AD-A046 781 ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLL FORT LEAVENWORTH KANS F/G 5/10
AN ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN POSTER ART AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION--ETC(U)
1977 P J HICKOK

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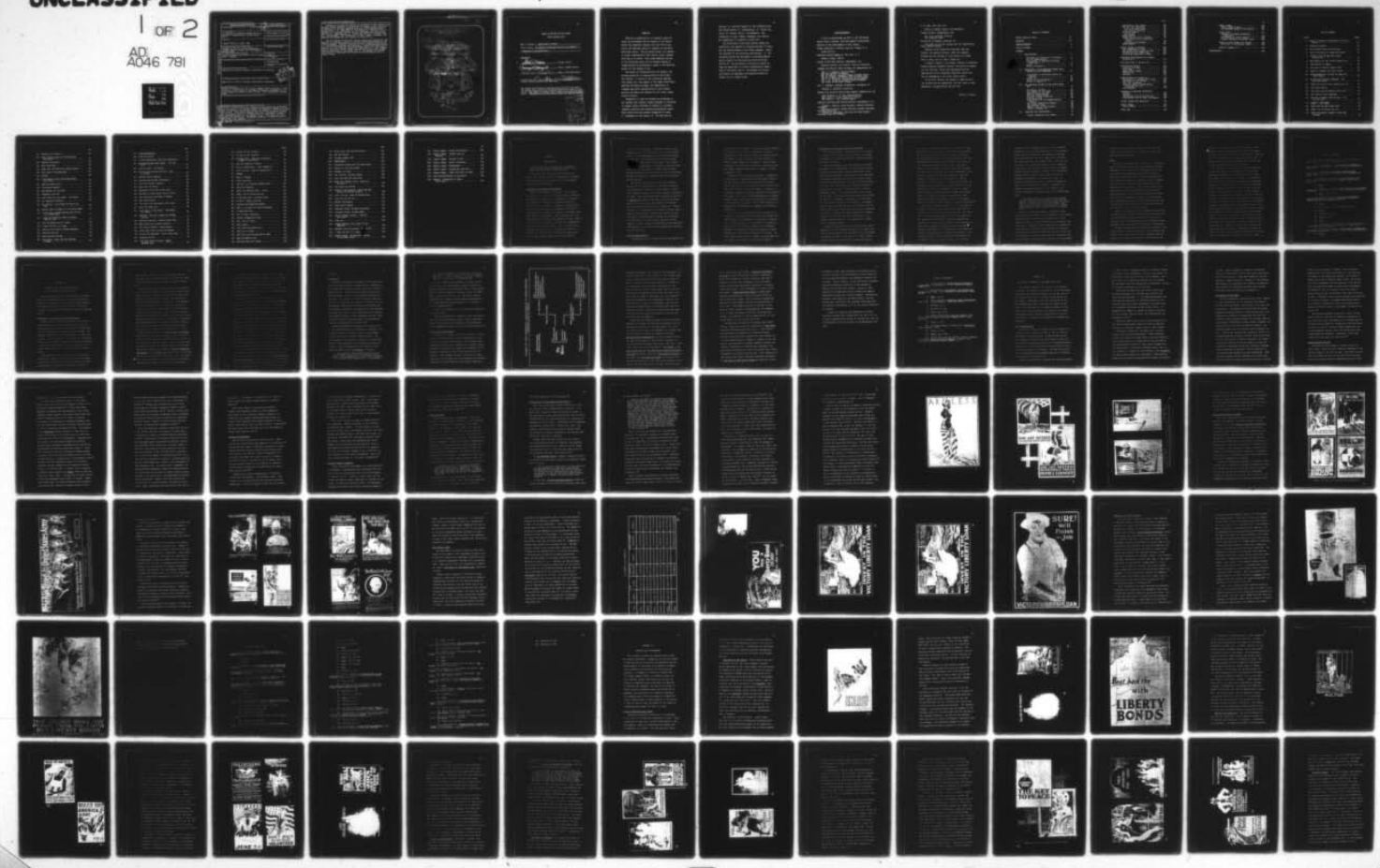

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM

1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO. 3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) An Analysis of American Poster Art as a Medium of Communication During World War I	5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Final Report 10 Jun 77 6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR(s) Hickok, Philip J., MAJ, USA	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Student at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS US Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATSW-SE	12. REPORT DATE 10 Jun 77 13. NUMBER OF PAGES 171
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS(if different from Controlling Office)	15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) Unclassified 15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE

16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES
Master of Military Art and Science (MMAS) Thesis prepared at CGSC in partial fulfillment of the Masters Program requirements, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)
Effective communication on a massive scale between the government and the people of the United States was essential between 1917 and 1919 to mobilize the American people in support of the First World War effort. This study examines the use of the pictorial poster as the primary medium of communicating the government's needs to the American people for the waging of war. The study is illustrated with 129 plates, consisting primarily of reproductions of World War I war posters.

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

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The principles of pictorial poster design are identified, and applied to selected posters to evaluate the effectiveness of the visual message. Analysis resulted in the following conclusions: 1) the pictorial poster was successful in gaining general public support for the American First World War effort; 2) the principles of pictorial poster design are applicable to visual communication regardless of the media; and 3) the graphic art poster can fulfill an important and mission-related external role in today's Army.

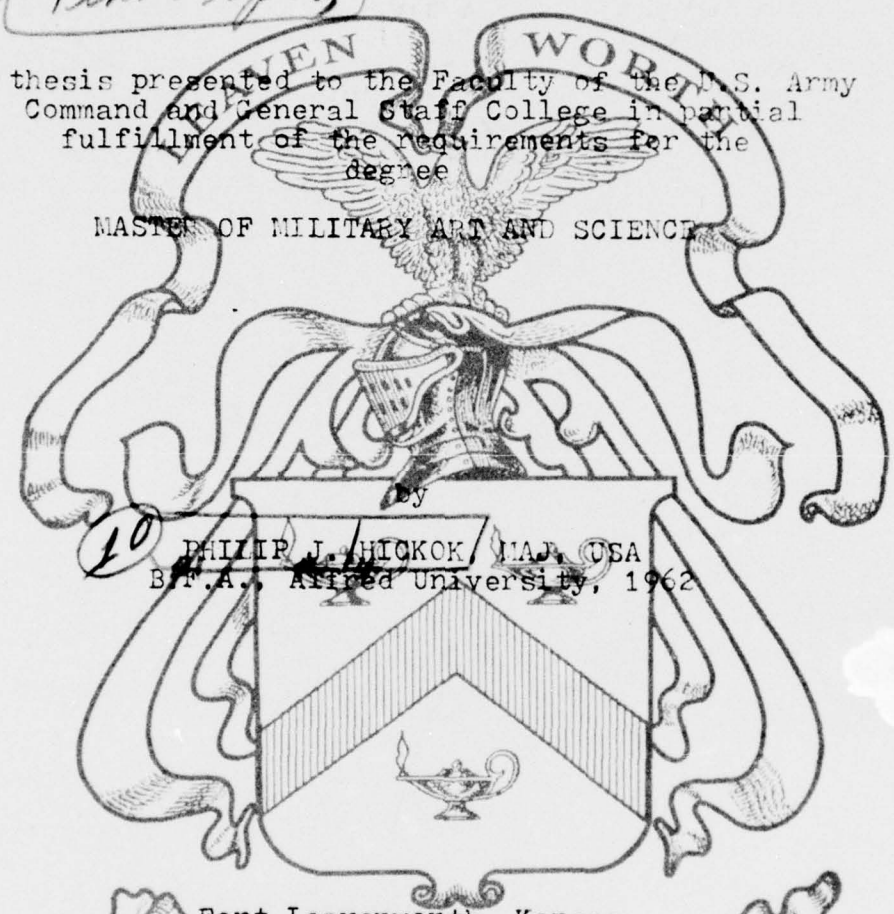
Code 33

(6) AN ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN POSTER ART AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION DURING WORLD WAR I,

(9) Final rpt.,

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE



by

(10) PHILIP J. HICKOK, MAJ, USA
B.F.A., Alfred University, 1962

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

(11) 1977

(12) 185 p.

5L5-3150

037 260.

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Name of candidate Major Philip J. Hickok

Title of thesis An Analysis of American Poster Art as a Medium of Communication During World War I

Approved by:

_____, Research Advisor

_____, Member, Graduate Faculty

_____, Member, Consulting Faculty

Accepted this 11th day of May 1977 by _____, Director, Master of Military Art and Science.

The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author and do not necessarily represent the views of either the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

Effective communication on a massive scale between the government and the people of the United States was essential between 1917 and 1919 to mobilize the American people in support of the First World War effort. The pictorial poster is a medium of visual communication that tells a story, usually with few or no words. This study examines the use of the pictorial poster as the primary medium of communicating the government's needs to the American people for the waging of war.

The study is illustrated with 129 plates, consisting primarily of reproductions of World War I war posters. A review of the literature dealing with poster art, the temper of the times (1914-1919), American military heritage, and examination of original and photo reproductions of war posters provide the basis for analysis of the visual communication effort.

Categories of need are defined as groupings of war posters with similar themes designed to reinforce, or change, public attitude or behavior to produce tangible products that answered governmental needs. This study found six primary categories of need: 1) awareness of the threat, 2) the call for re-

sources, 3) societal support of the combatants and the allied effort, 4) humanitarian, 5) finish the job-on to victory, and 6) retrenchment. The categories of need, themes, messages, and symbols are summarized in a matrix at plate 129.

The principles of pictorial poster design are identified, and applied to selected posters to evaluate the effectiveness of the visual message. Analysis resulted in the following conclusions: 1) the pictorial poster was successful in gaining general public support for the American First World War effort; 2) the principles of pictorial poster design are applicable to visual communication regardless of the media; and 3) the graphic art poster can fulfill an important and mission-related external role in today's Army.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge my debt to the following people whose interest, help and support contributed greatly to the development of this thesis.

Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, N. Y.

Linda Pullian

American Artists Magazine, New York, N. Y.

Susan E. Meyer, Editor

Center of Military History, Washington, D.C.

Marylou Gjernes, Art Curator, Army Art Activity

Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, KS

LTC J. R. Angolia, Faculty Member
MAJ Ken Johnson, Classmate
MAJ Al Officer, Graduate Degree Program Office
MAJ Don Rogers, Classmate, and his wife, Anne
COL R. W. Schlater, Consulting Faculty Member
Dr. T. R. Young II, Graduate Faculty Member
The staff of the CGSC library

Geo. C. Marshall Research Foundation, Lexington, VA

Anthony R. Crawford, Archivist

Kansas City District Recruiting Command, Kansas City, MO

John Lathrop, N. W. Ayer Representative
MAJ Ronald J. Viles, Executive Officer
SGM James W. Voss, Sergeant Major

National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

George C. Charlou, Asst Director, General Archives Division
Marilla B. Guptil, Modern Military Branch, Military Archives Division
Timothy K. Nenninger, Navy and Old Army Branch, Military Archives Division

N. W. Ayer, New York, N.Y.

Thomas E. Maxey, Senior Vice President

Truman Library, Independence, MO

Dr. B. K. Zobrist, Director
The research staff

University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

The staff of the Art Library and the Distribution Desk, Watson Library

Because of his supportive attitude, MAJ Jim Channon, my Research Advisor, made the research process and the writing of this thesis fun rather than a chore, and for that I thank him.

A special thanks to Jim Helyar, Curator in Graphics, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas for his interest, advice and assistance and the application of his invaluable editorial skills during the massaging of the final thesis draft.

To my wife, Sharon, who agreed to share me with the library and the typewriter, and who stuck to that agreement, my appreciation and my love.

Philip J. Hickok

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CHAPTE I

INTRODUCTION

> Send the word, send the word to beware,
> We'll be over, we're coming over, And we won't
> come back till it's over over there.[1]

This study will illustrate how the pictorial poster was used as a medium of communication between the government and the people of the United States during the First World War.

Rationale For Selection Of Subject

What is the benefit of a study of First World War poster art to the United States Army? Effective communication between the government and the people was essential to mobilize the American people in support of the war effort. Because it was an institution, the government was a faceless authority to the people; an authority that dealt in ideology rather than tangible commodities. That ideology had to be translated into stories that appealed to basic emotions and persuaded the people to support the government's cause. The pictorial poster, a form of visual communication, tells a story - usually with few or no words.[2] In World War I, the pictorial poster was used to gain public support for the war effort.

In order to continue to persuade people of the necessity of such emotional and threatening concepts as war, or the maintenance of a large standing army to deter war, it is beneficial to review how such c[illegible]e dealt with in the past. Once visual co[illegible]n principles, themes and trends have been identified, an evaluation of their effectiveness and applicability can contribute to current and future military communication needs between the government and the people.

The First World War period has been selected because of the availability of reference materials in an extensive collection of photographs of World War I posters housed in the Watson Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas and a complete collection of The Poster magazine covering the First World War years in the periodical department of the Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri. Concentration on the American First World War poster experience is also pertinent because that period saw the initiation of communication between the government and the people on a grand scale, and left as its legacy a visual language of patriotism, self-sacrifice and national unity that remains recognizable and useable to this day.

Art As Communication

Communication is the means by which man shares his

needs, emotions and ideas. Groups of people, societies and cultures share rules of language and custom. Communication takes various forms, or systems, within and between groups of people, the most common of which is human speech and language.[3] Another basic communication system that has been in existence since man became sophisticated enough to engage in social groupings is art.

Cultural life is created by society. Regardless of the degree of understanding he possesses concerning the social forces at work within his culture, the artist's work is influenced by that cultural life. The artist's work - the art statement - consists of a system of symbols to convey a meaning to an audience. The power of art is in its effectiveness as a communication system - its success in evoking in an audience a need, emotion, or idea.[4] Art is often used by individuals and institutions to support the customs of society.[5]

One of the more widely practiced customs of societies is to wage war, and to raise and sustain military forces for the purpose of protection or aggression. Common support of a war effort is usually required within a society to sustain the tremendous physical and emotional energies necessary to endure hardship and deprivation in pursuit of victory. An overt communication effort between the government and the people is necessary to gain public support.

Development of American Attitude Toward War

Some understanding of American military heritage is necessary to properly frame the birth, evolution, and impact of the pictorial poster in America during the First World War.

American attitudes about war grew from early experiences in the development of the American society. In early colonial times, American existence in the "New World" depended on the ability of the individual to successfully defend himself and his family from the hostile Indian menace. War evolved along different lines than the conventional European concept of just occasions, proper limits of warfare, and professional armies. The American Indian did not play by the rules - and the American colonist had to adapt to survive. In America, war became an institution for the citizen as well as the soldier. The experience of early colonial America was reinforced by the American Revolution where citizen-soldiers, organized as militia, defended the hearth against all enemies. Civilian control over the army, as stated in the Federal Constitution, simply formalized an institution of colonial life.[6]

State militias evolved into the "National Guard" keeping alive the regional nucleus of the armed citizen who could step into the soldier's role in defense of hearth and home.[7] The idea of a strong, professional standing army was alien to American culture

and society. Americans inherited a distrust of "regulars" from the "deep-seated anti-military prejudices of the mother country."[8] This hereditary distrust was strengthened by the American experience with "foreign mercenaries" employed by Britain to tame the unruly colonists between 1763 and 1775. Americans feared a strong regular military force and the power it could give an unscrupulous leader determined to establish a monarchy in the new republic.[9] When the Society of Cincinnati was established in 1783 by American and French officers to "perpetuate their comradeship, their memories, and their tradition" it was viewed with alarm and suspicion.[10] Such an organization hinted of a military caste system and aroused fears of a dangerous center of aristocracy. Even George Washington was suspicious of the threatening image it conveyed to the young and vulnerable republic.[11]

The regular soldier continued to be considered as "possibly sinister," and American attitudes about a standing army did not begin to change until the latter half of the nineteenth century.[12] As the weapons of war became more destructive, and more manpower was necessary to sustain the war effort, the necessity to find troops quickly in a crisis became critical.[13] American experience in the Mexican and Civil Wars validated the necessity for a small standing army. Volunteers, however, still outnumbered the regulars.[14] As America entered the 20th century, her colonial

heritage and the complex evolution of her citizens' attitudes about the inadvisability of a large professional army made essential the shaping of national will to gain general popular support and resources (men and money) for the waging of war. Even to this day, with the accumulated wisdom and scar tissue of a civil war, two world wars, and a number of limited expeditionary and "police" actions around the globe, American public attitude about war is the key to effective commitment of national resources. In October 1976, General George S. Brown, Chairman of the U. S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, in response to a question concerning possible U. S. reaction to a Russian triggered conventional war in the Middle East said:

> But there would be no way to react without the total will of the country and total mobilization. Because if you go into a game like that, you've got to be able to get the people. And there isn't any point in getting into it unless you're prepared to provide the force to sustain it.[15]

How do you "get the people" to support a war? In the early 20th century, the government of the United States needed to develop the national will of the American people to support American involvement in the Great War. A medium of mass communication between the government and the people was necessary to mobilize total national resources and guide the day to day life of the nation. Since neither radio nor television was yet available, the visual arts offered the link between

institutional values and individual values.[16] The vehicle for selling war to a society of citizen-soldiers was the war poster.

Scope

Chapter I (Introduction). Prior to U. S. involvement in World War I, the pictorial poster had little influence on the life of the community since it was used primarily by publishers and manufacturers to advertise household products, books, magazines, and other items of general, if limited, appeal. However, the war created a need for mass communication unparalleled in the history of the United States, and the pictorial poster reached its full maturity in America because of its unique qualifications to meet that need.[17] Subsequent chapters will define what those qualifications were and how the poster was used to communicate the needs of the United States at war for the first time on a global scale.

Chapter II (Background of the American Poster and a Review of the Literature) defines the pictorial poster and provides a brief history of the poster in America; lists its qualifications as a medium of mass communication; and reviews the literature researched.

Chapter III (The American Poster in the First World War) relates the birth and growth of the American war poster during the First World War, examining such aspects as the temper of the times, institutional and

voluntary organization for poster production, the origin of ideas and designs for posters, the phases of poster production and their relationship to the war, and the identification of themes and symbols that emerged and captured the American spirit (e.g., the stern, finger-pointing Uncle Sam image).

An analysis of the World War I poster experience is made in Chapter IV (Analysis and Conclusions) identifying phases of poster production and themes and symbols that evolved in America. The effectiveness of poster art as a mass communication medium is analyzed by looking at its use in various categories of governmental need such as the raising of men and money, and the resultant product. Poster trends in America are examined by looking at the use of the war poster in subsequent wars, the treatment of World War I themes, and the birth of new themes due to different societal circumstances and governmental needs. Anti-war themes during the Vietnam era and the use of partiotic themes for anti-war messages are noted and analyzed. Throughout the study, illustrations are provided to visually document the text. General conclusions are drawn concerning the effectiveness of the war poster as a medium of communication between the government and the people, concerning the poster as good or bad art, and concerning the future of the poster as a communication medium for the U. S. Army.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. George M. Cohan, "Over There," (New York: Leo. Feist, Inc., 1917), Refrain, p. 3.

2. Joseph Pennell, Joseph Pennell's Liberty-Loan Poster, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1918), p. 5.

3. Colin Cherry, On Human Communications, (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1971), p. 4.

4. Sidney Finkelstein, Art and Society, (New York: International Publishers Company, Inc., 1947), pp. 9-10.

5. Ibid.

6. Daniel J. Boorstin, The Americans: The Colonial Experience, (New York: Random House, 1958), pp. 347-363.

7. Ibid., pp. 371-372.

8. Marcus Cunliffe, Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America 1775-1865, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1968), p. 40.

9. Ibid.

10. Boorstin, p. 371 and Cunliffe, p. 41.

11. Ibid.

12. Cunliffe, p. 101.

13. Ibid., p. 150.

14. Ibid.

15. Hanan Lurie, "What General Brown Really Said," U. S. News and World Report, November 1, 1976, p. 64.

16. Harold F. Hutchison, The Poster: An Illustrated History from 1860, (London: Studio Vista, 1968), p. 70.

17. Ibid.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND OF THE AMERICAN POSTER AND A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a brief history and definition of the pictorial poster, lists the attributes the poster offered as a communication medium between the government and the people in 1914 - 1918, and describes the sources investigated during the research effort.

Development Of Pictorial Poster In America

Communication through pictures was first used by the cave dwellers.[1] Thus poster art can trace its origins back to the earliest recorded two-dimensional form of communication between and among humans. The messages communicated were essentially the same then as now: to inform, exhort, and persuade.[2] The poster tells a story. Before language was reduced to writing - or even more significantly, before large numbers of people became literate - that story was told without words.

The American poster owes its heritage primarily to European influences. It was borrowed from French and British sources, and later from German and other foreign styles. Japanese prints also influenced

early poster artists, and such characteristics as flatness, lack of shadows, little modeling, and "free-hand" perspective began to appear in western poster art.3

The artistic poster which enjoyed brief popularity in the United States found its roots in early 19th century France. In 1869, the first color poster was printed in France by Jules Cheret, who greatly influenced the development of poster art. The popularity of the poster was assisted by the American Industrial Revolution - the movement of European immigrants and rural Americans to the cities for employment and the resultant increase in the need for on-the-street communication within the community. Businesses and cities expanded and American publishers adopted the poster as a method to increase magazine sales. The poster was confirmed as a respectable art form in 1886 by Ernest Maindron's Les Affiches illustrées, a history of the poster in France. This stimulated public interest in poster collecting and the works of such artists as Cheret, Grasset, and Toulouse-Lautrec. The American poster renaissance started in 1893 when such mass circulation magazines as Harper's Magazine, The Century, and The Chap-Book started to issue monthly posters and sponsor poster contests. Once the commercial value of posters was demonstrated by publishers, manufacturers adopted the poster for advertising.

The American poster renaissance of 1890 - 1900 was brief, spanning only one decade, but it had a profound effect on American visual arts. The poster of the 1890's was the primary vehicle through which Americans were introduced to Art Nouveau and the new European graphic styles such as the post-impressionist lithographic experiments.[4]

The evolution of the pictorial story from the cave walls of primitive man to the mass communication medium of the war poster was keyed to technological advances. Perhaps the biggest boost to poster art came with the invention of printing in the early part of the 15th century, thus expanding the impact of the medium - more copies meant more people would see the message in the same relative time period.[5] Woodcuts were used to print posters in America well into the 1880's. Then lithography was introduced from Europe, and with this significant improvement in technology, the poster was on its way to becoming an important communicative medium. By 1896, designs were transferred photomechanically onto lightweight zinc or aluminum plates, replacing lithographic stones.[6]

An interesting and informative description of the lithographic process is given by Joseph Pennell in a short book published in 1918 entitled Joseph Pennell's Liberty-Loan Poster. Pennell describes the evolution of one of his war posters from conception of the idea to its printing and use in the Fourth Liberty Loan

campaign.

Poster Art

American traditional disrespect for authority and flair for improvisation, coupled with the dynamics of the competitive economic system, allowed for growth in poster styles. Nevertheless, growth was slow, primarily because of the following factors prevalent in America: 1) A lack of artistic tradition made poster art rootless; 2) The success of Currier and Ives lithographs, which used literal and sentimental detail leaving nothing to the imagination, was emulated in poster art; and 3) Early American poster artists were usually German or Czech engravers who were interested in realistic representation, thus making few original contributions to poster art.[7]

Sidney Finkelstein stated that the power of art is its effectiveness as a communication system.[8] The pictorial poster is ideally suited to meet Finkelstein's definition of visual communication. The basic purpose for creating a poster is to sell something.[9] This definition of a poster's function was stated a little differently in an article in the February 1914 issue of The Poster as follows:

> The important thing about a poster is not its country or its date or the name of the artist, or its authenticity or any other fact about it - the important thing about it is its power

> to attract attention and sell goods. If it has the power of attraction, it does not much matter when it was made, or where, or by whom - its usefulness is its reason for existence.[10]

To sell something effectively, a poster must be good art and good advertising. Since a poster is a message dramatically expressed in terms of the graphic arts, it should conform to certain rules to be effective. A poster should be: 1) startling (attract attention); 2) direct (convey meaning immediately); 3) simple (meaning unmistakable); 4) convincing (can be remembered).[11]

Plate 1 is a depiction of the essential qualities of a good poster.

From an institutional viewpoint, pictorial posters were the ideal advertising medium because they were cheap, they could reach everybody, they dramatized their messages with pictures and they were effective.[12]

Review Of The Literature

An extensive amount of literature exists on poster art, but little has been devoted exclusively to war poster art of the United States. Two booklets were published in 1972 by the Imperial War Museum, London, England to advertise the range and importance of the museum's collection of First and Second World War posters. The booklets contain a selection of reproductions of war posters from the temporary War Posters Exhibition of 1972 (Imperial War Museum) offering a

CHART OF THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD POSTER

HUMOROUS QUAINT OR DIGNIFIED

The Poster

- **The Advertising Essentials**
  - **Must Concentrate INDIVIDUAL STORY**
  - **Must Sell the Goods**
    - **By means of**
      - **Direct and Simple Idea, or**
      - **Tempting Argument, or**
      - **Catch Phrase, or**
      - **Trade-mark Character**
- **The Artistic Essentials**
  - **Must Attract Attention and Comment**
    - **By means of**
      - **Strong and Simple Design**
      - **Good Draughtsmanship**
      - **Pleasing Color Effect**
      - **Good Composition**
  - **Must Immediately Convey the Idea**

sampling from many of the countries represented in the museum's collection. The authors of the booklet state that an international survey of war posters does not appear practicable; that much material is listed but not catalogued; that a special difficulty in the study of posters is the large number extant; and that many general statements about posters and their history, even in works of reference, are ill-founded.[13] This last statement is not explained. However, different points of view and ideological positions are certainly conceptualized in the war poster output of different nations. Therefore, varying and even opposite interpretations and conclusions by authors and historians can be expected.

Other material reviewed paints a broad and general background of poster history and development, and describes the evolution of the war poster into one of the primary tools used by governments for shaping mass opinion during the First and Second World Wars. American Poster Renaissance by Victor Margolin covers the early development of the poster in America and the brief American poster renaissance from 1890 - 1900. Other books, such as Ervine Metzl's The Poster - Its History and Its Art, The Poster: an Illustrated History from 1860 by Harold Hutchison, The Poster in History by Max Gallo, and The American Poster published by The American Federation of Arts cover the evolution of the poster from the 19th century through both world wars

to, in some cases, the 1960's. Posters of the First World War by Maurice Rickards contains a sampling of World War I poster art from 12 countries that participated in the war and commentary on the political, social and military conditions, primarily in Britain, which contributed to the development of poster themes and trends. James Montgomery Flagg by Susan Meyer contains reproductions of many of Flagg's First and Second World War posters, with informative background material oriented toward the life and personality of the artist. The Truman Library's collection of war posters, while limited to approximately 200 examples of U. S. First and Second World War and Korean War posters, was examined to gain an appreciation for the visual impact of the original art form.

Research was conducted in the Kansas City Public Library, which has a complete collection of The Poster magazine published during World War I. This source was particularly valuable as it contained period-related information and insights into the organization of artist/advertising volunteers in support of the war effort, reproductions of poster designs, relevant and detailed information on Liberty Loan campaigns, and many facts concerning the use of the poster as a visual communication medium during the war. Also contained in the Kansas City Public Library's reference collection is The Story of the Liberty Loans by Labert St. Clair,

published in 1919, and providing an invaluable source of facts, figures and illustrations on the conduct of the five American Liberty Loan campaigns between 1917 and 1919. Watson Library, at the University of Kansas, houses an extensive collection of photographs of American First World War posters. Access to this collection provided much data on themes and symbols appearing in World War I poster designs. The National Archives, The Center for Military History, and the Smithsonian Institution were queried concerning relevant material pertaining to U. S. war posters available as sources.

A review of existing and reasonably available material provides much insight into the use of art as a visual communication vehicle in selling war, and the effectiveness of the war poster in accomplishing that goal.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. Joseph Pennell, Joseph Pennell's Liberty-Loan Poster, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1918), p. 5.

2. Ervine Metzl, The Poster: Its History and Its Art, (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1963), p. 19.

3. Ibid., p. 41.

4. Victor Margolin, American Poster Renaissance, (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1975), pp. 13-46.

5. Pennell, p. 7.

6. Margolin, p. 21.

7. Metzl, pp. 61-64.

8. Sidney Finkelstein, Art and Society, (New York: International Publishers Company, Inc., 1947), pp. 9-10.

9. Metzl, p. 18.

10. "A Little Sermon on Poster Art," The Poster, 5:37, February, 1914.

11. Metzl, p. 18.

12. Ibid., pp. 87-89.

13. Joseph Darracott and Belinda Loftus, Imperial War Museum, First World War Posters, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1972), p. 5.

CHAPTER III

THE AMERICAN POSTER IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

This chapter describes the birth of the American war poster, and examines the needs of the United States Government that developed because of the war, and how those needs could only be met by selling the war to the people. Critical to the form and direction that the communication effort took was the temper of the times - the attitudes of the American people in 1914-1918. This chapter examines the temper of the times, institutional and voluntary organization for poster production, and the war poster phases and themes that developed.

The Poster And War

We have seen that the poster had been around for a number of years before World War I, and was used by publishers and manufacturers to extoll their wares. The ordinary citizen of the industralized nation was accustomed to looking at posters for shopping guidance and for his or her attitudes in foreign affairs, party politics and good or bad causes. The pictorial poster held a responsible and respected position in American society prior to World War I.[1]

When the United States declared war against Germany

on 6 April 1917, an immediate need for workers, soldiers and public support developed. To meet those needs, the necessity for war had to be sold to the people. However, there was a difference between the job facing the government and that facing most businessmen. Values, not tangible products, had to be sold.

There were two main ways the poster could serve the United States (as it already was doing for the other warring nations): 1) by stimulating patriotism and national morale through fostering hatred of the national enemy and urging investment of private funds in government securities and war loans; and 2) by appealing for support on behalf of various charities for the wounded, the Red Cross, the refugees and the prisoners of war.[2]

These and other areas vital to the success of the war effort became major themes of poster production and will be covered in detail later in this chapter.

Pictorial posters were now being used to plead causes, not just sell merchandise. They stimulated emotions and played on human hopes, fears and ambitions. They became weapons of propaganda for mass persuasion and psychological warfare.[3] Some poster designs were created hastily to dramatize shocking events, such as the invasion of Belgium and the sinking of the Lusitania, but they lacked imaginative overtones or implications. Some were as static as photographs and almost as rigidly

literal. Others lacked the subtlety and artistic finesse to effectively involve the viewer and achieve the desired response. Some were flamboyant and pretentious: symbols without a catalyst.[4] The ultimate effectiveness of the poster as a medium of communication between the government and the people during World War I will be analyzed in Chapter IV.

The Temper Of The Times

The First World War started in July, 1914, sparked by the assassination of the Austrian crown prince, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on 28 June 1914 at Sarajevo. The assassination provided the excuse Germany and Austria needed to force Europe into a war conceived to deliver to Germany the territory she needed for her planned political and economic empire.[5] By 12 August 1914 Serbia, Russia, France, Belgium, and England were at war with the Central Powers.[6] The American people did not generally favor entering the war. America was enjoying the prosperous fruits of a rapidly expanding munitions and war trade with Europe, and was not anxious to become involved in the deprivations and horrors of the war going on across the Atlantic.[7] President Wilson was a moralist (perhaps even a "pacifist at heart")[8] and the policies of isolationism and pacifism had many supporters. There were also several million American and recent immigrants of German descent whose attitudes and loyalties

were an unknown factor.[9] However, American public sympathy was with those unfortunate nations that felt the weight of the German war machine, and stories of German atrocities in Belgium (many untrue, the result of Allied propaganda) and the shooting of the British nurse and spy Edith Cavell aroused public indignation in America.[10] But not enough to join the fight.[11] America declared her neutrality at the start of the war in 1914. President Wilson and his cabinet were committed to a policy of peace; a sentiment apparently shared by a majority of American voters since Wilson was returned to office in 1916 on the slogan "he kept us out of war."[12]

Anti-British sentiment arose as a result of England's flagrant violation of America's neutrality on the open seas by her enforcement of a blockade against American vessels bound for German ports and the mining of the North Sea.[13] However, German submarines were claiming American lives, while the British were only seizing American property. Obviously, the British action was "the lesser of two evils."[14]

America Enters The War

Although America managed to remain neutral for three years, there was much "hawkish" sentiment in the United States to get into the war. The effort to prepare the nation for war was not left until the last minute, and many volunteer organizations took it upon

themselves to stir up national will and concern.

The single most important cause of the United States' entry into the war was Germany's policy of unrestricted submarine warfare.[15] Three days after Germany's 31 January 1917 announcement of her lethal submarine warfare policy, the United States broke diplomatic relations with her.[16] Prior to formally announcing a no-holds-barred submarine campaign, Germany had perpetrated attacks on unarmed merchant ships on various occasions throughout the war. The sinking of the Lusitania without warning on 7 May 1915 by a German U-boat with the resultant loss of 1,198 lives (including 114, 128, or 139 Americans - depending upon the source - who were mostly women and children) aroused great anti-German sentiment within the United States among militants and pacifists alike.[17] President Wilson protested the sinking and Germany agreed in October 1915 that merchant ships would not be sunk without warning or safeguarding of noncombatant lives.[18] However, with the tightening noose of the British blockade, Germany stepped-up her underwater warfare threat. On 24 March 1916, a German U-boat torpedoed a British owned steamer, the Sussex, which it had mistaken for a mine layer. The ship was not sunk, but 80 of the 325 passengers were killed or injured. President Wilson gave the German Government the ultimatum that unless they abandoned "present methods of sub-

marine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels" the United States would sever diplomatic relations.[19] Germany was conciliatory, and on 4 May 1916 promised to conduct submarine warfare in accordance with international law.[20] However, events transpired within the military leadership sphere in Germany to place pro-U-boat forces in positions of influence with the Kaiser, leading to the 31 January 1917 declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare.[21]

Also contributing to America's entry into the war on the Allied side were revelations of German plots to sabotage the highly profitable American munitions trade.[22] Publication of documents obtained from German espionage agents by American and British authorities confirmed their intentions to foment strikes in munitions factories and fed the suspicion that Germany was involved in the 1916 $22 million explosion at the New Jersey Black Tom munitions plant.[23] Perhaps the most sensational exposure of German duplicity was the interception and release in the newspapers of the Zimmerman note. In January 1917, Zimmerman, the German Foreign Secretary, cabled the German minister in Mexico that in the event the United States entered the war on the Allied side, a German-Mexican alliance should be pursued. Mexico was to be lured by the possibility of recovering Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Japan, already on the Allied side, was also to

be courted. Americans were shocked and this news did much to unite the United States against the Central Powers.[24]

Using these events as necessary provocation, coupled with Germany's refusal to limit submarine activities and the resultant ruthless sinking of an additional four unarmed American merchant ships, on 2 April 1917 President Wilson asked Congress to "formally" enter the war that had been "thrust" on America.[25] Congress passed the resolution and four days later the United States went to war.[26]

Military Preparedness

America was not militarily ready for war. Isolationism and pacifism had many supporters in early 1917.[27] Germany was well aware of American reluctance to strain Mexican-American relations beyond the breaking point, thus limiting the 1916-1917 Punitive Expedition led by General Pershing into Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa.[28] Germany's attitude was one of scorn, viewing the limited expedition as a failure of American military power rather than the exercising of a diplomatic show of force.[29]

America had a small standing army of less than 100,000 men and officers. The National Guard - that legacy of the citizen-soldier from America's colonial experience - had been allowed to lapse into an ineffec-

tive force through federal inattention. It was a victim of national pacifist policy - more a myth than a viable force. William Jennings Bryan, the pacifist Secretary of State under President Wilson, gave voice to that myth when he stated that were the nation endangered "a million men would leap to arms between sunrise and sunset."[30]

There was a serious scarcity of weapons and military equipment. General Pershing, in his writings on the Great War, stated: "It was brought out that we had to issue, not in the hands of troops, only about 285,000 Springfield rifles, 400 light field guns, and 150 heavy field guns."[31] Although the United States had become a great munitions manufacturing nation keeping the war going across the Atlantic, none of the supplies had been diverted to her own arsenals and none of the people engaged in war production had been consulted on the arming of America. One of the most serious problems was the lack of shipping.[32]

Need For Public Financing

Faced with serious shortages of military personnel and materiel, transportation and eventually fuel and food, the government called upon the American people to finance the war. Raises in income taxes and internal and export revenue taxes did not produce enough money. To meet the financial crisis, the government inaugurated Liberty Loan drives, asking the people to

literally "buy into" the war. Congress estimated that the first twelve months of America's involvement in the war cost a little under $18.25 billion, approximately a fourth of what all the other nations had spent in three years of war.[33]

Raising An Army

Another pressing need was manpower. Prior to the war, the United States relied on a small standing volunteer army and the comfortable (if mythical) thought of the "million man" reserve force extolled by Mr. Bryan. Prior to and after the American declaration of war men volunteered for the military services by the thousands, but could not satisfy the demand for manpower. A draft was needed. Congressional opposition to conscription was strong, however, and the important lessons learned during the Civil War and the British experience in the beginning of the World War were ignored by the champions of the volunteer system. General Pershing, concerned about the possible failure of the Draft Act, wrote to a friend:

> Universal service is the only principle to follow that will lead to success in this war, and that should be well understood. We are in this thing for keeps and it is going to demand the utmost exertion and the best of preparation to win.[34]

The proponents of conscription won, and the draft was initiated on 28 April 1917. From this great manpower pool came the majority of the two million

Americans committed in the Great War.[35]

Mobilization Of The Communication Effort

Once war was declared, poster production to support the war effort became highly organized. On 6 April 1917, George W. Creel was placed in charge of the government's newly established Committee of Public Information.[36] His responsibilities can generally be divided into three areas: recruiting, public speaking, and pictorial publicity.[37] Eleven days later, the Division of Pictorial Publicity was created within the Committee of Public Information, and Charles Dana Gibson was selected as chairman.

George Creel has been accused by one source of not understanding posters or painters, and assuming that inspiration for the war effort could be bought like bread or coal or steel and that ideas could be mass produced like any other commodity.[38]

In The American Poster, however, Margaret Cogswell attributes the following positive and perceptive statement to Creel:

> One of the first realizations of the Committee was the importance of pictorial publicity in building morale, arousing the spiritual forces of the Nation, and stimulating the war will of the people. It was not only that America needed posters, but it needed the best posters ever drawn.[39]

In his book, How We Advertised America, Creel devoted a chapter to the Division of Pictorial Publicity.

In that chapter, he stated:

> Even in the rush of the first days, when we were calling writers and speakers and photographers into service, I had the conviction that the poster must play a great part in the fight for public opinion. The printed word might not be read, people might not choose to attend meetings or to watch motion pictures, but the billboard was something that caught even the most indifferent eye. The old-style poster, turned out by commercial artists as part of advertising routine, was miles away from our need, however. The current Washington idea that imagined art as a sort of slot-machine was a mistake that had to be rectified. What we wanted--what we had to have--was posters that represented the best work of the best artists--posters into which the men of the pen and brush had poured heart and soul as well as genius.[40]

Gibson, with the assistance of a vice-chairman/secretary, 10 associate chairmen, a 16 member executive committee, and 7 departmental captains set about the job of mobilizing the artists of America to meet the poster needs of a nation newly at war. Orders were taken from governmental departments and those orders, translated into poster themes, were assigned to artists best fitted for the particular need. Obtaining cooperation and the approval of sketches by the governmental department heads was no easy task, but Gibson and the other executive directors of the Committee persevered and eventually "penetrated the official consciousness."[41]

This volunteer organization of artists dedicated to communicating governmental needs to the people met weekly at Keene's Chop House in New York City to discuss

the task and contribute ideas and criticism.[42] The total free contribution of visual communication media turned in by the Division of Pictorial Publicity was a staggering 1438 drawings and designs. Of the total, 700 were poster designs. The majority of poster designs were submitted in the following general subject areas: American Red Cross (100), Fourth Liberty Loan (100), Shipping Board (100), War Camp Community Service (101), War Saving Stamps (50), Food Administration (50), Division of Films (33), Fuel Administration (25). The remaining designs were spread out among 42 agencies and subjects.[43]

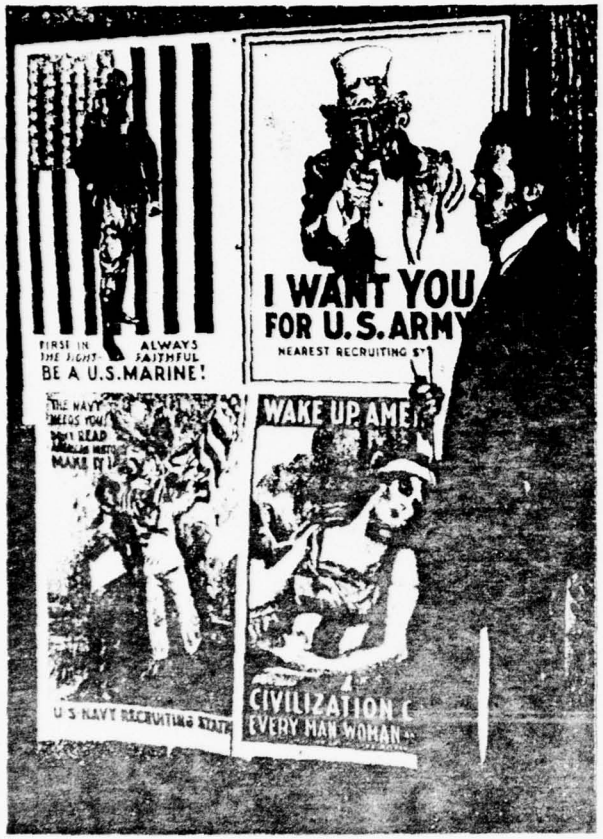
Even prior to America's entry into the war, artists and advertising men were offering their experience and talent in the effort to get the message to the people. On 7 April, 1916, in the Hotel Astor, New York City, the message was sponsored by the Industrial Preparedness Committee before an audience of artists, cartoonists, illustrators, and poster advertisers. The chairman of the committee told the assembled artists that America had to organize industry for defense. A representative of the poster advertising interests told the group that in the event of war, 50,000 poster boards could be covered with war posters calling the nation to arms in twenty-four hours.[44] All he needed was the posters - and the war. James Montgomery Flagg displayed his poster of the "Armless Columbia" designed

to wake America up (see plate 2).[45] The artists were receptive and made plans to begin a poster campaign for industrial preparedness.[46]

Many of the art schools in America turned the talents of their students in the direction of the war effort after the United States entered the war. America learned from the English experience that poster art required more than the effort of a good lithographer, it also needed a good artist. The New York School of Fine and Applied Art turned out designs for both the regular force and the National Guard under the critical eye of an army officer acting as both model and technical advisor (see plate 3). By June of 1917, 10,000 posters designed by art students had been distributed throughout New York City. The New York Teachers' College made plans to conduct a class in war poster design and advertising in its fine arts division.[47] The Society of Illustrators, claiming many of America's top artists and illustrators as members, were a primary source of original war poster designs.[48] Photographs of James Montgomery Flagg and Charles Dana Gibson with a representative sampling of their war poster designs are shown at plate 4. In August of 1917, an exhibition of war posters was presented by the Art Institute of Chicago to keep the public aware of its responsibility during war and the artist's contribution to the war effort, and to stir American


ARMLESS


YOU ARE NEEDED
TO DEFEND YOUR COUNTRY
US
YOU ARE NEEDED
TO PROTECT YOUR
HOME & COUNTRY



Illustrations by courtesy of *Collier's Weekly*

James Montgomery Flagg

Charles Dana Gibson

POSTERS BY THESE ARTISTS AND OTHERS AID IN WAR CRISIS

Two of the leading American artists are here shown with recent war posters designed by them. The promptness with which the artists of the United States responded to the appeal for posters to obtain recruits and for other phases of national service was inspiriting.

patriotic spirit. The announcement for the exhibit stated that posters were needed to remind the American people that they must support the war by cultivating the soil, conserving food, supporting the army, navy, and Red Cross and purchasing war bonds.[49] (Plate 5 contains examples of posters exhibited.)

War Poster Phases And Themes

War posters were produced in identifiable phases, following the pattern of warfare itself. Maurice Rickards, in his book Posters of the First World War, identifies four distinct phases experienced internationally, with a recurrent theme appearing throughout the pattern. The first phase was the call for manpower and investment of private funds. The manpower need was felt keenest by Britain, and later the United States, with their policies of volunteer military forces. When conscription became universal, the number of recruiting posters diminished. An example of an early U. S. recruiting poster issued before the draft was instituted is at plate 6.

Appeals for money were constant. In America, they took the form of posters extolling government war bonds, war savings stamps, and urging the people to support the war through the five Liberty Loan campaigns. Raising of money was a priority, and the call for commitment of private funds was repeated again and again

SHOWN AT CHICAGO WAR POSTER EXHIBITION

THE NEW ARMY POSTER

This new United States Army 24-sheet poster was approved by the Adjutant-General on Tuesday, December 22. It is reproduced in monotone from one of the first lot of posters which were cut and collated. The original is brilliantly and beautifully colored. The poster was lithographed by the American Lithograph Company, and the orders for posting have been sent out by the Associated Billposters' and Distributors' Protective Company

throughout the war.[50]

The second phase was in support of the actual combatants - comforts for the troops and assistance to the fighting man through sacrifice at home. Such items as books and tobacco figured prominently in American posters issued during this phase (see plates 7-10).

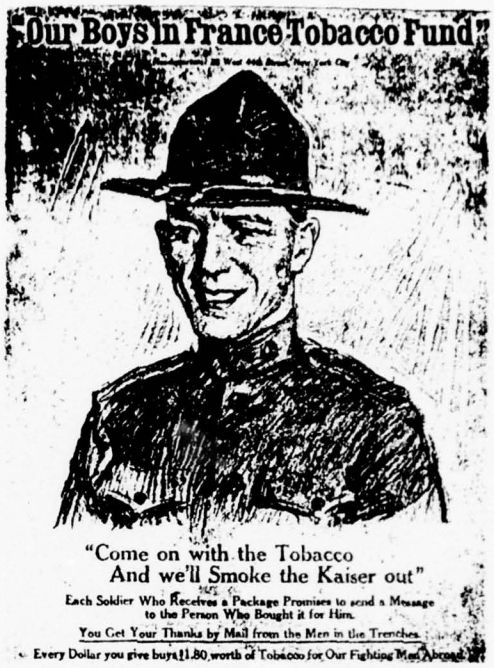
An appeal for help for the wounded, the orphans and refugees identified the third phase. Images of wounded soldiers and the innocent victims of war were an incentive to the people to sacrifice - they jolted the public conscience. This phase was important to the sustainment of the war effort and was not introduced too soon for fear of creating premature despondency, but soon enough for official recognition of public sacrifice.[51] This was perhaps the most dignified and moving theme of any of the war posters, since it communicated compassion, not hate.[52] (See plates 11-14).

The fourth phase was caused by the increasing shortage of fighters and war materials. Themes presented in this phase were women as factory workers, increased production, saving of vital materials, economy in food consumption and increased personal sacrifice and austerity.[53]

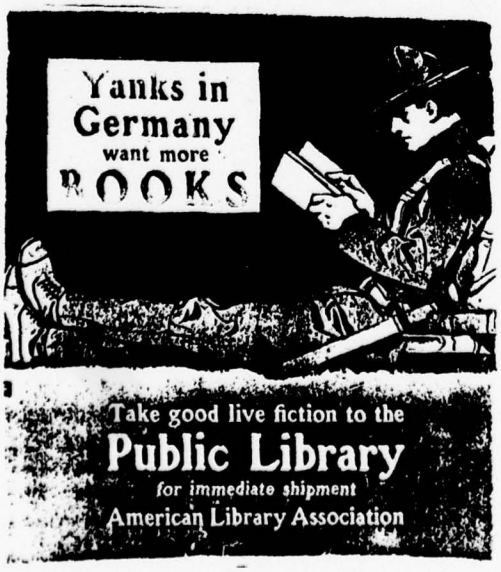
The recurring theme was the appeal for money, for one last momentous effort, to overwhelm and crush the


"SEND SMOKES TO SAMMY!"
"FIFTY-FIFTY ON MY LAST SMOKE, BILL!"
Mail Your Contributions to
"OUR BOYS IN FRANCE TOBACCO FUND"
25 West 44th Street
New York City

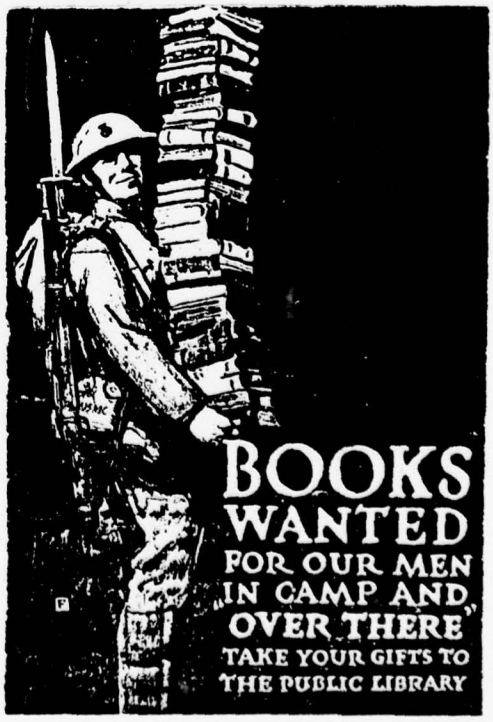
7


"Our Boys in France Tobacco Fund"
"Come on with the Tobacco
And we'll Smoke the Kaiser out"
Each Soldier Who Receives a Package Promises to send a Message to the Person Who Bought it for Him.
You Get Your Thanks by Mail from the Men in the Trenches.
Every Dollar you give buys $1.80 worth of Tobacco for Our Fighting Men Abroad.

8


Yanks in Germany want more BOOKS
Take good live fiction to the
Public Library
for immediate shipment
American Library Association

9


BOOKS WANTED
FOR OUR MEN IN CAMP AND "OVER THERE"
TAKE YOUR GIFTS TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

10

$1,000,000
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

For Work Among Our Soldiers and Sailors

DECEMBER 2-9, 1917

War Work Committee

THE SALVATION ARMY

General Headquarters, 122 West 14th Street, New York City

11

"Have you room in your heart for us."

Fatherless Children of France, Inc

12

CAMPAIGN for $30,000,000

AMERICAN COMMITTEE
FOR RELIEF IN THE NEAR EAST

ARMENIA - GREECE - SYRIA - PERSIA

ONE MADISON AVE. NEW YORK

13

"You Won't Let Me Starve, Will You ?"

I am little Shushan, from Armenia
My home has been destroyed
Father was taken away
Mother starved because she gave me all the food
I am so hungry and cold
Thousands of other children are hungry and cold too

The Opportunity for Our Sunday School

17 cents a day - $5 a month - $60 a year will save a life

☐ Make contribution to Near East Relief, 70 Fifth Ave., New York City

☐ Cleveland H. Dodge, Treasurer

enemy. Money was needed everywhere - in ship building, munitions production, relief for refugees and orphans, support of charitable organizations such as the Red Cross and YWCA, and so on.[54] It was certainly the most predominant theme, serving as a link between the phases of poster production and appearing in many of the other themes clamoring for the public's attention and support.

The Liberty Loans

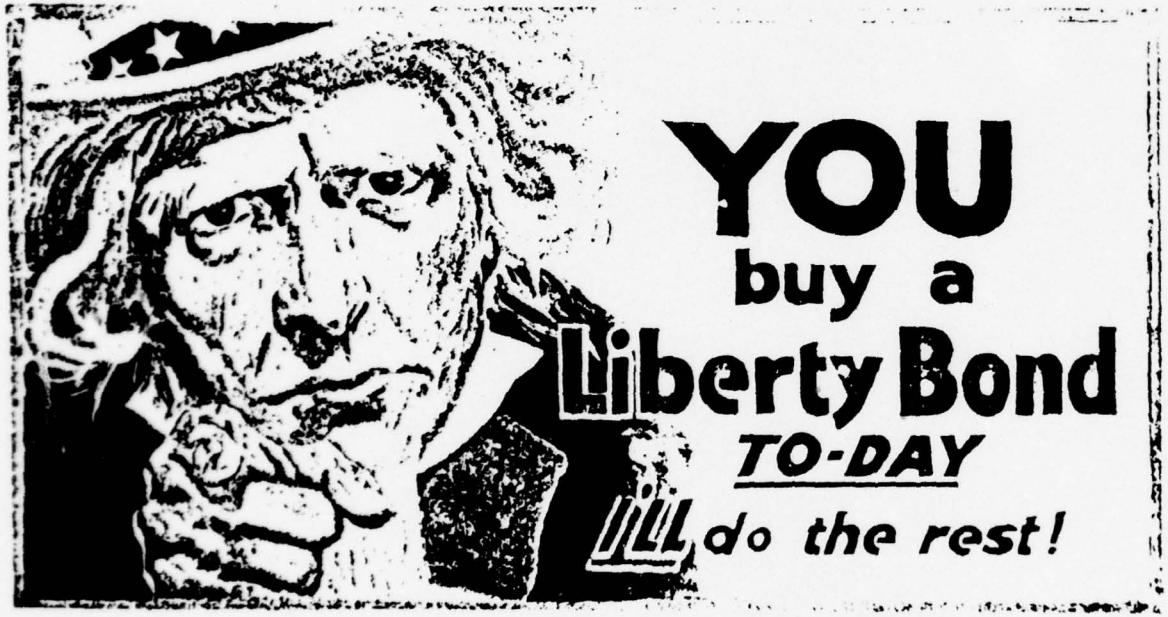
The importance of need for money and the recurrence of that theme is best explained through a look at the five Liberty Loan campaigns conducted by the U. S. Treasury Department from May 1917 through May 1919. This story is very well documented in Labert St. Clair's The Story of the Liberty Loan, published in 1919.

Posters used in support of the Liberty Loans appealed to patriotism and never failed to evoke an overwhelming response from the American people.[55] Virtually two-thirds of the war funds used by the United States during actual hostilities were obtained through sale of Liberty Bonds. The money was used for loans to Allies, to equip and maintain the armed forces, and to build ships for the emergency fleet. There were five loan campaigns conducted from 1917 to 1919. A total of approximately $24 billion was

subscribed and approximately $21.5 billion was actually accepted by the Treasury Department. (plate 15 depicts a chart of the five campaigns.) Total individual purchases were a little over 66.25 million. The impact of the fund-raising campaigns can be appreciated by comparing the total of outstanding U. S. Government Bonds on 1 July 1916 ($1,378,124,593) to the total of almost $24 billion less than two years later.[56] (Examples of Liberty Loan posters are at plates 16-18.) The phenomenal success of the Liberty Loan campaign is attributed to the effectiveness of the pictorial poster in communicating the patriotic ideals effectively. That, and the effect of incessant repetition, accomplished the goals.[57] R. W. Emerson, who was in charge of production and national distribution of the Liberty Loan poster for the government during the war, analyzed one of the posters for the Victory Liberty Loan in The Poster magazine as follows: The poster fosters identification with the patriot who wears four previous Liberty Loan buttons and is digging into his pocket with an "expression of ready confidence on his face [indicating] conclusively that again he stands ready to provide the necessary money for the nation, while with admirable commonsense and prudent forethought, making the soundest of investments for himself."[58] (See plate 19).

THE LIBERTY LOAN CAMPAIGNS

LOAN	DATES		NUMBER OF	AMOUNT OF MONEY		
	OPENED	CLOSED	SUBSCRIBERS	OFFERED	SUBSCRIBED	ACCEPTED
FIRST	14 May 1917	15 May 1917	4,000,000	2,000,000,000	3,035,226,850	2,000,000,000
SECOND	1 Oct 1917	28 Oct 1917	9,400,000	3,000,000,000	4,167,532,300	3,807,891,900
THIRD	6 Apr 1918	14 May 1918	18,308,325	3,000,000,000	4,176,516,850	4,176,516,850
FOURTH	28 Sep 1918	19 Oct 1918	22,777,680	6,000,000,000	6,992,927,100	6,992,927,100
FIFTH (VICTOPY)	21 Apr 1919	10 May 1919	11,803,895	4,500,000,000	5,249,908,300	4,500,000,000
TOTAL			66,289,900		24,072,611,400	21,477,335,850

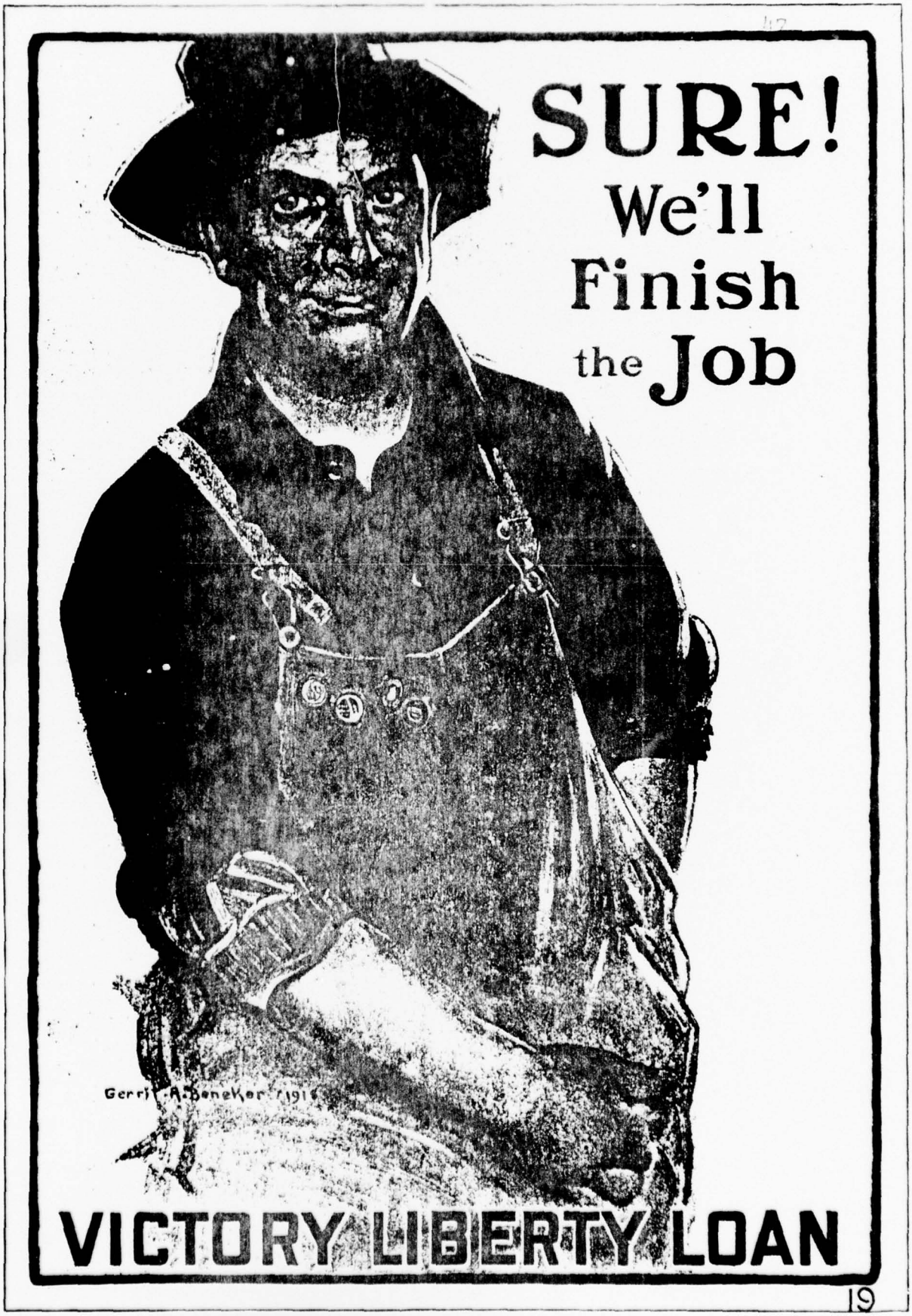


16

17


THEY KEPT THE
SEA LANES
OPEN!
INVEST IN THE
VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN


THEY KEPT THE
SEA LANES
OPEN!
INVEST IN THE
VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN


SURE!
We'll
Finish
the Job
Gerrit A. Beneker 1918
VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN

Symbols Used In War Posters

How the people reacted to a poster theme depended on two key factors: The literal message conveyed by the copy (or slogan) and the emotional message imparted by the visual image. In "The Battle of the Fences" chapter from his book, How We Advertised America, George Creel states that the Division of Pictorial Publicity had a "contact man" who would visit the chiefs of the war-making branches of government to advise them of the artistic services available through the Committee, and obtain from each department its list of poster needs. Charles Dana Gibson, the Committee Chairman, would then make assignments to specific artists. The finished work then traveled back through this chain to the department heads for approval.[59] Joseph Pennell, in his book on the making of a Liberty Loan poster, states that a competition was held for the Fourth Liberty Loan campaign to select posters to announce the campaign. Pieces entered by artists first had to pass a jury in New York, and then receive final judgement at the Treasury Department in Washington.[60]

These "categories of need" developed by government officials were translated into messages to the public through the pictorial image of the poster artist. The artist used many symbols to assist him in getting his visual message across. "Uncle Sam" as the most popular symbol of American patriotism ever, is immortalized

in James Montgomery Flagg's fierce recruiting poster which proclaimed: "I Want You." Flagg used himself as the model, adding the goatee and patriotic props, and using a mirror.[61] (See plate 20). Other symbols were a combination allegorical-heroic approach, such as Leyendecker's flag-draped Statue of Liberty bearing the sword and shield of national defense, with clean-cut American youth represented by a Boy Scout as her squire (see plate 21), and Joseph Pennell's lithograph of New York City burning in front of a ravaged and war-torn statue minus head and torch (plate 22). The depiction by Pennell of an imagined event that was militarily impossible (enemy planes could never reach New York) to incite public fear and hatred of the enemy - thus support of the nation through contribution to the Liberty Loan - is representative of the "unreal" approach to actual events freely subscribed to by war poster artists. This would support the thesis presented by Bevis Hillier in Posters that the people of the West incline to believe propaganda, regardless of the truth behind it.[62]

Other symbols freely used by American poster artists to communicate patriotism, fear or hatred of the enemy, compassion for war wounded and the innocent victims of war, and other major themes were the stars and stripes; the American eagle; heroic soldiers - usually charging an unseen enemy; the despotic and feared

20

21

THAT LIBERTY SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH

BUY LIBERTY BONDS

FOURTH LIBERTY LOAN

enemy - usually engaged in some alleged atrocity; and quite skillful use of women and children images to sell a specific theme or point of view.

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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter analyzes the American First World War poster experience. Categories of need and themes of American poster production are identified and the effectiveness of the poster as a medium of communication between the government and the people is analyzed. A comparison of First and Second World War poster themes is made to identify trends, and the volunteer artist organization for poster production is examined during both major war periods. To finalize the analysis, the use of the poster to convey anti-war messages during the Vietnam era is examined, and conclusions are reached concerning: the effectiveness of the war poster as a medium of visual communication; a brief analysis of the poster as good or bad art; and the future of the poster as a communication medium for the U. S. Army.

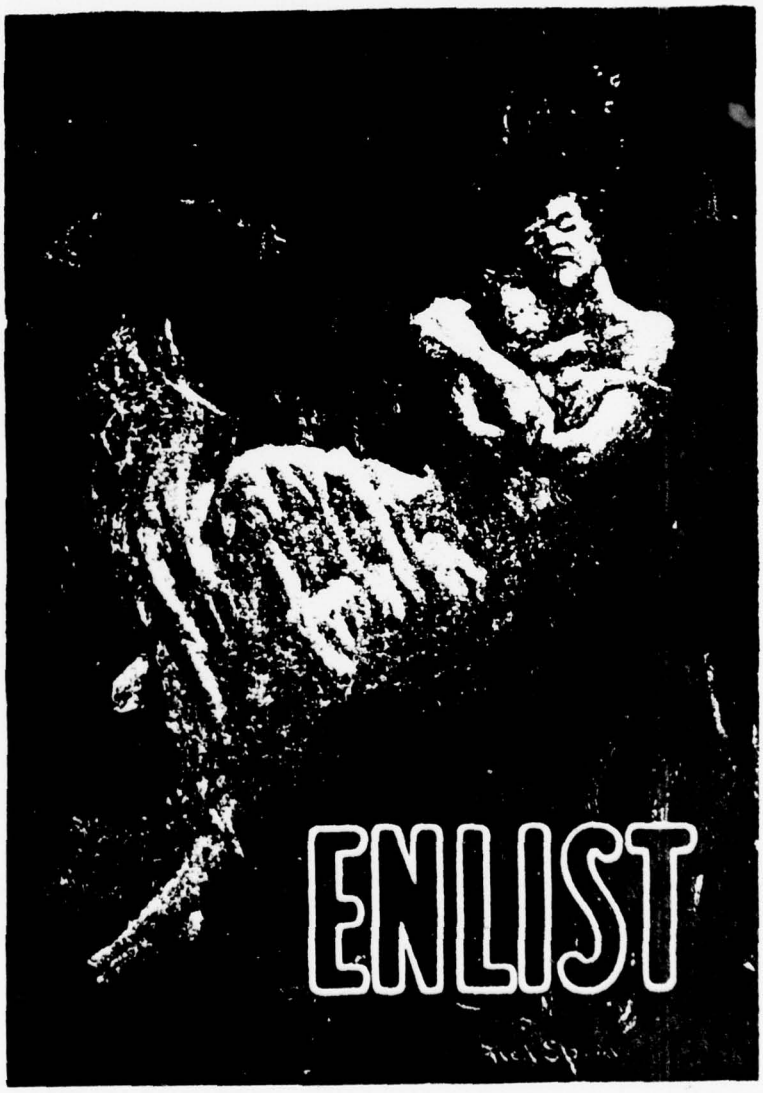
Poster Categories And Themes

American World War I posters can be classified in six clearly identifiable categories of need. These categories of need have a direct relationship to the governmental needs that determined the themes used in American war posters. For the most part, they

paralleled the more general phases of international poster development described by Maurice Rickards and discussed in Chapter III. Differences are attributed to the uniqueness of American cultural heritage and the strong American societal attitudes about freedom and war.

Awareness of the threat. Since America was late in joining the war, the first category fostered public awareness of the threat rather than initiating an immediate and urgent call for soldiers and money. The predominant themes were fear and hatred of the enemy cultivated by drawing attention to the alleged atrocities commited by the Central Powers. Some incidents, such as the sinking of the Lusitania, were ready-made for dramatic exploitation through emotional appeals to American values of fair play. Plate 23 depicts the Lusitania tragedy through quite skillful use of the human image in a powerful visual message of a drowning mother and child. With the incident already on the public mind (and conscience?), no words are necessary and the one word "ENLIST" fulfills the secondary role of meeting a governmental need - manpower.

The depiction of the hated and feared enemy - the "Hun" - as a brutal, hulking and menacing figure with the enemy-identifying symbol of the spiked helmet (for clarity of the message) was an often repeated



23

image. Plate 24 shows the enemy trampling through a ravaged and war-torn Belgium, with the plea "HELP STOP THIS" alerting all viewers to the possibility of such a tragedy being repeated in America. The secondary message addressed the governmental need for funds from the private sector - in this instance to support war production through purchase of War Savings Stamps.

Plate 25 conveys the same primary message of fear and hatred, showing the brutal and degenerate enemy peering threateningly over ruined Europe at the viewer. The copy proclaims "Beat back the HUN with LIBERTY BONDS." Again, the secondary message supports the institutional need for financial resources.

James Montgomery Flagg's painting of the all-American boy stripping down for action in response to the newspaper headline: "HUNS KILL WOMEN AND CHILDREN!" (plate 26) loudly proclaims that any red-blooded American will not tolerate such cruelty and injustice as war on women and children. The unstated message - the feeling evoked from the imagery of the fighting stance of the male figure and the warning in the newspaper headline - may well be that America must stop this now before it happens to American women and children. The secondary message is an appeal for manpower, this time in support of the Marines.

TELL THAT TO THE MARINES!

26

BUY W. S. S.

& KEEP HIM OUT of AMERICA

NATIONAL WAR SAVINGS COMMITTEE

9 US 9

24


Beat back the
with
LIBERTY
BONDS

The depiction of realism (that is, the realism of death, fatigue, personal sorrow and loss, or even direct confrontation with the enemy) was not widely practiced in poster art. A notable exception is the poster at plate ?? which vividly conveys the themes of fear and hatred of the enemy. The threatening symbols of sword, spiked helmet, and Kaiser's mustache are clearly drawn to identify the enemy. The secondary message of public support of the government through purchase of liberty bonds is clearly subservient to the primary and shocking impact of the visual message of fear and hatred for the enemy.

The slogan "WAKE UP AMERICA" is also a predominant theme in this first category. James Montgomery Flagg used it at least three times in his "Armless Columbia," "CIVILIZATION CALLS EVERY MAN WOMAN AND CHILD!" (plate 28), and "WAKE UP AMERICA DAY" (plate 29). The visual images used are symbolic, depicting American society in the form of an allegorical Columbia in plates 2 and 28, and referring to the American colonial heritage in plate 29. The message is clear, exorting Americans to wake up before it's too late and the feared enemy is on America's shores.

<u>The call for resources</u>. The second category is the call for resources. This category consisted of two primary sub-categories, or elements - recruiting and financing. Two themes were used in the recruiting

KULTUR


WAKE UP, AMERICA!
CIVILIZATION CALLS
EVERY MAN WOMAN AND CHILD!
MAYORS COMMITTEE 50 EAST 42ND ST

28


WAKE UP
AMERICA
DAY
APRIL 19
1917

29

element: patriotism and guilt or shame. The financing element consisted of advertising the Liberty loan campaigns and urging Americans to purchase War Savings Stamps. Although this category is primarily identified in time with America's entry into the war, it is really recurring and the elements may be identified as the secondary message in many of the posters produced in all of the other categories of the American World War I poster experience.

As noted in Chapter III, the American effort to build a large standing volunteer army in a limited amount of time was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, posters appeared before and after the arrival of the draft appealing to American patriotism to attract volunteers. Symbols of American unity and heritage were widely used to provide a means of visual identification with the patriotic theme. The American flag, Uncle Sam, the warlike American eagle, and the image of the honored and respected soldier appear in plates 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35. The visual message is limited to patriotic symbolism and an attention-getting device in plate 30; the copy conveys the message.

Plates 31 and 35 dwell more on the pre-World War I concept of the cavalryman, containing an inference of romanticism as the main selling point. The military uniform is a symbol of unity in itself, and visually provides a comfortable feeling of security and order

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES

The President's Call

For Volunteer Contingent of

GREAT WAR ARMY

ENLIST NOW FOR THE WAR ONLY

Red Blooded Fighting Men, between 18 and 40, will be Freely Accepted in this State, until the Quota of the State is Complete

If You Want to Fight for Your Country, Enlist Today

For Further Particulars Apply to

United States Army Recruiting Station

AT

Newark - 268 Market Street
Passaic - 215 Main Avenue
Perth Amboy, 130 Smith Street
New Brunswick, Post Office Bld.
Atlantic City, 1536 Atlantic Avenue
Paterson - 269 Main Street
Elizabeth - 55 Broad Street
Trenton 103 E. State Street
Or See Your Postmaster
Orange, Post Office Building
Camden 211 Market Street
Phillipsburg
Over Penna. R. R. Station

30

Men Wanted for the Army

31

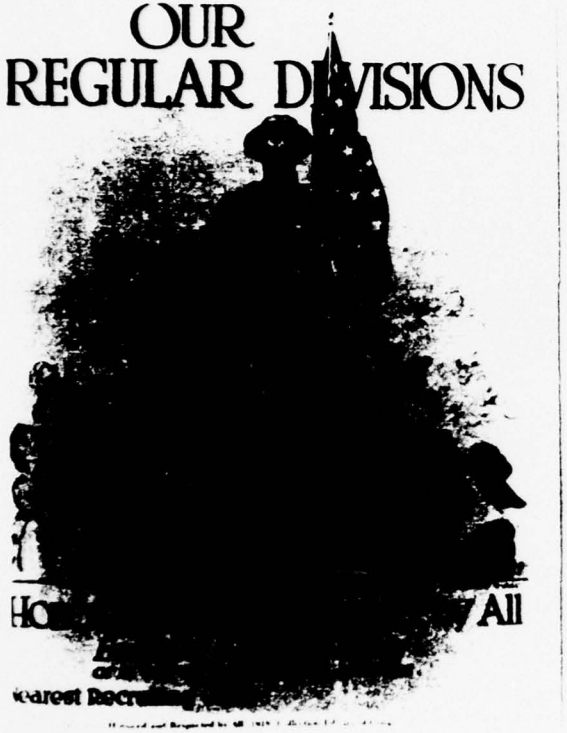
REGISTER

JUNE 5th

32

DON'T WAIT for the Draft VOLUNTEER

33


OUR
REGULAR DIVISIONS
All

34


PRO
PATRIA!
JOIN
ARMY FOR
PERIOD OF
WAR.

35

not necessarily factual.

In plates 32 and 33, the societal symbol of Uncle Sam calls on patriots to register for the draft (plate 32) and, in a more belligerent tone (plate 33), challenges the viewer: "DON'T WAIT for the Draft VOLUNTEER." This last image also contains a strong guilt theme (albeit by inference): a good American wouldn't wait to be drafted, but would volunteer immediately because his country obviously needs him or there would be no need for a draft.

Plate 34 reminds the viewer of the honored and respected place the soldier holds in American society. This can be seen by the proud stance of the male figure, the sharpness of the uniform, the "winner" symbolism of the laurel wreath, the proximity of the flag evoking the home defender image, and the admiring and approving looks of the surrounding crowd of civilians. The depiction of the full length soldier image above the cut-off figures of the crowd is psychologically important, emphasizing to the viewer the greater importance of the soldier. The use of the word "REGULAR" in the copy is also important, acknowledging societal acceptance of the need for professional military services.

Guilt and shame theme. The guilt or shame theme was also used in various degrees of subtlety to attempt to procure enlistments. The best example of this rather undignified approach is the British poster "Daddy, what

did YOU do in the Great War?" (plate 36). Maurice Richardson, in Posters of the First World War, describes the guilt recruiting campaign as follows:

> At levels that ranged between the naive and the near-satanic, with ever-increasing insistence the civilian male was needled. It shortly became a mobilisation by shame. "Daddy, what did you do in the Great War?"...says an indiscreet little girl to her ulcerating father in years to come, as a son and heir plays soldiers at their feet.[1]

Not to be outdone, American poster artists came up with such slogans as "IF YOU ARE A COWARD-PERISH BUT IF YOU ARE A MAN-FIGHT" (plate 37), and "I WISH MY DADDY HAD BEEN A SOLDIER BACK IN 1917" (plate 38). Brave soldiers and children serve as the visual images.

On a more subtle note, but still as threatening to the American male civilian, are the finger-pointing soldier (Pershing?) in plate 39 and Uncle Sam in plate 40, proclaiming for all to see that "YOU" are not only wanted, but needed to defend your country. The sternness of both the soldier image and Uncle Sam clearly state that this is a very serious matter, and the accusing finger singling out the individual viewer appears designed to induce psychological guilt in those able-bodied American males who have not responded to their country's call-to-arms.

The need for dollars. The financing element of the call for resources category is primarily represented in the Liberty Loan and War Savings Stamp campaigns. These campaigns were overt solicitation in


Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War ?

36


VICTORY
IS WITH US
IF YOU ARE A COWARD PERISH
BUT IF YOU ARE A MAN FIGHT

37


"I WISH MY DADDY
HAD BEEN A SOLDIER
BACK IN 1917"
ENLIST

38


YOU
ARE
WANTED
BY
U.S. ARMY
660 MARKET ST. SAN FRANCISCO
OR ANY ARMY RECRUITING STATION

39


YOU

40

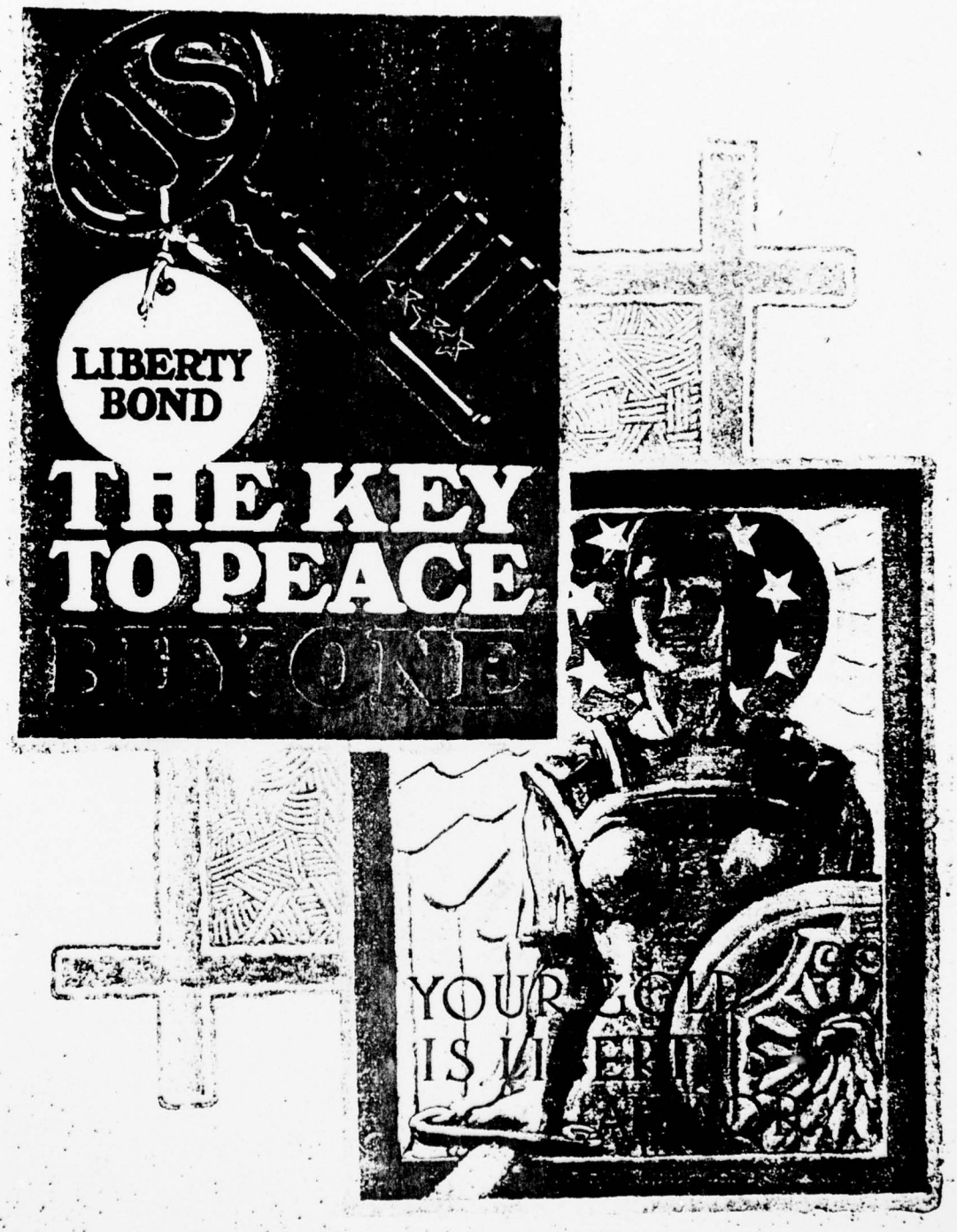
support of governmental needs, opposed to other calls for financial assistance for humanitarian or soldier comfort purposes.

As discussed in Chapter III, approximately two-thirds of the actual war costs were financed through Liberty Bond sales. The money was used to produce military equipment, build ships, sustain Allies (loans), and maintain the armed forces. Liberty Bonds were sold to individuals in specific dollar increments ($50, $100, etc.), with maturity dates from 4 to 30 years in the future, depending on the particular campaign in progress.

The War Savings Movement was started in the fall of 1917. Its concept was originally based on the Goods and Services Doctrine. Americans were experiencing an increase in wages as a result of the war. The War Savings Movement attempted to impress upon the people the need to lend these surplus wages to the government for use in hiring labor and purchasing raw material to support the war effort, rather than spending it on luxuries.[2] The appeal was: "Do not spend your money for unnecessary luxuries, as this will take labor and material from the essential industries."[3] War Savings Stamps also provided an opportunity for people who could not afford the higher priced Liberty Bonds to invest their quarters in support of the war effort.[4]

The familiar symbols of the foreboding Hun, helpless women and children, a paternal Uncle Sam, heroic soldiers, the American flag, the Statue of Liberty, an allegorical Columbia in battle array, cooperative and concerned civilians, and the machines of war are all portrayed in selling the message that investment of personal funds will lead to victory. Poster contests were conducted to promote the Liberty Loans. Examples of designs submitted in the Second Liberty Loan contest are at plates 41-43.

Plate 44 is an example of a War Savings Movement poster. The visual image immediately conveys the message that investment in War Savings Stamps supplies bullets to the fighting man. The copy: "Help Them KEEP YOUR WAR SAVINGS PLEDGE" reminds the viewer that continued investment is necessary to keep the troops supplied with the equipment to successfully fight. Here, the visual imagery directly and clearly supports the governmental need. In this respect, it is successful government-to-people communication. In contrast, the use of the paternal Uncle Sam image in plates 45 and 46 has no direct visual link with the goals of the War Savings Movement. Plate 45 is confusing through use of the words "army" and "enlist" and the message must be interpreted intellectually by the viewer before the meaning becomes clear. Plate 46 is a little clearer through use of the copy: "BOYS and GIRLS!"



Photos by Juley, New York.

PRIZE-WINNING DESIGNS IN LIBERTY LOAN POSTER CONTEST


BUY
A
BOND
HELP WIN THE WAR

42


HELP
SHORTEN
THE WAR
BUY A LIBERTY BOND

43


Help Them
KEEP YOUR WAR SAVINGS PLEDGE
TREASURY DEPT.

44


I am telling you
On June 28th I expect you to enlist in the army of war savers to back up my army of fighters.
W. S. S. Enlistment

45


You can Help your Uncle Sam Win the War
W.S.S.
Save your Quarters
BUY WAR SAVINGS STAMPS

46

and "Save your Quarters." The very docile pose of the children, however, does little to instill the viewer with the urge to immediately invest in War Savings Stamps, and without the presence of the copy, the visual message would be very unclear.

Societal support. The third category was societal support of the combatants and a concern for public awareness and support of the Allied effort. The supplying of tobacco and books to the troops were desired ends, and the public was informed, exhorted and persuaded to send money and gifts in support of this worthy cause. The image of the soldier smoking or reading was widely used to convey the message that the least the American public could do for their heroic defender was to provide him with a few simple luxuries. The finger-pointing image in plate 47 proclaiming "I need SMOKES more than any thing else" is an extension of the guilt theme used in recruiting. The wide-eyed expression and the square-jawed determination of the image are not in harmony with the written message. Plate 48 is an example of bad art combined with an unclear literal message. The viewer may be more concerned with mentally replacing Uncle Sam's top hat with horns to complete the unfortunate resemblance to a goat, rather than getting the intended message of donating money or books to the "FIGHTING MEN." In this respect, a poor visual image can be more damaging to the

AD-A046 781 ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLL FORT LEAVENWORTH KANS F/G 5/10
AN ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN POSTER ART AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION--ETC(U)
1977 P J HICKOK

UNCLASSIFIED

2 OF 2
AD
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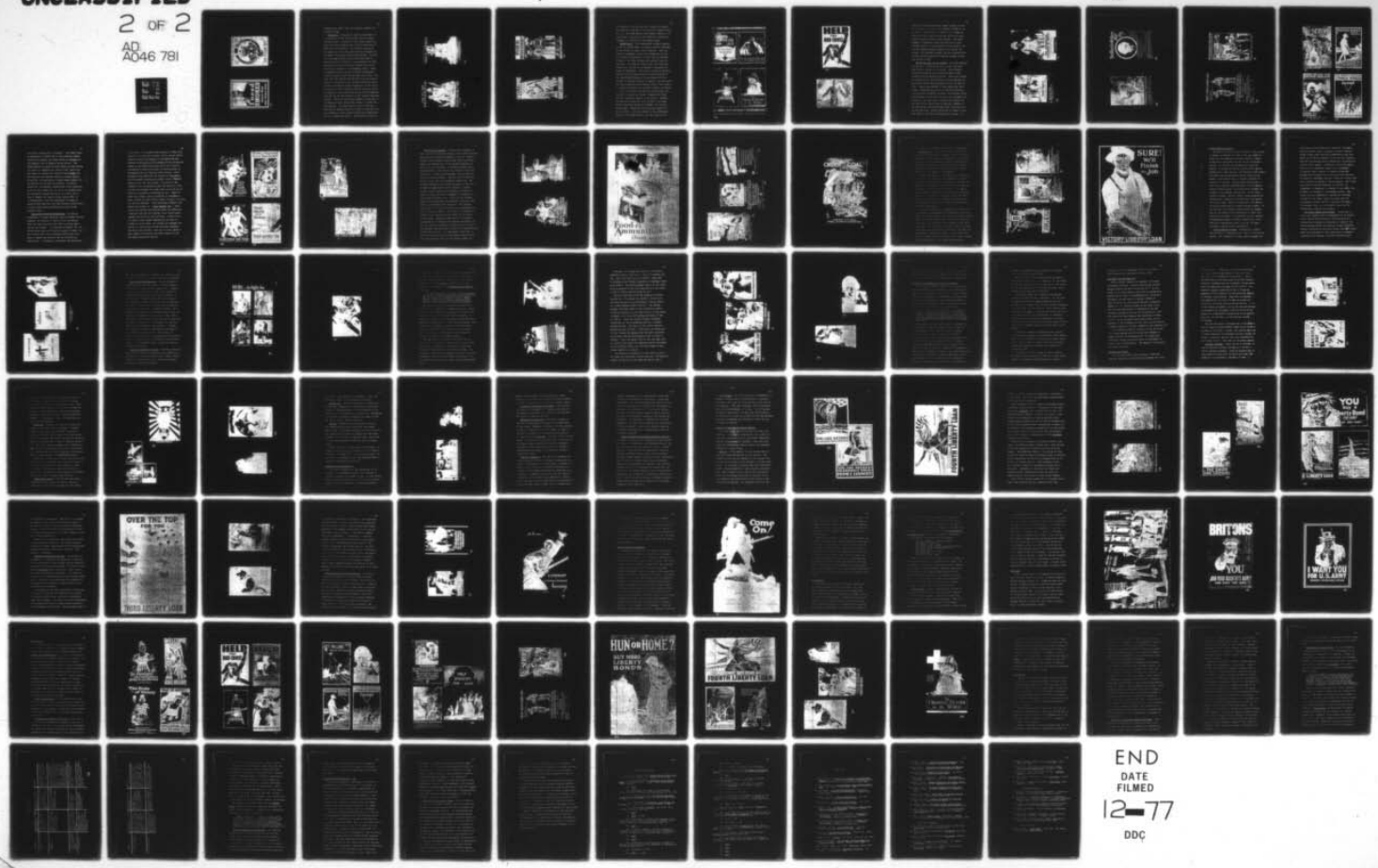
NL



END
DATE
FILMED
12-77
DDC


I need
SMOKES
more than
any thing else

47


MY FIGHTING MEN NEED BOOKS
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOC.
"DO YOUR BIT"

48

communicative effort than the complete absence of a pictorial image.

The allies. Allegorical symbols predominate in the depiction of the United States and her allies (plates 49-52). In plate 49, the viewer senses the unity of purpose communicated by the linked arms of Uncle Sam and Britannia. The national symbols of the eagle and lion, obviously alert and prepared for the fight, flank their master and mistress. In view of the strong pre-1917 anti-British sentiment in America because of Britain's sea blockades, an overt expression of unity of purpose between America and Britain was essential to governmental needs. Plate 50 commemorates the strong pro-France feeling prevalent in America since the American Revolution. The words "ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL!" and the crossed swords of the group of four soldiers backing a sword-wielding Marianne of France (suggesting by the action in the pose a total national unity of purpose) convey the wedding of the comradeship of the French musketeer with the heroism and idealism of the "modern" American soldier. Plates 51 and 52 are examples of the use of the female and male allegorical images to convey the same message. The same relative size of both the American and Belgian figures in plate 51 may well convey acceptance of the smaller nation as an equal partner in a unified war effort. The reverse is true in

SIDE BY SIDE -
BRITANNIA!

Britain's Day Dec. 7th 1918

MASS MEETING

ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL!

VIVE LA FRANCE!

Allied Tribute [illegible] 14, at 3 p. m.

[illegible]


WELCOME
NOBLE BELGIUM

51


WELCOME BIG BROTHER DEMOCRACY!
U.S.A.
RUSSIA
USA
RUSSIA
180,000,000
STRONG
UNITED FOR LIBERTY!

52

the display of the American and Russian land masses and population figures in the pictorial image in plate 52, i.e., although smaller than Russia, America is at least equal to Russia in the unified and democratic struggle for victory over the common enemy.

Humanitarian. The humanitarian category emerged as the war effort began to create a greater influence on the routine of daily life in America. Here the themes of sympathy, charity and compassion for the war wounded, the prisoners of war, and the innocent victims of war (the refugees and orphans) were predominant. As stated in Chapter III, such emotional themes were used by the government to persuade the people to sacrifice. Once used to giving up personal luxuries for such good causes as those espoused in the humanitarian category, it was easier and more natural to sacrifice further to support the more basic, but less acceptable, governmental needs of war material, manpower (soldier and civilian worker), and money.

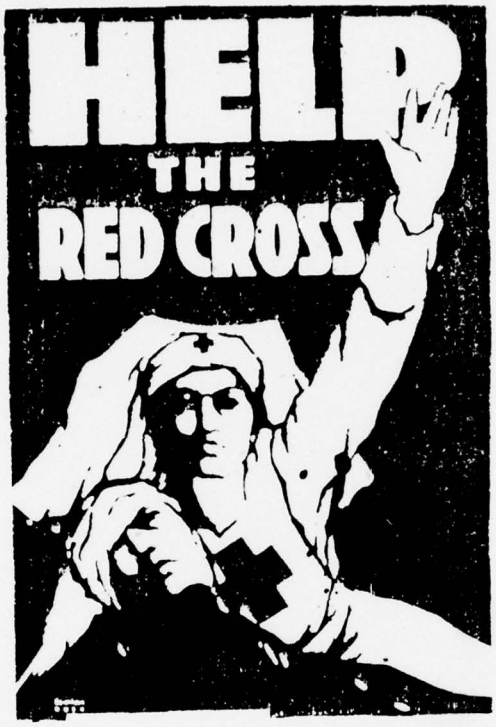
Many charitable organizations, sponsoring a multitude of humanitarian causes, communicated their need for financial support to the people. Perhaps the most well known were the Red Cross, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the Salvation Army. Plates 53 and 54 solicit support for the Red Cross. The cross itself is the predominant symbol in Red Cross posters, and the image of the


The First Three!
Give till it Hurts
- they gave till they
died
War Fund
Week
One Hundred
Million Dollars


Have you answered the Red Cross
Christmas Roll Call?


Hold up your end!
WAR FUND WEEK
One Hundred Million Dollars


The
GREATEST MOTHER
in the WORLD


HELP
THE
RED CROSS

54


BFB Permanent Blind Relief War Fund 590 Fifth Ave BFB

55

female "nurse-mother-madonna" symbol appears in most of the posters as well. "The GREATEST MOTHER in the WORLD" is representative of the Red Cross image in both World War I and World War II, and will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. The other examples of American poster art produced in this category appeal to the generosity of the people, and use the sympathy-evoking images of the blind, the wounded, the innocent refugee, and the orphaned child as both attention-getter and primary message vehicle (see plates 55-59).

Finish the job - on to victory! The next category was the call to finish the job; to make that last great effort and go on to victory. This category was necessitated by the growing shortage of both soldiers and the materials of war. Women were needed to replace men in the factories so that manpower and production levels were maintained as the war used up both. Themes that emerged in this phase were patriotism, responsibility, guilt for wasting resources, self-sacrifice (domestic heroism), and national pride. They appeared in the form of a call for increased production on the home front, unifying the soldier and the work force, using women as essential members of the work force, and economizing vital resources such as food and fuel. Plates 60-65 call on women to take over many of the jobs customarily held by men - to


MOTHERLESS
FATHERLESS
STARVING
HOW MUCH
TO SAVE THESE LITTLE LIVES ?
WAR FUND WEEK
ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS
MAY 20th–27th

56


THE FATHERLESS
CHILDREN OF FRANCE
Headquarters 666 Fifth Avenue, New York.
BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF FRENCH WAR ORPHANS
10¢ keeps a child in its mother's home 1day
$3.00 1month
$36.50 1year
ASK FOR NAME AND ADDRESS OF CHILD
LOCAL TREASURER

57

CAMPAIGN for $30,000,000

AMERICAN COMMITTEE
FOR RELIEF IN THE NEAR EAST

ARMENIA - GREECE - SYRIA - PERSIA

"You Won't Let Me Starve, Will You?"

I am little Shushan, from Armenia
My home has been destroyed
Father was taken away
Mother starved because she gave me
all the food
I am so hungry and cold
Thousands of other children are hungry and cold

The Opportunity for Our Sunday School

17 cents [illegible] per month [illegible] a year will [illegible]

[illegible]

HELP HER CARRY ON!

"Miss America reports for service, Sir"

NATIONAL LEAGUE *for* WOMAN'S SERVICE

The Woman Army

$200,000

needed for Vital War Work

SEPTEMBER 17 — 28

What we do	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

60

FOUR YEARS IN THE FIGHT

— The Women of France —

We Owe [illegible]

UNITED WAR WORK CAMPAIGN

61


SERVICE
FALL IN
NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR WOMANS SERVICE

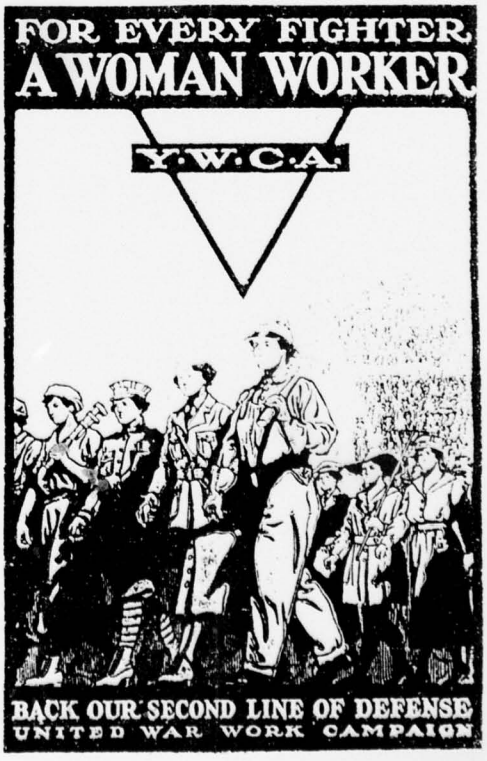
62


NATIONAL SERVICE
WOMEN'S
LAND ARMY
GOD SPEED THE PLOUGH
AND THE WOMAN WHO DRIVES IT
APPLY FOR ENROLMENT FORMS AT YOUR NEAREST POST OFFICE OR
EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE

63


MAKE READY FOR
GREATER SERVICE
WOMEN AND WAR WORK
COME TO
CONFERENCE
SILVER BAY, NEW YORK
JUNE 21-JULY 1, 1918

64

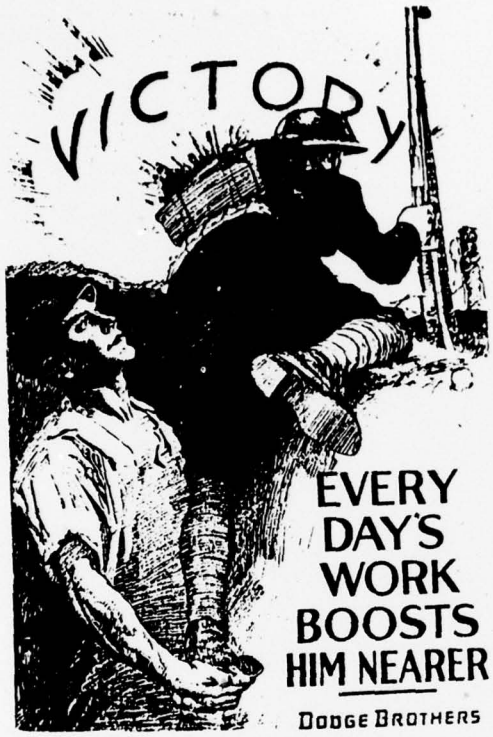

FOR EVERY FIGHTER
A WOMAN WORKER
Y.W.C.A.
BACK OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE
UNITED WAR WORK CAMPAIGN

65

act as the "second line of defense." The female image is displayed in uniform and in work garments, always slim and attractive, and often heroic in carrying out her assigned role to support the war effort. The "Miss America" in plate 60 could easily win the bathing suit event to establish her right to wear that title. The viewer is offered the choice of identifying with the beautiful and selfless service volunteer (plates 60 and 62), the industrious foreign example (plate 61), the backbone of the American economy - the farmer (plate 63), the average housewife and mother preparing to do her part (plate 64), or one of the conscientious and responsible masses willing to do a man's job at home to support the fighter at war (plate 65). It is interesting to note the similarity of design of plate 65 with some that have been produced in Red China in more recent years proclaiming the unity of the "People's Army."

Importance of the production base. As the war progressed, it became essential that sufficient civilian manpower was obtained to insure a solid production base, and make the worker feel that he was as important as the soldier. As discussed in Chapter III, the United States was not militarily prepared to enter the war in April 1917, and a momentous effort had to be made to augment and maintain the war material production base. A wedding of the worker and the soldier

in the minds of the people was necessary to help unify national attitudes and resources behind the war effort. Posters carrying the message of responsibility and national pride were produced showing the war production worker as the behind-the-scenes force that directly and primarily aided the soldier in finishing the job and gaining the all important final victory. Plate 66 depicts the worker and the soldier as team mates, with the worker boosting the soldier toward "VICTORY" which is just over the horizon. In plate 67, the riveter's tool is synonymous with the soldier's rifle, and the copy informs the viewer that rivets are as important as bayonets in finishing the job. Plate 68 shows the soldier, sailor and worker as comrades-in-arms, unified in their efforts toward victory. In plate 69, the copy informs: "Your Work means Victory," and exhorts the worker to: "Build another One." Since one of the critical governmental needs was sufficient shipping to get men and supplies "over there," great emphasis was placed on ship building. Plates 70 and 71 contain visual images emphasizing the need for workers to build ships, and carrying the message that the way to victory was through increased shipping. The sturdy ship builder, rivet gun in hand, became a major symbol of civilian work force support of the war effort (plates 67 and 70).


VICTORY
EVERY DAY'S WORK BOOSTS HIM NEARER
DODGE BROTHERS

66


Rivets are Bayonets
Drive them home!

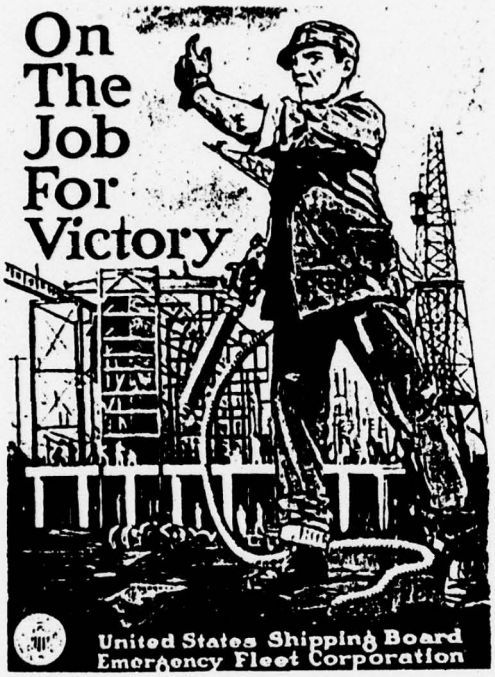
67


TOGETHER WE WIN
UNITED STATES SHIPPING BOARD EMERGENCY FLEET CORPORATION

68


Your Work means Victory
Build another One
UNITED STATES SHIPPING BOARD EMERGENCY FLEET CORPORATION

69


On
The
Job
For
Victory
United States Shipping Board
Emergency Fleet Corporation

70


ON THE JOB FOR VICTORY

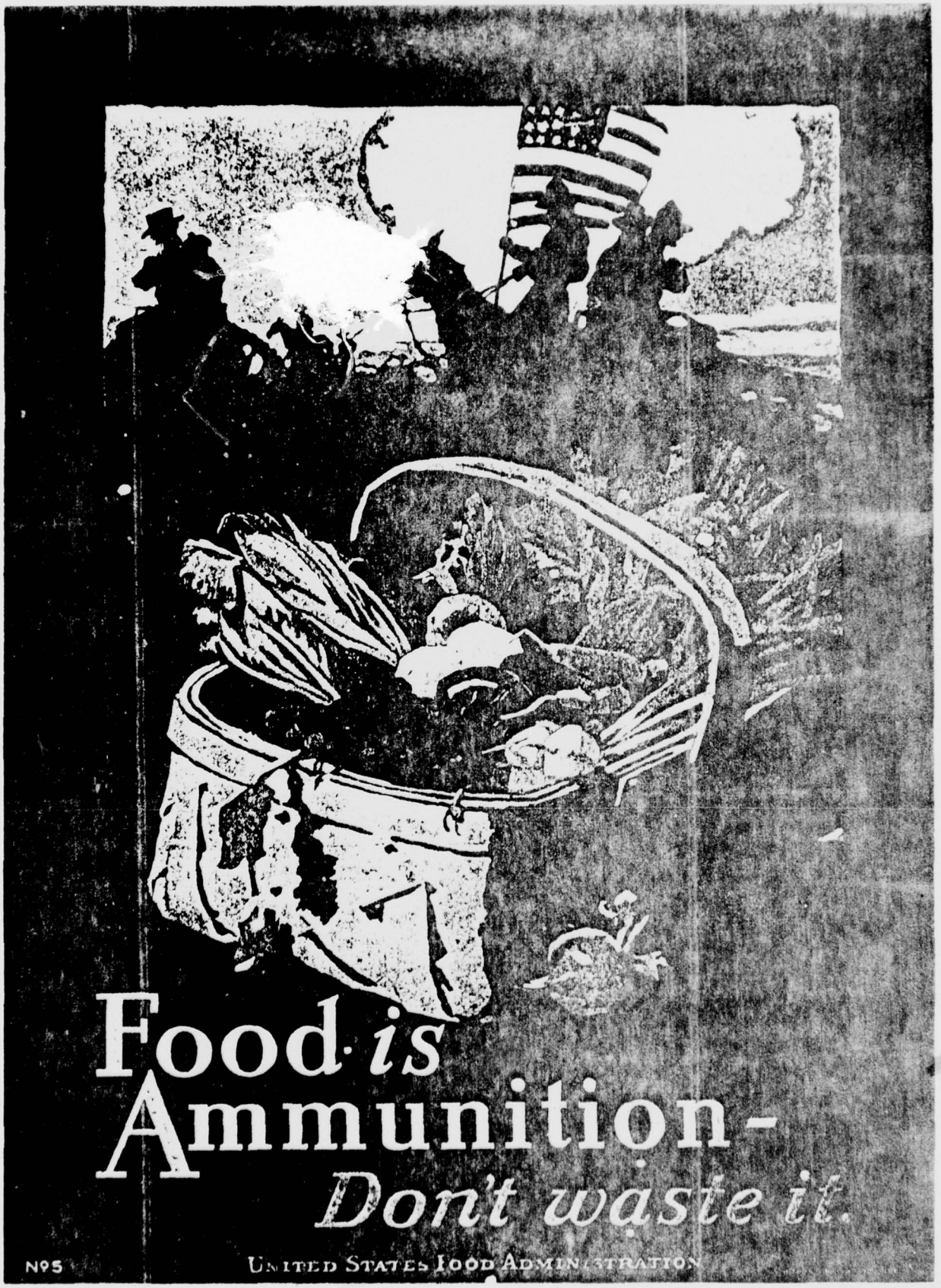
71

Sacrifice and economy. Another major element of this category of need was economy of the vital resources made scarce by the great demands of the war. Availability of food became a major issue since the United States was feeding many of the European homeless as well as her own citizens. A pleading Columbia cries "Be Patriotic" as she exhorts the viewer to save food (plate 72). A more serene Columbia sows her own garden with the good advice: "Sow the seeds of Victory! plant & raise your own vetetables" (plate 73). The ultimate message is that money not spent on food can be spent on ammunition and war supplies. Victory gardens became a part of the American heritage as a result of this World War I campaign to economize for the ultimate national good. Plate 74 also directly links food economy with war production with the copy: "Food is Ammunition-Don't waste it." The implied guilt theme is if you waste food, you waste ammunition and hurt the war effort. The viewer is reassured in plate 75 that saving food will result in the defeat of the enemy. America's assumption of the awesome responsibility of feeding the refugees and orphans in the war zone is advertised in plates 76 and 77, with the reminder that the viewer shares that responsibility. "ORDER COAL NOW" by J. C. Leyendecker (plate 78) emphasizes the need for fuel conservation and planning. The art quality is high, and the design simple and

72

"Every Garden a Munition P"

73


Food is Ammunition-
Don't waste it.
No 5
United States Food Administration

75

HUNGER

For three years America has fought starvation *in* Belgium

Will you *Eat less* – wheat meat – fats *and* sugar that *we* may still send food *in* ship loads?

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

76

KEEP *it* COMING

"We must not only feed our Soldiers at the front but the millions of women & children behind our lines"

Gen. John J. Pershing

WASTE NOTHING

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

77


ORDER COAL
NOW
UNITED STATES
FUEL ADMINISTRATION

clear enough to attract attention and be remembered.

Retrenchment. The sixth and final category of need developed during the American World War I poster experience was the retrenchment effort. This occured after the end of hostilities, and was concerned with welcoming the victorious soldiers home, advertising the need for jobs for veterans, and paying the war debt through the Victory Loan campaign.

In plate 79, Uncle Sam welcomes home a sharp looking soldier and expresses the sentiments of a proud and grateful nation with the statement: "MY BOY, YOU CERTAINLY HAVE GOOD!" Plates 80 and 81 encourage the job seeking veteran to check with the U. S. Employment Service and remind the employer of his responsibilities to the returning heroes. Notice the peacetime head gear worn by the soldiers in contrast to the helmeted version of the soldier depicted during the other categories.

Of the five Liberty Loan campaigns, the first four were numbered consecutively and conducted in 1917 and 1918. The fifth campaign was titled the Victory Liberty Loan. It opened 21 April 1919 and closed 10 May 1919. $4.5 billion was accepted toward paying the war debt. Plate 82 is a good example of a clear message communicating the need of the nation for money, and exhorting the viewer to follow the example of the citizen who states: "SURE! We'll Finish the Job". Clear, direct, and memorable, it is good visual communication.


"MY BOY, YOU CERTAINLY MADE GOOD!"
FOUR ★ MILLION
WELCOME HOME!

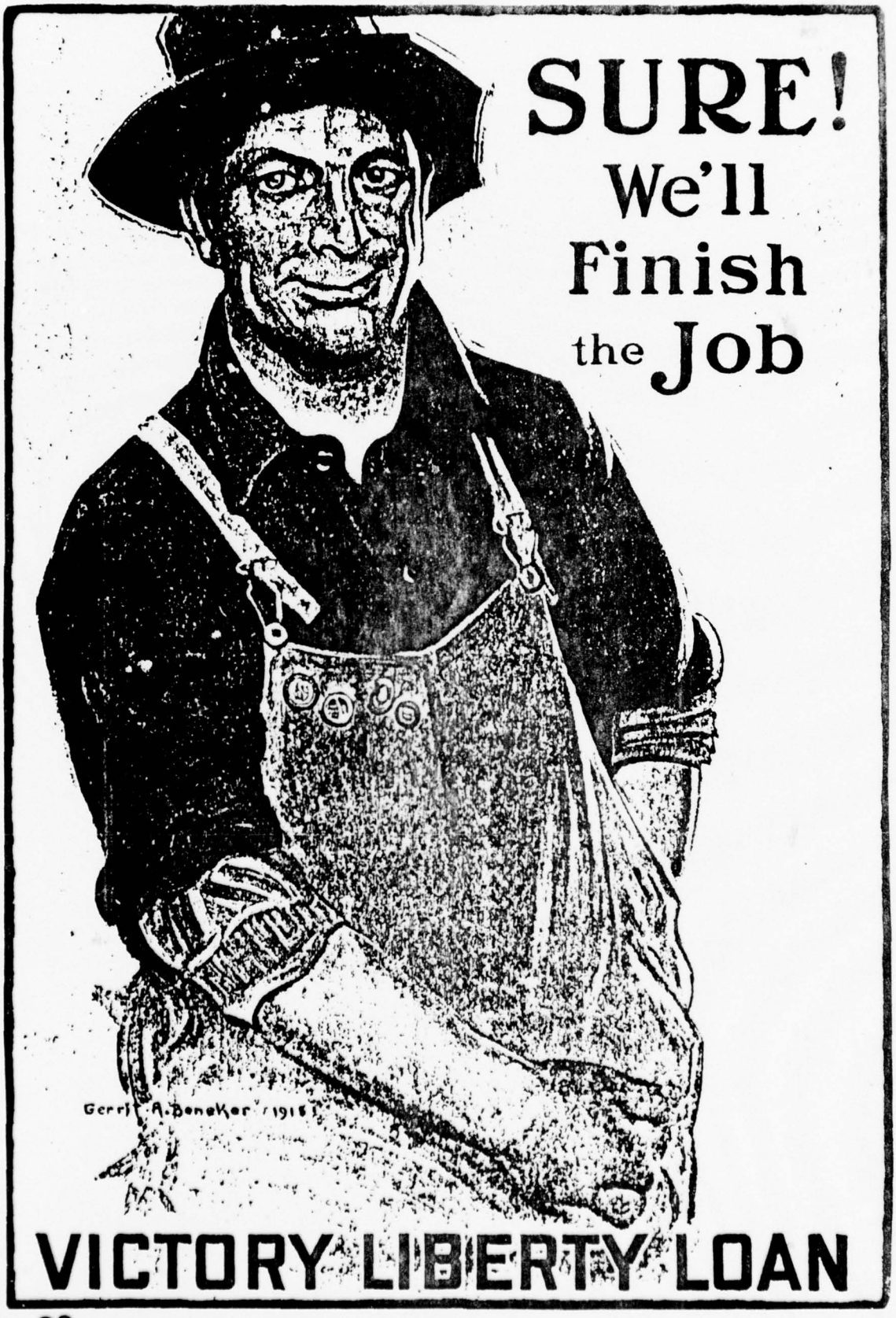
79


JOBS for FIGHTERS
BUREAU for RETURNING SOLDIERS and SAILORS
WALK IN
U.S. Employment Service and Co-operating Agencies
If You Need a Job
If You Need a Man
Inform the Official Central Agency
The Service is Free
The United States Employment Service
Bureau for Returning Soldiers and Sailors

80


After the Welcome Home
a JOB!
U.S. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

81


SURE!
We'll
Finish
the Job
Gerrit A. Beneker 1918
VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN

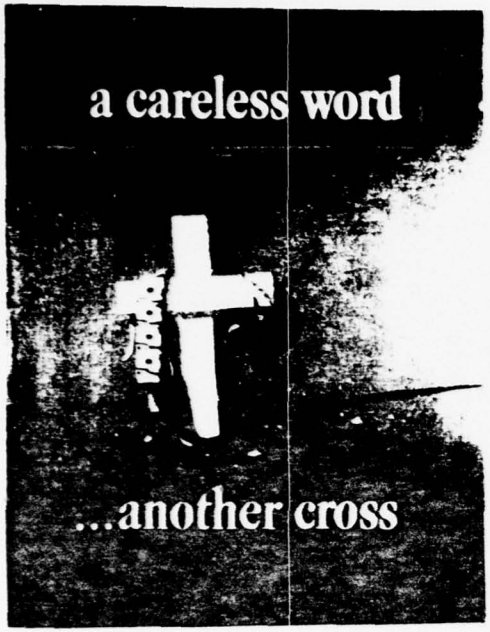
Poster Trends In America

The First World War poster experience left a legacy of themes and symbols that were to be used again in a larger and more awesome world-wide conflict a scant twenty-three years after the end of the "Great War." However, the societal environment had changed in America. Although the need for government-to-people communication still existed, the techniques had changed. The radio gave the government direct access to the people. There was no need to inspire patriotic interest or to recruit. Everyone was involved as a result of the national unifying effect of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and conscription softened the urgency of the manpower requirement. The pictorial billboard poster, the main outdoor advertising medium, declined due to gasoline rationing which kept people off of the roads. Paper was also short and rationed. The United States felt the paper shortage acutely. Of the more than two thousand posters with war slogans sent to the Office of War Information in 1942, only three were published.[5] During World War II, societal circumstances (public attitude, conscription, other effective communication media, and fuel and paper shortages) limited poster production.[6]

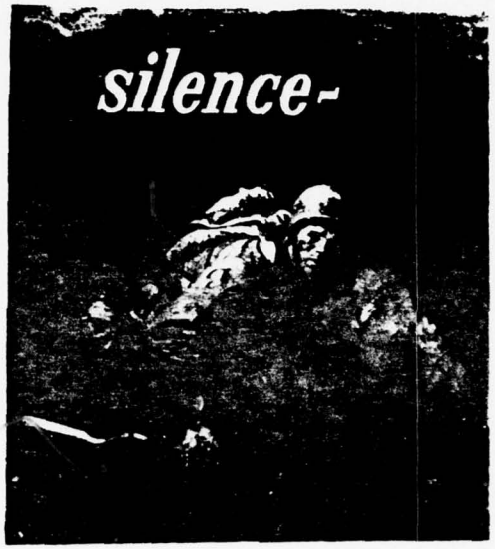
New categories of need. Nevertheless, posters were produced to communicate war needs to the American people. New categories of need, such as appeals for

blood donors and warnings about security, did appear. Security became a major category, and many different poster designs were published communicating that need. Plates 83 and 84 are examples of the security category. Plate 83 incorporates fairly effectively the principles of good poster design - simplicity, clarity of image, good art, and sufficient impact to be remembered. It requires copy, however, to clearly convey the message that careless talk on the home front can give the enemy an advantage overseas. Plate 84, on the other hand, contains an ambiguous visual message. The crouching soldier could be listening, or startled, or frightened, or behaving in a number of ways other than carefully or silently as the message intends. The viewer does not immediately identify with the idea conveyed by the visual image; the image does not convincingly inform, exhort or persuade the viewer. The message, then, is not instantly clear and its effectiveness suffers accordingly.

The other side's point-of-view. Racial bias is also a new category that is represented in an Italian poster (plate 85) portraying a black American G.I. irreverently clutching a priceless art object.[7] The visual message labels the American "enemy" as apeish, uncouth destroyers of civilized values (the hate theme). Other new categories of need concentrate on personal cleanliness and hygiene to prevent epidemics, warn-



83



BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU
SAY OR WRITE

84

85

ings about accidents with weapons, the need for clothing for the troops, and the preservation of freedom.[8]

Freedom and the common man. The preservation of freedom category was illustrated by Norman Rockwell in the "Four Freedoms" posters (plate 86). Rockwell used the image of the common man as his vehicle to communicate national pride and unity of effort. In the "Freedom of Speech" poster, the focal point is the informally dressed free citizen who is exercising his right to free speech in the traditional American environment of the town or community meeting. He is flanked by two more formally dressed citizens who are listening attentively to what he has to say. This image conveys the message that in America everyone has the right to speak out and be listened to, and that right should be exercised and preserved. Rockwell also reminds the viewer of his American heritage in plate 87 ("To Make Men Free"). The concept of patriotism and pride in the American military tradition emerge to convey national survivability and the willingness of the American people to fight for the preservation of freedom.

Recurring categories of need. Recurring categories from the First World War experience were depiction of the enemy as a monster (hate and fear themes), Allied assistance, finishing the job, humanitarian causes (Red Cross), and war production.

OURS...to fight for

Freedom of Speech

Freedom of Worship

Freedom from Want

Freedom from Fear

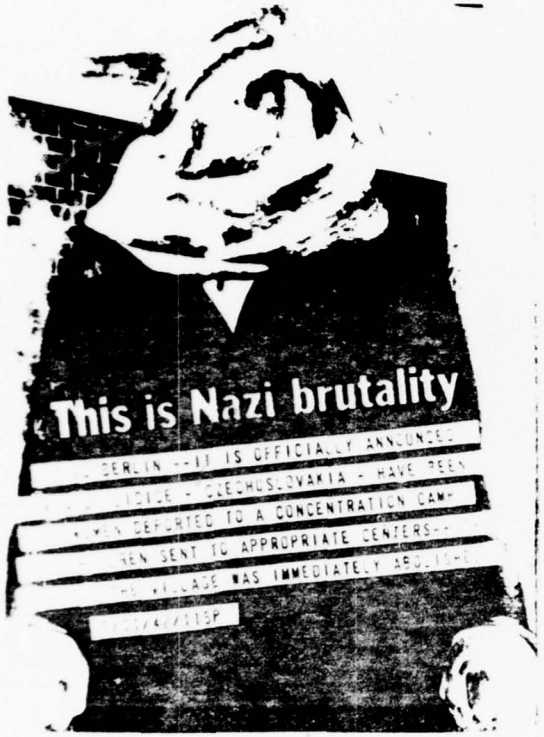
87

The hate and fear theme had its origin in the World War I poster experience, but strangely enough there were few atrocity posters during World War II. Bevis Hillier, in his book Posters, quotes Mr. A. J. P. Taylor, in a footnote to his English History, 1914-45, as follows:

> In the First World War nearly everyone believed the stories of German atrocities, though relatively few were true. In the Second World War nearly everyone refused to believe the stories, though they were true, and the German crimes the most atrocious ever committed by a civilized nation.[9]

The Ben Shahn poster illustrated at plate 88 reports the Nazi atrocities in Czechoslovakia in a shocking image that skillfully incorporates the copy in the design and demands the viewer's full attention. In startling contrast is the Nazi poster (plate 89) which depicts the German soldier as the viewer's friend. Even so, there is a coldness and reserve about the fixed smile, the inability of the viewer to see the eyes, and the starkness and efficiency of the helmet and uniform that belies the intended message.

Plate 91 evokes a feeling of compassion for the wounded and the refugee, a sense of unity with an ally, and solicits assistance for the relief of the less fortunate allied country - in this case, China. The presence of Uncle Sam assisting the homeless, but still determined, woman and child reminds the viewer of his responsibility to take care of this heroic and unbeaten ally.



88

89

Plate 90 illustrates the category of need first identified during World War I - that of finishing the job. Here, the image is one of action - Uncle Sam is rolling up his sleeves preparatory to making a final, great effort. The wrench grasped tightly in his right hand is symbolic of the vital importance of the worker to the war effort and finishing the job.

Plate 93 also falls into the category of finishing the job. It conveys the soldier's pride in the fact that his girl is contributing to the war effort as a Woman Ordnance Worker (W.O.W.). The primary message reinforces women as war production workers. An implied message of guilt also exists, if the viewer is female and is not contributing personally to the war effort. Plate 94, another Rockwell creation, contributes to the governmental need for a strong production base. The image of the soldier behind a machine gun and the copy: "Let's give him Enough and On Time" convey the message that the need to provide the soldier with the instruments of war is vital to victory. Here, the script form of the copy type does not support the urgent and dangerous emotion portrayed by the pictorial image, and the total impact of the poster suffers as a result.

The humanitarian category is seen again in plate 92, where the Red Cross cause is espoused. The familiar symbols of the cross, the nurse and healer, and a

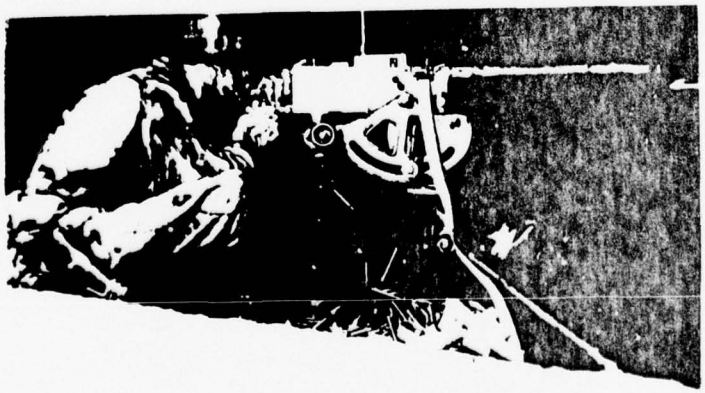
90

CHINA IS HELPING US
UNITED CHINA RELIEF

91

92

93



94

serious-faced Uncle Sam, framed against the smoke of battle, communicates the justness of the cause and the patriotic responsibility of the viewer to support it.

Volunteer Organization For Poster Production

As discussed in Chapter III, The Division for Pictorial Publicity was organized to support the production of posters during World War I. A similar organization of volunteers was constituted on 10 March 1942 in New York City under the name Artists for Victory, Incorporated. The purpose of the organization is summarized in the preamble to its constitution:

> We artists, our Country at war, our welfare and security threatened, join the struggle of the nation against enemy aggressors. We offer our talents, our all, to help to win the war so that we shall remain a free nation dedicated to a creative useful life, practicing the arts and sciences of peace.[10]

In essence, the organization hoped to apprise the U. S. citizen of the seriousness of the war and his responsibility to buy U. S. war bonds and stamps, through posters and other graphic art media.[11]

The themes for the poster designs conceived by the Artists for Victory were obtained from a document authored by Archibald MacLeish, the Director of the Office of Facts and Figures. MacLeish's "Statement of Information Objectives" expanded on the policy expressed in President Roosevelt's 6 January 1942 State of the Union message. The assumption from Mr. MacLeish's analysis was that the government desired imaginative

designs and pictorial images conceived by artists, rather than factual pictures.[12]

The categories of governmental need described by Mr. MacLeish were: 1) war production, 2) the effect on civilian life, 3) the fighting job, 4) the cause, 5) the conspiracy, 6) its counter strategy, and 7) civilian morale and state of mind.[13]

Three main themes were considered appropriate to the categories of need. They were: 1) The factual phase of pictorial imagery required when the American public became weary of the constantly repeated radio messages; 2) The menace or threat motive associated with the enemy, to include the slavery and atrocity themes; and 3) The idealization of liberation, unity and peace to convey the seriousness and righteousness of the Allied cause, the preservation of freedom, and the ultimate triumph of the American way of life.[14]

Artists for Victory contributed poster designs to governmental agencies, and sponsored poster competitions and art exhibits in furtherance of their objective to support the war effort with "their training, experience, technical abilities, and qualities of imagination."[15]

The Second World War poster production effort paralleled that of the First World War in that organizations of volunteer artists evolved to become a

catalyst in the all important visual communication effort between the government and the people.

Post World War II Poster Art

The war poster reached its highwater mark under nationalist policies. However, nationalism was fast disappearing by the end of World War II.[16] By the middle of the 20th century, the world had become much smaller due to radio, telecommunications, the movies, the press, and the threat of nuclear warfare.[17] After World War II, the graphic arts had a lessening impact on U. S. society because of the slump of the 30's (reduced expenditure on advertising, and the resultant decrease in the use of the poster as a primary method of advertising); the ascendancy of radio and TV as more acceptable advertising media; the acceptance of the photograph as the norm; and the failure of poster designs to reflect imagination and innovation.[18]

War posters saw limited exposure during the Korean War, communicating essentially the same messages as their World War II predecessors.[19] The camera and television became the primary media of government-to-people visual communication. The heyday of the American war poster was over.

The Anti-war Poster

In the early 1960s a new challenge to American ideology and military tradition and heritage was taking

form in Vietnam. Like Korea, the Vietnam experience was to be a limited war effort in that there was no call for total mobilization of the nation. Unlike the world wars of the early half of the 20th century, realism in communication was to prevail through press, photo and television coverage of the conflict. Government-to-people communication was no longer an organized effort controlled by the government through one primary visual medium. This time the government had competition, not only from the news media but from active and vocal anti-war groups as well. A few of the themes and symbols used in the anti-war movement are presented as an example of the evolution of the poster as a communicative medium from the pro-government tool of World War I to the anti-war vehicle of Vietnam.

The anti-war poster contained many of the symbols used in support of governmental needs during the First and Second World Wars. However, the symbols were used to evoke opposition of government policies through the themes of ridicule, parody, fear, and compassion for the victims of war - this time the Vietnamese people.

Colonial heritage. Plates 95 and 96 contrast the uses of American colonial heritage as a vehicle to deliver opposite messages. Plate 95 appeared shortly after America's entry into the First World War, and champions the government's decision to enter

95

96

the war. Its message evokes a patriotic spirit in the viewer through identification via the visual images of the colonial patriot and the flag. Plate 96 parodies Paul Revere's ride to warn the American patriots of the approaching enemy by substituting a Vietnemese rider and the copy: "THE AMERICANS ARE COMING." The message is clear: the Americans are the bad guys in Vietnam.

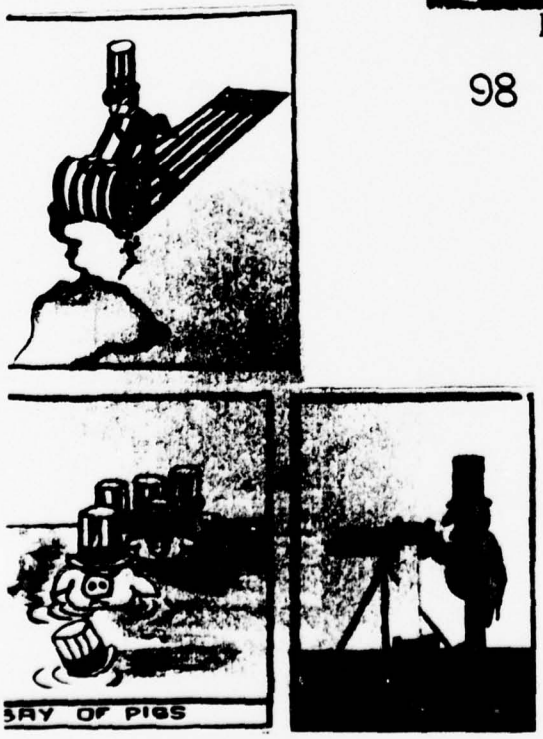
Uncle Sam. Plates 97 and 98 use the Uncle Sam symbol to sell their anti-war messages. Counter-clockwise, from the top (plate 97), Uncle Sam is shown spreading his magic carpet of influence southward in the Western Hemisphere; the American sponsored effort in Cuba (the Bay of Pigs) is depicted as failing - the visual image suggesting that the Americans (pigs in Uncle Sam tophats) are in over their heads; and a silhouetted Uncle Sam is manning a machine gun with the copy stating: "WAR→TAXES→INFLATION."

Plate 98 is a caricature of Uncle Sam with a mouth full of bombers depositing their deadly pay-loads on a Vietnamese village. The copy proclaims: "End Bad Breath." The message infers that America is causing the destruction of non-combatants in Vietnam and has the power to change that situation.

Female/child image. Plate 99 uses the mother-child/female-infant image to create a feeling of revulsion and horror in the viewer over the injury

End Bad Breath.

98



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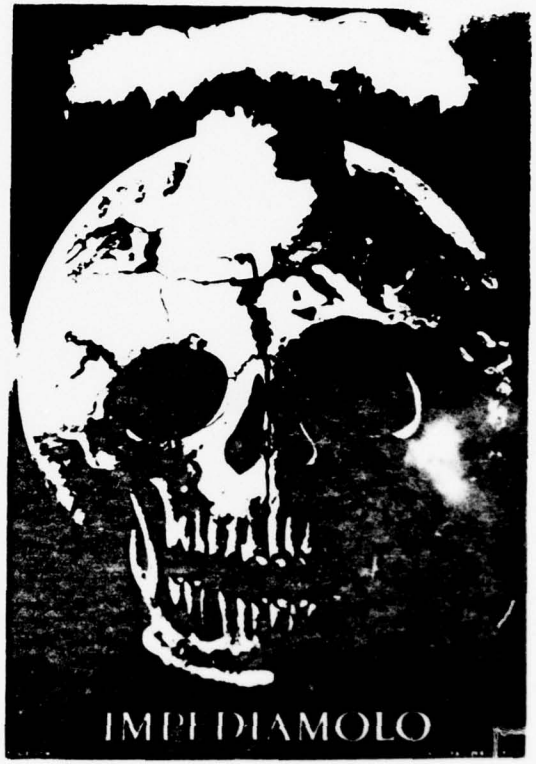
99



100

and death of non-combatants in Vietnam. Again, the message is anti U. S. involvement in the war.

Nuclear war. Plate 100 uses fear of nuclear war as the theme, employing the mushroom cloud and skull symbols to convey impending doom for mankind if nuclear arms are not controlled or eliminated. The poster was produced by the Swiss movement for peace in 1954. The slogan reads: "Let us stop it."

Heroism. Plates 101 and 102 contrast the Iwo Jima symbolism of heroism (plate 101) with peace (plate 102). The highly patriotic World War II poster was converted to an anti-war message thru the transposition of a rose for the American flag. The poster is a photomontage made in 1969 by Ronald and Karen Bowen.

Plates 96 and 97 are the work of Tomi Ungerer, an American artist who saw the Vietnam war as "hopeless, senseless, and stupid."[20] One of Ungerer's main concerns with the Vietnam war was the financial drain it imposed on Americans (plate 97).[21]

Effectiveness Of Poster Art

As stated in Chapter II, the usefulness of the poster as a communicative medium is its ability to attract attention and to sell an idea. To sell effectively, a poster must be both good art and good advertising. The war poster had to communicate govern-

Oil painting, based on famed photograph of marines raising [illegible] Iwo Jima, which is to be used in the next War Bond [illegible] given the President by Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau (*second left*) in presence of three of the [illegible] men who were there and are portrayed in the [illegible] PfcMgr. John Bradley, Pfc Rene Gagnon and Pfc Ira H[illegible]

101

102

mental needs by selling values and ideas. These values and ideas were represented in emotional themes, and often conveyed through the use of symbolic images.

Evaluation of categories of need. A way to measure their effectiveness is to evaluate how well the governmental needs were met. This will only be done for the First World War period.

Awareness of the threat. The first category of need was communicating awareness of the enemy threat to the people. Examples of poster art in this category date back to 1916 exhorting such themes as "Wake Up America" and German brutality and atrocity such as the sinking of the Lusitania. The fact that the United States did enter the war in April, 1917 on the side of the allies without significant national resistance can attest to the propaganda value of the poster in communicating the threat to an initially reluctant and neutral nation.

Call for resources. The call for resources, the second category of need, is the most visible with respect to achievement of tangible goals: manpower and money. Since the effort to recruit sufficient volunteers to man an army failed and the draft had to be initiated, a judgement may be made that the recruiting effort via the poster was ineffective. However, in all fairness, history shows that the recruitment of large volunteer armies in time of war has never suc-

ceeded, regardless of the communicative media used, and that the recruiting poster served a useful and informative role in communicating the need for volunteers to help meet the tremendous and continuing requirement for military manpower throughout the war. The most dramatic accomplishment of poster advertising was the overwhelming success of the Liberty Loan campaigns. As discussed in Chapter III, the five campaigns were often over-subscribed, and the ability of the government to achieve its monetary goals was attributed directly to the effectiveness of the advertising poster.[22]

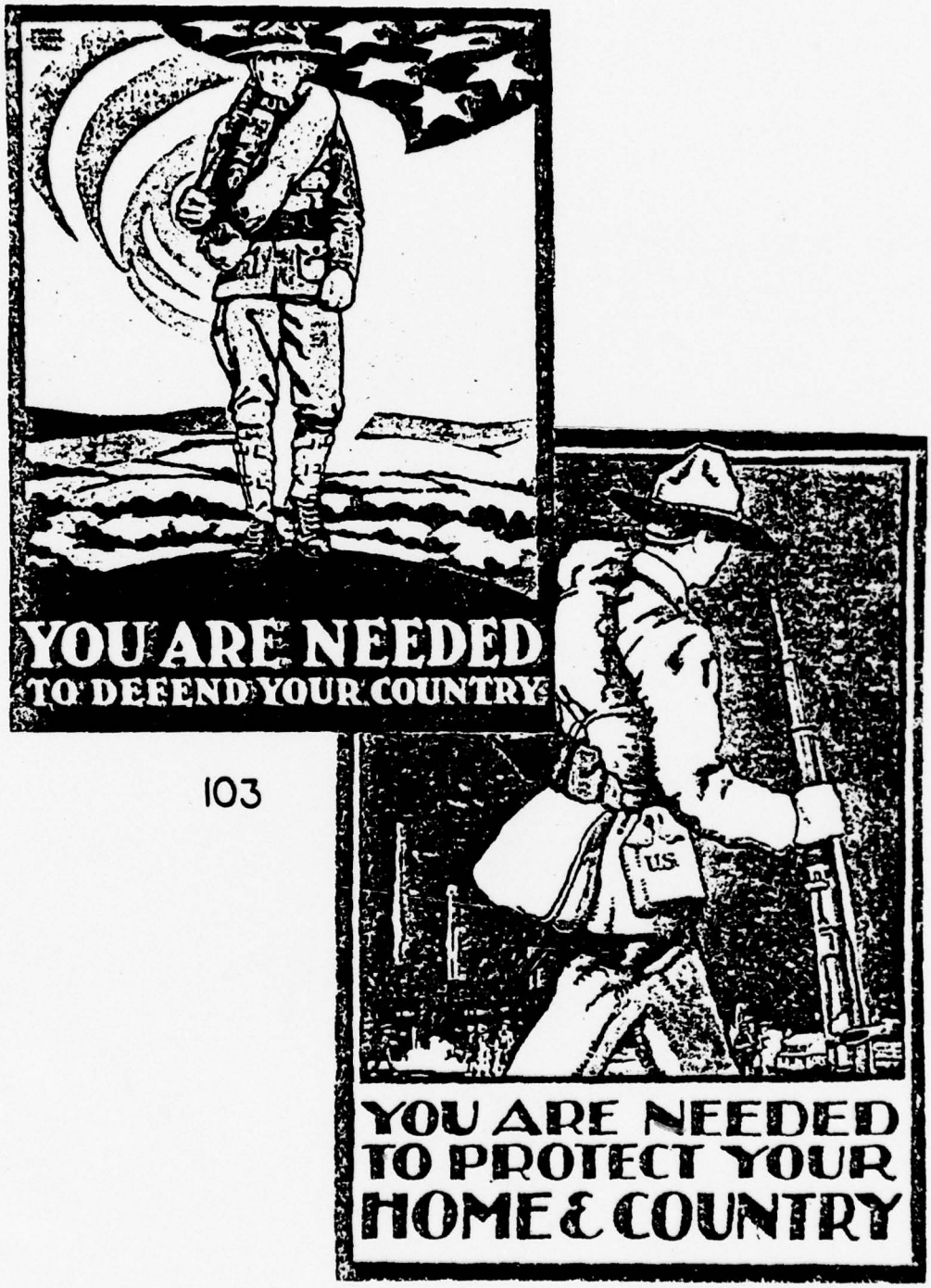
Societal support-humanitarian-finishing the job. The third, fourth and fifth categories of need (societal support; humanitarian; and finishing the job) can best be measured by the outcome of the war - allied victory. Since the ultimate governmental goal was victory, and since victory could only be obtained through societal support of the war effort, the achievement of victory is indicative of the government's success in communicating the need for, and obtaining societal support. As described in Chapter III, the poster was the primary medium of visual communication employed by the government in achieving societal support. Therefore, the poster was an effecitve medium of communication between the government and the people during the First World War.

Retrenchment. The sixth category (retrenchment) was limited in scope, and insufficient data is available to analyze other than the effectiveness of the Victory Loan campaign. This last campaign, like its predecessors, was overwhelmingly successful. In a 20 day period from 21 April 1919 to 10 May 1919, $5.25 billion was subscribed; of that amount $4.5 billion was accepted. Obviously, the people were willing to finish the job of paying for the war.

Analysis Of Selected Individual Posters

Not every poster produced during World War I was effective. As stated in Chapter III, some poster designs were created in a hurry, and lacked imagination. Some were poorly drawn or designed. Some were flamboyant and pretentious, symbols without the necessary framework of a clear story.

Bad art. A few examples of poor posters have already been mentioned earlier in this chapter. The posters in plate 103 are examples of art student work that are poorly drawn, poorly designed, and lack imagination. The majority of posters that used allegorical Columbia figures also fit in that category (see plate 104). The Columbia in plate 104 is not only poorly drawn (is the primary image male or female?), it is also flamboyant and pretentious, coming close to symbolism without meaning. The catalytic factor in the


YOU ARE NEEDED
TO DEFEND YOUR COUNTRY
US
YOU ARE NEEDED
TO PROTECT YOUR
HOME & COUNTRY

103


FOR VICTORY, BUY MORE BONDS
FOURTH LIBERTY LOAN

poster is not the allegorical symbolism of the figure, or the diving eagle, but the silhouetted soldiers marching to war in the background.

Other examples of poorly drawn and designed posters, apparently hastily produced to capitalize on the sinking of the Lusitania, are at plates 105 and 106. The strong emotional reaction sought in the viewer is tempered by the incongruity of the Hun-children-ocean relationships in plate 105 and the obvious impossibility of the sailor-children-ocean relationships in plate 106. To appreciate the difference between good and bad poster art, compare these two efforts with the psychological power of Fred Spear's interpretation of the Lusitania tragedy in plate 111.

Plate 107 is an example of a symbol without a catalyst - the American eagle hovering over a ship sailing out of the shipyard (?) toward the horizon with the slogan: "THE SHIPS ARE COMING." The analogy of shipping power adding to American fighting power is intellectually acceptable, but the visual message fails in its mission of instant clarity. Other examples of poor art, lifeless symbols and uninspiring slogans are at plate 108. Repetition of the need (buy bonds) and possible viewer identification with the patriotic symbols are the only merits of these poster designs.

Plate 109 is another example of an arresting visual image that initially conveys a meaning other than

ONLY THE NAVY CAN STOP THIS

105

WHEN YOU FIRE REMEMBER THI

ENLIST IN THE NAVY

106


don't
let
up
Keep On
Saving Food
UNITED STATES
FOOD
ADMINISTRATION

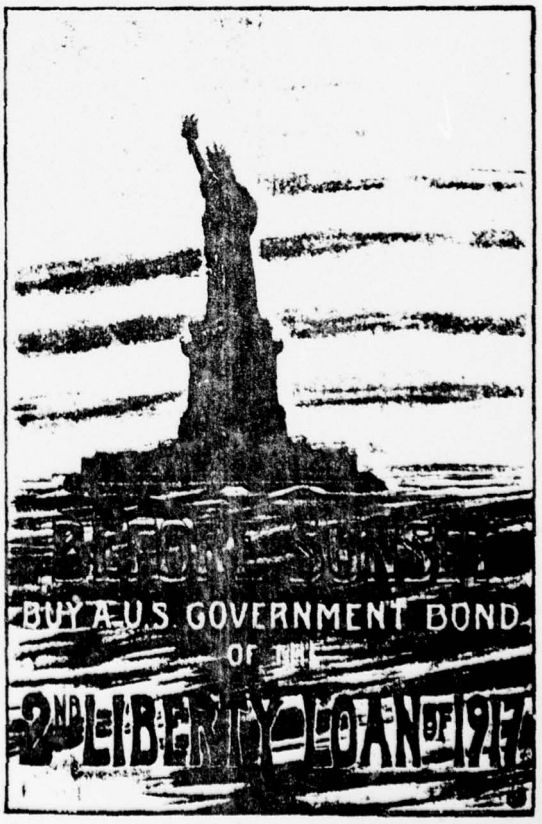
109


THE SHIPS
ARE COMING
UNITED STATES SHIPPING BOARD
EMERGENCY FLEET CORPORATION

107


YOU
buy a
Liberty Bond
TO-DAY
will do the rest!


"Shall we be more tender with our dollars than with the Lives of our sons"
Secretary of the Treasury
Buy a United States Government Bond of the
2nd LIBERTY LOAN
of 1917
No.1

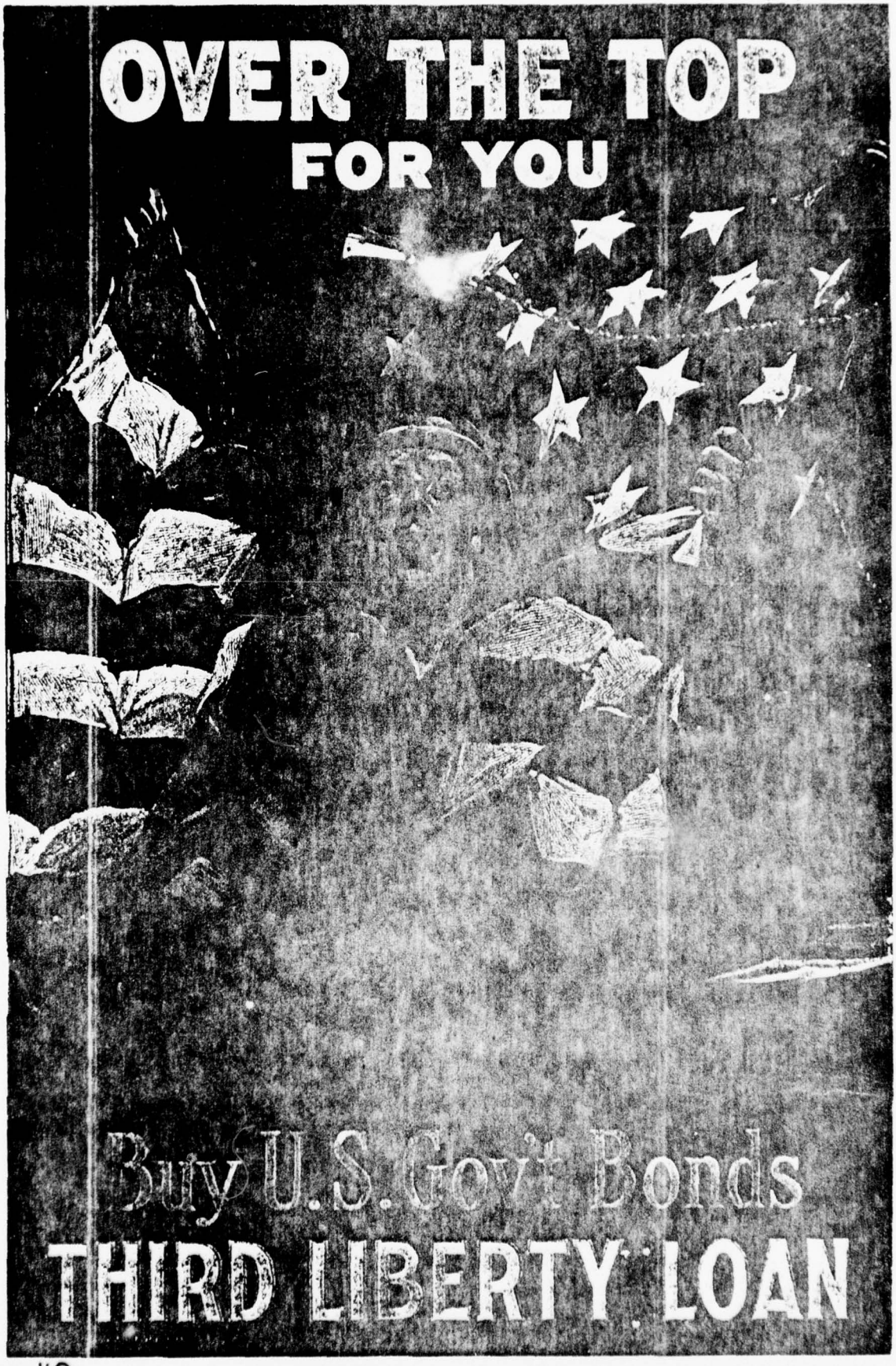

BUY A U.S. GOVERNMENT BOND
OF THE
2ND LIBERTY LOAN OF 1917

that imparted by the slogan. The need is to convince the viewer to save food, yet food is not a part of the pictorial image. Although probably an effective poster, the lack of clarity and requirement for copy to convey the message categorizes this example as less than the best poster art.

Plate 110 is a flamboyant and pretentious concept in the best heroic tradition. The soldier image is charging the viewer, weaponless, with the flag grasped tightly in his hand. Effective? Probably. Pretentious? Definitely.

Comparison of good and bad art. Two posters can be compared to illustrate the importance of adhering to the principles of poster design (attract attention, directness, clarity, memorability). The first is Fred Spear's Lusitania poster (plate 111), which has already been discussed in some detail. As poster art, it meets all of the principles of poster design listed above. Additional copy explaining the background of the image was not necessary in 1915 because of the notoriety of the incident.

In contrast to the power and clarity of the image in plate 111, plate 112 is confusing to the viewer. The images are well drawn, and the two dimensional space well designed. The action and inter-relationship of the figure and the bird images attract attention. But the purpose of the poster - the government need it


OVER THE TOP
FOR YOU
Buy U.S. Gov't Bonds
THIRD LIBERTY LOAN

111

112

was created to advertise - is unclear. The Department of Labor needed to enroll high school boys, primarily from the cities, to work on farms during their summer vacations. The purpose of the poster was to sell the following ideas or attitudes: The need to triumph over world destitution - specifically, a need for greater supplies of food for the world; and an awareness of: 1) the destitution of Europe, 2) the chivalry of American high school boys, 3) the joys of country life, 4) the practical value of farm knowledge, and 5) the perception that victory was within reach. The poster does not communicate the desired messages. It contains too much symbolism (member of Boy's Working Reserve fighting off vultures of world famine) that must be analyzed by the viewer to be understood.[23]

Good poster art of other countries. Good art is a necessary ingredient to achieve effective visual communication via the poster medium. Plates 113 and 114 are examples of good foreign poster art. Designed by Ludwig Hohlwein, a German, they combine the principles of poster design with highly developed draftsmanship and technical artistic skills. Plate 113 advertises an exhibition of work by German internees in Switzerland. Plate 114 pleads for charity for German Prisoners of War and civil internees. The symbolism in both posters, the expressions and posture

113


Volksspende
für die deutschen
Kriegs- und Zivil
Gefangenen

114

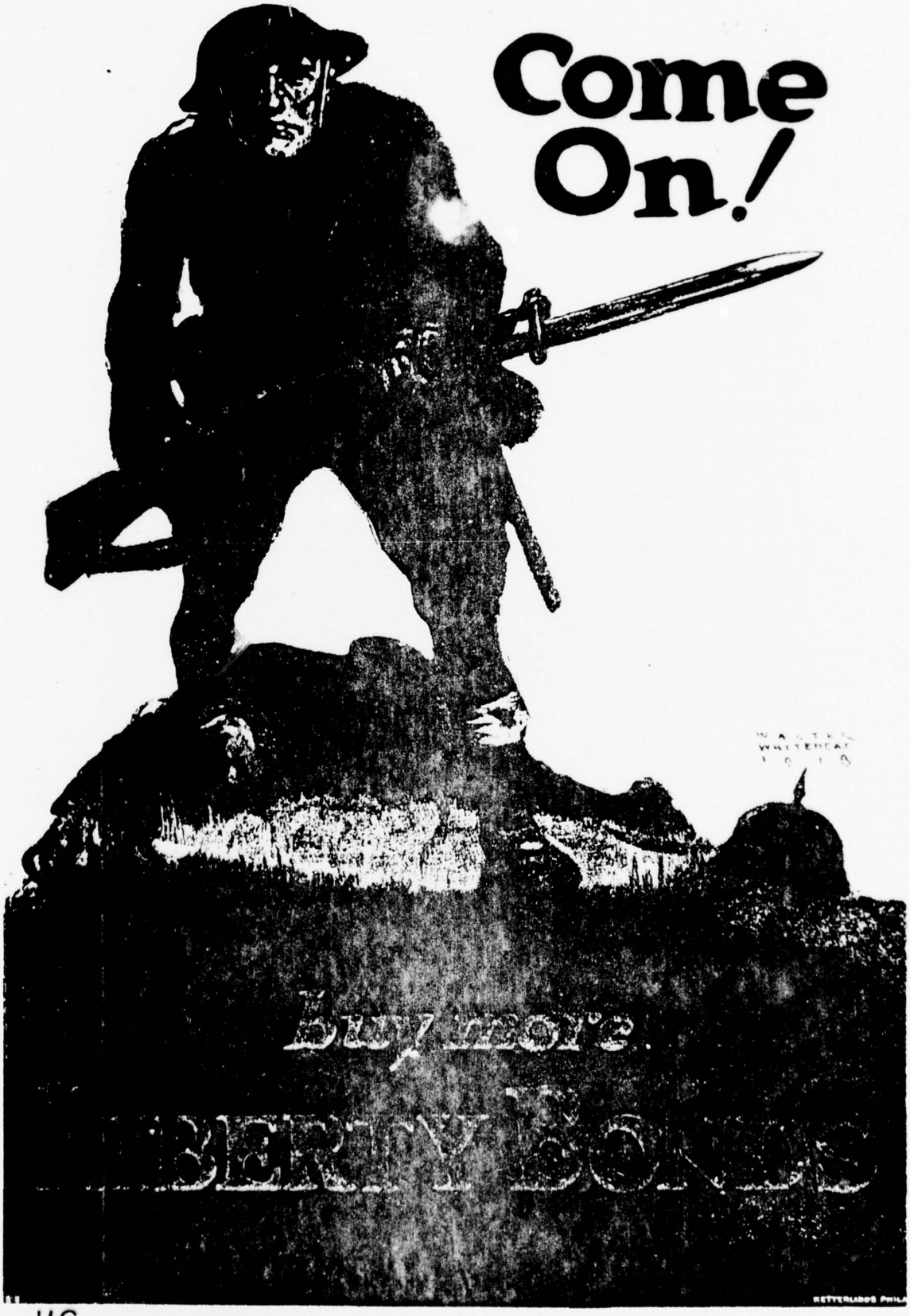

On les aura
2e EMPRUNT
DE
LA DÉFENSE NATIONALE
Souscrivez
DEVAMBEZ IMP PARIS

of the figures, and the total design of the pieces speak eloquently for the plight of the prisoner of war.

Jules Abel Faivre's design for the Second National (French) Defense Loan (plate 115) is simplicity and clarity, dynamic action, and the freshness (innocence?) and vigor of enthusiastic identification with the cause. The slogan: "We will get them!" reinforces the strong visual message.

Poster Design And Symbolism

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there was a general lack of violence and realism in the posters produced during World War I. A general attitude prevailed that killing people - even the enemy - was wrong and should not be overtly advertised.[24] This attitude carried over to World War II, where few atrocity posters appeared.[25] There were some notable exceptions during the Great War, however. The poster of the child impaled on a Hun sword (plate 27), which was described earlier, is noteworthy for the exceptionally violent emotions it conveys. Plate 116 also contains violent pictorial images, portraying an alert American soldier straddling the lifeless body of the enemy he has obviously just dispatched, rifle and bayonet at the ready. The important symbol of the spiked German helmet is present next to the body to insure that the viewer is clear as to the identity of the deceased. The total pictorial image conveys a tension, a feeling of built-up


Come On!
WALTER WHITEHEAD 1918
Buy more
LIBERTY BONDS

energy ready to explode in violent action. There is no doubt that violent action had immediately preceded the moment captured in the image. The poster is effective in that the viewer is exhorted to "Come On!" and join the soldier in his successful fight by buying more Liberty Bonds.

Examination of anti-war posters produced during the Vietnam era reveals that the non-violent and non-realistic trend of poster design of World Wars I and II did not continue into the 1960s. This may be a result of the influence of the realism experienced through still and motion picture photography, and the enormous decrease in time from the occurence of a military event or incident until its public announcement by the news media. It is hard to keep realism out of the graphic medium when television and the still camera bring "real" images of death and destruction into the viewer's living room.

Heroic Image

The heroic representation of images appeared in most of the American World War I poster art. The heroic image is an idealization of the human form, bigger than life-size and symbolizing strength, virility, power and invincibility. Artists can control the effect that the image creates in the viewer through use of selected physical characteristics when creating the image. Philipp Fehl, in a thesis for a Master of

Arts degree from Stanford University, analyzes the human images in a collection of World War II posters through characterology. For example, in his thesis Fehl referred to definitions of physical characteristics described by Hamilton McCormick in his Characterology, an Exact Science, such as the following description of the physical characteristics of brutality:

(a) Broad forehead of medium height
(b) Heavy low eyebrows
(c) Medium or small eyes
(d) Large, broad nose with expanded nostrils
(e) Large, broad, tightly shut mouth.
(f) Square jaws
(g) broad, prominent chin.
(h) Thick ears
(i) Short, thick neck[26]

Examination of plate 25 reveals the use of many of these characteristics in depiction of the enemy. The opposite is true when characterizing the hero visually, e.g., medium height and weight; acquiline nose; broad and square jaw; thin lips, tightly closed; etc.[27] Plates 26 and 34 are examples of posters that incorporate many of the finer physical characteristics in the soldier/American male images to create the impression of heroic and fearless young manhood.

Heroic-scale. Another technique used by some artists to convey the "bigger than lifelike" image was to draw the figure eight or nine head-lengths long, rather than the normal seven head-lengths. This was a modification of the Renaissance "heroic-scale" figure, and was used with dramatic effect by such artists

as Howard Brodie in World War II combat drawings.[28] The male images in plates 34 and 68 appear to have been drawn to this "heroic-scale." James Montgomery Flagg's potential Marine (plate 26) embodies the inherent masculinity, heroism, and righteousness of the early 20th century American male (r what the government would like the American male to be). Plate 117 is a photograph of Flagg painting his Marine poster (1918) in front of the New York Public Library building to draw attention to the war effort. And perhaps one of the most memorable images of heroism was painted from a Second World War photograph - the Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima. Plate 101 depicts President Truman, Treasury Secretary Morgenthau and three of the participants (including Ira Hayes - extreme right) admiring the war poster commemorating the famous event.

Uncle Sam

Of all of the symbols that emerged from both world wars, the most famous and popular is James Montgomery Flagg's version of Uncle Sam. Flagg borrowed the idea for the "I WANT YOU" poster (plate 119) from Alfred Leete's rendering of Britain's War Minister, Lord Kitchener (plate 118). Flagg's "I WANT YOU" poster is the best known American war poster, with an estimated five million plus copies and reproductions printed through the years.[29] It is still in use by the U. S. Army Recruiting Command.

Photo by Paul Thompson

POSTER MAKING BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG UNDER UNUSUAL CONDITIONS

BRITONS

"WANTS YOU"

JOIN YOUR COUNTRY'S ARMY!

GOD SAVE THE KING


I WANT YOU
FOR U.S. ARMY
NEAREST RECRUITING STATION

Female Image

The female image was also widely used in American First World War poster art. Maurice Rickards comments on the international use of the female image in his Posters of the First World War but does not get into an analysis of the American female poster image. Fehl also addresses the female figure in his master's thesis, categorizing the women in the poster collection he reviewed as "either glamorous, dainty and basically helpless, symbols of the things for which men go to war, or they are enlisted women."[30] American posters conveyed women as allegorical symbols of national unity (plate 120); nurses and healers (plate 121); the "second line of defense" (plate 122); victims of war (plate 123); heroic volunteers (plate 124); defenseless and in need of protection (plate 125); and allegorical warriors (plate 126).

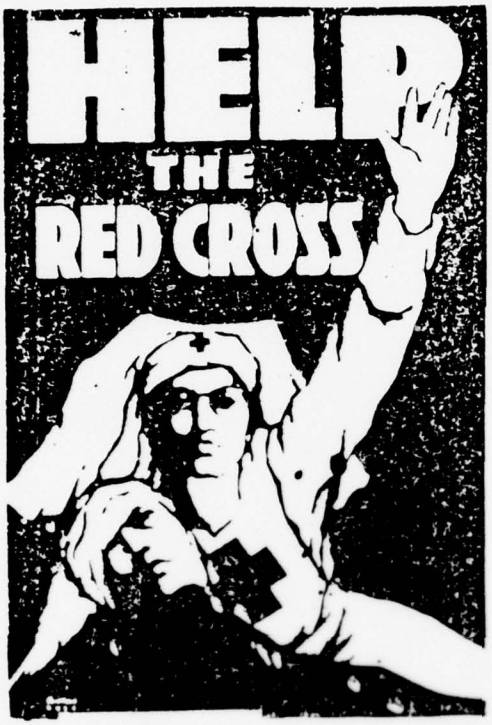
Female image trends. It is interesting to note that the woman and child image was used in World Wars I, II, and the anti-war posters of the 1960s to communicate the same message: anger about the atrocities of war and compassion for the innocent victims (see plate 127).

The Greatest Mother in the World. Plate 128 is one of the more famous female images to come out of the First World War. It has been widely interpreted, and definitely contains religious as well as maternal symbolism. The reduced scale of the soldier in the

Be Patriotic
sign your country's
pledge to save the food
U.S. FOOD ADMINISTRATION

The Fruits
of Victory

Write for Free Book to
National War Garden Commissio
Washington, D. C.
Charles Lathrop Pack, President P.S. Ridsdale, Secretary


HELP
THE
RED CROSS


HELP
YOUR AMERICAN
RED CROSS
ENROLLMENT


Hold up your end!
WAR FUND WEEK
One Hundred Million Dollars


YOUR RED CROSS NEEDS YOU!


GET IN LINE
BEHIND THE TRENCH


NATIONAL SERVICE
WOMEN'S
LAND ARMY
GOD SPEED THE PLOUGH
AND THE WOMAN WHO DRIVES IT


FOR EVERY FIGHTER
A WOMAN WORKER
Y W C A
BACK OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE

HUNGER

For three years America has fought starvation *in* Belgium

Will you *Eat less* – wheat meat – fats *and* sugar that *we* may still send food *in* ship loads?

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

CAMPAIGN for $30,000,000

AMERICAN COMMITTEE
FOR RELIEF IN THE NEAR EAST

ARMENIA - GREECE - SYRIA - PERSIA

HELP HER CARRY ON!

"Miss America reports for service, Sir"

NATIONAL LEAGUE *for* WOMAN'S SERVICE

The Woman Army

$200,000

needed for Vital War Work

SEPTEMBER 17 — 28

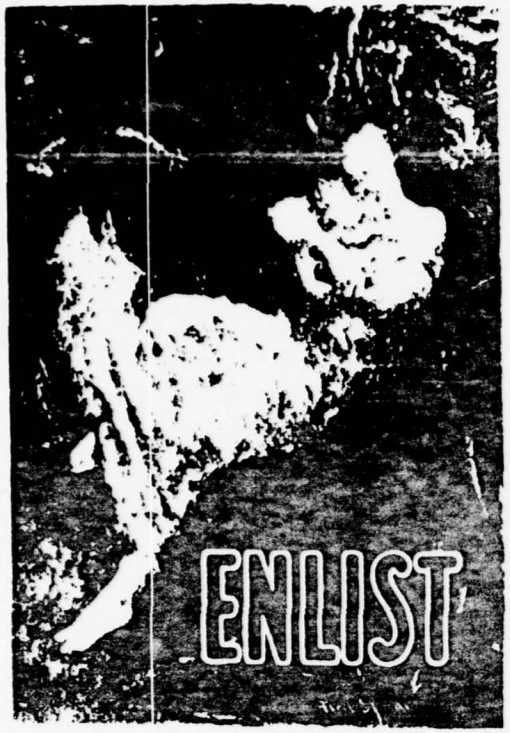
What we do	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9


HUN OR HOME?
BUY MORE
LIBERTY
BONDS


FOR VICTORY, BUY MORE BONDS
FOURTH LIBERTY LOAN


VICTORY
IS WITH US
IF YOU ARE A COWARD • PERISH
BUT IF YOU ARE A MAN • FIGHT


COLUMBIA
CALLS
ENLIST
NOW
FOR
U.S.
ARMY
RECRUITING STATION



CHINA IS HELPING US
UNITED CHINA RELIEF

The GREATEST MOTHER in the WORLD

stretcher, cradled in the arms of the female image, suggests the Virgin and Child. The pose of the total image, the flowing drapery-like clothing adorning the female image, the angelic expression (with eyes cast heaven-ward), and the bare toes peeking out from under the draping vestments all suggest Michelangelo's Pieta - the sculpture of Mary holding the dead body of Christ.[31] A postage stamp printed in 1931 was modeled after the poster, and the image was used again in World War II by the Red Cross.

Conclusions

What was that flood of posters during World War I all about? Why were they created? Was there a controlled, driving force behind their creation, or did they just happen? What was their effect on mass attitudes and behavior? Do the principles of pictorial poster design still pertain to visual communication, regardless of the medium? Does the graphic art poster have a future as a medium of mass communication for the U. S. Army?

These questions are the basis for this study of First World War poster art. Some have obvious answers; others can only be subjected to conjecture due to the relatively limited research conducted in respect to the scope of the material.

American World War I poster production was, for the most part, a controlled mass communicative effort to

obtain tangible resources to meet the needs of the United States Government. The instrument of the government in controlling poster production was the Division of Pictorial Publicity. Although an organization of volunteer artists, it received its legitimacy from the Committee of Public Information, which was a part of the formal institution.

To better understand the purposes and processes of the First World War poster production effort, the major ingredients of the communication product have been defined as follows: 1) Categories of need: the groupings of war posters with similar themes designed to reinforce, or change, public attitude or behavior to produce tangible products that answered governmental needs; 2) Themes: the intangible institutional values, or ideas, that were expressed in the form of visual images and slogans to convey an emotional concept of the institutional value or idea to the viewer; 3) Primary message: The emotional theme in the pictorial image conveyed to the viewer, such as hate or compassion, or fear; 4) Secondary message: the attitude or behavior desired from the viewer to meet a tangible need of the government, such as enlistment or purchase of Liberty Bonds.

Analysis of poster production components. Categories of need dealt with tangible products, i.e., the material needs of the government to successfully wage war. Themes used in posters dealt with values

and attitudes. They were designed on an emotional, rather than straight factual base. Recruiting, then, was not a poster theme. It was a category of need, since the product of recruiting was a commodity needed by the government - manpower. The themes used in the recruiting category were emotional, i.e., patriotism, shame, and guilt.

Analysis of World War I posters reveals that two messages were communicated to the viewer. Whether this was intentional, or simply an integral part of the process, is only conjecture. Examination of the many different posters designed by different artists over a four to five year period, all of which contain as a minimum two messages, leads to the conclusion that the emotional content - or feeling generated in the viewer by the theme - is a process that will happen regardless of whether or not it is consciously designed. The second message, that of product merchandising, is obviously consciously planned. But the success of the selling effort is dependent upon how well the two elements of the total message work together. The catalyst is invariably the symbols and imagery employed by the designer. Too violent imagery may evoke so much fear, hatred or anger (primary message) in the viewer on an emotional level that he is turned off, and the tangible product (secondary message) never attains a sufficient level of awareness within the viewer to be "bought."

A matrix summarizing the categories of need, themes, primary and secondary messages and symbols is at plate 129.

Principles of poster design. If the principles of poster design are not followed the message is not effectively communicated. For example, a visual communication effort that does not attract the potential viewer's attention cannot sell its product. As pointed out by Alvin Toffler in Future Shock, the assault upon the public eye and ear has become overwhelming. Toffler states:

> Nothing, indeed is quite so purposive as advertising, and today the average American adult is assaulted by a minimum of 560 advertising messages each day. Of the 560 to which he is exposed, however, he only notices seventy-six. In effect, he blocks out 484 advertising messages a day to preserve his attention for other matters.[32]

Although competition from other visual communicative media for public attention was not a significant factor in 1914-1919, the ability to capture public interest and attention, and clearly and directly communicate a message that would be remembered was the goal of the effective poster. Today, as pointed out by Toffler in Future Shock, the fast paced and rapidly changing environment of the average U. S. citizen demands that proponents of mass media advertising adhere to the basic visual communication principles for the best results. Otherwise, that important idea or product may end up as one of the 484 daily messages

SUBSCRIPTS OF WWI
WORLD WAR I

CATEGORY	THEME/PRIMARY MESSAGE (EMOTIONAL)	SECONDARY MESSAGE (TANGIBLE)	SYMBOLS
1. Awareness of the Threat	Enemy atrocities, fear, hatred of the enemy, Wake Up America	Enlistment, Purchase of bonds and War Savings Stamps, Increased Production Base	Brutal enemy, Columbia, defenseless women and children, colonial heritage, angry citizens
2. Call for Resources	Patriotism, guilt, shame, romanticism, heroism, respect for the professional soldier, paternalism	Enlistments, purchase of bonds and War Savings Stamps, (manpower & money)	Honored and respected soldier, uniformed and heroic soldier, Uncle Sam, Statue of Liberty, boy scout, American eagle, patriotic children and citizens, Hun, helpless women and children, allegorical national symbols, American flag, Columbia, machines of war
3. Societal Support of the Combatants & the Allied Effort	Societal responsibility to combatants, guilt, pride & comradeship	Tobacco, books, public support of allies, money	Soldier images, allegorical national symbols, Uncle Sam
4. Humanitarian	Sympathy, compassion and charity for prisoners of war, wounded soldiers, & refugees and orphans; maternalism	Financial support of charitable organizations	Red Cross, nurses, refugees, orphans, war wounded religious symbolism, Uncle Sam

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	CATEGORY	INNER/PRIMARY MESSAGE (EMOTIONAL)	SECONDARY MESSAGE (TANGIBLE)	SYMBOLS
5.	Finish the Job-On to Victory	Unity of soldier & workforce, responsibility, patriotism, guilt for wasting resources, self-sacrifice (domestic heroism), national pride	Increased war material production, women as essential members of the work force, economizing of food & fuel	Attractive female images, female workers, male worker with rivet gun, fighting soldier, food, fuel, shipyards, American eagle, Columbia, soldier and worker linking arms
6.	Retrenchment	National pride, responsibility to employ the veteran, responsibility to pay the war debt	Hiring of veterans, purchase of Victory Liberty Loan bonds	Patriotic citizen, returning soldiers, Uncle Sam, machines of war

that get "tuned out" by the average American adult.

The principles of pictorial poster design are few and simple, and can be applied to effective visual communication regardless of the medium used. Briefly stated, an effective piece of pictorial communication should: 1) attract attention: well designed but not too literal; 2) be clear: message unmistakable and conveyed instantly; 3) be imaginative: elicit viewer interest and participation; 4) let the visual image tell the story: too much copy will not hold viewer attention; 5) be convincing: sell the benefits of the product so that the viewer remembers the message.

An article in the April 1977 issue of American Artist magazine sums up the legacy and the value of poster design principles in today's highly competitive communications market as follows:

> TIME magazine prides itself on being on top of the news, a feat it has handled amazingly considering the physical realities of what it takes to get from news to newsstand. The TIME cover bears the responsibility of being more than eye-catching: it must inform the reader with poster-like impact about the major issue of the week....[33]

General summary of poster's role. As discussed earlier, during the First World War the pictorial poster was successful in gaining general American public support for the war effort. As briefly discussed in this chapter, the pictorial poster played a diminishing role in World War II and Korea as a result of the ascendancy of photographic and electronic mass

media. During the Vietnam era, the poster became a tool primarily of the anti-war groups, and the needs of the U. S. Government were advertised via the other mass media.

Future Of The Graphic Art Poster

The graphic art poster still plays a role in the communication process within the U. S. military. It has been relegated to an internal communication vehicle, however, and loses most of its public-attitude influencing power due to its limited exposure. Catagories of need communicated by military posters today deal with such managerial hygiene factors as energy conservation, safety, health, education, cost effectiveness, and other internal programs and problems.

The major advertising effort of the U. S. Army has been conducted in recruiting the "All Volunteer Army." N. W. Ayer has administered the Army advertising program since fiscal year 1968. The N. W. Ayer advertising concept in presenting the Army to the public "is one central idea, as simply stated as possible."[34] The advertising firm uses the photograph and copy as mutually supporting elements within an advertisement, focusing the copy on one idea indigenous to the advertisement. N. W. Ayer employs "a wide range of media for the Army: print, primarily magazines, newspapers, radio, television, direct mail, recruiter promotion items, billboards, posters, et al."[35] Mr. Thomas F. Maxey, Senior Vice

President, N. W. Ayer, feels that "electronic media are best suited to promote Army service" and that television may be the best medium to advertise the Army since it combines audio and visual effects to provide action and impact in delivering the message.[36] Posters are used primarily as give-away items to evoke patriotism, which N. W. Ayer considers to be "a latent appeal to most young American men and women."[37] Flagg's "I WANT YOU FOR U. S. ARMY" World War I finger-pointing Uncle Sam poster has proven successful to their advertising effort as a give-away item.[38]

Potential of the poster today. Based on this review of our war poster heritage, there is an important and mission-related external role for the graphic art poster in the modern military. The reproduction and sale of World War I and II American military posters as collectibles would offer both a source of income to the government and remind Americans of their 20th century military heritage. In this era of nostalgia in America, such an enterprise could be well received by the general public. As a minimum, the publication and sale of descriptive catalogs of the Government's collection of war posters would accomplish the same goal.

Another area that could lend itself to communication via the poster medium is that of the Army's current needs in meeting its post-Vietnam peacetime mission. Such areas as public image, training to "win the first

battle," sustained physical fitness, a professional and prepared cadre, the importance of a trained and well-equipped citizen-soldier reserve all have potential for exploitation through visual communication via the graphic art poster medium.

Considering the current and projected fuel crisis, high air pollution, and the heavily congested traffic conditions of the larger inner-city areas in the United States, eventual mandatory use of public transportation systems in many cities is a distinct possibility. Under such circumstances, the display of graphic pictorial art posters in public transportation vehicles throughout the U. S. would expose military categories of need to a constantly changing public audience on a daily basis.

Careful definition of categories of need and planning of themes, combined with high quality art work and adherence to the principles of visual communication will pay large dividends in communicating in a credible fashion both the Army's needs and achievements to the American people.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

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3. Ibid.

4. Label from World War I Poster Exhibit, Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, N. Y., 1977.

5. Harold F. Hutchison, The Poster: An Illustrated History from 1860, (London: Studio Vista, 1968), p. 129.

6. Erwine Hetzl, The Poster: Its History and Its Art, (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1963), p. 161.

7. Bevis Hillier, Posters, (New York: Stein and Day, 1969), pp. 262-264.

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9. Ibid., p. 234.

10. Constitution of Artists for Victory, 18 May 1942, Artists for Victory manuscript collection, (Archives of American Art microfilm copy, reel 1).

11. Ibid.

12. Archibald MacLeish, "Current Information Objectives," Artists for Victory manuscript collection, (Archives of American Art microfilm copy, reel 2).

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Certificate of Incorporation, Artists for Victory manuscript collection, (Archives of American Art microfilm copy, reel 1).

16. Hutchison, p. 134.

17. Ibid., p. 135.

18. Ibid., p. 144.

19. War Poster collection, Truman Library.

20. Jack Rennert (ed.), The Poster Art of Tomi Ungerer, (New York: Darien House, 1971), pp. 5-10.

21. Ibid.

22. Edwin Rand, "Poster Art and the US War Loans," The Poster, 10:23, January 1919.

23. Francis Allston, "US Food Poster Fails to Hit Mark," The Poster, 10:19, February 1919.

24. Rickards, p. 23.

25. Millier, pp. 264-267.

26. Philipp Fehl, "A Stylistic Analysis of Some Propaganda Posters of World War II," (unpublished Master's thesis, Leland Stanford Jr. University, 1948), p. 43.

27. Ibid., pp. 25, 43.

28. James Jones, WWII, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975), p. 58.

29. Joseph Darracott and Belinda Loftus, Imperial War Museum, First World War Posters, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1972), p. 27.

30. Fehl, p. 34.

31. Darracott, p. 28.

32. Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, (New York: A Bantam Book published by arrangement with Random House, 1970), pp. 166-167.

33. Nick Meglin, "Jack Davis Cover Story," American Artist, 41:34, April 1977.

34. Based on personal correspondence between Thomas F. Maxey, Senior Vice President, N. W. Ayer, and the writer.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

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