulsory military service, and support of freedom of speech.[8]

Hardwick defended his wartime record as senator during the campaign season while the recently founded American Legion battered him in support of gubernatorial challenger Clifford Walker, Georgia's former attorney general. Meanwhile, Hoke Smith defended his Senate seat from challenges by two-time Governor Hugh Dorsey and the reascending Tom Watson. Newspapers again decried Hardwick as a threat to southern democracy and backed Walker. This time, however, Georgia voters weren't so easily shepherded. Hardwick won 78 counties in the primary to Walker's 69.[9] Georgia newspapers reiterated their support of Walker,[10] but a runoff gave Hardwick the governorship by a two-thirds majority of counties.[11] (Watson had defeated both Smith and Dorsey to win the Senate race outright by a wide majority in the initial primary.)[12] Despite months of doomsaying by the press, Tom Watson and Thomas Hardwick won back the political power they had lost during the war.

The sudden turnaround of political fortune for these Georgia mavericks speaks to the changing attitudes and new prerogatives of Georgia voters after the war. Especially given Hardwick's drubbing in his reelection campaign of 1918, the 1920 gubernatorial race is a clear indicator of a break between the coercive influence of newspapers on public attitudes during the war and afterward. It is evidence of the way in which Georgia voters—many of whom clearly wanted

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[8] "Hardwick Issues Platform Planks," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 May 1920, 3.
[9] "Runover to Decide Governor," *Atlanta Constitution*, 10 September 1920, 1.
[10] Editorial, "Leading Papers of Georgia Say Best Interests Demand Walker," *Atlanta Constitution*, 28 September 1920, 8.
[11] "Hardwick Winner in 104 Counties," *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 October, 1920, 3.
[12] "Runover to Decide Governor," *Atlanta Constitution*.

Hardwick out of political office in 1918—were looking inward again at Georgia's own interests once the threat of war was gone.

The waning influence of newspaper editors in the 1920 Georgia election was a symptom of falling newspaper reputations nationwide after the war. The repercussions of the press's unmitigated support of official doctrine by the Committee on Public Information during the war led to whole-scale changes in journalistic tactics and ethics in the 1920s. Media historian Burton St. John III notes that journalists felt guilty even by the end of the war for unquestioningly disseminating government propaganda and quickly recognized the damage done to newspaper credibility in the process.[13] One of the biggest proponents for journalistic reform was one of the war years' greatest journalistic culprits, Walter Lippman. During the war as a journalist, Lippman did a great deal toward increasing the reach and the power of the CPI. Later, however, he advocated that journalists "learn from the scientist's detached posture of observation." According to St. John, Lippman believed "journalism [could] provide a route to moderating the power of authority by encouraging news workers to report in an objective style, focusing on facts contextualized by experts."[14] Newspapers realized that the reliance on "news" from "unchecked experts" threatened to mislead a democracy into "an ill-advised effort."[15]

Many opportunities for further study exist on the topic of Georgia's support of the US war effort in World War I. This thesis explores several means by which Georgia government tried to influence citizens. One of the most common methods was to coerce compliance through laws, several of which I explored in chapter 1. Still, perhaps somewhere in Georgia municipalities passed ordinances in opposition to the law. Though evidence in chapter 2 suggests wide-

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[13] Burton St. John III, *War and the Media: Essays on News Reporting, Propaganda and Popular Culture*, Paul M. Haridakis, Barbara S. Hugenberg and Stanley T. Wearden, eds. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 151.
[14] Ibid., 152.
[15] Ibid.

spread press support, more research is needed for a complete view of how much the press supported the war and how dissent and resistance—or even simple disagreement—appeared in newspapers outside of the common attacks on nationally known political figures.

The Georgia Council of Defense records at the Georgia Archives are a treasure trove of information on the state's efforts during the war. My extensive exploration in chapter 3 is still but a cursory peek at this collection. Gerald Shenk has studied the GCD Negro Organization files in depth, and I have endeavored to reveal much of the rest, but this group of records is ripe for further study. With regret I was unable to explore the collection's Woman's Committee records, for which an entire box of files exists, for this thesis because these local organizations fell directly under the national council rather than the state until very late in the war. [16] Many Bulletins and Correspondence files—the daily records, really, of the GCD—are interspersed throughout the boxes, and the Farm Furlough records[17] surely reveal more about the labor struggles and agricultural crisis in Georgia during the war. And who knows what may exist in county archives or individual collections throughout the state.

I have challenged the conclusions of historians who have perhaps too heavily focused on resistance to the war and the draft on a federal level, but that does not mean my study of support and compliance cannot be reconciled with resistance studies. Dissent is extremely important in understanding how war affects a nation and its citizens; how people resist and what they are resisting is integral to the story. Others have looked at southern resistance to national imperatives, yet the support demonstrated in this study by local and state governments in Georgia as well as by a significant portion of its citizens brings a new perspective to that story of resistance. Those who resisted the war did so within local contexts, where resistance to coercive measures brought

[16] Woman's Committee records are found in RCB 56825, GCD.
[17] Farm Furlough records are found in RCB 56823, GCD.

war opponents into direct conflict with neighbors and local officials. My evidence does not dispute resistance; rather, it expands the background by which resistance studies may be viewed.

The wartime experiences of Georgians cannot be lumped into simple categories of support or opposition. But those experiences are more multifaceted than many studies on resistance and dissent have allowed. Previously included as a part of the South where wartime resistance reigned, Georgia in fact helped foster a political and cultural coerced voluntarism among its population. World War I was a pivotal time period for the state. Through laws, watchful citizens, newspaper support, and a widespread yet conflicted network of defense councils, Georgia lawmakers and Georgia citizens navigated the war with a mixture of martial spirit and proud patriotism as well as practical resistance and self-preservation.

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APPENDIX:

COMPARING THE ESPIONAGE ACT AND THE SEDITION ACT

The bolded text in the Sedition Act indicates new or changed language from that in the original Espionage Act. Identical language is in plain roman text. Only section 3 of each act is compared here, as they are the most relevant to this study.

Section 3, Espionage Act, passed June 1917[1]

"Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies and whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or of the United States, shall be punished by a fine of not more than $10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both." (122 words)

Section 3, amended, Sedition Act, passed May 1918[2]

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[1] 40 Stat. 219 (1917–1919), Public Law 65-24 / Chapter 30, 65 Congress, Session 1, "An Act: To punish acts of interference with the foreign relations, the neutrality, and the foreign commerce of the United States, to punish espionage, and better to enforce the criminal laws of the United States, and for other purposes." Accessed 11 June 2013, HeinOnline.org, http://heinonline.org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/HOL/Page?handle=hein.statute/sal040&size=2&collection=statute&index=statdocs241&id=241

[2] 40 Stat. 553 (1917–1919), Public Law 65-150 / Chapter 75, 65 Congress, Session 2, An Act: To amend section three, title one, of the Act entitled "An Act to punish acts of interference with the foreign relations, the neutrality, and the foreign commerce of the United States, to punish espionage, and better to enforce the criminal laws of the

"Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States, or to promote the success of its enemies**, or shall willfully make or convey false reports, or false statements, or say or do anything except by way of bona fide and not disloyal advice to an investor or investors, with intent to obstruct the sale by the United States of bonds or other securities of the United States or the making of loans by or to the United States,** and whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause or incite or attempt to incite, [sic] insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct **or attempt to obstruct** the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, **and whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States, or the flag of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy of the United States, or any language intended to bring the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States, or the flag of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy of the United States into contempt, scorn, contumely, or disrepute, or shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any language intended to incite, provoke, or encourage resistance to the United States, or to promote the cause of its enemies, or shall willfully display the flag of any foreign enemy, or shall willfully by utterance, writing, printing, publication, or language spoken, urge, incite, or advocate**

United States, and for other purposes," approved June fifteenth, nineteen hundred and seventeen, and for other purposes. Accessed 11 June 2012, HeinOnline.org, http://heinonline.org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/HOL/Page?handle=hein.statute/sal040&size=2&collection=statute&index=statdocs575&id=575

any curtailment of production in this country of any thing or things, product or products, necessary or essential to the prosecution of the war in which the United States may be engaged, with intent by such curtailment to cripple or hinder the United States in the prosecution of the war, and whoever shall willfully advocate, teach, defend, or suggest the doing of any of the acts or things in this section enumerated, and whoever shall by word or act support or favor the cause of any country with which the United States is at war or by word or act oppose the cause of the United States therein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than $10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both: ***Provided*, That any employee or official of the United States Government who commits any disloyal act or utters any unpatriotic or disloyal language, or who, in an abusive and violent manner criticizes the Army or Navy or the flag of the United States shall be at once dismissed from the service. Any such employee shall be dismissed by the head of the department in which the employee may be engaged, and any such official shall be dismissed by the authority having power to appoint a successor to the dismissed official."** (560 words)