

Y12 History Summer Work

Please complete all the tasks, covering both sides of the Y12 History course.

Paper 1: Britain Transformed, 1918-79

Read the article, 'The Fall of the Liberal Party, 1910-29' by Iain Sharpe and make notes that answer the following questions:

1. What arguments have been made in favour and against the idea that the Liberal Party faced problems before WW1?
2. What problems for the Liberals does Sharpe argue were caused by WW1?
3. Why did Liberal fortunes fail to recover after the war?
4. How did the rise of Labour affect the Liberals?
5. What views have historians taken on the importance of the Representation of the People Act 1918?
6. What is the overall conclusion of the article?

A Spotify playlist of music to introduce you to some of the cultural developments in Britain:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/65VXWH5bEimEdlaW59xT3L?si=72a13dd204fc4011>

Paper 2: USA - Conformity and Challenge, 1955-92

Read the extract by Howard Zinn. What does his argument suggest about the effects of WW2 on divisions along lines of:

- Race
- Gender
- Class



How useful is this poster for understanding the impact of the Second World War on American society?

All GCSE courses have a question that asks you to consider an historical source and make a judgement on its utility.

Ensure you include:

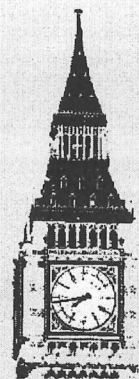
- Comment on the content of the sources (quote/describe and explain).
- Evaluation of the provenance of the source (where it has come from and why)
- Use of own knowledge to develop your points (this will come from the Zinn reading).

Source A: United We Win. Photograph by Alexander Liberman, 1943. Printed by the Government Printing Office for the War Manpower Commission, Records of the Office of Government Reports.

A Spotify playlist of music to introduce you to some of the cultural developments in America:

<https://play.spotify.com/user/annieburt13/playlist/20hjgyWIn3nQvhYHxVcL7i>

The fall of the Liberal Party, 1910-29



Iain Sharpe

The split between the two great Liberal leaders, Asquith and Lloyd George, sounded the death knell for the mighty Liberal Party which had dominated the politics of Victorian England. But was the party in terminal decline anyway, or have the accounts of its demise been exaggerated?

In May 1915, prime minister H. H. Asquith submitted the resignation of his Liberal government to King George V, and formed a coalition government including Conservative and Labour ministers. The Liberals would never hold power again in their own right and within 10 years they were reduced to third party status in British politics — replaced by Labour as the main rivals to the Conservatives. Historians have offered a wide range of explanations for this collapse. Some argue that the party was in terminal decline before 1914, others see the First World War as the key cause of Liberal collapse, while a further view holds that, but for a series of accidents, the party would have survived the war intact.

Before the First World War

In the decade prior to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the Liberal Party had won three consecutive general elections and enjoyed its longest continuous period in power since the **1867 Reform Act**. With the Conservative Party divided and demoralised, the Liberals could look forward with optimism to the possibility of a fourth general election victory in 1915.

However, historians such as George L. Bernstein and Ross McKibbin have argued that this apparent record of success hid deeper problems. The growth of the Labour Party and a greater awareness among the electorate of **class issues** meant that the Liberals were facing a long-term challenge. Labour had established itself as a parliamentary force, with 42 MPs elected in the December 1910 general election. Labour was also making gains from the Liberals in municipal elections and the 1913 Trades Union Act, which enabled unions to set up **political funds**, gave Labour a guaranteed source of funding.

Other historians have put forward a more positive view of Liberal prospects. P. F. Clarke has argued that the Liberals were successfully adapting to the needs of the working class electorate. Under the influence of **'new Liberalism'**, they were

1867 Reform Act: Disraeli's measure heralded the start of Gladstone's long period in office.

class issues: issues relating to a particular class, especially the working class.

political funds: money levied from trade union members for Labour Party funds. The legality of the practice was challenged in the Osborne judgement, 1909.

new Liberalism: new political thinking in the Liberal Party during the 1890s and 1900s to seek solutions to social welfare problems.

the kind of freedom Liberals believed in: heavily based upon individual freedom, and a minimum of state direction.

conscription: compulsory military service in wartime.

private political fund: a fund designed to support Lloyd George's own Liberal organisation, which was supplied from the Liberal party.

socialism: belief that the production and exchange of goods should be owned by the community as a whole.

Key points

- ★ Prior to 1914, the Liberals had won three consecutive general election victories.
- ★ The First World War created serious tensions in the Liberal Party, leading to a formal split in 1916.
- ★ While the Liberals allowed their party organisation to decay during wartime, Labour fortunes were boosted by increased trade union membership.
- ★ The continued divisions in the Liberal Party damaged its electoral prospects and enabled Labour to become the second party in British politics.
- ★ Whereas the pre-war Liberal governments had cooperated with Labour, the Labour government which took office in 1924 was very hostile to the Liberals.
- ★ By the time Lloyd George became Liberal leader and introduced radical new policies it was too late for a full recovery.

becoming more aware of the need for measures of social reform. They had already introduced limited old age pensions for the poorest people over 70 years old, and National Insurance. Even historians such as Bernstein, who argues that the writing was already on the wall for the Liberal Party by 1914, agree that the decline would have been slow.

The effect of the First World War

Trevor Wilson, in his book *The Downfall of the Liberal Party*, coined a memorable phrase, describing the First World War as a 'rampant omnibus' that ran over the Liberal Party. Liberals had always seen themselves as a party of peace and liberty. They tended to oppose high military spending and excessive state intervention in the economy or in the lives of citizens. Some Liberal MPs were unhappy at Britain's involvement in the war and believed its only justification could be to defend **the kind of freedom Liberals believed in**. Others, such as Lloyd George, believed that some Liberal values had to be suspended in order to win the war. Asquith tried to pursue a middle course, but ended up pleasing no one.

For example, the issue of **conscription** divided the Liberal Party. When it was finally introduced in May 1916, some Liberals blamed Asquith for agreeing to it, while others felt he had delayed too long. Divisions on issues like this led to Asquith being replaced as prime minister at the end of 1916 by Lloyd George, with support from the Conservatives, Labour and some Liberals. Asquith refused to serve under Lloyd George and the Liberal Party formally split.

The Asquith/Lloyd George split

The feud between Asquith and Lloyd George went on for many years and was very damaging for the Liberal Party. Although the two men had worked together in government between 1905 and 1916, they had contrasting approaches to politics. Asquith was intellectually gifted and had proved a successful peacetime prime minister. But he did not seem dynamic enough for a wartime leader and he was not interested in new or radical ideas. By contrast Lloyd George was a man of action. He saw quickly that in wartime government had to be more efficient and energetic than under normal conditions. He was interested in ideas and policies. Whereas Asquith was strongly attached to the Liberal Party, Lloyd George was interested in putting party differences aside to create coalitions of the 'best' people in all parties. As prime minister, Lloyd George developed a reputation for sleaze by selling peerages to raise money for his **private political fund**.

The divided Liberal Party

Although both remained Liberals, Asquith and Lloyd George fought the 1918 general election on different sides; Lloyd George remained in alliance with the Conservatives. He did this partly because Asquith and the Liberals opposed his government, partly because he felt there was a need to unite against **socialism** after the 1917 Russian Revolution, and partly to save the seats of his own Liberal supporters. Official government candidates, whether Liberal or Conservative, were given a letter of support from Lloyd George and Bonar Law, the Conservative leader, which was referred to by Asquith as a '**coupon**'. The election became known as the 'coupon election'. The result was an overwhelming victory for the government. Asquith's Liberals were routed — reduced to a rump of just

Herbert Henry Asquith (1852–1928)

1886	Elected MP for East Fife.
1892–95	Home secretary in Gladstone and Rosebery administrations.
1905	Appointed chancellor of the exchequer.
1908	Became prime minister.
1915 (May–December)	Headed a coalition government.
1915 (December)	Ousted by Lloyd George and the Conservatives.
1916–25	Headed the rump of the Liberal Party.
1925	Was made Earl of Oxford and Asquith.

George V (1865–1936)

Second son of King Edward VII.

1877–92 Served in Royal Navy.

1892 Succeeded his brother, the Duke of Clarence, as heir to the throne.

1893 Married Princess May of Teck (who was originally his dead brother's fiancée).

1910 Succeeded to throne as king-emperor of Great Britain.

Was the first monarch to broadcast Christmas messages to the nation.

Was also the only British monarch to visit India as its emperor.

1935 Celebrated silver jubilee as king-emperor.

28 MPs. Even Labour fared better, with 62 seats in the House of Commons. There remained 136 Liberal MPs who supported Lloyd George.

Liberal fortunes failed to recover over the next 4 years. The party under Asquith's lacklustre leadership was short of funds and new ideas. Many of the 'New Liberals', who had been interested in social reform before the war, left the party to join Labour, which they saw as a more viable vehicle for their views. Because they were no longer in power or even likely to be, the Liberals found it more difficult to persuade people to donate money.

After 4 years of peacetime coalition government, the Conservatives decided to fight the next general election on their own. In the 1922 general election the Liberals were still divided between supporters of Asquith and Lloyd George. The Conservatives won and for the first time Labour had more MPs than both Liberal groups combined.

Liberal reunion

In 1923, Conservative prime minister Stanley Baldwin decided on a policy of abandoning **free trade** and introducing tariffs. He called a general election to get a mandate for this new policy. As free trade was a traditional Liberal cause, this was the spur to Liberal reunion and in the 1923 general election Asquith and Lloyd George shared a public platform for the first time in many years.

The election saw some revival in Liberal fortunes — they won 159 seats — and the Conservatives lost their overall majority, but Labour had more seats than the Liberals. Asquith and Lloyd George decided to put Labour in power, believing that they would be able to control the actions of the new government. However, once in office, Labour proved unwilling to cooperate. Lloyd George had predicted that 'if Labour succeeds they get all the credit; if it fails, we get the blame for putting them in power.' His prediction

was accurate: when Labour resigned office at the end of 1924, the Liberal Party was reduced to just 40 seats at the subsequent election.

Lloyd George as leader

Asquith retired as party leader in 1926 and died in 1928. Lloyd George became undisputed Liberal leader. He tried to revitalise the Liberal Party's policies and electoral fortunes by setting up an inquiry into unemployment, led by the economist **John Maynard Keynes**. In 1928, the party published a report, *Britain's Industrial Future*, known as the *Yellow Book*, which argued for state-funded **public works** to reduce unemployment. It fought the general election of 1929 on this radical policy, but emerged from the election with just 59 seats. The 1929 election simply confirmed that the Liberals were the now third party in British politics.

The Labour Party

Before the First World War, Labour was very much the junior partner in a **Progressive Alliance** with the Liberals. However, the war and its aftermath were to benefit Labour. Labour leader Arthur Henderson joined Asquith's cabinet in 1915 and continued to serve under Lloyd George, although in 1918 the party withdrew from the coalition. Labour gained credibility from having held ministerial office, but maintained its independence. During the war, Labour was strengthened by the growth in trade union membership: from 4 million in 1914 to 8 million by 1919.

coupon: coupons were associated with special deals offered by retailers, so Asquith was ridiculing his opponents by suggesting they were reducing politics to a commercial transaction.

free trade: the unrestricted ability to import and export goods, without them being taxed — a traditional Liberal belief.

John Maynard Keynes: Cambridge economist and leading critic of the 1919 Peace Settlement with Germany. Leading advocate of state spending to kick-start the economy and alleviate unemployment.

public works: any work scheme financed by government; often large-scale construction projects, for example road building.

Progressive Alliance: agreement between Liberals and Labour before the First World War not to oppose each others' candidates in parliamentary elections to avoid splitting the vote against the Conservatives.

Chronology

January 1906	Liberals win landslide majority in general election after 10 years in opposition.
January and December 1910	After battles with the House of Lords, Liberals win two general elections, although they are now dependent on support from Irish Nationalist and Labour MPs.
August 1914	Outbreak of First World War — Liberal government agrees to enter the war after German invasion of Belgium.
December 1916	Lloyd George becomes prime minister with Conservative support, replacing Asquith, who refuses to serve in new government.
December 1918	Lloyd George wins general election victory in alliance with Conservatives. Asquith's Liberal Party reduced to 28 seats in parliament. Asquith loses his seat.
November 1922	At the general election, for the first time, Labour has more MPs than the Liberal Party.
November 1923	Liberal Party reunited but still wins fewer seats than Labour in the general election, as the Conservatives lose overall majority.
October 1924	First Labour government under Ramsay MacDonald. After Labour government resigns, Liberals reduced to 40 MPs at general election.
October 1926	Lloyd George becomes party leader.
May 1929	Despite new policies for tackling unemployment, Liberals win just 59 seats as Labour becomes largest party and forms minority government.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 also had an effect on British politics. Socialism seemed like the ideology of the future and Liberalism out of date. At the same time, the fear of revolutionary socialism pushed many moderate Liberals into supporting the Conservatives. However, Labour managed to inherit part of the Liberal tradition of reform. With the Liberals under Asquith taking little interest in social issues and Lloyd George in alliance with the Conservatives, Labour appeared to be the only progressive force in British politics. Although in 1918 the party had adopted a 'socialist' constitution, advocating widespread state ownership, the first Labour government did not attempt to introduce socialist measures, but was a model of moderation and financial responsibility.

The 1918 Representation of the People Act

The significance of the **1918 Representation of the People Act** in the rise of the Labour Party has also been the subject of debate among historians. An article by Matthew, McKibbin and Kay, published in 1976, argued that the expansion of the electorate from 1918 meant that there were now many more working-class voters, who were likely to support Labour. This has been challenged by Duncan

Tanner, who points out that the pre-1918 franchise did not disadvantage the working classes so much as non-householders of all classes: for example young men who had not left home and soldiers living in barracks. It is therefore not so clear that the new voters of 1918 would have been Labour supporters.

Conclusion

It is hard to sustain an argument that the Liberal Party was in terminal decline by 1914. Although the party undoubtedly faced organisational and political difficulties, this is true of any party that has been in power for many years. The First World War created ideological problems for the party, which brought about a formal split. However, this need not have been fatal had Asquith agreed to serve under Lloyd George or had the party reunited sooner. By 1918 the party was in a position of weakness, with lacklustre leadership from the ageing Asquith and a fragile party organisation. The three general elections between 1922 and 1924 confirmed this weakness and even a reunited party could not re-establish itself as the main party of the left. By the time Lloyd George became leader, replenishing party funds, revitalising the organisation and giving it a new set of radical policies, it was too late for recovery.

Iain Sharpe is an editor for the University of London External Programme and is currently researching a PhD on the Edwardian Liberal Party. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Liberal Democrat History*.

Further study

Adelman, P. (1995) *The Decline of the Liberal Party 1910–1931*, Longman.

Adelman, P. (1996) *The Rise of the Labour Party 1880–1945*, Longman.

Both of the above are useful summaries of the chronology, key issues and recent research.

Bernstein, G.L. (1986) *Liberalism and Liberal Politics in Edwardian England*, Allen and Unwin. Very readable and offers a pessimistic view of the Liberals' prospects in 1914.

Searle, G.R. (1992) *The Liberal Party: Triumph and Disintegration*, Macmillan. A very good survey focusing on the different historical interpretations.

Thorpe, A. (1997) *A History of the British Labour Party*, Macmillan. Good chapters on the growth of the Labour Party, giving a fair and balanced interpretation.

1918 Representation of the People Act: gave universal male suffrage and the vote to women over 30.

the King on the cruiser *Quincy*, together with his entourage of fifty, including two sons, a prime minister, an astrologer and flocks of sheep for slaughter.

Roosevelt then wrote to Ibn Saud, promising the United States would not change its Palestine policy without consulting the Arabs. In later years, the concern for oil would constantly compete with political concern for the Jewish state in the Middle East, but at this point, oil seemed more important.

With British imperial power collapsing during World War II, the United States was ready to move in. Hull said early in the war:

Leadership toward a new system of international relationships in trade and other economic affairs will devolve very largely upon the United States because of our great economic strength. We should assume this leadership, and the responsibility that goes with it, primarily for reasons of pure national self-interest.

Before the war was over, the administration was planning the outlines of the new international economic order, based on partnership between government and big business. Lloyd Gardner says of Roosevelt's chief adviser, Harry Hopkins, who had organized the relief programs of the New Deal: "No conservative outdid Hopkins in championing foreign investment, and its protection."

The poet Archibald MacLeish, then an Assistant Secretary of State, spoke critically of what he saw in the postwar world: "As things are now going, the peace we will make, the peace we seem to be making, will be a peace of oil, a peace of gold, a peace of shipping, a peace, in brief . . . without moral purpose or human interest. . . ."

During the war, England and the United States set up the International Monetary Fund to regulate international exchanges of currency; voting would be proportional to capital contributed, so American dominance would be assured. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was set up, supposedly to help reconstruct war-destroyed areas, but one of its first objectives was, in its own words, "to promote foreign investment."

The economic aid countries would need after the war was already seen in political terms: Averell Harriman, ambassador to Russia, said in early 1944: "Economic assistance is one of the most effective weapons at our disposal to influence European political events in the direction we desire. . . ."

The creation of the United Nations during the war was presented to the world as international cooperation to prevent future wars. But the U.N. was dominated by the Western imperial countries—the United States, England, and France—and a new imperial power, with military bases and powerful influence in Eastern Europe—the Soviet Union. An important conservative Republican Senator, Arthur Vandenburg, wrote in his diary about the United Nations Charter:

The striking thing about it is that it is so conservative from a nationalist standpoint. It is based virtually on a four-power alliance. . . . This is anything but a wild-eyed internationalist dream of a world State. . . . I am deeply impressed (and surprised) to find Hull so carefully guarding our American veto in his scheme of things.

The plight of Jews in German-occupied Europe, which many people thought was at the heart of the war against the Axis, was not a chief concern of Roosevelt. Henry Feingold's research (*The Politics of Rescue*) shows that, while the Jews were being put in camps and the process of annihilation was beginning that would end in the horrifying extermination of 6 million Jews and millions of non-Jews, Roosevelt failed to take steps that might have saved thousands of lives. He did not see it as a high priority; he left it to the State Department, and in the State Department anti-Semitism and a cold bureaucracy became obstacles to action.

Was the war being fought to establish that Hitler was wrong in his ideas of white Nordic supremacy over "inferior" races? The United States' armed forces were segregated by race. When troops were jammed onto the *Queen Mary* in early 1945 to go to combat duty in the European theater, the blacks were stowed down in the depths of the ship near the engine room, as far as possible from the fresh air of the deck, in a bizarre reminder of the slave voyages of old.

The Red Cross, with government approval, separated the blood donations of black and white. It was, ironically, a black physician named Charles Drew who developed the blood bank system. He was put in charge of the wartime donations, and then fired when he tried to end blood segregation. Despite the urgent need for wartime labor, blacks were still being discriminated against for jobs. A spokesman for a West Coast aviation plant said: "The Negro will be considered only as janitors and in other similar capacities. . . . Regardless of their training as aircraft workers, we will not employ them." Roosevelt never did anything to enforce the orders of the Fair Employment Practices Commission he had set up.

The Fascist nations were notorious in their insistence that the woman's place was in the home. Yet, the war against Fascism, although it utilized women in defense industries where they were desperately needed, took no special steps to change the subordinate role of women. The War Manpower Commission, despite the large numbers of women in war work, kept women off its policymaking bodies. A report of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, by its director, Mary Anderson, said the War Manpower Commission had "doubts and uneasiness" about "what was then regarded as a developing attitude of militancy or a crusading spirit on the part of women leaders. . . ."

In one of its policies, the United States came close to direct duplication of Fascism. This was in its treatment of the Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast. After the Pearl Harbor attack, anti-Japanese hysteria spread in the government. One Congressman said: "I'm for catching every Japanese in America, Alaska and Hawaii now and putting them in concentration camps. . . . Damn them! Let's get rid of them!"

Franklin D. Roosevelt did not share this frenzy, but he calmly signed Executive Order 9066, in February 1942, giving the army the power, without warrants or indictments or hearings, to arrest every Japanese-American on the West Coast—110,000 men, women, and children—to take them from their homes, transport them to camps far into the interior, and keep them there under prison conditions. Three-fourths of these were Nisei—children born in the United States of Japanese parents and therefore American citizens. The other fourth—the Issei, born in Japan—were barred by law from becoming citizens. In 1944 the Supreme Court upheld the forced evacuation on the grounds of military necessity. The Japanese remained in those camps for over three years.

Michi Weglyn was a young girl when her family experienced evacuation and detention. She tells (*Years of Infamy*) of bungling in the evacuation, of misery, confusion, anger, but also of Japanese-American dignity and fighting back. There were strikes, petitions, mass meetings, refusal to sign loyalty oaths, riots against the camp authorities. The Japanese resisted to the end.

Not until after the war did the story of the Japanese-Americans begin to be known to the general public. The month the war ended in Asia, September 1945, an article appeared in *Harper's Magazine* by Yale Law Professor Eugene V. Rostow, calling the Japanese evacuation "our worst wartime mistake." Was it a "mistake"—or was it an action to be expected from a nation with a long history of racism and which was fighting a war, not to end racism, but to retain the fundamental elements of the American system?

It was a war waged by a government whose chief beneficiary—despite volumes of reforms—was a wealthy elite. The alliance between big business and the government went back to the very first proposals of Alexander Hamilton to Congress after the Revolutionary War. By World War II that partnership had developed and intensified. During the Depression, Roosevelt had once denounced the "economic royalists," but he always had the support of certain important business leaders. During the war, as Bruce Catton saw it from his post in the War Production Board: "The economic royalists, denounced and derided . . . had a part to play now. . . ."

Catton (*The War Lords of Washington*) described the process of industrial mobilization to carry on the war, and how in this process wealth became more and more concentrated in fewer and fewer large corporations. In 1940 the United States had begun sending large amounts of war supplies to England and France. By 1941 three-fourths of the value of military contracts were handled by fifty-six large corporations. A Senate report, "Economic Concentration and World War II," noted that the government contracted for scientific research in industry during the war, and although two thousand corporations were involved, of \$1 billion spent, \$400 million went to ten large corporations.

Management remained firmly in charge of decision making during the war, and although 12 million workers were organized in the CIO and AFL, labor was in a subordinate position. Labor-management committees were set up in five thousand factories, as a gesture toward industrial democracy, but they acted mostly as disciplinary groups for absentee workers, and devices for increasing production. Catton writes: "The big operators who made the working decisions had decided that nothing very substantial was going to be changed."

Despite the overwhelming atmosphere of patriotism and total dedication to winning the war, despite the no-strike pledges of the AFL and CIO, many of the nation's workers, frustrated by the freezing of wages while business profits rocketed skyward, went on strike. During the war, there were fourteen thousand strikes, involving 6,770,000 workers, more than in any comparable period in American history. In 1944 alone, a million workers were on strike, in the mines, in the steel mills, in the auto and transportation equipment industries.

When the war ended, the strikes continued in record numbers—3 million on strike in the first half of 1946. According to Jeremy Brecher (*Strike!*), if not for the disciplinary hand of the unions there might have been "a general confrontation between the workers of a great many industries, and the government, supporting the employers."

In Lowell, Massachusetts, for example, according to an unpublished manuscript by Marc Miller ("The Irony of Victory: Lowell During World War II"), there were as many strikes in 1943 and 1944 as in 1937. It may have been a "people's war," but here was dissatisfaction at the fact that the textile mill profits grew 600 percent from 1940 to 1946, while wage increases in cotton goods industries went up 36 percent. How little the war changed the difficult condition of women workers is shown by the fact that in Lowell, among women war workers with children, only 5 percent could have their children taken care of by nursery schools; the others had to make their own arrangements.

Beneath the noise of enthusiastic patriotism, there were many people who thought war was wrong, even in the circumstances of Fascist aggression. Out of 10 million drafted for the armed forces during World War II, only 43,000 refused to fight. But this was three times the proportion of C.O.'s (conscientious objectors) in World War I. Of these 43,000, about 6,000 went to prison, which was, proportionately, four times the number of C.O.'s who went to prison during World War I. Of every six men in federal prison, one was there as a C.O.

Many more than 43,000 refusers did not show up for the draft at all. The government lists about 350,000 cases of draft evasion, including technical violations as well as actual desertion, so it is hard to tell the true number, but it may be that the number of men who either did not show up or claimed C.O. status was in the hundreds of thousands—not a small number. And this in the face of an American community almost unanimously for the war.

Among those soldiers who were not conscientious objectors, who seemed willing fighters, it is hard to know how much resentment there was against authority, against having to fight in a war whose aims were unclear, inside a military **machine** whose lack of democracy was very clear. No one recorded the **bitterness** of enlisted men against the special privileges of officers in the army of a country known as a democracy. To give just one instance: combat crews in the air force in the European theater, going to the base movies between **bombing** missions, found two lines—an officers' line (short), and an **enlisted** men's line (very long). There were two mess halls, even as they prepared to go into combat: the enlisted men's food was different—worse—than the officers'.

The literature that followed World War II, James Jones's *From Here to Eternity*, Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, and Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, **captured** this GI anger against the army "brass." In *The Naked and the Dead*, the soldiers talk in battle, and one of them says: "The only thing wrong with this Army is it never lost a war."

Toglio was shocked. "You think we ought to lose this one?"

Red found himself carried away. "What have I against the goddam Japs? You think I care if they keep this fuggin jungle? What's it to me if Cummings gets another star?"

"General Cummings, he's a good man," Martinez said.

"There ain't a good officer in the world," Red stated.

There seemed to be widespread indifference, even hostility, on the part of the Negro community to the war despite the attempts of Negro newspapers and Negro leaders to mobilize black sentiment. Lawrence Wittner (*Rebels Against War*) quotes a black journalist: "The Negro . . . is angry, resentful, and utterly apathetic about the war. 'Fight for what?' he is asking. 'This war doesn't mean a thing to me. If we win I lose, so what?'" A black army officer, home on furlough, told friends in Harlem he had been in hundreds of bull sessions with Negro soldiers and found no interest in the war.

A student at a Negro college told his teacher: "The Army jim-crows us. The Navy lets us serve only as messmen. The Red Cross refuses our blood. Employers and labor unions shut us out. Lynchings continue. We are disenfranchised, jim-crowed, spat upon. What more could Hitler do than that?" NAACP leader Walter White repeated this to a black audience of several thousand people in the Midwest, thinking they would disapprove, but instead, as he recalled: "To my surprise and dismay the audience burst into such applause that it took me some thirty or forty seconds to quiet it."

In January 1943, there appeared in a Negro newspaper this "Draftee's Prayer":

Dear Lord, today
I go to war:
To fight, to die,
Tell me what for?
Dear Lord, I'll fight,
I do not fear,
Germans or Japs;
My fears are here.
America!

But there was no organized Negro opposition to the war. In fact, there was little organized opposition from any source. The Communist party was enthusiastically in support. The Socialist party was divided, unable to make a clear statement one way or the other.

A few small anarchist and pacifist groups refused to back the war. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom said: "... war between nations or classes or races cannot permanently settle conflicts or heal the wounds that brought them into being." The *Catholic Worker* wrote: "We are still pacifists. . . ."

The difficulty of merely calling for "peace" in a world of capitalism, Fascism, Communism—dynamic ideologies, aggressive actions—troubled some pacifists. They began to speak of "revolutionary nonviolence." A. J. Muste of the Fellowship of Reconciliation said in later years: "I was not impressed with the sentimental, easygoing pacifism of the earlier part of the century. People then felt that if they sat and talked pleasantly of peace and love, they would solve the problems of the world." The world was in the midst of a revolution, Muste realized, and those against violence must take revolutionary action, but without violence. A movement of revolutionary pacifism would have to "make effective contacts with oppressed and minority groups such as Negroes, share-croppers, industrial workers."

Only one organized socialist group opposed the war unequivocally. This was the Socialist Workers Party. The Espionage Act of 1917, still on the books, applied to wartime statements. But in 1940, with the United States not yet at war, Congress passed the Smith Act. This took Espionage Act prohibitions against talk or writing that would lead to refusal of duty in the armed forces and applied them to peacetime. The Smith Act also made it a crime to advocate the overthrow of the government by force and violence, or to join any group that advocated this, or to publish anything with such ideas. In Minneapolis in 1943, eighteen members of the Socialist Workers party were convicted for belonging to a party whose ideas, expressed in its Declaration of Principles, and in the *Communist Manifesto*, were said to violate the Smith Act. They were sentenced to prison terms, and the Supreme Court refused to review their case.

A few voices continued to insist that the real war was inside each nation: Dwight Macdonald's wartime magazine *Politics* presented, in early 1945, an article by the French worker-philosopher Simone Weil:

Whether the mask is labelled Fascism, Democracy, or Dictatorship of the Proletariat, our great adversary remains the Apparatus—the bureaucracy, the police, the military. Not the one facing us across the frontier or the battlelines, which is not so much our enemy as our brothers' enemy, but the one that calls itself our protector and makes us its slaves. No matter what the circumstances, the worst betrayal will always be to subordinate ourselves to this Apparatus, and to trample underfoot, in its service, all human values in ourselves and in others.

Still, the vast bulk of the American population was mobilized, in the army, and in civilian life, to fight the war, and the atmosphere of war enveloped more and more Americans. Public opinion polls show large majorities of soldiers favoring the draft for the postwar period. Hatred against the enemy, against the Japanese particularly, became widespread. Racism was clearly at work. *Time* magazine, reporting the battle of Iwo Jima, said: "The ordinary unreasoning Jap is ignorant. Perhaps he is human. Nothing . . . indicates it."

So, there was a mass base of support for what became the heaviest bombardment of civilians ever undertaken in any war: the aerial attacks on German and Japanese cities. One might argue that this popular support made it a "people's war." But if "people's war" means a war of people against attack, a defensive war—if it means a war fought for humane reasons instead of for the privileges of an elite, a war against the few, not the many—then the tactics of all-out aerial assault against the populations of Germany and Japan destroy that notion.

Italy had bombed cities in the Ethiopian war; Italy and Germany had bombed civilians in the Spanish Civil War; at the start of World War II German planes dropped bombs on Rotterdam in Holland, Coventry in England, and elsewhere. Roosevelt had described these as "inhuman barbarism that has profoundly shocked the conscience of humanity."

These German bombings were very small compared with the British and American bombings of German cities. In January 1943 the Allies met at Casablanca and agreed on large-scale air attacks to achieve "the destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic system and the undermining of the morale of the German people to the point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened." And so, the saturation bombing of German cities began—with thousand-plane raids on Cologne, Essen, Frankfurt, Hamburg. The English flew at night with no pretense of aiming at "military" targets; the Americans flew in the daytime and pretended precision, but bombing from high altitudes made that impossible. The climax of this terror bombing was the bombing of Dresden in early 1945, in which the tremendous heat generated by the bombs created a vacuum into which fire leaped swiftly in a great firestorm through the city. More than 100,000 died in Dresden. (Winston Churchill, in his wartime memoirs, confined himself to this account of the incident: "We made a heavy raid in the latter month on Dresden, then a centre of communication of Germany's Eastern Front.") * TO Here

The bombing of Japanese cities continued the strategy of saturation bombing to destroy civilian morale; one nighttime fire-bombing of