

## FIVE

# THE RAMPARTS WE WATCH

THE DRIVE FOR NATIONAL UNITY WENT FAR BEYOND GOVERNMENT propaganda and censorship. Among the semiofficial groups aiming at suppressing general opposition to the war were the Home Defense League, the Liberty League, the Knights of Liberty, the American Rights League, the Anti-Yellow Dog League, the American Anti-Anarchist Association, the Boy Spies of America, the Seditious Slammers, and the Terrible Threateners!<sup>1</sup> Moreover, each state had its own Council of Defense, with branches in every county and city, often focusing upon the German American "threat."

Certain voluntary organizations were particularly active. In November 1916, four professional writers founded the Vigilantes, a group organized to foster the preparedness movement. Defining itself as a "patriotic, anti-pacifist, nonpartisan organization of Authors, Artists and others," with offices on New York's Fifth Avenue, by mid-1918 it included many prominent figures. Among them were novelists Booth Tarkington and Gertrude Atherton; muckrakers Mark Sullivan, Samuel Hopkins Adams, and Ida Tarbell; publicist Bruce Barton; columnist Don Marquis; editors Lyman Abbott and William Allen White; historian Albert Bushnell Hart; philosopher Ralph Barton Perry; and former

Yale football coach Walter Camp. Several Wall Street financiers bankrolled the effort, including Vincent Astor, First National Bank's George F. Baker, and Kuhn, Loeb's Jacob Schiff. Theodore Roosevelt contributed generously.

The Vigilantes promoted Liberty Loans, conservation of food and fuel, and the War Savings campaign while fighting the Socialist Party, the Hearst publications, pacifist groups, the German-language press, and the teaching of German in primary and secondary schools. Its volunteer authors contributed to 15,000 newspapers serving 53 million readers.

George Creel found the group suspect. When eighty Vigilante writers offered their service to the Committee on Public Information (CPI), he replied, "We don't want you. You're all Roosevelt men!"<sup>2</sup> Vigilante illustrators Charles Dana Gibson and James Montgomery Flagg did, however, work closely with the CPI.

The National Security League was far more visible—and controversial. It had been founded in 1914 by Solomon Stanwood Menken, a prominent Manhattan lawyer, to warn against a German military attack and to make U.S. forces combat-ready. When honorary president Joseph H. Choate, jurist and diplomat, died in May 1917, he was replaced by Elihu Root. As early as that June, the NSL boasted 290 branches; it had established ninety Home Defense bodies, held several thousand meetings, and distributed 20 million pieces of literature. During the conflict, it sponsored five hundred speakers. Much financing came from Henry Clay Frick, Cornelius Vanderbilt III, and the Carnegie Corporation. In the spring of 1918, Theodore Roosevelt toured the Middle West under NSL auspices. By the end of the war, it claimed 85,000 members and branches in twenty-two states.<sup>3</sup>

Once the United States became a full-scale belligerent, the NSL stressed internal security and the dangers of "hyphenated Americanism." It took the lead in advocating military tribunals for spies, enemy aliens, and Americans opposed to the war. In time it called upon educational institutions to inquire carefully into the loyalty of their faculty. Its educational director, Princeton historian Robert McElroy, mourned that "the melting pot has not melted" as he toured nine states and addressed 45,000 people. After the war, Harvard historian Albert Bushnell Hart, who had preceded McElroy as NSL educational director, admitted to a Senate subcommittee that effec-

tive propaganda required simplistic arguments, uncluttered with academic complexities.<sup>4</sup>

On April 6, 1918, McElroy attracted much controversy when, in a speech in Madison, Wisconsin, he told several thousand people that "this state has been on trial as to whether it is American or German." Wary rain-soaked university cadets, listening to three hours of speeches in an unheated arena, showed their irritation by fidgeting, shuffling their feet, and clicking their rifle triggers. McElroy snapped, "By God, I believe you are traitors!" After the meeting, he claimed that at least 60 percent of the audience was disloyal. Even after NSL president Menken traveled to Madison and reported that McElroy should apologize, the executive committee endorsed the professor's remarks. Creel was furious. In a letter to William E. Dodd, historian at the University of Chicago, he wrote, "Few instances have struck me as more disgraceful than the McElroy affair. . . . The National Security League seems to put press notices above patriotism."<sup>5</sup>

In late June 1918, Menken, a Democrat with reformist leanings, praised the Hearst papers for their pro-military stance, encumbers that met with Theodore Roosevelt's scorn and Root's threatened resignation. He immediately found himself replaced by attorney Charles E. Lydecker, a conservative Republican who proved to be a weak leader. Members of the Hearst staff, including the publisher himself, had contributed to the NSL from its inception. Feeling strongly insulted, the publisher commented, "Poor little Menken, long-time cabin boy of the black craft Plunderbund, has at last been made to walk the plank by its brethren."<sup>6</sup>

If anything the American Defense Society, founded in 1915, was more militant. Like the NSL, it was established to agitate for a larger army and navy. Unlike the NSL, however, it directly attacked the Wilson administration. Formally chaired by Elon Hooker, who headed a New York electrochemical concern, it was dominated by Theodore Roosevelt, who in January 1918 became the honorary president. Early in 1917, the advisory board was headed by David Jayne Hill, who had been TR's ambassador to Germany. Other members included TR himself; Robert Bacon, President Taft's ambassador to France; banker Perry Belmont, vice president of the Navy League; Charles J. Bonaparte, in turn TR's secretary of the navy and attorney general; Princeton president John Grier Hibben; automobile manufacturer

Henry B. Joy; and military inventor Hudson Maxim. A year later, Charles Stebbins Fairchild, Grover Cleveland's secretary of the treasury, was added. Not surprisingly, most members backed the writers group, the Vigilantes. In January 1918, C. S. Thompson, ADS founder and chairman of its publicity committee, embarrassed the organization when he was investigated by the Justice Department for spreading false rumors concerning alleged U.S. arms shipments to Germany.<sup>7</sup>

Upon U.S. entry into the war, the ADS stressed "100% Americanism." It pushed loyalty oaths for teachers, opposed the teaching of German in city schools, wanted all German-owned insurance companies closed, and sought to expel Robert La Follette from the Senate for giving a supposedly seditious address. In late August 1917, the ADS created an American Vigilante Patrol that would charge "seditious" street orators with disorderly conduct. Early in 1918, it sought to organize small groups of citizens in each community who would divide all residents into the categories of "loyal," "disloyal," "doubtful," and "unknown." By August, the ADS reported that 200,000 had signed its pledge to boycott German goods for the rest of their lives. An ADS pamphlet by William T. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Park, advocated dropping German language instruction for all schools. He opposed the importing of German wares for the next hundred years. He continued, "After the war is over, the less we hear in America of the German language and of German literature, art, music, art and science, the better for all concerned."<sup>8</sup>

The Wilson administration found the ADS destructive. In September 1918, the president wrote former California congressman William Kent (Prog. Rep.): "It is astonishing to me that some of the responsible men whose names are given as Vice Presidents or Trustees should lend their authority to such damnable stuff—for it is nothing less." In his memoirs, Creel saw both the NSL and the ADS as singularly obnoxious: "At all times their patriotism was a thing of screams, violence, and extremes, and their savage intolerances had the burn of acid." Even TR, irritated by scandals and mismanagement, threatened to resign from the ADS.<sup>9</sup>

The largest of such organizations, "vigilante" in the true sense, was the American Protective League. Membership fluctuated widely over a year and a half, but it boasted almost half a million in its ranks

by war's end. Just after Germany had declared unrestricted submarine warfare, Albert Briggs, president of a Chicago outdoor advertising firm and veteran of the Spanish-American War, sought to ferret out spies and German sympathizers, doing so by recruiting private citizens as a volunteer auxiliary to the government. Because of his extensive business contacts, he appeared ideal for this task. He approached Hinton Clabaugh, head of the Chicago branch of the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation (BOI), who accepted their offer. Bruce Bielaski, national BOI chief with headquarters in Washington, realized that his agency was greatly understaffed and welcomed the volunteers.<sup>10</sup>

Briggs took the name American Protective League, first used by an old secret society in Maryland, for his new organization. Headquarters were initially established in Chicago's People's Gas Building, rooms having been donated by utilities mogul Samuel Insull. In November, the offices were moved to Washington, where they occupied an entire building.

At the time of Wilson's war message, about a hundred APL branches were being organized. The Eddystone explosion on April 10, 1917, caused factory owners to seek the protection that neither federal nor state governments appeared able to provide. On paper the organization appeared most effective, having a quasi-military structure of lieutenants, captains, and operatives. It drew from the more affluent and influential levels of society, recruiting a disproportionate number of bankers, hotel managers, retired police chiefs, insurance executives, railroad presidents, and company directors.

At first, however, APL administration was chaotic. Local units were practically autonomous. Briggs himself served as the only link between the branches and Washington. He lacked control over his membership, unable to impose discipline. Only when headquarters were moved to Washington did some semblance of order ensue.

Almost immediately, the APL was caught in turf wars between the Justice and Treasury Departments. In mid-May, Treasury Secretary William Gibbs McAdoo, who had hoped for a unified intelligence bureau under his control, warned Wilson. If, he said, the APL was allowed to continue, "suspicion will be engendered among our people, smoldering race antagonisms will burst into flame, and the melting pot

of America will be a melting pot no longer, but a crucible out of which will flash the molten lead of suspicion and dissension." Writing Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory early in June, he accused the Justice Department of promoting a scheme whose very existence "is fraught with the gravest danger of misunderstanding, confusion and even fraud." In a letter to Wilson, the treasury secretary compared the danger to the injustices performed by the Sons of Liberty during the American Revolution. Within a week, Gregory replied to McAdoo, claiming that the APL volunteers had been most valuable.<sup>11</sup>

By this time, the president had entered the controversy. On June 4, Wilson wrote Gregory, finding such an association "very dangerous." "I wonder if there is any way we could stop it." The attorney general countered that the APL was a patriotic organization. Possessing up to 100,000 members, it had been a tremendous help to the Justice Department's BOI. The president, satisfied with Gregory's explanation, dropped the matter. Historian David M. Kennedy observes of its members: "They went their meddling and noxious way, unmo- lested and even supported by the administration."<sup>12</sup>

In late June, Bielaski permitted the APL to bear the title of "Organized with the Approval and Operating Under the Department of Justice of the United States." By August the first news story concerning the APL appeared. The *Chicago Tribune* reported that more than 200,000 members were on guard in "every city, town, and hamlet"; a million people served as intelligence field operatives. "Your own banker is just as likely to be a secret agent as your haberdasher or your chauffeur. . . . A street car conductor is welcomed just as graciously as a capitalist." In Cleveland, St. Louis, and San Francisco, women were members, but in July 1918 the directors banned females.<sup>13</sup>

It took little time for the APL to make its presence felt. From rounding up aliens to illegally arresting "slackers," it acted with abandon. Enrollees would tap phones, bug offices, and even would pose as plumbers and gas repairmen to enter homes illegally. Clergy would be asked about congregants, teachers about pupils. Nothing was sacred—bank accounts, medical records, real estate transactions, even the mails. In Minnesota, the police deputized APL members, which allowed them to arrest citizens. Recruits could pose as reporters, salesmen for autos or Liberty Bonds, or representatives of credit bureaus or insur-

ance companies. Members loved to play detective, lurking at street corners and in hotel lobbies and sporting official-looking badges labeled "American Protective League—Secret Service" that one could purchase for seventy-five cents.

Some activities were authorized, such as making character investigations of civil service positions, enforcing laws against bootleggers, checking on jury qualifications, enforcing vice and liquor bans around military camps. In New York City, APL volunteers asked would-be army officers if they had approved of the German invasion of France and Belgium or the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Were they susceptible to bribery, blackmail, or "bad women"? The Brooklyn Navy Yard allowed the APL to investigate its 16,000 employees.<sup>14</sup>

McAdoo kept up his opposition. Writing Attorney General Gregory early in January 1918, he pointed to the APL's "many abuses," adding:

I am frank to say that if I were a German spy I should want nothing better than the opportunity of joining this organization, getting one of its "Secret Service" badges, and carrying on my nefarious activities under the guise of this organization. . . . No volunteer organization should, in my opinion, be entrusted with power of this character, which can be irresponsibly exercised with resultant injustices of the gravest sort to the people.<sup>15</sup>

Thomas Gregory remained supportive, though he did call upon APL directors to oppose an increasing wave of hysteria. At times members heeded his request. One intervened when a New York factory woman was about to whip a fellow employee for pro-German remarks; others rescued a man about to be personally painted yellow for opposing a Liberty Bond drive; still others foiled an armed vigilante attack on a German American community.<sup>16</sup>

In 1918, APL activities were extended. In June, it authorized movie director Cecil B. De Mille, who owned one of the few planes in California, to organize an "Aerial Division" on the West Coast; its task involved engaging in air intelligence. That month, thanks to a distressed Polish woman living in Chicago concerned about her husband, APL members arrested an entire Jehovah's Witnesses congregation. Because of APL evidence, Joseph F. Rutherford, president of the International

Bible Students Association (the formal name of the Witnesses), and seven other members were sentenced to Atlanta Penitentiary for the rest of the war. The APL undertook investigations for the Food and Fuel Administration, reporting on enemy employees. Its Washington State unit merged with the State Minute Men, a private organization focusing on suppressing units of the Industrial Workers of the World. The newly formed cadre extended anti-IWW activity and purged German influences in the schools. In late July, the APL served as the field office for Alien Property Custodian A. Mitchell Palmer, searching out German-held assets.<sup>17</sup>

Almost from the outset, though, the APL faced obstacles. Relations with the Justice Department were always shaky. Intelligence work was taken over by the Secret Service, the War and Navy Departments, and the Industrial Plants Division of the Labor Department. State Councils of Defense and commissions of public safety rivaled APL work.

Several incidents made the APL look foolish. In New Orleans, the local leader sought to outlaw all horse racing. George Creel protested to Bielaski that APL staffers were investigating his friends. The State Department complained that members sought information directly from U.S. consuls overseas. One rural North Carolina member dressed up as a self-styled marshal, wearing an old Texas Ranger uniform, sporting a high-powered Winchester, and pocketing a \$50 bounty for every deserter he rounded up.<sup>18</sup>

During the summer of 1918, as U.S. troops were engaging German forces in Europe, APL volunteers played a prominent role in rounding up men suspected of being draft dodgers. City after city experienced "slacker raids," including Milwaukee, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Detroit, Galveston, Trenton, and Sacramento. Theaters, vaudeville houses, cabarets, bars, poolrooms, restaurants, railway stations—no public place seemed immune. In mid-July, the Cubs' Weeghman Park in Chicago was raided. So, too, was the Barnum and Bailey Circus.<sup>19</sup>

On September 3, the APL took a leading role in the massive "slacker raids" of New York City. Acting alongside soldiers and sailors, members assumed posts at all subway exits, rounding up thousands, who stretched the city's armories beyond capacity. The raids continued two more days, corralling 60,187 men but yielding only

1,999 draft dodgers. Even Wall Street was not immune—vigilantes interrupted trading. A U.S. marshal congratulated APL director Briggs for "splendid work."<sup>20</sup>

Outrage was instantaneous, even reaching the Senate. Hiram Johnson likened the APL actions to the French Revolution's Reign of Terror. Only in Bolshevik Russia, remarked Albert Fall, could such actions take place. Reed Smoot (R-Utah) introduced a resolution calling for a national investigation. The *New York World*, referring to APL operatives, noted that arrests were made without warrants by "men destitute of official standing."<sup>21</sup>

A minority defended the roundup. Senator Andrievus Jones (D-N.M.) praised the "most patriotic" people involved, saying that "the results justify the means." Senator Miles Poindexter declared that the raids had imposed no "great hardship" or "serious mistreatment" upon anyone. To Hearst columnist Arthur Brisbane, those who objected were "like the young English lady who wanted the war to stop because she could no longer get the right kind of dog biscuit for her poodle."<sup>22</sup>

Attorney General Gregory had long protected the APL. Now he hedged on the matter, reporting to President Wilson that the organization betrayed an "excess of zeal for the public good." Conceding that "a considerable number of persons" were detained unjustly, he remarked in a letter made public, "Such mistakes always occur in exercising the power of arrest."<sup>23</sup> Neither Gregory nor Wilson ever disavowed these raids.

Yet, given the extensive negative publicity, the APL soon fell apart. The organization had caught no saboteurs and entrapped no spies. Stripping the APL of its quasi-official status, Bielaski told APL agents that they had never possessed the authority to make arrests. In October, the association's New York City chief ordered that all operators turn in their badges. The ending of draft calls, the influenza epidemic, and of course the armistice showed no further demand for such an organization. On February 1, 1919, it disbanded.<sup>24</sup>

APL chronicler Joan M. Jensen concludes that none of those arrested was accused of espionage: all had simply opposed the war or were against Wilson's means of waging it. Historian David M. Kennedy writes that the sheer existence of such organizations reveals "the

unusual state of American society in World War I, when fear corrupted usually sober minds, and residual suspicions of strong government disposed public officials to a dangerous reliance on private means."<sup>25</sup> In retrospect, what is particularly disconcerting is the informal deputizing of a nondescript band of citizens to take on what are usually police functions, often violating constitutional rights in the process.

No prominent American embodied the drive for imposed unity as much as Theodore Roosevelt, and none stirred such controversy. His attacks against "hyphenated Americans" were long-standing, the nation's entry into the war simply intensifying them. Not only did he make many public addresses. He wrote a monthly column for the *Metropolitan* magazine and, more important, contributed a newspaper column several times a week for the *Kansas City Star*. Beginning with the issue of September 17, 1917, the column was syndicated in fifty leading dailies throughout the country. For Roosevelt the war served as a time of political recovery, allowing him to heal the 1912 breach with his party's Old Guard and receive consideration as the leading presidential prospect in 1920.

No friend of civil liberties, TR wanted the entire nation subject to martial law. In fact, he maintained that military courts should try all dissenters. Conscientious objectors should be made to perform army service, but without bearing arms. If they refused, they must be subjected to hard labor behind the French lines. All church services and Sunday School classes ought to be conducted in English, which should be the nation's only language. The German American writer George Sylvester Viereck, in 1912 a leading Roosevelt backer, deserved jail. Directly naming the *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung* and the Hearst chain, Roosevelt called them "enemies of America." In August 1917, TR appealed to the police to make "short shrift" of dissenting newspapers and "street-talking traitors." By April 1918, he sought the imprisonment of any American who "directly or indirectly, assails any of our allies, notably England, but also Japan." A month later, he called pacifists "the tools of alien militarism." If one wrote him criticizing the U.S. government or the Allies, TR would turn the letter over to the Justice Department for investigation and prosecution.<sup>26</sup>

TR's attacks on Wilson marked him off from many who sought an imposed patriotism. The administration's rejection of a Roosevelt

army division simply added to his bitterness. In a work titled *The Foes of Our Own Household*, published late in 1917, TR wrote, "The leaders who have led us wrong are these foes." TR biographer John Milton Cooper Jr. notes that it is not difficult to guess just who these foes were. Just two weeks before the armistice, the former president approvingly quoted a supposed slur made informally in the U.S. House: "Here's our Czar, last in war, first toward peace, long may he waver."<sup>27</sup>

Some longtime Roosevelt foes believed that he nevertheless served a useful purpose. Mainline Republicans saw in TR's columns evidence that Wilson had not totally succeeded in muzzling the press. The far more radical *Nation* remarked, "It is largely to him that we owe our ability to discuss peace terms and to criticize at all."<sup>28</sup>

Given his views, TR found himself strongly attacked. German Americans were particularly incensed. In a 1917 Fourth of July speech, Roosevelt assailed those who, though favoring the United States against Germany, still sided with Germany against Britain. *Issues and Events* accused the former president of demanding that "every German must kiss the English colors and pray to hear of their sons and brothers slaughtered by English Zulus and Maoris, and Berlin sacked, as our English cousins sacked Washington in 1812."<sup>29</sup>

Others felt similarly. In October 1917, Hearst's *New York American* claimed that TR had "ceased to think sanely any more." In May 1918, it accused TR of suffering from "mental and moral deterioration" and "the childish mental processes" of old age. The newspaper carried a cartoon of this "moral traitor" showing the kaiser patting TR on the back, saying, "He's Good Enough for Me."<sup>30</sup>

The literary critic Stuart P. Sherman wrote, "Victory for Mr. Roosevelt means the permanent establishment of militarism in the United States," for the ex-president sought permanent universal military service and seemed grimly determined to keep the population mobilized for "the next war." In September 1917, the *Chicago Tribune*, an overtly nationalistic organ, urged him to moderate his criticism, rebuking him for "digging into the rubbish heap of past mistakes to assail the Administration." When Kermit Roosevelt accepted a commission in the British army, Viereck's *American Weekly* accused TR's son of placing the Union Jack above the Star-Spangled Banner in order to realize Cecil Rhodes's dream of an Anglo-American union.<sup>31</sup>

Wilson's cabinet was furious over TR's broadsides. In October 1917, Daniels argued that Roosevelt's writings were aiding Germany more than those of "the little fellows" being arrested for sedition. Burleson considered banning the *Kansas City Star* from the mails. A month later, McAdoo referred to the former president's "utter hypocrisy and lack of patriotism."<sup>32</sup>

Obviously aware of TR's popularity, the administration realized it could do nothing. A postal inspector did visit the offices of the *Kansas City Star* yet no action resulted. In an interview in the fall of 1917, Burleson commented, "What he says is not true, but I don't think it would affect the morale or fighting spirit of our soldiers." In December 1917, Wilson articulated his attitude: "I really think the best way to treat Mr. Roosevelt is to make no notice of him. That breaks his heart and is the best punishment that can be administered." Just after the armistice, journalist Ray Stannard Baker remarked, "Nothing could have been better calculated to infuriate a man of Roosevelt's temperament more than this. It drove him wild!"<sup>33</sup>

By the beginning of 1918, however, Wilson's backers were increasingly vocal in their response. On January 21, during a three-hour Senate debate that was the most tempestuous since the one over conscription, William J. Stone called Roosevelt "the most potent agent the Kaiser has in America." Lodge snapped back, "Is it treason to say that our lack of preparation has cost thousands and thousands of lives of our allies, hundreds of lives already of our own men, and uncounted millions of money?"<sup>34</sup>

Certain facts about Roosevelt are not commonly known. All during the conflict, his health was deteriorating. Prone to irrational rages, in October 1917 he became so fatigued that his wife, Edith, sent him to a health farm in Connecticut. In February 1918, suffering from fevers contracted four years earlier on the Amazon, TR underwent surgery on his inner ear. At one point, the surgeon called his situation "hopeless." Roosevelt had a sense of increasing irrelevance, writing his son Archie that month, "I am not in sympathy with the bulk of my fellow countrymen, and therefore am no longer fit to lead the public men or politicians."<sup>35</sup>

All four of Roosevelt's sons saw military service overseas. The loss of his son Quentin, an AEF pilot shot down behind German lines in

July 1918, was a blow from which he never recovered. On the very day of the armistice, TR was rushed to New York's Roosevelt Hospital, and on January 6, 1919, he died, having suffered six weeks of pain in his legs, arm, and hand.

There is a risk, however, in stereotyping Roosevelt as a crude advocate of repression. During the July 1917 riots in East St. Louis, in which nine whites and thirty-nine Blacks were killed, TR offered far more condemnation than any other leader, including President Wilson; he claimed there had been "no real provocation" for this mob violence. His address in New York's Carnegie Hall on the matter almost resulted in a fist fight with labor leader Samuel Gompers, with whom he shared a platform. Amid the anti-German hysteria, to which he strongly contributed, he claimed that discrimination against loyal Americans of German stock was "base infamy," doing so as he cited the heroism of AEF pilot Eddie Rickenbacker. (In reality, Rickenbacker was born in Columbus, Ohio, of Swiss ancestry.) Indeed, TR boasted of the "German blood" in his own veins. Unfortunately, writes biographer Kathleen Dalton, "that fine distinction was lost on audiences already inclined toward nativism."<sup>36</sup>

In regard to domestic policy, TR very much remained the Bull Moose reformer. In a 1917 Labor Day speech in Chatham, New York, Roosevelt called for an 80 percent excess-profit tax and continued long-standing pleas for health, old-age, and unemployment insurance; he favored heavily graduated income and inheritance taxes. "After declaring," he told his daughter Ethel in December, "that all men are equal we cannot expect that permanently the 3% will own the property and have the power: the 97% will become restless, are restless." In March 1918, he wrote a California progressive that the British Labor Party was "about 90% right." A month later, TR told reformist editor William Allen White, "If the Romanovs of our social and industrial world are kept at the head of our government the result will be Bolshevism, and Bolshevism means disaster to liberty writ large across the face of this continent."<sup>37</sup> His domestic policy certainly rivaled the progressivism of the Democrats.

Biographers offer varied appraisals of the old Rough Rider's role. Kathleen Dalton notes that TR eagerly sought to advance domestic reform even as the press continually focused on "bugle call" messages.

However, the great bulk of his writings and speeches were devoted to issues of mobilization and loyalty, not to the progressive cause. In addressing Roosevelt's wartime stridency, Cooper notes that TR's stress upon service and sacrifice in 1917-18 allowed him to integrate his views on domestic and foreign policy better than at any time since 1912. His continued attacks on "materialism" revealed that he had certainly not forsaken the cause of renewal at home. No shallow, juvenile romantic, the ex-president welcomed the grim and brutal aspects of war, for only by passing through suffering could men gain full humanity. As TR himself wrote in September 1917, "To my fellow Americans I preach the sword of the Lord and of Gideon."<sup>38</sup>

As for the ultrapatriotic leagues, any positive effect gained by their activities was far exceeded by their destructive force. In many ways, however, the "countersubversive" activities of the National Security League and the American Defense Society are the logical outcome of their prewar undertakings, with their continual focus on a German menace. The American Protective League was a somewhat different matter, for relatively obscure leaders were engaging in major vigilante action. As in the case of Burleson's censorship activities, Wilson was acquiescent. Roosevelt could have served as a positive force, rallying both reformers and many mainline Republicans in support of the general war effort. As we will see, Roosevelt had legitimate concerns over abysmal training conditions and snags in weapons production. He could not, however, separate valid criticism from vindictive assaults. Serving as a antithetical model to such GOP leaders as William Howard Taft and Charles Evans Hughes, in reality he became something of a pathetic individual.

To see the antisubversion crusade, one must take a close look at its targets.

## SIX FOES OF OUR OWN HOUSEHOLD

THEODORE ROOSEVELT IMPLIED THAT THE "FOES OF OUR own household" lay primarily among his opponents in the Wilson administration. Many Americans, however, thought in terms of a far wider scope. Seldom if ever had the United States seen so much repression, legal or otherwise. Not since the presidency of John Adams had Congress passed a law to punish seditious speech and that legislation was short-lived. British publicist Norman Angell later recalled that "the mob mind in the United States often outdid that of Britain in violence and silliness." Only 10 out of 1,500 Americans arrested under the Espionage Act were actually accused of being German agents. Much suppression took place below the federal level, particularly in the West. State and municipal agencies, often working through Councils of Defense, were supplemented by private vigilante activity. In Minnesota, for example, the Commission on Public Safety was a de facto agent of the state government, with the state courts enforcing its edicts!

Of all the ethnic groups in the United States, German-Americans were the most suspect. In 1917 they were a markedly distinct element in society, seeking to preserve their own identity and asserting themselves with vigor whenever