

venture in partnership with others. Like the good "realists" that we were, we knew, of course, that we "cannot cast up accounts once for all and then throw ourselves blindly into relentless action." We knew that in order that we may count in the game we must be in a position to "check up our partners as well as our enemies."

And here is where we met our first obstacle to our embarking upon the very desirable but extremely perilous undertaking of swatting the Kaiser and saving democracy. We found that the "tariff-Republicans" (of both old parties) were to be the "managing partners" in this enterprise, and that they "wished to make war for some private and exclusive right, or to avenge some concrete injury." Here was a situation that would make any true realist pause, no matter how "humble" he might be. In fact the humbler he was the more reason for looking before he leaped. His humility of spirit could only accentuate the paucity of his physical resources in the tremendous task he was taking upon himself of "checking up" upon his arrogant and powerful "managing partner."

Now we no more believe in any "necessary opposition between ideals and interests" than do the editors of the *New Republic*. Like the editors of the great "journal of opinion" we know "that unselfish ideals may in the end serve interests, and that interests often serve ideals." But that was so much more reason for us to look carefully into the causes of the sudden awakening of a certain kind of idealism in the breasts of certain of our compatriots. It was not so much a question of the sincerity of the idealism avowed, as a probing of its sources for the purpose of determining how long it may be expected to last and how far it may be expected to go. And such an examination revealed the painful fact that genuine as that idealism may be, its source was to be found in the violation of certain private rights and in our desire to avenge a concrete injury. As the *N. Y. Tribune* put it: "If it had not been for the submarine's interference with our commerce the American people might never have realized how much democracy needed saving."

But water cannot rise above its source. Nor can an ideal born out of a particular interest outlast that interest. There was no telling when our interest in the war would vanish, for one reason or another, and our idealistic enthusiasm for civilization and democracy with it.

It was this trend of thought that the writer sought to express in the following paragraphs of the resolution which he offered at the St. Louis Convention in the name of a minority of the Committee on War and Militarism:

"When the great war opened with one of the most lawless and ruthless acts in history, the invasion of Belgium by Germany—an act not merely abhorrent in itself, but striking at the very roots of those international arrangements for which we have contended so long and which must lie at the foundation of any international order that will put an end to all wars, the president solemnly enjoined upon the people the duty of reining neutral, not merely in deed, but in thought.

"By that declaration President Wilson officially and authoritatively announced to the people of this country, as well as to the world at large, that the existence of international law, the fate of small peoples, and of democratic institutions, were matters that do not concern 'us.'

"And they did not concern 'us' so long as 'our' trade was not interfered with. But, when the enormous export trade which 'we' have enjoyed during the last two and one-half years was seriously threatened, our rulers suddenly realized the solemn duty resting on 'us' to come to the defense of democracy, civilization, and international law."

This was not merely a criticism of President Wilson and his administration. It was a statement of one of our reasons for refusing to approve America's entry into the war—the fear that American enthusiasm for democracy and international order would disappear with the interest that has generated it, and that the peace which will terminate the war will be dictated by the same kind of interest as that which has started it.