JUDSON’S WAR AND Hutchins’s Peace:
The University of Chicago and War in the Twentieth Century

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warm welcome to the new academic year. The Class of 2007, whose members are now in the middle of their first quarter at the College, numbers 1,172 new first-year students. This represents the largest entering class in the history of the College, and it is also the size at which we will remain in order to achieve and maintain our goal of a College of 4,500 students. The total population of the College is now 4,375 students, almost 1,000 students more than we had ten years ago, in the autumn of 1993. The challenges that we have successfully addressed this academic year in teaching our first-year students are a reasonable measure of the challenges that our general-education programs will continue to face in years to come, as we sustain a College of 4,500 students.

The 1,172 members of the Class of 2007 were chosen from 9,100 applicants, of whom 40 percent were admitted. They join a College with a total enrollment of approximately 4,375 students. In comparison, the Class of 2003, which graduated a few months ago, was admitted from a pool of applicants 2,251 students smaller and had an admit rate of 48 percent. We had 1,011 first-years in the Class of 2003, 167 fewer than this year. Our simultaneous growth in size and quality is a tribute not

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only to the efforts of the Admissions Office but also to the College faculty and staff, who continue to deliver on our promise of a rigorous education and a stimulating, engaging academic and cultural community.

Along with their numbers and their competitiveness, the academic preparedness of our students has also increased. In the fall of 1999, when the Class of 2003 entered the College, the middle 50 percent of our admitted students had SAT scores in the range from 1270 to 1440. For this year’s admitted students, the middle 50 percent of SAT scores ranges from 1330 to 1480. Forty-three percent of the Class of 2003 was drawn from the top 5 percent of their high school class, but for the Class of 2007 that figure has risen to 58 percent. We should take pride in the quality of the students who have chosen to join our community, and equally we can take pride in the quality of education that we provide to them. Our goal in the years to come must be to maintain and to enhance that level of achievement in the context of the opportunities and the challenges presented to us by the increase in size and quality that our College has enjoyed in recent years.

Turning from new students to returning students, I am delighted to report that our students have won their share of national awards in the past year, including six Medical Science Training Program Fellowships, five Fulbright Grants (for graduate study and research abroad), three Barry Goldwater Scholarships (for study in mathematics or science), three National Security Education Scholarships (also for study abroad), three Morris K. Udall Foundation Scholarships (for study leading to a career in environmental public policy), a Rhodes Scholarship, a Gates Cambridge Scholarship, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Predoctoral Fellowship in the Biological Sciences, ten National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships, and a German Academic Exchange Service Scholarship. I am grateful to you, the members of the
College faculty—as I know these students and their families are—for the role that you played as teachers, as mentors, and as collaborators in their achievements.

Our new University of Chicago Center in Paris opened this fall, with a new resident Administrative Director, Valerie Okrend, and our first Academic Director, Professor Robert Morrissey. It is especially fitting that Robert was named to the Benjamin Franklin Professorship in the College and the Humanities (established in 1996 by an endowment gift to the College by Dr. Raymond Kjellberg, Ph.B.’47, S.B.’49, M.D.’52), effective the very month that his tenure as Director in Paris began. A distinguished scholar of French language and culture, Robert’s engagement with explaining France to America and America to France via the France-Chicago Center and now the Paris Center presents a modern-day analogue to the kinds of international activities and commitments that were associated with Franklin’s name in his lifetime. During the center’s inaugural quarter, Robert is teaching fifteen students in an intensive European Civilization course conducted entirely in French, and the students who are enrolled in our year-long program as well. The center is also the home for our new intensive intermediate French language program, enrolling an additional ten students. In subsequent quarters, we will offer an intensive quarter-long program in economics and public policy studies, and a quarter of the History of European Civilization in English. Plans are now underway to create another quarter-long program focusing on the geophysical sciences. Over time, our goal is to expand our offerings so that approximately two hundred students each year can undertake their studies in Paris. We also hope that the graduate departments and other units will use the Paris Center for scholarly conferences and workshops, drawing upon faculty from across Europe and the wider world in collaborative scholarly enterprises.
The Paris Center has attracted extraordinarily generous financial support from several College and University alumni and alumnae. I am grateful to all of them and to many colleagues on campus, especially to Dean Janel Mueller, who played a critical role in our ability to achieve the unique presence in Europe now represented by the center. My professional collaboration with Janel Mueller over the past five years—and the equally close partnership on the institutional level between the College and the graduate Division of the Humanities extending back many years—has been one of the most satisfying personal experiences of my deanship. I hope that we will see more such creative collaborations between the College and the divisions in the future. In contrast to the fears and anxieties of the combatants of the 1950s—on both sides—the College and the graduate divisions are not natural-born enemies. Nor should they be strangers who pass in the night. Working together we can accomplish much more than working apart.

Once again this year, foreign-language study at the College has benefited from the generosity of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In June we received an extension of the grant first awarded in June 1998 to support language teaching and course development. The extension will allow us to continue to develop language-across-the-curriculum courses. These courses provide students who have gained advanced language skills in the College a chance to use those skills in social sciences and humanities course sections that would ordinarily be taught in English.

Our Foreign Language Acquisition Grant (FLAG) program continues to support language learning in the College by providing summer fellowships to students traveling overseas for intensive language instruction at the intermediate and advanced levels. We have awarded 379 FLAGs since 1998. In the summer of 2003, eighty-seven students used the grants for study in twenty different languages, including all the familiar European
languages, the major languages of East Asia, and also Arabic, Catalan, Hindi, Nahuatl, and Swahili, among others.

The Center for Teaching and Learning continues to provide a valuable forum for the discussion of teaching at Chicago. I am pleased to note the increasing popularity of the Certificate in University Teaching program offered for our graduate students in the Department of English Language & Literature. This program provides a model that many other departments might do well to emulate for their own graduate students. The center is willing to help any interested department in developing such a program. This fall the center launched a Web-based guide to teaching in the College designed to provide at a single location the basic information necessary for success in the classroom at Chicago. Please contact Elizabeth Chandler or one of her colleagues at the center for instructions on how to access the site, which is password protected.

Effective teaching requires appropriate classroom space, and the expansion of our entering classes over the past few years has made it eminently clear that we need to use our available facilities as efficiently as possible. To that end, I have commissioned a systematic study of classroom use by the Registrar’s Office. Tom Black and his colleagues have agreed to develop several alternative models of instructional classroom use under a set of assumptions about the availability of rooms and the scheduling of classes over the course of the day. Our plan is to test several different scenarios for classroom use, projected over the next five academic years. The goal of the study is to answer the following questions: Under which sets of temporal and spatial assumptions do we have adequate classroom space for the next five years? Under which do we come up short? When do we come up short and in what types of classrooms? The list of classrooms that we will use in this study will include all of those currently under the control of the Registrar for course scheduling purposes.
and all of those under local departmental or divisional control that the Registrar deems appropriate for use as classrooms. The latter group of rooms we charmingly refer to as proprietary space, although, when all is said and done, we should remember that these rooms too are the property of the University of Chicago. We will also include in our calculations the Graduate School of Business classrooms that will become available as a result of the GSB’s move to the Woodward Court site in the fall of 2004 and possible other rooms that the move may make available (for example, the additional classroom space on the first floor of Harper, made available by the move of the Admissions Office to Rosenwald). Our study will further examine the possible consequences of our returning the arts and sciences classrooms in Judd Hall to the control of the Laboratory Schools, an action which the Laboratory Schools leadership has urgently requested. Finally, the study will also look at the consequences of our holding a small percentage of humanities and social sciences core courses in the early evening or the late afternoon, as a possible strategy for distributing at least some of our teaching into less frequented parts of the day. I expect the results of this study to be available later in the Autumn Quarter, and I will report them to the College Council at that time.

Susan Art’s leadership of the Dean of Students Office has been strong and effective, and she has given the staff a renewed sense of purpose. Among last year’s successes was increased attention to minority student mentoring designed to address problems of social isolation and attrition from the College. The LGBTQ program run by Kathleen Forde has served as a model in this arena, and new initiatives in mentoring for Asian and for African-American students have also begun with initial signs of success.

Organized student activities remain quite vibrant, with over three hundred functioning campus organizations. Among the more popular and
innovative this past year were Absolute Value, devoted to mathematics tutoring in local middle schools; several entrepreneur clubs; and a community service group with the self-explanatory name Men in Service. Student political activism seems to be increasing, not surprisingly given the character of recent world events. It is worth noting that the Kalven Report attracted the attention of our students last year. As might be predicted, many students are not convinced by the report’s stance on academic freedom and University political neutrality.

The College Programming Office has completed another excellent year. Just this fall it mounted a very well received Orientation Week and an extremely successful Family Weekend, which saw over one thousand parents return to campus. Many parents and other family members have commented on how welcoming and supportive the University appears to them, and I believe that such expressions of confidence and good will are vitally important to us as an institution at this time in our history. This year’s Orientation also included a new diversity training experience, consisting of a compelling video presentation featuring our own students talking about diversity and followed by small discussion sessions. The video can be seen by contacting Bill Michel, Assistant Vice-President for Student Life and Associate Dean of the College.

We also held a new event for College seniors this fall, gathering the entire class on the first evening of the quarter in Mandel Hall to help them focus on the essential tasks before them in finishing their senior academic projects and course work in a timely way and getting a solid start on plans for after graduation.

Career and Placement Services (CAPS) initiated a comprehensive annual survey of graduating seniors and returning students in the spring of 2003. The results of this survey will be presented in a number of contexts for students, faculty, and administrators throughout the coming
academic year. The College Council will hear a presentation on this survey at its November meeting. Over the next several years we hope to benefit from a growing body of longitudinal data about our students created by these surveys. For this year, it is interesting to learn from the survey’s preliminary results that as of May 2003, 22 percent of the graduating Class of 2003 was headed for graduate school in the fall, 34 percent had already secured full-time employment, and 44 percent did not yet know what they would be doing. Believe it or not, these are encouraging results given the poor job market, and we look forward to the follow-up results on the Class of 2003 that will be collected by CAPS in January 2004.

Last winter’s Report on College Housing, generated by a committee chaired by Dennis Hutchinson, gave our housing system some positive strategic directions, and I am grateful to Dennis and the many other colleagues who contributed to that effort. This fall’s public discussion of the future of Shoreland Hall should clarify many significant issues, but for now I wish to reiterate what I said in extended remarks before the College Council last January, namely, that I believe that the University needs to develop a systematic plan for additional high-quality housing for our College students, that this housing should be closely adjacent to (that is, within easy walking distance of) the campus, and that we should seek to increase our residential housing resources so that we can house at least 70 percent of our 4,500 College students. It is also worth noting, in anticipation of the outcome of the Shoreland discussion, that we are encountering considerable student dissatisfaction with our current policies regarding returning students who want to live in Palevsky. The Palevsky facility is extremely attractive, and it is a source of friction to forbid (even if for good programmatic reasons) so many of its residents to return. This problem highlights the need to move aggressively forward with the modernization of campus housing and with the development
of more attractive housing opportunities within easy walking distance of the central quadrangles.

The College has raised $100 million toward our $250-million portion of the overall goal of the current campaign. I remain very active in cultivating as many College alumni and alumnae as possible and in soliciting gifts for the College. Along with our regular work on behalf of College fund raising, we hosted a College Retreat this fall for potential major donors, which featured frank discussions of University finances and faculty teaching, and which elicited from most of those in attendance remarkable testimonies to the value of a Chicago education and very positive impressions about the current state of the College and about the incredible quality of our College students.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the superior teaching that you, our faculty, offer to our students. In some cases we were able to acknowledge distinguished teaching in a traditionally formal and public way. This past year, for example, five colleagues received Quantrell Awards: Edward M. Cook, Jr.; Susan Goldin-Meadow; Munir Humayun; Christina von Nolcken; and Bernard Roizman. Russell Tuttle of the Department of Anthropology also received the American Anthropological Association/McGraw-Hill Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. But so much more excellent teaching occurs in quiet, often little-noticed ways as a part of our regular enterprise as teachers and scholars. Indeed, great teaching fills this University each day and each week, occurring in many and diverse places—in classrooms, laboratories, and offices; in small groups and in large ones; in formal and in informal settings. All of this good work creates the intense, densely woven intellectual culture of the College, a culture in which we justifiably take enormous pride and which constitutes the heart of the education we offer. The basic character of our University itself depends heavily on the remarkable educational practices
of the College for its core identity. Those who would ignore the importance of successful faculty teaching in the College for the future welfare of the University make a profound miscalculation about what it will take to sustain a great American research university in the twenty-first century. For all of your efforts I want to thank you, on behalf of our students and their families.

Perhaps the most important event of this past academic year was the war in Iraq. Given the importance of the subject, I would like to devote the remainder of this report to some reflections on the role of the University of Chicago in war in the twentieth century.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE WAR

This past academic year our nation went to war. For our campus the war broke out during spring break, and within two weeks of the start of the new quarter it was over. The run-up to the war took place over several months, and many on our campus had decided opinions about the actions of our government, pro and con. The peace that follows the war will be protracted and costly in human life and national wealth, but the war itself was mercifully brief. Wars are often important catalysts of social change, and big wars frequently produce big change. World War I and World War II profoundly influenced the basic institutional and cultural underpinnings of American society, and this was no less the case for America’s universities. Wars are rarely concluded in the ways that their planners and ideologues imagine; in fact, war makers take huge gambles, sorely tempting the unintended consequences of human action. Sometimes, the outcomes of war are worse than the causes that led to the conflict. In other cases, the provocations for war are so heinous
and so terrible that war is the only available moral outcome. The fascination with war never ceases, and yet our expectations about the future are never more fragile and subject to error than in times of war.

When the European War broke out in August 1914, most American academics sided with Britain and France, especially after Germany’s brutal invasion of Belgium. Yet having sympathy with the Entente powers did not necessarily mean advocating American intervention in the war. This involved a much more complicated set of assessments. On our campus, faculty members were divided over the war. Some faculty members supported Woodrow Wilson’s regime of neutrality, all the while hoping for a Franco-British victory. Others were eager that the United States join the conflict as soon as possible. For the small minority of faculty who were sympathetic to Germany, the war was both a horrible and a frustrating experience. In December 1916, classicist William G. Hale circulated among his faculty colleagues a petition to Woodrow Wilson protesting German deportations of Belgian civilians from their hometowns. Starr Cutting, the Chairman of the German Department, refused to sign Hale’s petition because he considered it an action that “under the circumstances seem[s] to me a prostitution of the name of the institution to a manifestly unneutral and partisan use. It is unfortunately not the first attempt to force the universities of our country into partisan support of one of the warring parties in Europe. . . . I strongly disapprove the present effort to take the name of our educational institutions in vain.”

1. Cutting to Judson and Cutting to Hale, December 12, 1916, Presidents’ Papers, 1889–1925, Box 68, folder 10. Presidents’ Papers hereafter cited as PP. My thanks to Patrick Houlihan, Thomas Sutton, Dennis J. Hutchinson, Kathleen N. Conzen, Friedrich Katz, and Andrew Patner for generous assistance in preparing this essay. All of the archival materials cited in this report are located in the Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
Cutting’s challenge to Hale raised some fundamental questions. Is a university obligated to be “neutral” and “nonpartisan” in time of war? If so, does the rule of neutrality and nonpartisanship only apply in wars in which America is not involved, or does its efficacy cease when our nation itself becomes implicated in a war? If it does cease, what then is the proper role of a university in time of war? Are we the equivalent of an appliance factory or an automobile plant, to be mobilized for educational war production? Are we (small) ministries of information and enlightenment, to be mobilized to fight cultural wars on behalf of our nation? If the latter conditions apply, what happens to the objectivity, dispassion, and pluralism that, most faculty at most universities in the United States would insist, define the basic value structures of their institutions?

*The Campus and the Great War*

With the decision of President Woodrow Wilson to ask Congress for a declaration of war against Germany in early April 1917, across America universities sought to mobilize to support the war, and the experience of the faculty at Chicago was similar to that at many other research universities. As Carol Gruber has noted, a principal justification for this effort was that the tradition of service to the community in peacetime easily translated into service to the state in time of war.² Universities competed with each other to be seen to be most dedicated to the war. Accusations of faulty patriotism hit some universities, particularly the University of Wisconsin, and the stakes were thus high for Chicago not

to appear to be lagging. The Columbia historian James Shotwell even urged universities to collect materials relating to their war contributions, with an eye on impressing public opinion and persuading the Congress that donations to higher education should be made tax-exempt.3

Several weeks before Wilson’s war message, in mid-March 1917, fifty members of the natural sciences departments at Chicago had petitioned the Trustees recommending that they “offer the scientific laboratories and equipment of the University to the federal government for use in case of war” and volunteering to assist the government in war-related activities.4

Many of our most distinguished faculty volunteered for or accepted special war jobs, and it was the University’s policy to guarantee them the full salary they would have earned on campus.5 By January 1918, seventy faculty members were involved in war service, of whom twenty-seven were full professors.6 Some applied for commissions, and others, failing to obtain assignment in the Army, received work in government agencies. Some jobs were full time in Washington, others were part time in Chicago. Anton Carlson became a major in the Food Division of the Sanitary Corps, attached to the Office of the Surgeon General. Charles Judd edited patriotic pamphlets for the Bureau of Education.7

3. Ibid., p. 105.


5. See Judson to Stanley Hall, May 18, 1918, PP, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 14.


Matthews Manly, Chairman of the English Department, left Chicago to work in military intelligence in Washington, D.C., with the rank of captain.\textsuperscript{8} Robert A. Milan served as vice-chair of the National Research Council and was given the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Signal Corps.\textsuperscript{9} Henry Gale, a dean in the Colleges, volunteered for officer training at Fort Sheridan and went through a course with men much younger than himself, being commissioned as a captain at the age of forty-three.\textsuperscript{10} Frederic Woodward of the Law School became an aide to Herbert Hoover in the Food Administration.\textsuperscript{11} Frank Billings was appointed a colonel in the Army, organized a base hospital under the auspices of the Presbyterian Hospital, and traveled to Russia on a Red Cross mission in 1917.\textsuperscript{12} In a few cases, the enthusiasm of war service led to professional mishaps. Chicago’s local resident expert on Russia, Samuel N. Harper, visited Russia immediately after the March 1917 revolution as an unofficial member of the U.S. mission led by Elihu Root and then gave public reports on his journey.\textsuperscript{13} In October 1918, Harper was asked by the Wilson administration’s wartime

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{8} Maroon, October 3, 1917; and Robert Lovett’s biography in \textit{ibid.}, November 27, 1918.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Maroon, October 4, 1917.
\item \textsuperscript{10} Maroon, October 30, 1917; \textit{PP, 1940–1946}, Box 12, folder 12. James Linn reported that, as a boy, Gale had tried to go to West Point, but failed to gain admittance. Now, “[h]e drilled the faculty squad, and was made chairman of the committee on military affairs.” He was also “one of the first to urge the development here of a department of military science.”
\item \textsuperscript{11} Maroon, October 30, 1917.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Maroon, November 20, 1917; November 23, 1917.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Maroon, October 24, 1917; November 6, 1917.
\end{itemize}
propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information, to endorse the authenticity of a collection of documents edited by Edgar Sisson alleging that, in the aftermath of the October revolution, the German general staff had paid the Bolshevik leaders to continue to foment their revolution. Subsequently, the collection was attacked as a work of forgery, and the whole episode caused Harper acute embarrassment.\textsuperscript{14}

In addition to those faculty who entered government service and left Chicago, many others, especially in the sciences, undertook war work in the laboratories. Herman Schlesinger of Chemistry, investigated ways to improve permanganate, in collaboration with Armour and Company; while Julius Stieglitz worked on the creation of new synthetic drugs.\textsuperscript{15} Rollin D. Salisbury, Dean of the Ogden School of Science, reported that “[a]ll science departments have participated in the war work, many of them to such an extent as to interfere seriously with the program which has been prepared for other conditions. The extent to which the ranks of the faculty and advanced students have been depleted testifies to the whole-hearted entrance of this division of the University into the task which confronts the nation.”\textsuperscript{16}

Many other faculty did not participate in government service or in government research work. A large number of faculty members had


wives and dependent children, which normally excused them from the draft. Others were physically unfit, by virtue of nearsightedness, etc.\(^{17}\) War service varied also by department. The Physics Department was hit hard: from a former complement of eight faculty members, only two were in residence by the spring of 1918.\(^{18}\) Other departments, in contrast, faced greater obstacles to finding appropriate war service. James Breasted wrote to David Robertson, “I regret to say that we members of the Oriental Department have not been able to find enough to do in aiding the War to carry us away from the University. The only one so occupied, I believe, is Dr. Harper, whose name you already know. I at once applied for administrative service in the Near East in the opening of the War, but being a Republican, I presume my offer will not be accepted.”\(^{19}\) The historian William Dodd felt “ashamed . . . feeling the injustice of staying at home when others give their lives for my safety.”\(^{20}\)

The war left divergent and often conflicting memories, some enthusiastic, others mordant and depressing. Elizabeth Wallace, a professor of French and an ardent Francophile, remembered the enthusiasm of the majority of the faculty and Trustees for the Allied cause, took pride in the visit to the University of a delegation of French political and military leaders

\(^{17}\) This is apparent in the responses that James Angell got in August 1918 when he circularized the department chairs asking about the possible impact of the government’s decision to raise the upward limit of the draft age to forty-five. See PP, 1889–1925, Box 68, folder 7.

\(^{18}\) Maroon, March 16, 1918.

\(^{19}\) Breasted to Robertson, December 18, 1917, PP, 1889–1925, Box 67, folder 26.

led by General Joseph Joffre and former Premier René Viviani, and expressed great pleasure in the patriotism of women students on campus. Wallace spent part of her war months in France, working as a translator for a mission sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, and the work gave her pride in “the indestructible power of unity” manifested by Americans working with their French allies in the defense of France.21 When she returned to campus, she chaired the Student War Activities Committee, and in the autumn of 1918 helped to organize the Woman Students’ Training Corps, a group that was dedicated by “organization, discipline, and devotion” to aiding the University “in every way possible to do its part to win the war.”22 Her war was a noble cause, fully justified and worthy of University support.

Another humanist, English professor Robert Lovett, experienced a radically different war. Lovett had grave doubts about the war’s legitimacy and necessity. In his autobiography he remembered a campus and a nation besotted with what he called “manifestations of synthetic patriotism” that were “so extreme as to defeat their purpose.” For Lovett, the war was a time of hysteria and hyper-nationalism; of chronic and shameful violations of the civil liberties of war protesters, conscientious objectors, and pacifists; a time in which some members of the faculty embarrassed themselves because of their egregious partisanship. When Lovett dared to speak at a peace rally in the Auditorium Theatre in late May 1917, urging that the United States make clear its war aims as a way to focus all the belligerents on the conditions for a possible peace settlement, he was


22. “Work and Fight. Together We Win,” a handout signed by Elizabeth Wallace in 1918; as well as Wallace to Angell, October 16, 1918, in PP, 1889–1925, Box 70, folder 3.
roundly denounced as a defeatist. Lovett’s views met with the disapproval of some of his colleagues, which led him to remark, “I had the opportunity to learn the truth of Samuel Butler’s assertion that of three misfortunes, loss of money, loss of health, and loss of reputation, the last is by far the least.”

The war also had a profound personal impact on Lovett when his only son, a second lieutenant in the American forces attacking the German front at Belleau Wood, was killed by machine-gun fire in August 1918.

Carol Gruber has argued that many professors had feelings of uncertainty about their own roles in society and that war helped to expunge these feelings by giving the faculty a valuable patriotic service role. In 1926, Robert Herrick, like his friend Lovett a professor of English, published an autobiographical novel *Chimes* which has scenes of faculty rejoicing about the war and seeing it as way to compensate for their frustrations as academics. In one scene, Herrick has his central character (and alter ego), Clavercin, reflect on the behavior of a senior faculty member, Caxton [John Matthews Manly], who should have been proud of his intellectual achievements but who only found real value in being able to associate with a group of army officers:


It was apparent that the war had touched the stagnant pools of the university to life. Caxton with a lifelong experience of thwarted power had found in it a responsible and active post. The inferiority of the academic life . . . was about to be disproved. The country in its crisis needed trained minds, the special knowledge of the university. Clavercin mused over the irony of the situation. . . . It was as if all the long years of abstractions, of repressed ambition, of class room routine and unreality were now revenging themselves in the glorious release of energies that the war offered.

“Beckwith [Robert Lovett] is here,” Caxton remarked, with a slight reserve in his voice,—and Snow [Ferdinand Schevill].”

“Yes, I am lunching with them. Won’t you join us?”

“No,” Caxton refused briskly, “I am lunching with General Bord and some of his staff at the Eureka Club.”

There was a touch of superiority in the scholar’s voice, quite pardonable, a little amusing, indicating his sense of importance. His was one of the best minds in America, Clavercin reflected, as he left Caxton’s office, not merely in his own narrow line of scholarship but as a mental machine, and it took the bloody insanity of a world war, a chaos of misery, to awaken its possessor to a sense of importance and dignity! A Caxton to be proud of lunching with a few stupid army officers, to be inflated by the task of educating young men how to collect information from spies and prisoners.27

27. *Chimes*, pp. 261–62. Late in his life Robert Lovett, who was a close friend of Herrick, argued that Herrick’s portraits of Harper and Judson were “cruel and ungrateful” and that there were only two portraits in the book that were totally accurate (Alice Freeman Palmer and Mrs. Parsons). On the other hand, he admitted that the book had been written “by direct suggestion from life” and that its publication had created indignant feelings on campus, which may suggest the book’s various caricatures had some basis in reality. See Lovett to Allen T. Hazen, February 24, 1947, *Robert Herrick Papers*, Addenda, Box 1, folder 8.
A few faculty members excelled in patriotic propaganda against Germany of a particularly vindictive sort. Albion Small, the Head of the Department of Sociology, harshly denounced Germany and its political culture in a published lecture entitled “Americans and the World Crisis.” Small believed that Germany was a nation and a civic culture gone mad in its subservience to a militaristic caste and to the doctrine of might makes right in the service of pure state power. The German fondness for *Der Staat ist Macht* had created a “resuscitated paganism” to which “the Germans have become unresisting perverts.” The Germans’ “domineering militarism” had stunted the development of a civil society in which self-expression and self-realization could become robust liberties, as they had in America. Small warned that “until the Germans repudiate this military caste and the creed it imposes, to be at peace with Germany would make our nation a moral monstrosity.” For Small, the war was essentially about a profound conflict between “two contradictory conceptions of national life” in the modern world: the German tendency toward autocracy, which he abhorred, and the rival movement toward democracy, which had been set in motion by the American and French revolutions. The war was thus a crusade to protect the world against “the most hellish heresy that has ever menaced civilization: There is no God but power, and Prussia is its prophet.”

Paul Shorey, the distinguished classicist, entered the rhetorical fray in a public lecture in early May 1917 with a strong denunciation of pacifists who opposed war with Germany:

The militant pacifist is in essence a contradiction in terms, a chimera with whom reason is helpless to deal. You cannot argue with him. You can only analyze for yourself the problem he presents. His reason has lost its way in the terrible antinomy between the historic necessity of national patriotism and the millennial ideal of international brotherhood. Drunk with the rhetoric of an undefined and undefinable humanitarianism he shrieks with Schiller *seid umschlungen Millionen*, shuts his eyes to facts and affirms not argues that patriotism is an obsolete instrument of evolution which has served no purpose.

Shorey continued in a racist vein that “[n]o attentive reader of a pacifist book, no logical debater with a pacifist can fail to perceive that their principle inevitably involves the unrestricted intermingling of all peoples and the interbreeding of all races,” and he warned that “Germany is already planning the next war. A negotiated peace that on any pretext leaves her in control of Central Europe is merely a truce in which she may prepare to fight on more favorable conditions. That is the alternative which the pacifist dupes of German propaganda refuse to face.”

Small and Shorey had both spent considerable time in Germany, the former having studied at Leipzig and Berlin, the latter having received a Ph.D. from the University of Munich. Both owed a substantial debt to German scholarship, which they gladly acknowledged. Yet even before the war, each man had criticized facets of German culture: Small had attacked certain tendencies toward militarism in German political life,

while Shorey had urged less “slavish subservience” by Americans to German research traditions, arguing that the Germans suffered from a “false historical perspective” and a “crudity and amateurishness of their criticism of life and letters.”\textsuperscript{30} Their wartime critiques were, in a way, logical and consistent, if somewhat inflated and forced, and they demonstrated the acute awkwardness in which American scholars found themselves in trying to distinguish between good and bad Germans, and between those parts of the heritage of German culture which “decent” Americans could continue to honor and those that were so tinged with “Prussianism” that they must be repudiated. Shorey himself was sufficiently sensitive about this problem to ask

\begin{quote}
in what separate compartments of the mind shall we keep our memories of German travel and study, our respect for German scholarship and industry, our delight in German music, our hopes of renewed German friendships, our unfeigned and sincere sympathy for the spiritual anguish of our German-American friends[,] provided they remain loyal[,] to preserve them from disintegration by the poisonous acid of our indispensable, ever vigilant and illimitable distrust of all possible agencies of the accursed spy system which[,] from the body of international and interracial affiance[,] has plucked the very soul and threatens to make the religion of humanity a rhapsody of words.
\end{quote}

The same month that he was denouncing Germany, Paul Shorey also wrote to President Harry Pratt Judson criticizing the appointment of

Joel Franklin to be the private secretary of Secretary of War Newton Baker on the grounds that Franklin “is a near relation of persons holding official positions in Vienna who have doubtless been in communication with him. He may be the most loyal of Americans. But I should still think it folly to the United States to take the chances of putting such men in strategic positions.” Shorey viewed Franklin’s appointment as “a very dangerous symptom of the national mind at present. It would mean that we still don’t know what we’re up against.”31 Judson joined in Shorey’s paranoia by sending a copy of Shorey’s note to Senator James Lewis of Illinois, informing Lewis of Shorey’s credentials and assuring him that Shorey “knows what he is talking about, and I think that the matter ought to have very careful attention.”32 War hysteria was the order of the day.

The University went to great lengths to chronicle faculty participation in the war. Judson’s secretary, David A. Robertson, was charged with compiling a war service list for the University Record. Robertson also chaired a campus Intelligence Committee, which was charged with identifying all university activities related to the war and publicizing them.33 In the rush to collect stories and reports, inevitably some names were omitted and feelings ruffled. J. Paul Goode of Geography, who had given a pro-war lecture seventy-eight times to “boards of trade, chambers of commerce, state educational associations, and other similar bodies of distinction,” complained to Robertson that no notice was taken of his contributions in the University Record. He then added, “I do not know whether public


33. Maroon, October 30, 1917.
lecturing in this way is considered worthwhile by the President and Trustees of the University. I suspect that there is only lukewarm approval of it on the part of the head of my department. If I felt that the University is no more interested in it than he has been, I should feel tempted to resign from the University, for I could get between two and ten times as much for lecturing as the University pays me for the time I give it.”

The war also led to changes in student life at the University. The conventional wisdom about World War I is that the university campuses totally mobilized for war. Yet, seen from the perspective of student culture, for the first twelve months at least, the campus itself was less affected by the war than might at first glance seem to be the case. Enlistment information is scattered and imprecise, but enrollment data from the Registrar’s Office suggest that while the number of undergraduate and graduate male students in the arts and sciences on campus between the spring of 1917 and the spring of 1918 declined significantly, there was still a large number of male students enrolled in the University a year into the war (1,427 men were registered in spring 1917, compared with 1,007 men in spring 1918). Female enrollments remained relatively stable, with 1,045 women in the spring of 1917 and 1,010 women in the spring of 1918. In the undergraduate business program, the decline in male enrollments was even smaller—from 138 men in 1917 to 106 men in 1918. In considering


these enrollment data, we should remember that the initial Selective Service Act of May 1917 set the age range for conscription from twenty-one to thirty.37 Not until August 1918 was the draft age reduced to eighteen.

The immediate student reaction to the war was mixed. Many male students immediately tried to enlist. By mid-May 1917, over one hundred fraternity men had entered the military training camp at Fort Sheridan or other service venues.38 By October 1917, 225 fraternity men were in uniform, which amounted to 55 percent of the 409 men in campus fraternities during the previous year.39 The majority of the student officers of the first ROTC unit organized on campus, in May 1917, also came from the fraternities (of thirty-six student officers, twenty-five were members of the fraternities).40

The first Chicago undergraduate to die in France was an aviator, William Jewell Whyte, Class of 1919, who was killed on March 20, 1918, in an airplane crash after a wing of his aircraft disintegrated at six thousand feet. Whyte had entered the University as a first-year student in 1915 from Danville, Illinois. He was a good student, and a football


38. Maroon, May 18, 1917.

39. Maroon, October 5, 1917; October 18, 1917.

40. See the list dating from late May 1917, PP, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 13. Over some resistance, Judson had been able to persuade the faculty to authorize an ROTC program in late 1916. To encourage military training, the University allowed men to count one military science course towards their degree programs. See “Notice concerning Military Training,” [1917], ibid., folder 4.
player and member of the Delta Tau Delta fraternity. He immediately enlisted in April 1917, entering the ambulance service and then military aviation. In a letter to friends on campus, Whyte wrote, “They tell me that I am living on borrowed time, but I think I have a long-time loan.”

Tragically, he was wrong about his loan. In all, sixty-seven University students and alumni would die during the hostilities.

Not all male students were eager to join in the crusade, however, and attitudes about the war were more complex than one might expect. In late April 1917, Frederick Bramhall, a political scientist who helped organize a popular lecture series justifying the war, publicly criticized the nonattendance of students at these lectures: “I have been rather disappointed to see such a small percentage of University students present at the lectures. . . . To see that less than one-half of those present are students is discouraging.” When a student group—the Undergraduate Council—passed out cards asking students about their interest in participating in military drills and training, “many of the questions were left unanswered and some cards were never returned.” Moreover, the Maroon published ongoing litanies of complaints about the failure of male students to participate in voluntary, after-school drills. In May 1917, of the 1,250 men eligible to participate in such drills, 700 had yet to show up. Participation in the campus’s ROTC program was similarly unimpressive. By October 1917, only 130 men had registered for ROTC, which led one


42. Maroon, April 28, 1917.

43. Maroon, May 1, 1917.

44. Maroon, May 3, 1917; May 7, 1917.
student officer to observe that “the attendance is not as heavy as I would like to see, especially as we are at war.” 45 Dean James Linn publicly reproached the men for not participating in military training in December 1917, observing (as reported in the Maroon) that this was “a sign of a lack of appreciation on the part of the undergraduate male student body of the seriousness of the war situation.” 46 The Maroon again complained in February 1918 about the “very small percentage of men students” who had enrolled in military science courses. 47 By April 1918, the situation had little changed—of the 1,500 male students eligible, only 187 had enrolled for such courses. The Maroon again bemoaned the fact that “[t]he men of the University of Chicago are asleep or otherwise they must have some reason for failing to respond to the knocks of opportunity” and went on to ask “why is the registration for military science so miserably small?” 48 In early June 1918, the Maroon insisted that “the undergraduate body has not shown itself to be profoundly affected in any way by the war.” 49 Later in 1918, after the armistice, Vice-President James Angell would candidly admit to the Board of Trustees that the University’s attempts to create voluntary military training programs for students had not been successful. 50

45. Maroon, October 3, 1917.

46. Maroon, December 11, 1917.

47. Maroon, February 8, 1918.

48. Maroon, April 9, 1918; May 9, 1918.

49. Maroon, June 4, 1918.

50. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1918, p. 632.
The *Maroon* was sure that war would transform the campus, making students more serious about their studies, since “there will no longer be a hustling for snap courses, a careless attitude toward studious application, a waste of time during vacations.”\(^51\) Still, social activities for Spring Quarter 1918 were plentiful, and the schedule for seniors was reported as being “the peppiest ever had.”\(^52\) In fact, the year was filled with false steps involving arbitrary assessments of student opinion. The organizers of the annual spring dance voted to cancel the affair in 1918 in order to “awaken the student body to the fact that a great struggle is being carried on between the Allies and the Central Powers,” even though, as the *Maroon* implied, the majority of students were opposed to canceling it. Then, members of the freshman class proceeded to organize a less formal dance in Bartlett open to all students that was essentially the spring dance under another name.\(^53\) One student’s patriotism was another’s unfair sacrifice.

The Washington Prom had to be retrenched and made simpler, while Blackfriars theatricals and intercollegiate bowling, basketball, and tennis tournaments were canceled to save money.\(^54\) Candy sales were eliminated in Reynolds Club as part of sugar rationing.\(^55\) But the basic rhythms of life remained steady and uninterrupted for most students. Key social events defined the calendar, and frequent dances were held, along with social teas. The *Maroon* protested in late February 1918:


52. *Maroon*, April 18, 1918.

53. *Maroon*, April 16, 1918; May 1, 1918.

54. *Maroon*, January 31, 1918; February 5, 1918; February 15, 1918.

We at the University decide to forgo Blackfriars and then purchase parquet seats at the Ziegfeld Follies. We submit grudgingly to the small portions of bread and sugar at the Commons and then make up for our loss at class teas. We do these things and any number of other equally inconsistent deeds and fail to realize that we are defeating our own designs for aiding the nation. That is because we are complacently inconsistent.56

Such evidence, while admittedly impressionistic, taken together with the modest participation rates of men students in ROTC, may suggest that student opinion about the war was more complex and more diverse than the University’s pro-war publicists were willing to admit. A metropolis with large German, Austrian, Scandinavian, and Irish populations, the city of Chicago was the source from which a substantial number of our undergraduates were recruited.57 Would it be surprising that at least some of these students felt ambivalence about the war?

War enthusiasm led to extreme behavior among some students, however, as the case of Ewald Pietsch proved. Pietsch was the son of Karl

56. Maroon, February 21, 1918.

57. In 1914, out of a total population of 2,437,526 in Chicago there were 399,977 first- and second-generation Germans, 58,843 Austrians, and 146,560 Irish, many of whom were, in Melvin Holli’s term, “Anglophobic.” Holli also points out that “[t]he Scandinavians, comprising 118,000 Swedish ethnics and 47,496 Norwegians, were generally correctly neutral, but were pro-German in their basic sympathies.” Melvin G. Holli, “The Great War Sinks Chicago’s German Kultur,” in Peter d’A. Jones and Melvin G. Holli, eds., Ethnic Chicago (Grand Rapids, MI, 1981), pp. 262–263. Aldermanic elections in the spring of 1917 saw substantial numbers of Germans voting Socialist, in protest against the war. See Leslie V. Tischauser, The Burden of Ethnicity. The German Question in Chicago, 1914–1941 (New York, 1990), p. 39.
Pietsch, a distinguished professor of medieval Spanish literature at the University. Pietsch’s family was German by ethnicity and understandably was opposed to entry of the United States into the war. When Ewald Pietsch became involved in an argument about the war with two of his Beta Theta Pi fraternity brothers in late October 1917, he told them in anger, “if I got the chance I’d stick a knife in the President’s back.” The two “friends” then reported Ewald Pietsch to Captain Thomas I. Porter of the Chicago office of the United States Secret Service, who had Pietsch arrested and held on $10,000 bond for having made seditious comments. In the trial that ensued, Pietsch was found guilty and fined $500.58 To their credit, the elder Pietsch’s colleagues made a collection to help pay the fine.59

Like Ewald Pietsch, other students emerged to protest the war. One brave soul wrote to the Maroon in mid-April 1917 denouncing the “mob tactics” of a “powerful and influential minority” who favored universal conscription, arguing that they “insisted that we dispense with all personal judgment and convictions and accept as law and gospel whatever their assumed superior insight and judgment deems necessary for what they

58. Lovett, All Our Years, p. 147; Chicago Tribune, October 26, 1917, p. 1.
59. The younger Pietsch eventually graduated with a bachelor’s degree from the University in 1923, went on to take an A.M. degree in geography, and after a period of struggle became a high school teacher. Not all faculty members were sympathetic to his cause or that of his father. The Wilsonian Democrat William Dodd wrote in his private diary that “Pietsch is one of the greatest authorities on medieval Spanish; but he is also a rabid German though he has been here as teacher many years. His manners and conduct are the manners and conduct of a lower middle class German at home. He has never made himself part of our life and, I judge, he has never intended to be anything but a German—a sort of émigré always saying his prayers facing towards the Fatherland. Now he is beginning to respect the country which supports him. Nothing helps a German quite so much as to feel the heavy arm of the law.” “Professor William E. Dodd’s Diary, 1916–1920,” pp. 49–50.
consider the interest of the nation.” The student called this the “worst type of Prussianism.” The Maroon alluded to the existence of student pacifists in a December 1917 editorial observing that some students “cannot reconcile their feeling of duty with their feeling that too much blood is being spilled, too much poverty is being caused, too much misery is being forced upon the peoples of the world.” Unfortunately, little is known about the students who opposed the war, but we do know that one of their leaders was the young Louis Wirth, a student in the College from 1916 to 1919 who was later to become a key faculty member of the Department of Sociology and a distinguished expert in urban sociology. A leader of the local Cosmopolitan Club, a group of about thirty foreign students on campus founded in 1909 that was part of the national Association of Cosmopolitan Clubs, Wirth used one of the club’s meetings in 1919 to denounce the Versailles peace treaty as “the most impudent document ever devised by the hands and brains of diplomats” and as a peace of “vengeance.” A confidential report submitted to President Judson after this incident asserted that Wirth “[o]penly opposes all established

60. Maroon, April 27, 1917. An editorial in the Maroon, on March 1, 1918, implied that there were other such students on campus.


62. Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, “Louis Wirth: A Biographical Memorandum,” in Albert J. Reiss, Jr., ed., Louis Wirth. On Cities and Social Life. Selected Papers (Chicago, 1964), pp. 335–36. According to his official transcript, Wirth was an excellent student, meriting honors in sociology and in history, and being elected to Phi Beta Kappa. His grades were generally good, except for the C he received in a philosophy course called “Intellectual Background of War” in the spring of 1918.

governments, in the United States and Germany alike. More pronounced since armistice in attacks upon authority and in favor of revolution. . . . Clever orator, cool and daring. Constantly agitating to spread his views.”

A dramatic change was in the offing, however, that would have radically transformed the campus had it continued. In late spring of 1918, the War Department announced the creation of a new campus-based military training program, the Student Army Training Corps. The SATC was to be a residential training program on college campuses sponsored by and paid for by the Army, as part of a scheme to train 100,000 new officers by June 1919. SATC students were to be housed in University dormitories (Snell, Hitchcock, and Gates-Blake Halls) and in specially constructed barracks under the stands of Stagg Field. The University spent $50,000 on these conversions, with the goal of housing up to 1,500 student soldiers. At the same time, the University also announced that ten fraternity houses were to be requisitioned by the Army. The University was essentially to be converted into an Army encampment, run by seventeen Army officers who would command and train the students. Students were to stand in line for “chow” and undertake guard duty, following a military training regimen modeled on that of the Army’s cantonments. Faculty would have to show passes to these student guards to enter classroom buildings.


65. Maroon, October 9, 1918.

66. Maroon, October 10, 1918.
Simultaneously, women students organized a nongovernmental Woman Student Training Corps that enrolled four hundred women at the start of Autumn Quarter and seven hundred by mid-October. A mass induction meeting was held on October 11. Women were given the option of wearing uniforms, and all wore a special armband that had the insignia of the organization. The group hoped to help win the war by having its members devote blocks of hourly work to defense causes each week. Women were also to drill, and nineteen women were commissioned as student officers to conduct the drills.67

Since the SATC was a national training program, the universities were forced to open admission to a wider cut of prospective students from their regions, in addition to regularly enrolled students. According to the Registrar’s statistics, 1,007 students joined the SATC program at the University of Chicago.68 Of this number, several hundred were not regular students but had been recruited via public advertisements in Chicago newspapers inviting high school graduates eighteen years and older and others to enroll in late September.69 The attrition rate for this group was high, and few of them returned in the Winter Quarter, since they lacked the academic qualifications to attend a normal undergraduate program.70

67. Maroon, October 2, 1918; October 15, 1918.

68. Annual Register of the University of Chicago, 1918–1919, pp. 742, 744.

69. See Angell to the editor of the Herald-Examiner, September 5, 1918, PP, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 8. The alumni magazine reported that the University received 1,745 applications, of which 523 were current students and 1,222 were new students attracted by the ads. University of Chicago Magazine, 11 (1918–19): 8.


Vice President James R. Angell and Major Henry S. Wygant, C.O. and Adjutant, at the first assembly of the Student Army Training Corps at the University of Chicago. October 1, 1918. Major Wygant read messages from President Wilson and War Department officials.
Publicly, Vice-President James Angell welcomed the SATC program as one that would be remembered for “centuries to come” as having transformed “this peaceful University into an army camp.” But privately he acknowledged to the Board of Trustees that the program would decimate existing academic programs, splitting the campus into two separate worlds—the men in service on the one side and the “[g]irls and physically defective men, or men in the deferred classes of the draft” on the other, and would lead to “the most radical rearrangement of our instructional program, our methods, and distribution of our teaching force.”

Faculty experience with the SATC was discouraging. In briefing Professor Samuel N. Harper on the kinds of lectures required for the SATC’s historical “war-aims” course in the fall of 1918, History Department Chairman Andrew MacLaughlin cautioned, “Please remember that these lectures must be very simple, given very slowly, and thoroughly outlined. . . . The lecturing is to be somewhat more simple than in an ordinary college course. You will have to remember that a lot of fellows do not know Peter the Great from Tamerlane the Great.” In a confidential memo in January 1919 evaluating the SATC experiment, James Angell concluded:

For the most part, the attitude as compared with that of peace times, was distinctly discouraging. A reasonable number of students were eagerly interested in their work, although finding

71. Maroon, October 2, 1918.

72. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 10, 1918, p. 562.

73. MacLaughlin to Harper, November 5, 1918, Department of History Records, Box 1, folder 3.
the conditions of its prosecution almost hopelessly impossible. But the unit contained so large a number of men wholly lacking in interest in study that the intellectual atmosphere as a whole was decidedly below the normal level in the institution.

Angell also noted that the faculty tried to cooperate but in the end became negative about the program: “The impossible character of the program, together with the wholly unsympathetic attitude of many of the younger officers—men in many cases of extreme youth, social callowness, and lack of education—made it increasingly difficult to preserve a satisfactory attitude on the part of the faculty.” He concluded that “[t]he outcome of this situation was the conviction on the part of many members of the faculty that a combination of military and academic work was impracticable.”

When the issue of renewing the wartime ROTC program on a post-war basis came before the Board of Trustees in late 1918, James Angell was forced to admit that while President Judson was a steady enthusiast, the faculty were “decidedly opposed” to renewing the program in peace-

74. James Angell, “Report for Collegiate Section A, S.A.T.C.,” PP: 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 14. The first version of the SATC was created on the assumption that the draft age would be twenty-one, but Congress lowered this to eighteen in the summer of 1918. Had the draft age stayed at twenty-one, Angell expected a smaller program. Initial enrollments were also adversely affected by influenza, by rumors of peace, and by delays in completing the induction because of paperwork hold-ups at local boards and Army headquarters. Angell reported that University planners estimated that one-third of the enrollees would have attended college in any event, the remaining two-thirds would “perhaps not have come except for the S.A.T.C. . . . We expect to lose from two-thirds to three-fourths of the men in the S.A.T.C., the reasons being partly inability to meet the expense, and partly lack of interest in a college education, as such.”
Judson was able to get his way, however, and an ROTC field artillery unit was created under the aegis of a Department of Military Science which was (after 1930) attached to the Division of the Physical Sciences. The ROTC unit remained at the University of Chicago until the War Department transferred it to Michigan State University in 1936. As early as 1924–25, the leaders of the ROTC program complained about “[t]he apparent attitude of indecision as to whether the Military Department has a place at the University” and “[t]he lack of active support by the faculty generally.” Judson’s successor, Ernest DeWitt Burton, felt conflicted about having a military science unit on campus, but was not inclined to force the issue. To a correspondent who accused the unit of fostering militarism, Burton admitted, “Unable as yet to reach a clear decision as to precisely what the course of the University ought to be, I have felt it wise to maintain [the] status quo.”

ROTC’s final years on campus were marked by falling student enrollments and increasingly inadequate facilities, as well as by the indifference of senior officials in the Hutchins administration who refused to encourage

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75. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1918, pp. 631–32. For Judson’s support for postwar universal military training, see his letter to George F. James, March 26, 1920, PP, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 9.

76. See Hutchins to Major General Frank R. McCoy, April 9, 1936, PP, 1925–1945, Box 105, folder 9.

77. “A Statement regarding the Department of Military Science for the Board of Trustees,” [1924], PP, 1889–1925, Box 17, folder 5. The leader of the unit, Major Harold Mayr, insisted to Burton that he needed “the active—not passive—cooperation of every member of the faculty.” PP, 1889–1925, Letter of July 13, 1923, Box 17, folder 5.

78. Burton to Frank G. Lewis, September 17, 1923, PP, 1889–1925, Box 17, folder 5.
students to take military science courses over any of the many other electives available under the New Plan curriculum of 1931.79

Harry Pratt Judson Leads the Way

The moral and logistical leader of the University's war efforts was Harry Pratt Judson. At first glance, Judson's energetic involvement in the war was a surprising turn of events, given his campus-wide reputation for caution and circumspection. Yet Judson was among the most partisan of those who before 1917 wished to pursue the war, and after 1917 he was the most eager to engineer a total mobilization of campus resources in its support.

Harry Pratt Judson is one of our forgotten Presidents, yet his sixteen-year term (1906 to 1923) was longer than that of any of our Presidents except Robert Hutchins. Judson was born in 1849. He graduated from Williams College with a B.A. in 1870 (from which he also took an M.A. in 1883) and worked as a teacher and a high school principal for fifteen years in Troy, New York, before landing a teaching position in history at the University of Minnesota in 1885. Judson did not have a pronounced "scientific" scholarly background—he lacked a Ph.D.—and was always somewhat resentful about the impact of German scholarly traditions and methods on the American academy.

79. Dean of the College Chauncey Boucher informed the Chair of the Military Science Department in 1934, “It seems to me that Military Science as a College sequence will have to sink or swim on its own merits as reflected by student interest in, and demand for, the sequence, just as any of the other College elective sequences.” Boucher to Major Preston Vance, October 12, 1934, PP, 1925–1945, Box 105, folder 9.
Harper recruited Judson to join the original faculty of the University in 1892, as much as an administrator as a teacher or scholar. Judson became Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Literature, and Science, and in most respects Harper’s right-hand man. His temperament was the exact opposite of Harper’s—cautious, laconic, phlegmatic. When Harper died in 1906, the Trustees named Judson Acting President, and then, without consulting the faculty and in the face of some outright opposition, they soon named him as Harper’s permanent successor.

Judson’s presidency was lived in Harper’s shadow, at least until World War I. Judson’s main achievement as President was to wipe out the structural deficit that Harper had generated and thus to balance the University budget for most of his term in office. Judson’s strategy of budgetary discipline and financial austerity renewed John D. Rockefeller’s confidence in the future of the University and led to his final gift of $10 million in 1910.80 Even during the war, the University maintained a balanced budget. Judson was extremely proud of this record, and he took it for granted that the University should be run strictly as a business.81

Judson was a constitutional historian with an interest in national history and international law. His books on modern European and American history were balanced and carefully executed, manifesting support for the nineteenth-century liberal tradition (a photo portrait of William Ewart Gladstone served as the frontispiece for Judson’s Europe


81. See Judson to Henry C. Morrison, June 12, 1920, PP, 1889–1925, Box 43, folder 10: “[T]he University should be administered on the same basis as any safe business, that is, that expenditures should never exceed income, unless, of course, some extraordinary contingency should occur.”
Judson’s sense of the world around 1900 was cautiously optimistic. He viewed the nineteenth century as being “the most brilliant in the history of human achievement, “a century that had equipped Europe with “the tools of civilization in rich abundance.” But juxtaposed to Europe’s technological and cultural brilliance, Judson also saw a continent riven by political distrust, beset by a dangerous arms race and “the dread of a gigantic war,” and facing the danger of mass socialism. These phobias—militarism and socialism—were distinct clouds on the tranquility of liberal Europe’s horizon.82 As much as he admired the many achievements of European civilization in the nineteenth century, Judson was also convinced that America had become a “great power” and mature republic, whose opinions in international affairs would have consequences, and that it was mandated to support “the advance of humanity throughout the globe.”83

Although Judson’s Europe demonstrated sympathy for Bismarck and presented a balanced view of the political structure of the German Empire, in private he was uneasy about German influences on the fledgling American university environment. As early as 1891, Judson voiced what Daniel Meyer has termed “nativist” attitudes, demonstrating a special phobia for things German.84 He stubbornly opposed Harper’s decision to appoint a distinguished German scholar, Hermann von Holst, to be the first Head Professor of History, urging against

82. Harry Pratt Judson, Europe in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1900), pp. 9, 332–333.


the “slavish imitation of foreign ideas” and insisting that “American scholarship should be inspired by ideals materially different from those of Germany. The motives, methods, and spirit of an American department of history . . . would in many essentials be radically antagonistic to those of a German university.” But Judson also resented the fact that a German national would lead a department of which he, Judson, would be a member:

I dislike the idea of a foreigner at the head of such a department in an American university. It seems to me that departments involving American history, American literature, and American politics should be in charge of Americans, if possible. Personally, I must confess that I don’t fancy having to work under a German. I doubt if many American professors would.85

Judson also opposed Hermann von Holst’s stance against the legitimacy of American imperialism in the late 1890s, arguing that there was a proper role for American power in the world.86 Ironically, Judson’s own soft imperialism bore many similarities to the attitudes he would so openly criticize in his German opponents after 1916. When asked several months before America’s entrance into World War I if he favored the permanent retention of the Philippines, he replied, “It has always seemed to me advisable to keep the Philippine Islands until the people there are sufficiently developed to be able to administer their own affairs. That time


in my opinion will not come for two or three generations. It seems to me hardly necessary to interpret such a phrase as ‘permanent retention’.”

A staunch Republican, Judson voted for William Howard Taft and Charles Evans Hughes. He was a strong supporter of states’ rights, opposing federal aid to education and, logically, also opposing a national prohibition of alcohol. As University President, Judson cultivated and flattered wealthy Chicagoans upon whom the University depended for support. According to Steven Diner, he was opposed to labor unions, had mixed feelings about women’s suffrage, was a strict constructionist in relation to the role of the federal government, and was proud of it. Judson’s views of race relations were also benighted, almost the opposite of his fellow Chicago historian Hermann von Holst, although on this score he was probably no worse than Woodrow Wilson himself.

88. “I am not in accord with the movement of which you write, as I still believe that this matter is one for the control of the states, and that social regulations of that sort should not be forced on states by Federal authority.” Judson to Irving Fisher, January 21, 1916, PP, 1889–1925, Box 43, folder 7. He also opposed federal aid to education, arguing that education was a matter for the states and for private foundations. Judson to O. E. Tiffany, December 16, 1915.
89. In his private diary, William Dodd reported on a dinner party at Judson’s house where “[a]fter dinner Judson once more made a point, he has made before with me, that slavery was the only proper way to manage and work the negroes in the Old South. This sounds like strange doctrine from one who served in the Union army at the end of the war to exterminate slavery! But that is the viewpoint of many people whom I meet in Chicago.” “Professor William E. Dodd's Diary, 1916–1920,” p. 28. For Wilson and the race problem see John Hope Franklin, “The Birth of a Nation. Propaganda as History,” in Race and History. Selected Essays, 1938–1988 (Baton Rouge, 1989), pp. 16–17, 20–21; and John David Smith, An Old Creed for the New South. Proslavery Ideology and Historiography, 1865–1918 (Athens, GA, 1985), pp. 123–24, 198. I am grateful to Dennis Hutchinson for calling my attention to these materials.
foibles of faculty members who he thought had embarrassed the University.  

Diner calls him with considerable justice a “man of limited intellectual vision.”

Yet his friends and supporters interpreted his phlegmatic personality in a more positive light. James Tufts remembered him as “reflective, cautious, taking few chances,” while Theodore Soares called him a “genial, kindly man” with “sound practical judgment . . . [whose] nature was most definitely conservative. He preferred assured ways to experiment.” Judson’s personality and career make most sense when he is seen as a member of that generation of older American educational and cultural leaders in 1914 about whom Henry May has suggested, “The earliest and most consistent supporters of the Allies were the beleaguered defenders of nineteenth-century tradition, and particularly the professional custodians of culture. . . . Nearly all the leading men of letters, the college presidents, the old-line publishers, the

90. Judson was responsible for the sudden dismissal of W. I. Thomas of the Department of Sociology in 1918 because of an extramarital affair. See Morris Janowitz, ed., W. I. Thomas on Social Organization and Social Personality (Chicago, 1966), pp. xiv–xv, and Martin Bulmer, The Chicago School of Sociology. Institutionalization, Diversity, and the Rise of Sociological Research (Chicago, 1984), pp. 59–60. He also had little good to say about Thorstein Veblen (“Mr. Veblen was once a member of our faculty, and we were quite willing to accept his resignation when he tendered it.”). Judson to Abraham Flexner, April 1, 1919, PP, 1889–1925, Box 67, file 9.


editors of standard magazines, and their friends knew where they stood from the start."  

On matters of national security, Judson proved to be extremely aggressive. Judson had a lifelong interest in military affairs. Too young to fight in the Civil War, Judson tried to enlist as a drummer boy in the Union Army. The Civil War was a living memory, horrible, fascinating, and persistently romantic, and it affected his thinking about World War I. While teaching high school in upper New York State, Judson served in the Troy County Citizens Corps, a private militia company that was incorporated in the New York National Guard in 1877. He greatly enjoyed drilling and marching with his comrades, and he took pleasure in the camaraderie afforded by volunteer military service. Just before moving to Minneapolis in 1885 to become a professor at the University of Minnesota, he wrote a eulogistic account of his New York militia, arguing:

[B]eneath the smooth surface of civilized society are always seething the savage elements of disorder. Behind the stately courtesies, which mark the intercourse of enlightened nations, are always lurking envy, jealousy, and cupidity, likely at any


94. See, for example, his letter to Major Eugene Greathiel, March 8, 1918, commenting on the latter’s concern about finding jobs for demobilized veterans and assuring him that just as Civil War veterans had found work immediately, so too would soldiers of this war. PPI, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 8.
moment to bring opposing interests into hostile collision. The complex organism of civilization is ever ready to resolve into its primitive forms; and of those forms, force is the sole master. So it is that the strong arm of force must be kept always prepared to execute the mandates of law, and to preserve the state from foreign aggression. Our country is happily spared, by three thousand miles of ocean, from the need of maintaining that huge armament which is so crushing to the life of European nations. But the experience even of our first century of national existence has taught us the absolute necessity of maintaining the military spirit, and of keeping alive a knowledge of the modes of military action.\(^95\)

Four years later, Judson published a study of Caesar’s army during the Roman civil wars in which he admitted that “[w]ar is barbarism” but immediately added that “the story of man has no epoch in which war has not existed. The history of war is the history of the development of the human mind.”\(^96\)

Judson embraced the Great War. His early public statements about the war were carefully neutral, but privately his sympathies were clearly pro-British and French and pro-rearmament. Judson joined the pro-preparedness National Security League in 1915, and became a member of

95. Harry Pratt Judson, *A History of the Troy Citizens Corps, Troy, N.Y.* (Troy, NY, 1884), p. 3. Ironically, for all of Judson’s later denunciation of Prussian militarism, the uniforms worn by his corps were described in 1879 as a “neat Prussian uniform and ‘pickelhauben’.” (*ibid.*, p. 72, and p. 55).

the executive committee of its Chicago branch. He believed that “lawlessness and lack of national defense are so interwoven as both to be serious dangers. Effort to prevent each aids to secure the other. The National Security League in my opinion is a useful agency and a very necessary one to secure national defense. I am glad to do all in my power to aid its purposes.”

At the same time he refused to join the Chicago Peace Society, arguing, “I . . . think it advisable to put the United States in a better position for defense than is the case at present.” By the time of the American presidential elections in November 1916, Judson openly opposed Woodrow Wilson’s attempts to maintain U.S. neutrality and advocated America joining the war. He had little sympathy with the plight of German Americans. When a local German-American businessman wrote to him in March 1917 complaining about being “despised and rejected” because of his ethnic background, Judson replied by assuring him that “no one of our fellow citizens is ‘despised and rejected’ if in the last analysis he puts the United States of America before all other countries in the world.”


Judson was also a robust advocate of peacetime universal military service. In late December 1916, Judson wrote to Harvard historian Albert Bushnell Hart, arguing “in my opinion the whole nation ought to be trained for national defense” and that “modern experience shows that the only adequate form of national defense is by the proper training of the entire nation to act quickly and efficiently in case of emergency.”

When a pacifist minister from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, challenged Judson on his call for universal service, Judson dismissed him by arguing, “If any young men are too precious to give their lives for this purpose [the defense of their country], they should be carefully put away in a museum.”

When Congress declared war in early April 1917, Judson threw himself into its prosecution. Aside from his genuine dedication to (in his mind) a fully righteous cause, it is also possible that the war offered Judson a welcome opportunity to step out of his role as strict guardian of budgetary austerity, and thus to compensate for his sometimes unsteady relationship to the senior faculty. What Robert Herrick would later characterize as “the contemptuous murmurs of the faculty about their President” would now be repressed for the time of the war.

Judson responded by supporting all possible measures to mobilize his campus, from encouraging students to


105. *Chimes*, p. 235. Robert Herrick also said of his Judson-figure Dolittle, “The war had surprisingly rejuvenated Dolittle. He was once more feeling his own importance, which is the psychological basis of youth.” *Chimes*, p. 266.
volunteer for the new military science program that he had established in late 1916 to leading war bond solicitations to giving anti-German speeches to drilling students on Stagg Field. His secretary, David Robertson, reported that Judson loved to drill and that “[f]rom the beginning he has interested himself in the success of the Reserve Officers Training Corps, himself appearing on Stagg Field for drill; subsequently, after the recall of Major Bell . . . he himself prepared to take charge of the drilling of the Corps.”

Judson was also eager for the faculty to play a patron role toward ROTC students. He wrote to Professor Albert Mathews, “[T]here is a movement on foot in which I am interested to register all members of the faculty who will, as an honorary organization to aid the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps in the University. I wish I were enough younger to be an active member of the Corps, and if occasion should serve to be an active member of the Army, but alas, the years have run by, and have not left me behind them.”

Judson’s most notable war speech came in late April 1917 before a crowd in Mandel Hall. Later published by the University of Chicago Press as the first in a series of *The University of Chicago War Papers*, this speech was an American equivalent of the pro-war rhetoric that overtook German, French, and British academics in the autumn of 1914.


Judson’s central premises—that Germany was evil; that its political system was dominated by undemocratic, Prussian elements; that it had deliberately started the war; that it was a danger to the international order; and that it must be punished—all bear close resemblance to British war propaganda in the so-called “war of the professors” in 1914 and to similar pamphlets published by senior U.S. historians in 1917–18. If anything, Judson’s essay was more moderate in tone than some of those distributed or edited by such prominent historians as Guy Stanton Ford or Albert Bushnell Hart. Still, the reception on campus was mixed. Even the Maroon, whose tameness on war-related issues was obsessive, objected to the menacing tone of Judson’s demand for a “complete victory over the Teutonic empires” on the grounds that it went beyond what Woodrow Wilson intended and failed to acknowledge Wilson’s own expectations for the establishment of a democratic Germany.

What is most striking about the essay and the series of seven other pamphlets that it inaugurated was that Judson claimed to be speaking not as a private citizen but as the leader of an institution that, in his view, was justified in acting as a patriotic corporation in the war effort. The University could send its boys to the army and its faculty to government agencies, but it could also act institutionally against Germany as a Midwestern regional voice of patriotic propaganda (the University mailed Judson’s


110. Maroon, January 5, 1918.
essay to 4,500 professionals and local notables in small towns all over the Middle West in order to “give the superior advantages of authoritative information to people who probably could not otherwise obtain them.”) That the leaders of the University saw Judson's pamphlet and its companions as propaganda is clear from the circular that accompanied the pamphlets when they were distributed to newspaper editors: “Pamphleteering is not a new form of educational activity, and the projection of this series is a part of the effort of the University of Chicago to render a patriotic service to the government and at the same time to extend through its Press some of the opportunities that are being offered on its Quadrangles for obtaining a greater appreciation of the viewpoint of America in this world struggle.”

Judson was also directly responsible for one of the most partisan decisions ever taken by the University of Chicago, namely, the decision of March 1918 to revoke the honorary degree awarded to the former German ambassador to the United States, Count Johann von Bernstorff. Before World War I the University occasionally gave honorary degrees to political or diplomatic figures, and in June 1911 the Board of Trustees awarded an honorary doctor of laws to Count Bernstorff, commending

111. Maroon, January 8, 1918. For Midwestern attitudes about the war, which were somewhat more isolationist than those on the East Coast, see Chambers, To Raise an Army, pp. 84, 108–111, 176–177; Blakey, Historians, p. 77; and May, The End of American Innocence, pp. 370–371. The print run for the Chicago War Papers series was 25,000 each. “War Activities,” PP, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 9. It is possible that the Chicago series was modeled on the Oxford Pamphlet series, which began in the fall of 1914 and reached eighty-seven by the fall of 1915. Strandmann, “The Role of British and German Historians,” pp. 352–358.

him as a “soldier, diplomat, author, worthily representing a friendly nation of kindred blood.” Seven years later, Judson urged the board to rescind the degree, arguing that “[s]ince Count von Bernstorff was given his passports by the Government of the United States it has been made public that the said Imperial German Ambassador was long before that time engaged in transactions inimical to the rights of this country as a neutral and in violation of the laws and of the peace and order of the Republic of which he was a guest.” Judson further insisted, lest his proposal be seen as vengeance against Germany as a result of the declaration of war in April 1917, that the revocation was not a retaliation against Germany in time of war, but came about because Bernstorff’s actions before April 1917 were “contrary to peace and order of the Republic, and inimical to the rights of the United States as a neutral nation.”

Judson was most likely referring to Bernstorff’s role in the Zimmermann Telegram Affair of February and March 1917. This affair involved a secret German telegram from Alfred Zimmermann, the German foreign secretary, to the president of Mexico, Venustiano Carranza, on the eve of Germany’s resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare, in which Berlin offered Mexico a chance to reclaim its former territories in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico in return for siding with Germany in a possible war against the United States. The Zimmermann Telegram Affair has long been one of the great mysteries of modern intelligence history, but as our colleague Friedrich Katz has brilliantly demonstrated, Bernstorff was in fact opposed both to his government’s resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare and to the Zimmermann telegram.


114. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 12, 1918, pp. 387–388.
itself.\textsuperscript{115} Ironically, in blaming Bernstorff, Judson was mimicking the tactics of Alfred Zimmermann himself, who, unwilling to admit that Germany’s secret telegraphic codes had been compromised to the Allies, insisted that Bernstorff was at fault in the disclosure of the secret telegram because of a security compromise perpetrated by Bernstorff’s embassy staff.

Yet, given that the Zimmermann Affair had occurred a full year before, what explains Judson’s timing in rescinding Bernstorff’s honorary degree in 1918? There are two possible explanations. First, in late February 1918 the Senate Judiciary Committee began holding well-publicized hearings into the activities of the National German-American Alliance in which one super-patriotic senator, Josiah Wolcott of Delaware, tried to coax the treasurer of the alliance, John Tjarks, into admitting that the funds collected by the group for war relief purposes in Germany had been secretly steered by Ambassador Bernstorff to Bernhard Dernburg for propaganda purposes. A distinguished German banker who spent seven months in the United States from August 1914 until June 1915 soliciting (in vain) a war loan for Germany and coordinating fund-raising activities for the German Red Cross, Dernburg also tried to function as a one-man publicist for the German cause, but in fact he did so, much to the dismay of Bernstorff, not with the ambassador’s approval.\textsuperscript{116} John Tjarks rejected any such imputation of fraud, but the


\textsuperscript{116} See Werner Schiefel, \textit{Bernhard Dernburg 1865–1937, Kolonialpolitiker und Bankier im wilhelminischen Deutschland} (Zurich, 1974), pp. 152–153.
mud was in the air, and Judson would have known that his audience—the local Chicago Trustees—would hardly be willing to give Bernstorff the benefit of the doubt.117 Equally important, the recision of Bernstorff’s degree was a dramatic public statement at a time when Allied fortunes were at their lowest point, March 1918. On the eastern front, Russia had collapsed, being forced to sign a draconian peace with Germany; and German armies now prepared to pound Allied lines in a make-or-break spring offensive on the western front. Shailer Mathews, the Dean of the Divinity School and a longtime colleague of Judson, remembered,

I shall never forget those days in March 1918 when ‘England’s back was against the wall’. It seemed that democracy was liable to be defeated. I left my office and sat by the side of the lake to gain peace of mind. At home I opened a prayer-book with something of my old-time hope for a message. I found it in some of the imprecatory psalms! I recovered my poise.118

On learning of the University’s action, one of Judson’s local ministerial friends congratulated him on a “fitting and patriotic” act, suggesting that the decision was indeed taken for publicistic purposes.119

117. National German-American Alliance. Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary. United States Senate. February 23–April 13, 1918 (Washington, D.C., 1918), pp. 246–263, esp. 258–262. The story was carried on the front page of the Chicago Tribune, March 10, 1918, p. 1, two days before the Trustee meeting on March 12.


In addition to his advocacy of the war on campus, Judson was appointed to be a member of the committee on labor of the National Council on Defense, and other war-time service groups, including service on the federal exemption board of the selective service system for Chicago, which was almost a full-time job. Then in June 1918 he left for the Middle East, leading a fact-finding commission to survey social conditions in Persia for the Armenian and Syrian relief effort, and he was absent from campus for the Summer and Autumn Quarters of 1918. The war had ended by the time he returned, and the peace settlements that soon followed were catastrophic in their vindictive hypernationalism and political improvidence. The war that Judson and many others had initially embraced as a way of defending traditional liberal values fundamentally transformed the social, economic, and political conditions under which such liberalism might survive. The unintended consequences of a war fought to defend nineteenth-century cultural and political ideals came close to destroying the very civilization where such values were even possible.

120. Judson to Governor Frank Lowden, August 1, 1917, PP 1889–1925, Box 68, folder 7. His official appointment was as a member of the District Board for Division 1 of the Northern District of the State of Illinois. David Robertson reported, “Since that time the President, except for one hour each morning, has given his entire time to the Government.” Maroon, October 23, 1917. Judson served from August to December 1917, upon which time he resigned and found a replacement for himself from the University’s law faculty. Judson to Charles Evans Hughes, December 12, 1917, PP 1889–1925, Box 68, folder 7.
The Aftermath of the War

The sudden armistice and the collapse of the SATC fiasco prevented the total militarization of the campus, and within six months life began to return to normal. But the war did have long-term consequences, both for the University and for Harry Pratt Judson.

In May 1917, a student writing in the *Maroon* had predicted that the war would transform local and national society:

>[G]reat changes must occur in the social and economic life of the people in every nation. . . . The relations of men will have to be readjusted and the differences between capital and labor will have to be smoothed out. And great changes will occur in our conceptions of government, even in our own nation. . . . Our universities will also change. There will be new fields to study, new fields to conquer, and new fields to glory in. Our attitude toward each other will change, we will be more altruistic, more unselfish, more capable.121

The war did bring about enormous demographic changes, as former students clamored to return to the University’s degree programs and new students sought admission to colleges and graduate schools. University of Chicago enrollments took a decisive upward turn during and after the 1918–19 academic year. In 1913–14, the University had 1,766 undergraduate students, whereas by 1918–19 the number had increased to 1,996 and in 1919–20 to 2,382. By 1929–30, the undergraduate population stood

at 2,970, an increase over prewar levels of almost 60 percent. Graduate enrollments followed the same pattern of robust growth, increasing from 500 students in 1913–14 to 696 in 1919–20 and 1,513 in 1929–30.\footnote{See Floyd W. Reeves, Ernest C. Miller, and John Dale Russell, \textit{Trends in University Growth} (Chicago, 1933), p. 212.} Many of these students were aided by grants from a new $2.5-million scholarship endowment established by LaVerne Noyes in 1918, with the express purpose of aiding veterans or family members of veterans who had fought in World War I. Once the Board of Trustees had officially accepted this gift, the University sent forms to all students in the service inviting them to apply for these scholarships. By 1921, 525 students were receiving Noyes Scholarships, 316 undergraduates and 209 graduate and professional school students. Within three years of their creation, the University was also able to award scholarships to a number of women students whose fathers had served in the war.\footnote{R. D. Salisbury to Judson, October 28, 1921, \textit{PP, 1889–1925}, Box 60, folder 4.}

For some faculty, the war had been the most exciting time of their personal lives, and when it ended they felt disappointed by the return to normalcy.\footnote{Gruber, \textit{Mars and Minerva}, pp. 113–115.} Robert Herrick captured this mood in \textit{Chimes}, when he wrote that the older men returned to the academic nest, discarding regretfully the uniform, their honorable khaki and spurs, feeling somehow that the great vacation of all their lives had ended, with the freedom of being ‘under orders’! Now they must enter the treadmill once more and give orders to themselves. They must resume the dull tasks of study and classroom, get out of...
the desk drawer the old lecture notes, which looked more dingy and lifeless than after the usual vacation.125

But other faculty members returned from war service with still greater ambitions and with more determination to make or remake their mark in their respective scholarly fields. The extraordinary national excellence that the University achieved in many fields in the 1920s and 1930s cannot be explained apart from the high expectations that the war unleashed. Barry Karl has cogently argued that Charles Merriam’s scholarly and personal sensibilities were profoundly affected by his wartime experiences, and Merriam was not alone in this regard.126

The war thus had broader, more secular impact by fueling expectations on the part of senior faculty who had been deeply involved in war work about ambitious new research programs. Roger Geiger has noted that the experience of the war set off “an even more rapid transformation in the general perception of science.”127 The creation of the National Research Council in 1916, led by former Chicago faculty member George Hale, was a visible symbol of the power of the collaboration between science and the national government, as well as a portent of the powerful achievements that could be made by cooperation among the universities, the big foundations, and big business.128 Writing in Science

125. Chimes, p. 274.


127. Geiger, To Advance Knowledge, pp. 94–95.

128. Chicago played a key role in the creation of the NRC. James Angell became one of its directors, while Robert Millikan was its vice-chairman and director of research.
Magazine in September 1919, Robert Millikan, who had served as a senior official on the National Research Council during the war, argued that “for the first time in history the world has been waked up by the war to an appreciation of what science can do.” Millikan felt that American scientists now stood on the threshold of promising breakthroughs marked by enhanced scientific literacy in the schools, by fruitful cooperation of research scientists with industry, and by “the development of the possibilities of cooperative research among themselves.” Millikan aspired to establish America as “a center of the world’s scientific life and progress,” which necessitated the creation of a series of great research institutes in the natural sciences, attached to universities but with key researchers released from mundane instructional responsibilities.  

Under pressure from Millikan and other top scientists like Julius Stiegitz, Albert Michelson, and E. H. Moore to create new institute-based organizations for scientific research, Harry Pratt Judson announced in mid-1920 the creation of four new research institutes “devoted to conducting such research and such training in pure science as has an immediate bearing on the application of the sciences to the industries.” Daniel Meyer has rightly noted that the Chicago initiative was part of a national movement toward the autonomous research institute that was given great impetus in the 1920s as a result of the demographic changes caused by the infusion of undergraduates after the war. It was characteristic of the time and the man that Judson used preparedness for war as a negative analogy for why the University sought to create these centers:


The University having resumed its normal life after the interruption caused by the War it now becomes possible once more to look into the future. This, it may be said, has been the habitual attitude of the University of Chicago from the beginning. War, however, centers every energy on the immediate present. This by the way is notably true in a republic which has had a war for every generation but is so sure that it will never have another one that it has always stubbornly neglected to be prepared. The University, however, cannot be content with a policy of drift, but must take a long look ahead.131

Having sanctioned the idea of these institutes, Judson did little or nothing to find the money to create them, however, and this sense of inertia caused frustration among many senior faculty members. When Robert Millikan resigned from Chicago in June 1921 to go to the new California Institute of Technology because of Judson’s dithering and refusal to match the latter institution’s offer, the writing was on the wall.132

These heightened ambitions and expectations on the part of faculty researchers came at the same moment that financial and demographic challenges appeared on the postwar horizon. The inflation of the war led to a reduction of the value of tuition, and competition from other universities displaced the University’s dominant prewar position on senior faculty salaries. By 1923, Chicago had fallen seriously behind Harvard and

131. *University Record*, 6 (1920): 163–64. The four institutes were to be Physics and Chemistry, Plant Agriculture, Mining, and Science of Education.

Columbia in the average value of full professorial salaries. Moreover, the crush of students who returned to the University after 1918, both undergraduate and graduate, put great pressure on instructional staff and on facilities, and led to discontent among the senior faculty and a movement to limit or even abolish the first two years of the undergraduate program. In December 1922, a report of the Committee on Research of the University Senate, the governing body of the University filled only with full professors, urged that Chicago should prioritize graduate education and research as the highest obligation of the University and impose limits on the numbers of undergraduates it would admit, since “the State Universities are able and obliged to provide for the great mass of college students.” Responding to an invitation of the curriculum committee for the arts and sciences in 1923 to comment about the future structure of undergraduate instruction, the faculty of the Department of History listed as their first choice “the elimination of the Junior College, either by a gradual process, beginning with the Freshman year and after a period, if the step seems to have justified itself, discarding the Sophomore year also, or by a direct striking of the whole Junior College.” In one of his final letters to Harold Swift before leaving the presidency, Harry Pratt Judson also allowed that “[a]s I look at it the University is at the parting of the ways. Either it is to be primarily a University in the highest sense, with distinct emphasis on its graduate work and its graduate professional work, or it is to be essentially a College with the


135. Carl Huth to David Robertson, January 29, 1923, *Department of History Records*, Box 1, folder 4.
higher work incidental.” Judson left no doubts about which option he favored: “My own view is that the University idea ought to be made very prominent; that we should frankly recognize the College as of secondary importance.”136 Such rhetoric, which was both financially naïve and corrosive to sensible planning about the future of the undergraduate College, was to continue throughout the 1920s until Robert Maynard Hutchins’s appointment as President in 1929.137

All of these problems—the pressures caused by mushrooming enrollments, the rising professional expectations of the faculty, their disgruntlement over the administration’s penny-pinching ways—required strong presidential leadership, and it was soon apparent that Harry Pratt Judson was not the man for this job. Judson’s preoccupation with the draft commission in 1917 led him to neglect University business for five


137. Hutchins characterized the financial naïveté of such arguments in a notable rejoinder to William Dodd in 1935. Dodd had written to Hutchins, “I think it unwise for a large endowed institution to continue to offer undergraduate work, especially in a region where there are four State universities not far away. . . . The one thing which modern civilization needs is absolutely free university work on a research level.” Dodd then urged that the University “slowly but certainly abandon undergraduate work and make every effort to obtain the first scholars in the world as writers and teachers.” Hutchins replied, “I entirely agree with you that Chicago has the opportunity to become the leading university in the world. I believe, however, that if it fails to become the leading university the reason will be financial and not the one that you advance. At present undergraduate work, by which I mean the first two years, more than pays for itself. Actually research at the University of Chicago is supported by the undergraduate college. The New Plan has reduced and ought further to reduce the cost of undergraduate instruction. Solely from the point of view of research, therefore, the College is indispensable at the present time.” Letters of March 1, 1935, and April 12, 1935, PP, 1925–1945, Box 104, folder 5.
months, and faculty grumbling about his inability to act decisively intensified.\textsuperscript{138} By the time he returned from the Middle East in the fall of 1918, he was exhausted. Yet, Judson had no plans to retire. University policy dictated retirement at the age of seventy, yet when Judson approached the mandatory retirement age in 1919 he secured a five-year waiver from the Board of Trustees to continue in office. Daniel Meyer has observed of this decision, which was taken by a conflicted and divided board, that it “raised the question of how long a deliberate policy of administrative restraint on research initiative could survive in the rapidly changing environment of postwar America.”\textsuperscript{139}

Judson also found it difficult to end the Great War symbolically. Judson hemmed and hawed on plans to memorialize the war dead, unable to make up his mind what should be done.\textsuperscript{140} The issue was still not settled in June 1921 when Ernest Burton suggested a mural at the end of Harper Library reading room to honor the University’s war dead. Judson communicated the idea to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Martin Ryerson, but no decision was forthcoming. Not until November 1938, on the twentieth anniversary of the Armistice that ended the war, was an official memorial tablet in honor of the Chicago war dead dedicated in Rockefeller Chapel.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{138} For his work on the exemption board, see his letter to James Angell, October 2, 1917, \textit{PP}, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 6.

\textsuperscript{139} Meyer, “The Chicago Faculty,” p. 393.

\textsuperscript{140} See the correspondence in \textit{PP}, 1889–1925, Box 69, folder 7. Judson wrote to Frank McNair on November 12, 1919, “I have not hurried in this matter because I have been anxious that we should proceed deliberately and with a full knowledge in our minds, preparatory to making the right choice.”

\textsuperscript{141} The memorial was a gift to the University of the Class of 1918. See the materials in \textit{PP}, 1925–1945, Box 8, folder 10; and \textit{PP}, 1925–1948, Addenda, Box 4, folder 10.
When Judson finally left the presidency in early 1923, he was already for many faculty an unwelcome guest, and his historical reputation inevitably suffered. The war that Judson welcomed and enthusiastically endorsed thus created new conditions for a final exit that took more the form of a political demise. As Meyer observes,

(for many, it was the University’s president, Harry Pratt Judson, who most acutely symbolized the frustrations of the postwar era. Approaching his fifteenth year in office, the aging president had become the embodiment of a once-promising institution that now appeared to be in danger of succumbing to administrative fatigue and complacency.)"142

Many years later Harold Swift, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees from 1922 to 1949, would reflect that Judson was “tired and old” when he finally retired, and that essentially he had stayed too long for the University’s good. Comparing Judson to his successor, Ernest DeWitt Burton, Swift argued that

Burton seems to me to have had an electric knowledge of what should be done when he took over from Judson. Dr. Judson, tired and old, was ambitious to stay on as President as long as Dr. Harper had stayed; and the Board, grateful for the firm foundation Judson had put under Harper’s brilliant superstructure, permitted him to stay on for five or six years too long. Burton had been at the University since its beginning, as had Judson. He was a great scholar, had a scholar’s point of view,

and knew how the scholars of the University had suffered for five years [i.e., since 1918]. Therefore he was on fire to get the faculty back to research and scholarship.143

When Harry Pratt Judson died in 1927, he was mourned by old friends and colleagues, but on campus he was already a forgotten figure. Although the University announced a memorial service in his honor, it was never held.144

Hutchins and the Second World War

The young radical Louis Wirth was right about the flawed peace treaty signed in Versailles in 1919, if for the wrong reasons. Whatever one thinks about Woodrow Wilson’s goals in Paris in 1918–19 or about the justice or injustice of the final peace settlement, Versailles ushered in neither an era of stable democracy nor an epoch of lasting peace. Instead, Europe in the 1920s and early 1930s became the scene of enormous social turmoil and dangerous political extremism, and out of this squalid mixture of class and racial hatred erupted renewed international violence in the mid-1930s. This failed heritage of the Great War led, on the part of many Americans, to a revulsion against mass killing and to an ardent desire to avoid entrapment in another major conflict. Yet the rise of fascism and National Socialism created the

143. Swift to Glen A. Lloyd and George W. Beadle, April 17, 1961, Harold H. Swift Papers, Box 119, folder 29.

144. The alumni magazine did publish a cluster of short eulogies to Judson, along with longer appreciations by Theodore Soares and Shailer Mathews.
University of Chicago Student Committee Against the War, Spring 1940.
preconditions for a second, even more deadly round of international conflict which was to draw America into its vortex of horror in late 1941.

World War II was, however, a different kind of war, and the University of Chicago had a different kind of war President. Whereas Harry Pratt Judson embraced World War I, believing it a just and even noble cause, Robert Maynard Hutchins took exactly the opposite view, becoming an eloquent spokesman for nonintervention in the European and Asian wars of the later 1930s.

In the 1930s, American college campuses were marked by strong antiwar and pacifist movements, and the University of Chicago was no exception, with Chicago students organizing peace strikes, rallies, and parades from 1934 through 1941. Reacting against the horrors and disasters of the first war, many college-age students rejected the prospect of fighting in what they felt to be another round of futile and immoral wars. In his excellent survey of public opinion in the city of Chicago in the late 1930s, James C. Schneider has suggested that students on our campus were probably more anti-interventionist and isolationist than the faculty. In late January 1941, for example, the Maroon undertook a sample poll of 600 students, finding a majority (315 against 236) supported the proposition that America should stay out of armed conflict with Germany or Japan.


In contrast to the predicament of students favoring nonintervention in 1914–16, antiwar students at Chicago in 1940–41 had an eloquent faculty leader urging neutrality in the person of Robert Maynard Hutchins. Having served as a young ambulance driver in Italy in 1917–18, Hutchins had seen “the suffering caused by the war and its devastation” at first hand, and the experience “made me into as much a pacifist as I am. It gave me a deep suspicion of the military.” Unlike Harry Pratt Judson, Hutchins found nothing to admire or justify about any war, and especially World War I. On September 7, 1939, just after the outbreak of World War II, he wrote to John U. Nef:

The war has got me down. I wish I could think either that it would be short or that we could stay out of it. I think that it will be long, and that though we could stay out of it, we are not likely to. I remember 1914 with horror and 1917 with something worse. I don’t see either that after the war is over, though Hitler will be gone, the actions of the French and English governments will be any more enlightened than they were after the last war.

Hutchins was not an official member of the America First Committee, and his biographers Milton Mayer and Harry Ashmore have denied any connection with the official isolationists. But James Schneider has argued that back-channel connections existed between that group’s lead-


ership and Hutchins, sustained via William Benton, whom Schneider calls an “unofficial advisor to the group.” Hutchins’s controversial speeches against Lend Lease and American military support for Britain in the winter and spring of 1941 evoked a conception of America’s naturally limited role in the world. In both addresses—“America and the War” (January 26, 1941) and “The Proposition Is Peace” (March 30, 1941)—Hutchins brilliantly commingled his personal aversion to World War I, based on the disastrous political consequences it had wrought, with deeply felt pleas for isolationism as a precondition for the further development of American social virtue. The two themes played off well against each other. For Hutchins, the peace that World War I had promised was a phantom, one that had led to violations of civil liberties at home and to disastrous international consequences abroad. The conflicts of the 1930s were the unintended offspring of the First World War. To lure young Americans into a second military crusade was to invite them to commit national disaster by destroying all possibility for a just, free, tolerant, and well-cared-for civil society:

We Americans have only the faintest glimmering of what war is like. This war, if we enter it, will make the last one look like a stroll in the park. If we go into this one, we go in against powers dominating Europe and most of Asia to aid an ally, who, we are told, is already in mortal danger. When we remember what

a short war did to the four freedoms, we must recognize that they face extermination in the total war to come.\footnote{151}

American society had made some progress in achieving freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech, and freedom of worship, but those increments of progress had come at great cost and were still fragile and incomplete. In its present state, America was “morally and intellectually unprepared to execute the moral mission to which the President calls us.” What America needed was a “new moral order,” but that was a state of collective ethical being that only America could give to itself, for itself, and by itself.

When war finally came on December 7, 1941, it came with a suddenness that cut through the conflicted emotions of 1939 to 1941, ending the moral agony endured by many of our faculty and students (and the larger nation as well). By rupturing our history, Pearl Harbor created the condition for a classic just war. The campus mobilized for war, and, unlike World War I, the length and size of the conflict made it inevitable that the war would make a drastic mark on the campus’s enrollment patterns. In the autumn of 1941, 5,315 students were matriculated on campus. By the autumn of 1942 this number had been reduced to 4,939, and by 1943 the Quadrangles had only 3,515 students. Among male students in the College and the graduate divisions the drop was quite significant. In 1941, the University had 1,561 male undergraduates, but by 1943 this had shrunk to 658.\footnote{152}

\footnote{151. “America and the War,” \textit{University of Chicago Magazine} (1940–41), No. 5, pp. 5–8; and “The Proposition Is Peace,” \textit{Hutchins Papers}, Box 24, folder 2. Hutchins subsequently informed John Nef that he had received about 3,000 responses to his talk, of which only 3 percent were negative. Hutchins to Nef, January 29, 1941, \textit{Nef Papers}, Box 23, folder 5.}

\footnote{152. See \textit{The Registrar’s Report to the President, 1941–1942} and \textit{The Registrar’s Report to the President, 1943–1944}. The drop in male divisional enrollments was even greater, from 1,764 men in 1941 to 518 men in 1943.}
The effects of total war were soon seen throughout the campus. The University agreed to host a variety of military training programs, and by 1942 virtually all available dormitory space had been consigned to military programs.\textsuperscript{153} International House became a military residence hall, filled with cadets enrolled in the Institute for Meteorology and hundreds of Red Cross volunteers. Other college residences soon met the same fate. The Reynolds Club ceased to be a student clubhouse, becoming the headquarters for the meteorology program.

However, the military training programs of 1942–44 were different from the 1918 SATC model, which Hutchins and other University leaders despised. In June 1940, Hutchins had joined with other six other Midwestern university presidents to write a memorandum outlining the appropriate roles of the university in time of war. The presidents affirmed that the universities should do what they could do best, namely, provide substantive knowledge-based training programs, and that they should not become substitute Army encampments:

Though the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps should be continued as part of the academic program of the colleges and universities that have them, ordinary military training should be given by the army and navy in their own establishments. The Student Army Training Corps of the last war should not be revived.\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{153} Government-related programs occupied 97 percent of all available housing and food provisioning space on campus and 33 percent of all instructional and research space by the fall of 1943. See “Space Used for Government Training and Research,” October 2, 1943, \textit{PP}, 1925–1945, Box 99, folder 4. The Institute of Meteorology alone commandeered 70 percent of the Law School, all of Reynolds Club, and 75 percent of Mandel Hall. W. B. Harrell to the Army Air Forces Materiel Command, October 2, 1943, \textit{PP}, 1925–1945, Box 92, folder 7.

\textsuperscript{154} Memo of June 28, 1940, \textit{PP}, 1925–1945, Box 94, folder 1.
On the eve of war, in late November 1941, Vice-President Emery Filbey put down for the record the assumption that, in the event of war, the University would cooperate fully with the government and that it would participate fully in the national defense, but at the same time that it would “attempt to avoid doing a lot of the foolish things we undertook to do at the beginning of the first World War” and that “the best interests of defense would be served if, among other activities, the University undertook to maintain the integrity of its teaching and research programs, and that this in itself was no mean contribution to national defense.” Hutchins himself had insisted as early as 1936, when the War Department closed down our ROTC program for want of student interest, that the University might best serve the national defense by focusing on its capacities for “advanced training and research.” Hutchins tried to enforce these propositions, and programs like the Civil Affairs Training School for the Far East, launched in August 1943, and the Institute for Meteorology, started in October 1940, could be viewed as appropriate candidates for this model of wartime support. Of the Civil Affairs program that was expertly organized for over four hundred Army and Navy officers by Fred Eggan of the Department of Anthropology, Hutchins’s second-in-command Ernest Colwell would write in September 1945 that “[w]e have always felt that the work done in this particular war


156. Hutchins to McCoy, April 9, 1936, PP, 1925–1945, Box 105, folder 9.

157. The Institute of Meteorology was launched at the urging of Arthur Compton, who long before Pearl Harbor insisted that such a program could provide the University with a useful role in defense: “[O]ur reason for urging this matter at the present time is solely the question of national defense.” Compton to Emery Filbey, July 13, 1940, PP, 1940–1946, Box 11, folder 4.
training program came the closest to the ideals of the University and its legitimate function.”

The University hosted other military training programs as well, including a Navy radio and signal training school that began in 1942 and enrolled six hundred trainees. By 1943, approximately 2,600 soldiers and sailors were taking special instruction, including such subjects as medical hygiene, optics, electronics, nursing supervision, and German. Ironically, measured in numbers of service personnel on campus, Hutchins presided over a wartime mobilization of the campus far greater than anything Judson could have imagined. As Hutchins put it to the faculty in early January 1942, “We are now an instrumentality of total war.”

Hutchins also allowed the establishment of a special training program for civilian students which would blunt the danger of an SATC-like militarization of the curriculum. This was the Institute for Military Studies, organized in fall of 1940 as a preemptive response to the reactivation of a peacetime draft via the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940. This institute provided voluntary, after-hours, and weekend training in military subjects to over ten thousand civilian students before it was closed down at the end of 1944, and in so doing it helped to shield the core academic programs of the University.

158. Colwell to Fred Eggan, September 4, 1945, PP, 1925–1945, Box 90, folder 1.
159. Maroon, October 15, 1943.
161. The institute was open to non-University students as well as Chicago matriculants, requiring applicants to be between sixteen and forty-eight years of age and have at least two years of high school. See the materials in PP, 1925–1945, Box 93, folder 1; and Ashmore, Unseasonable Truths, pp. 223–24, as well as Mayer, Hutchins, p. 225, for a different view.
Navy Radio and Signal School: Typing Practice, Summer 1942.
Alongside these special military programs, regular instruction continued at the University for civilian students enrolled in degree programs. Hutchins insisted that the basic functions of the University—to cultivate liberal education and to undertake basic research—were centrally relevant to the war effort, and the timing of Pearl Harbor provided him with a unique opportunity to push through his long-desired reforms of the undergraduate curriculum, and to do so by touting their relevance to a mobilized nation in arms.162 Early in January 1942, in the aftermath of the declarations of war on Japan and on Germany, Hutchins suddenly and with considerable drama proposed to the faculty that the A.B. degree be transferred from the jurisdiction of the divisions to the College, and that it be conferred upon completion of a four-year program in general education beginning with grade eleven, thus making it possible for Chicago to graduate eighteen- or nineteen-year-olds with A.B. degrees.163 After protracted discussion, the University Senate approved this proposal on January 22, 1942, creating the opportunity for Hutchins’s supporters,

162. See Clarence Faust, “How the University of Chicago Is Meeting the Emergency,” in John Dale Russell, ed., The Colleges in Wartime. New Responsibilities (Chicago, 1942), pp. 42–54. As early as 1937, Hutchins wrote to Newton Edwards, “I should prefer to award the Bachelor’s [degree] at the end of the sophomore year, the Master’s at the end of three years of advanced study in the divisions, and the Ph.D. as a degree for college and university teachers, without the present highly artificial research requirements. I should then favor awarding another degree, say the L.H.D. or S.C.D., for students who prove substantial evidence of real scholarly ability.” Letter of October 25, 1937, Emery T. Filbey Papers, Box 3, file “1938–1939.”

163. Hutchins first announced the scheme in his report to the faculty on “The University at War” on January 7, 1942. See also the Maroon, January 8, 1942, pp. 1–2.
led by the new Dean of the College Clarence Faust, to formulate a new, wholly mandated general-education curriculum that excluded any departmental specialization. A last-ditch effort in early April 1942 by senior faculty led by Bernadotte Schmitt, Ernst W. Puttkammer, George Bogert, and several others to rescind the Senate’s earlier approval of the transfer of the baccalaureate degree from the divisions to the College deadlocked in a fifty-eight to fifty-eight vote, with Hutchins then ruling that the motion for recision had failed. Hutchins’s revolutionary reordering of undergraduate life killed two birds with one rhetorical stone: his new A.B. program could not only be touted as a duty to the nation, but it also helped to reaffirm the proposition that the University retained a civilian educational mission in a time of total war. In the short term, Hutchins’s strategy of launching the new general-education College under the umbrella of the national defense was brilliant. In the long run, however, once the war was over, it was inevitable that the powerful departmental and divisional interests that had been excluded from undergraduate education by virtue of the reforms of 1942 would seek redress, if not outright vengeance.

Perhaps the most notable wartime achievement on campus was one about which few students and faculty knew anything—the atomic research project led by Arthur H. Compton, Enrico Fermi, and other major scientists. At its zenith, the Metallurgical Laboratory employed two thousand scientists, and it signaled a new pattern of cooperation between the government and the University that would extend far beyond the conclusion of the war. In accepting the plutonium research project that Arthur Compton organized in early 1942, Hutchins found himself caught between his own negative feelings about the military and his suspicions about government involvement in University affairs on the one hand and his responsibilities as the chief executive officer of the


University on the other.\textsuperscript{164} Given the secrecy with which the Met Lab was organized, it is difficult to reconstruct exactly what Hutchins knew about the project, when he knew it, and how he felt about it at the time.\textsuperscript{165} It does seem likely that Hutchins was given general briefings on the project, and it is instructive that one of his key lieutenants, Emery Filbey, was invited by Compton to tour the Clinton Laboratories in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in December 1943.\textsuperscript{166} Filbey is also reported to have assured Compton in early 1942 that “[w]e will turn the University inside out if necessary to help win this war. Victory is much more important than survival of the University,” which, if Filbey actually said this, would not have been said without backing by Hutchins.\textsuperscript{167} Nor was Hutchins sheepish about exploiting the considerable human resources that the


\textsuperscript{165} Compton’s memoirs, \textit{Atomic Quest. A Personal Narrative} (New York, 1956), pp. 79–86, contain little specific information on his negotiations with Hutchins about the University accepting the project. Compton had already secured University approval, however, to create a project on self-sustaining fission in beryllium with National Defense Research Committee support in April 1941. See Jack M. Holl, \textit{Argonne National Laboratory, 1946–1996} (Urbana, 1997), p. 5; and W. B. Harrell to Irvin Stewart, April 14, 1941 (confidential), \textit{PP, 1925–1945}, Box 92, folder 5.


Manhattan Project had assembled in Chicago and elsewhere for the post-war advancement of scientific research at the University, since on August 9, 1945, he announced his decision that two large research institutes should be founded at Chicago for postwar research in nuclear physics and in the study of metals.  

Still, Leo Szilard reported in his memoirs that, as late as April 1945, Hutchins was not aware of how close the scientists had come to producing an atomic bomb. Many years later, in May 1973, George Dell described to Harry Ashmore a conversation he had with Hutchins on the atomic bomb project: “He said that he didn’t feel guilty . . . about his role as a representative of the University, but as a human being and [in] his private role, he did indeed feel guilty.” To which Ashmore responded:

That’s right, and that’s fairly characteristic. You see, again, that’s the old puritan wasp sense of obligation to the country, to the institution, [the] decision was made to do this so then he had to do it, and he did it extraordinarily well. Since it had to do with mass destruction he dreaded the fact that it had to be done, had serious doubts about whether it should be done. One time he

168. Chicago Tribune, August 10, 1945, p. 7; R. S. Mulliken to Hutchins, August 15, 1945, PP, 1940–1946, Box 12, folder 10. A third institute on radiobiology and biophysics was soon added. An unsigned memorandum from 1945 justifying these institutes invoked as precedents the institutes of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft in pre-1933 Germany, arguing that they made possible a level of scientific progress impossible within normal university settings. See PP, 1940–1963, Box 32, folder 2. By 1947, the three institutes had a total budget of $1.5 million.

gets into this is when he talks about the effort to keep Truman from dropping the bomb, in which he was highly engaged.170

With the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as its finale, the end of World War II left the campus in an uneasy mood. Many of the Metallurgical Laboratory scientists involved in the atomic bomb project were profoundly disturbed by the terms on which the war had ended. A report authored by James Franck, Eugene Rabinowitch, and other leading nuclear scientists at Chicago in early June 1945, urging that the United States not use the atomic bomb against Japan without first organizing a demonstration of the new weapon “on the desert or a barren island,” probably represented the opinion of the majority of Chicago scientists then working at the Met Lab.171 Arthur Compton’s poll of the attitudes of the Met Lab scientists on July 12, 1945, and Leo Szilard’s petition of July 17 signed by sixty-nine scientists urging a delay in the use of the bomb confirmed that a significant number of the project researchers at Chicago had serious doubts about an immediate deployment of the weapon against a civilian population center. Alice Kimball Smith has suggested that Hiroshima was in fact a “shattering blow” to the scientists of the Met Lab who hoped that the bomb would not be used straightaway on a civilian target.172 No less was

170. George Dell’s interview with Harry Ashmore, May 25, 1976, Robert M. Hutchins and Associates, Box 1, folder 3, pp. 61–63. Ashmore further mentioned that Hutchins “doesn’t like to talk about it [the atomic bomb project], because he doesn’t like the result.”


172. Smith, A Peril and a Hope, pp. 75–76.
this the case for Robert Hutchins. To the end of his life Hutchins insisted that Truman’s use of the bomb had been “incorrect and improper.”

The way the war ended—and, perhaps, his own feelings of culpability as war President—made it logical for Robert Hutchins to return to the dialectical relationship between national progress and international warfare he had articulated in 1941, and to open a discussion about the future contours of a world peace, setting it in the new context of atomic terror. In “The Proposition Is Peace” in April 1941, Hutchins had observed,

[f]ear and ignorance wrote the last peace; the fear of the French and British, the ignorance of all nations. From this fear and ignorance sprang a peace that made this war inevitable. There is no less fear and certainly no less ignorance today. Have we the courage and the wisdom to bring the world to a peace that shall establish the four freedoms everywhere? . . .

[If] we go to war, and preserve the British Empire, and crush Germany, our fundamental problems will remain. We do not face our fundamental problems by going to war, we evade them. We do not make a just and lasting peace by writing into another treaty the fear, ignorance, and confusion that have marred our efforts to build a democratic community at home.

173. Szilard sent Hutchins a copy of his petition, about which Hutchins replied, “The petition looks good to me. I hope it may be effective.” Hutchins to Szilard, July 26, 1945, PP, 1925–1945, Box 92, folder 5.


For those haunted by memories of 1918–19 who, in the summer of 1945, now opposed the use of atomic weapons, the stakes were particularly high. Ironically, what Robert Hutchins had feared in the winter and spring of 1941—that a new war would end in a “peace” even more ominous than the Peace of Versailles in 1919—seemed now to come true.

*World Government and a Final Peace*

Within days of the bombing of Hiroshima, Hutchins participated in a University of Chicago Round Table discussion on NBC radio on “Atomic Force: Its Meaning for Mankind” where he rejected the use of the bomb, arguing that “[a]ll the evidence points to the fact that the use of this bomb was unnecessary. . . . [T]he United States has lost its moral prestige [by using it].” Later in the same discussion Hutchins observed that “[t]he only hope . . . of abolishing war is through the monopoly of atomic force by a world organization.” William Ogburn, a distinguished Chicago sociologist who defended the use of the bomb, replied laconically: “But that is a thousand years off,” to which Hutchins rejoined:

> Remember that Léon Bloy, the French philosopher, referred to the good news of damnation, doubtless on the theory that none of us would be Christians if we were not afraid of perpetual hell-fire. It may be that the atomic bomb is the good news of damnation, that it may frighten us into that Christian character and those righteous actions and those positive political steps necessary to the creation of a world society, not a thousand or five hundred years hence, but now.\(^\text{176}\)

A month after this public exchange between Hutchins and Ogburn, Hutchins was approached by two other senior faculty members, Richard McKeon and Giuseppe Borgese, who proposed that Hutchins should sponsor a study group to do in reality what Hutchins had advocated in theory—to write a constitution for world government. They argued that the atomic bomb had ushered in a new era in human history: “The names and dates of Alamogordo and Hiroshima, July 16 and August 6, 1945, lost almost immediately whatever lyrical or controversial overemphasis they may have carried at first. The statement that there and then started a new era, was accepted almost unanimously as an obvious truth.” For McKeon and Borgese, the future of this new era involved a stark choice: “few if any have questioned the validity of a dilemma whose alternatives are world rule—with supreme authority vested in a global organism—or world ruin.” The solution to the dilemma of atomic terror was the formulation of “a world state which in your and our thought is the only alternative to world destruction.” The University of Chicago was a particularly appropriate place to launch a movement for global rule, since it played a decisive role in ushering in the atomic age, whose birth-place and date might well be put in Stagg Field, December 2, 1942 rather than in New Mexico or Honshu two and a half years later. There is no manifest destiny, but there is more than a symbolic value in the suggestion that the intellectual courage that split the atom should be called, on this very campus, to unite the world. An Institute of Nuclear Physics has been founded. We propose an Institute for World Government.177

Hutchins agreed to sponsor such an effort, and a committee of distinguished University of Chicago faculty members—Robert Redfield, Mortimer Adler, Richard McKeon, Rexford Tugwell, Giuseppe Borgese, and others—joined with leading academics from elsewhere to craft the outlines of a government for the world. The committee met monthly at the Shoreland Hotel and in two locations in New York City between February and October 1946 and again from February to July 1947, and assessed a variety of political and legal issues, such as those involving federalism and centralism, human rights, electoral representation, and executive power. The debates were heady and sometimes acerbic, and intellectual disagreements between Borgese—who favored a unitarist world regime that might suppress state-based nationalism—and McKeon—who favored a more federalist structure that would have preserved more authority for the nation-states—led McKeon to refuse to sign the final document.178

After eighteen months of deliberations, Hutchins’s committee published their design for a world government, the Preliminary Draft of a World Constitution, in October 1947. The Draft was an elegant document that established a Federal Republic of the World. This republic was constituted by a Federal Convention, made up of delegates from nine Electoral Colleges which, in turn, comprised regional societies of the various “kindred nations and cultures” of the world. Each Electoral College had the right to nominate candidates for the office of President of the World Republic, who was then elected by the vote of the full convention for a single six-year term. The Colleges also elected representatives to a ninety-nine-person World Council, which exercised legislative power for the republic. The President of the World Republic was charged with the responsibility of appointing a government, including a Chancellor.

178. McKeon to Borgese, August 26, 1947, McKeon Papers, Box 26, folder 3.
and a Cabinet, and a Grand Tribunal of sixty justices organized in five Benches, each serving fifteen-year terms (although the World Council could veto a nominee to the tribunal by a two-thirds vote). The Grand Tribunal in turn elected a seven-member Supreme Court, which functioned both as an executive authority for and an appellate jurisdiction over the decisions taken by the tribunal. In addition to these and several other organs of world governance, the Draft also provided a declaration of duties and rights for the people of the world. Among its bolder and more farsighted propositions was the assertion that the four elements of life—earth, water, air, and energy—are “the common property of the human race,” a postulate that merited committee members the unenviable tag of being crypto-socialists (or worse) in 1948. The Draft was also forward looking in that it sought to displace the electoral power of individual nation-states with regional federations which, the authors hoped, would experience and profit from shared economic and cultural interests over time.

The Draft was translated into forty different languages, including Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, and Russian, and it is estimated that its final circulation ran to over a million copies. Reactions to the Chicago world government group came from all over the world, and they were of sufficient interest to justify the University of Chicago Press publishing a special monthly journal, Common Cause, as a venue where world government proponents could respond to and debate with their many interlocutors. Hutchins’s public advocacy for world government to control atomic weapons generated interest among amateur internationalists of all walks of life. Many correspondents wrote simple, congratulatory messages, like Harold E. Fackert of Jersey City, New Jersey, who hoped that Hutchins “will do all you can to encourage a world constitutional convention. You can be a great influence toward everlasting peace and happiness for all
mankind, if you will,”179 and Walter Piakowski of Chicago, who suggested, “I am moved to express my admiration for your plan to effect an international organization. . . . If you succeed in bringing about this organization, this truly will be a miracle of the twentieth century.”180 James L. Reed of Omaha, Nebraska, confessed, “I have read of your efforts toward a one World Government with profound interest. Perhaps we who have long been proponents of a united world will take renewed interest upon finding men of your standing and ability lending efforts to the dream of so many little people, men like myself, who have not the education or stations in affairs to properly implement our hopes of a sound international order.”181 Other advocates of world government submitted their own schemes for Hutchins’s review and evaluation. Most were acknowledged with polite responses, even those that bordered on the crackpot. Hutchins had clearly touched a nerve.182

The project encountered not only unalloyed admiration, but also excoriating criticism. Not only was the Soviet Union militantly opposed to world government, but it was by no means clear that such a scheme bore any reasonable or even imaginable relationship to America’s or Western Europe’s vital interests in the later 1940s. The Chicago Tribune, a bastion of America-first loyalties, solemnly condemned the project as a “super secret constitution” generated by “one of a rash of militant globalist organizations which have sprung up in the United States and England since

182. These letters and submissions are in Hutchins Papers, Addenda, Box 157, folders 4–7.
the United Nations has demonstrated its uselessness.”183 For the Tribune, the bill of rights contained in the Draft “appears to be a combination of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Karl Marx.” Not unpredictably, the Draft encountered an equally venomous reaction from the spiritual home of Karl Marx: Moscow Radio quoted a Soviet journalist who condemned the Draft as an effort “to justify the American Empire plan for world supremacy,” concluding that “the program of the Chicago world government embodies the ambitions of the American war-mongers.”184

Much of the energy (and anxiety) impelling the many world government movements in Europe and in the United States in the immediate postwar world was driven by a palpable fear that the human race faced not only the possibility of perpetual war, but atomic war at that. The peace that had arrived in August 1945 was uneasy and precarious; Hutchins and his colleagues wanted a more permanent peace, grounded in international law protected by international sanctions. Granted, the specter of atomic annihilation that so preoccupied Hutchins and his friends did not come to pass. Yet, seen from the distance of the last half century of nationalist terror (witness the most recent bloodbaths in the Balkans and in the Middle East), the committee’s dream of a world order guaranteeing universal justice beyond the proclivities of nationalism (and national self-interest) may not seem so arcane irrelevant as it did in the heady days of the early cold war. Moreover, some particular elements of the draft constitution have seen subsequent confirmation. The regionalist emphasis articulated by the Chicago committee in 1947 no longer seems so utopian in an age of the North American Free Trade Agreement and


in the even more striking and robust regionalism launched by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992.

Among the many fascinating exchanges that took place in the committee was a debate at the last meeting, on July 15, 1947, having to do with the authority and legitimacy of law, where Hutchins brought up the problem of racially restrictive real estate covenants in many American cities, including Chicago. This subject arose when Stringfellow Barr raised the critical issue of the relationship between the ideals of liberty espoused in the document and the capacity of the organs of the future world government to defend those ideals. Barr specifically mentioned his concerns about racial discrimination. The discussion that followed was spirited, with Giuseppe Borgese advocating a world government with meaningful authority to ensure racial justice. During the course of that discussion, Hutchins intervened with a telling example:

The laws of America permit restrictive covenants which are legal devices by which the Negro cannot rent the apartment below yours. I would take it that these restrictive covenants would be rendered illegal [under the new constitution], and the Negro could be in the apartment under yours.

Mortimer Adler: What Antonio is saying is that he wants the law rendered illegal.185

Hutchins’s allusion to racialist real estate covenants in July 1947 had a real-world reference, for the University lived in a community that was dominated by such racially based covenants until the Supreme Court

185. Stenographic minutes of the session on July 15, 1947, Committee to Frame a World Constitution, Box 56, folder 2.
struck them down as being unconstitutional in *Shelley v. Kramer* in May 1948. The Supreme Court’s decision of 1948 was merely a small part of a larger unraveling of the status quo in the racial and class makeup of Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Woodlawn between 1940 and 1955 that created conditions of chronic “blight” in the neighborhood around the University.186 The war set in motion powerful demographic changes in the movement of peoples, most significant being the movement of African Americans to Chicago. In 1940, just over 8 percent of the population of Chicago was African American. By 1950, African Americans constituted almost 14 percent of the population and the number was growing each year. The war years saw the migration of tens of thousands of people from the South to Chicago, a movement that continued to accelerate after 1945.187 As the borders of the Black Belt expanded, more poor, lower-class people began to move into Hyde Park, and with the poor came rising crime rates, housing code violations, property deterioration, and other social problems. By 1951, the Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference would report that “more and more the Hyde Park–Kenwood


187. “The two decades between 1940 and 1960, and especially the fifteen years following the conclusion of World War II, witnessed the renewal of massive black migration to Chicago and the overflowing of black population from established areas of residence grown too small, too old, and too decayed to hold old settlers and newcomers alike. It was during the 1940s and 1950s that the Black Belt’s boundaries, drawn during the Great Migration, were shattered.” Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto. Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940–1960* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 4–5.
community is becoming an island surrounded by blighted and near-blighted areas; its very foundation as a desirable residential community is being threatened.”

These trends in the neighborhood took place at the same time that the national academic labor market also expanded in the aftermath of World War II, creating many more job possibilities for faculty members who felt unsafe or unwelcome in the community. They also occurred in a time of great political tension among the faculty over the future of the College curriculum of 1942, which had essentially banished the departments from undergraduate education. These tensions would eventually lead to the implosion of the classic “Hutchins” College in May 1953, when the Council of the Senate adopted the Filbey Report that reauthorized the divisions and the departments a share of the undergraduate curriculum. Finally, World War II gave birth to a strange, seesaw pattern in our demography. Chicago’s undergraduate enrollments soared after 1945 because of returning veterans on the GI Bill. But, in contrast to the year after 1918, these new students were only a temporary phenomenon, virtually disappearing by 1951. Their loss, coupled with the severe recruitment problems caused (in part) by the College’s exciting but very unorthodox curriculum, led to a severe decline in enrollments in the College after 1951, with the total undergraduate enrollment reaching a nadir of 1,338 students in 1953–54.


189. “Many University of Chicago faculty members who left the University since 1947 cited the decline in the caliber of Hyde Park as a source of disaffection.” Rossi and Dentler, The Politics of Urban Renewal, p. 67.
The record of the Hutchins administration on the community front was mixed, to say the least. We know from the research of Arnold Hirsch and others that the University sanctioned and helped to enforce racially restrictive covenants in the 1930s and 1940s. Hutchins’s admirers like Milton Mayer and Harry Ashmore have argued that Hutchins was personally opposed to such practices, and there is considerable evidence to support the view that he was simply enforcing a policy set by the Trustees that he found personally abhorrent. But the fact of the matter remains that the University under his stewardship continued to rely on such policies. The University’s tolerance of restrictive covenants demonstrated a woeful lack of flexible and forward-looking policy planning about the neighborhood that could meet the challenges we eventually faced in the later 1940s and early 1950s. Hutchins has often been accused of indifference toward the emerging crisis in Hyde Park–Kenwood. The subject is complex and merits more research, since much may depend on when one views the crisis as actually having begun. Even so, if Hutchins had concerns about the future of the neighborhood, he undertook few concrete actions to address those concerns. In fact, he subsequently


192. If one accepts the argument, following Rossi and Dentler, that the real crisis in the area began after 1948, one might argue that Hutchins’s failure to act was less an act of intellectual arrogance and more a question of faulty judgment about the timing and severity of the crisis. See Rossi and Dentler, The Politics of Urban Renewal, pp. 21–22.
admitted to George Dell in 1977 that he had not devoted much time or effort to this problem.193

It says much about the frames of reference that preoccupied Robert Hutchins in the aftermath of World War II that he would sponsor the writing of a new constitution for the world, designed to open discussions about ways to secure international peace in a world of potential atomic warfare; and, further, Hutchins and his colleagues would write that constitution in a way that gave world governmental authorities the power to fight against racist practices; but that at the same time he was unable to imagine a “constitution” for Hyde Park that would have addressed the serious social problems facing both the neighborhood and the University in a politically effective way and thus secure (local) peace in his own time. It was left to Hutchins’s successor, Lawrence Kimpton, to provide such leadership, and to do so in the realpolitik mode marked by intense controversy that eventually achieved the local peace that had eluded his predecessor.

193. See George Dell Interviews, January 12, 1977, p. 14. Even Hutchins’s greatest admirer—Milton Mayer—admits that the University may eventually have been saved, “[b]ut it wasn’t Hutchins who saved it. There is no hard evidence that he spent ‘the rest of my administration’ trying to do anything about it [the neighborhood]—and considerable recollection that he didn’t.” Mayer, *Hutchins*, p. 381. Rossi and Dentler reported in 1961 that “[m]any informed respondents assert that Chancellor Hutchins’ strong absorption in academic and national policy questions contributed to the institution’s neglect of neighborhood problems of overcrowding and deterioration.” *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, p. 68.
Conclusion

Both world wars brought in their trail powerful movements for institutional change that affected the history of our University. Both wars created temporary demographic crises which, in opposite ways, influenced the course of institutional policy-making at the University in the decades that followed their conclusions. The huge numbers of students who arrived immediately after 1918 stayed and gave Chicago a new, seemingly permanent level of undergraduate enrollments, which, in turn, provoked serious and tense discussions among the senior faculty about whether the University should even have a large undergraduate college to begin with. Robert Hutchins was in many respects the beneficiary of these tensions, since it was Acting President Fritz Woodward’s seeming support of a large College in 1928–29 that undermined his chances to become our permanent President in 1929.194 Had Woodward, who was a solid, capable administrator but a relatively unambitious intellectual leader, succeeded to the presidency, the history of the University in the twentieth century would have been profoundly different.

Large numbers of students also arrived on our campus after the conclusion of the Second World War in 1945, but, in contrast to 1918, they were largely gone by 1951, as the pool of veterans needing higher education on the GI Bill shrank and as the historic gamble of the Hutchins College—that parents would send their sixteen-year-olds to study at Chicago—proved to be a serious miscalculation. The disappearance of the veterans

and the absence of younger college students contributed to a collapse of undergraduate enrollments by 1953–54, which, in turn, unleashed one of the worst budgetary and political crises in the University’s history.

Both wars were also followed by searching debates about the nature of undergraduate education at Chicago. The first war led to a debate in the middle and later 1920s on how to teach responsibly a large undergraduate College, which eventually resulted in the creation of the New Plan of 1930–31; while the second war saw an enormous controversy in 1946–47 and again in 1953 over the balance between general education and specialized knowledge which was, in turn, part of a larger debate about the relationship of the undergraduate college to the larger research university. For better or worse, that historic debate is not yet fully resolved at the University of Chicago, fifty-eight years after the conclusion of World War II.

Both wars called upon the University’s President to provide leadership, before and after the outbreak of hostilities. Harry Pratt Judson anticipated, lobbied for, and embraced the war of 1914, whereas Robert Hutchins opposed and rejected the war of 1939, until the fait accompli of Pearl Harbor made his anti-interventionist rhetoric meaningless. Then, in a stunning role reversal, Hutchins was forced to become a wartime President presiding over a militarization of the campus that far surpassed anything Judson could have imagined.

Moreover, in the case of both Presidents, their postwar years were arguably the least successful components of their presidencies. Judson found himself unable to cope with the rising tide of faculty and student expectations that World War I had set in motion, and Hutchins’s postwar years were equally, if not more frustrating. He could write constitutions for the world which would try to address chronic social and political problems—like racism and the control of atomic weapons—but he made little or no effort to sustain the conditions for a genuine peace in
his own neighborhood, a neighborhood that was itself chronically affected by demographic and economic pressures set in motion by World War II.

Finally, both wars raised concerns about the politicization of scholarship and the utilization of the University as a corporation in the name of war. Some scholars have viewed the mudslinging of the professors in World War I as damaging to “the ethics of their subject in the name of nationalism.” 195 Other commentators wondered after 1945 why Robert Hutchins, who was the most determined of noninterventionists, agreed to allow the work of the Metallurgical Laboratory to take place at the University of Chicago and to help produce a devastating new weapon that Hutchins himself clearly found morally fearsome and repugnant, if only after the fact. Both cases raise the issue of the relationship of the University to war, and in doing so they also raise the issue of the relationship of the University to the nation-state. War is a national as well as a state project. That is, total war involves the nation as a cultural and social corporation, as well as the state as a mechanism to mobilize resources, set war aims, and guide armies. Universities live and thrive from scholarly dispassion, from cultural pluralism, and in our time from sober internationalism. Such virtues are often the first casualties of wars. Are there boundaries beyond which a university cannot or should not go in the name of national partisanship? Or, should universities, as truly American national institutions, stand in the forefront of our nation’s defense? These are fundamental issues, and unfortunately the times when they become most relevant—armed conflict—are also those that provide the

least hospitable opportunities for a public debate that might illuminate, if not resolve them.

We were fortunate that this time we had a short war, even if the peace that follows will be costly and unpredictable in its final outcomes. Opinions about the merits of the war differed widely on our campus, with many faculty and students being strongly opposed to our invasion of Iraq, while others were firmly in favor of our overthrowing Saddam Hussein. The campus behaved with civility, thoughtfulness, and forbearance throughout, and that, in the end, may be the highest tribute we can pay to our community.

This time, war brought out the best in our University.

I wish you a safe, stimulating, and productive academic year, and, as always, I thank you for your devotion to the work of the College.
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