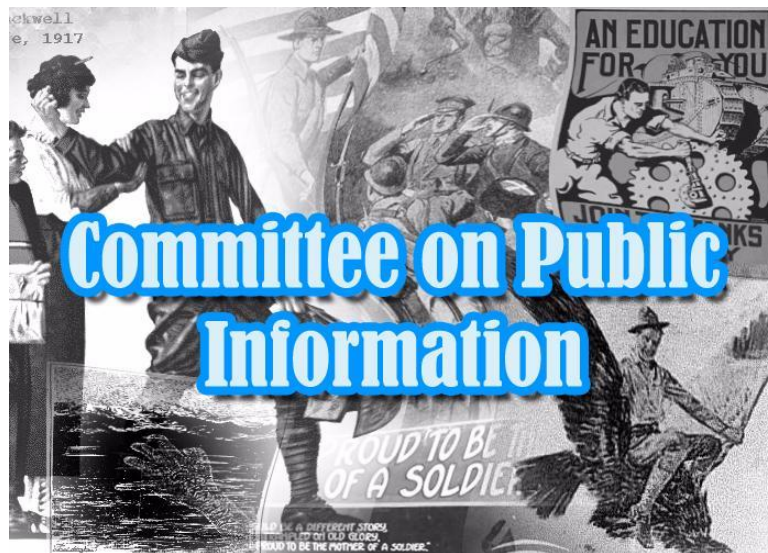


Bastiaan van Schagen
427791
Rise and Fall of the American Empire
ESHCC, Erasmus University
Sebastianvans@gmail.com
Supervisor: Martijn Lak
Second Reader: Hein Klemann
24-06-2019
Word Count: 27640

America influencing the hearts and minds of Europe
An assessment of the influence of Progressivism on the message of the Committee on Public Information in Italy between 1917-1919



The first picture details a few methods the CPI used to spread its message and the topic of this thesis.

Source: <https://www.sutori.com/item/committee-on-public-information-on-april-13-1917-wilson-created-the-committee-6c22> Last accessed, 14-06-2019.

The second picture is the famous poster created by James Montgomery Flagg for the Division of Pictorial Publicity, the DPP. This division aimed at promoting the war effort in the United States. The division was quickly absorbed within the Committee on Public Information and this poster became the most well-known of its kind.

Source: James Montgomery Flagg, "Leslie's Weekly," July 6, 1916.
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2017645753/> Last accessed, 14-06-2019.

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Introduction

We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretence about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.¹

On April 6, 1917, the United States joined World War I after a speech by President Woodrow Wilson stating he saw no other option.² Only a month prior to this historical event, Wilson had been re-elected after campaigning with his slogan: ‘kept us out of the war’.³ This instilled a sense of betrayal within the public, since they voted for him to keep them out of the war. To help quell the unrest and change the public opinion, Wilson enacted executive order 2594 on April 13, 1917, to create a Committee on Public Information, the CPI, which had three main goals.

The first of these goals was to quell civic unrest following the presidential decision to join the war, regardless of his earlier campaign slogan. To do this, various divisions, were established within the Committee in order to change the public sentiment towards the war. This goal can be attributed to the chairman of the CPI, George Creel, a man which this thesis explains more about later on. At the height of its influence, the Committee had over twenty divisions with governors in offices in nine countries.⁴ However, the number of countries the Committee was active in over the course of its existence, was a total of thirty-two, spreading their message to countries in South America, Europe, and Asia as well as being active in the United States.⁵

¹ Woodrow Wilson, Joint Address to Congress, April 2, 1917.

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=61&page=transcript> last accessed 28-03-2019

² Woodrow Wilson, Joint Address to Congress, April 2, 1917.

³ Official White House government website, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/woodrow-wilson/> last accessed 28-03-2019

⁴ Robert Jackall & Janice Hirota, *Makers, Advertising, Public Relations, and the Ethos of Advocacy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003): 14.

⁵ Charles Merriam, “American Publicity In Italy,” *The American Political Science Review* vol 13, no 4. (November 1919): 541.

The second goal was one proposed by the different secretaries. The Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, the Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, and the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, asked the President to create this Committee on April 13, 1917. The Secretaries wanted to create this Committee to influence the spread of information to the public, especially the press who published on the war effort needed to be controlled in their opinion.⁶ This to ensure no sensitive information was put in the press that could damage the war effort. This goal was the only reason the Secretaries wanted a Committee on Public Information. The other goals of civic unrest, pro-war sentiment, and spreading ‘Wilsonianism and Progressivism’ were “nice to have”, but in reality, all that mattered to these people was winning the war at all costs. This difference in objectives and goals created some struggles within the CPI, something this thesis deals with in its second chapter.

The third of the goals was to spread the supposed benefits of a capitalist and democratic society within European countries where the CPI would be active. This message is often referred to as Wilsonianism, a concept that is explained in the Methodology chapter, but can briefly be explained as President Wilson’s view on Progressivism and the foreign relations aspect of Progressivism. This third goal combined with the first two were the main objectives for President Wilson.

The Secretaries wanted this Committee to be comprised of themselves and one member of the public. Wilson chose Creel for this job, a famous reporter for newspapers such as *The Independent*, but also a fervent supporter of his Presidency and manager in his 1916 campaign. Creel claims to be ‘the original Woodrow Wilson Man’ since he had him picked for presidency as early as 1905.⁷ Appointing Creel as chairman to the Committee did not go without struggles, because all people linked to the CPI wanted different things out of it. On the one hand, the Secretaries wanted only to win the war, the President and Creel, on the other hand, sought to instil better morals and beliefs in the people their message reached. This created a difficult working sphere, in which all involved members of the Committee wanted something else out of it. This tension between the heads of the organisation is something this thesis looks into further when looking at the domestic approach, but also within Italy these tensions play a part.

This thesis looks at the period the Committee was active, from 1917 until 1919, when it was disbanded completely. By utilising this narrow scope, the focus can be put on specific examples within the United States and Italy, to try and distinguish the notion of Progressivism within the message of the CPI. One reason to choose Italy was the nature of Italy within the

⁶ Woodrow Wilson's Letters, Volume 42, April 13, 1917, 55.

⁷ George Creel, *Rebel at Large* (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1947), 148.

war, having sided with Austria-Hungary and Germany in the Triple Alliance, but in reality, waiting how the war would go and then join the other side.⁸ This is intriguing since the CPI had to account for this mentality within Italy and, presumably, adjust its message accordingly. Another reason is that Italy, from the outlook of it, did not seem to be influenced at all if looking at the interbellum and World War Two. It seems that the message of capitalism and democracy being favourable things seemed to not have stuck within Italy. This is based solely on the fact that in the Second World War and prior to it, Italy was a fascist state.

This topic is scientifically relevant, because when looking at literature on the CPI, it is predominantly focussed on its domestic approach. The extensive work by Duckworth, Dulgow, Dismukes, and others in 1934 for instance provides a critical assessment of the CPI, but only domestically. The same goes for the article by Thomas Hollihan of 1984, “Propagandizing in the interest of war: A rhetorical study of the committee on public information,” or James Mock’s 2015 book *Words that won the War*. These are all valuable books for the domestic part of thesis, but this thesis goes beyond the domestic approach to look extensively within Italy and the United States; in an attempt to uncover the Progressivist notions within the CPI, something no other publication seems to have done so far.⁹ This could be due to the difficulty of acquiring source material related to the CPI, since most of it is lost over time or was done orally with no accounts or transcripts remaining, but also the possibility has to be considered that discerning Progressivism within propaganda materials can be problematic on its own. The difficulty of dealing with this and how this thesis deals with these problems is discussed in the Methodology chapter.

This domestic approach was of course the main facet of the CPI itself, thus this is no surprise. However, the very few scholars that do deal with the CPI within Europe only focus on one country and do not expand on its domestic approach as well. Various historical sources such as Gregg Wolper’s article: “Wilsonian Public Diplomacy, the CPI in Spain” of 1993, Daniela Rossini’s book of 2008 on Italy, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Myth in Italy: Culture, Diplomacy, and War Propaganda*, or Bernadette Whelan’s article on Ireland of 2017, “American Propaganda and Ireland during World War one: The work of the Committee on

⁸ Patricia A. Weitsman, “Alliance Cohesion and Coalition Warfare: The Central Powers and Triple Entente,” *Security Studies*, 12:3, (2003), 81.

⁹ 1. E. M., Duckworth, J. Dolgow, Judith Lee Dismukes, M. M. Dudycha, Mary C. Dolan, Robert Dublirer, Ronald C. Doll, and Rose Marie DeSanctis. *A Critical Study of the Domestic Activities of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919*, 1934.

2. Thomas Hollihan, “Propagandizing in the Interest of War: A Rhetorical Study of the committee on Public Information,” *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 49 (3) (1984): 241-257.

3. James R. Mock, *Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919* (London: Forgotten books, 2015)

Public Information,” focus on one country specifically, just like this thesis. However, they do not include the Progressivism aspect or come up with a satisfactory comparative analysis between the CPI abroad and domestically.¹⁰ Why these authors do not mention the Progressivist aspect is unknown, but following the research conducted in this thesis, it could be due to the limited amount of primary source material available for their countries. Another potential reason is that measuring the influence of a concept on a message is in itself a difficult thing to do. This research adds to this historiography by making a comparative analysis between Italy and the United States, but also incorporate the notion of Progressivism within the CPI’s messages to the people.

The research question this thesis uses is: “How did Progressivism impact the message of the Committee on Public Information within Italy between 1917-1919?” By using this research question, this thesis looks at the methods the CPI used, the effects it had on Italy, but also do a comparative analysis of the approach domestically and abroad. The time period this thesis focusses on is between 1917-1919, because it is the period in which the CPI was active, formally extending this period is not necessary to answer the research question and would only broaden the scope of sources mandatory to come with a sufficient answer.

The focus on Europe is predominantly determined by the gap in historiography encountered when researching the CPI itself. There was a wide variety of sources related to the CPI domestically available, but an international comparative analysis was left wanting, and a study linking Progressivism to Wilsonianism and then back to the CPI is lacking completely. Of course, measuring the impact of a concept on a message aimed at influencing the minds of its recipients is tricky. Within the Methodology chapter it is outlined how this thesis intends to bypass this problem and still come up with a valid conclusion.

Several sub-questions support this main research question. These include: What were the goals of the CPI? Why was the CPI established? What methods did the CPI use to achieve those goals? What were the effects of the CPI on the countries they were in? What was the general opinion of the CPI within Europe and how did the European countries react to the CPI having offices within their country? What are the methods the CPI used domestically and how do those differ from their European approach? These sub questions all deal with different

¹⁰ 1. Gregg Wolper, “Wilsonian Public Diplomacy: The Committee on Public Information in Spain,” *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 1 (1 January 1993): 17–34. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1993.tb00157.x>.

2. Daniela Rossini, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Myth in Italy: Culture Diplomacy, and War Propaganda* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008)

3. Bernadette Whelan, “American Propaganda and Ireland during World War one: The work of the Committee on Public Information,” *Irish Studies Review* 25, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 141-169.

themes related to the main research question, such as: the methods the CPI used, the goals and visions of the CPI and its pivotal members, the effects of the message, and a comparison between the two major focus points of the CPI, those being domestic and abroad. By using these sub questions throughout the chapters and applying them to the United States and to Europe, this thesis attempts to create a narrative that details the differences or similarities of the domestic approach and the approach abroad. Within this narrative the thesis looks at the concept of Progressivism and whether or not any influences of Progressivism can be discerned within the messages of the CPI.

Historiography

When looking at the historiographical debate surrounding the Committee on Public Information, there is an abundance of literature. These studies range from looking at the CPI's activities within America, to using the CPI as an example of the first official form of propaganda. This historiography focusses primarily on the three most important concepts within the thesis: Progressivism, Wilsonianism, and Public Diplomacy. After discussing these three concepts and the authors used for this thesis, literature related to the Committee on Public Information in general is discussed as well as the largest contribution to this thesis, the book by CPI founder George Creel, *How we advertised America*. Furthermore, authors that have contributed to the historiography surrounding the CPI in Europe are discussed, focussing on the authors related to the case study, Italy. Their viewpoints are not dissected within this historiography, since their views are an integral part of the comparative analysis in further chapters. However, their contributions and why they are relevant are mentioned in this chapter.

Within this thesis, the three themes of Progressivism, Wilsonianism, and Public Diplomacy play a pivotal role. Specific literature related to these themes needs to be discussed in order to use definitions of these concepts. Another reason this needs to be discussed is that certain primary sources have to be factchecked in order to see if they are not making stuff up. Examples of sources on these themes include Bruce Pinkleton's article of 1994, in which he demonstrates the influence of the CPI on public relations.¹¹ Since the CPI is deemed to be the first 'official' propaganda office within the United States, this thesis looks more in-depth into the CPI itself and the role it has had within the field of Public Relations and Diplomacy, after of course dealing with what propaganda actually is, since its negative meaning is a remnant from the Second World War and this thesis deals with the first.¹²

Discerning the difference between Public Diplomacy and Propaganda is something this thesis has to do as well. Pinkleton in this article describes the various mediums the CPI used to convey its 'propaganda' message. This thesis uses his article as one of several sources that describe the various tactics the CPI used, but also as a way of looking at propaganda and public diplomacy. Connected to this article is the 1984 article by Thomas Hollihan, which describes the inner workings of the CPI. It demonstrates the tactics used by the people working for the

¹¹ Pinkleton, Bruce. 'The Campaign of the Committee on Public Information: Its Contributions to the History and Evolution of Public Relations'. *Journal of Public Relations Research* 6, no. 4 (1 October 1994): 229.

¹² 1. Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017)

2. Stephen Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines; Democracy, Nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information* (Chapel Hill: The university of North Carolina Press, 1980), 12 and 20.

domestic offices, who those people were, and how they achieved their goals. Hollihan also discusses the term 'Just War', stating that the rhetoric the CPI and thus America adopted within the First World War helped shape future wars and its rhetoric.¹³ The article also deals with public reactions to the rhetoric used by the CPI. Since this article deals with domestic issues only, this work is pivotal for the second chapter on the domestic workings of the CPI, but it also connects to the reception of the CPI. Thus, it can be used for Italy, as well in a comparative analysis. In terms of the three themes within this thesis, this article details the use of public diplomacy and how the CPI tried to influence the public.

Furthermore, Wilsonianism is one of the most important themes used in this thesis and one of the authors this thesis uses to explain and grasp this concept is Frank Ninkovich. Ninkovich is a historian with a Ph.D from the University of Chicago, a professor at St. John's University, and he has published several books regarding international affairs in the twentieth century. He wrote a book in 1999 titled, *The Wilsonian Century*. In this book, Ninkovich deals with how Wilsonianism influenced global politics for almost a century. Its main point is that the Wilsonian outlook, far from being a crusading, idealistic doctrine, was reactive, practical, and grounded in fear.¹⁴ Despite this book being twenty years old, it is still considered to be the most useful book when discussing twentieth century American policy and Wilsonianism in general and is labelled as such by other authors such as John Broesamle and Erez Manela. This notion of fear is something this thesis can use as a tool of analysis for primary sources, but it can also use the literature as a source for Wilsonianism in general and its applications within American foreign relations, making this an invaluable source for this thesis.

Another, more recent publication, is the work of Erez Manela, a historian at Harvard University, *The Wilsonian Moment*, published in 2007. Whereas Ninkovich details the foreign relations aspect of Wilsonianism and its influence on global politics, Manela focusses on one of the parts of Wilsonianism: national self-determination. In his book, he argues that colonial struggles and the strive for equality for African-American rights helped shape Wilson's view of politics and influenced his policies that aimed for an international system of equal sovereign states with a League of Nations to govern it. This breaks from the traditional historiographical debate by focussing on the role of colonies in Wilson's decision making. Despite this not being about the colonial efforts, this book offers useful insights into Wilsonianism. Manela describes the 'Wilsonian Moment' as: "Transformation of the norms and standards of

¹³ Thomas Hollihan, "Propagandizing in the Interest of War: A Rhetorical Study of the Committee on Public Information," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 49 (3) (1984): 241-257.

¹⁴ Frank Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999): 13.

international relations that established the self-determining nation-state as the only legitimate political form throughout the globe.”¹⁵ This book in conjunction with Ninkovich’s work helps in understanding Wilsonianism, which in turn allows for a better and correct application of this concept to my research on the Committee on Public Information.

Another important concept for this thesis is ‘Progressivism’. To better understand this concept, various authors are used to create a clear cohesive definition for this concept. This thesis utilises the work of Eric Foner, an American historian who published a book in 2004 detailing all American history. Albeit, mainly used for teaching purposes in the United States, chapter 18 focusses solely on the notion of progress and Progressivism between 1900-1916. A period in American history Foner describes as “the Progressive Era”.¹⁶ In this chapter Foner details the varieties of Progressivism, as well as the politics behind it, making this a pivotal part of this thesis for understanding the concept of Progressivism. Foner is used in this thesis since he is the main author for all history books in American high schools and by utilising his work, a clearer conception of what is taught to children in American regarding Progressivism is obtained. Thus, by using his work to build up general notions regarding Progressivism, this thesis can build upon the knowledge children in the United States are being given in high school. Not only that, but Foner’s work contains a chronological overview of important events within the Progressive Era, as he calls it, illustrations and tables, and is heavily focussed on immigration, a focus other authors seem to lack regarding Progressivism.

Richard Hofstadter is another important author for Progressivism, to supplement Foner, who in 1955 wrote the Pulitzer-Prize winning book *The Age of Reform*. In this book, Hofstadter explains the start of the progressive era, the causes for it, and certain enemies for progress, such as the growing rise of modernisation.¹⁷ The start of Progressivism, according to Hofstadter, is based on the status revolution, the revolution from lower class workers becoming middle class after the American Civil War and the rise of political activists.¹⁸ Thus, the rise of modernisation can be seen as an enemy for progress since it increases the gap between the rich and the poor, fuelling the longing for a reform. This book is instrumental in understanding the roots of Progressivism and how this so-called progressive era came into being. This book is stated to be “a landmark in American political thought” or even “the most influential book ever published

¹⁵ Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5.

¹⁶ Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), chapter 18) fully accessible at <https://ushistory1865present.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/ch-18-the-progressive-era.pdf> last accessed 25-01-2019.

¹⁷ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Knopf, 1955), 5.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 131.

on the history of twentieth-century America.” Not just because of its coherent writing, but instead of trying to retell the history of that period, Hofstadter analyses the various motivations for the reform groups he studied.¹⁹ John Broesamle, another author that is also used to help define and understand Progressivism, but also international relations in general, says that: “Hofstadter’s study is, quite simply, the most brilliant book ever written on twentieth century American reform.”²⁰ Therefore, this book is impossible to neglect when discussing Progressivism in the time period of this thesis. Its influential and ground-breaking historiographical research is instrumental in creating a narrative surrounding the notion of progress within the Committee on Public Information.

The final author that is discussed related to Progressivism is Michael Katz. Not one specific work of this author is used, but instead his lifework related to the notion of Progressivism is important for this thesis. Instead of focussing on the positive aspects of progress and Progressivism as the other two authors do within their works, Katz continuously tries to alert people to the dangers of Progressivism. Especially his work related to the social welfare system within the progressive era is important. Katz tried to explain to his readers that the notion of progress and Progressivism was usually a method of hiding a narrower set of ideals and motives.²¹ This is vital to the research regarding the Committee on Public Information which might very well be using the same notions. Trying to obscure their true message and intentions in a framework of progress. Thus, by combining these three authors this thesis provides a clear definition for Progressivism that is then applied to the individual cases within Europe and the United States. Focussing not only on the supposed benefits of Progressivism within the CPI’s methods, but also the potential negatives the messages the CPI might contain. These three authors each bring a different point of view to the table regarding Progressivism. Thus, by using these three authors, with supplemental literature throughout this thesis from, for example, Broesamle, a coherent and strong narrative is constructed of the rise of Progressivism and how it might have influenced the Committee on Public Information’s message in Italy and the United States.

¹⁹ Alan Brinkley, “Richard Hofstadter’s *The Age of Reform: A reconsideration*,” review of *The Age of Reform*, by Richard Hofstadter, *Reviews in American History*, vol 13, no 3, September 1985, 462.

²⁰ John J. Broesamle, *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics* (New York: Greenwood press, 1990), 31.

²¹ 1. Mark J. Stern, “Michael Katz’s Contribution to Social and Social Welfare History,” *Social Science History*, volume 41 issue 4 (Winter 2017): 768.

2. Michael B. Katz, *Poverty and Policy in American History* (New York: Philadelphia University Press, 1983), 201-210.

This thesis starts with providing an overview of the domestic activities of the Committee on Public Information in order to create a framework for the comparative analysis. An example of literature used for the domestic part of this thesis is the 2015 reprint of the 1939 *Words that Won the War* by James R. Mock. Mock was a scholar who wrote several studies on the First World War and the CPI itself. This book illustrates the founding of the CPI, its goals and methods, and its downfall. Mock describes the CPI as a useful tool that helped win the First World War, going as far as stating that it was the CPI itself that won the war, since without the CPI America would not have been involved as much as it was. Mock states that the CPI's most important job, which helped the United States win the war, was its domestic approach to keep the morale of the workforce high.²² This book is used as a source for background information, since it provides a clearly structured overview of the CPI. It is also used as a way to compare what scholars, such as Mock, who lived within the period of the CPI thought of it and what the primary sources, including the President himself in his letters, thought of the CPI and its actual legacy.

Furthermore, another source that is used to the same ends, is the book by the founder of the CPI, George Creel, *How we advertised America*. However, since this book is written by the founder of the CPI and he is not impartial to the contents and workings of the Committee on Public Information, this thesis uses the book as a reference point in the research that is conducted and to see what the supposed intentions of the CPI were, and to look how Creel's ideals held up throughout history. This literature is used as secondary literature, but also as a primary source. In conjunction with the letters from President Wilson aimed at George Creel and other important members of the Committee on Public Information, this thesis analyses the relationship Creel and President Wilson had, but also look closer as to what the founder of the CPI described what the ideas of the CPI were and how they tried to get those ideas across.

However, there is very little literature on the CPI abroad, and it is primarily focused on Europe. The studies that are conducted on the CPI in Europe focus primarily on one country and only describe the situation within the country. Since this thesis uses Italy as a case study to illustrate the CPI's workings in Europe, literature surrounding Italy is used, but also other authors from different countries are used to complement or challenge the preconceptions made when looking at Italy.

²² James R. Mock, *Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919* (London: Forgotten Books, 2015), 188-189.

The work of Bernadette Whelan, a historian and member of the society for historians of American Foreign Relations, is an example of this. She wrote an article in 2017 regarding the CPI in Ireland, discussing the CPI's activities, role, and reception within Ireland.²³ Although she does attempt to link the CPI to the broader picture surrounding American propaganda, it is not the main focus of her study. Nevertheless, this article helps to understand the methods of the CPI in a different country, since it provides a clear and structured overview of the CPI in Ireland. An example of literature used for Italy is the work by Daniela Rossini, who wrote a book with a similar structure as Whelan but focussing on Italy instead. Rossini argues that the American message within Italy was nothing more than 'a myth', and that the way the message was conveyed was instrumental in its supposed failure, as she describes it.²⁴ These articles are two examples of instrumental literature for this thesis that help in analysing the case study of Italy from the perspective of scholars related to foreign relations who have written on the CPI itself from the international relations field of study point of view.

However, to come up with a concrete argument and answer to the research question, simply looking at literature related to the CPI as well as using literature related to the three themes, Progressivism, Wilsonianism, and Public Diplomacy, is not enough. Literature related to the broader field of American diplomacy during the period of the CPI also needs to be discussed. One author that creates a bridge between the CPI in one of the case studies, Italy, is Louis John Nigro Jr. In his book of 1999, he describes not only the CPI in Italy itself, but also a broader picture of the diplomatic relationship between America and Italy. Nigro Jr was a renowned American diplomat, who worked in various offices throughout his life, including as ambassador to Chad from 2007-2010.²⁵ He was a research fellow in Italy and earned a PhD in modern European History at Vanderbilt University.²⁶ His study into the Italian-American diplomatic relationship is a useful source for this thesis, as it not only helps with the specific case, Italy, but is also the first step in bridging the historiographical gap between specific cases and the broader picture of American foreign policy.

Furthermore, the work of Mazover, *Governing the World, a history of an Idea*, of 2012 provides an overview of American foreign relations that is pivotal in understanding the

²³ Bernadette Whelan, "American Propaganda and Ireland during World War one: The work of the Committee on Public Information," *Irish Studies Review* 25, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 141-169.

²⁴ Daniela Rossini, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Myth in Italy: Culture, Diplomacy, and War Propaganda* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008), 1.

²⁵ Office of the Historian Website, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people/nigro-louis-john> last accessed 09-12-2018.

²⁶ United States embassy in Chad Website, https://web.archive.org/web/20120115041824/http://ndjamena.usembassy.gov/ambassador_nigro.html archived on January 15, 2012, last accessed 09-12-2018

international playing field in which the Committee had to operate. Mazower in his book focusses on how the world was governed in that period of history, focussing on how ideologies helped shape international relations, saying that this part in history related to foreign relations, was a “battle of ideologies.”²⁷ In this part of history nations fought to spread their influence by backing international institutions which promoted the same ideals. He also puts a great deal of emphasis on the various institutions that helped with this development of internationalism, such as the League of Nations, but also the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, NATO, and even more specialist agencies such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade are discussed within his book. Whereas this thesis ends before the League of Nations is properly discussed and bears it no thought, the use of organisations to exert their will is something the CPI in Italy also makes use of. The Committee uses the American Red Cross and the YMCA to spread their message in Italy. Thus, this book not only helps in understanding global politics and international relations during the First World War, it could also help with understanding how and why governments would use institutions to do their work for them.

Another example of general literature related to American Foreign Policy is the book by John J. Broesamle, *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics*. This book not only covers the concept of Progressivism, which is useful for this thesis, but it also describes American politics in general, similar to Ninkovich’s work.²⁸ Using these four authors, Ninkovich, Broesamle, Mazower, and Nigro Jr, this thesis has a solid framework to build the background of American foreign policy during the First World War with. Especially when combined with other authors that are mentioned by these four scholars, including Postel, who wrote an essay in the compiled volume by Woolner and Thompson, and Rossini. Both of these are authors used for other purposes in this thesis as for example Rossini is the author who wrote about the CPI in Italy, but she has also written an article on American foreign policy titled “An Object of Demonstration in Wilson’s Foreign Policy,” in 1994, which she has amended as recently as 2017.²⁹

Two other authors who have written on American’s foreign policy are George C. Herring with his book *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* published in 2008 and Antony Gerald Hopkins’ book *American Empire: A Global History*

²⁷ Mark Mazower, *Governing the World, a History of an Idea* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012): 154-155.

²⁸ John Broesamle, *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics* (New York: Greenwood press, 1990).

²⁹ Daniela Rossini, “Italy: An Object of Demonstration in Wilson’s Foreign Policy. Retrospects of the Fiume Appeal of April 23, 1919,” In: *Revue Française d’Etudes Américaines, La politique étrangère des Etats-Unis*. N°61 (August 1994).

published in 2018. Both these books deal with the International relations playing field during World War I. However, both of them only very briefly mention the CPI. Herring only gives half a page to the CPI stating that in late 2017 the United States started a propaganda effort domestically and soon went overseas as well.³⁰ Hopkins on the other hand seems to ignore the Committee entirely. Only a very brief mention of Wilson establishing the CPI is put forward in this tome.³¹ Despite both these works being considered pivotal in understanding American Foreign Policy, the attention, or lack thereof, they give to the CPI is noticeable. It seems both these authors acknowledge the existence of the Committee, but they consider its impact to have been negligible in the international relations playing field, else they would have mentioned it in more than one or two sentences. By showing the lack of attention given to the Committee, this thesis hopes to expand on their works, and demonstrate that the CPI actually did play a pivotal role in Wilson's foreign policy campaign.

Furthermore, there is other literature that is also used in this thesis which does not directly play as large a part as the aforementioned works but is nevertheless important to mention here. Gregg Wolper's account on the CPI in Spain, albeit not the case study, can provide another source for a comparative analysis within Europe. The 1934 book written by Ronald C. Doll and Rose Marie DeSanctis, *A critical study of the Domestic Activities of the Committee on public Information, 1917-1919*, is used in conjunction with the aforementioned literature in detailing the inner workings of the CPI for the chapter that focusses on background information and domestic activities.³²

This thesis also deals with the term propaganda, and whether or not the CPI can be seen as propaganda since the chairman publicly states it wasn't propaganda. However, behind closed doors Creel calls it 'propaganda of the faith'.³³ Thus, the notion what propaganda exactly is and the negative outlook it currently has within society needs to be addressed. For this, the thesis uses the combined work of Nicholas Cull, David Culbert, and David Welch who wrote an encyclopaedia in 2003 that details the use and function of propaganda from 1500 to the

³⁰ George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008): 413-414.

³¹ Anthony Gerald Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018): 451.

³² 1. Gregg Wolper, "Wilsonian Public Diplomacy: The Committee on Public Information in Spain," *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 1 (1 January 1993): 17-34.

2. E. M., Duckworth, J. Dolgow, Judith Lee Dismukes, M. M. Dudycha, Mary C. Dolan, Robert Dublirer, Ronald C. Doll, and Rose Marie DeSanctis. *A Critical Study of the Domestic Activities of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919*, 1934.

³³ Vaughn, *Holding fast the Inner lines*, 16.

present.³⁴ This book is instrumental in coming up with a clear definition of propaganda for the thesis as well as detail the use of propaganda within the time period of 1917-1919. Having a clear definition of propaganda is pivotal in being able to understand and dissect the CPI's methods and propaganda material.

Another source that is pivotal for the understanding of public diplomacy and propaganda is the article by Devai Dora, "American Outlook on Public Diplomacy," from 2010.³⁵ Dora argues that there is no clear definition of Public Diplomacy, something this thesis explains how it deals with this in more detail in the Methodology chapter. However, she does state that public diplomacy: "provides us with a truthful, factual exposition and explication of a nation's foreign policy and way of life to overseas audiences."³⁶

Therefore, by using this article and the encyclopaedia this thesis uses their definition of public diplomacy and propaganda to argue that what the Committee on Public Information was doing, influencing the spread of information, domestically and internationally, can be seen as a form of public diplomacy, which this thesis sees as equal to propaganda as it was understood back in the First World War.

Thus, when looking at the available literature on the CPI, it becomes evident that despite there being a lot written about it, its scope has predominantly been domestic. This is no surprise, since the most important work as mentioned was to be done at home. This leads to a void in the historiography where the dealings of the CPI, within Italy and domestically, have not yet been researched via the scope of Progressivism. The research conducted in thesis adds to the historiographical debate by not only providing a comparative analysis between the domestic approach and that within Italy, but also incorporating the concept of Progressivism. With the aforementioned literature and by using primary sources, this thesis constructs a narrative surrounding the CPI and comes up with a clearly structured story that adds to the historiography and try to fill this void, regarding the CPI abroad and Progressivism, in the historiography for this moment in history.

³⁴ Nicholas J. Cull, David Culbert, and David Welch. *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A historical Encyclopedia, 1500 to the Present* (California: ABC Clio, 2003).

³⁵ Devai Dora, "American Outlook on Public Diplomacy," *International Relations Quarterly* vol 1. No4. (Winter 2010).

³⁶ *Ibid*, 2.

Methodology

There are three theoretical concepts that play an important role in this thesis. These are: Wilsonianism, Progressivism, and Public diplomacy or Propaganda. Wilsonianism is a term coined for the view on foreign relations that President Woodrow Wilson had. It focusses on the topic of foreign relations itself and is usually described as an ideological perspective on foreign relations. Wilsonianism advocates the spread of democracy, capitalism, the self-determination of people, and favouring intervention in world politics. To utilise the concept of Wilsonianism, the definition of Frank Ninkovich is used. Ninkovich is the most renowned scholar detailing Wilsonianism in general. His book, *The Wilsonian Century*, is still widely used as a source not only for Wilsonianism, but as a source for American foreign policy in the twentieth century, despite being published in 1999. This thesis therefore also uses Ninkovich's work as the starting point for any discussion or debates surrounding Wilsonianism. This alleviates the need to go into great length and detail surrounding the political allegiances of Wilson himself, thus allowing for a narrower focus on the sources itself to apply the concept to. Ninkovich considers Wilson to be an idealist in any case.³⁷ Ninkovich defines Wilsonianism according to a set of regulations and propositions. He argues that Wilson had to look at the international playing field of politics through a 'fog of war' and came up with the following preconceptions to make sense of international relations:

1. War itself was no longer a useful or reliable instrument of diplomacy;
2. A new kind of danger that was different from old threats: the possibility of poisoning of the world political environment by powers hostile to liberal democracy;
3. The European balance of power is unhinged and beyond restoration;
4. The necessity of American intervention in Europe demonstrated that modern politics and warfare were global in scope.³⁸

With his second preconception Ninkovich means that, according to Wilson, international powers opposed to liberal democracy and other American ideals, could create a hostile political environment for world politics.³⁹ By applying these preconceptions in combination with the ideas regarding Wilsonianism, this thesis looks at the messages of the CPI and its source

³⁷ Frank Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century, U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1900* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 48

³⁸ *Ibid*, 13.

³⁹ *Ibid*. 47-49.

material in an attempt to discern whether or not this message was present within the CPI. More likely, the concept of Wilsonianism is used as a way of explaining the motivations President Wilson had for forming the CPI and the objectives he wanted to accomplish with the Committee on Public Information. Wilsonianism is therefore considered to be the international relations or foreign policy extension of Progressivism in this thesis.

Progressivism is a concept that focusses on the notion of progress to further the improvement of the human race. It states that progress within science, technology, or even economic development is a good thing and will benefit all people. The main way of achieving this notion of progress is through social reform.⁴⁰ Progressivism within this thesis thus focusses on the CPI's ideals and motives that are present within the approach the CPI to spread its message. This thesis analyses the methods of the CPI and look at how, or if, Progressivism is a clear part of the message or has influenced the message at all. In order to accurately understand the notion of Progressivism, the thesis starts off by analysing the start of Progressivism in the United States, using the work of Hofstadter. Albeit an old book, it originates from 1955, it is still the most widely used literature by more recent scholars such as John Broesamle and Robert Harrison.⁴¹ Both scholars wrote about the American social and political reform in the early twentieth century. Hofstadter's book details the reform within American politics that led to the rise of Progressivism. It also won the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1956.⁴² Hofstadter's *Age of Reform* describes Progressivism not just as the aforementioned notion of progress, but also looks at it from a more critical point of view. It "affected in a striking way all the major and minor parties and the whole tone of American political life."⁴³ Hofstadter notes that Progressivism as a whole was meant to "restore a type of economic individualism and political democracy that was believed to have existed earlier in America."⁴⁴

Another important work that is used to show the origins of Progressivism within America is the edited volume by David Woolner and John Thompson. This volume from 2016 contains various essays from authors that display the rise of Progressivism throughout American history. The first chapter focusses on the start of the Progressive era and is used to illustrate this beginning within this thesis. The important notion this volume brings forth, is that despite Progressivism being noted by historians as a middle and upper class influenced

⁴⁰ Broesamle, *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics*, 46.

⁴¹ 1. Ibid.

2. Robert Harrison, *Congress, Progressive Reform, and the New American State* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁴² Richard Hofstadter, *Age of Reform* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), cover.

⁴³ Ibid, 5.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 5-6.

movement, instead it all begin at the lower classes. Especially the agrarian and lower-class factory workers were instrumental in the rise of Progressivism in the political playing field.⁴⁵ Since Progressivism started out as akin to the Populist movement, it started at the same place as well, the lower-class citizens. Following the growing modernisation and industrialisation the rights and status position of rural citizens and factory workers were under threat. Following this change in society, they started crying out for reform, which eventually led to notions of Progressivism. It was this movement that was eventually ‘hijacked’ by middle and upper-class citizens when they realised these Progressivist notions would also benefit them. This is the reason that when discussing Progressivism is often considered to be a movement for the elite as Foner argues in his book for high school students.⁴⁶ The elite of society played a more prominent role in the direction of the movement, eventually drowning out the voices of the lower-class since they were more influential. This thesis utilises this description of Hofstadter, the concepts of Broesamle, and the viewpoints within the volume by Woolner and Thompson to test the message of the CPI and to see whether or not Progressivism was a part of its message.

Public diplomacy is the notion of influencing public opinion and perception through the use of information, whether the truth or not was published depended on the subject matter. For instance, troop movements and draft results were often not publicised by the CPI or with inflated numbers, whereas battles were always reported truthfully.⁴⁷ This influencing of information is arguably a part of propaganda. Public diplomacy is thus the concept that is the most dominant within this thesis, since the CPI is always conducting public diplomacy. The CPI never publicly stated they were conducting propaganda during the war, since this was deemed to be something only the Germans could do and was considered a negative thing.⁴⁸ The thin line between propaganda and public diplomacy is one this thesis tries to avoid crossing.

When dealing with certain materials that would be labelled as propaganda in the contemporary sense of the word, it is vital to understand that in 1917-1919, these methods were seen by the CPI as justified means of diplomacy. The definition used in this thesis for public diplomacy stems from the teachings of Alan Henrikson, a history professor at Tuft University, who defined it as such: “Public diplomacy may be defined, simply, as the conduct of international relations by governments through public communications media and through

⁴⁵ Charles Postel, “TR, Wilson, and the origins of the Progressive Tradition,” in *Progressivism in America*, ed. David B. Woolner and John M. Thompson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016): 6.

⁴⁶ Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*, 706-707.

⁴⁷ George Creel, *How we advertised America* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1920), Foreword XIV-XV.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 4-5.

dealings with a wide range of nongovernmental entities (political parties, corporations, trade associations, labor unions, educational institutions, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and so on including influential individuals) for the purpose of influencing the politics and actions of other governments.”⁴⁹ Why Henrikson considers political parties to be nongovernmental entities is never explained, but it is assumed that he means parties that are not a part of government, thus the opposition.⁵⁰ By using this definition this thesis seeks to explain how American Public Diplomacy was executed through the Committee on Public Information within Italy. However, this thesis does not look at examples of the Committee’s message and state that this is Public Diplomacy or propaganda; instead, this thesis sees them as the same, since they were the same before any negative connotations were given to it. Public Diplomacy and Propaganda are, for all intents and purposes of this thesis, the same thing and can be seen as “that what the CPI is doing.”⁵¹

Furthermore, most sources that are used are written qualitative sources, letters by President Woodrow Wilson and books written by CPI members during the First World War and the active period of the Committee on Public Information. However, this thesis also analysis certain posters or speeches as they come up in the literature. The selection process for the Italian chapter is simply by looking at what was left. As explained further on, the biggest problem this thesis ran into when attempting to find materials to analyse was that there was almost nothing left, or the message was spread orally without any records. Using the Hoover Institution database from Stanford University and the Roosevelt Institution for American Studies database, certain materials were found to analyse for the Italian case. The domestic case however, as explained in its respective chapter, had more materials available, but most of those served the same purpose. Thus, a selection was made following different themes that these materials dealt with.

An example of a domestic poster that is analysed in this thesis is the “I am Public Opinion Poster,” created by the Division of Pictorial Publicity and published in *The Official Bulletin*. An example of a primary source for Italy that did remain and is analysed is the translation of the Star-Spangled banner into Italian. These are methods the CPI used to convey

⁴⁹ Devai Dora, “American Outlook on Public Diplomacy,” *International Relations Quarterly* vol 1. No4. (Winter 2010): 1.

2. Tuft University Website archive, Edward R Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy, <https://web.archive.org/web/20100617004930/http://fletcher.tufts.edu/murrow/pd/definitions.html> last accessed 02-04-2019.

⁵⁰ Dora, “American Outlook,” 2-3.

⁵¹ This idea is based on the work of Gregg Wolper’s Ph.D thesis on Public Diplomacy and the CPI. Gregg Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy: Woodrow Wilson, George Creel, and the Committee on Public Information” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1991): 7-9.

its message to the general public and this thesis analyses them to see how they were constructed, by whom they were constructed, and what the message is that this medium is trying to convey. These methods can be posters and speeches as mentioned, but films are also mentioned by primary sources, such as letters from Creel, as propaganda materials thus are also possible materials to investigate.

Furthermore, instead of analysing certain materials itself, since there were not that many left, this thesis analyses certain institutions that were directly linked to the CPI, which often carried out 'missions' that coincided with the Committee's ideals, on their orders. The two institutions this thesis deals with in Italy in chapter three of this thesis are the Young Men's Christian Association, the Y.M.C.A., and the American Red Cross, ARC. Both of these institutions or organisations are explained more in depth when their contributions and involvement in the Committee's war effort in Italy is discussed in chapter three.

In the domestic section of the Committee in chapter two, a newspaper called *The Official Bulletin*, is mentioned. The publications can be found online at the World War I centennial website, a website dedicated to the education of the general public following a century after the First World War.⁵² The newspapers that are picked in this chapter to be analysed are based on the time around the first and last publication, but also around the time of the battle of Caporetto, October – November 1917. This is a battle that is mentioned in greater detail in chapter three, to show the Committee's motivations for establishing an office in Italy. The reason for picking these dates and publications is simple. Publications at the start of the newspaper and its end were picked to discern any major shifts in the layout or tone of the newspaper. The publications surrounding the battle of Caporetto were read to see if *The Official Bulletin* addressed this major Italian defeat. This newspaper is also analysed to see if Progressivism played a part in its publications or not.

However, the biggest problem that can be encountered during the research is not being able to access certain databases or the lack of decent quality primary source material related to the methods of the CPI, think of films or posters. The Roosevelt Institute for American Studies, however, has a large database and collection of primary sources relevant for this research. Not only that, but they have a library filled with some of the books mentioned in the Historiographical chapter as well. Examples of primary sources include the full collection of letters from President Woodrow Wilson to George Creel, the chairman of the CPI, but also letters to various diplomats during the First World War that can be relevant to this research. On

⁵² World War 1 Centennial website, accessed at <https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/educate/places/official-bulletin.html> last accessed 24-06-2019.

that note, this thesis owes a debt of gratitude to the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies, Dr. Dario Fazzi, and the various Ph.D. students working there. Without their continued support throughout the writing of this thesis, it would not have been possible to create this work.

To access more propaganda materials, the Hoover Institution Database of the Stanford University is used. This institution, founded in 1919, documents war, revolution, and peace in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.⁵³ This database contains posters, newspaper clippings, voice materials, and movies of materials used by the CPI to spread its message, domestically, but also abroad. To analyse these primary sources, close reading is performed to establish the intent of the writer and its intended message, since these were not written with historians in mind. However, the largest obstacle for this research is the use of the materials relevant to the CPI.

The CPI was an organisation with the sole purpose of influencing public perception through the use of information. In the current day and age, this would be called propaganda. Thus, extra attention is required to be weary of the intended message the CPI was trying to send with their material and methods, but also who created and distributed these materials to the public. An example of this is the use of journalists in Italy rather than the American ambassador for Committee related activities. Journalists have a different background and less contacts than the ambassador might have had at the time, so this was important to keep in mind. To alleviate these issues, the thesis deals with the materials on a case-by-case basis, in order to paint the full picture of the message and its meaning, but also not to fall for the propaganda message itself. The cases are dealt with via a set regime: who is the creator or subject of the propaganda case, why is this message created, thus also how the creators influenced the contents, where was it created and how was it distributed, who are the objects the message is relayed to, and what are we really looking at, what is the object or event that is being described? This specific regime is henceforth known as the Quintuple W regime, standing for Who/What, Why, Where, Whom, and What? Although this regime is created for the purpose of this thesis, it borrows journalistic tendencies. The creating of a journalist article often also follows the same specific set of questions to create a coherent story.

However, this regime differs from the journalist approach by only dealing with ‘what are we looking at’ last instead of at the beginning. This is done as to not fall for the propaganda message itself, since analysing what is being looked at first might skew the recipients view on the work already, but also because what exactly is being looked at is of lower importance. The

⁵³ Hoover Institution Website, <https://www.hoover.org/library-archives> last accessed 28-05-2019.

notions of Progressivism that this thesis attempts to discern within the CPI's message does not inherently come from the object or event that is being analysed, instead the creators of it, who may or may not have been influenced by the Progressive era, are more valuable. Of course, analysing the motivations and actions of an organisation as large as the Committee on Public Information based on the individualistic tendencies of a handful of people is problematic. However, due to the strong Progressivist pull, which is explained in the first chapter, and the background of the people involved, it is still a valid way of measuring the impact of Progressivism in the message of the Committee.

Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that due to the limited amount of materials that have stood the test of time, formulating a concrete and decisive answer to the research question in this thesis is nigh impossible. It analyses the materials available and creates a narrative based on these findings, but since the sources discussed are only a drop in the ocean that the Committee created, it is important to keep in mind that these findings can change if more sources appear in the future.

1.0 The Italian's view on a Progressive America

1.1 Progressivism in America

In this widespread political agitation that at first sight seems so incoherent and chaotic, there may be distinguished upon examination and analysis three tendencies. The first of these tendencies is found in the insistence by the best men in all political parties that special, minority, and corrupt influence in government be removed; the second tendency is found in the demand that the structure or machinery of government, which has hitherto been admirably adapted to control by the few, be so changed and modified that it will be more difficult for the few, and easier for the many, to control; and, finally, the third tendency is found in the rapidly growing conviction that the functions of government at the present are too restricted and they must be increased and extended to relieve social and economic distress. These three tendencies with varying emphasis are seen to-day in the platform and program of every political party; they are manifested in the political changes and reforms that are advocated and made in the nation, the states, and the cities; and, because of their universality and definiteness, they may be said to constitute the real progressive movement.⁵⁴

The above quote from a classic study of contemporary events by Benjamin Parke De Witt summarised what was considered to be the Progressive movement in 1915. These three tendencies play a pivotal role throughout this subchapter and are indicative of what the Progressive Era can be defined as. Throughout this subchapter, the three tendencies described in 1915 can be discerned, despite being analysed via scholars who came decades later. However, in order to fully grasp how a concept such as Progressivism played a part within the messages of the CPI, it is paramount to understand how America became known as a Progressive nation. Even more so, how Europe, and thus Italy in particular, viewed America as a nation. This chapter focusses therefore on the rise of Progressivism within America and the perception of America by Italy, its official body of government, but also its citizens, before the First World War.

The rise of Progressivism within America started around the 1890s, following a period

⁵⁴ Benjamin Parke De Witt, *The Progressive Moment: A non partisan, comprehensive discussion of current tendencies in American Politics* (New York: Macmillan Co, 1915), 4-5. Found in Broesamle *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics*, 40-41.

of unrest and turmoil amidst the transition of an agrarian to an industrial society.⁵⁵ This was of course not the first mention of progressive thought but is often seen as the starting point of the age of reform within American politics.⁵⁶ Following a time of industrialisation and economic growth, the economy had hit a bit of stagnation in the late nineteenth century and the American population was eager for social and economic reform. In truth, these cries for reform were not easily definable as one group of society versus another, but a coherent view of all social layers to restore economic individualism and political democracy. These ideas were thought to have been destroyed by the industrial movements of larger corporations and the political situation at that time.⁵⁷ Progressivism is seen as the culmination of what is known as decades of unrest within the agrarian and lower-class labour force.⁵⁸ Predominantly the ideals of Progressivism arose from their opposition towards conservatism.⁵⁹ Later notions of Progressivism include a dislike for anything not directly related to their Progressive ideals, which were the spread of democracy and going back to the era of economic individualism as stated before. However, the earliest notions were primarily seen as a bottom-up cry for reforms regarding large corporations and their influence on politics.⁶⁰

First, this notion of agrarian society demanding reforms has to be addressed, since it paints an important picture for the approach the CPI had within Italy later on. The farmers within America were deemed to be the backbone of society when they first settled within these new lands. It is this notion that even Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding fathers of America and principal author of the Declaration of Independence proclaimed: “The small land holders are the most precious part of a state.”⁶¹ However, throughout time this concept of the farmer being the most important member of society and the state was under attack. Larger corporations fuelled by the technological advancements of industrialisation shifted the focus of the state and its government away from the agrarian, rural societies. Instead, the focus was given to the now ever-growing urbanised cities within America. The farmers started to realise that their position within society was being replaced and they felt more and more ignored. They were losing respect and status, even going as far as believing that the political structure was created in such

⁵⁵ 1. Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 3 and 7.

2. Broesamle, *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics*, 46.

⁵⁶ Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 5.

⁵⁷ Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 4.

⁵⁸ Postel, “TR, Wilson, and the origins of the Progressive Tradition,” 5.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 7.

⁶⁰ 1. *Ibid*, 8.

2. Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 17.

⁶¹ Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 25.

a way that farmers were seen as being from a lower caste.⁶² This tension with society split the political field in two. On the one hand were the lower-class rural communities wanting to be better represented. On the other hand, the growing middle-class and elites that profited of the newly build industrial corporations.⁶³

However, despite being evidently a tradition and movement that started at the lowest societal order, it became known in the more contemporary scholarly circles as an elitist movement owned by the upper middle-class and the elite. This is partly because history tends to remember those most influential, and evidently those in higher standing were by definition more influential, but also because Progressivism in itself was a form of political ideology that attracted members from all standings.⁶⁴ These connotations lead to the notion that Populism, defined as a “resentment to the current system” in the early nineteenth century, was closely linked to the Progressivist ideals. In truth, despite similarities, the main difference still remains that Progressivism deals with more than one societal layer, thus being the arguably more sophisticated choice for middle and upper-class citizens.⁶⁵ Due to this increase in higher educated citizens in the movements ranks, and these people also taking control of the movement, the Progressivist ideals strengthened. Whereas the farmers could be branded as wild anarchists fighting against the system, when lawyers, doctors, and politicians started joining their side, this became increasingly more difficult.⁶⁶ William Allen White, leader of the progressive movement, a politician, newspaper editor, and author, summed up this difference within his autobiography, labelling the early Progressive movement, akin to the Populist ideals as: “Those agrarian movements too often appealed to the ne’er-do-wells, the misfits--- farmers who had failed, lawyers and doctors who were not orthodox, teachers who could not make the grade, and neurotics full of hates and ebullient evanescent enthusiasms.”⁶⁷

However, in 1912, when surveying the Progressive Party membership list, he found something else: “A movement of little businessmen, professional men, well-to-do farmers, skilled artisans from the upper brackets of organized labor . . . the successful middle-class country-town citizens, the farmer whose barn was painted, the well-paid railroad engineer, and the country editor.”⁶⁸ This indicates that the Progressive movement underwent a transition in

⁶² Ibid, 33-34.

⁶³ Ibid, 30.

⁶⁴ Postel, “TR, Wilson, and the origins of the Progressive Tradition,” 11-12.

⁶⁵ 1. Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 4, 131.

2. Broesamle, *Reform and Reaction in Twentieth Century American Politics*, 47-48.

⁶⁶ Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 131.

⁶⁷ William Allen White, *The Autobiography of William Allen White* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1946), 482-483.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 483.

the way its members were organised. Moving from a rural, often called Populist, movement to a movement that attracted people from all classes of society. However, to unite themselves under one banner to achieve their goals, the People's Party became increasingly popular. It is this People's Party's ideas that became the birthing ground of the ideals of the Progressive platform.⁶⁹ This platform was at the height of its influence in 1912 when the "Bull Moose" Progressive Party led by Theodore Roosevelt was founded.

These ideals can be summarised as a return to individualistic economic certainty, but more importantly the notion of progress itself. The fact that through democratic institutions and governments, the people in the nation would be better off. The year 1912 was also the year in which over seventy-five per cent of the ballots cast in the presidential election were for one of the three candidates, Woodrow Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Eugene Debs, who embraced political reforms now known as Progressivism.⁷⁰ In the end, Woodrow Wilson won these elections with 435 of the electoral college votes required out of a maximum of 531. This highlighted the beginning of the term of a Progressive President and a new chapter in American political history. In this era the notions of Progressivism, which can be summarised as a longing for economic reform with a return to economic individualism, a feeling of progress embedded in society, and a democratic, capitalistic form of governing, were ingrained in society. This society and Progressive era were the birthing ground of the CPI and the thoughts of the people associated with it.

1.2 The Italian Opinion of America before World War One

The European governments are willing to take American men, her money, her munitions, her food, her moral support through the preaching of democracy and universal peace; but in the end at the peace settlement they expect to have their way. They are willing to allow us to talk democracy as a war measure, but they intend to have "no [such] nonsense" in the finish. ... however, ... the President could make peace terms on his own basis, that is on a democratic basis, but... he would have to go over the heads of the governments' representatives and appeal to their people.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Postel, "TR, Wilson, and the origins of the Progressive Tradition, 3.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 3.

⁷¹ Charles Merriam, *Letter to George Creel*, June 4, 1918.

Before discussing the CPI itself, its domestic methods, and then comparing it to the situation in Italy, a brief context detailing the relationship between Italy and the United States is important. In order to fully understand the reception of the CPI's messages and the way it handled the distribution of propaganda materials, knowing how the Italians, officials and citizens alike, viewed America and its President is paramount.

First of all, it has to be noted that prior to World War One, the relationship between the United States and Italy was generally positive. The Italian population admired the strength of the American nation and aspired to one day be like them. However, certain fractures within the official relationship were already noted. Wilson and his administration considered the official Italian government to be the 'old diplomacy' way of dealing with international politics. More precisely, the Italian government was considered to be antithetical to American values and ideals. They were considered to be anti-democratic, corrupt, and imperialistic.⁷² This perception of the 'official Italy' is in stark contrast to what is described as the 'real Italy' by Rossini and others, such as Nigro Jr.⁷³ The real Italy is what is considered the population of Italy itself; basically, everyone that was not a part of the official institutions and government of Italy. Charles Merriam, head of the CPI office in Italy, described this difference in a paragraph in a letter with which this subchapter started.

Thus, the difference between what Italy represented officially and what were the actual feelings in the Italian population towards America differed immensely. On the one hand, the Italian people were considered friendly towards American ideals and practices, but on the other hand, the government were thought to be untrustworthy and not worth working with.⁷⁴ This untrustworthy attitude that the American government had of the Italian government stems from the period just before World War I and from their change in position within the War itself. Italy was a part of the Triple Alliance, not to be confused with the Triple Entente which was between Russia, France, and the United Kingdom, an alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary. This alliance was ratified on May 30, 1882. Germany and Austria-Hungary already had an alliance, the so-called Dual Alliance, from October 7, 1879, but due to the fact the French seized Tunisia, a country the Italians considered a great opportunity to start their own colonial and overseas imperialistic Empire, they felt like it was necessary to join this defensive league with

⁷² Rossini, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Myth in Italy*, 127 & 138.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 140. And Louis John Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations, 1917-1919* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), IX-X.

⁷⁴ Merriam, *American Publicity in Italy*, 542-543.

Germany and Austria-Hungary.⁷⁵ However, in 1912 this Alliance treaty was renewed with some interesting new additions to it. In particular article 7 that reads: “Austria-Hungary and Italy, having in mind only the maintenance, so far as possible, of the territorial status quo in the Orient, engage to use their influence to forestall any territorial modification which might be injurious to one or the other of the Powers signatory to the present Treaty.”⁷⁶ Translating this into layman’s terms, if any of the two parties, Austria-Hungary or Italy, would start a war that could potentially negatively impact the other party, they would not be forced to honour the treaty. It is this clause on which Italy build their case of neutrality at the start of the war.

However, Italy did not stay neutral for very long. On May 23, 1915, following diplomatic relationships and negotiations with the members of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente, in which both sides were trying to force Italy to join the war, Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary.⁷⁷ The reasons for joining the war against Austria-Hungary are manifold. The government justified their decision by looking at the Balkan situation and how Austria-Hungary has impacted the region, which was deemed ‘directly in opposition to Italian general and political interests in the Balkan Peninsula.’⁷⁸ Furthermore, within negotiations between Austria-Hungary and Italy when the First World War started, the Italian government had set out a list of territory they wanted to own following the aftermath of the war to strengthen their strategic hold on the Adriatic Sea. This included a larger district of the Trentino, a new district on the Isonzo, the special treatment of Trieste, the cession of some islands in the Curzolari Archipelago, a declaration of Austria’s disinterestedness in Albania, and the recognition of Italy’s possession of Valona and the Dodekanese.⁷⁹ However, Austria-Hungary refused all these demands and only offered a small portion of lands around the Adriatic and only after the war had officially ended. The Italian government considered this to be a threat and an insult. Italy stated that it was “face to face with the danger that all her aspirations, whether traditional or ethnical, and her desire for security on the Adriatic, would be lost forever.”⁸⁰ The aspirations that are spoken of in their war declaration were the perceived interests of Italy to expand their territory, which can also be seen in the wanting of a declaration of Austria’s interest in Albania, a notion which the American considered to be imperialistic. Imperialism of course being a

⁷⁵ John Grenville, Bernard Wasserstein, *The Major International Treaties of the Twentieth Century, A History and Guide with Texts* (New York: Routledge, 2013): 38.

⁷⁶ Expanded version of the Triple Alliance, Article 7, translated from French, accessed at [https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Expanded_version_of_1912_\(In_English\)](https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Expanded_version_of_1912_(In_English)) last accessed 19-06-2019.

⁷⁷ United States, Department of State, *Declarations of War* (Washington: Government Print Office, 1919): 40. Accessed at: <https://archive.org/details/declarationswar00statgoog/page/n46> last accessed 19-06-2019.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 41.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 43.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 43.

notion that was antithetical to American ideals at the time.⁸¹ These imperialistic tendencies and the betrayal of their alliance created a negative of Italy's government within the American government.⁸² Following this strenuous international relation between the two countries, the work of the Committee on Public Information had various problems to overcome when it started its work in Italy. The main problem related to this diplomatic situation is dealt with in chapter three, following the discussion of how the Committee went to work in Italy.

Thus, the relationship between Italy and the United States differed between the government and its population according to the Americans. This division between 'real' and 'official' Italy shaped the way diplomatic situations were handled before, during, and even after the First World War.⁸³ However, it also impacted the way the Committee had to operate within Italy to spread its message. In chapter three, this thesis explains how the Committee tried to alleviate these problems, if it was successful in doing so, and how it tried to influence public opinion in a country where the government had antithetical views compared to your own.

⁸¹ Daniela Rossini, "Italy: An Object of Demonstration in Wilson's Foreign Policy. Retrospects of the Fiume Appeal of April 23, 1919," In: *Revue Française d'Etudes Américaines, La politique étrangère des Etats-Unis*. N°61 (August 1994): 228.

⁸² Ibid. 228-229.

⁸³ Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, 3-4.

2.0 The CPI's domestic activities

2.1 The founding of the Committee on Public Information

I hereby create a Committee on Public Information, to be composed of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and a civilian who will be charged with the executive direction of the committee. As civilian chairman I appoint Mr. George Creel. The Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Navy are authorized each to detail an officer or officers to the work of the Committee.⁸⁴
Woodrow Wilson, April 14, 1917.

With this public statement, a week after America announced to the world that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany, Woodrow Wilson informed the public of his decision to create the Committee on Public Information. He was asked to create this specific committee and separate it from the general committees related to the government by the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, the Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, and the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels. These influential figures stressed the importance of creating a committee overseeing the spread of information regarding the war effort by the media. They considered the media to be damaging the war effort in their attempts to convey daily news updates to the public, without regard to the military importance of their statements.⁸⁵ On the same day Wilson enacted Executive Order 2594, giving birth to this specific Committee and entrusting the civilian chairman position to George Creel.

Creel was a reporter and journalist by nature and profession, but was also heavily involved in the Presidential campaign of Woodrow Wilson in 1916, writing newspaper articles and interviewing people for the Democratic National Committee.⁸⁶ George Creel, born in Missouri in 1876, was a progressivist from the moment he could walk, being labelled as such by his contemporaries.⁸⁷ He went on record saying that “Democracy is a religion with me, and

⁸⁴ Woodrow Wilson, *Executive Order 2594*, April 13, 1917. Accessed at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-2594-creating-committee-public-information> last accessed 23-06-2019.

⁸⁵ President Woodrow Wilson's Letters, Volume 42, April 13, 1917, 55.

⁸⁶ Woodrow Wilson Letters, volume 40, 1916-1917, December 31, 1916. Accessible at the RIAS.

⁸⁷ Jan Onofrio, *Missouri Biographical Dictionary* (USA: Somerset Publishers, inc., 2001), 171. And Chloe Maxwell, “George Creel and the Committee on Public Information 1917-1918,” *The Tenor of Our Times* volume 4, Article 8 (Spring 2015): 72.

throughout my whole adult life I have preached America as the hope of the world.”⁸⁸ After discovering that the aforementioned military and political leaders wanted a strong censorship on the media, Creel wrote a letter to Wilson, advocating the use or expression of the media, rather than a tactic of oppression and that if there was going to be censorship in the media he, should be ‘it’.⁸⁹

President Wilson was more convinced by the approach of Creel, since Wilson was strictly against censorship himself. In a meeting between the Secretaries, George Creel, and Frank Polk, a famous lawyer and counsellor for the Department of State, it was noted that Polk and Lansing wanted a great censorship network akin to the German propaganda machine. However, Wilson was noted to be against this great censorship network, since it “does not fit a democratic country.”⁹⁰

There were also divisions within the Committee on what approach and direction the Committee should have. Whereas Lansing and Polk favoured a censorship network, Baker, Creel, and the President favoured a more liberal approach in controlling the media.⁹¹ Newton Baker considered a censorship approach to be a weak one and comparing it to sitting by idly. He much preferred empowering the media with the truth regarding America’s war effort and using them to spread the information.⁹²

However, this goal of the secretaries to influence the flow of information into the country was not the only task given to the Committee on Public Information domestically. Another equally important task was to influence the hearts and minds of the population. This momentous task was described by the Secretary of War as being of the greatest importance: “It was of the greatest importance that America in this war should be represented not merely as a strong man fully armed, but as a strong man fully armed and believing in the cause for which he was fighting.”⁹³

To fully understand the level of involvement the Committee on Public Information had on the public sentiment towards the war, a brief overview of the foundation and inner workings of the CPI is necessary. When the Committee was founded on April 13, 1917, the approach the committee would take was unclear. Aforementioned discussions on the level of censorship were

⁸⁸ Oliver Stone & Peter Kuznick, *The Untold History of the United States, volume 1: Young Readers edition, 1898-1945* (New York: Atheneum Books, 2014), Chapter 8.

⁸⁹ Stephen Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines; Democracy, Nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information* (Chapel Hill: The university of North Carolina Press, 1980), 17.

⁹⁰ Woodrow Wilsons Letters, Volume 42,

⁹¹ Woodrow Wilson Letters, Volume 42, Diary of Josephus Daniels, April 17, 1917.

⁹² George Creel, *How we advertised America*, Foreword XIV.

⁹³ *Ibid*, Foreword XV.

heated and there was no clear consensus on the way forward. Creel positioned himself anti-censorship, claiming the word should be avoided if possible, since the volume of information held back from the public was minor compared to the information they were free to give out.⁹⁴ Creel also considered the censorship bill put before Congress was unfit of a democratic nation. He felt that the freedom of the press was a right that was abused too often and should be respected at all costs. The people should always be confident in the truth in the printed information given out and a censorship network would compromise this, according to Creel.⁹⁵ The President favoured this approach and thus the work of the CPI could begin in earnest.

However, despite both the President and Creel being opponents of the proposed censorship, one of the very first divisions founded within the Committee on Public Information was the Censorship board. This board had committees throughout important cities, such as New York and Washington, to keep a tab on what the newspapers published. Everything they published had to be approved by this board. Thus, despite not officially announcing a great censorship network and working informally with papers on a case-by-case basis, there was most definitely an overarching network active to filter messages. Supposedly, this censorship was voluntary for the press, but in truth if the press wanted any sort of support from the government and to be allowed to publish your papers, submitting your work to these censorship committees was mandatory. Nevertheless, they only very scarcely prohibited papers from publishing certain stories.⁹⁶ Due to the number of negative letters the President received from worried newspapers fearing a restriction on the freedom of press and speech, a board of censorship was created through which all information and news would have to pass, before it could be publicised by the media.

However, even the appointment of Creel, a firm believer in American supremacy in relation to its institutions and ideals, was criticised by the media.⁹⁷ He was a devout believer in the American cause, even going as far as stating that the Committee had no need for propaganda materials, since “no other argument was needed than the simple, straightforward presentation of facts.”⁹⁸ This attitude, accompanied by his nativity regarding America’s supremacy made him an easy target for the domestic press. *The New York Times* questioned his ability to work together with the press on numerous occasions.⁹⁹ David Lawrence, assistant to the Adjutant

⁹⁴ Vaughn, *holding the inner lines*, 18.

⁹⁵ Creel, *How we advertised America*, 16-17.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 18-19. And George Creel, personal letters to the censorship board, November 16, 1918.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 20.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 20.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 21.

General in Washington and later Governor of Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to President Wilson on May 24, 1917, stating that although the press in general had more faith in Creel's approach to the censorship situation and the media overall, the level of criticism Creel has received so far was indicative of a failing relationship. He advised the President to support Creel publicly and invite correspondents to the White House to help quell this unrest. However, the President fully backed up George Creel and stated that Creel had done nothing wrong and he has his full support.¹⁰⁰

After quelling the unrest within the organisation and the appointment of Creel as Chairman, the Committee went to work. First, focussing on its domestic goals, influencing public opinion in favour of the war effort and trying to control the flow of information at the same time. Within the rest of this chapter the various methods the Committee employed within its domestic chapter are discussed and analysed according to the Quintuple W regime. When the domestic situation is analysed, the thesis moves on to show how the Committee with influences from the President and Creel, tried to influence public opinion in Italy, in chapter three.

2.2 The Committee's methods in America.

We did not call it propaganda, for that word, in German hands, had come to be associated with deceit and corruption. Our effort was educational and informative throughout, for we had such confidence in our case as to feel that no other argument was needed than the simple, straightforward presentation of facts.¹⁰¹

Despite not calling it propaganda in public, George Creel did acknowledge it was propaganda behind closed doors in meetings with Wilson and the Secretaries.¹⁰² This subchapter demonstrates several methods the CPI used domestically to spread its information. Several forms of propaganda methods are analysed according to the Quintuple W regime in order to create a basis to which the methods in Italy can be compared in the next chapter.

Probably the most well-known form of propaganda within the United States during the First World War is the Four Minute Men method. A series of speeches held by volunteers in theatres and cinemas in between breaks. These breaks lasted for four minutes, hence how they

¹⁰⁰ President Woodrow Wilson Letters, Volume 42, 386 and 395-396.

¹⁰¹ Creel, *How we advertised America*, 4.

¹⁰² George Creel, Personal letters to Wilson and other correspondence,

got their name. The idea came from Donald Ryerson, a Chicago native that tried this specific method himself with great success in Chicago and proceeded to travel to Washington in the hopes of getting an audience with Creel. This was the time when the Committee was in its very first hours of its existence and still working from the navy library. Ryerson managed to get a hold of Creel who listened to his proposal with much interest.¹⁰³ Creel was at that moment still thinking of ways to reach every American and Ryerson's idea seemed to be exactly what was needed.¹⁰⁴ He convinced Creel of the value of the method of information distribution and was appointed as the director of the Four Minute Men division until June 1917, when he left for the navy.¹⁰⁵ Ryerson was replaced as the director of the Four Minute Men Division by William McCormick Blair. Blair was also one of the original founders of this idea and vowed to make the Four Minute Men reach every individual American. Organisation wise, the first plans were to work according to Federal Reserve districts, but this over time changed to states, counties, cities and in the end even down to wards and townships.¹⁰⁶ The way the Four Minute Men worked was that their speeches were not allowed to be, obviously, longer than four minutes. This was due to the fact that many movie theatres, that were quite popular at the time, had little breaks in between shows of exactly four minutes. The time within this break would be exclusively filled by the Four Minute Men. This would be announced with a glass slide on the theatre display which looked something like this:

4 MINUTE MEN 4

(copyright, 1917. Trade-mark.)

.....

(Insert name of Speaker)

Will speak four minutes on a subject

of national importance. He speaks

under the authority of

THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

GEORGE CREEL, Chairman

Washington, D.C.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Creel, *How we advertised America*, 84.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 84-85.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 88.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 88-89.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 85.

Getting enough people willing to speak was not the problem. Moments after this Division was created thousands of volunteers made their way to the local offices to sign up. However, the preparation of the specific speakers and the contents of their speeches proved to be more challenging. The decision was made to create a specific bulletin with daily news regarding the CPI's activities and the word on the war, but also to convey the various topics the Four Minute Men had to speak about. This included several examples of speeches as well and was first constructed by Mr. Waldo P. Warren of Chicago, but he was replaced by Ernest Theodore Gundlach after the first Bulletin. Gundlach was the head of an advertising agency and was under the impression that all advertising was supposed to influence the minds of individuals.¹⁰⁸ This notion of influencing the minds of individuals is also something he put into action with the bulletin, which this thesis discusses next, but also in the writing of the example speeches.

This lines up perfectly with the individualistic notions of Progressivism as well as the approach of the Director of the Four Minute Men and the organisation of the division as aforementioned. Progressivism from its very beginning was a movement aimed at restoring individualism in society. Thus, the notion of influencing every American individually rather than appealing to the masses only, can be seen as a Progressivist idea. The topics that were discussed also carries this progressive message within them (see appendix 1). The speeches had to follow those topic lines, but time was always reserved for the promotion of war bonds and to advocate the war against injustice. More specifically, the notion that America is supreme and righteously fighting for what is right in the world.¹⁰⁹ One of the examples of a speech given by a Four Minute Man is printed in the book by Mock, *Words that won the war*, and is one of the illustrative speeches that served as an example for others to follow.

¹⁰⁸ Ernest Theodore Gundlach, *Facts and Fetishes in Advertising* (Chicago: Consolidated Book Publishers, 1931): 5.

¹⁰⁹ Mock, *Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919*, 116-117.

While we are sitting here tonight enjoying a picture show, do you realize that thousands and thousands of Belgians, people just like ourselves, are *languishing in slavery* under Prussian masters?

Driven into slavery, after they were lured back home by Prussian promises—Prussian scraps of paper.

Read the stories of deliberate *governmentally ordered* brutalities as told in the book, *German War Practices*, recently published by the Government's Committee on Public Information.

Read how the Prussian war lords robbed Belgium, pilfered and stole. How they extorted fines of millions of francs for trivial reasons—e.g. 5,000 francs [5,000,000?] (\$1,000,000) in Brussels because of an attack by a policeman; 200,000 marks at Tournai for refusal to send a list of citizens. Taxes went to 50,000 francs a month and more in Belgium.

Prussian "Schrecklichkeit" (the deliberate policy of terrorism) leads to almost unbelievable besotten brutality. The German soldiers—their letters are reprinted—were often forced against their wills, they themselves weeping, to carry out unspeakable orders against defenseless old men, women, and children, so that "*respect*" might grow for German "efficiency." For instance, at Dinant the wives and children of 40 men were forced to witness the execution of their husbands and fathers.

Now, then, do you want to take the *slightest* chance of meeting Prussianism here in America?

If not, then you'll have to help in summoning all the resources of this country for the giant struggle. For resources will win the war.

I

The Americans © McDougal Littell Inc.

FOUR-MINUTE SPEECH

Here's the way you can help save our resources. Instead of throwing money away on unnecessary things, buy Thrift Stamps, 25 cents, and War-Savings-Stamps, \$4.12, worth \$5 in five years, 4 per cent compound interest. They're good as government money; like a mortgage on the U.S.A. Here's one of the War-Savings Certificates, and here's a Thrift Card. Ask at any post office, any bank, or store wherever you see a W.S.S. sign.

It is up to us. We, the people, must win the war.

An illustrative speech that served as an example for a Four-Minute speech, printed in James R. Mock, *Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919* (London: Forgotten books, 2015): 123-124.

Within this example it is clear that it is a deliberate decision to appeal to the audience's emotions via the use of slavery and the numbers of people suffering. Especially the mention of the Dinant massacre would invoke sympathy in the audience. The battle of Dinant was fought

between Germany and France in which German soldiers entered the town of Dinant and throughout the day killed unarmed civilians.¹¹⁰ The Germans, in the confusion of the battle, assumed they were under attack by the civilians and to set an example they executed seventy-seven civilians, of which seven were men over seventy, thirty-eight were women or girls and fifteen were children under fourteen, and seven of which were babies.¹¹¹ After having invoked the emotions of the listeners, the speech immediately moved onto the American situation, stressing how they can help win the war. The sentence “we, the people, must win the war,” can be seen as a direct link to the Progressivist notion of economic individualism as described before. Economic individualism in the Progressive sense means that you, as an individual, are responsible and have the authority of your own economic situation. By stating that it are “the people” that must win the war, the speech aims to embed this thought into the minds of the audience. You, as an American in 1917, can help win the war with your own money. You are making the decision to help save the world. The American citizen can take the situation into its own hands and help make sure that America stays free of ‘Prussian influence’.

As time progressed, more subdivisions within the Four-Minute Men Division were created and other methods were tested. Four-Minute Singing became a thing, as well as a special women’s division and junior division aimed at women clubs and schools respectively were established. There was also a college Four Minute Men Division, usually with teachers as chairmen. Thus, gradually the influence of the Four Minute Men increased, and it was nigh impossible to escape the influence and reach of this propaganda Division. When the armistice concluded all domestic CPI activities, the Four Minute Men had over seventy-five thousand active speakers with over seven and a half million speeches made, estimating that over hundred-thirty-four million people had been addressed with these speeches.¹¹²

In hindsight, Creel admitted that if he would have had more time to think about installing this Division, he might have decided against utilising this form of propaganda, since turning a large army of volunteer patriots into well-versed spokespeople was dangerous. This was due to the fact they were acting out of authority of the government, but there was almost no control over what the speakers were doing when granted the permission to speak.¹¹³

Nevertheless, it can easily be stated that the Four Minute Men was a success. It influenced the hearts and minds of ordinary hard to reach Americans exactly as was intended

¹¹⁰ Alan Kramer, John Horne, *German Atrocities, 1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 47.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 50-51.

¹¹² Ibid, 84-85

¹¹³ Ibid, 84-85.

and was utilised by the government as well. Its message informed the American population of the righteousness of America's war-time ideals, in line with the intention Wilson had for founding the Committee on Public Information, and with Progressivist ideals in mind. Not only that, but it managed to do this with an army of volunteers who received no special training and a budget of only a hundred thousand dollars. The division used around nine million dollars' worth of assets in the time they were active, despite this significantly lower budget.¹¹⁴ All the hard work from the volunteers even led to an acknowledgement from Wilson in a public letter to all the Four Minute Men on November 29, 1918. In this letter he expresses his appreciation for the patriotic accomplishments of their hard work. He also stressed the importance of the contribution to the war effort by the Four Minute Men and its value to "the country, and indeed to civilization as a whole, during our period of national trial and triumph." Highlighting the Progressive efforts of the division and the help the Four Minute Men provided in achieving the aims of Wilson's administration.¹¹⁵

Another important propaganda tool the CPI equipped itself with during the First World War was the use of the *Official Bulletin*. It was deemed that no other medium other than a newspaper could influence thousands of minds at the same moment.¹¹⁶ Will Irwin, the head of the foreign division, considered there to be "no other extrajudicial force except religion... half so powerful as the American Press."¹¹⁷ Creel after the war called it to be the greatest power on earth, the importance of the press was so enormous according to him, because "we only know what it tells us."¹¹⁸

The various reasons for creating the *Official Bulletin* are stated in the official report of the Committee from 1920: "That there might be some official source to which the public could look for authoritative information as to the acts and proceedings vitally affecting their legal rights and obligations; that there might be put in print for all time a faithful record of the part played by the Government of the United States in the World War; and that the Government departments might be relieved of the very considerable correspondence with persons desiring the character of information which properly should be published from day to day; and that this information should be disseminated through the Nation in an effective manner."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 97.

¹¹⁵ Woodrow Wilson, *letter to the Four Minute Men of the Committee on Public Information*, Washington, November 29, 1918.

¹¹⁶ Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines*, 193.

¹¹⁷ Will Irwin, "the Power of the Press," in *The American Newspaper: A study of Journalism in Its Relation to the Public*, first appeared in *Colliers*, no 46 (January 21, 1911): 18.

¹¹⁸ George Creel, "The Press: The Greatest Power in the Land," *Mentor* vol 9 (June 1, 1921): 4.

¹¹⁹ Committee on Public Information, *Complete Report of the Committee on Public Information: 1917, 1918, 1919* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920): 63.

Thus, to summarise, the public had to be given an official source to look at for information, the *Official Bulletin* was supposed to be a record of government activity, and it should be a beacon for people to write to, so they would not write to every separate division anymore. The Committee used posters to advertise the newspaper, as can be seen in appendix 2. What is important to note is that the newspaper itself is deemed a history, plainly stating the truth via formal and official means.¹²⁰ To achieve the stated objectives, the *Official Bulletin* carried out various tasks, including: printing a record of all soldiers who died or were captured, creating a link between the government's executive branches and their interests, printing and announcing regulations issued by the permanent government divisions, and making sure it was published in every country where the CPI was present, including Italy, to inform the soldiers what was happening at the front.¹²¹

Over the course of its lifespan the *Official Bulletin*, led by its editor, E.S. Rochester, from day one on May 10, 1917, to its final day on April 1, 1919, reached millions of Americans directly and indirectly via its publications. All credit of the founding of this newspaper must be given to Wilson, who deemed it necessary for a daily gazette to achieve the earlier mentioned objectives.¹²² Rochester was a hardened journalist having worked as managing editor of *The Washington Post* and Creel had no trouble convincing him to become the editor of the *Official Bulletin*.¹²³ The picture below shows the official monthly circulation of the *Official Bulletin*. This shows the amount of people who had a subscription, which had a fixed price of five dollars a year, to ensure no competition with other newspapers was present.¹²⁴ However, the newspaper started out as a free listing, but the other newspapers in the United States complained about this so the Committee removed it from the free list. Creel notes that: "there was humor in the fact that when we took the press at its word and cut newspapers from the free list, virtually every Washington correspondent sent in his five dollars to become a paid subscriber."¹²⁵ This shows that despite the press feeling threatened by the newspaper's existence, they were still more than happy to pay for it when they wanted it to no longer be free in the first place.

Despite this newspaper's success in achieving its objectives, which is the case according to the official reports and Creel's statements, the fact the newspaper tried to remain unbiased and merely 'represent the truth' makes it hard to discern Progressivist notions. Rochester

¹²⁰ Ibid. 63-64.

¹²¹ Ibid. 64-65.

¹²² Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 208.

¹²³ Ibid. 208-209.

¹²⁴ Ibid. 67.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 209.

himself has no direct links to any Progressive movements or ideals and since it is a newspaper, the people writing for it are too varied to analyse. However, because this newspaper was publicised in all countries the Committee was active, including Italy, the important remark has to be made that by displaying what they deemed was the truth regarding America's war effort, they were influencing Italian and American public opinion. Having analysed around twenty newspapers, there has been no negative article found in any of them regarding America's progress for the war. After analysing these twenty the outline of the paper became clear and the contents started to repeat itself. Because, the newspaper shows reports, statements from divisions, and provides information to several branches of the government rather than create its own stories.¹²⁶

Thus, because they do not create their own opinionated articles and are merely representing the stances of several government agencies in its newspaper, it was considered a very dull paper.¹²⁷ Furthermore, because there are no opinions stated or stories created in this newspaper, there are no direct notions of American Progressivism presented. Instead, it merely acted as an information newspaper and a record of other governmental actions during World War I. A perhaps coloured source of information, since no negative stories were found whatsoever regarding America and if any negative articles were published they related to the Allies, but a source of information regardless. These stories were also quickly followed up by an advertisement of a Liberty Loan Bond, so the motivations for placing these stories is dubious at best.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Samples of the analysed newspapers, which can all be found at <https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/educate/places/official-bulletin.html> last accessed 24-06-2019. include: (for the exhaustive list, see the list of used primary sources at the end of this thesis)

1. Official Bulletin, Volume 1, issue 1, May 10, 1917.
2. Official Bulletin, Volume 1, issue 6, May 16, 1917.
3. Official Bulletin, Volume 1, issue 49, July 7, 1917.
4. Official Bulletin, Volume 1, Issue 53, July 12, 1917.
5. Official Bulletin, Volume 1, issue 147, October 31, 1917.

¹²⁷ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 209.

¹²⁸ Official Bulletin, Volume 3, issue 502, January 3, 1919.

Monthly circulation.

1917.		1918—Continued.	
Daily average:		Daily average—Continued.	
May.....	60,000	May.....	111,870
June.....	67,000	June.....	113,782
July.....	70,000	July.....	115,639
August.....	77,500	August.....	118,008
September.....	82,000	September.....	113,136
October.....	89,081	October.....	115,031
November.....	90,341	November.....	108,477
December.....	94,912	December.....	97,074
1918.		1919.	
January.....	99,000	January.....	90,269
February.....	102,603	February.....	89,886
March.....	106,233	March.....	33,454
April.....	109,513		

Monthly circulation of newspapers from the *Official Bulletin*. Found in: Committee on Public Information, *Complete Report of the Committee on Public Information: 1917, 1918, 1919* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920): 66.

Furthermore, one of the more prominent divisions within the CPI was its Pictorial Publicity Division, which focussed on the creation of posters. Although in the early days of the Committee this Division was simply known as the media Division and handled all forms of communication with the public through films, posters, telegrams, and sign-boards. However, when Creel realised the potential of the poster was limitless within America, since there were still areas where people could not read and other people who would not go to meetings where the Four Minute Men spoke, he separated the poster division into the Pictorial Publicity Division.¹²⁹ America in the First World War created more posters than any other country involved, despite only starting to mass produce them in 1917, and they were considered the best quality of them all.¹³⁰ Together with the Division of Advertising, the Pictorial Publicity Division created thousands of works of art, such as: posters, cartoons, and paintings. However, it were the posters that were deemed to be the most influential and laid the groundwork for the boom of the advertisement industry in America.¹³¹ A feeling arose following the First World

¹²⁹ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 133.

¹³⁰ 1. *Ibid.* 133-134.

2. See Appendix 3.

¹³¹ Vaugn, *Holding fast the Inner lines*, 141-142.

War that “with proper advertising one could sell anything.”¹³² This feeling originated from the CPI’s Division of Advertising, which managed to influence public opinion and steer them into the direction of buying war bonds. It has to be acknowledged that despite the Division of Advertising did not concern itself with the creation of posters, due to the fact they worked so closely with the Pictorial Publicity Division, their achievements and work has to be considered together.¹³³

The Pictorial Publicity Division was founded on April 22, 1917, the brainchild of a group of artists, called the Vigilantes, which most notably included James Montgomery Flagg, the creator of the iconic ‘I want you for U.S. army’ poster, which is on the front page of this thesis and Charles Gibson. Gibson was the leader of this group and also the leader of the Division, a man most notably known for his creation of the Gibson Girl, a personification of the new woman and a new feminine ideal.¹³⁴ He was a patriot through and through, dedicating his life to the promotion of American beauty and ideals in all his work, which resonated in his division work as well.¹³⁵ The main objective of this division was to influence the minds of the people they would reach and mobilise public opinion. Creel of course believed in the rationality of public opinion and considered the work of this Division merely an alternative way of informing the public.¹³⁶ The main reason for creating the Division was to give a home to the talented artists within the United States, but also to provide the sale of the Liberty Bonds with a necessary boost.¹³⁷

Gibson orchestrated his division by appealing to patriotic fervour, inspiring artists from all over the country to do volunteer work for the Committee. Not only were the artists that signed up for this Division patriotic in nature themselves, and were called upon when deemed necessary to create something, they were artists at heart. The Division and Gibson held dinner parties in New York City where the Division had its headquarters and the artists felt patriotically obliged to come, but they discussed their art works there as well, creating a division of work and leisure, but still all committed to the CPI and its intended goals.¹³⁸ These dinners were the places where young men who just started working in the art business could meet figureheads of

¹³² Ibid. 142.

¹³³ Ibid. 149.

¹³⁴ Library of Congress, “The Gibson Girl’s America: Drawings by Charles Dana Gibson,” *exhibitions* March 30 to August 17, 2013. Accessed at <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gibson-girls-america/> last accessed 20-06-2019.

¹³⁵ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 134-135.

¹³⁶ Vaughn, *Hold fast the Inner Lines*, 149.

¹³⁷ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 134.

¹³⁸ Ibid. 135.

their art community, like Flagg and Gibson, thus it also felt like an honour to work for the Division since it could get you in contact with famous artists.

Due to the leadership of Gibson and his patriotic message, the Division had no shortage of volunteers and, as seen in appendix 3, created over a thousand works of art related to the war effort, orchestrated and supported by the Committee on Public Information. To demonstrate how the Division spread the CPI's message and what the contents of these materials were often about, various posters are analysed. The posters and paintings are analysed according to the Quintuple W regime as outlined in the Methodology chapter.

The first painting this thesis analyses is the ninety feet long and twenty-five feet high painting by Lieutenant Henry Reuterdahl and Newell Convers. Wyeth, which was placed at the Subtreasury building promoting the Third Liberty Loan Act and its bond. The Loan Act was the third liberty bond American citizens could purchase to support the American war effort. It was basically a loan to the American government that would be paid back later with interest.¹³⁹



Lieutenant Henry Reuterdahl and N.C. Wyeth working on their painting, “Get into the fight, buy liberty bonds,” April 1918, photographed by Paul Thomson accessed at: <https://picryl.com/media/artists-artists-paint-to-assist-third-liberty-loan-photo-shows-henry-reuterdahl-2ec741>

Lieutenant Henry Reuterdahl was born in Sweden and was commissioned to work on the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 and decided to stay in the United States.¹⁴⁰ Reuterdahl was drafted into the navy to start fighting on the front against the German submarines and became an officer in the reserve force when his artistic skills were discovered. Together with renowned graphical artist Wyeth, they created two incredibly large paintings for the Third and Fourth Liberty Loan Acts.¹⁴¹ The Division did not require a test to join as an artist and every men or

¹³⁹ United States Department of Treasury, *Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances*, published in 1918, 20-21. Accessed at <https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/title/194/item/5564/toc/421592> last accessed 20-06-2019.

¹⁴⁰ Dumas Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1943), 511-512.

¹⁴¹ I. Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 138.

women willing to join and spread the CPI's message as set out by the bulletin and company policy was able to join. Thus, when the Committee had heard of Reuterdaahl's skill set, who had had no training whatsoever in art, the CPI asked the navy to loan Reuterdaahl to the Division of Pictorial Publicity. This request was granted and Reuterdaahl joined the Division to work on various paintings, including the one shown and appendix five. Eventually becoming known as "America's foremost naval artist."¹⁴²

Wyeth on the other hand was a born and raised artist. Born in Massachusetts in 1882, he went to various art schools, including the Mechanic Arts School in Boston, the Eric Pope School of Art in Boston, and Howard Pyle's new Brandywine School of Art. Howard Pyle was at that time one of the most successful illustrators at the time and only accepted twenty students a year, of which Wyeth was one.¹⁴³ Learning from the best he inevitably came into contact with the Committee and was persuaded by Gibson to join the Division of Pictorial Publicity as a volunteer.

The reason for the creation of this specific painting is the advertisement of the launch of the Third Liberty Loan Act and its associating bond to the public. It was created in front of the pediment of the subtreasury building in New York, somewhere around April 1918. The reason for creating it was to try and persuade the public to buy more bonds to help support the overseas troops. The way this painting tries to convey this message seems straightforward. It shows American troops on the left, the American eagle in the middle, which is a nod to American nationalism and patriotism, one of the main features in the work of the Pictorial Publicity Division, and the working labour force on the right. By showing these three images, with the text, "get into the fight, buy liberty bonds," below the painting the artists tried to convey the message that if you are not over there fighting, you can still play a part in the war by doing your job and helping the war effort by buying these bonds.

Nevertheless, notions of Progressivism in this work can only be discerned by extrapolating values from what is shown. Showing soldiers fighting against countries opposed to the democratic and ideas of freedom, as outlined by Wilson's declaration of war speech, can be interpreted as an attempt to promote Progressivist ideals. However, this is reaching, since there is no clear Progressivist notion directly visible. Nevertheless, combined with the

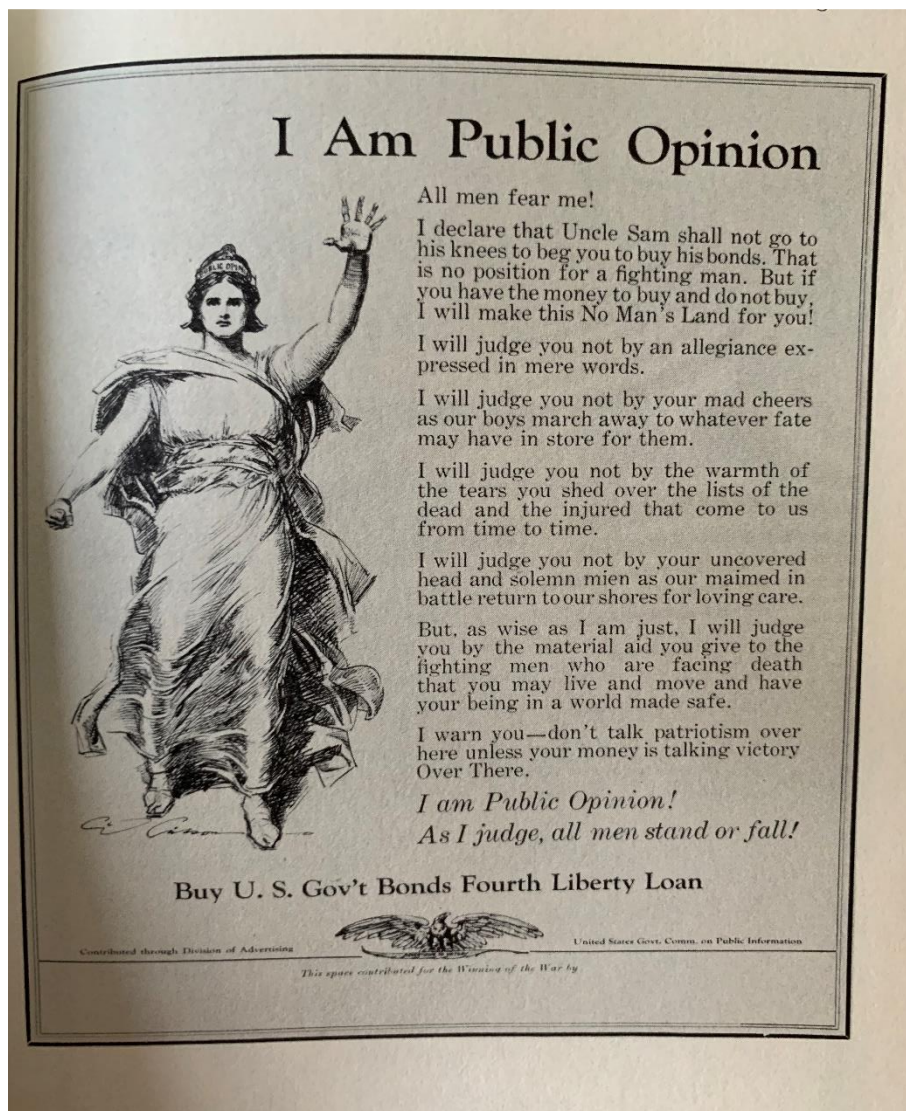
2. See appendix 4 for the Painting for the Fourth Liberty Loan Act.

¹⁴² Sammy R. Dana, *Advertising and Popular Culture, Studies in Variety and Versatility* (Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1992): 45.

¹⁴³ Artsedge, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, "N.C. Wyeth, A Short Biography, accessed in archived form at: https://web.archive.org/web/20070210110823/http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2154/2154_illustrationwyeth_ncwyethbio.pdf from the original dating from February 10, 2007. Last accessed 20-06-2019.

forementioned notions of economic individualism, as already analysed and also shown in the Four Minute Men speech, certain links to Progressivism are still present, but in order to really classify this as being a work to promote Progressivism, there is not enough to go on to make an absolute statement.

Another example of a poster created by the two Divisions is the “I am Public Opinion Poster, as seen below.



Uncredited artist, with an unrecognisable autograph at the woman's feet, working for the Pictorial Publicity Division under orders by the Division of Advertising, “I am Public Opinion,” after July 2018. Found in: Vaughn, *Holding fast the Inner Lines*, 169.

This poster is created by one of the, uncredited, artists working for the Pictorial Publicity Division, but created the poster itself for the Division of Advertisement, which is why it is important, as aforementioned, to not separate these two Divisions in an analysis. It was created with the intent similar to the large painting by Reuterdaahl and Wyeth, to persuade the public to purchase war bonds, in this case the Fourth Liberty Loan Bond. However, the means of

achieving this goal vary between the two works. Whereas the large painting focussed on the patriotic duty of the United States citizens to give money, this poster focusses on inspiration through fear. Stating it will make this country a ‘No Man’s Land,’ which is a throwback to the older times in American history where the country was considered a no man’s land, inhospitable and uncivilised. It attempts to ‘force’ the people into action rather than using their words, even going as far as saying you should not consider yourself patriotic if you are not helping the war effort by buying these bonds. This poster thus therefore also focusses on appealing to the patriotic side of its recipients, which is a recurring image in Gibson’s Division.

It has to be noted that an organisation as the Committee on Public Information, which had influencing and swaying public opinion as one of its main objectives, creating a poster titled, “I am Public Opinion,” is ironic at best. Irony in the sense that this poster states that public opinion can judge you and all men stand or fall if public opinion does not deem them worthy, when the entire reason the Committee exists in the first place was to control and influence public opinion. This creates another link to the Committee’s work in the United States of influencing public opinion through the use of Public Diplomacy or Propaganda. The link being that the Committee tried to influence the opinion of as many people as possible so that those people would feel compelled to influence each other.¹⁴⁴

However, in terms of Progressivist notions recognisable within this poster, aside from the economic individualism and the notion that you are supporting your country, which fights for freedom and democracy, when buying the bonds, there is nothing else present. This might be due to the fact these posters were created for advertisement, but the main reason, which can be discerned when looking at this is that Gibson who was the main orchestrator of the contents of these posters was a devout patriot. Patriotism in its early stages was a part of Progressivism, as outlined in the first chapter, however, in general terms the truly nationalistic form of patriotism collides with Progressivist notions on several occasions. Namely, that Progressivism in its domestic form, used in this thesis, has liberal tendencies integrated in its core. The notion of women rights and the rights of immigrants were woven within the Progressivist message in this period of history, which shifted its patriotic sense to the background at the time, since patriots were highly conservative and not open to the same amount of reform as Progressivists were.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy, 1-2.

¹⁴⁵ Peter Dreier and Dick Flacks, “Patriotism and Progressivism,” *Peace Review, a Journal of Social Justice* Volume 15, no. 4. (December 2003): 401.

Furthermore, the Division of Advertising did not only create, although it was one of its main objectives, materials for the sale of liberty bonds. The poster below, “he must not overstay his leave!” is an example of another part of the war effort the Division created posters for.



He Must Not Overstay His Leave!

Save trouble for him by keeping your eye on the clock

YOU loving wives and sweethearts! You fond parents and devoted friends! We know just how you feel when *HIS* leave is almost up, and it is about time for him to start back to camp.

A few minutes more means so much to you—and seems to mean so little to Uncle Sam.

Surely, you think, there is no great harm if one soldier is a few minutes, or even hours, late, getting back. How could an innocent and well-meaning soldier be punished for so trifling a transgression?

But such thoughts do *HIM* and Uncle Sam—and yourself as well—more harm than you can possibly realize.

An army must be run by the clock!

When you stop to think that the army is made up of millions of individuals, each with his own little circle of friends and acquaintances, just like your soldier boy, you can see how vitally important it is for every man to be in the appointed place at the appointed time.

The slightest laxity of discipline here means hope-

less confusion. Without absolute regularity, uniformity, orderliness, an army would be helpless. That is why all breaches of discipline are punished severely.

And since **ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE** is one of the most dangerous offences of all, it is one of the **MOST SEVERELY PUNISHED**.

The regrettable part about this is, that the soldier's friends are nearly always more to blame than he is.

Nine times out of ten the soldier overstays his leave because his loving friends cling to him—tempt him—encourage his tardiness.

HE has to pay for *YOUR* unwise kindness—*YOUR* thoughtless hospitality. He has to pay for his own politeness in accepting the attentions you thrust upon him through your love and patriotism *improperly directed*.

For his sake, for Uncle Sam's sake, and to help lick the Kaiser, ask him when his leave expires—“send him away with a smile” **BEFORE HIS TIME IS UP.**

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION, 8 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.
GRAND CHIEF, Chairman
 THE SECRETARY OF STATE
 Contributed through Division of Advertising

THE SECRETARY OF WAR
 THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
 U. S. GOV.'S COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

This space contributes for the Winning of the War by

Arthur William Brown working for the Pictorial Publicity Division under orders by the Division of Advertising, “He Must Not Overstay His Leave, unknown date. Found in: Vaughn, *Holding fast the Inner Lines*, 177.

Arthur William Brown was a Canadian artist born in 1881 who dropped out of school. After saving up enough money he enrolled at the Art Student's League, where he was introduced to a journalist working for the *Hamilton Spectator*, this newspaper liked his drawings and gave him a job where he created many illustrations for the stories published in the newspaper. However, when the First World War had begun, and America had joined, Gibson sought him out and convinced him to join the Vigilantes and by extension the Division of Pictorial Publicity. Despite not ticking the patriotic American box, since he was Canadian, the prospect of being able to work with so many talented artists convinced Brown to join regardless. This

shows that despite Gibson appealing to the patriotic side of his artists, also recruited artists of talent who did not share his views of America.¹⁴⁶

Instead of appealing to patriotism and trying to influence the public to purchase the war bonds, this poster, which is also published by the Division of Advertising but created by the Division of Pictorial Publicity, focusses on something else entirely. This poster emphasises the role of the family or friends of the soldiers or other military personnel, thus also who it is aimed at, and is trying to influence the way they act around their loved ones being back home on leave.

The only example found that has some connotations of Progressivism embedded in it is the poster below, “This is Kultur.”



This is Kultur

THERE is no sharper contrast between German Kultur and the civilization that our forefathers died for, than the difference in the attitude of the two civilizations towards women and children.

Kultur in Belgium, and other devastated countries, is a tale so terrible that never yet has one dared more than whisper fragments of it. Yet the wrongs of Belgium, as a State outraged, pile beside the wrongs inflicted in savage, bestial revenge upon its defenceless women and children.

Such a civilization is not fit to live. And, God willing, it shall be mended or ended. To this task America summons every loyal heart and hand. It is a Crusade, not merely to re-win the tomb of Christ, but to bring back to earth the rule of right, the peace, good will to men and gentleness He taught.

To carry on this crusade of modern righteousness means not merely that our young men shall cross the seas to fight the Hun. It means that we at home shall uphold them. It means that we shall back them with all things spiritual and material. It means that we shall lend, not merely from our plenty, but that we shall save and serve. It means that we shall give up many things that are dear to us; sacrifice, that our Crusaders may save us and our children from the horrors that have come to the little ones of Belgium and of France.

BUY U. S. GOVERNMENT BONDS FOURTH LIBERTY LOAN

Contributed through Division of Advertising United States Govt. Comm. on Public Information

This space contributed for the Winning of the War by

George Bellows, working for the Division of Advertising, whilst under orders by the Division Pictorial Publicity, “This is Kultur,” unknown date, found in Vaugn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines*, 165.

¹⁴⁶ 1. American Art Archive, “Arthur William Brown / A W Brown,” accessed at <http://americanartarchives.com/brown,aw.htm> last accessed 21-06-2019.

2. Hamilton Public Library, “Arthur William Brown (1881-1966),” accessed the archived version at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20140911014136/http://www.hpl.ca/articles/arthur-william-brown-1881-1966> last accessed 21-06-2019.

This material is a lithograph with an accompanying story created by George Bellows. Bellows was born on August 19, 1882 and wanted to be an athlete when he grew up.¹⁴⁷ He was also highly talented as an artist and was often asked in primary school to paint the classroom blackboards. However, he eventually grew tired of baseball and focussed all his efforts on art instead. He dropped out of school just before he graduated and moved to New York, the city where the Division of Pictorial Publicity was located, to study art.¹⁴⁸ He quickly came into contact with Gibson who recruited him for his Division. Bellows is considered to be ‘the most acclaimed artist of his generation.’¹⁴⁹ Bellows was also a fervent supporter of American intervention in World War I, thus Gibson did not need to try his hardest to convince him to join the cause.¹⁵⁰

The reason this specific poster was chosen over the other countless examples shown in literature or on the Hoover Institution website is because this specific poster, created to also advertise the Fourth Liberty Loan Bond, is the only example found that has a clear Progressivist tint to it. The poster, aimed at the citizens of the United States to persuade them to buy the bonds, as others mentioned before did as well, goes into detail about civilisation and how American civilisation is superior. Comparing the war to a crusade in order to restore “modern righteousness.” This specific example demonstrates the superiority of the American ideals and beliefs compared to Germany by demonstrating the horrors the Germans committed, which Bellows was well known for.¹⁵¹ The Progressivist ideals of progress and the Wilsonian notions of spreading democracy and freedom can be discerned in the global point of view within this poster. By contrasting the German ‘Kultur’ and ‘modern civilisation’ the message that America’s ideals and views are good are spread into the domestic sphere.

However, the fact that this poster shows signs of Progressivist notions seems to be a rare occurrence. In all the encountered domestic materials created by the Committee, this specific poster was an exception amongst all the others found within the Hoover Institution database, primary sources, and literature. This thesis only mentions four posters and one painting, despite the domestic materials being well preserved in literature and on the Hoover

¹⁴⁷ Gale Research Inc, *Encyclopedia of World Biography* (Detroit: Gale Publishers, 1998), accessed at <https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/american-art-biographies/george-wesley-bellows> last accessed 21-06-2019.

¹⁴⁸ 1. Ibid.

2. Hiller Schwarz, “The boy who chose the brush over baseball,” in *Smithsonian* volume 23, no n3 (June 1992): 58.

¹⁴⁹ Gale Research Inc, *Encyclopedia of World biography*.

¹⁵⁰ Jane Myers and Linda Ayres, *George Bellows, The Artist and his Lithographs 1916-1924* (Texas: Amon Carter Museum, 1988): 62.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 64.

Institution website, because what is seen on the posters might differ, the overall themes are the same in all that were found. These themes being the advertisement of Liberty Loan Bonds and showing the people at home what they could do to help with the war effort.

The Official Bulletin, however, contained several of these posters and was more of a newspaper agency, which accumulated and showed the outcome of the other Divisions rather than have an opinion of its own, thus stating this newspaper has Progressivist tendencies would be the same as stating the other Divisions were influenced by Progressivism, which is not inherently true. This is due to the patriotic way of leadership by Gibson for the Division of Pictorial Publicity, but also seemingly due to the fact that Progressivist notions were supposedly already a part of the American society. There was no need for the Committee to try and persuade the public that the American way of life with its democracy, freedom, and capitalism was a good thing, since society already broadly agreed with that. Only the Four Minute Men Division carried Progressivist notions in its message. However, due to the fact these were volunteers speaking who could make up their own stories if they so chose to, with very little oversight as well, it is difficult to assess whether or not this Division can be seen as a spreader of Progressivism. Nevertheless, the founder of the Division who was responsible for the example speeches showed clear signs of Progressivism in his examples. However, the Progressivist notions embedded within his speech also were only present to influence public opinion in favour of buying Liberty Loan Bonds. Thus, whether or not this can be seen as an inherent Progressivist message with the intent of spreading the message that capitalism and democracy are good is still up for debate.

Instead, the Committee in the United States focussed on other topics. Rather than attempting to influence the hearts and minds of its citizens in favour of Progressivist ideals, which was unnecessary, it focussed on promoting the war effort. By using, for instance, the Division of Film, which also used posters created by the Division of Pictorial Publicity, the Division of Advertising, the Four Minute Men, and the Official Bulletin. The focus of the domestic chapter of the Committee appears to have been more concentrated on improving the opinion of the war in the public and inspire the people who stayed at home to contribute in one way or another rather than spread Progressive and Wilsonian ideas.¹⁵²

¹⁵² Several other posters and materials that indicate this statement of 'overall theme is the same':

1. The War Review, a series of films produced by the Division of Film in collaboration with other allied countries, which showed how the war went on, but only focussed on the victories or massacres of the Germans, examples include: <https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/37285/allies-official-war-review--italy-flings-back-the-foe-?ctx=f68ba55f-c984-406c-85ab-d5341c3caad7&idx=8> last accessed 21-06-2019.
<https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/37317/official-war-review-the-red-cross-at-their-work-of-mercy-in?ctx=c92dd462-677c-4011-93ae-8cc488ae9f68&idx=34> last accessed 21-06-2019.

3.0 The CPI in Italy

3.1 Establishing an office in Italy

At first glance, Italy appeared to offer the aspiring American propagandist many advantages over Switzerland. First, unlike the annoyingly neutral Swiss, the Italians were full-fledged Allies eager for American help. Second, the letters and visits of Italian immigrants in the United States had created a warm feeling toward America in the old country, making the CPI's task that much easier. The American Red Cross and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) had earned additional respect for the U.S. by providing much needed aid for Italian soldiers and civilians.¹⁵³

Now that the domestic methods of the CPI have been discussed, this thesis moves on to analyse the Italian situation and provide a comparative analysis. This chapter focusses on the start of the Italian chapter in the CPI, the reason for establishing an office in the first place, the various institutions used by the CPI to promote its message, the person in charge of the office in Rome and their background, and offers a case-by-case analysis following the Quintuple W regime of several instances of propaganda. As the introduction to this chapter indicates, the CPI's task was deemed much easier than in, for example, Switzerland. However, there were still problems the Committee had to deal with, which is something this chapter focusses on as well.

First of all, the history of the CPI's office in Italy has to be discussed. It was not until April 1918 that the Committee on Public Information established their own office in Italy in Rome.¹⁵⁴ This means that the office was only active during the war period for seven months, until November 1918. Nevertheless, the office stayed open until the CPI was closed and its tasks handed over to the Council of National Defence on August 21, 1919 following Executive Order 3154.¹⁵⁵ However, after the war ended, the CPI was stripped off most of its funds: as mentioned, the domestic branches closed immediately. Thus, the impact it had post November

<https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/37300/official-war-review-the-brothers-in-arms-move-forward-ital?ctx=00fd87d9-61fa-4353-8a62-559681f2b587&idx=19> last accessed 21-06-2019.

<https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/34239/dont-enlist-without-thinking-find-out-where-you-fit-then?ctx=b02453a5-ae3f-473a-8191-bc16766174a1&idx=42> last accessed 21-06-2019.

2. Some other posters created by the Division of Pictorial Publicity, not analysed within the thesis since the theme is the same in all of the ones encountered. There are more of these available at the Hoover Institution, but the message is the same in all of them, namely to buy bonds.

See appendix 5-7.

¹⁵³ Wolper, "The Origins of Public Diplomacy, 74.

¹⁵⁴ Rossini, "Italy: An Object of Demonstration in Wilson's Foreign Policy," 230.

¹⁵⁵ Wikisource, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Executive_Order_3154 last edited February 16, 2010. Last accessed 31-05-2019.

1918 was extremely limited.¹⁵⁶ Instead of continuing their propaganda effort, in the period between November 1918 and August 21, 1919, the Committee relied on several institutions instead. These institutions are also analysed in this chapter. The CPI itself only kept its records open and responded to queries rather than create more materials.¹⁵⁷ To illustrate the methods the CPI used in Italy, within its seven-month period, it is paramount to understand the background of the man in charge there for the seven months the CPI was most active, Charles Merriam.

Merriam was born in Iowa on November 15, 1874, in a family that could trace its lineage all the way back to Scottish immigrants.¹⁵⁸ He obtained his master's degree in 1897 and Ph.D. in 1900 from Columbia University, after which he joined the University of Chicago as the first member of its Political Science Faculty. Merriam already tried to influence politics early on by having another Progressive reformer, Seth Low, elected as New York mayor, but this effort failed. However, he quickly rose through the academics ranks and became a professor in 1911, having created a large academic network that made him renowned as a political science scholar.¹⁵⁹ He wrote *A history of American Political Theories* in 1903, a work that strongly supported the Progressivist movement at the time.¹⁶⁰ In this book, he notes, for example: "There ought to be a transformation of government from its present unscientific and un-progressive methods."¹⁶¹ This notion perfectly lines up with later Progressive thoughts and ideals that were present in American politics when Woodrow Wilson became President of the United States.

Not to mention that George Creel was, as aforementioned, also a fervent supporter of the Progressive ideals, which made Merriam an excellent candidate to field an office in Europe. Creel explicitly stated that "we did not want a commissioner who had the European point of view or fancied himself a diplomat, but we wanted an American who thought regularly and enthusiastically in terms of America."¹⁶² This last quote is indicative of the intentions of the Americans, they did not come to Italy to work alongside the government, but to influence the hearts and minds of its population by sending Progressive thinking Americans, rather than qualified diplomats. This did cause some tensions between the embassy and the Committee, which are explained further on in this chapter.

¹⁵⁶ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 427.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 296-297.

¹⁵⁸ Patrick D. Reagan, *Designing a New America, The origins of the New Deal Planning 1890-1943* (USA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999): 3.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁶⁰ Richard Wightman Fox & James T. Kloppenberg, *A Companion to American Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995): 448.

¹⁶¹ Charles E. Merriam, *A history of American Political Theories* (New York: Macmillan, 1903): 329-330.

¹⁶² Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 291.

The reasons for establishing an office within Italy were varied. When the time came that the American involvement in World War One reached its peak, it was deemed instrumental to establish various offices in Europe to promote American ideals for when the war was over. Especially since President Wilson considered the CPI to be a main instrument in his Public Diplomacy campaign and therefore saw fit to deploy the CPI where he considered it necessary.¹⁶³ Wilson's main reason for this was to sway public opinion in the countries towards his own Wilsonian ideals of democracy, capitalism, and freedom.¹⁶⁴ As Mazower argues, the world's international relations playing field at this time was a battle of ideals and Wilson utilised the Committee as his primary weapon in this war.¹⁶⁵

However, this was not the only reason to establish an office since in Italy the situation was nowhere near a peaceful conclusion at the time. Already in November 1917 following the Italians defeat at Caporetto, a part of the Isonzo river front, considerations were made about potentially establishing an office in Italy.¹⁶⁶ Austria-Hungary at that time were in desperate need for reinforcements since the Italians were doing well in the war. The progress was slow, and casualties were high, but they were winning their battles.

However, when the Russian front collapsed in late 1917, it gave the Central Powers the opportunity to move their eastern front troops to the Isonzo front. The newly arrived reinforcements from the eastern front, combined with troops from the Trentino front and some from Flanders, managed to break through and completely route the 2nd Italian army on October 24, 1917.¹⁶⁷ They used newly formed shock troopers and tactics orchestrated by German generals. The main objective of these troops was to use light machine guns to rush past enemy fortifications, leaving them to be taken by the slower main force, and assault troops in the open.¹⁶⁸ This battle is known as the battle of Caporetto or the Twelfth battle of the Isonzo. Following this defeat the entire Italian army at the Isonzo front broke and they were forced to fall back all the way to the Tagliamento and Piave river, meaning that the Central Powers forces managed to progress a hundred fifty kilometres in just four days.¹⁶⁹ They were only a day's march away from Venice at this time.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶³ Wolper, "The Origins of Public Diplomacy, 15.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 15-16, 364.

¹⁶⁵ Mazower, *Governing the World*, 154.

¹⁶⁶ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 299-300.

¹⁶⁷ Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, 1-2.

¹⁶⁸ Spencer Tucker, *Battles that changed History: An Encyclopedia of World Conflict* (California: ABC- CLIO, LLC, 2011): 430.

¹⁶⁹ See appendix 9, for a map that provides an overview of the progress of the Isonzo front war.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 430-432.

The outcome of this battle had disastrous consequences for the Italians. Not only was the long stalemate, that was the Isonzo front, broken in Austrian-Hungarian favour, were ten thousand soldiers dead, thirty thousand wounded, and two hundred fifty-six thousand made prisoner, more importantly, the morale of the defending armies now in charge of holding the front was at its lowest ever. Scholars have written volumes surrounding the Isonzo battles, but they all agree on one thing, this loss was one of the worst military defeats in Italian history. It was ‘the greatest defeat in military history,’ ‘Twelfth Isonzo and its aftermath represented an unprecedented catastrophe for Italian arms,’ and even years later the term Caporetto was still used in Italian discourse as a notion of a terrible defeat.¹⁷¹ This situation in which Italian morale was at an all time low was considered one of the main motivations, if not the strongest motivation, to establish an office in Rome.¹⁷² The President feared that if Italy would lose even more ground and men, that Italy would collapse and fall back into their governments ideals which opposed his own. It was only when the office was established, and its work started on boosting Italian morale, by showing America was going to get involved, that its message started to diversify and incorporate the message of showing America’s ideals.

Thus, the reasons for establishing an office in Italy were two-fold. First, the Italian government was seen as antithetical and opposed to American beliefs. When the Italian army routed following their defeat at Caporetto and its morale was shattered, the United States feared that the government of Italy would flip sides again, as they had done when they joined the war in the first place. This would create another hostile state in the Mediterranean and went against Wilson’s ideals for a peaceful international playing field. The second reason was Wilson’s ideals themselves and his use of the Committee as a weapon to spread his Wilsonian ideals to foreign governments.

¹⁷¹ 1. Brian Sullivan, “Caporetto: Causes, recovery, and consequences,” in: *The Aftermath of Defeat: Societies, Armed Forces, and the Challenge of Recovery*, ed. George J. Andreopoulos and Harold E. Selesky (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1994), 60.

2. John R. Schindler, *Isonzo, The Forgotten Sacrifice of the Great War* (London: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 263.

3. Ernst Nolte, *The Three Faces of Fascism* (New York: Mentor Books, 1969), 274.

¹⁷² Merriam, “American Publicity In Italy,” 542.

3.2 CPI Methods in Italy

The Committee distributed 4,500,500 post-cards bearing American war pictures; American flag bow-pins, Italo-American ribbons and buttons, 154,854; President Wilson posters, 68,574; assorted American war posters, 66,640; American flags in paper, 200,000; American flags in cloth, 30; sheet music, "The Star-spangled Banner," 33,300; booklets containing extracts from President Wilson's speeches, 326,650; pamphlets containing American war statistics and other information, 364,235; United States maps, 200; President Wilson photographs, 500; President Wilson engravings, 35.

Reprints from American photographic displays were exhibited in three thousand Italian towns and cities. In some form or other American educational information was disseminated through sixteen thousand towns and cities of Italy by this department alone.¹⁷³

Considering the short-lived existence of the CPI's actual presence on the Italian mainland, the time it was personally involved with the spread of its propaganda within Italy was also limited. Despite this short period of time, as can be seen in the estimate of published materials in Italy according to Creel at the start of this subchapter, there was still a large amount of materials created and published. However, out of these supposed numbers almost nothing remains to analyse in this thesis. Not to mention the fact many of these thousands of propaganda materials were copies or translated works from the domestic Divisions. Meaning that the amount of material, which can be analysed in this chapter, is small in comparison to the domestic chapter. However, the Committee did not only use the mentioned materials, it used institutions as well.

Before the Committee had established an office, it used other institutions such as the Young Men's Christian Association, better known as the Y.M.C.A. and the American Red Cross, ARC, to influence the public opinion in Italy in its stead. This chapter focusses on the various ways the CPI itself influenced the public opinion during their time in Italy, but also highlights how the CPI enlisted other institutions to do the work for them, to demonstrate how

¹⁷³ Creel, *How we advertised America*, 301-302.

Wilson utilised the Committee as a weapon to influence public opinion towards his own ideals. This is done on a case-by-case basis looking at primary source material that shows the various materials and methods used. These materials are analysed in a similar fashion as the domestic materials have been dealt with, following the Quintuple W regime.

Due to the shorter amount of time and lower amount of resources available as its domestic variant, the Committee had less options available to it to carry out their work. However, Merriam was well suited to his task and improvised continuously to come up with new ways of showing America's progress to the Italian citizens. However, there were various difficulties Merriam had to overcome, such as the presence of German and Austrian-Hungarian propaganda and as the difficult relationship between him and Ambassador Thomas Nelson Page.

The difficulties that arose within Italy haunted the Committee for its existence there and are vital to understand, since it shaped the way the propaganda efforts were set up and carried out. There were three main problems the Committee had to deal with, the Italian political parties that were anti-war and its supporters in Italy, the relationship between the United States ambassador and Merriam, and the enemy propaganda efforts on the frontlines. This thesis deals with the first two of these problems, since the third one is less documented and in truth less important. The enemy propaganda efforts alongside the Isonzo front were effective to break Italian morale, but as soon as the Committee started distributing its own message, the effects of enemy propaganda were deemed negligible.¹⁷⁴

The government of Italy, as previously described, was deemed antithetical to American ideals and beliefs. This difference in system created an uneasy foreign relation setting for the Committee to operate in. This was due to the conservative government of Italy that was not very keen on entering the war in the first place and the Socialists who, when Italy had entered the war, continued to hamper the Committee's efforts. Merriam considered the official Socialist party to be the most tenacious opposition to the war.¹⁷⁵ The unofficial leader of the government was Giovanni Giolitti, who had been Prime Minister four times before this, and who was said to control two thirds of parliament, despite not being the Prime Minister anymore. Giolitti was also extremely opposed to the war, which made any efforts the Committee made to reach out to the Italian parliament almost guaranteed to fail.¹⁷⁶ Merriam noted that Giolitti was winning support from Socialist in the rural areas who were upset with the war effort. No other country

¹⁷⁴ Creel, *How we advertised America*, 299-300.

¹⁷⁵ Merriam, "American Publicity In Italy," 552.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 552-553.

was suffering as much as Italy did economically during the First World War according to Merriam. Due to the lack of coal, steel, and oil, Italy was inherently weaker positioned than its enemies. Combined with the fact its export was nearly halted due to a lack of production facilities, shipping facilities, and of course a lack of trading partners, the Italian economy was on the verge of collapse. Thus, the rural population that was suffering cried out for reforms and a stop to the war that was costing them their livelihoods.¹⁷⁷ The only way to motivate Italy enough to keep fighting, and not disintegrate as Russia had done, was by spreading the news of war preparations and purposes of the United States. Before this, the general Italian public was largely uninformed about these topics.

However, the Italian government, which was put together as a coalition just for the war, and its parliament controlled by Giolitti kept insisting on making peace rather than continuing the war. Merriam tried to persuade the members of the Socialist party by organising meetings in anti-war strongholds such as Milan and Bologna. In these meetings the motivations of the United States for joining the war, the intended aftermath according to President Wilson's ideals, and the workings of the Committee were discussed. It is noted, however, that none of the Socialist leaders could have been said to change their minds following these meetings, but the followers were highly impressed by the American effort.¹⁷⁸

The second main problem is a continuation of the international relations problems between the United States and Italy, the relationship Merriam had with the ambassador Thomas Nelson Page. However, the relationship started off promising. Page was a supporter of the CPI's work and viewed propaganda as a necessary tool to influence public opinion.¹⁷⁹ He already had coordinated efforts to do just this via the American Red Cross and YMCA. However, on March 11, 1918 Creel wrote a letter to Ambassador Page informing him of Merriam's arrival.¹⁸⁰ Page was unpleasantly surprised since he figured due to his propaganda efforts out of the embassy he would be in charge of this endeavour.¹⁸¹ Creel feared that there were going to be rivalries as was also the case in Switzerland, Russia, and Spain between CPI representatives and diplomats. In the same letter he mentioned that Page was doing "splendid work" and that Merriam was there to "ensure the correct allocation of resources."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. 553.

¹⁷⁸ 1. Ibid. 552-553.

2. Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, 7-8.

¹⁷⁹ Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, 80.

¹⁸⁰ George Creel letter to Thomas Nelson Page, March 11, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

¹⁸¹ Wolper, "The Origins of Public Diplomacy, 77-78.

¹⁸² George Creel letter to Thomas Nelson Page, March 11, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

At first it seemed this had worked, Merriam wrote back to Creel four days after arriving in Rome that “the Ambassador is very much interested in the work, and is very cordial in his attitude.”¹⁸³ However, this did not last. At the end of September Merriam and Page barely spoke to each other. This was due to an incident with another diplomat and, Hugh Gibson who came from Paris to help outline the CPI campaign for Italy, Merriam’s reaction to him.¹⁸⁴ Creel had failed to properly inform Merriam of Gibson’s intentions and the conflict escalated. Merriam wrote to Irwin, the head of the foreign Division, that “He spent three weeks here knocking our work and hindering progress.” Merriam also called Gibson a “crooked man” and “if he is a diplomat, God help Diplomacy.”¹⁸⁵ This was all an overreaction since Merriam thought Gibson was taking the credit for the Committee’s work and was turning personnel in Paris against him.¹⁸⁶ However, Gibson’s messages stated it was a cooperative effort and he praised all staff including Merriam who Gibson considered to be “Capable of good work and has a devoted group helping him.”¹⁸⁷

Following this outburst, the relationship between Merriam and Page started to decline even further. Merriam continued to worsen his relationship with the embassy by providing detailed reports on Italian political and military affairs, of which embassy personnel was not too keen since it included harsh critiques.¹⁸⁸ This came to a heated discussion in the end of June when Page informed Merriam that all CPI telegrams had to be read and approved by him. This was due to the fact Page was in the process of creating reports for the State Department, but Merriam had already done it for him. The heated discussion that followed was documented by Merriam in his report and went as follows, according to Merriam, “stated that my instructions specifically require me to report on Italian public opinion as that affects the entire propaganda campaign, to which Ambassador Page retorted that, “Irwin and Creel were not the government.”¹⁸⁹ This debate was supposedly solved over a lunch and dinner, but at the heart of this discussion lays the resentment between a newly created propaganda agency and the already well established diplomatic service. Despite Merriam stating that “nothing will come of this,” it influenced the remainder of the time Merriam was the head of the Italian office.¹⁹⁰ He never relied on the embassy to help the Committee with its work and thus employed various other

¹⁸³ Charles Merriam letter to George Creel, April 15, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

¹⁸⁴ Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy,” 80.

¹⁸⁵ Charles Merriam letter to George Creel, June 26, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

¹⁸⁶ Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy,” 83.

¹⁸⁷ Charles Gibson letter to Philip H. Patchin (secretary of Will Irwin), May 16, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

¹⁸⁸ Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy,” 89.

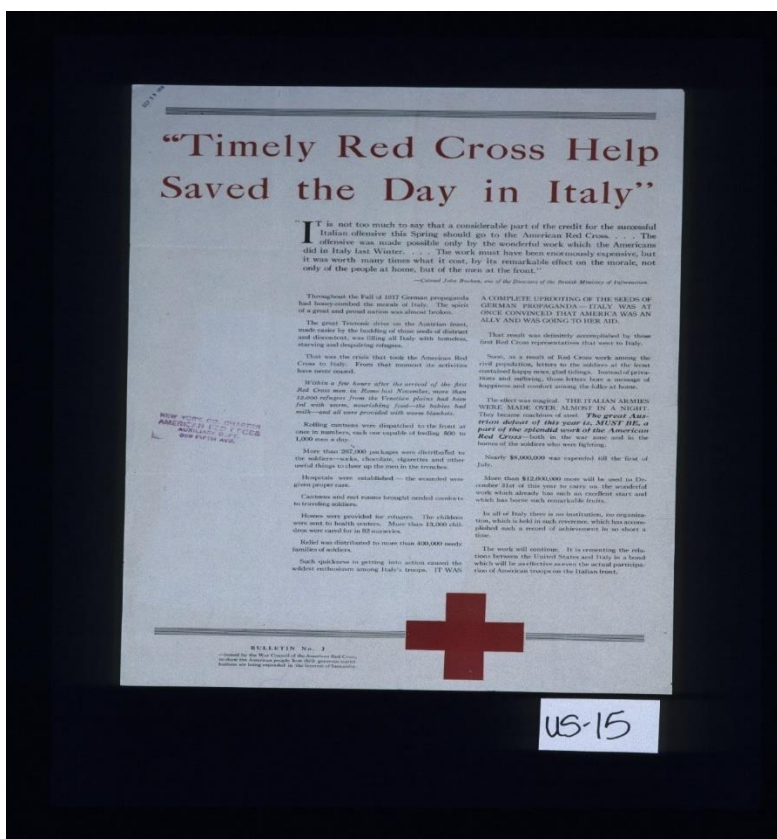
¹⁸⁹ Charles Merriam report to George Creel, July 2, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

¹⁹⁰ 1. Ibid.

2. Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy,” 91.

institutions and methods to win the war, which is what Merriam stated was ultimately the goal.¹⁹¹

The first American propaganda effort in Italy that this chapter discusses is the American Red Cross relief effort in Italy from November 1917 onwards. The American Red Cross and the CPI were already intrinsically linked before the Committee established an office in Italy. As can be seen in appendix 1, the Red Cross was often mentioned in Four Minute Men speeches. Merriam does state that the Red Cross, under leadership of Colonel Perkins, was not intended for propaganda purposes. However, as can be seen below, this was a side effect of their involvement regardless.



American Red Cross, issued by the war council of the American Red Cross, Bulletin 2. Accessed at <https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/33553/timely-red-cross-help-saved-the-day-in-span-classqueryhl?ctx=5d8f855e-65ab-425f-a6d5-98524bb8d0dc&idx=3> last accessed 15-06-2019.

This is the second bulletin published by the American Red Cross to “show the American People how their generous contributions are being expended in the interest of humanity.”¹⁹² Of course the Red Cross never intended to further the propaganda messages of the CPI when they got

¹⁹¹ Charles Merriam letter to George Creel, June 26, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

¹⁹² Bottom left of the Bulletin.

involved with the Committee and used their money to go overseas and help.¹⁹³ However, their contributions provided the recipients of Red Cross help with favourable feelings towards America who came to their aid. It was a public relations campaign for the Committee to aid the American Red Cross organisation.¹⁹⁴ This notion of being used for propaganda purposes was criticised by several members of the organisation, one of who stated that it seemed “they were more here for propaganda than ambulance work.”¹⁹⁵ The American Red Cross is seen as a vehicle for carrying American ideas, diplomatic and social, into Italy.¹⁹⁶

Furthermore, the American Red Cross itself was a non-government organisation, NGO, which funded itself completely through private donations. This unique status the ARC held gave it a better position to influence public opinion, because the Italian government could not state this was blatant propaganda and an attempt to persuade the public opinion, since all the American Red Cross was doing was aiding the injured soldiers.¹⁹⁷ A contemporary, Charles Bakewell, noted in a book in 1920 that details the story of the American Red Cross in Italy that the notion of aiding the wounded and providing material aid was not the way they helped win the war. Instead, it was through these actions of providing aid that the ARC managed to “put into deeds the soul of America, in making it plain to the Italians that we were there to work as brothers filled with a common enthusiasm and inspired by common ideals.”¹⁹⁸

The ARC carried out countless relief efforts, as seen in appendix 8, all of which would influence the public opinion of the United States. The ARC never intended to be the tool of a propaganda machine as the Committee on Public Information, however, by simply doing their job and carrying out relief work they managed to successfully instil Progressive ideas and values in the hearts and minds of all they helped.¹⁹⁹ By building an infrastructure that spanned the Italian countryside, the ARC managed to connect the governmental and private spheres of Italy. As the head of the American Red Cross Department of Public Information stated: “the Commission to Italy "symbolized the fraternity of Italy and America, the alliance in a holy cause, the pledge to stand side by side through the trial of war until victory crowned the efforts

¹⁹³ Julia F. Irwin, "Nation Building and Rebuilding: The American Red Cross In Italy During the Great War," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 8:3 (2009): 408.

¹⁹⁴ Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, preface VIII.

¹⁹⁵ John Dos Passos, *Diary*, Jan. 1, 1918, in *The Fourteenth Chronicle: Letters and Diaries of John Dos Passos*, ed. Townsend Ludington (Boston, 1973), 115-16.

¹⁹⁶ Irwin, "Nation Building and Rebuilding," 408.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 408-409.

¹⁹⁸ Charles M. Bakewell, *The Story of the American Red Cross in Italy* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1920): V.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 100-101.

of the Allies to save civilization.”²⁰⁰ In this era of internationalisation, as Mazower calls it, this statement underscores the position of the ARC as a player in the development of the United States foreign affair discourse of Progressive Internationalism.²⁰¹ Ambassador Page also states that the future peace of the world would be dictated by the great democracies and that in the future, Italy and the United States would inevitably unite in a fraternal bond against "autocracy and militarism." Page figures that the ARC would be the organisation building the bridges to create this bond.²⁰²

The second institution that is discussed in relation to the spread of propaganda between Italy and the United States is “Il Progresso Italo-Americano,” a newspaper run by Charles Barsotti. Charles was his American name, since he was born as Carlo. Barsotti was born in Pisa in Italy in 1850 and immigrated to the United States in 1872. In 1879, he founded the newspaper with his friend and quickly became one of the top selling foreign newspapers in New York City.²⁰³ Thus, this newspaper was already active in the United States and not in Italy before the Committee established an office in Rome. However, it created a connection between the Italian war effort and that of the United States. The materials published in this newspaper that can be considered beneficial for the CPI and its message to Italy were publicised in Italian for all the Italian citizens of New York to read. These people then contacted their family back home, which helps improve the Italians opinion on America.²⁰⁴

Furthermore, this paper itself established contact between the Italian newspaper agencies which the CPI made us of to spread their message within Italy. The Italian media was repeatedly asked to come to America to witness the might of America first hand, so they could report back to their readers at home.²⁰⁵ However, Creel was consistently opposed to sending American journalists on the same mission to Italy as mentioned in a letter to Vincent Tanzola, an American journalist who was born in Italy who applied to go to Italy.²⁰⁶ He considered Merriam to be able to handle this on his own with help of his divisions and did not need assistance in any way by American journalists.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁰ William R. Hereford, untitled ms, page 6, Feb. 4, 1918. Found in Irwin, “Nation Building and Rebuilding,” 410.

²⁰¹ 1. Mazower, *Governing the World*, 154.

2. Irwin, “Nation Building and Rebuilding,” 410.

²⁰² “Il Contributo Americano per la Guerra,” *la Giornale d'Italia* (Rome) Jan.16, 1918.

²⁰³ Gertrude Richardson Brightham, “The New Memorial to Dante,” in *Art & Archaeology* vol 13, 1922, 33-34.

²⁰⁴ Correspondence between Charles Barsotti and George Creel, April 3, 1918 and September 14, 1917.

²⁰⁵ George Creel letter to Vincent Tanzola, August 8, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

²⁰⁶ 1. *Ibid.*

2. Vincent Tanzola letter to George Creel, August 6, 1918. Accessible at the RIAS.

²⁰⁷ Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy, 78-79.

The newspaper was usually filled with the normal news of the day, but there was always a distinctive session dedicated to the ‘progress’ of the American war effort. An example of this is seen below in a part of an article titled “the Progress from the North American Colonies.”



F. Cleona, “Servizio Speciale del “Progresso” Dalle Colonie Nord-Americane, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, Monday, February 4, 1918, 6.

The name of the newspaper, “Progresso.” already hints to it being a Progressive paper, but the paper when it was founded was meant to strengthen the Italian-American relationship by focussing on the notion of progress and moving forward.²⁰⁸ Thus, when Creel received a letter from Barsotti that he wished to strengthen this relationship by working together with the Committee, Creel gladly accepted. Following this agreement between the Committee and the newspaper, the newspaper had to reserve a certain section of its publication to demonstrating the American war effort, consistently titled ‘Progresso,’ throughout its publications. The above shown picture is a part of one of these articles and discusses how one of the reporters went to

²⁰⁸ Charles Barsotti letter to George Creel, September 14, 1917. Accessible at the RIAS.

visit various American military bases and talked to several generals. It focussed on how America is progressing in terms of war effort and did not fail to compliment America on how well it was doing. This can be seen as coloured information, since Creel stated ‘we only know what it [the newspaper] tells us’ in relation to the American newspapers, and there is no way for the Italians in New York or in Italy to know whether this was the truth or not. However, the Progressivist notions in this paper are often highlighted in this dedicated section, when the articles talk about how America is going to ‘free us,’ us being the Italians, for instance, or when the newspaper promotes shows where the Four Minute Men would make an appearance.²⁰⁹ This newspaper can thus be seen as an organisation employed by the domestic chapter of the CPI to spread Progressivist notions at home, but also by extent in Italy. Its mouth-to-mouth advertising from the Italian immigrants was one of the most successful methods of spreading the Committees message.²¹⁰

The third organisation that the CPI collaborated with within Italy was the Young Men’s Christian Association, better known as the YMCA. The YMCA has a long history, being founded on June 6, 1844 in London by Sir George Williams.²¹¹ It offered its services, which included food, shelter, and a place of worship, to all those who asked for it. The YMCA was also deemed to be the first social welfare organisation in World War I.²¹² It was during this period of time the so-called ‘huts’ became the main instrument the YMCA used to help the needy. A ‘hut’ in YMCA terms did not necessarily need to be an actual hut, it could be any place that provided enough shelter to the elements, but it always had to contain a place of worship and a place to eat needed to be provided.²¹³ Throughout the First World War the YMCA provided over two hundred huts at the front in Italy for soldiers to rest.²¹⁴

In Italy the YMCA was received with open arms due to its Christian associations. On January 15, 1918, thus three months prior to the CPI, the YMCA established a headquarters in Bologna, a city where most occupants were against the war.²¹⁵ It was deemed to be the closest city to the front that was still safe, thus they moved from Rome to Bologna, to be able to better

²⁰⁹ Il Progresso Italo-Americano, “Teatro del Progresso,” Monday, February 4, 1918, 6-7.

²¹⁰ Merriam, “American Publicity In Italy,” 554.

²¹¹ YCMA Website, “YMCA History,” accessed at <https://www.ymca.int/about-us/ymca-history/> last accessed 23-06-2019.

²¹² Young Men’s Christian Association, and National War Work Council, *Summary of World War work of the American Y.M.C.A.; with the soldiers and sailors of America at home, on the sea, and overseas* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1920): 4.

²¹³ Ibid. 9-10.

²¹⁴ Ibid. 64.

²¹⁵ 1. Ibid. 63.

2. Merriam, “American Publicity In Italy,” 553.

handle the Caporetto situation and combat the loss of morale. The YMCA were present to ensure the Christians, and by extent all who were not Christian, but in Italy there were not that many, were able to fight back against the invaders.²¹⁶ It was deemed of the utmost importance that the morale of the soldiers at the front was raised. This coincided perfectly with the Committee's intentions, thus they decided to collaborate on several occasions. The Committee would help promote the YMCA, see appendix 1, with posters, newspaper articles, and Four Minute Men speeches. In return, the YMCA would continue their work to boost Italian morale at the front and at the same time spread a positive message to Italian soldiers.²¹⁷

The YMCA shipped supplies from the United States to Italy and handed it out at the fronts to the veterans.²¹⁸ The notion of helping veterans seems similar to the American Red Cross, but the difference is that the ARC was dedicated to dealing with the veterans and wounded, whereas the YMCA was trying to boost morale in those who were still fighting. However, the YMCA did not only provide food, shelter, and religious comfort to the soldiers. It provided free education and recreational facilities as well. In the official summary published in 1920 by the YMCA and the National War Work Council, this was explained as "It [The YMCA] aimed to provide free for the soldiers such educational and recreational facilities as the most progressive communities provide for their citizens."²¹⁹ It is within these educational facilities where the Wilsonian ideals of democracy, capitalism, and freedom were often brought up.²²⁰ Not intentionally, as just like the ARC, the YMCA was not considered by the CPI to be a part of their propaganda machine, but through carrying out their work as they always had done, they informed the Italian soldiers of the American ideals and beliefs, instilled a sense of trust in the Italians regarding the Americans. Thus, the YMCA can be seen as one of the organisations that helped create a favourable image of America even before the Committee had established an office. The YMCA was deemed to have been influential and pivotal in the spread of the CPI's message in Italy.²²¹

However, the CPI itself also produced propaganda materials when it was in Rome. Not many of its propaganda materials survived due to time and even more were propaganda

²¹⁶ Merriam, "American Publicity in Italy," 545.

²¹⁷ 1. Young Men's Christian Association, and National War Work Council, *Summary of World War work of the American Y.M.C.A.*, 63-64.

2. a collaboration between the three institutions, CPI, ARC, and YMCA is seen in the poster, "Y.M.C.A. 50 centres in Italy and Mediterranean," which is listed as appendix 10.

²¹⁸ Young Men's Christian Association, and National War Work Council, *Summary of World War work of the American Y.M.C.A.*, 186.

²¹⁹ Ibid. 166.

²²⁰ Ibid. 166-167.

²²¹ Merriam, "American Publicity in Italy," 548.

materials were recycled from the domestic chapter, such as films who were only given Italian subtitles. Nevertheless, one of the CPI's materials made in Rome is the translation of the American anthem by Alberto Celpi, *Il Vessillo Stellato*.

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER
Inno Nazionale Americano

Oh! say can you see,
By the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd,
At the twilight's gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
Through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd,
Where so gallantly stream'd
And the rocket's red glare,
The bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there;
Oh! say does the star spangled banner yet
wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of
the brave?

Oh! thus be it if 'er
When free men shall stand
Between their loved homes
And the war's desolation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace,
May the heav'n-rescu'd land
Praise the Power that has made
And preserved us a nation:
Then, conquer we must,
When our cause it is just,
And this be our motto,
"In God is our trust."
And the star spangled banner in triumph
shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of
the brave.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEYS

IL VESSILLO STELLATO
Inno Nazionale Americano

Mirate se ancor,
Nel rosato albor,
L'altero Vessillo di nostra speranza
Fiammeggiante splendor,
Ormai vincitor,
Sul forte garrisca con fiera baldanza.
Or che al rosso fulgor,
Già la notte sen muor
E George la speme fra l'ansie e il dolor,
Che sempre quel nostro Vessillo stellato
Fiero garrisca al sol
Del libero suol.

Qualvolta nel cuor
Con fede ed amor
Nazione mai sognò la sua libertate,
Dal duro oppressor
Si creò protettor
Il nostro vessillo di loro contrade!
Quei nobili amor
Protegga il Signor
Al for, la speme conservi nel cuor,
Che sempre quel nostro Vessillo stellato
Fiero garrisca al sol
Del libero suol!

(Traduzione di ALBERTO CELPI)

STORIA

Mentre infuriava la guerra per l'indipendenza una nave inglese cannoneggiò una intera notte un forte americano. Su questa nave vi era FRANCIS SCOTT KEYS, il quale nell'ansietà e nella speranza per l'esito della pugna alla quale egli, prigioniero di guerra, doveva assistere impotente, compose i versi dell'INNO AMERICANO.

La Bandiera americana consta di tredici strisce bianche e rosse che rappresentano gli Stati Originali e le quarantotto stelle in campo azzurro simboleggiano gli Stati Attuali della Grande Repubblica Americana.

ALBERTO CELPI

OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION
OF THE UNITED STATES
ROMA - VIA DEL TRITONE N. 342 - ROMA

IL VESSILLO STELLATO
INNO NAZIONALE AMERICANO
PER CANTO E PIANOFORTE
TRADUZIONE ITALIANA DI ALBERTO CELPI

The American anthem translated into Italian and given commentary by Alberto Celpi, a supposed famous poet during World War One, published by the CPI in Rome.

This pamphlet was produced by the American CPI within its office in Rome as can be seen in the official branding just above the soldier's head. However, more importantly for this specific message is the translator. Alberto Celpi was supposedly, since there are almost no records of him available, a famous poet who lived during the First World War. This is no exception, because the CPI in Italy was known to recruit famous Italian figureheads of the communities to work with them. Having a celebrity promote your message rather than a random individual, boosts the popularity of the message.

This is in stark contrast to what the Committee did within the United States. The Four Minute Men, who were not active outside the United States, were specifically chosen to be random civilians in order to promote a feeling of kinship and relatedness. In Italy, however, this was much harder to accomplish, thus it was easier to pick spearheads of the community instead for this work.²²² This anthem was translated not only to show the American way of life detailing the struggle that America went through during the Civil War, which resembled the Italian

²²² Merriam, "American Publicity In Italy," 544-545.

struggle versus Austria, but also to promote a feeling of kinship and even fun. Over thirty-thousand copies of the anthem and its sheet music were created. Supposedly, all the Italian bands learned to play the anthem.²²³ It was sent to various musical institutions, but also shipped to soldiers at the front. The story in the bottom left details how America fought for its independence and the braveness of its troops. This syncs up perfectly with the actual text of the anthem as well. The soldiers this was sent to were supposed to sing of the bravery of themselves following the American anthem, lined up with other propaganda materials that showed the war preparations in the United States. The lyrics of the anthem are a perfect match to what the Italian soldiers on the front had to endure when fighting Austria-Hungary. They were fighting a just war in their eyes, defending against an invading force, which is resembled in: “When free man shall stand between their loved homes and the war’s desolation;” All of these can be seen as Progressivist notions. The fight for freedom, a just war, which is also what President Wilson called it, the land of the free.

However, the most obvious clue as to why this specific creation can be deemed as propaganda is the American soldier holding an eagle banner on the right. The eagle is also an American symbol, but when in Italy the eagle bearer vexillum when carried by a soldier is a throwback to Roman times, which every Italian recognises. In combination with the banner, this creation shows that Italy and America united can win the war. Whether or not this specific propaganda material can be deemed Progressive is unclear. The anthem itself has Progressivist notions, but it was written before Progressivism was considered to be a thing, thus that would be anachronistic to state. However, Merriam was the one who asked the Committee to create these translations and illustrations, with a clear motive in mind, it can be reasonably assumed that he intended for this anthem to be an advocate of Progressive values.²²⁴

However, the creator of the image on the right is Byron Nester, or Nestor depending on the source. An American Artist in Italy working for the Committee on Public Information who was the man in charge of producing the images for distribution within Italy. He created all the official war images, including the Italian Government issued newspaper *Inter-Allied weekly* Since many Italians were analphabetic, images were considered the perfect way to address them.²²⁵ Nestor was handpicked by Merriam for this position due to his personal ideals that matched his own. The fact that the creator of the illustrations sent to the official Italian

²²³ Ibid, 550.

²²⁴ Ibid. 549.

²²⁵ Ibid, 550.

government and was published and promoted through sixteen thousand Italian cities and towns was a supporter of the Progressive political ideals, is not something that can go unnoticed.

Furthermore, the CPI within Rome did not only create its own propaganda measures such as posters and pamphlets, they also tried to instil American values and ideals within Italian society. They even celebrated the fourth of July, American Independence Day within Italy.²²⁶ Merriam came up with various ways of influencing public opinion in Italy. He brought in an American Ambulance Unit from the ARC, which was extremely well received. He ensured that through local contacts the American Official Bulletin was translated and published in Italy. It was also his idea to randomly send Italians into the country, without any form of training or oversight, to inform the population of America's war effort. This is akin to the Four Minute Men, but then unorganised and without oversight. An interesting idea since Creel after the war had noted he thought the Four Minute Men idea was potentially dangerous, and yet Merriam did the same tactic with untrained civilians. Nevertheless, his tactics were successful, since the goal of his methods, "to bring home personally to as many Italian citizens as possible a detailed story of the actual work being done by America in preparation for a victorious finish," was accomplished. Where a thousand people might hear a person speak of America, soon another fifty thousand would hear it due to the way Merriam had organised the Committee.²²⁷

It can be concluded that within the Italian chapter of the Committee on Public Information, Progressivist and Wilsonian Ideals were present within the messages created by the Committee itself, as much as this can be stated due to the lack of available source material. Furthermore, the organisations with which Merriam surrounded himself with helped pave the way for the Committee to arrive later on and start their full-blown propaganda campaign.²²⁸ Not only did they improve public relations between Italy and the United States, when the Committee arrived in Italy to start their propaganda work, the YMCA and ARC proved invaluable to the cause by promoting American ideals and beliefs wherever they went.

Whether this can be deemed ethical, to establish a propaganda office, ignore the government of the country, and influence the people in that country to suit your own ideals, is a different story. However, during the war the Committee and its associated organisations were highly effective in swaying the Italian Public to favour American Progressive ideals. However, as time went on, Italy became a fascist state with ideals and motivations completely opposed to

²²⁶ 1. Ibid, 552.

2. See appendix 11.

²²⁷ Merriam, "American Publicity In Italy," 548-549.(entire paragraph)

²²⁸ Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, VIII-IX.

those instilled during World War I. Despite this thesis not focussing on the aftermath, it is still important to mention what is considered the main reason for this political and societal change. Since, it is strange that this thesis can conclude the work of the Committee was effective in spreading American Progressivism and instil Wilsonian ideals in the Italian population when only a few years later Italy turned into a fascist state with completely opposing views.

It is not the supposed relations the Committee had with future dictator Mussolini that certain scholars deem to have influenced this change, since the research conducted in this thesis found no specific mention of Mussolini in any primary source related to the Committee or Wilson.²²⁹ The authors who mention this link state that Merriam mentioned in a letter to Wilson regarding “a man of vision,” and a leader of the reform socialists. They then proceed to state “this could only have been Mussolini,” which is plausible, but there is no conclusive evidence presented for this statement.²³⁰ Instead, what this thesis, and other scholars, like Rossini, as well, considers to be the pivotal reason for the change between the Progressivist population the Committee had worked so hard to create and the fascist regime which was supported by many, is Wilson’s appeal to the Italian population during the Paris Peace Conference. On April 23, 1919, Wilson was at an impasse regarding the Italian delegation and their demands. Italy wanted specific parts of the coasts of Adriatic Sea and Wilson opposed this.²³¹ He was a supporter of self-determination and this went, again, against the ideals of the Italian government.

However, in his appeal on this day, called the Fiume Appeal, Wilson did exactly what his Committee had been doing for the entire war. He went over the heads of the representatives of the Italian government and directly addressed the Italian population via the present press. Despite this being the same the Committee had done; the Italians were furious. They almost unanimously opposed this blatant disregard of their countries’ leaders. Streets and towns named after the President following the Committees work were removed and, in some ways, the work of the Committee was destroyed in one speech. This is a logical conclusion to Wilson’s foreign policy regarding Italy and how he considered the Italian government to be a remnant of old international politics, something he sought to replace with the Committee.²³² This speech was deemed one of Wilson’s biggest mistakes during the Paris Peace Conference.²³³ Further

²²⁹ Scholars that stated this notion also showed no proof of these statements.

1. Peter R. D’Agostino, *Rome in America, Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004): 190.

2. Giorgio Bellini, *The Divo and the Duce: Promoting Film Stardom and Political Leadership in 1920s America* (Oakland: University of North Carolina Press, 2019): 166.

²³⁰ Ibid. 167.

²³¹ Rossini, “Italy, an Object of Demonstration,” 225-226.

²³² Wolper, “The Origins of Public Diplomacy, 362-363.

²³³ 1. Rossini, “Italy, an Object of Demonstration,” 225-226, 228, 230-231.

research will need to demonstrate whether or not the assumption that this was one of the reasons Italy returned to their old antithetical stance towards America's ideals is accurate. However, it did need some mention in order to show that despite the Committee dedicating months of work, utilising various institutions and other mediums, and having reached millions of Italians with its Progressivist message, the aftermath was the exact opposite of what Wilson had hoped to accomplish when he sent the Committee to Italy.²³⁴

3.3 Comparative analysis between the domestic and Italian message of the CPI.

Following the analysis of several materials published by the CPI in the United States and Italy as well as the information regarding institutions or other agencies the CPI worked with to spread their message, a comparative analyse can be created. However, as aforementioned, the analysis provided within this subchapter is based on the sources dealt with within this thesis, which are not all the sources available. Especially considering the fact a lot of sources were lost over time, this may not be the definitive comparison if more sources are discovered in the future.

First of all, the various media forms the CPI used is discussed. Whereas in the United States the approach was wildly varying: speeches by the Four Minute Men, movies created specifically with the American audience in mind, posters, billboards, advertisements, a newspaper are several forms of mediums the CPI employed domestically. However, when looking at the Italian situation, it becomes clear that the overall scope of the CPI's involvement is relatively shallow. The Committee in Italy only uses a handful of original works, creates no movies, a low number of posters, if they use other media they usually simply import it from the United States and translate it which does not always work as well as it did in the United States, and they rely on other institutions to do their work for them a lot more.

This difference in their modus operandi can be attributed to several factors. The first is the shorter time span that the CPI is actually active, only fully active for six months, April to October 1918, compared to the year and a half of the domestic situation, April 1917 to October 1918. Another reason is the difference in available resources. The Committee in the United States had the entire country working for them as volunteers, since it was a highly successful enterprise to mobilise the citizens to do its work for them. Furthermore, the Italian office had to deal with a smaller budget financially since its foreign division was given one specific

2. Paul Birdsall, *Versailles Twenty Years After* (New York: Reynall and Hitchcock, 1941): 283.

3. Rene Albrecht-Carrie, *Italy at the Paris Peace Conference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 144.

²³⁴ Creel, *How we Advertised America*, 302.

amount of money, which had to be distributed amongst the nine foreign countries they had an office in. A third potential reason for the difference in their methodology can be attributed to the person running the show. Whereas the CPI domestically could rely on various Divisions and leaders of those Divisions to attempt to achieve its goal, influencing public opinion, Merriam had to rely on a smaller group of people and only one real Division, the Foreign Division. He could borrow several people from homegrown divisions when necessary, as demonstrated in the Italian newspaper case that is analysed, however they were only there on a temporary basis, thus the amount of work that could be put out by the office in Rome was limited. Thus, the fact Merriam had to rely more on outside institutions such as the American Red Cross and the YMCA is not that surprising all things considered.

Furthermore, the political situation in the United States and Italy was vastly different. In the United States there was a Progressive President in power who gave full power to the CPI and backed the chairman whenever necessary. The people and the government in the United States were all supporting the CPI to succeed, therefore, the methods that could be employed within America were vastly more numerous compared to the Italian situation. Since, when everybody likes you and you have nigh limitless resources to work with, thus more people to choose from to create hand tailored messages for the public, the amount of influence you can exert is higher. In Italy the difference between the motivations of government and its people was staggering. The conservatist Italian government was hesitant to support any American influence to begin with, was threatened by opposing government factions throughout its reign of power such as by the socialists, and yet the Italian population loved the American President and welcomed the CPI with open arms.

This division between the Italian government's motivations and ideals and those of the United States, but the love of the public for the American message, prompted the CPI to go over the heads of the Italian government and appeal to the population directly instead. This tactical difference, working with the government in the United States and ignoring it in Italy, created a difficult scenario for Merriam to work in. It also created a lot of tension between him and ambassador Page who continuously tried to better official relationships between Italy and the United States to no avail.²³⁵ Thus, by having to rely on local people without help from the Italian government, Merriam's work was a lot harder than that of his domestic counterparts. The way Merriam chose to try and solve these problems was by using community leaders to help carry out his message instead. Celpi, the poet who translated the American anthem, is an

²³⁵ Nigro Jr., *The New Diplomacy in Italy: American Propaganda and U.S. - Italian Relations*, 54-55.

example of this. He appealed to various pro-war organisations, since the country was still divided about joining the war even after Caporetto, which helped give the CPI a foothold within Italy.

An example not analysed which shows this difference, since their contribution was in the form of oral speeches, there are no sources available that clearly show their impact, is the Italian association of Mutilati. Mutilati was an Italian association which focussed on taking care of wounded soldiers. Thus, when Merriam approached them and asked if they could speak for the CPI's cause, they were eager to help promote the war effort. These soldiers were considered one of the most influential pro-war organisations the CPI made use of in Italy. Merriam states this was the case since, "they spoke on behalf of thousands who had shed their blood for the Italian cause, and who could speak from the basis of a definite sacrifice."²³⁶ Despite the fact this might sound similar to the Four Minute Men, since both gave speeches to crowds to promote the war effort and influence public opinion, the main difference is that the speeches in Italy were not curated. The Four Minute Men had to follow a strict regime, of four minutes, but also speak on various topics outlined in the Official Bulletin (see appendix 1). Whereas the Italians were more or less set free upon the country and there was no curation whatsoever to what they were saying. Furthermore, the Italian Mutilati were not registered or trained in any capacity. As long as you were a member of the organisation, you were allowed to speak on behalf of the organisation and by extent thus also the CPI and America.²³⁷

Another example of the differences in the approach between the two countries is the use of soldiers themselves. Whereas in Italy it was considered to be the most valuable propaganda tool of all, to have American soldiers land on a beach in Italy and demonstrate America's power and will to fight, domestically this aspect was much less stressed. For instance, it is noted that when an American Ambulance unit landed at Genoa in July the entire city emptied out to greet them.²³⁸ This Ambulance Unit was a part of the American Red cross, which shows how the institution that was only there to help the wounded in accordance with their own motives, actually helped promote a pro-American sentiment as well. This is not to insinuate that American soldiers were not respected or shown as heroes within America, instead this aims to show that in Italy using actual troops to promote the war effort was a valid tactic, whereas in America the troops were supposed to be fighting and the efforts were put into acquiring ways to aid the troops.

²³⁶ Merriam, *American Publicity in Italy*, 552.

²³⁷ Ibid. 552-553.

²³⁸ Ibid. 551.

However, not only the methods by which the Committee tried to communicate their intentions towards the general public differed, also the contents of the messages themselves varied. In the examples shown within this thesis it is clear that in the United States the efforts of the Committee were focussed on influencing public opinion towards becoming more pro-war, but more specifically, creating this pro-war sentiment which mobilises public opinion and rallies them behind their troops. This was clearly visible within the various posters and paintings analysed within this thesis and also in appendix 3, which shows the various topics the artists created works for, it is clear that public sentiment and promoting, for instance, the purchase of bonds was the main priority. Thus, the Progressive aspects were a lot less discernible within the domestic approach. The notion of capitalism, freedom, and progress were still present, but were not shown in full force. Instead, it could be extrapolated from promoting this pro-war sentiment that by extension if you are fighting against a nation that is antithetical to your own country's beliefs you are promoting your own system, but this was not the main goal of the Committee.

This approach is almost the complete opposite in Italy, where the notion of spreading the Wilsonian and Progressivist ideals of peace, self-determination, capitalism, and democracy are consistently a part of the Committee's message and the organisations it had ties with. Despite noting that improving Italian morale was the core reason for establishing an office, the Committee started to work on promoting its Progressivist message not soon after arriving. The CPI carried out this message by directly appealing to the population with local speakers, various institutions, newspapers, and even an American army unit, or by demonstrating to the soldiers on the frontlines that America was coming and preparing for war. In most if not all of the found materials, certain notions of Progressivism and nudges to the Wilsonian ideals can be discerned, in stark contrast to the domestic approach.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is clear that the Progressive movement that stemmed from agrarian cries for reform impacted all societal layers in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The men that were raised within this era were impacted heavily by the ideals and reforms proposed by the Progressive movement. It is thus no surprise that when the first true Progressive President Woodrow Wilson was asked to create a Committee dedicated to the spread of Americas ideals, domestically and internationally, he asked George Creel to be its chairman. Creel being a homegrown Progressivist, impacted from birth with ideas surrounding reform such as women's right to vote, but also the spread of democracy which he considered like a form of faith.

George Creel led the Committee on Public Information through the First World War following the Progressive ideals and motives by the letter. When it became clear that America had to establish offices in Europe, Creel looked for candidates to be the head of their offices within Europe in the Progressive community circles. This is where he found Charles Merriam, a Progressivist backer like none other who was famous amongst academics for his work on political theory and more specifically the promotion of Progressive ideals. When Merriam became the head of the CPI in Rome, his own motivations matched with that of Creel and the CPI itself, which lead to a continuous Progressive wave of propaganda being pushed into Italy.

The CPI collaborated with institutions, the YMCA and ARC, which had the same goals in mind, the spreading of democracy, progress, and capitalism to better propagandise the Italian population. Their messages were aimed at the general population rather than the official government of Italy, since the assumed position of the international relations playing field was that the Italian government was antithetical to American Progressive ideals and too much focussed on imperialistic notions.

In the end it is clear that the messages in Italy were heavily impacted by the Progressive era and the people raised within this period of American history according to the materials analysed within this thesis. As mentioned, the materials that are still available from the CPI in Italy is limited, thus when more sources are found, this conclusion could need revision. It can also be noted that there was a clear distinction between the CPI domestically and in Italy. Whereas the goals of the CPI in the United States were also in line with influencing public opinion, the end goal of this influence was different compared to that of Italy. In America the Committee worked tirelessly with nigh unlimited resources to improve America's own war effort, by promoting the sale of bonds, and influencing the behaviour of its citizens to strengthen

the pro-war sentiment. This was partly done, because of President Wilson and his famous 'I kept us out of the war' campaign slogan, which he did not live up to, that irked some citizens. However, more importantly, the Progressivist notions were already embedded within American society at this time. The public had elected a Progressive President with an overwhelming majority and were considered increasingly favourable to Progressive ideals. Italy on the other hand was the complete opposite, sure the population was amicable to America and its President, but the government was antithetical to American beliefs. Thus, the available resources Merriam had at his disposal to influence public opinion by utilising his public diplomacy skills and the resources of the CPI, were limited in comparison.

Furthermore, the goals of the international branch of the CPI were different from the start in comparison to its domestic chapter. Internationally, the citizens did not have to be convinced to support American troops or to change their behaviour in favour of the American war effort. Instead, the focus was put on the spreading of Wilsonianism, the belief that democracy, capitalism, and freedom are inherently good notions, which any modern country should adopt. It was this change in the goals of the Committee, the difference between the 'real' Italy and the 'official' Italy, and the difficult working atmosphere with the government as a result thereof, that influenced the CPI's message in Italy. The influence of Progressivism in the international relations aspect of it, Wilsonianism, can clearly be seen when looking at the methods the Committee employed and the message it conveyed to the general public in Italy.

These notions were far less, or not at all, present in the domestic methods, since the goals differed. In the United States the main objectives of the Committee were to promote a pro-war sentiment to help boost Wilson's popularity following his re-election, but also to instil a more nationalistic and sense of patriotism in society. These feelings of patriotism and national pride were promoted by the various Divisions such as the Division of Pictorial Publicity, which created many posters that tried to persuade the population to support the war, for instance by buying bonds, by drawing on patriotic pride. On a comparative note, due to the difference in goals of the Committee abroad and at home, fuelled by Wilson's foreign affair ideals of Wilsonianism, Progressivism was much more prevalent in the Italian branch than the one in the United States.

However, the research done within this thesis was not without its limitations and still leaves much to explore for other scholars. The biggest challenge within the writing of this thesis was the fact that not a lot of very specific propaganda materials for Italy survived the test of time. Only a handful of propaganda materials such as posters are still available in online databases, whereas films, speeches, and other materials are lost. This created the negative image

that often surrounds the CPI, accusing them of negatively influencing the opinion of others by swaying public mentality through misguided information and the appeal to the emotions of people rather than the establishments of facts.

Relating back to the already existing literature, it is clear that there was a good reason why scholars did not attempt to show the notions of Progressivism in the Committee on Public Information. The available sources are limited and the idea of proving a concept has influenced the messages of a propaganda machine is difficult. The primary sources researched in this thesis seem to strengthen the existing literature regarding the importance of organisations such as the YMCA and the ARC in the CPI in Italy as outlined by Rossini and Nigro Jr amongst others. Furthermore, the domestic sources seem to back up the literature too. When looking at Wolper's thesis and Vaughn's book for instance, they note that the Committee domestically differed in terms of its goals and methods in relation to its foreign Divisions. By analysing several posters and paintings, as well as newspaper articles, this thesis proves that there was indeed a distinction made between the foreign and domestic divisions. However, the role of the Progressive movement, the people who came from this period in American history, Merriam and Creel, was undervalued in the literature. The Committee itself was also underrepresented in foreign relations literature. The books by Herring and Hopkins for instance only mention the CPI very briefly, despite its contribution to international politics. Wilson used the Committee to promote his own Wilsonian beliefs of democracy, freedom, and capitalism to strengthen his own political situation. This thesis hopes to have shown that despite the lack of attention being given to the Committee in the international relations literature, its role should not be underestimated.

This thesis has sought to establish a more rounded and cohesive narrative, explaining that despite the current negative connotations with the CPI and propaganda as a whole, the CPI did try their best to create a trustworthy news agency within America and in Italy. Their intended message was often based on facts and did nothing more than show the truth of what America was doing on a general level. George Creel and its board members were consistently trying to prevent a great censorship network being installed akin to its German counterpart, despite being pushed in this direction by the Secretaries of Staff and Congress itself. The informal approach of Creel to foster relationships with the media led to struggles, but more often than not it made sure that the American Press could still be considered 'free,' which was of the utmost importance to President Wilson. This thesis hopes to have added to the historiographical debate by analysing primary sources ranging from letters and books to posters and paintings, to show how Progressivism impacted the people who were in charge of the

Committee's efforts and how this translated itself into the spread of Wilsonianism and Progressivism in the United States and Italy.

Therefore, this study contains several notions that can be expanded on in future studies. First of all, the impact of the CPI's message in Italy is still open for future discussion. It is clear that the CPI's message during the period of war was quite effective to sway public opinion in the direction that favours America. However, after the war had ended Wilson directly appealed to the Italian populace during the Versailles peace conference and this was not met with the same favourable reactions. Instead, towns and roads named after the President were removed. The impact of this speech, named the Fiume Appeal, on April 23, 1919, can be discussed to see how, if at all, it has changed or even completely nulled the work of the CPI in the First World War. Another possible opportunity for further research is the rise of fascism within Italy and the role Mussolini played. Throughout the research for this thesis there have been some allusions made regarding the CPI and its potential relation with Benito Mussolini. Despite not being relevant for this specific research topic, this can be an interesting notion to explore, considering that despite all the efforts of the CPI to try and turn Italy away from its supposed imperialistic tendencies, it was not that late after the First World War had ended that Italy became a fascist nation. A nation with views completely opposed to the American ideals that the Committee on Public Information tried so hard to embed within Italian society during World War One.

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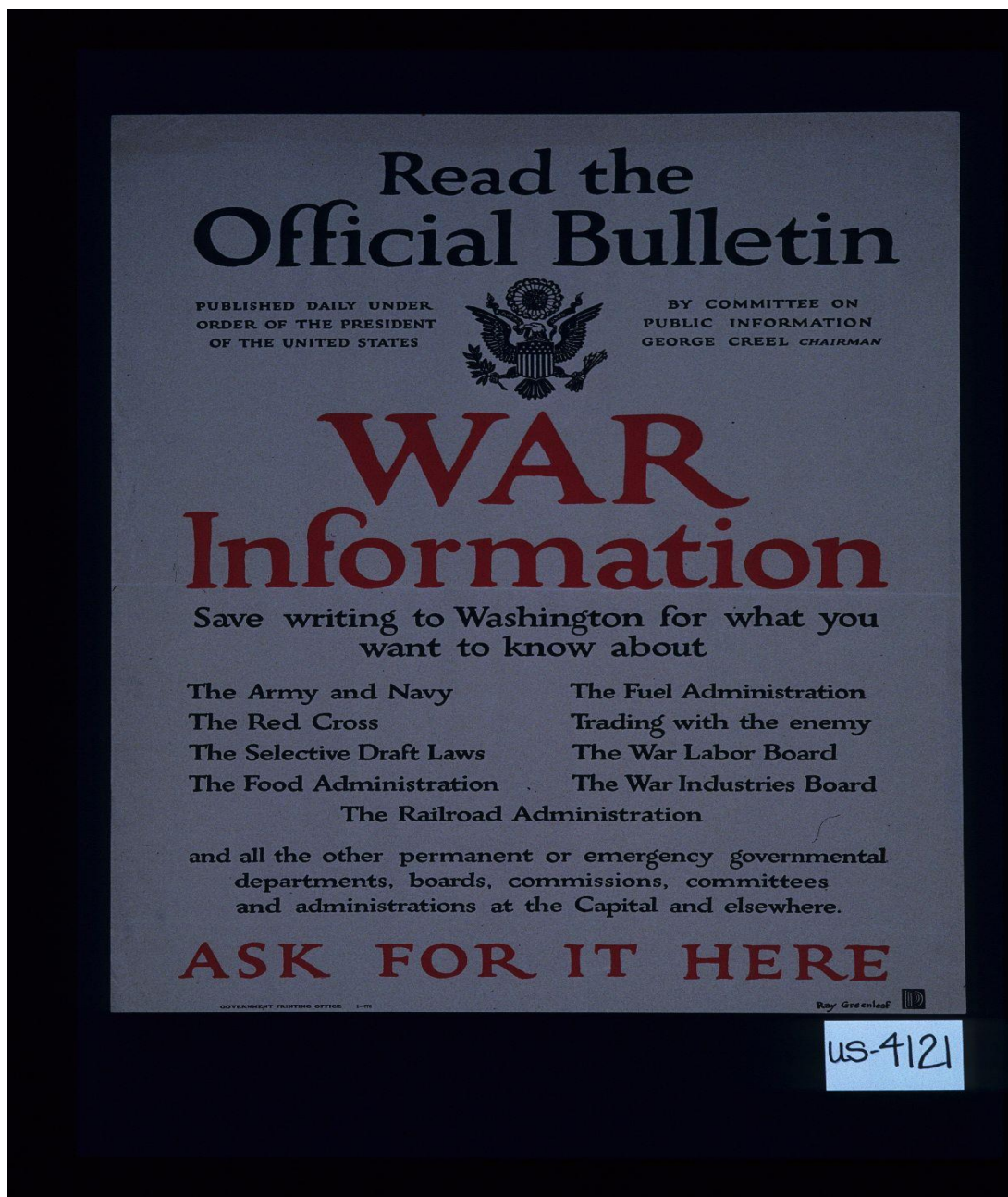
Appendices

HOW WE ADVERTISED AMERICA		THE FOUR MINUTE MEN																																																					
<p>that regular bulletins should be issued, each containing a budget of material covering every phase of the question to be discussed, and also including two or three illustrative four-minute speeches. Mr. Waldo P. Warren of Chicago was chosen to write the first bulletin, and when he was called away his duties fell upon E. T. Gundlach, also of Chicago, the patriotic head of an advertising agency. These bulletins, however, prepared in close and continued consultation with the proper officials of each government department responsible for them, were also gone over carefully by Professor Ford and his scholars.</p> <p>The idea, from the very first, had the sweep of a prairie fire. Speakers volunteered by the thousand in every state, the owners of the motion-picture houses, after a first natural hesitancy, gave exclusive privileges to the organization, and the various government departments fairly clamored for the services of the Four Minute Men. The following list of bulletins will show the wide range of topics:</p>		<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>TOPIC</th> <th>PERIOD</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Eyes for the Navy</td> <td>Feb. 11-16, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Danger to Democracy</td> <td>Feb. 18-Mar. 10, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lincoln's Gettysburg Address</td> <td>Feb. 12, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Income Tax</td> <td>Mar. 11-16, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Farm and Garden</td> <td>Mar. 25-30, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>President Wilson's Letter to Theaters</td> <td>Mar. 31-Apr. 5, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Third Liberty Loan</td> <td>Apr. 6-May 4, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organization</td> <td>(Republished Apr. 23, 1918)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Second Red Cross Campaign</td> <td>May 13-25, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Danger to America</td> <td>May 27-June 12, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Second War Savings Campaign</td> <td>June 24-28, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Meaning of America</td> <td>June 29-July 27, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobilizing America's Man Power</td> <td>July 29-Aug. 17, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Where Did You Get Your Facts?</td> <td>Aug. 26-Sept. 7, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Certificates to Theater Members</td> <td>Sept. 9-14, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Register</td> <td>Sept. 5-12, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Four Minute Singing</td> <td>For general use</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fourth Liberty Loan</td> <td>Sept. 28-Oct. 19, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Food Program for 1919</td> <td>Changed to Dec. 1-7; finally canceled</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fire Prevention</td> <td>Oct. 27-Nov. 2, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>United War Work Campaign</td> <td>Nov. 3-18, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Red Cross Home Service</td> <td>Dec. 7, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>What Have We Won?</td> <td>Dec. 8-14, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Red Cross Christmas Roll Call</td> <td>Dec. 15-23, 1918</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A Tribute to the Allies</td> <td>Dec. 24, 1918</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		TOPIC	PERIOD	Eyes for the Navy	Feb. 11-16, 1918	The Danger to Democracy	Feb. 18-Mar. 10, 1918	Lincoln's Gettysburg Address	Feb. 12, 1918	The Income Tax	Mar. 11-16, 1918	Farm and Garden	Mar. 25-30, 1918	President Wilson's Letter to Theaters	Mar. 31-Apr. 5, 1918	Third Liberty Loan	Apr. 6-May 4, 1918	Organization	(Republished Apr. 23, 1918)	Second Red Cross Campaign	May 13-25, 1918	Danger to America	May 27-June 12, 1918	Second War Savings Campaign	June 24-28, 1918	The Meaning of America	June 29-July 27, 1918	Mobilizing America's Man Power	July 29-Aug. 17, 1918	Where Did You Get Your Facts?	Aug. 26-Sept. 7, 1918	Certificates to Theater Members	Sept. 9-14, 1918	Register	Sept. 5-12, 1918	Four Minute Singing	For general use	Fourth Liberty Loan	Sept. 28-Oct. 19, 1918	Food Program for 1919	Changed to Dec. 1-7; finally canceled	Fire Prevention	Oct. 27-Nov. 2, 1918	United War Work Campaign	Nov. 3-18, 1918	Red Cross Home Service	Dec. 7, 1918	What Have We Won?	Dec. 8-14, 1918	Red Cross Christmas Roll Call	Dec. 15-23, 1918	A Tribute to the Allies	Dec. 24, 1918
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Appendix 1:

This page contains the various topics the Four Minute Men discussed during the time they were active in a bullet list, including the dates during which these topics were discussed.

Found in: George Creel, *How we Advertised America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920): 86-87



Appendix 2:

Official Bulletin poster, promoting and advertising that people should read it.

Accessed via the Hoover Institution at <https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/37266/read-the-official-bulletin-published-daily-under-order-of-th?ctx=71fe64e6-59f2-4aff-897b-1e522669cd5b&idx=2> last accessed 20-06-2019.

THE "BATTLE OF THE FENCES"

	Poster designs.	Car. bus. and window cards.	Newspaper and other advertising.	Cartoons.	Seals, buttons, banners, etc.
American Red Cross, Washington and New York.....	100	25	100	50	
War Savings Stamps.....	50	50	25	50	
Liberty Loan (Third).....	3	10	15		
Liberty Loan (Fourth).....	100		25		
Shipping Board.....	100			8	1
American Library Association.....	7		43		
War Camp Community Service.....	101	2	3		1
Ordnance Department.....	18	1	15	1	4
Training-camp Activities.....	10	1	3	10	
Food Administration.....	50	15	10	50	
Fuel Administration.....	25	10		23	
Department of Agriculture.....	11			1	1
War Department.....	11				1
Public Health Service.....	14	6	3		
Young Men's Christian Association.....	6		7		
Young Women's Christian Association.....	6		7		
Signal Corps.....	4		3	15	
Signal Corps, Aviation.....	1		2		1
Division of Films.....	33		4		1
Committee of Patriotic Societies.....			3		2
Turner Construction Co.....				20	
United States Boys' Working Reserve.....	5	1	2	7	
Committee on National Defense.....		1			3
Western Newspaper Union.....			2		
War Risk Insurance.....	2		2	1	
Committee on Public Information.....	4		6	5	
Division of Advertising.....	11		10	3	1
Squad A, Magazine Gun.....	2				
Mothers' Day.....	2				
Chain Stores.....	2				
Food for France.....	3				
Department of Labor.....	6				
Department of Interior.....	2		1		1
United States Tank Corps.....	1				
Salvation Army.....	5				
Treasure and Trust Fund.....	1				
Boy Scouts.....	3		9		1
Jewish Welfare.....	5		1		
Trades for Disabled Soldiers.....	6		2		
Railroad Administration.....	8				
Motor Corps.....	1				
Southern Pine Association.....	1				
Federation of Neighborhood Associations.....			1		
Office of Chief of Staff.....	1				
International Arms & Fuse Co.....	1				
Bastille Day.....	3			14	
Marine Corps.....	5				
Fifth Avenue Association.....	2				
American Poets' Committee.....	2				
Federal Food Board.....			3		
Rehabilitating Wounded Soldiers.....			2	2	1
Dewey Recreation Committee.....	1				
Italian War Work.....				1	
Mayor's Committee.....	1				
Official Bulletin.....	1				
Phonograph Recruiting Records.....	3			25	
Connecticut Defense Council.....	1				
Felham Naval Station.....			1	1	
United War Work Campaign.....	5				

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RECAPITULATION

Departments and committees requesting work.....	58
Poster designs submitted.....	700
Cards requested.....	122
Newspaper and other advertising.....	310
Cartoons submitted.....	287
Seals, buttons, etc., executed.....	19
Total material (drawings, designs, etc.).....	1,438

Appendix 3:

Records of the amount of designs created for the individual topics by the Division of Pictorial Publicity. Note: This therefore does not include the records of the advertising division, since those were nowhere to be found. However, it was estimated that there were 'thousands of productions.'

Found in: George Creel, *How we Advertised America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920): 137-138.



Appendix 4:

Lieutenant Reuter Dahl, Henry., N.C. Wyeth working on their painting, "Sink the U-boat," July 1918, accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d0l6y959h4> last accessed 20-06-2019.



**“Gee!
I wish there was
something I could do!”**

WHEN you think of what the boys “over there” are doing to help the great cause of freedom, wouldn’t you just give anything to be there and help them? Wouldn’t you fairly jump at the chance to do anything in the world to back up the men that are fighting?

You can’t be there yet, of course, but there is a place for a boy who wants to help our country, a place where he can show the stuff he is made of as well as he could over in France.

There is a new opportunity for boys who want to do their share toward winning the war. It is called the *Victory Boys*. Its motto is, “A million boys behind a million fighters.”

The organizations for which the *Victory Boys* are working provide the soldier with his movie theatre, his church, his club, his store where he buys the little everyday things he needs. When he is hungry, they feed him; when he is tired, they comfort him.

When you enroll with the *Victory Boys*, you pledge yourself to go out and earn money for this great work that the soldier needs so much. Ask your neighbors for odd jobs. Tell them of the great cause you are working for. If you can pledge yourself to earn \$20, remember that for five months you are giving all that these mean to some lonely soldier.

Wear the *Victory Boys* button—It is a badge of honor. It means that you are doing everything in your power to help your country to victory.

For further information inquire at the Victory Boys Division of your local UNITED WAR WORK CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Seven Allied activities, all endorsed by the Government, are combined in the United War Campaign, with the budgets distributed as follows: Y. M. C. A., \$100,000,000; Y. W. C. A., \$15,000,000; National Catholic War Council (including the work of the Knights of Columbus and special activities for women), \$20,000,000; Jewish Welfare Board, \$3,500,000; American Library Association, \$3,500,000; War Camp Community Service, \$15,000,000; Salvation Army, \$3,500,000.

Contributed through Division of Advertising



United States Gov't Comm. on Public Information

This fact contributed for the Winning of the War by

Appendix 5:

Arthur William Brown, “Gee! I wish there was something I could do,” unknown date, found in Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines*, 186.

This advertisement and poster with illustrations by Brown shows, again, what the people left at home can do to contribute to the war, in this instant it focusses on the children.



Remember Belgium

YOU can floor an Uhlan with lead, but only gold can floor Berlin—the gold of a world aroused.

You can hit the Hun the hardest by putting every possible dollar into this critical bond issue. Make it your business to see that every man and woman in your establishment understands the importance of buying bonds to the limit.

The enemy has developed a world-distribution on brutalities that bear the Berlin shipping-tag. How long shall this obscene commerce in brutality continue?

Your answer is required, now. Your money talks. You can crack Kultur on the head by volunteering *more* of your money than the Government asks for. You can overwhelm the mad Wolf of Wilhelmstrasse with the crushing wrath of billions.

How long do you want to receive news of U-boat sinkings, casualty lists, and maimed sons, marked F. O. B. Berlin?

Gentlemen, your answer?

Put your answer in writing—on a check. Now is the time to hurl Wilhelm II against the tence, and make him face a firing squad of 100,000,000 Americans—with dollars for bullets.

Buy U. S. Gov't Bonds Fourth Liberty Loan

Contributed through
Division of Advertising



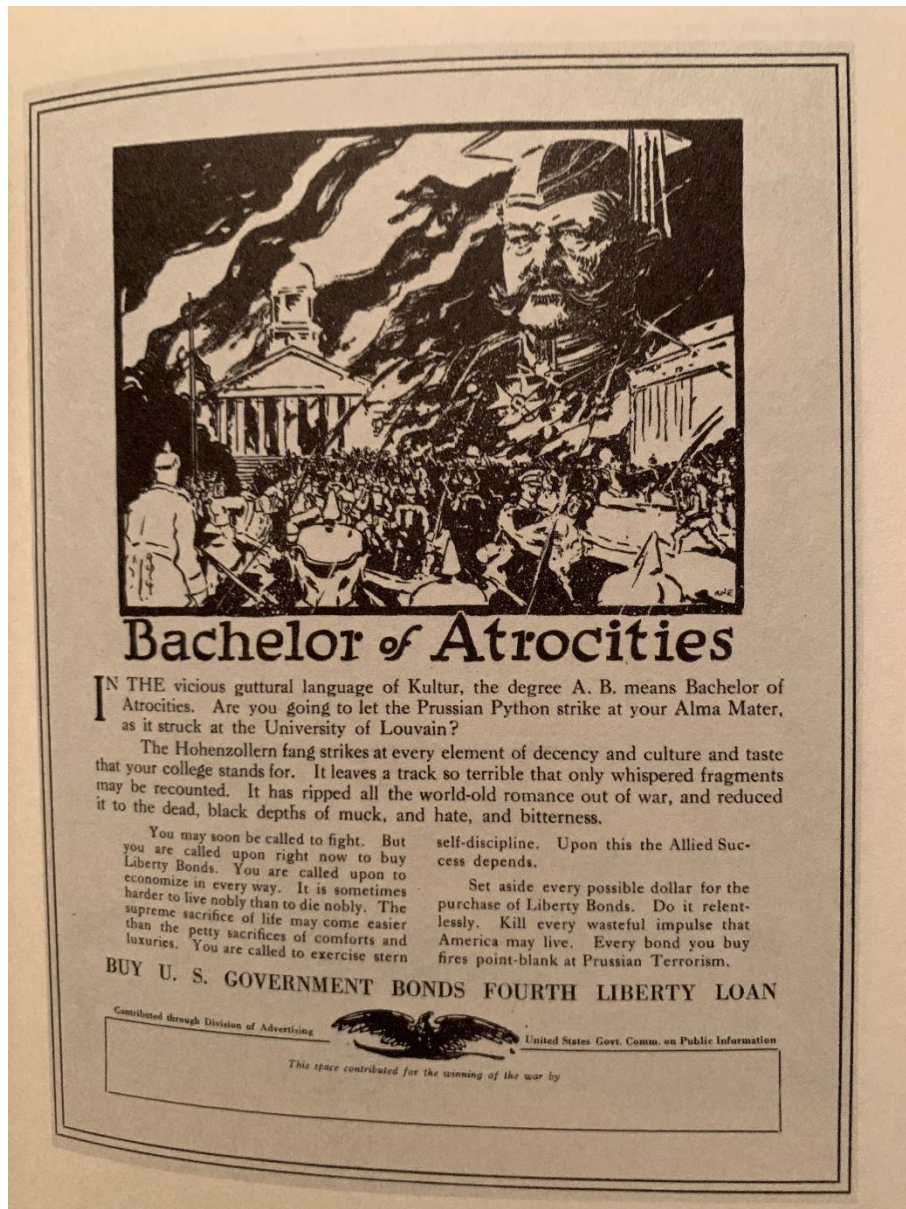
United States Govt. Comm.
on Public Information

This space contributed for the Winning of the War by

Appendix 6:

Unknown Artist, "Remember Belgium," found in Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines*, 166.

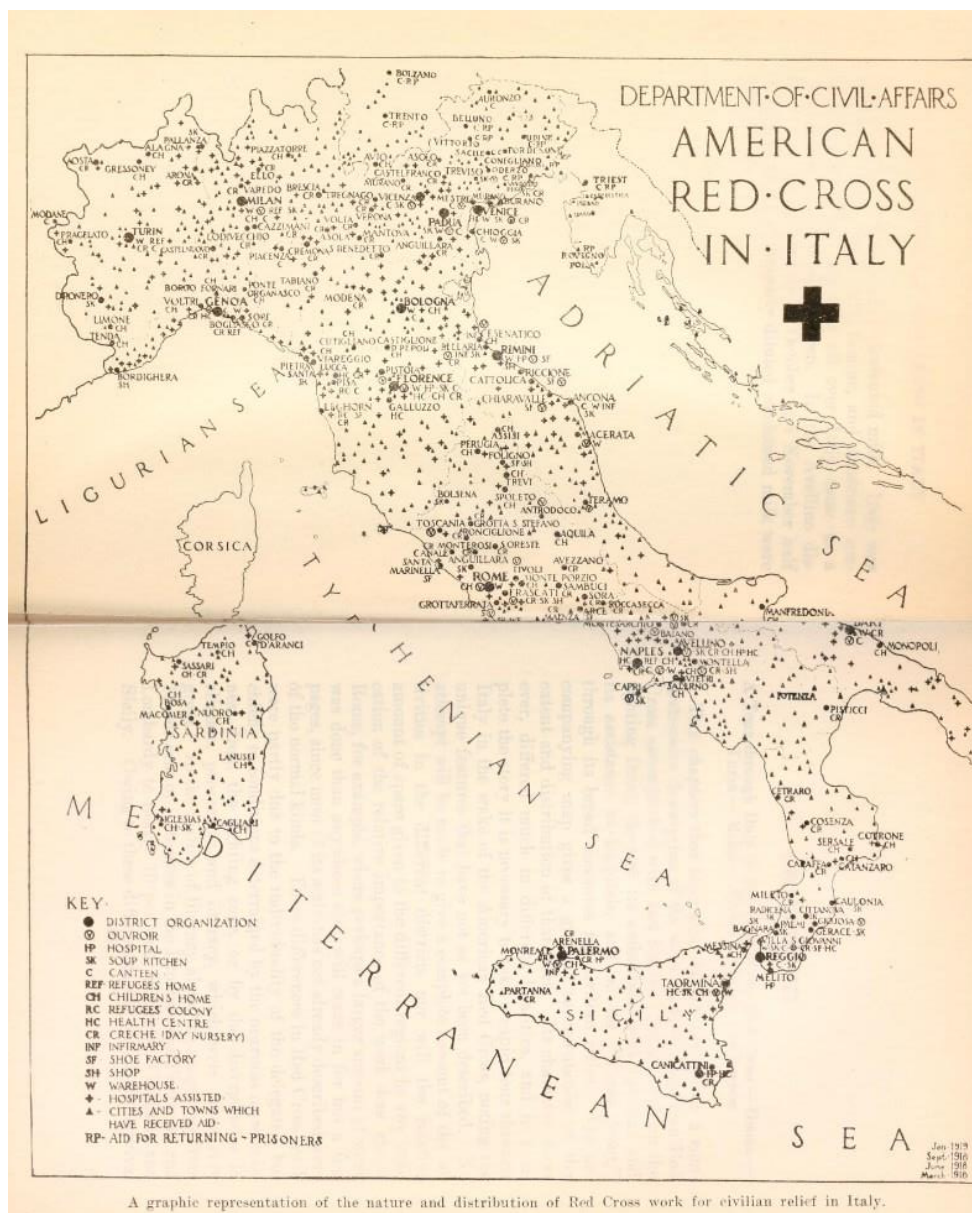
This poster, another advertisement of the Liberty Loan Bonds, shows the atrocities committed by the German troops in Belgium, in an attempt to appeal to the morals of the audience and try to convince them to buy Liberty Bonds.



Appendix 7:

Unknown Artist, "Bachelor of Atrocities," found in Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines*, 167.

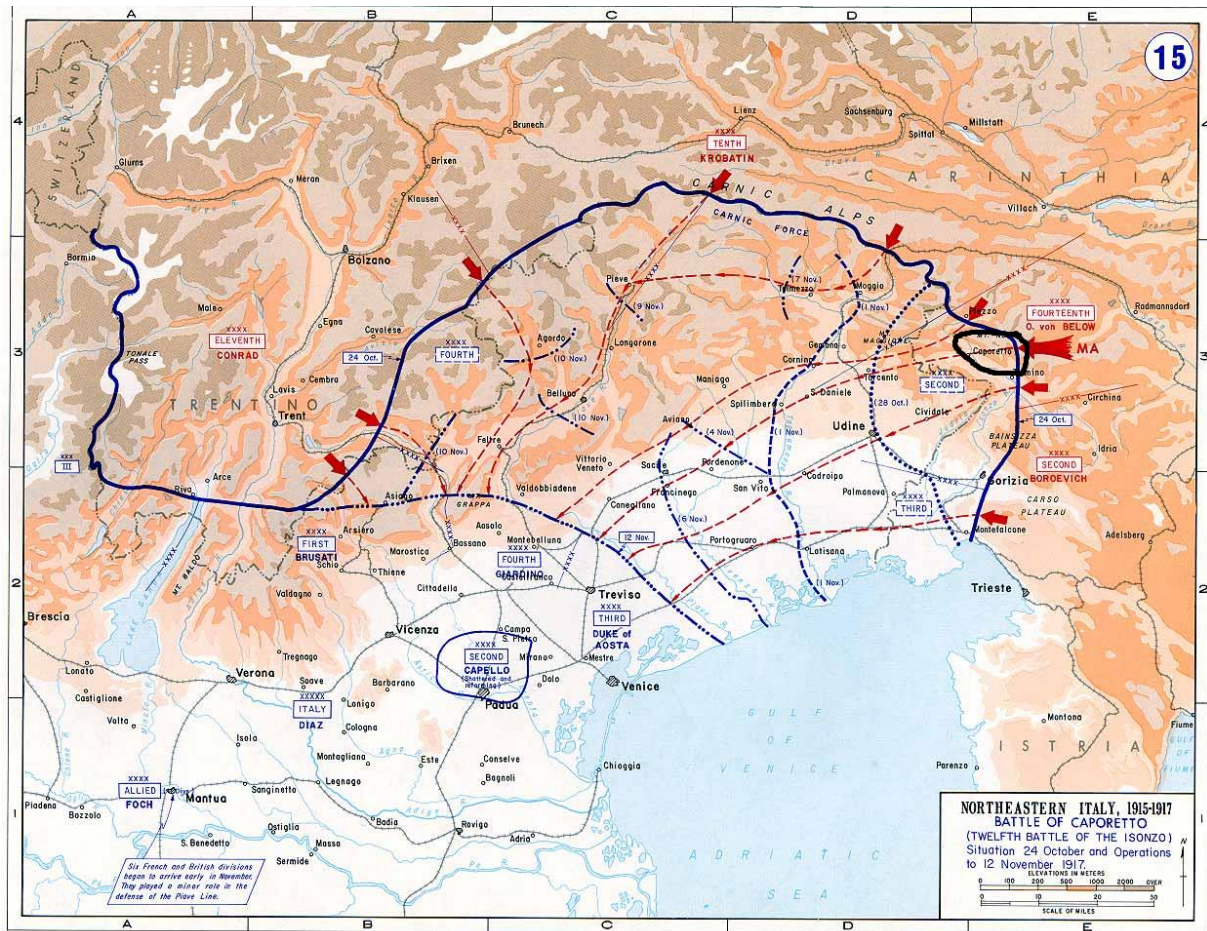
This poster uses the same tactics as appendix 7, appeal to the morals of its audience, using specific examples of conflict on the frontier in Western-Europe, in an attempt to make the public buy more Liberty Loan Bonds.



Appendix 8:

Map which shows the starting location and types of relief worked started by the American Red Cross in Italy.

Found in: Charles M. Bakewell, *The Story of the American Red Cross in Italy* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1920), 109.



Appendix 9:

Map which shows the advance of the Austrian-Hungarian troops following the major defeat of the Italian army at Caporetto, circled in black, and the newly drawn front. The new front was only a day's march away from Venice and other major cities in Italy.

United States Military Academy Westpoint, https://westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/academics/academic_departments/history/WWI/WWOne15.gif (An older variant of the same map is used since it is much easier to read, but that has since been removed) Last accessed 18-06-2019.



UK-849

Appendix 10:

A poster created and published by the Division of Pictorial Publicity, which reads “50 centres in Italy and Mediterranean.” These centres were from the YMCA, but the poster also has an American Red Cross ship entering the harbour.

Found at: The Hoover Institution Website, accessed at:
<https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/32703/ymca-50-centres-in-italy-and-mediterranean> last accessed 23-06-2019.



Appendix 11:

In Rome, A boy from Monteporzio celebrates the Fourth of July with a Garibaldini, a veteran from Italy's nineteenth-century wars for independence and national unification.

Found in: Julia F. Irwin, "Nation Building and Rebuilding: The American Red Cross In Italy During the Great War," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 8:3 (2009): 422.