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AN EDITOR AND A WAR:
WILL A. CAMPBELL AND THE HELENA INDEPENDENT, 1914-1921

By

Charles Sackett Johnson
B.A., University of Montana, 1970

Presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
1977

Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

Johnson, Charles Sackett, M.A., December 1977

History

An Editor and a War: Will A. Campbell and the Helena Independent
1914-1921 (278 pp.)

Director: K. Ross Toole */KRT*

This thesis examines Will A. Campbell as an influential Montana newspaper editor and prominent member of the Montana Council of Defense during World War I.

Primary research sources were editorials written by Campbell and editors of other newspapers during the period and the records of the Montana Council of Defense.

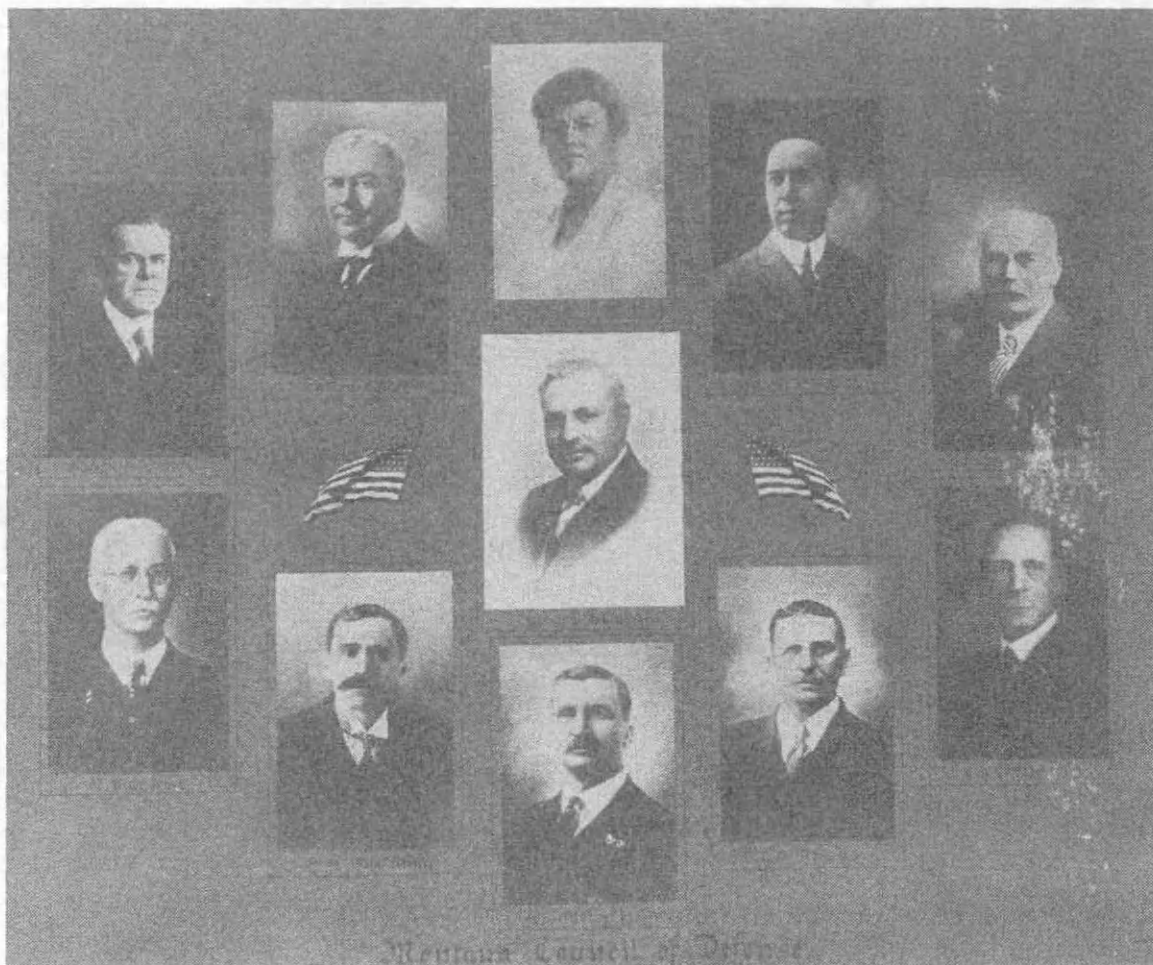
The thesis concludes that Campbell was a talented newspaper editor who, like many other Americans, was overtaken in his zealotry promoting the American war effort. His writings as a newspaper editor and his actions as a Council of Defense member made him a leader in the movement to strip dissenters and his political opponents of the rights guaranteed in the Constitution he venerated.

Campbell's actions were significant because of the Council's questionable activities, which are highlighted in some national histories of the period. Moreover, Campbell also served as a mouthpiece for the state's predominant political and economic force, the Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

The thesis concludes that Campbell, by becoming so personally and emotionally involved in the war effort, gave up his newspaperman's role of being a detached observer who could comment freely on the issues. Through his editorials and Council actions, Campbell himself became a controversial issue during the war. Although he may have cherished this role, it did nothing to enhance the credibility of his newspaper.



WILL A. CAMPBELL



THE MONTANA COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

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INTRODUCTION

Once lead this people into war, and they'll forget there ever was such a thing as tolerance. To fight must be brutal and ruthless and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fibre of our national life, infecting Congress, the courts, the policeman on the beat, the man in the street.¹

--President Woodrow Wilson,
April 2, 1917.

Montana and the nation faced turbulent times during the years of World War I. Many Montanans, as well as other Americans, ignored or forgot their rich heritage of civil liberties during the war years. Both official and unofficial groups suppressed dissent by legal and clearly extra-legal means in the interest of Americanism. A foreign name, a thick accent, a concern over relatives left behind in Europe often wrongly branded loyal Americans as would-be German spies and saboteurs. Many American newspapers, cowering to government pressure, fueled this hysteria; their exaggerated reports further frightened and incited an already terrified nation.

¹John L. Heaton, Cobb of the World (New York: n.p., 1924), p. 270, quoted in H. C. Peterson and Gilbert C. Fite, Opponents of War, 1917-1919 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), p. 11.

Montana, seemingly well out of the range of German U-boats and poison gas, was at the vanguard of this national hysteria. As historian K. Ross Toole wrote: "No state in the union engaged in quite the same orgy of bookburning, inquisitions of suspected traitors and general hysteria."² Labor unrest in the tough mining city of Butte, overblown reports of the activities of the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the threat of discontent farmers arising, as some had in neighboring North Dakota, all contributed to the terror. A statute passed by a special session of the Montana Legislature became the model for the federal Sedition Act of 1918.

During the same special session in 1918, Montana legislators granted virtual blanket powers to the state Council of Defense to purge the state of those it considered disloyal. The Council seized these powers and quickly began its witch-hunts. In most states, councils of defense, which were formed in response to an order from President Wilson, busied themselves with innocuous but helpful projects. They promoted the sale of Liberty Bonds, provided farmers with technical advice and urged persons to eat less meat. In Montana, the Council supervised these tasks and more. It intimidated and harassed innocent citizens, it banned the use of the German language, it burned German books, and it tried to stifle dissent. County

²K. Ross Toole, Twentieth Century Montana: A State of Extremes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), p. 139.

councils of defense, headed by prominent businessmen, carried these inquisitions one sordid step further.

Flag-kissing, which might have been expected in the Kaiser's Germany, became the acid test of red, white and blue patriotism. One young Montanan, E. V. Starr, refused to kiss an American flag, saying: "What is this thing anyway? Nothing but a piece of cotton with a little paint on it and some other marks in the corner there. I will not kiss that thing. It might be covered with microbes." For this "seditious" remark, Starr faced a \$500 fine and imprisonment.³

Histories of the period highlight examples of repression in Montana and refer to the work of the Council of Defense.⁴ But this repression certainly was not unique to Montana. Most states had similar bands of patriots seeking to imprison or banish the dissenters.

Since Germany did have spies stationed in the United States during the war, not all of the nation's fears were groundless. Yet it is improbable that German agents cruised over the mountains of Montana in low-flying airplanes to plan bombing raids, as some persons seriously contended. The claim that Butte miners went on strike to help Germany by crippling

³Peterson and Fite, Opponents of War, pp. 196-197.

⁴Besides Peterson and Fite, Opponents of War, see also William J. Preston, Jr., Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933 (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New York: Atheneum, 1963); and Robert K. Murray, Red Scare: A Study of National Hysteria, 1919-1920 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

American copper production is equally preposterous. Butte miners walked off their jobs after a mine holocaust killed more than 160 workers in 1917 for only two reasons: safer working conditions and higher wages.

If Germany had launched an espionage operation in Montana, it was either inept or miniscule. To read accounts in many Montana newspapers, however, the German invaders and sympathizers posed a serious threat to the state.

Montana's most powerful political and economic force, the Anaconda Copper Mining Company (ACM), owned some of these daily newspapers outright. As one might suspect, these newspapers criticized miners' strikes, radical unions and politicians challenging the Company-dominated status quo. A number of other newspapers, while not owned by ACM, hewed the Company line and warned readers of Wobblies, Nonpartisan Leaguers and such dangerous "radicals" as Jeannette Rankin, Burton K. Wheeler and Joseph M. Dixon.

Among the state's influential newspapermen was Will A. Campbell, editor of the Helena Independent. Whether the Independent was ACM property during the wartime years is not clear. If the newspaper was not owned by the Company, Anaconda's executives on the sixth floor of the Hennessy Building in Butte certainly could count Campbell as a sympathetic ally.

Campbell's influence was not restricted to journalistic circles. He was a close friend and political adviser of Governor Samuel V. Stewart, a Democrat elected in 1912 and

re-elected four years later. It was Stewart who appointed his friend Campbell to the Montana Council of Defense, and it was Campbell who was the Council's most influential member.

This thesis will examine Campbell as an important Montana newspaper editor from 1914 to 1921 and also as an outspoken member of the Council of Defense. Often the two roles coincided. His newspaper served as a mouthpiece for the Council, which usually met in secret, publicizing and defending its actions. Similarly, Campbell used his seat on the Council of Defense to smoke out political enemies of his newspaper.

Campbell's influence around the state as a newspaper editor is difficult to assess. That other editors frequently reprinted his editorials indicates at the very least that his opinions often received statewide exposure. It is easier to discern his role on the Council of Defense because minutes and verbatim transcripts of some meetings and hearings are available. His editorials also offer clues. Campbell, for example, strongly advocated in editorials that the use of the German language be banned in Montana. Later, at Campbell's urging, the Council enacted such a ban.

The period from 1914 to 1921 spans the years before the American entry into the war, the years American soldiers fought in Europe and the period after the fighting ended when anti-Bolshevism replaced anti-German feelings.

While this repression in Montana and other states is deplorable by any standard, it must be remembered that America was a troubled nation during the war. Unlike the Spanish-American War, this war was not a lark and, in the eyes of many, posed a genuine threat to America's future. The war's end did not end the turmoil. Describing the post-war years of the infamous Red Scare, one writer said: "It was an era of lawless and disorderly defense of law and order, of unconstitutional defense of the Constitution, of suspicion and civil conflict--in a very literal sense, a reign of terror."⁵

Throughout this period, Will Campbell is a study in contradictions. He used his considerable writing talents to inform as well as deceive his readers. His opinions were not restricted to the editorial page columns; they infested the news columns too. The newspaper's name itself was a misnomer, for the Independent was no more independent than it was Republican. It was all but a house organ for the Democratic party editorially and, to a lesser extent, in the news columns. Although he often appeared heartless through his editorials, Campbell occasionally headed fund-raising campaigns for charities.

By becoming so personally and emotionally involved in the war effort, Campbell in effect abandoned his news-

⁵Frederick Lewis Allen, Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920's (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 39.

paperman's role of being a detached observer who could comment on the issues. This thesis will try to show with repeated examples the dangers inherent in such an approach to journalism. By placing himself in such a position, Campbell became an issue during the emotional battles in Montana during this period. It may have been a role he enjoyed, but it did nothing to enhance the credibility of his newspaper.

CHAPTER I

A NEW EDITOR FOR THE INDEPENDENT

Editorially, the Helena Independent will support the principles of Democratic government as formulated by Thomas Jefferson, who once said he would rather live in a country with newspapers and no laws than in a country with plenty of laws and no newspapers.¹

--Will A. Campbell, upon
taking over as editor of
the Helena Independent,
March 6, 1913.

In March 1913, William Alexander Campbell arrived in Montana to become editor of the Helena Independent. His journalism credentials were impressive. Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, on May 8, 1881, Campbell attended the University of Nebraska for three and one-half years. He squeezed in a job writing editorials for the Nebraska State Journal with his studies. Campbell did not graduate from college, leaving school to take a newspaper job in 1900. As one account said: "His first love--and his last--journalism, early luring him

¹Helena Independent, March 6, 1913, p. 1. Campbell misquoted Jefferson, who said, ". . . if it were left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

from learning's halls."² For the next nine years, he bounced around on the newspaper circuit and worked for several dailies--the Nebraska City Conservative, Denver Post, Chicago Chronicle, Sioux City Tribune, and Omaha Bee.³

A skillful writer, Campbell also was a inveterate promoter. He had not only served as financial editor of the Omaha newspaper but also headed the newly created publicity bureau of that city's Commercial Club. The bureau, according to one newspaper report, was "charged with the duty of exploiting the Nebraska city throughout the country."⁴

After turning down two previous offers, Campbell left Omaha in 1909 for a full-time publicity job with the Great Northern Railway Company in St. Paul, Minnesota. He received an annual salary of \$5,000 as an assistant to Vice President Louis W. Hill.⁵ Campbell, who had traveled throughout the Midwest and Northwest promoting Omaha, "handled the publicity end of the land exploitation department of that company until 1913."⁶ The Great Northern joined forces with two other railroads, Northern Pacific and Milwaukee, to stage an annual

²Ibid., December 15, 1938, p. 1.

³Tom Stout, ed., Montana, Its Story and Biography: A History of Aboriginal and Territorial Montana and Three Decades of Statehood (Chicago and New York: American Historical Society, 1921), Vol. 3, pp. 1177-1178.

⁴Will A Campbell scrapbooks, 1907-1910, Montana Historical Society Library, Archives, newspaper clipping, n.n., n.d.

⁵Ibid., 1912 scrapbook, newspaper clipping, n.n., n.d.

⁶Stout, Montana, p. 1178.

land show in St. Paul, organized by Campbell, to lure persons to buy dryland farms in Montana, Idaho and the Dakotas.⁷

In 1913, Campbell decided to move to one of the states he had promoted. With some associates, he purchased the Helena Independent, a daily newspaper in Montana's capital city.⁸ His son recalled that Helena rancher Lewis Penwell and attorney and United States Senator Thomas J. Walsh "enticed him to come out."⁹

That the morning newspaper had been a fiercely Democratic organ for years did not deter Campbell, a Republican. He converted quickly to a Democrat and pledged his support to that party in his first editorial.¹⁰ Said his son: "Democrats in those days were so conservative. There was little difference in parties then, unlike today, except over who was going to cut up the hogs."¹¹ An associate who had worked as a reporter for the rival--and Republican--afternoon Helena newspaper, the Montana Record-Herald, added: "Old Will wasn't a Democrat at all. But he had to support the Democratic party at least for a while because it was supposed to be a Democratic

⁷William C. Campbell, personal interview, Helena, Montana, January 13, 1972. He is Campbell's only child.

⁸Helena Independent, December 15, 1938, p. 5.

⁹Campbell interview.

¹⁰Ibid.; Helena Independent, March 6, 1913, p. 1.

¹¹Campbell interview.

paper when he came out here."¹²

Campbell and others bought the Independent from relatives of John S. M. Neill for \$90,000--\$75,000 for the capital stock and \$15,000 for outstanding accounts.¹³ Neill had owned the Helena newspaper previously but sold it to copper king William Andrews Clark in 1900.¹⁴ Clark, who bought the Independent as a tool in his relentless quest for a seat in the United States Senate, sold it back to Neil in 1905 after safely securing a coveted seat in the Senate.¹⁵

Walsh bought almost \$5,000 worth of Independent stock in 1913,¹⁶ and another future senator, Butte attorney Burton K. Wheeler, put up \$500.¹⁷ Both at times came to regret their connections with the outspoken newspaper and its vitriolic editor.

Other large stockholders who sat on the newspaper company board of directors were: C. B. Nolan, Helena, former

¹²Charles D. Greenfield, Jr., personal interview, Helena, Montana, January 12, 1972.

¹³Helena Independent, March 6, 1913, p. 8.

¹⁴Florence H. Sanden, "Consolidation of Montana Newspapers--Their Tendency Toward Consolidation and Present Ownership" (Master's thesis, Columbia University, 1930), p. 15.

¹⁵Burton K. Wheeler with Dayton Stoddard, unpublished manuscript, Wheeler MSS, Montana Historical Society Library, Archives, Box 26, Folder 16, p. J-2a.

¹⁶Miles W. Dunnington, "Senator Thomas J. Walsh, Independent Democrat in the Wilson Years" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1940), p. 31.

¹⁷Wheeler and Stoddard, unpublished manuscript, Wheeler MSS, Box 26, Folder 16, p. J-2a.

Democratic attorney general and Walsh's law partner; D. G. O'Shea, Red Lodge, banker and Democratic state senator; T. M. Swindlehurst, Livingston, "capitalist" and chairman of the Montana Democratic Central Committee; Lewis Penwell, Helena, rancher; W. R. C. Stewart, Bozeman, former district court judge and brother of Governor Samuel V. Stewart, a Democrat; H. A. Davee, Lewistown, Democratic state superintendent of public instruction; and Campbell.¹⁸

The board elected Penwell president of the Independent Publishing Company, Nolan as vice president, Campbell as secretary and designated the Union Bank and Trust Company of Helena as treasurer. Board members appointed Campbell editor of the newspaper and manager of the publishing company.¹⁹

They offered some \$10,000 worth of stock to the public for sale.²⁰ In an editorial entitled "So the People May Know"²¹ the next day, Campbell explained what the relationship between the stockholders and the newspaper would be:

¹⁸Helena Independent, March 6, 1913, p. 8.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Campbell apparently borrowed and frequently used the editorial headline "So the People May Know" from his former bosses at the Denver Post, the colorful F. G. Bonfils and H. H. Tamm. See Gene Fowler, Timber Line: A Story of Bonfils and Tamm (New York: Garden City Books, 1933), p. 96.

This is the understanding among those who control the stock of the Independent. If they cannot be paid cash dividends, they will not be paid in editorial favors nor undeserved political support.

The stockholders understand that what the people want is news rather than their views. Their suggestions will be welcomed as readers and friends, the same as those of every other citizen of Montana.

We expect that our stock holders will be our friends and that they will exert their influence in behalf of the Independent, that its earning power may be increased and the paper made larger and better as befits the morning newspaper in the capital city of a great state. Their combined efforts and those of the editors will not make an ideal newspaper, because an ideal newspaper, like all dreams, is quite impossible of realization.

Every dollar's worth of stock sold thus far has been bought by men and women of Montana and a good share of it by those who will devote their lives to the paper. There still remains a small amount to be sold. As soon as it is disposed of, the stock books of the corporation will be open to the inspection of anyone desiring to honestly know who holds the stock.²²

Whether the powerful Anaconda Copper Mining Company, which gradually amassed a newspaper chain that included the Independent and most other Montana dailies, had fastened its grips on the Helena newspaper as early as 1913 cannot be determined. Like a spy on an espionage mission, Anaconda conducted its business clandestinely, leaving few tracks.²³

²²Helena Independent, March 7, 1913, p. 1.

²³No corporation records of the Independent ownership during this period are available. In November 1943, the Independent merged with another Anaconda Company newspaper, the Montana Record-Herald, forming the Helena Independent Record.

Anaconda's penchant for secrecy became legendary. As John Gunther wrote in 1947: "Anaconda is probably the most secretive of the great American corporations."²⁴ Despite a few leaks,²⁵ Anaconda officials would not admit publicly to

Former Independent Record publisher George D. Remington said he did not know where the company files for the first few decades of the 20th century are located. Remington is now publisher of the Billings Gazette. George D. Remington, personal interview, Helena, Montana, August 1971.

Thomas F. Wigal, former director of the Anaconda Company public relations department in Montana and a former Butte newsman, said the company destroyed its newspaper files after selling eight newspapers to Lee Enterprises, Inc., in June 1959. Thomas F. Wigal, personal interview, Helena, Montana, July 1971.

²⁴ John Gunther, Inside U.S.A. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), p. 167. Fortune Magazine said: "If you were able to make a list of the most secretive corporations in the United States, you would probably have to enter Anaconda's name among the first ten or twelve. . . ." "Anaconda," Fortune, XV, January 1937, p. 72.

²⁵ In 1935, a select committee of the Montana State House of Representatives investigated the political activities of public utilities and other corporations. Campbell and other company newspaper editors testified on the financial arrangements, leading the committee to conclude: "It is apparent that the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, the Montana Power Company and the Montana Power Gas Company wield a controlling influence over a number of daily papers of the state. . . ." House Journal of the Twenty-Fourth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, January 7, 1935, to March 7, 1935 (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1935), pp. 773-777, 916-926.

In 1951, the Fairmont Corporation, a holding company wholly owned by Anaconda, applied to the Federal Communications Commission to purchase control of radio station KFBB in Great Falls. The FCC required Fairmont officials to divulge previously unknown details of the extent of Anaconda's newspaper chain. See U. S., Federal Communications Commission, Record Group 173, National Archives, Docket 10026. The Montana Historical Society Library has microfilm of these records.

Using the FCC files, former Billings attorney, legislator and Constitutional Convention Delegate John M. Schiltz wrote a revealing article on the Anaconda newspapers. See

owning the newspapers until they sold them in June 1959.²⁶
 But as one critic said: "It has never been any real secret
 that Anaconda owned or controlled certain newspapers; . . ."²⁷
 Fixing the exact date of Anaconda's takeover of the Independent
and other papers is more difficult.²⁸

A bitter Wheeler, his memory perhaps jaded by some
 stinging Campbell editorials, believed Anaconda bought con-
 trolling interest in the Independent in 1913. Governor
 Stewart's brother, W. R. C., purchased a majority of shares

John M. Schiltz, "Montana's Captive Press," Montana Opinion,
 I (June 1956):1-11.

²⁶William E. Larson, "News Management in the Company
 Press: The Anaconda Copper Mining Company's Missoulian,
Billings Gazette, and Helena Independent, Independent Record,
 1938-1944" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1971),
 p. 8.

²⁷Schiltz, "Montana's Capitive Press," p. 5.

²⁸In a letter to Ruth James Towe in May 1963, Don
 Anderson, president of the Lee Newspapers of Montana, said:
 "I suspect it would take a competent research person many
 months to trace down the actual dates of purchase of the
 various newspapers by the Anaconda Company. There were so
 many mergers, shifts in ownership and the like that it would
 take a certified public accountant a long time to prow1
 through the corporation books and discover just when these
 changes were made. In several cases, it was a matter of the
 Anaconda Company first loaning money to help a friendly news-
 paper over a rough spot, and eventually taking over title to
 the paper to save its investment. . . . I don't believe you
 will get all of this information by scrutiny of the corporate
 books. It would require such a study, plus a lot of inter-
 views of those who knew the facts, that you would probably be
 a very old lady and ready for a PHD [sic] before you got the
 job done." Ruth James Towe, "The Lee Newspapers of Montana:
 The First Three Years, 1959-1962" (Master's thesis, Univer-
 sity of Montana, 1969), pp. 208-209.

as a trustee for ACM, Wheeler said.²⁹

One student speculated that Campbell could not have afforded to buy the Independent on the basis of his previous salaries, but she apparently ignored the presence of the other stockholders. She said: "It is not unreasonable to assume that perhaps the Company provided the financial backing for this venture."³⁰

A retired Independent newsman fixed the takeover date at sometime between 1918 and 1920.³¹ Another journalist said he was certain ACM had financial control of the Independent by 1920 but could offer no proof.³²

In The Brass Check, Upton Sinclair wrote in 1920--and

²⁹Wheeler and Stoddard, unpublished manuscript, Wheeler MSS, Box 26, Folder 16, p. J-2a. Burton K. Wheeler, personal interview, Washington, D.C., March 20, 1970.

³⁰Shirley Jean DeForth, "The Montana Press and Joseph M. Dixon, 1920-1922" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1959), p. 10. DeForth lists no evidence, just tenuous links, to substantiate her claim, which may be colored by her obvious pro-Dixon feelings. Campbell criticized Dixon until 1920, when he offered a lukewarm endorsement of Dixon's candidacy for governor. He began attacking Dixon shortly after the Republican governor took office.

³¹Al Gaskill, personal interview, Helena, Montana, May 23, 1972. Gaskill went to work for the Independent as a sportswriter in 1918. He retired as managing editor of the Independent Record in 1963.

³²Miles Romney, Jr., personal interview, Hamilton, Montana, May 20, 1972. He was editor and publisher of the Western News, a weekly newspaper published in Hamilton, until his death in 1976. Both Romney and his father, Miles, Sr., who managed the newspaper from 1893 to 1937, knew Campbell.

probably erroneously overestimated the number--that Anaconda owned or controlled all but two Montana newspapers. One exception was the fiesty Butte Bulletin, a radical labor publication; he did not identify the other but probably meant the Great Falls Tribune.³³

Others set the date somewhere in the 1920s, especially around 1923 and 1924.³⁴

Regardless of who actually owned the stock, one point is clear: if the Anaconda Copper Mining Company did not own the Helena Independent from 1913 on, it had a loyal supporter in Will A. Campbell and his newspaper. Despite his periodic denials, the Helena editor was known around the state as a "Company man" throughout this period.³⁵ His editorial stands

³³Upton Sinclair, The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism (Pasadena, Calif.: published by the author, 1920), p. 242.

³⁴Richard T. Ruetten settled on 1923 but offered no evidence. Richard T. Ruetten, "Anaconda Journalism: The End of an Era," Journalism Quarterly XXXVII (Winter 1960):6.

Towe agreed, noting that Campbell removed the newspaper's boxed slogan, "Montana's Independent Newspaper" from its editorial page in January 1922. ACM and Montana Power also began advertising extensively during this period. Towe, "Lee Newspapers of Montana," p. 13, n. 24.

Campbell's son believed the date was in 1924 but had no proof. Campbell interview, January 13, 1972.

K. Ross Toole, in an extensive history of ACM, said the Independent became company property in the 1920s. K. Ross Toole, "A History of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company: A Study of the Relationships Between a State and Its People and a Corporation, 1880-1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1954), p. 294.

³⁵Richard T. Ruetten, "Burton K. Wheeler: A Progressive Between the Wars" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1961), p. 14. James Leonard Bates, "Senator Walsh

did nothing to refute this charge.

Campbell's initial editorial, however, pledged objectivity and fairness while boasting of the newspaper's Democratic heritage:

For forty-seven years the Helena Independent has been a Democratic newspaper.

But during all that long period of its existence, it has been more to the state and more to this community, than simply a paper supporting platforms and individuals representing a more or less changing party.

.

THE FIRST THING THE HELENA INDEPENDENT WILL LOOK FOR IS NEWS, not one-sided, prejudiced, tainted or lacking. It is quite as essential to be fair and give all the news as to be truthful editorially. [Emphasis in original.]

The management of this paper has no sympathy with the disposition in some quarters to say that newspapers ought to limit the amount of news they print; that certain kinds of news ought not to be published. It is the belief of the present publishers that whatever the Divine Providence permits to occur, we ought not be too cowardly nor too proud to print.

Editorially, the Helena Independent will support the principles of Democratic government as formulated by Thomas Jefferson, who once said he would rather live in a country with newspapers and no laws than in a country with plenty of laws and no newspapers.

Of the untried men now taking up the reins of government in the state of Montana and the Republic of the United States, we know nothing except that their private lives commend them to us, and the confidence

of Montana, 1918-1924: A Liberal Under Pressure" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1952), p. 48. Jules Alexander Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana," in A History of Montana, Merrill G. Burlingame and K. Ross Toole, eds. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc., 1957), Vol. I, p. 258.

the American people have shown in these men by electing them to office, would recommend individuals to any newspaper as worthy of public trust. We will give each and every one of them our public support as long as he deserves it and retains the confidence of the people [Democrats headed both the national and state administrations.]

It will be hard to judge sometimes. It will be hard to decide when a public official is unworthy of the support of a party newspaper. But a newspaper is an institution which should always fight for progress and reform and never tolerate injustice, corruption nor inefficiency.

To follow a set of rules; to blindly support a party; to say today what shall be the policy of the paper in a year, is impossible in newspaper making.

Thus the Helena Independent will never pretend to a silly infallibility, but will have the courage to admit that it has been wrong, if it has made a mistake and it will doubtless outlive ideas as men do and is not in any way pledged to the "old cause and the old standard" nor to the support of a living individual.

We believe in a constructive policy of cooperation between the communities of Montana. Especially should the larger cities work together free from hostile suspicion, because they wield a tremendous power and will have a great influence on the present and future of what we firmly believe to be the greatest state on which the sun has ever shone.³⁶

Realizing that a newspaper is only as good as its staff, Campbell brought more than just his wife, Maude, whom he married in 1903, and son, William, born in 1908, to

³⁶Helena Independent, March 6, 1913, p. 1.

Montana with him.³⁷ Campbell named Guy E. LaFollette, a nephew of United States Senator Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin, as his managing editor. The two men became friends on the Sioux City Tribune in Iowa, where LaFollette was city editor. Their friendship carried over to Chicago, where Campbell worked for the Chronicle and LaFollette for Hearst publications.³⁸ LaFollette's last job had been with a Democratic newspaper in Oregon.³⁹

Nepotism being as integral to journalism as deadlines, Campbell later added his two brothers to the Independent payroll. Glenn became business manager, while Bert headed the advertising department.⁴⁰

For his bookkeeper and Girl Friday, Will Campbell brought Jane M. MacMillan, who had followed him previously when he switched jobs.⁴¹ His publicity assistant in Omaha, Miss MacMillan had joined Campbell as an assistant for Great Northern in St. Paul.⁴²

³⁷ Stout, Montana, p. 1178.

³⁸ Helena Independent, December 15, 1938, p. 5.

³⁹ Ibid., March 6, 1913, p. 8.

⁴⁰ Ibid., December 15, 1938, p. 5.

⁴¹ Stout, Montana, p. 1178.

⁴² Will A. Campbell, scrapbooks, 1912, several newspaper clippings, n.n., n.d. One, which praised Campbell for organizing the Northwest Products Exposition in Minneapolis, said: "Mr. Campbell's best man, and most dependable assistant has been Miss Janet McMillian [sic], his stenographer, who runs the 'gate' for him, takes care of tickets and cash and knows every detail of the business. Few people except exhibitors who paid her for their space here seemed to know who she was."

With the staff assembled, the board of directors re-incorporated the Helena Independent Publishing Company in June 1913. New officers elected were Will Campbell, president, Glenn Campbell, vice president, and Jane MacMillan, secretary and treasurer.⁴³

Campbell's rapid elevation to the company presidency in just three months may have been a reward for his thorough conversion to the Democratic party. During the interim, his editorials showed no traces of a Republican background as Campbell heaped praise on President Wilson and Governor Stewart day after day. The board of directors, stacked with prominent Democrats, may have decided to leave the entire operation of the newspaper in Campbell's experienced hands.

Aggressive and determined, Campbell set out to improve the Independent. Besides arranging for regular reports from the Montana congressional delegation, Campbell dispatched J. F. Durham, the former editor, to Washington, D.C., to serve as correspondent.⁴⁴

Campbell, who stood five feet seven and weighed 185 pounds, was handsome and popular in Helena social circles.⁴⁵ He soon joined a number of clubs, including the Masons, Elks, Rotary, Helena Commercial Club, Montana Club, Helena Country

⁴³Stout, Montana, p. 1178.

⁴⁴Helena Independent, March 6, 1913, p. 8.

⁴⁵Campbell interview, January 13, 1972; Greenfield interview, January 12, 1972.

Club, and the Young Men's Christian Association.⁴⁶

He quickly became best friends with the governor, Sam Stewart, who joined the publishing company's board of directors after leaving public office in 1921.⁴⁷

Campbell was a workhorse, writing five or six editorials a day and about a dozen one-paragraph editorial fillers.⁴⁸ He commented on issues ranging from international problems to those of Helena concern only. He would rise early, arrive at the Independent office at 52 South Main Street at 8 a.m., work all day and return after dinner to put the paper to bed.⁴⁹

One former employee remembered Campbell as a "very brilliant editorial writer." The editor, he said, considered becoming a minister while in college and knew the Bible well, coming up with quotations off the top of his head for use in editorials. Campbell also handled news stories when necessary.⁵⁰

"He was a very stern and demanding man to work for," the former employee said. "He encouraged his men to go out and get the story, and it didn't matter whose toes they stepped on."⁵¹

⁴⁶Stout, Montana, p. 1178.

⁴⁷Campbell interview, January 13, 1972.

⁴⁸Ibid.; Gaskill interview, May 23, 1972.

⁴⁹Campbell interview, January 13, 1972.

⁵⁰Gaskill interview, May 23, 1972.

⁵¹Ibid.

CHAPTER II

WAR IN EUROPE AND UNREST IN BUTTE

It is noticeable that most of the disturbers in Butte being picked up now and then have been residents of the town a short while, thus proving that it is the drifting gang of IWWs which have been responsible for most of the trouble.¹

--Will A. Campbell, assessing blame for labor unrest in Butte, September 17, 1914.

Hopes for a lasting world peace sank in 1914 when an assassin's bullet triggered a world war that would leave almost eight million persons dead. Although the United States did not enter the war directly until three years later, the mood of many of its citizens became more bellicose and anti-German.

In Montana, Will Campbell offered revealing glimpses as to how he would react when America finally declared war. Campbell, through his Helena Independent editorials, asserted his views on radicalism, labor strikes, immigration and dissent during the years before 1917. To be sure, he refined and intensified these stands after the United States entered the war, yet one can trace their roots to these pre-war days.

¹Helena Independent, September 17, 1914, p. 4.

One labor group in particular, the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or Wobblies), was anathema to Campbell.² The IWW, founded in Chicago in 1905, had gained strength in Butte, where Wobblies hoped to capture control of the Western Federation of Miners (WFM) Local No. 1 as part of their drive for One Big Union. Conservative elements, and probably Company infiltrators too, controlled the union but by a tenuous majority.³

Besides frequently publishing emotional wire-service reports of IWW activities around the country, Campbell tossed

²For background on the IWW, see Paul F. Brissenden, The IWW: A Study of American Syndicalism (New York: Russell and Russell, 1957), passim; John S. Gambs, The Decline of the IWW (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), passim; Vernon H. Jensen, Heritage of Conflict: Labor Relations in the Nonferrous Metals Industry up to 1930 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1950), Ch. XI, passim; Patrick Renshaw, The Wobblies: The Story of Syndicalism in the United States (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1967), passim; Robert Emlyn Evans, "Montana's Role in the Enactment of Legislation Designed to Suppress the Industrial Workers of the World" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1964), Ch. I.

³For further information on the union movement in Butte, see Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, Ch. V; Jensen, Heritage of Conflict, Ch. XVII, XVIII. Jensen's chapter XVIII, "Blasting of the Butte Miners' Union," is reprinted in Michael T. Malone and Richard B. Roeder, eds., The Montana Past: An Anthology (Missoula: University of Montana Press, 1969), Ch. XIII.

Also, see Arnon Gutfeld, "The Butte Labor Strikes and Company Retaliation During World War I" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1967), Ch. I; Arnon Gutfeld, "The Murder of Frank Little: Radical Labor Agitation in Butte, Montana, 1917," Labor History X (1969):178-180; Arnon Gutfeld, "The Speculator Disaster in 1917: Labor Resurgence at Butte, Montana," Arizona and the West XI (Spring 1969):30-31.

regular brickbats at the Wobblies from the Independent editorial pages. A recurrent theme underscored these editorials: Montanans had better run the Wobbly agitators out quickly or face the dire consequences.

Said one editorial: "There is one town in which the IWW is not kicking up any fuss at present. San Diego cleaned out the crew a year or two ago and has had peace ever since."⁴ Another editorial the same day described the IWW as "the same worthless loafing gang that has had the coast stirred up for several years."⁵

Campbell blamed a strike of Butte newsboys on the IWW and suggested that parents "might use a bed slat to advantage out in the woodshed."⁶ Parisians, he said, also had trouble with the IWW, but the French recognized them for what they were--anarchists.⁷

Immigrants were the source of much of the labor agitation, according to Campbell. Backing tighter immigration laws, Campbell said:

There is room for the right sort of immigrants in America, but it is the height of folly to turn them loose in the cities of the more thickly populated sections of the country, where they enter into competition with American labor and cause such trouble as is

⁴Helena Independent, January 6, 1914, p. 4.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., January 8, 1914, p. 4.

⁷Ibid., April 3, 1914, p. 4.

observed, for instance, in the mining regions.⁸

In another editorial, the Helena editor contended that the melting-pot concept of immigration was "overworked."⁹

Somehow, in Campbell's eyes, the Butte Wobblies had even helped incite normally docile Negroes. Campbell called his readers' attention to an incident in Butte in which a "bad negro" shot his boss, who had complained about the quality of his work. "In these days of the IWW," Campbell cautioned, "no boss should have the temerity to suggest anything about how his porter works."¹⁰

As for those doomsday scientists, muckraking journalists and women lecturers who consistently found fault with the world, Campbell replied:

The world is growing better--except for the man and woman who is [sic] looking for the foul and the unclean or the scientist who is searching for the unfit. They can find what they are looking for--as any of us can. . . .

The world is growing better. The indictment against the human race contains no true bills. We move, your honor, for a dismissal.¹¹

Campbell remained ever loyal to the Independent's Democratic backers at the expense of impartiality. One might expect that he would run a slate of the Democratic candidates

⁸Ibid., January 14, 1914, p. 4.

⁹Ibid., February 6, 1914, p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., June 6, 1914, p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., February 4, 1914, p. 4.

and their platforms on the editorial page,¹² but the news coverage also showed a strong Democratic bias. On the eve of a city election, a page-one headline said this about the Democratic candidate for mayor:

POLITICAL WEATHER VANE
POINTS TO THE ELECTION
FRANK STEELE FOR MAYOR¹³

Despite the newspaper support, Steele lost to Republican Lincoln Working. The Independent buried news of his loss in the third deck of a headline proclaiming that Democrats gained control of the city council.¹⁴ Things could have been worse, Campbell wrote bitterly, for Butte and Missoula had elected socialist mayors.¹⁵

While the rest of Montana basked in the warm June sun in 1914, Butte simmered. The progressive wing of the factious Butte Miners Union had failed again to wrest control of the union from the entrenched conservatives. As they had done the two previous years, the conservative candidates, caustically labeled the "Company slate" by progressives, won the important offices. Comprising the dissident group were "independent and bona fide unionists" seeking change, along with Wobblies and

¹²Ibid., April 1, 3, 1914, p. 4.

¹³Ibid., April 5, 1914, p. 1.

¹⁴Ibid., April 7, 1914, p. 1.

¹⁵Ibid., April 8, 1914, p. 4.

their sympathizers.¹⁶

An angry mob reacted ten days later, June 13, during the annual Miners' Union Day parade. The mob knocked union stalwarts off their horses, ransacked Miners' Union Hall and demolished the safe to destroy union records and files.¹⁷

Explanations varied. A Western Federation of Miners official, J. C. Lowney, blamed imported IWW agitators for the riot. He said Wobblies feared that the WFM planned to merge with the United Mine Workers of America, which would jeopardize their chances of grabbing control of the Butte local. The Montana Socialist saw matters differently and attributed the trouble to a protest over abuse of power and graft by union officials. Butte newspapers also cited other grievances.¹⁸

Will Campbell saw a different coalition responsible for the riot--"a number of conservative miners, disgusted

¹⁶Jensen, Heritage of Conflict, p. 326.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 328-329; Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 132-133.

¹⁸Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 133-134. The other grievances included the despised rustling-card system, initiated by the Company in late 1912, the attendance of mining companies' spies at union meetings and political discrimination against individual workers by Company agents.

Under the rustling-card system, a miner needed a card from the employment office before he could seek work. If hired, he turned in the card, which was returned to the employment office. Company personnel officials thus could maintain dossiers on all employees and keep "troublemakers" off the payroll. Ibid., p. 132.

and enraged at alleged union mismanagement, and the reckless IWW element, which thrives only on discontent and destruction."¹⁹ But Campbell toed the Company line and defended the conservative, Company-dominated union leadership, saying:

Certainly, however, the long reign of peace in the big mining camp justifies the assertion that the miners of Butte should think twice before they completely dethrone the conservative element and install IWW agitators in places of power in the big union. For thirty years, the Butte union of the Western Federation of Miners has dwelt in peace with the operators of that district. The important result of this thirty years of industrial peace in Butte has been that the miners of that place have had more continuous work at better wages than in any similar mines of the world, while the short working day has been steadfastly observed.

These are the results which are of value. Whether the radicals who are now in control of the Butte labor situation can continue this long record of harmonious relations between employer and employe is a matter which is open to grave doubt, especially if, as seems likely, the IWW element is to predominate in the new union being proposed.²⁰

Progressives had banded together after the turmoil to form the rival union Campbell mentioned. Elected president was Muckie McDonald, who repeatedly denied that IWW members controlled the group.²¹

¹⁹Helena Independent, June 15, 1914, p. 4.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Toolc, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 134.

Campbell continued to warn readers of the IWW influence in Butte. He called IWWs "firebugs" who obstructed traffic by preaching treason from their soap boxes.²² In another editorial, the Independent said any peaceful settlement of the labor difficulties was unlikely "unless the miners purge themselves of that [IWW] influence and do it immediately."²³

Campbell's prediction that more trouble in Butte was imminent proved accurate. On June 23, a hostile crowd gathered outside Miners' Union Hall, where WFM regulars met. Disgruntled miners taunted the union members as the atmosphere grew tense. Then came a shot, killing one WFM loyalist, and more bullets that left a second man dead. The terrified crowd dispersed quickly. Shortly thereafter, twenty-five dynamite blasts demolished the hall. Shots echoed through the night in Butte. On the next day, McDonald said that his progressive miners were innocent of sabotage, and he charged the WFM with starting the melee. Charles Moyers, WFM president, blamed the IWW. And ACM, through its Butte Miner, attributed the violence to an internal union struggle.²⁴

The Helena editor criticized Mayor Duncan and the

²²Helena Independent, June 16, 1914, p. 4.

²³Ibid., June 23, 1914, p. 4.

²⁴Toolc, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 134-135; Jensen, Heritage of Conflict, pp. 334-336. Jensen said some persons believed the Company helped destroy the hall.

Butte police force and said they "were as utterly incompetent to handle the situation as ever." He called the destruction "deplorable" and said: "Butte and Montana will receive a second installment of bad advertising over the nation."²⁵

While Campbell's first editorial did not assess blame for the trouble, a subsequent one did. Stationing federal troops in Butte, he said, might be the only way to "bring the IWWs to their senses and send them scurrying away from Butte." Meantime, vigilante groups had formed to clear Butte of "the anarchistic riff-raff which is doubtless responsible for most of the trouble over there," Campbell wrote, not voicing disapproval.²⁶

As tensions mounted in Europe over the assassination of the Austrian crown prince, Montanans temporarily forgot about labor problems in Butte. Like most Americans, Campbell foresaw the dangers after Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. He predicted a worldwide financial crisis and accurately concluded:

The pity of it all is that perhaps not to exceed fifty men will be responsible for the tremendous strife. The peasants, the so-called common people who must pay with blood and toil for the row over territorial seizure, may and may not sympathize with the determination of the plotting rulers to wreck civilization.²⁷

²⁵Helena Independent, June 24, 1914, p. 4.

²⁶Ibid., June 27, 1914, p. 4.

²⁷Ibid., July 28, 1914, p. 4.

An editorial two days later said that the European experiences demonstrated why Latin Americans should be grateful they were under the American protection afforded by the Monroe Doctrine. If Latin American republics had attempted "any of the farcical revolutions across the ocean they are accustomed to stage at any hour of the day or night over here," Campbell wondered how long it would have taken for European powers to capture them. Enforcing the ninety-one-year-old Monroe Doctrine had been costly for the United States, he said, and many Latin Americans had been "ingrates of the most pronounced type."²⁸

Following his jab at Latin American nations, Campbell wrote several editorials urging that America remain neutral in the war. One called for American statesmanship, adding: "It is no time for politics or partisan, blundering diplomacy." The United States, in all probability, would serve as arbiter at the peace conference after the war ended, he said, which, ironically, was accurate to a degree.²⁹

Another Campbell editorial³⁰ veered off in a pacifistic direction unusual for him. Said Campbell:

²⁸Ibid., July 30, 1914, p. 4.

²⁹Ibid., August 7, 1914, p. 4.

³⁰Campbell wrote virtually all the editorials for the Independent. Gaskill interview, May 23, 1972.

Most Independent editorial pages consisted of five or six lengthy editorials and at least a dozen one-paragraph editorial fillers.

. . . We give them toy soldiers to play with and toy firearms, and we pride ourselves on the fact that we are teaching our boys to be patriotic. . . .

We may prate of peace to the end of time, but if we insist on massacring the children every Fourth of July and calling it patriotism, if we train up our boys to respect the man who takes a life, we will be as far from peace in a thousand eons as we are today. If we are eager for peace, let us teach our boys the things that make for peace. Let us help them to grow into honest, manly men. Let us direct their energies to worthy endeavors, and then when we put our trust in our boys, we shall have peace.³¹

He later suggested that United States residents buy only American products and avoid those manufactured by the war's belligerents.³² In later editorials, Campbell advised persons not to contribute to foreign relief funds or to return to their European homelands and enlist in armies. "Let the monarchs and the political medicine mixers of those blood-soaked nations take full responsibility and the cost upon themselves," he wrote.³³ It was sheer "madness" for foreign-born Americans to return to Europe and enlist in the armies of their native lands, according to Campbell.³⁴

Fierce battles raged in Butte throughout the summer of 1914. Through both news articles and editorials, Campbell

³¹Helena Independent, August 9, 1914, p. 4.

³²Ibid., August 18, 1914, p. 4.

³³Ibid., August 22, 1914, p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., August 23, 1914, p. 16.

and his Independent staff attempted to discredit the upstart union. One front-page news story accused Muckie McDonald of making "incendiary speeches." Reports from the Mining City indicated "there is a conspiracy afoot to terrorize the inhabitants and to bring about a condition of anarchy," the opinionated news story said. Butte newspapers, the article reported, had not portrayed conditions accurately. Either the newspapers were unaware of the severity of conditions, the Independent said, or they had suppressed reports in an attempt to quell the trouble.³⁵ Another front-page Independent report likened Butte to "a smoldering volcano" and blamed the newly formed union for terrorizing residents.³⁶

After contemplating the move for several days, Governor Stewart sent state troops to Butte September 1, 1914, and placed the city under martial law.³⁷

Campbell himself became embroiled in controversy in Butte. Possibly on a tip from his friend Sam Stewart, Campbell scooped Butte newspapers with the story that the governor planned to send the state militia into the troubled city. Rumors circulated that Butte editors wanted Campbell arrested for stirring up the city with his report. The reports apparently were unfounded or the Butte editors

³⁵Ibid., August 29, 1914, p. 1.

³⁶Ibid., August 30, 1914, p. 1.

³⁷Ibid., September 1, 2 and 3, 1914, p. 1.

changed their minds, for no one arrested Campbell.³⁸

The Helena editor also quashed a false report that the new union planned to blow up railroad trestles and leave Butte in ashes if the governor dispatched the National Guard. The Independent's correspondent, a Butte Miner reporter, wired that frightening report to the Helena newspaper office. But at the same time, Campbell was in Butte meeting with the union's executive committee. Union members expected the militia, he said, and showed "no added excitement." An angry Campbell wrote:

To the best of my knowledge and belief the telegram sent to the Independent is an outrage on truth. As editor of the Independent, I spent hours with the miners Monday afternoon and heard no talks of blowing up the railroad tracks nor of laying the city of Butte in ashes.

This telegram to the Independent is typical of the kind of stuff which has been sent out of Butte for the use of other newspapers, while the morning newspaper of that city has been congratulating itself on not publishing any such sensational stuff nor making trouble by printing the truth.

Here the business men of Butte are led to believe the Butte newspapers are suppressing the news to avoid trouble while at the same time men employed in writing for those papers are sending out such telegrams as the one quoted above.³⁹

Later Campbell editorials praised the performance of

³⁸ Ibid., September 1, 1914, p. 4.

³⁹ Ibid.

the state troops in Butte.⁴⁰ Their presence had altered the spirit of the "agitators," the Helena editor wrote, adding that many insurgents probably were happy the soldiers had crushed McDonald's organization.⁴¹ "Wonder where the IWWs will land next, now that Butte apparently has finished with them?" Campbell asked.⁴²

The Independent editor had kind words for his friend, Governor Stewart, who had "acted wisely and firmly" by sending troops to Butte. "The man who censures him is disloyal to the state and to law and order," Campbell said. "Montana ought not to be compelled to bear the citizenship of men who would utter a word of condemnation against the governor and the state officials with whom he has been advised."⁴³ A week later, Campbell said Stewart had "exercised the patience of a Woodrow Wilson" before finally ordering the troops to Butte. A "spineless" city administration and an inept sheriff forced the governor to take the drastic action, the Helena editor said.⁴⁴ He also urged Butte and Silver Bow County residents to impeach Mayor Duncan and Sheriff Driscoll for their inability to maintain law and order.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ibid., September 3 and 4, 1914, p. 4.

⁴¹ Ibid., September 3, 1914, p. 4.

⁴² Ibid., September 4, 1914, p. 4.

⁴³ Ibid., September 6, 1914, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Ibid., September 14, 1914, p. 4.

⁴⁵ Ibid., September 7, 1914, p. 4.

As for the upstart union members in Butte, Campbell advised them to lower their demands. Union men elsewhere generally believed some Butte unions "have gone too far and pushed wages up to a point where industry and new construction must come to a standstill," he said, not identifying the union men upset with the "high" wages in Butte. Montana industries were in no position to pay "exorbitant" wages, he said.⁴⁶ Workers in the Treasure State could enjoy other benefits besides wages: a nice climate, cheap land and abundant natural resources. In a statement that proved erroneous just three days later, he advised:

Conservatism would be a good rule for the unions of Butte other than miners. It is highly improbable that an open-shop policy will be demanded by the mine operators or business men of Butte, but the troubles of the past week should teach both sides alike, that fairness and loyalty to each other's interests, is the only policy which will succeed and assist this state in more quickly achieving its rightful destiny. . . . Above all we are all citizens of a great commonwealth, and the words "master" and "slave" should have no place in the treasure state of Montana. We are working for the same ends. . . .⁴⁷

On September 9, 1914, Butte mine operators, including

⁴⁶Miners' wages in Butte were hardly exorbitant in 1914. They started at \$3.50 daily and varied according to the market price of copper. Jensen, Heritage of Conflict, p. 305; Gutfeld, "Speculator Disaster in 1917," pp. 33-34. Gutfeld also describes the safety and health conditions in the Butte mines.

⁴⁷Helena Independent, September 6, 1914, p. 4.

ACM officials, announced they would follow an "open-shop" policy and would neither recognize nor deal with any union. Thus Butte, known for years as a "Gibraltar of Unionism" was without a miners' union from September 1914 until June 1917. The satisfied Company did not recognize a Butte union until 1934.⁴⁸

McDonald's union released a blistering response, carried by the Independent, which criticized the operators' action. Calling ACM "the all-inclusive mining octopus," it said the miner's \$3.50 daily wage would buy less in Butte than the Chinese coolie's nine cents a day would in a large city. It concluded:

Unless conditions under which the many thousands of Butte miners are compelled to work year after year are not corrected, they never can expect a settled condition or a contented working class in this community; there is no dodging this issue.⁴⁹

Campbell lashed into the union in an editorial the next day. He pointed out that mine operators had agreed to pay the same scale of wages and continue the eight-hour working day. "Altogether the reply is rather unfortunate," he wrote. "It betrays a disposition to continue the rows which resulted in the bringing of the state guardsmen to Butte." He urged the miners to return to work instead of "standing

⁴⁸Jensen, Heritage of Conflict, pp. 347-348; Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 138.

⁴⁹Helena Independent, September 11, 1914, p. 3.

around soap boxes listening to agitators who make a living by stirring up contention."⁵⁰

When the soldiers arrested Muckie McDonald in the Moose Block, Campbell said:

Cringing and meek, the leader who ruled with a rod of iron, while his reign lasted, succumbed to constituted authority and tamely went to jail, his feathers drooping, all the "bombastus furiso" evaporated, just a bluffer whose craving for notoriety and cheap melodrama had been "called."⁵¹

McDonald's actions, the Helena editor wrote, showed why Butte municipal affairs needed a "housecleaning."⁵²

Campbell blamed aliens, as well as IWW members, for the Butte violence. Many of the ringleaders were foreigners, he said, adding: "It has well been said that for years the United States has been the dumping ground of the undesirables of the Old World, and there is some truth in that statement."⁵³

As fall progressed, Wobblies flocked to their Mecca, Butte, at least according to the Helena Independent. Preparing to join the "socialist crew of marplots in Butte" was "a murderous band of IWWs," who had invaded the state, one editorial said.⁵⁴ Another report quoted railroad officials who sighted an army of 1,500 IWW members, many of them armed, presumably

⁵⁰ Ibid., September 12, 1914, p. 4.

⁵¹ Ibid., September 11, 1914, p. 4.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., September 19, 1914, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid., October 5, 1914, p. 4.

headed for Butte.⁵⁵ Later reports indicated many of the pack of murderers were nothing more than hoboes seeking a hot meal. But Campbell insisted these tramps were part of the sinister IWW conspiracy.⁵⁶ In November, Campbell predicted the Butte IWWs would not arise during the cold winter months. After all, the editor sneered, "An IWW hates cold weather as badly as he despises a bath."⁵⁷

When Campbell did not take on Butte radicals, he heaped praise on the Democratic state and national administrations. History would record the diplomatic successes of President Wilson and Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, he said. In a few years, one editorial said, even "the most carping critics will be compelled to admit that they [Wilson and Bryan] have done well in pursuing a cause which may insure our nation against war with other powers for years to come."⁵⁸

Montana Democrats set aside October 14, 1914, to honor the President. Campbell concluded an editorial about Wilson by saying: "Solemnly and reverently may America today exclaim: 'War in Europe, Peace in America--Thank God for Wilson.'"⁵⁹

⁵⁵Ibid., October 8, 1914, p. 1.

⁵⁶Ibid., October 23, 1914, p. 4.

⁵⁷Ibid., November 14, 1914, p. 4.

⁵⁸Ibid., September 17, 1914, p. 4.

⁵⁹Ibid., October 14, 1914, p. 4.

While the editor professed to hate war, the Independent sponsored motion pictures at a Helena theater of European battles taken by a Chicago Tribune photographer. A full-page advertisement in the newspaper bragged:

In securing these motion pictures, The Helena Independent has again demonstrated its enterprise. These are positively the FIRST and ONLY authentic motion pictures of ACTUAL FIGHTING on the battlefields of Europe. This is an opportunity that you cannot afford to miss--all the thrills of genuine warfare. [Emphasis in original.]⁶⁰

However, half of the admission receipts for this spectacle went to the Belgian government for Red Cross relief work.⁶¹

Like the President he so admired, Campbell agonized over the difficulties of America remaining neutral. The brutalities of war could lead to its abolishment, he said, adding: "But it will require an international army and navy as a police force to keep in order the ruffian and hoodlum powers."⁶²

The Independent editor occasionally took courageous editorial stands. While Campbell favored immigration restrictions, he opposed the literacy test some advocated.⁶³

⁶⁰Ibid., December 2, 1914, p. 10.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., December 4, 1914, p. 4.

⁶³Ibid., December 12, 1914, p. 4.

He also called for universal disarmament: "If that be not the outcome and great result of this war it will have been fought in vain."⁶⁴

⁶⁴Ibid., January 11, 1915, p. 4.

CHAPTER III

WILSON'S DEFENDER

To every American of German descent, and
To every American of Irish descent:
Certain fanatics are endeavoring to place
an indelible strain upon your loyalty. If
Woodrow Wilson is beaten for President of
the United States all real Americans will
forever cherish the belief that disloyalty
stood behind the verdict.¹

--Will A. Campbell, urging
the re-election of Woodrow
Wilson, October 8, 1916.

As attacks on President Wilson intensified in early 1915, Campbell's ire rose. He branded William Borah of Idaho and other Senate critics of Wilson's foreign policies "buzzing bees," "standpatters" and "a national scold" in Helena Independent editorials.² Other citizens who opposed Wilson's neutrality policies and favored entering the war were nothing but American Krupps, according to Campbell.³ He also suggested that American newspapers should line up behind Wilson's foreign policies as the British press had backed its country's government. "There are no press knockers in Great Britain when the

¹Helena Independent, October 8, 1916, p. 4.

²Ibid., January 15, 1915, p. 4.

³Ibid., January 25, 1915, p. 4.

interests of the country are involved," the Montana editor wrote.⁴

A Wilson speech on neutrality demonstrated "the greatness of the man and the broadness of his vision," according to Campbell.⁵ The Independent editor later pleaded with readers to withhold judgment on the U. S. response to the German's sinking of the British passenger liner Lusitania, which killed 128 Americans, until Wilson and the State Department had finished their investigations. He added: "Unfortunately there is an element in our national life which attempts to make political capital of the incident of the loss of American lives. They remind one of a ghoul. . . ." ⁶

Most Americans, like Wilson, wanted to avoid the European war, Campbell said, but they were not afraid to fight. Reciting the old jingoistic saw, Campbell wrote: "We don't want to fight, but by Jungo [sic] if we do, we've got the ships, we've got the men and we've got the money too."⁷

Debate over foreign policy within the Wilson Administration crested in June 1915, when the outspoken and controversial secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan, resigned. Campbell assured readers that there was no bitterness between

⁴Ibid., January 17, 1915, p. 12.

⁵Ibid., April 22, 1915, p. 4.

⁶Ibid., May 10, 1915, p. 4.

⁷Ibid., June 6, 1915, p. 4.

the two Democrats, but that Wilson simply did not believe the pacifistic Bryan offered a practical foreign policy solution. The Independent considered Bryan to be wrong in this instance but graciously praised his honesty and dignity.⁸

It took Campbell just one day to turn on Bryan, the Great Commoner. Snapped one editorial filler: "President Wilson will now be informed that he has lost the Bryan vote, as well as the German-American, negro and suffragette votes. Still there are millions who love a president for the enemies he makes."⁹ Two days later, the fiery editor mocked Bryan and his "pacifistic friends," saying that the international situation demanded "more firmness." He likened Bryan to the Theodore Roosevelt, whom he despised, for his criticism of Wilson's policies and concluded: "[T]he American people are thankful that neither Mr. Bryan nor Theodore Roosevelt occupy the White House, for they do not want war but prefer it to peace on terms incompatible with national honor."¹⁰

During 1915, Campbell defended the loyalty of German-Americans. He took strong exception to a German consulate official in San Francisco who forecast an exodus of German-Americans, who were disgusted with the United States, to the Fatherland after the war. Nonsense, replied Campbell, most

⁸Ibid., June 9, 1915, p. 4.

⁹Ibid., June 10, 1915, p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., June 12, 1915, p. 4.

Americans of German descent were loyal to the United States and "among our best citizens and patriots." Those few who were not patriotic should depart then instead of waiting until the war ended, Campbell said.¹¹

Campbell showed no such tolerance for the Wobblies. He recounted with obvious delight how Sioux City, Iowa, had purged itself of the IWW members by spanking them.¹² Later, Campbell reported that the IWW "rattlesnake" had not been killed in Butte after all as some had thought. He advised the city government to handle the "soapboxers" and "desciples [sic] of disorder" without kid gloves this time.¹³

By early 1916, Campbell was equating support for Wilson, a President planning to run for a second term, with patriotism. The Helena editor began running a daily message on page one: "STAND BY THE PRESIDENT," with the words garnished with stars and stripes, an eagle and the American flag. Nearby were two more messages: "In Union There Is Strength" and "My Country Right or Wrong."¹⁴

Less than two weeks later, the Independent endorsed Wilson for a second term. "There has been no sane criticism of Wilson," Campbell wrote, praising most of Wilson's economic

¹¹Ibid., December 19, 1915, p. 4.

¹²Ibid., April 1, 1915, p. 4.

¹³Ibid., September 30, 1915, p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., March 2, 1916, p. 1.

theories as sound. "If his political program has brought scant fruits, it is because the European struggle thrust the preparedness issue upon the nation and shelved everything else."¹⁵

Although irritated by the attacks on Wilson in the German-American press, the Helena editor said it was up to the newspapers themselves "to judge how far liberty of speech should permit them to go--where license and treason should begin." Campbell, whose opinion on this issue shifted dramatically once the United States entered the war, added: "As a rough proposition, we favor permitting these gentry to shoot their wads. We would make martyrs of no coyotes of this character."¹⁶

He later continued to urge German-Americans "to quit playing into the hands of subsidized spies and traitors" and to support the U. S. government. "This is no time for foreign-born people to be parading the streets, carrying banners and preaching a peace propaganda."¹⁷

Campbell gloated in June when Republicans again spurned the candidacy of Theodore Roosevelt, who was making another run for President. The GOP rejected Roosevelt, he said, because Americans want "preparedness, they want this country to

¹⁵Ibid., March 15, 1916, p. 4.

¹⁶Ibid., April 21, 1916, p. 4.

¹⁷Ibid., April 27, 1916, p. 4.

be in a position to defend itself from attack, . . . but they do not and will not have at the head of the government a swashbuckler, such as Roosevelt." If Roosevelt had been occupying the White House instead of Wilson, the United States would have been at war in either Mexico or Europe, the Helena editor contended.¹⁸

As the country prepared for the almost inevitable war, Campbell frequently advised his readers on the importance of loyalty and Americanism. He praised the 1916 presidential candidates, Wilson and Charles Evans Hughes, for their unwavering Americanism. They were "living proof of the wisdom of our forefathers" who stipulated that only native-born Americans were eligible to be President, according to Campbell.¹⁹

Later, Campbell urged Montana men to donate their vacations to their country by going to an Army camp or participating in a Navy cruise.²⁰ He also suggested that they keep up their rifle target practice.²¹ The Independent editor also advocated universal military training for young American men:

Military training does not make a man a militarist, anymore than an ability to defend himself with his fists turns him

¹⁸ Ibid., June 11, 1916, p. 4.

¹⁹ Ibid., June 26, 1916, p. 4.

²⁰ Ibid., June 27, 1916, p. 4.

²¹ Ibid., June 29, 1916, p. 4.

into a pugilist. Universal training will give the United States a finer body of young manhood than it now possesses. Incidentally, it will raise the moral standard of the nation.

Square shouldered fellows who know woodcraft and are physically fit do not lull in front of the poolrooms with cigarets drooping from their lips to leer at girls and insult women as they pass.²²

Campbell also felt obliged to advise parents to have their sons take courses in Spanish, rather than German, because America's "future intimate relations" would be with "the sister republics to the south."²³

On at least five different occasions in 1916, Campbell urged the government to take whatever legal steps were necessary to force loafers, hoboes and other idle hands to work. Some American crops had gone unharvested because of the lack of available help, Campbell said, while the "leisure class, the IWW, the tramps, the hoboes and all that ilk, strolled royally about the land--fed, clothed, happy, serene, by some miracle."²⁴

In another editorial, Campbell wrote that a strong vagrancy law was the only way to solve "the IWW problem." The country no longer could permit "thousands of embittered

²²Ibid., December 11, 1916, p. 4.

²³Ibid., August 26, 1916, p. 4.

²⁴Ibid., November 25, 1916, p. 4. Also see editorials on June 23, 1916, p. 4; July 19, 1916, p. 4; August 4, 1916, p. 4. and December 2, 1916, p. 4.

men, men with murder in their hearts, to roam about at will, without serious consequences."²⁵

Campbell occasionally showed remarkable forbearance, a quality that was soon forgotten after the United States entered the war. He urged lenient treatment for national guardsmen who refused to take a federal loyalty oath. Merciful action was more desirable, he wrote, for "the skulker, the traitor of today may be the patriot, the hero of tomorrow."²⁶

But these moments of charity were outnumbered by the Helena editor's more venomous writings. He informed Americans of German and Irish descent that it would be treasonous to cast a vote against Woodrow Wilson. If Wilson lost, "all real Americans will forever cherish the belief that disloyalty stood behind the verdict."²⁷

Before the election, a man born in Germany was denied his American citizenship papers by a Helena district court judge because he damned the flag and said he would blow up the Helena Independent if he had the powder because of its anti-German articles. Campbell defended the news accounts of the war in the newspaper by saying that came from the impartial Associated Press. As for the Independent's editorial page,

²⁵ Ibid., September 24, 1916, p. 6.

²⁶ Ibid., June 29, 1916, p. 4.

²⁷ Ibid., October 8, 1916, p. 4.

Campbell said it was doing what it should--analyzing the news. He added:

But when it comes to a question of the kaiser-boosters who would attempt to defeat an American president because he would not take orders from Potsdam, the Independent is against every one of them from start to finish, and they have the most hearty and sincere condemnation of this newspaper regardless of the consequences. . . .²⁸

The results of the 1916 election pleased Campbell immensely. Wilson was re-elected in a close race, and Campbell's friend, Sam Stewart, won a second term as governor of Montana. Stewart, Campbell had advised readers in an election day editorial, stood for law and order and knew how to handle the Wobblies.²⁹ Wilson's defeat of Hughes demonstrated that there were thousands of U. S. citizens of German ancestry who considered themselves American-Germans, not German-Americans, he claimed.³⁰

During this period before the United States entered the war, Will Campbell expressed strong opinions in the Helena

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid., November 7, 1916, p. 4.

³⁰Ibid., November 16, 1916, p. 4. In an editorial the day before the election, Campbell said it was unfortunate that the great majority of German-Americans would be voting for Hughes because Wilson refused to urge Congress to place an embargo on the shipment of weapons to Germany's war opponents. He concluded, "It is unthinkable that the voters of this nation who put the interests of Germany, or any foreign country, ahead of the interests of America, are in the majority." Ibid., November 6, 1916, p. 4.

Independent about German-Americans, the IWW and critics of Woodrow Wilson. Yet from all indications, his views differed little from those of other Montana newspapers or public opinion at large around the country.

One study of eight representative Montana daily newspapers concluded that except for the Republican Billings Gazette, "the Montana press lined up behind the President's foreign policy and went step by step to war." This study concluded that the Montana daily newspapers were pro-ally even before the United States declared war because the allies "more nearly exemplified American concepts of right in government and action."³¹ Another reason, according to the study, was that overseas news coverage placed the allied nations in a more favorable light. It added:

Allied censorship and allied control of the cables were reflected prominently in the type of news printed and were no doubt effective in keeping the pro-ally viewpoint uppermost. But German policies and acts committed by German, rather than British propaganda, erased the attitude of noninvolvement held by Montana newspapers. . . .³²

The study further noted, without offering specific examples, that there was some evidence that the Montana press

³¹Andrew C. Cogswell, "The Sources, Transmission and Handling of World War News in Representative Montana Newspapers from 1914 to 1917" (Master's thesis, University of Minnesota, 1943), p. 249. Cogswell did not include the Helena Independent in his study but examined news coverage and editorials in the Anaconda Standard, Butte Miner, Great Falls Tribune, Montana Record (later Montana Record Herald of Helena), Billings Gazette, Daily Missoulian, Billings Journal, and Billings Tribune.

³²Ibid., pp. 259-260.

reflected the opinion of a majority of Montanans on the issue: "Together they followed President Wilson to war."³³

Even so, Montana had a vocal minority that might have been expected to support Germany and the other Central Powers. The Cogswell study said that about 15 percent of the state's population was made up of "potential sympathizers of the Central Powers," including American- and foreign-born Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Irish. In Silver Bow County, where jobs at the mines were readily available, nearly 36 percent of the populace came from these groups, according to the 1910 census. Moreover, a German weekly newspaper, the Montana Staats Zeintung, was published in Helena. "But even with unanimity, these groups could express only a minority opinion," the study said.³⁴

Another author, examining the country's changing attitude toward German-Americans in the prewar days, branded it "the most spectacular reversal of judgment in the history of American nativism." Germans, the largest group of foreign-born persons living in the United States, had been accepted by other Americans "as one of the most assimilable and reputable of immigrant groups" and regarded as law-abiding and strongly patriotic, he wrote. Suddenly, they were accused of

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 258-259.

disloyalty, he said, because "when the European holocaust called forth their strong sympathies for the Fatherland, they rallied loudly and openly to influence American foreign policy. . . ." ³⁵

³⁵Higham, Strangers in the Land, pp. 195-196.

CHAPTER IV

AMERICA DECLARES WAR; "STAND BY THE PRESIDENT"

President Wilson did not neglect to plead, during his war address, for sympathy and tolerance for the millions of Americans of German birth and descent. Hoodlums always spring up, in times like these, and Americans as loyal as could be may now and then be attacked. Let us now make it our personal duty to defend them.¹

--Will A. Campbell, urging
tolerance toward patri-
otic German-Americans,
April 4, 1917.

Chances that the United States could avoid entering the war were dashed in early 1917. Despite President Wilson's attempts to negotiate, Germany had other plans. The German government announced in January that its submarines would sink all ships in sight, belligerent or neutral. Wilson broke off relations with Germany and later ordered American ships armed. Despite these precautionary measures, German U-boats sank three American ships in March, a move that prompted Wilson to ask Congress to declare war on Germany.

Will Campbell, as he had earlier, backed Wilson to

¹Helena Independent, April 4, 1917, p. 4.

the hilt during the trying days before war was declared. As the prospect of war became inevitable, he advised readers of the Helena Independent that no American wanted to fight the German people but added that all Americans "may yet find it necessary to fight the leaders of Germany."²

He bristled at the actions of a group known as the American Union Against Militarism, which opposed Wilson's policies. A union against militarism was not needed, he scoffed, but there was a "crying need . . . for a union to care for the miscellaneous cranks--particularly those to whom Heaven in its wisdom has denied the machinery to think."³

The Helena editor also became more bellicose during this period. "We have got to fight if we mean to stay on earth, and we mean to do it," Campbell said. "The BULLY must be whipped, and we must do our share."⁴

Meanwhile, Campbell offered daily suggestions on how the country should prepare for war. He called for drafting into the armed services ballplayers and boxers,⁵ movie crews (If they "can stand the whims and abuse of a movie director

²Ibid., February 2, 1917, p. 4.

³Ibid., March 11, 1917, p. 4.

⁴Ibid., March 24, 1917, p. 4.

⁵Ibid., February 20, 1917, p. 4.

[they] can face anything"),⁶ Wobblies,⁷ and "the loafers at Palm Beach."⁸ Although not endorsing the idea, Campbell warned that war might lead to the prohibition of alcoholic drinks because "[b]ooze and efficiency do not go together and modern war sacrifices everything on the altar of efficiency."⁹

Above all, he wrote, Americans must unite behind their President. The American citizen or alien living here who opposed Wilson's preparedness campaign "is an enemy, and if there is no law to punish him as such, Congress should enact one," Campbell declared.¹⁰ On another occasion, he said that those Americans not behind Wilson "will prolong their days of liberty by not talking too much."¹¹

Interspersed with Campbell's numerous shrill warnings were a few more restrained editorials. One called on Americans to be on their guard for the inevitable German spies and agitators in the country but said there was no need to fear German-Americans as a class. "He is no true American who in this crisis will discriminate between blood--who will

⁶Ibid., April 13 1917, p. 4.

⁷Ibid., March 31, 1917, p. 4.

⁸Ibid., April 14, 1917, p. 4.

⁹Ibid., February 20, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., March 20, 1917, p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., February 4, 1917, p. 4.

unduly suspect or discourteously jeer any other American of any extraction whatsoever," Campbell added.¹² Unfortunately, this type of calm, rational editorial rarely appeared in the Helena Independent during this period. As a consequence, its readers were exposed instead to emotional, vituperative editorials that undoubtedly contributed to the hysteria in Montana during the war years.

Ever the critic of Butte, the hotbed of radicalism, Campbell pointed out that the Mining City showed the poorest armed services enlistment rate in Montana. "Butte had just as well wake up," he wrote. "No man who dissents or derides his country in this crisis will ever live it down."¹³ He changed his opinion less than two weeks later following a massive pro-American parade there. Butte suddenly became "all right" and "one of the most patriotic cities in the nation," Campbell wrote. The few vocal malcontents gave the wrong impression of Butte, he said, adding: "Happily, these creatures are limited in numbers and even less influential in mental capacity."¹⁴

And then came war. By April 1917, it was almost certain that President Wilson soon would ask Congress to declare

¹²Ibid., February 5, 1917, p. 4. But a few days later, the Independent carried a map showing the distribution of large concentrations of German-Americans in the United States and Montana. Ibid., February 11, 1917, sec. 2, p. 1.

¹³Ibid., March 31, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., April 9, 1917, p. 4.

war. According to Campbell, the American public was united behind Wilson "except for a handful of cowards, traitors and near traitors; men in hoop-skirts and paid agents of the German Kaiser."¹⁵ On April 4, the U. S. Senate voted 82-6 to declare war, and the House of Representatives concurred two days later by a vote of 373 to 50.¹⁶

The declaration of war inspired Campbell to promote a massive display of patriotism. "Let us turn this town into a riot of red, white and blue!" he implored readers, asking them to wear American flag buttons and to unfurl Old Glory at their homes and businesses.¹⁷ A week later, Campbell complained that the flag was not on display at hundreds of Helena homes, while every Belgian peasant had an American flag in his home. "If a Belgian peasant can admire America, surely a person living here might deign to hoist the emblem as war begins."¹⁸

The editor also supported the formation in Helena of

¹⁵ Ibid., April 3, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁶ One of the 50 opponents in the House was Montana Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin. Campbell had no immediate reaction to her vote on the war resolution but later criticized her action. Rankin told her colleagues in the House: "I want to stand by my country, but I cannot vote for war." Rankin, later elected to a second term in the House of Representatives, was the only member of Congress to vote against the declaration of war against Japan in December 1941. She traveled widely promoting peace before her death May 18, 1973, at the age of 92.

¹⁷ Helena Independent, April 7, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., April 14, 1917, p. 4.

a home guard to train men not joining the armed services to protect the city if necessary.¹⁹ In addition, Campbell backed a proposal to award insignia and medals to men "whose services are more valuable at home than in the trenches." Such a move would help prevent jealousy and bitterness on the part of those remaining at home since those on the battleline stood to earn "considerable glory," according to Campbell. "We take particular interest in this decision because we feel that of all men more useful at their accustomed tasks than in bomb-proofs, newspapermen stand foremost," wrote the editor, who previously had urged the drafting of a number of other groups.²⁰

Once war was declared, Campbell's position on dissent hardened even more. Montana's only German language newspaper, the Montana Staats-Zeitung, had said that German-Americans should not be expected to enlist in the United States Army. Calling its editor a "radical kaiser booster," Campbell warned: "The country will not now stand for the attacks and abuse of the President in which the German newspapers indulged last fall."²¹ As a remedy, he suggested that the federal

¹⁹Ibid., April 13, 1917, p. 4.

²⁰Ibid., April 5, 1917, p. 4. Campbell's son said that the Helena editor registered to serve in the military in World War I but was never called. Campbell interview, January 13, 1972.

²¹Helena Independent, April 9, 1917, p. 4.

government forbid use of the postal system to publications printed in the language of any country with which the United States was at war. "It is not a question of suppressing these publications but of denying them the right to spread their un-American, treasonable propaganda through the medium of the German language," he declared.²²

Campbell made his position on dissent even more clear in another editorial:

Americans, therefore, must not challenge their government's position; there must be no divided loyalty or conditional loyalty; internal dissension must disappear when we are threatened with grave danger from the without.²³

The same issue of the Independent carried on page one a seven-column banner headline that said, "STAND BY THE PRESIDENT" trimmed in stars and stripes with an eagle nearby.²⁴

He advocated imprisoning for safety's sake the "blat-mouthed alien" who criticized the United States. Yet Campbell called for treating jailed aliens with kindness because "[I]f you were in Germany today, you might shoot off your mouth too--Old Timer." After all, Campbell said, the United States had entered the war "to expound Lincolnism and 'with charity toward all' were Lincoln's grandest words." The Montana editor tried to quash talk of lynching alien dissenters,

²²Ibid., April 8, 1917, p. 4.

²³Ibid., April 18, 1917, p. 4.

²⁴Ibid., p. 1.

calling it "hoodlumism" and saying: "We will let President Wilson order the executions."²⁵ He also distinguished between innocent aliens and those who criticized American foreign policy and urged Montanans to take care "not to harry the innocent."²⁶

Campbell's outspoken views on dissent and patriotism suddenly took on new meaning when he was one of eight persons appointed by Governor Sam Stewart to the Montana Council of Defense. Thus Campbell's opinions no longer were just those of a newspaper editor that could be dismissed lightly if one disagreed with them. Instead, he was in a position possibly to enforce some of these views, although the Council had no legal authority until 1918. According to a news story in the Independent, the Council of Defense was "created for the purpose of war preparation and in the coordination of the resources and energies of the state and nation."²⁷

The Helena editor had discussed the desirability of forming state councils of defense even before war had been declared. Campbell had cited the actions of California and Maine, which had organized defense councils or committees to prepare for the war. Although inland Montana was more protected than the states on the east and west coasts, the

²⁵Ibid., April 9, 1917, p. 4.

²⁶Ibid., April 20, 1917, p. 4.

²⁷Ibid., April 18, 1917, p. 1.

Helena editor favored formation of a Montana council "to help the sections whose peril is by no means imaginary."²⁸

Soon after war was declared, President Wilson asked all governors to appoint state councils to work with the Council of National Defense headed by Newton D. Baker, the secretary of war. Wilson asked the governors to grant the councils "broad powers" and to make them representative of the state's resources.²⁹

As governor, Stewart served as ex-officio chairman of the Montana Council of Defense. Besides Campbell, Stewart appointed the following to the Council: Charles D. Greenfield, Helena, commissioner of agriculture and publicity, who served as secretary; Norman B. Holter, Helena, hardware dealer; Charles J. Kelly, Butte, president of the Hennessy Mercantile Company; J. E. Edwards, Forsyth, bank president; Mrs. Tylar B. Thompson, Missoula, outstanding member of the Montana Federation of Women's Clubs; Edward C. Elliot, Helena, chancellor of the University of Montana; and B. C. White, Buffalo, rancher.³⁰

The Montana Council's goals, as outlined by the governor and listed in the Independent, seemed reasonable enough.

²⁸Ibid., March 29, 1917, p. 4.

²⁹Ibid., April 14, 1917, p. 1.

³⁰Ibid., April 18, 1917, p. 1. Nancy Rice Fritz, "The Montana Council of Defense" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1966), p. 6. The Fritz thesis remains the best comprehensive study of the Council.

Stewart directed members to find ways to improve the farm output in Montana by trying to come up with methods to increase the acreage planted, improve the transportation of seeds and stimulate production.³¹

The Council performed admirably at this task and the related duty of stirring up support for the war effort.³² But by 1918, Campbell, assisted by Stewart, had converted the Council into an entirely different body--one used to harass political opponents and attack individuals and organizations that opposed the war or did not back it as fervently as they did.

Long before the United States had entered the war, Campbell, with apparently noble and patriotic motives, had offered countless suggestions on the Independent's editorial pages on how the country might prepare for the upcoming battle. Yet his interest quickly turned into a fanaticism or zeal that was difficult to suppress once he was named to the Montana Council of Defense.

Within a week after his appointment, Campbell proposed "no punishment short of an ignominious death" for traitors³³ and a conference of high school principals to arrange to shorten the school term so older boys could help

³¹Helena Independent, April 18, 1917, p. 1.

³²Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," pp. 9-10.

³³Helena Independent, April 20, 1917, p. 4.

provide labor (and "forego further details of Caesar's hair and the exact way to square the circle)."³⁴ He urged that high school students of both sexes wear khaki outfits with insignia to cut down on clothing needs and as a constant reminder that the country was at war.³⁵

³⁴Ibid., April 20, 1917, p. 4.

³⁵Ibid., April 22, 1917, p. 4.

CHAPTER V

THE COUNCIL OF DEFENSE'S MOUTHPIECE

This war is not going to last forever.
Among our opponents are some of the
finest people in the world, whom, when
we have freed them, we would have as
future friends. Don't get bitter.¹

--Will A. Campbell,
April 26, 1917.

Will Campbell wrote like a man inspired in the days that followed the American declaration of war and his own appointment to the Montana Council of Defense. Almost daily he offered a variety of suggestions in the Helena Independent on what Montanans should be doing to support the war. His position on the Council ensured that many of his ideas, half-cocked as many may have seemed, would be seriously considered. Thus the newspaper rapidly became the unofficial mouthpiece of the Council.

His imagination appeared to have few limits. One issue of the newspaper carried a cartoon illustrating Campbell's conception of the Council of Defense. With an American flag and eagle as a backdrop, the drawing depicted a soldier holding a bayoneted rifle, shaking hands with a

¹Helena Independent, April 26, 1917, p. 4.

farmer, hoe in hand.²

He had suggestions on ways to save food, including banning the consumption of veal. It was "nothing less than a crime" to slaughter calves for veal, Campbell said, except for the destruction of "a few of the calves who are too busy in the poolrooms to enlist to defend their country."³ Other possibilities he raised included eating more venison,⁴ having cornmeal days twice a week⁵ and slashing the menus of restaurants because they only serve to tempt overindulgence.⁶ The newspaper also urged readers to work as field hands on farms during their vacations⁷ and suggested that Palm Beach and other posh hangouts of the idle rich "should be a fine place to grab farmhands."⁸ In his opinion, "Whoso will not work, should not eat. Few are so feeble they cannot do light farm work."⁹

Meanwhile, citizens also had an obligation to get in physical condition, he said: "Get fit!" one editorial implored.

²Ibid., April 21, 1917, p. 4.

³Ibid., April 23, 1917, p. 4.

⁴Ibid., May 4, 1917, p. 4.

⁵Ibid., May 10, 1917, p. 4.

⁶Ibid., May 27, 1917, p. 4.

⁷Ibid., May 4, 1917, p. 4.

⁸Ibid., May 3, 1917, p. 4.

⁹Ibid., April 28, 1917, p. 2.

"Get in condition. Get that paunch down. Get the muscles hard. Get in training!"¹⁰

Campbell also called on his readers to buy Liberty Bonds to support the country. "There is no better way to breed a patriot than to let your boy, or your girl, buy one," he wrote.¹¹ The editor praised the senior class at Missoula County High School for foregoing their yearbooks and instead spending the money on bonds. He also suggested that high school classes across the country buy bonds with the money they usually spent on gowns, flowers and decorations used for graduation ceremonies.¹²

He noted with glee that the Lewis and Clark County commissioners and sheriff had tapped a new source of manpower for the county road crew--prisoners. Forcing the prisoners to work to help the nation's war effort was a good idea, Campbell said, because they are not "the kind of men that Uncle Sam wants in the line of battle."¹³

His ire was raised by reports that some college professors were preaching sedition. Campbell lamented the country's lack of a "drastic deportation law" and said:

¹⁰Ibid., May 11, 1917, p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., May 5, 1917, p. 4.

¹²Ibid., May 19, 1917, p. 4.

¹³Ibid., May 7, 1917, p. 4.

Then when one of these blat-mouths, these cheap bidders for notoriety, these un-American individuals who sympathize with Prussian murderers of women and children and maimers of helpless children, started spewing his sedition or acting it, it would be an excellent thing if he or she were escorted down to the sea shore or to the border and kicked out of the country never to return.¹⁴

Unfortunately, Campbell wrote, the Germans had plenty of sympathizers in the United States. He singled out New York City as having a batting average of .185 as a patriotic city and said it may have to be regarded as an alien place.¹⁵

Even worse, he wrote, the Germans had allies in the United States Senate, where they could block American war plans and "cunningly plan to starve the American stomach and paralyze the American military arm." He did not identify the senators.¹⁶ Another editorial criticized congressional delays in President Wilson's war programs and said: "The loyal Americans are almost ready to vote Wilson a dictator and hurry Congress to intern camps or old men's homes."¹⁷

Campbell also stood up for the flag, criticizing its use in vaudeville acts that featured a performer, "decked in pink tights, wrapping herself in the American banner while the orchestra plays some patriotic airs. . . ." He added:

¹⁴Ibid., July 13, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁵Ibid., June 6, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁶Ibid., July 26, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁷Ibid., May 16, 1917, p. 4.

"Let's have the red, white and blue stand for the greatest democracy in the world and not as a teaser of handclaps in amusement resorts."¹⁸

Turning closer to home, Campbell reported that the Helena Home Guard was drilling regularly and had formed an espionage branch to check up on reports of "suspicious characters, spies or disloyal persons."¹⁹

During the same period, the Helena editor frequently offered his opinions on patriotism and dissent. He told readers not to say, "My country, right or wrong," because the United States was not wrong.²⁰ Campbell put his feelings on dissent on the part of orators and editors in no uncertain terms--"Shut up or be locked up."²¹

His explanation for the cause of the war was simplistic. He blamed monarchies and said:

Kings always work together--secretly
or openly; they are always in sympathy.
Democracy means peace. The kings
mean war.
No more kings; no more wars! It
isn't a phrase; it's an eternal truth.²²

In an editorial that was a precursor of action eventually taken by the Council of Defense, Campbell said that

¹⁸Ibid., April 30, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁹Ibid., May 17, 1917, p. 4.

²⁰Ibid., July 9, 1917, p. 4.

²¹Ibid., July 2, 1917, p. 4.

²²Ibid., May 9, 1917, p. 4.

students should not waste their time studying German but instead should enroll in Spanish because it was more useful.²³

Exemption of men eligible for military service was a controversy during the war. Campbell said he believed the number of exemptions should be small. "The best reason for exempting a man is because his efforts in a certain direction at home will be of more value to the nation than to send him to the front with a rifle in his hands," the editor wrote.²⁴ The next day Campbell boasted that eleven of the Independent's fifty-four employees would be enlisting in the military service.²⁵

For some reason Campbell had refrained initially from condemning Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin of Montana for voting against the declaration of war in April. Two months later, he began attacking Rankin, who had said on the House floor, "I want to stand by my country, but I cannot vote for war." Campbell compared her comment with the statement of a Helena woman, who had said at a Liberty Bond rally:

I am not one of those who have gold to loan to my country, but God has given me the most precious privilege of womankind, the gift of motherhood, and I have a son

²³Ibid., July 20, 1917, p. 4.

²⁴Ibid., July 30, 1917, p. 4.

²⁵Ibid., July 31, 1917, p. 4.

to give to my country . . . hoping it
will be only a loan.²⁶

Which woman, Campbell asked, best represented the women of Montana? It was not Rankin, with her "willingness to have the United States go down in history as the most cowardly and effeninate [sic] nation of all time; her clinging to the idea of the socialists and so called conscientious objectors. . . ." ²⁷

Later that month, Campbell reprinted a letter Rankin had sent her constituents asking them to write to her. Campbell, apparently forgetting his blistering attack eleven days earlier, said the newspaper had refrained from criticizing the congresswoman and "prefers to try Miss Rankin out and give her a fair chance to make good--to do something worthy of the women of Montana and worthy of the state as a whole." He then asked for readers' opinions of her.²⁸

Campbell wasted little time before attacking Rankin again. He charged that she was a friend of the Butte Wobblies and said that her speeches since the 1916 election "have on a broad average entitled her to just this sort of support."²⁹ But the editor saved his most vehement criticism for the time when Rankin expressed concern over women issuing Liberty Bonds

²⁶ Ibid., June 7, 1917, p. 4.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., June 18, 1917, p. 4.

²⁹ Ibid., June 22, 1917, p. 4.

having to work twelve hours a day. While the women in England, France and Belgium were working twelve to fifteen hours a day regularly, he said,

Montana sends a girl congresswomen down to the national capital to protest and cry around because well paid girls, working in great big light airy rooms, fed on the fat of the most prosperous country on which the sun has ever shone, wearing clothes which only the millionaire dames of the past could afford. . . .

Ye Gods! No wonder Lord Roberts said this country needed a blood letting when we tolerate such rot as is indulged in by Miss Rankin. . . .

Jeannette is getting meddlesome and is due for a large setback, perhaps even before her two years have passed.³⁰

During these early days of the war, Campbell sometimes appeared to be struggling personally with the questions of freedoms in wartime. At one point, he estimated that 99 out of 100 German-Americans, despite their backgrounds, could be classified as "supporters of the United States as against any other nation in the world."³¹ Less than a month later, however, the editor complained that there had been "too much treasonable talk in Montana" by persons who put support for their native country ahead of the safety of the United States. He added:

We are at war. This is no time to be mealy-mouthed. How any real American who has read the facts about Belgium can entertain anything but the bitterest hatred

³⁰ Ibid., July 8, 1917, p. 4.

³¹ Ibid., April 25, 1917, p. 4.

against the German military caste, it is impossible for us to conceive. This is a struggle to the death, this conflict we slowly enter, and if we do not get the Huns, the Huns assuredly will get us-- and get us good.³²

Campbell devoted many columns of the Independent's editorial page to warn of the dangers of radicals such as the IWW. The Helena editor applauded efforts in some Montana cities such as Livingston to control the Wobblies by jailing them when necessary.³³ In another editorial, Campbell said it was "nothing short of shameful . . . when the nation needs every hand, [and] these loafers should be permitted to wander in idleness."³⁴ He endorsed a West Virginia law, aimed at the IWW, that required all men between ages sixteen and thirty to choose between going to work within a month or leaving the state.³⁵

Another editorial criticized a University of Montana student, Clarence K. Streit, who donated the \$10 he won for first place in a state oratory contest to the defense fund of a Wobbly on trial for a bombing in San Francisco. Campbell wrote that Streit, once he had more exposure to the IWW, would realize that he was wrong.³⁶

³²Ibid., May 16, 1917, p. 4.

³³Ibid., May 18, 1917, p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., May 26, 1917, p. 4.

³⁵Ibid., May 31, 1917, p. 4.

³⁶Ibid., May 13, 1917, p. 4. Streit later was nominated four times for the Nobel Peace Prize. A Rhodes scholar,

Campbell praised Governor Stewart for calling out the troops "to put an end to IWW terrorism" in Montana. Unlike some governors, Stewart was willing "to throw personal advantage aside and do the right thing for the preservation of the state instead of bowing humbly to the lawless and radical elements, fearing to lose political support," an editorial said.³⁷

Other Independent editorials blasted the IWW. One said the initials stood for "I Will Wreck."³⁸ Another advocated forcing the Wobblies to work under military supervision or jailing them.³⁹ The jailed Wobblies should be exchanged with Germany for American prisoners of war, Campbell said.⁴⁰ Wobblies were called "treasonable bums" in a front-page headline over a story about an order from the governor and attorney general directing local officials to go after "the unwashed and smelly crew" in towns where the IWW was active.⁴¹ He later warned that if governments

Streit worked as a reporter for the New York Times before founding the Atlantic Union movement, which advocated the union of the United States with European countries. In 1977, at age 81, Streit was president of the Federal Union, Incorporated and editor of its magazine, Freedom & Union.

³⁷Helena Independent, June 16, 1917, p. 4.

³⁸Ibid., June 23, 1917, p. 4.

³⁹Ibid., July 14, 1917, p. 4.

⁴⁰Ibid., July 19, 1917, p. 4.

⁴¹Ibid., July 25, 1917, p. 1.

in the Pacific Northwest proved incapable of handling the Wobblies, then "the wrath of the public will trample" the IWW members.⁴²

In a shrill warning that proved to be prophetic, Campbell said that he would not be surprised if citizens declared an open season on the IWW "and start a series of hanging bees and shootings which will reduce the visible supply of criminals appreciably." He concluded on a grim note: "It is high time that IWWism was taken by the throat and choked to death."⁴³

⁴²Ibid., July 28, 1917, p. 4.

⁴³Ibid., July 10, 1917, p. 4.

CHAPTER VI

LYNCHING A WOBBLY

Sort of quickens the blood in the veins of some of the pioneers of Helena to see once more the fatal figures in print -- "3-7-77."¹

--Will A. Campbell, commenting on the lynching of IWW organizer Frank Little, August 2, 1917.

Butte, with its numerous foreign-born miners, was the natural center of antiwar activity in Montana. In early June 1917, 500 or 600 persons paraded down the city's main street hoisting a twelve-foot red flag that said: "Down With War." Troops were called out after several shots were fired, and Mayor W. H. Mahoney ordered the crowd to disperse. The rally was termed "treasonable" in a headline on the front page of the Helena Independent.² The next day, Independent editor Will Campbell wrote an editorial blaming "a small

¹Helena Independent, August 2, 1917, p. 2. The mysterious numbers were the symbols of the Vigilantes of Montana, who took law and order into their own hands in the 1860s, capturing and hanging some criminals. It is believed the numbers represent the dimensions of a grave--three feet wide, seven feet long and seventy-seven inches deep. For more information about the numbers, see Rex C. Myers, "The Fateful Numbers: 3-7-77," Montana: The Magazine of Western History XXIV (Autumn 1974):67-70.

²Helena Independent, June 6, 1917, p. 1.

coterie of professional Irish" for "the treasonable plots" in Butte and called for punishment of the guilty. And, he warned, "this is possibly the last scene of the sort that will be witnessed in Butte."³

But the protest was forgotten quickly because Butte was struck by a horrible mining disaster just two days later. A fire erupted in the Speculator Mine, one of the few mines in the area not owned by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company. The holocaust killed at least 162 miners and remains the worst mining disaster in state history. It was started when a cable in the shaft was accidentally ignited by a carbide lamp carried by a miner. Bodies of some of the miners were found lying against cement bulkheads with their fingers worn to the bone from trying to escape. The mine was not in compliance with a state law requiring bulkheads to have iron doors that could be opened during emergencies.⁴

The disaster also unleashed two years of the miners' pent-up bitterness against the mining companies, which had crushed the organized labor movement in Butte in 1915. Within days, miners formed the Metal Mine Workers Union and went out on strike. They wanted higher wages, better and safer working

³Ibid., June 7, 1917, p. 4.

⁴Gutfeld, "The Speculator Disaster," pp. 27-38. Gutfeld noted that Butte newspapers placed the number of dead at 162, while the United States Bureau of Mines counted 163 dead and the Montana Department of Labor and Industry reported 164 fatalities.

conditions and abolition of the despised "rustling card" system, which required a man to hold a card before he could work in the mines, thereby giving the companies, instead of the union, the decision of which miner would get the job.⁵ By mid-June, 1,000 miners were on strike, and by the end of the month, about 15,000 men, including machinists, boiler-makers and blacksmiths, had joined the picket lines to bring the Butte mines to a virtual standstill.⁶

Striking miners could read their side of the story in a newspaper founded by three Butte lawyers, including Burton K. Wheeler, later a United States attorney and senator, as an alternative to the Company press. The newspaper, called the Butte and Anaconda Joint Strike Bulletin, was edited by William F. Dunne, the electrical workers' union delegate to the Butte Metal Trades Council.⁷ Both the Bulletin and Dunne later proved to be nemeses of Will Campbell and the Montana Council of Defense.

Like the editors of the Company papers in Butte, Campbell blamed the IWW for the trouble at the mines. Although the Wobblies were not in the front line, Campbell accused them of being the "agitators" who had stirred up the masses.⁸

⁵Ibid.

⁶Helena Independent, June 15, 1917, p. 1. Gutfeld, "The Speculator Disaster," p. 35.

⁷Gutfeld, "The Speculator Disaster," p. 31.

⁸Helena Independent, June 14, 1917, p. 4.

Another editorial the same day appealed to the miners' patriotism and urged them to return to work and resolve their differences after the war because the country desperately needed the copper. It also questioned the need for higher wages, saying that miners were paid higher salaries than when they had belonged to a union. Moreover, Campbell said, "the miner saves the atrocious [sic] sums the union bosses were wont to rob him of."⁹ Six days later, Campbell tried a different approach. He said the miners' wages had been raised repeatedly in Butte voluntarily by the companies. If the miners could not make ends meet, perhaps they were being charged too much for "the necessities of life," Campbell wrote. He suggested that a federal investigation, which the miners wanted, might find the answer.¹⁰

The striking miners sought a basic salary of \$6.00 a day, which would not vary with the vicissitudes of the market price of copper. Their current wage scale called for a salary of \$4.75 a day as long as the market price of copper was at least 27 cents a pound. Their wages were reduced by 25 cents a day for each 2 percent drop in the market price of copper. Moreover, the companies had failed to keep a promise to boost the basic wage if the copper price rose past 31 cents a pound, a level it had reached and maintained since

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., June 20, 1917, p. 4.

February 1917.¹¹

Despite claims by the companies, Butte miners were not particularly well paid. Figures compiled by the federal government showed that despite two years of national prosperity, the Butte miner, his wife and two children remained below the basic comfort level, which would have required a yearly salary of \$1,413, and barely above the minimum subsistence level of \$1,106.¹²

Campbell, meanwhile, mixed his criticism of the IWW in Butte with a call for a federal investigation, which, he said, "might bring a bloodless compromise."¹³ Such a compromise, he wrote, might result in the miner returning to work "better off than he was before--union or no union."¹⁴ But there were no easy compromises to resolve problems that had accumulated for years. The Helena editor raised the possibility of the federal government taking over the mines to secure the needed copper. This solution, one editorial said, would start a weeding-out process so that only men of "proved loyalty" would be sent underground. The troubled situation clearly called for tact yet firmness, according to Campbell, who added: "In the meantime, Butte, in the eyes

¹¹Gutfeld, "The Speculator Disaster," p. 33.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Helena Independent, June 21, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., June 24, 1917, p. 4.

of the American nation, is a sickening sight. In the eyes of Prussians, it is a delight."¹⁵

His editorials became more strident as the strike wore on. One held the Wobblies directly responsible for the trouble in Butte and boasted that the Anaconda Copper Mining Company had given its workers "the best treatment and the squarest deal ever offered by any industrial corporation." The problem, he wrote, was the union bosses who were trying to make sure that the miner would not be able to save a single cent of his \$4.75 daily wage.¹⁶ Another editorial warned that the IWW, which was losing ground in Butte, surely would resort to "sneaking violence" soon because the Wobblies were afraid to come out in the open.¹⁷ Ironically, it was a Wobbly who was the victim, rather than the perpetrator, of an act of sneaking violence in Butte.

During the still of the early morning of August 1, Frank Little, a member of the IWW's national general executive board, was dragged from his bed in a Butte boardinghouse by five masked men at about three o'clock. A sixth masked man stood guard outside. Little, who had a broken leg in a cast, was dragged behind a car for some distance--long enough to scrape off his kneecaps--before he was hauled to a bridge

¹⁵Ibid., July 13, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁶Ibid., July 14, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁷Ibid., July 30, 1917, p. 4.

outside the city limits. After suffering another beating, Little was lynched from a railroad trestle. The men left him hanging with a sign pinned to his underwear that said: "Others take notice, first and last warning, 3-7-77." The bottom of the note contained the letters L-D-C-S-S-W-T with the "L," thought to stand for Little, circled.¹⁸

Little, a veteran of labor wars across the West, had come to Butte on July 18, 1917, to shore up support for the strike. In a fiery speech at the ball park the day after his arrival, Little reportedly called American soldiers "armed thugs" and "uniformed scabs" and bragged to the crowd of 6,000 that he had told the governor of Arizona: "Governor, I don't give a damn what country your country is fighting, I am fighting for the solidarity of labor."¹⁹ Accounts of this speech and another one on July 27, when he called the United States Constitution "a mere scrap of paper which can be torn up," were widely reported in the state's press. A number of the newspapers also carried editorials attacking Little as a dangerous agitator.²⁰

Most Montana newspapers denounced the lynching of

¹⁸Gutfeld, "The Murder of Frank Little," pp. 177-178. The initials supposedly stood for names of others on the lynching party's list, including labor leaders and Burton K. Wheeler, United States district attorney for Montana.

¹⁹Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 149. Gutfeld, "The Murder of Frank Little," pp. 183-184.

²⁰Gutfeld, "Murder of Frank Little," pp. 185-186.

Little as an outrage, but they generally agreed with the assessment from the Butte Miner, which said: "As far as the man himself is concerned, his death is no loss to the world. . . ." ²¹

But in Helena, Will Campbell could hardly contain his glee in Independent editorials. Noting that more than 2,000 copies of a special edition of the newspaper containing details of Little's death had sold out in less than an hour, Campbell said only one comment was heard around town: "Good work: Let them continue to hang every IWW in the state." In normal times, he wrote, the lynching would have been condemned as "a blot on the state" such as the lynching of "the southern rape fiend" is regarded elsewhere in the country. "But the United States is at war, and Little, the offending IWW agitator, paid for his traitorous work and treasonable speeches with his life," the editorial said. ²²

The editorial expressed other strong opinions that Campbell claimed to be the consensus of Helena residents although he did not name anyone who expressed these views. Public opinion around town advocated having the United States Army march the IWW leaders to a mountain side "and with one volley from the rifles of a picked company, end the agitation in Montana," he said. Townspeople also blamed the courts for

²¹Ibid., p. 188.

²²Helena Independent, August 2, 1917, p. 4.

lacking the courage to convict and impose stiff sentences on "such characters," according to the editorial. Campbell warned:

The Independent is convinced that unless the courts and military authorities take a hand now and end the IWW in the West, there will be more night visits, more tugs at the rope and more IWW tongues will wag for the last time when the noose tightens about the traitors throats. . . .

The time has come. The Independent cannot comprehend why the United States government has not long ago established prison camps and interned there the enemies of the American government. It is beyond the comprehension of the average citizen why the war department has not ordered certain leaders arrested and shot. The people will not stand for much more. The policy of "watchful waiting" in dealing with the IWW will not be tolerated.²³

Some short editorial fillers the same day reinforced his opinion. One said: "Evidently Butte has a 'Home Guard' which has been training for some time." Another added: "Sort of quickens the blood in the veins of some of the prisoners of Helena to see once more the fatal figures in print--'3-7-77.'"²⁴

A news story the same day bore the headline: "Prevalent Opinion Over/Butte Lynching is That/Traitor Met His Deserts." It quoted an anonymous Helena resident, who, referring to the lynching, said, "I've called Butte home for thirty years; for

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

the past fifteen I have apologized daily for my home town. I'll do less apologizing after this." Campbell said this man's opinions appear "to be the unofficial sentiment of Montana." Residents also were asked what kind of punishment should be imposed on the lynching party if the six men were caught. One anonymous person suggested: "Better start with the coroner's jury and have it reach a verdict of suicide." At least a dozen other "men of affairs" in Helena agreed, the story said.²⁵

In many ways, the lynching of Frank Little helped shape the course of Montana's internal turmoil during the war years. Sides were chosen for the debates over civil liberties that were to follow. As one student of the period wrote about Little's murder, which was never solved: "It intensified the hysterical campaign for passage of anti-sedition acts in Montana; this campaign had a decided effect on politics and the political careers of men who were to lead Montana politics in subsequent years."²⁶

Not everyone took the lynching as lightly as Campbell apparently did. An angry Burton K. Wheeler, the United States attorney for Montana, who was stationed in Butte, called Little's murder "a damnable outrage, a blot on the state and city." He said that good citizens "should condemn this mob

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Gutfeld, "The Butte Labor Strikes," p. 46.

spirit as unpatriotic, lawless and inhuman."²⁷

Wheeler had been besieged by demands from citizens to prosecute Frank Little after the IWW official's controversial speeches in Butte. Wheeler refused on the ground Little had not violated the federal espionage act. As Wheeler said after the lynching:

Personally, I think any man who talks against the government and the soldiers who will go to France should be condemned and he should not be attacked by a mob. If there is no law to bring him into courts to answer for his statements--and there is no law--no violence of any kind should be administered to him. . . . The people should ask Congress to pass a law that will bring men to justice who preach against the government but the law should take its course.

If there had been a law to prosecute Little my office would have done so. My department made a thorough investigation of the case and we could not by any stretch of the imagination have indicted Little.²⁸

The United States attorney's comments and failure to prosecute Little and others marked him as someone who later would be investigated by Will Campbell and the Montana Council of Defense.

Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin of Montana, who had expressed feelings similar to those of Wheeler about Little's death, was singled out for an attack in Campbell's newspaper.

²⁷Ibid., p. 35.

²⁸Burton K. Wheeler with Paul F. Healy, Yankee From the West (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1962), pp. 139-140.

Rankin had said she was horrified by the lynching and pledged to try to instigate a federal investigation of the murder. Campbell noted that Rankin had not expressed similar horror over the Wobblies' destruction of lumber mills and forests in the Northwest and their murders of workingmen. Yet she voiced great concern over the lynching by men "who driven to desperation by the indifference and political philandering of narrow-visioned authorities, rose and stilled the voices of the leader of the enemies of a government which he abused and cursed and defied," Campbell wrote.²⁹

The Helena editor also took issue with fellow Montana editorial writers who condemned the murder as a blot on the state though they also had condemned Little. Campbell advised his colleagues:

Tell the truth. If you are glad one of the trouble makers has paid the penalty of his acts, say so or keep still. You do not fool anyone by mouthing around over how sorry you are . . . you are absolutely satisfied with the work of the vigilante committees.³⁰

Little's lynching and the disturbances in Butte also attracted the attention of other members of the Montana Council of Defense. At a meeting after the lynching, the Council recommended that a 400-man state police force be established by a special session of the legislature if the

²⁹Helena Independent, August 4, 1917, p. 4.

³⁰Ibid.

trouble continued.³¹ The Council's consideration of such a proposal was in marked contrast to its usual activities, which focused primarily on agriculture at that time.

In other developments, federal troops were sent to Butte to patrol the streets that led to the mines, and the governors of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington met in Portland to discuss the IWW problem.³² An Independent editorial predicted that all six governors would call special legislative sessions soon to enact laws to deal with the Wobblies.³³ However, Montana Governor Sam Stewart said a day later that he saw no need for a special session at that time.³⁴

Campbell did not let up with biting editorials, sensational news stories and inflammatory cartoons after Little's murder. One editorial blamed Congress for the IWW trouble and accused the senators and representatives of fiddling along and failing to provide the necessary laws for prosecutors and courts to imprison the Wobblies.³⁵ His newspaper also carried on page one a cartoon showing a lynched gorilla hanging from a tree at night with a caption that said: "IF

³¹Ibid., August 3, 1917, p. 1.

³²Gutfeld, "The Murder of Frank Little," p. 191. Helena Independent, August 13, 1917, p. 4.

³³Helena Independent, August 13, 1917, p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., August 14, 1917, p. 1.

³⁵Ibid., August 6, 1917, p. 4.

THE BUTTE COMMITTEE COULD CALL ON THE KAISER."³⁶ The Helena editor, furious at a report that a middle-aged, unemployed man had rejected an offer to work on a farm by saying, "To hell with haying," offered this advice: "Pick 'em up. Feed them as poorly as possible. Give them nothing but water to drink and work them all you can."³⁷ The newspaper also gave prominent front-page play to a story that accused the IWW of inciting Apache Indians to burn some buildings in Arizona.³⁸

Most of Campbell's harshest editorials were reserved for Congresswoman Rankin, whom he called the IWW's "champion" in the House of Representatives. Noting that Rankin had announced plans to run for the United States Senate in 1918, Campbell wrote: "Surely by next fall she will actually be carrying a red card [representing the IWW] in her stocking."³⁹

The congresswoman responded to criticism from Campbell and other editors by telling the Washington Times that the Amalgamated [Anaconda] Copper Company owned the state. "They own the government," she said. "They own the press. Every newspaper will print my shortcomings, real and

³⁶Ibid., August 7, 1917, p. 1.

³⁷Ibid., August 8, 1917, p. 4.

³⁸Ibid., August 8, 1917, p. 1.

³⁹Ibid., August 9, 1917, p. 4.

fancied."⁴⁰ Campbell labeled her comments "intellectual dishwater" and, while acknowledging that the copper interests owned some papers, denied that Anaconda owned the Independent. He added:

Jeannette, you have a lot of things to take back. Don't tell the people of the east that the copper trust owns the state of Montana, the government nor the press, for this is the most independent and do-as-you-please state between the Father of Waters and the western sea.

The copper trust does not own the state, the government nor the press. Like any other business enterprise it wants to be let alone and not made the prey of mountebanks and scheming politicians. It wants to hire good men who are willing to do an honest day's work for an honest dollar. And more than anything else neither the miners in Butte nor the Anaconda Copper Mining company need the assistance and advice of an enthusiastic little girl whose socialistic ideas will disappear as she becomes a more mature woman and will be replaced by the common sense which characterized the true and noble American woman. . . .⁴¹

On her return to Montana, Rankin denied that she had made the statement about the copper trust influence. Campbell did not swallow her explanation and said it made persons wonder "if Miss Rankin feeds the newspapers and members of congress one thing and tells the people out home another sort of story." In any event, he urged her to demand a retraction

⁴⁰As quoted in Helena Independent, August 15, 1917, p. 4.

⁴¹Helena Independent, August 15, 1917, p. 4.

from the Washington Times and New York World, which also had printed her comments.⁴²

After visiting Butte, Rankin concluded that the striking miners were entitled to all their requests. She also appealed to them to return to work if the rustling-card system was abolished, a plea that was met with a chorus of noes. Campbell scoffed at her assessment in an editorial, saying that it meant turning the mines over to the Wobblies, who "want to hold up the copper companies, even to confiscation of every cent of profit."⁴³

The congresswoman also asserted that she did not believe the Butte strike leaders were IWW members, an assessment shared by Attorney General Sam C. Ford, a Republican like Rankin. Campbell accused Ford of joining Rankin in the IWW "mudpuddle."⁴⁴

In his criticisms of Rankin, Campbell apparently chose to ignore her comments to a crowd of thousands in a speech at

⁴²Ibid., August 16, 1917, p. 4. Campbell had mocked Rankin's return to Butte in front-page headlines: The banner headline told part of the story: "AS PER SKED, JEANNETTE ARRIVES IN BUTTE, BUT IS THERE A PARADE IN HER HONOR?" A slightly smaller headline across the page added: "There Is Not Because Police Outwit Waiting Wobblies and Whisk Her to Hotel." A two-column headline completed the tale: "IWW TURN OUT IN FULL FORCE/TO GREET THEIR PATRON, BUT SHE/IS FORBIDDEN TO MAKE ADDRESS." Ibid., August 15, 1917, p. 1.

⁴³Ibid., August 20, 1917, p. 4.

⁴⁴Ibid., August 24, 1917, p. 4.

a Butte park on August 15. "I have no patience with the alleged utterances of Frank Little," she said, "but I have the greatest contempt for the form of direct action that permitted the foul and cowardly murder of Frank Little!"⁴⁵

⁴⁵Hannah Josephson, Jeannette Rankin: First Lady in Congress (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1974), p. 92.

CHAPTER VII

GERMAN RAIDERS IN MONTANA

Mr. President, I have received a copy of the Helena (Mont.) Independent, a highly reputable and independent daily newspaper in Montana, . . . which contains a very comprehensive article about the activities of the Industrial Workers of the World in Montana and conditions arising therefrom. The owners of the Independent, I am sure, are in no wise financially interested in any mines or smelters, sawmills, lumber camps or other industrial institutions, and therefore I believe the paper is in a position to speak advisedly and disinterestedly of those conditions.¹

--Senator Henry L. Myers, addressing the United States Senate, August 23, 1917, on the IWW menace in Montana.

The uproar over the murder of IWW leader Frank Little in Butte soon focused the national spotlight on Montana and Butte's labor problems. Montana's senior United States senator, Henry L. Myers, a Democrat, decided it was time for the federal government to act. In a letter to Assistant Attorney General William C. Fitts, Myers reported that he was receiving a torrent of mail "of the most alarming nature"

¹U. S., Congress, Senate, 65th Cong., 1st sess., August 23, 1917, Congressional Record, Vol. LV, Part 6, 6262. Hereafter cited as Congressional Record.

from his constituents complaining that the state had been "invaded by a horde of IWW agitators" who were "preaching strikes and advising workingmen to quit their jobs and denouncing the prosecution of the war." Myers told the assistant attorney general that he had registered similar complaints with the Department of Justice in the past but to no avail.²

Three days later, Myers introduced a bill aimed at suppressing sedition, one that eventually passed but with a curious legislative history.³

On August 23, Myers distributed to each of his colleagues a copy of an August 19 Helena Independent editorial that denounced the IWW. In a speech on the Senate floor, Myers called the Independent "a highly reputable and independent daily newspaper" that could "speak advisedly and disinterestedly" of the state's labor conditions.⁴

Nothing could have been further from the truth. Myers

²Letter, Henry L. Myers, United States senator, to William C. Fitts, assistant attorney general, August 10, 1917, U.S. Department of Justice, Record Group 60, Records of the Department of Justice, Glasser File, Washington, D.C., National Archives, 1964. Hereafter cited as Department of Justice File.

³His bill was buried in the United States Senate Judiciary Committee but was borrowed and enacted with few changes by a special session of the Montana Legislature in 1918. To complete the cycle, Myers' bill was revived by Montana's other United States senator, Thomas J. Walsh, and enacted as the federal Sedition Act later in 1918. Evans, "Montana's Role," pp. 91-127. Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 154-155.

⁴Congressional Record, 6262.

neglected to inform his fellow senators that Will Campbell, editor of the Independent, was anything but an objective observer when it came to the Industrial Workers of the World. As his readers knew, Campbell had devoted hundreds of column inches of his newspaper to attack the Wobblies in a style marked by invective and venom. He had mocked them and repeatedly advocated that they be deported or jailed. "In short," one student of the period wrote, "a super-patriot such as Will Campbell could not have been impartial in regards to any issue involving the IWW."⁵

The Independent editorial that Myers passed out to the other senators accused the IWW of trying to sabotage American society. One historian called the particular editorial "a typical Campbell diatribe, composed in equal parts of rumor and half truths."⁶

Myers' approach drew a rebuke, couched in senatorial courtesy, from Senator Reed Smoot, a Republican from Utah, who said:

[I]t seems to me that if we are going to do anything with the IWW proposition at all, we ought to act instead of paying attention to newspaper articles. We can fill the Record every day with articles from all the papers of the United States and from individuals upon this question, and it will not assist one iota. If

⁵Evans, "Montana's Role," p. 101. For a good, concise summary of Campbell's attacks on the IWW, see pp. 100-101.

⁶Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 154.

Congress is to act in the matter, we ought to act by law; if a state is to act in the matter, it ought to put its laws into force and not do so much talking.⁷

Undaunted, Myers used the Independent editorial as the basis from which to attack the IWW. Myers, whose own election to the Senate in 1911 was "attributed to the machinations of the Company" in the Montana Legislature,⁸ then took advantage of his forum to defend John D. Ryan, president of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company. Ryan had been accused by some of causing the labor unrest in Montana, a charge that Myers termed "absurd and monstrous." Myers concluded his speech by urging passage of his anti-sedition bill "to suppress the pernicious and disloyal activities of the IWW. . . ."⁹

Meanwhile, back in Montana, the other half of the team--Campbell--was writing editorials urging Congress to act immediately on Myers' proposal so that "these agitators will be forever prevented from creating dissatisfaction among the labor unions. . . ."¹⁰ Another editorial urged that the

⁷Congressional Record, 6263.

⁸Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana," p. 250. For more detail, see Jules A. Karlin, Joseph M. Dixon of Montana: Part I, Senator and Bull Moose Manager (Missoula: University of Montana Publications in History, 1974), pp. 103-108.

⁹Congressional Record, 6264-6265.

¹⁰Helena Independent, August 17, 1917, p. 4.

Wobblies be handled without gloves. If they persisted in their hostility toward the government, the IWW members "should be handled firmly--sent to prison for the term of the war or shot as traitors," Campbell said.¹¹

The newspaper editor also expressed alarm that Helena residents had not shown enough concern over the war. It might take the return of some wounded soldiers to Helena, he wrote, before "we will understand that France is on her knees--and that England may soon be hungry--and that if we don't wake up from our sleep we will not be paying for Liberty bonds but for war indemnities."¹² [Emphasis in original.]

Campbell also took advantage of the time of year--right before school was to start--to hammer on what had become a pet theme. He urged students to forego the study of German in favor of Spanish, which would prove twice as useful. "Presumably there will always be Germans to translate the German books to sell to those who do not read German."¹³

Campbell ridiculed those Americans who had expressed concern over the federal government's violations of the civil rights of some individuals, whom he did not identify, and

¹¹Ibid., August 24, 1917, p. 4.

¹²Ibid., August 18, 1917, p. 4.

¹³Ibid., August 16, 1917, p. 4.

added:

If it were possible to gather such people together and ship them to Germany for a few days of life in that country it would effectively end their silly patter regarding vague rights endangered by the probable necessity of their having to show some appreciation for the great benefits this country has so freely conferred upon them.¹⁴

The Montana Staats-Zeitung, a German-language weekly published in Helena, came under renewed attack from Campbell. He urged persons to get a copy and if they could read "the most despised language in history, a tongue which will be damned as the world spins down the corridors of time," to find out which Helena merchants were supporting the newspaper. Lest there be any doubt, Campbell pointed out that his Independent was "100 per cent American all the time" and added that "if there is one paper in all of Montana which has given eleven of its employees to the army and raised hell with the Germans since war was declared, it has been the Independent."¹⁵ A day later, Campbell again raised questions about "treason-spreading sheets published in the German language and asked how any "100 per cent American business house" could support the Staats-Zeitung.¹⁶

Campbell's guilt-by-association attacks apparently

¹⁴Ibid., August 28, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁵Ibid., August 31, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁶Ibid., September 1, 1917, p. 4.

were too much for Fred Naegele, president of Naegele Printing Company, which published the Montana Staats-Zeitung. Naegele sent Campbell a statement acknowledging that he printed the German-language paper at his shop but pointing out that he had sold his interest in the weekly ten years ago. The printing company president added that "we have nothing in common with the Kaiser or the German government."¹⁷

His statement did not satisfy Campbell, who said "there still remains the question being asked by Helena generally whether Mr. Naegele would be done any injustice by assertions that he had been disloyal to the United States and disagreeably pro-German by his utterances of past months." If Naegele was willing to repudiate these statements, the editor said, "no one will rejoice more than The Independent on the return of an erring brother to the fold of the Stars and Stripes."¹⁸

Naegele, though, decided to fight fire with fire and, in a separate letter, noted that his father had served in the Civil War and he had volunteered for the Spanish-American War. Having made that point, Naegele then asked why "the three husky Campbells have not volunteered their services for the war against Germany." He was referring, of course, to Will

¹⁷ Ibid., September 3, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid.

and his two brothers, Glenn and Bert.¹⁹

Campbell responded by accusing Naegele of stooping "to cheap personalities." Two of the Campbell brothers were considerably past the military induction age, he wrote, and the third, undoubtedly Will himself, "has been drawn and though married, claims no exemption on any ground whatever." Campbell, obviously outraged that his own patriotism had been called into question, went on to say:

It might be further stated for Mr. Naegele's benefit that volunteering for service does not necessarily mean carrying a gun. The three "husky Campbells" have volunteered for service during the war. Their purchase of Liberty Bonds would be equal to Mr. Naegele's personal salary for three years, and they have volunteered to keep their business going as best they can, paying some \$70,000 per annum in payrolls; they have volunteered to buy just as many Liberty Bonds of the next issue as their means will permit; they have volunteered to give regularly and as generously as possible to the Red Cross and the Army YMCA; the [sic] have volunteered to give all the space in their paper possible to supporting the President of the United States and the Governor of Montana and every officer of the law in his hunt for traitors and disloyal persons; they have volunteered their credit and staked it in a thousand-acre farm to grow their share of wheat with which to feed a hungry world and furnish employment for two or more homesteaders burned out during the past summer; they have volunteered to support, loyally, every home business possible that we may all have the means to carry on the war, and they

¹⁹Ibid.

have volunteered to whack a German sympathizer over the head whenever they get a chance whether he means what he is saying or not.²⁰

The indignant editor concluded by saying he would leave the judgment of the dispute to people who knew Naegele "and have heard him talk" because they were "better able to judge who is right in the controversy than those who edit the Independent."²¹ But Campbell was unable to resist getting the last word. Three days later he ran a mocking editorial filler that called his rival "Herr von Naegele."²²

Campbell was waging a similar battle on another front at the same time. He began attacking Burton K. Wheeler, the United States district attorney for Montana, for "not jailing more Wobblies and soap-box agitators."²³

In a criticism that almost defies belief, Campbell said the problem with Wheeler and other Montana federal court officials was that they required "finding a certain law to cover minutely every point involved when a person is jailed." In other words, Campbell seemed to be saying, toss the Wobblies in jail and do not worry about the law. He praised district attorneys and judges in Iowa, Illinois, New York, and Nebraska "who can find a way to deal with the men who

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., September 6, 1917, p. 4.

²³Ibid., August 30, 1917, p. 4.

abuse the freedom of speech guaranteed by the constitution." What Montana needed, he wrote, was men "who will not excuse treasonable utterances on the ground that we are guaranteed free speech, but will jail those who utter them on the ground that such an abuse of language is sedition--is giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States."²⁴

A few days later, Campbell lashed into Wheeler again for not taking the "IWW menace and other seditious organizations as seriously as he should." The Helena newspaper editor said that instead of raiding the IWW headquarters in Butte himself, Wheeler waited until he had orders from his superiors. Wheeler, the editorial said, "must wonder why he did not order the raids himself and why he did not order the arrest of such men as Frank Little." Campbell explained why Wheeler, in his opinion, had not acted against the Wobblies:

From his viewpoint these organizations are merely protests against the capitalistic system and furthering the cause of labor. Mr. Wheeler is not a socialist, but he lives more or less in a socialistic atmosphere. The senior member of his firm is decidedly socialistic, while Mr. Wheeler is an intimate friend of William D. Sullivan, the Butte attorney for the Metal Mine Workers. Mr. Sullivan was a charter member of the Butte local, Industrial Workers of the World.²⁵

Wheeler, age thirty-five, was a tall, outspoken lawyer who had come to Montana from his native Massachusetts. Active

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., September 8, 1917, p. 4.

in Democratic politics, he had been appointed to the district attorney's position with the support of Senator Walsh.²⁶ He was aware of the criticism that he was not jailing Wobblies and explained his position in a letter to Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory on August 21, 1917. Wheeler told Gregory that telegrams sent to President Wilson that criticized him for not prosecuting Wobblies in Montana

are fathered by a desire of the interests, employing labor . . . , to keep the true condition of affairs from the public at large. I do not share this hastily, but it is a fact that the Press of Montana generally have published reports of labor conditions which are in truth unfounded; these reports have magnified the activity of the IWW element; have reported doings by this element which never happened and business men in communities wherein the influence of the large industries undoubtedly predominates among the people, have calculated reports about the existing conditions which upon investigation have proven to be wholly without foundation in fact. As to who is responsible for these reports being circulated and published as they are and the complaints that are made to this office about reigns of terror existing I do not care to venture an assertion as I am unaware of the source. . . .

My impression . . . is that the press of Montana is acting at the request of the employers to create an impression in the minds of the people that the IWW element is creating a lawless situation and by high-handed methods of destroying the industries of the state, whereas in truth and in fact, any strikes which are now on are being conducted in a most orderly manner, no violence or public disturbances

²⁶Wheeler, Yankee from the West, pp. 38-104.

are had, such picketing as is being done is strictly within the limits of the decisions of the Supreme Court of Montana, which has held that picketing is lawful where no violence is used. . . .

In Butte, there are several thousands of miners on strike and the strike is being conducted by them in a manner heretofore unheard of in mining regions. No violence or disorder is observed or has been reported and we have every reason to believe that the miners are conducting this strike for the sole purpose of bettering their conditions. . . .

That portion of the press in Montana which is subsidized and under the control of the large employers of labor has been continuously criticizing all government officials for failure to control the IWW situation throughout Montana, whereas in fact the situation has consisted merely of an agitation among the laboring classes urging them to better their conditions and this agitation has been done wholly by word of mouth and not by violent means. They have, indeed, insisted that we prosecute such people without laws of the United States under which prosecution could be had and this at a time when they admitted we had no laws under which a prosecution could be properly had. . . .²⁷

Wheeler's report that there were no problems was similar to that submitted by the commander of the army troops in Butte to the Department of Justice.²⁸

Attorney General Gregory responded by backing Wheeler. "Of course," he replied, "this department has nothing to do

²⁷Letter, Burton K. Wheeler, United States attorney for Montana, to Thomas W. Gregory, United States attorney general, August 21, 1917, Department of Justice File, 186701-27-15.

²⁸Gutfeld, "Murder of Frank Little," p. 191.

with strikes where no violations of federal laws are involved, and you appear to be dealing wisely with the situation." At the same time, Gregory reminded Wheeler that enforcing these laws was "a very delicate situation." When "we unearth facts showing a violation of the state law it should be referred to state authorities," Gregory said, "and we expect them to treat us in the same way where facts showing a violation of federal law come in their possession."²⁹

A few weeks later, Campbell warned that the Independent would give Wheeler only a little more time "to make good" before it joined some other newspapers demanding his resignation. The Helena editor made it clear he was becoming fed up with the performance of Wheeler, who "has an alibi ever ready--there is no law or the court will not punish or something."³⁰

The Helena editor also contributed to the frenzied wartime atmosphere in Montana in yet another way. A two-column headline on the Independent's front page September 1 asked a question that was bound to unnerve the newspaper's readers. It said: "AIRPLANE SEEN FLYING ABOVE HELENA/HAVE GERMANS SPY POST NEAR HERE?" The story raised the possibility of a German observation post "nestled down in some

²⁹Letter, Thomas W. Gregory, United States attorney general, to Burton K. Wheeler, United States attorney for Montana, August 25, 1917, Department of Justice File, 186701-27-15.

³⁰Helena Independent, October 19, 1917, p. 4.

secluded nook in the Rockies adjacent to Helena." Several Helena area residents claimed to have seen "an airplane of curious design . . . hovering over the city under the cover of darkness." According to the article, a similar machine had been spotted near Hamilton earlier but was reported to have fallen into a swamp. The story, which referred to the unidentified flying object as an "aerial scout," did not attempt to explain with comments from federal or state officials the likelihood of the Germans conducting aerial espionage missions over the capital city of Montana and tiny Hamilton, of all places.³¹

An editorial the next day must have frightened some readers even more. Campbell asked how long it would be before the Germans launched an air raid on New York City from ships in the Atlantic Ocean. War experts expected such raids as a last-ditch tactic by the kaiser, the editorial said.³²

The arrest of Carl von Pohl in Butte on espionage charges the next month lent further credence to the spy story in Campbell's opinion. The editor was convinced that von Pohl and other spies in Butte relayed information to a wireless station in the forests west of Missoula where it was transmitted to German operatives in Mexico.³³

³¹Ibid., September 1, 1917, p. 1.

³²Ibid., September, September 2, 1917, p. 4.

³³Ibid., October 17, 1917, pp. 1, 4. Campbell later

A day later, Independent readers were offered a chance to help solve the mysteries of the past few months. In a boldface box on its front page, the Independent offered a \$100 reward to the person who could locate the airplane seen and heard south and east of Helena and find out who owned it. Two Independent reporters had heard an exhaust sound while hunting and reasoned it was an airplane since they were at least three miles from any road where an automobile or motorcycle might be running. "This mystery must be solved," the newspaper said, adding:

Are the Germans about to bomb the capital of Montana? Have they spies in the mountain fastnesses equipped with wireless stations and aeroplanes? Do our enemies [sic] fly around over our high mountains where formerly only the shadow of the eagle swept?³⁴

The Helena newspaper reprinted a story from the Missoula Missoulian later that month that added further intrigue to the espionage tale. An old logger had discovered what he thought to be a wireless plant hidden in the mountains near Missoula. His evidence consisted of a tree that had been trimmed, some pieces of copper wire and other signs that someone had lived there.³⁵

called von Pohl "a pretty important wheel in the kaiser's spy machine," an allegation he never proved. Ibid., November 17, 1917, p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., October 18, 1917, p. 1.

³⁵Ibid., October 30, 1918, p. 6.

The most incredible story appeared in the Independent a few days later. "On Dot, Raider Returns/To Fly About Capital," a front-page headline declared. The story boasted that "Helena fired the first shots discharged in America at an airplane." It said residents had become "[i]ncensed by repeated visits of a mysterious aerial visitor" and "emptied a high-power rapid-fire gun at the raiders." The newspaper reported that the airship had been "terrorizing" western Montana for months and its appearance over Helena had "set the city agog" for three nights. Governor Sam Stewart pledged his assistance in gunning down the aircraft. "Notify me at once next time, and I will pursue in my auto," the governor ordered. "This thing must be run down."³⁶

No one had actually seen an airplane, the story said, but some had spotted red and green lights in the sky and assumed it to be a German plane.³⁷

Besieged with demands for an investigation into the mysterious airplanes, Wheeler traveled to the Bitterroot Valley south of Missoula where some reports had originated. An old railroad man offered him "a sensible explanation for the dreaded aircraft," Wheeler recalled, adding:

He pointed out that if looked overhead
as you drove through a winding pass in
the Bitterroots, the North Star appeared
on the right hand and then on the left

³⁶ Ibid., November 2, 1917, p. 1.

³⁷ Ibid.

hand. Since it appeared to be moving, it was taken for the taillight of a German bomber.³⁸

Although he later criticized Montana newspapers for encouraging a panic over these reports, Wheeler said it must be remembered that the airplane truly was "an excitingly new and mysterious machine in the West." Just as Americans living on the coasts feared German submarine attacks, he said, "inland Westerners had no trouble at all worrying about invasion from the air."³⁹

One historian's assessment of the national hysteria also applies to Montana during the war years:

The fear of organized plots survived every disappointment and triumphed over every symptom of tranquility. German-America Red Cross volunteers were widely believed to be putting ground glass in bandages and in food sent out to soldiers. Others were supposed to be selling court plaster containing tetanus bacilli, spreading influenza germs or poisoning wells. . . . The closing of many normal channels of communication and criticism stimulated the circulation of all sorts of rumors, so that the air was full of stories of transports sunk, Red Cross sweaters on sale in department stores and governmental plans to confiscate all savings. Both the press and government intensified the anti-German hysteria by branding such reports as inventions of German agents.⁴⁰

³⁸Wheeler, Yankee from the West, p. 143.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 143-144.

⁴⁰Higham, Strangers in the Land, pp. 207-208.

CHAPTER VIII

AN EXTRAORDINARY LEGISLATIVE SESSION

If you would admit your cowardice or demonstrate how you disapprove of the war against Germany, tell everybody you would flee before you would go to war. Have no hesitancy in declaring your sentiments openly.

Because, according to the decision of Judge George M. Bourquin of the United States courts for the district of Montana, one may do all these things and yet not violate the federal espionage act.¹

--Will A. Campbell, criticizing Judge George M. Bourquin's decision to acquit a man charged with violating the espionage act, January 28, 1918.

Throughout the rest of 1917, Will Campbell continued his Helena Independent's editorial policy of talking toughly against the Industrial Workers of the World and other dissenters. As he said in one editorial, "Direct action, not soft words, is the policy of this newspaper when it comes to dealing with the yellow streak in Montana and nothing but direct action will eradicate it."² Clearly irritated because he believed that a majority of Montanans were not as concerned

¹Helena Independent, January 28, 1918, p. 4.

²Ibid., September 6, 1917, p. 4.

as he was in stamping out dissent, Campbell warned:

Wait, you fathers and mothers of boys who have gone to the front; wait until the lists of dead and wounded begin to come back from the battlefields of France; wait until your boy's face lies white and upturned toward heaven which stretches its canopy o'er no man's land, and you will rise up and take a hand in stamping out industrial sedition and the yellow streak in Montana, and the cheap politician, who makes capital by encouraging industrial paralysis, will shrink like a terrified jelly-fish and recede into political oblivion.³

The editor offered his four-point program for handling the disloyal: making them forfeit their citizenship, confiscating their property, interning them during the war, and deporting them when the war ended.⁴ He also lamented the lack of legal hangings in the United States for those convicted of helping the enemy. "When will we overcome the sentimental ones and make hanging really popular?" Campbell asked.⁵

At the same time, Campbell could not resist touting his newspaper's own patriotism. He called readers' attention to the new flag unfurled in front of the Independent's office. It featured nine blue stars--one for each employee who had joined the military during the war--on a field of white. He

³Ibid., September 5, 1917, p. 4.

⁴Ibid., December 22, 1917, p. 4.

⁵Ibid., November 26, 1917, p. 4.

urged other businesses and homes to display similar flags.⁶

The editor pleaded with Helena residents to invest in Liberty Bonds to "help strangle the kaiser with a golden rope."⁷ As he wrote later: "Every dollar that is not invested in Liberty bonds is a SLACKER DOLLAR and its retention in your pocket stamps you as a DOLLAR SLACKER."⁸ [Emphasis in original.]

He also dispensed other suggestions to his readers on a regular basis. Overhearing a woman tell another in a grocery store that she was buying more expensive foods because her children refused to eat carrots and rutabagas, Campbell said that people must train their finicky appetites and eat the cheaper foods. "We will be healthier for it," he said, "and that, Mrs. Mother, includes those children of yours with their wasteful, expensive appetites." Another editorial called on persons to keep their American flags clean because "[w]hoever is loyal enough to raise a flag surely ought to be conscientious enough to keep it spotless."⁹

The Helena editor endorsed the idea of having shotgun

⁶Ibid., November 23, 1917, p. 4. Three months earlier, Campbell had written that eleven Independent employees had enlisted. Ibid., August 31, 1919, p. 4.

⁷Ibid., October 5, 1917, p. 4.

⁸Ibid., October 23, 1917, p. 4.

⁹Ibid., October 4, 1917, p. 4; September 17, 1917, p. 4.

owners form an organization in Montana and elsewhere to protect the country in emergencies against Wobblies and other "anarchists and traitors." He predicted that there would be no criticism of the group "except from the man, who, through being misguided perhaps, finds himself at the muzzle end of one of the weapons. . . ." ¹⁰

In another editorial, Campbell wrote that two kinds of pacifists existed in the country. There were the real pacifists, he said, who were "loath to see this country plunged into war" but once the decision was made, "loyally and patriotically accepted the verdict" and have tried "to do everything possible to help their country win the war." On the other hand, he said, there were the "fake pacifists" who "knowingly, treacherously and disloyally are playing their German game" by fighting the draft and spreading the "kaiserist gospel." ¹¹

He reminded "kaiser boosters and their pacifist abettors" that their freedom of speech was not unlimited. "We may be granted the right of free speech by the federal constitution and by the constitution of the state of Montana," Campbell wrote, but in this state, persons are held "responsible for all abuse of that liberty." ¹²

¹⁰ Ibid., December 2, 1917, p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid., October 3, 1917, p. 4.

¹² Ibid., September 30, 1917, p. 4.

The Independent's editorial columns were laced with frequent criticism of Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin. At various times, she was called "the high priestess of the Wobblies,"¹³ "a socialist or ethical anarchist,"¹⁴ "a busy war obstructionist,"¹⁵ and "Miss-representative Rankin."¹⁶

Campbell also attacked Burton K. Wheeler, the United States district attorney for Montana, for failing to prosecute "spies and traitors, the seditious talkers and paid agents seeking to influence our politics and policies. . . ." Sometimes he mentioned Wheeler by name, and others he did not but left no doubt to whom he was referring. One editorial said it was "maddening to have an attorney or a court argue that laws do not cover" certain cases and, mentioning the shutdown of the Butte mines because of a strike, added:

It makes a loyal American want to organize a firing squad. We have to put away the fiction about missing laws and enforce the laws of WAR and we are going to have to begin right NOW. Every day we delay means that many more of our boys have to die in France and their blood will be on the stupid courts and stupid public prosecutors.¹⁷ [Emphasis in original.]

Another editorial complained that Montana's prosecutors and courts "pretend to be helpless when the Wobblies plaster our

¹³Ibid., September 7, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., December 2, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁵Ibid., January 6, 1918, p. 4.

¹⁶Ibid., February 1, 1918, p. 4.

¹⁷Ibid., November 9, 1917, p. 4.

cities with posters advocating sabotage and advising workers to slow down, destroy and hinder the government." While persons are arrested and convicted for these activities elsewhere, Campbell said, in Montana "it's only free speech and the right of protest to advise workers to strike, set fire, throw the sabot and raise hell!"¹⁸

One editorial zeroed in on Wheeler and United States District Judge George M. Bourquin by name.¹⁹ Campbell chided the two federal officials and as much as called them incompetent because the United States attorney general, Thomas W. Gregory, had not called on them for advice as he had with some other federal judges and attorneys. Campbell also launched a campaign that would eventually force Wheeler to resign as district attorney. The Helena editor held United States Senator Thomas J. Walsh responsible for Wheeler's actions since he had secured the latter's appointment to the district attorney's position. The Independent said:

When Senator T. J. Walsh is a candidate--if he is a candidate next year--the one issue he is going to face is Burt Wheeler.

Senator Walsh is going to be asked why men who preach seditious sermons in Iowa are promptly arrested by the United States district attorney while in Montana they have to be lynched.

¹⁸Ibid., November 14, 1917, p. 4.

¹⁹For more information on the controversial Bourquin, see Arnon Gutfeld, "The Ves Hall Case, Judge Bourquin and the Sedition Act of 1918," Pacific Historical Review XXXVIII (May 1968):163-178.

Senator Walsh is going to be asked why men who talk sedition in Iowa are sentenced to twenty years in prison while in Montana those who preach the same doctrine and oppose the draft are turned loose with a blessing.

The Independent believes Senator T. J. Walsh to be the most capable man elected to the United States Senate from Montana in years, but this does not have anything to do with the fact that The Independent is every [sic] mindful of the shortcomings of the United States officers in Montana. . . .²⁰

Campbell took another jab at the federal law enforcement in Montana in January 1918, when he ruefully noted that the bulletin that had been published on an irregular basis by striking miners was now coming out in an expanded version every week as the Butte Weekly Bulletin. The newspaper was published by the Metal Mine Workers Union, which Campbell accused of being a branch of the IWW. "While the government is trying to suppress the IWW which is an out and avowed enemy of the United States," federal officials in Montana let the Bulletin be published in Butte, he complained.²¹

Campbell would have been even more furious had he known then that Wheeler and several other liberal young

²⁰Helena Independent, October 22, 1917, p. 4.

²¹Ibid., January 23, 1918, p. 4. For more information about the founding of the Strike Bulletin and Butte Weekly Bulletin, see Guy Ole Halvorson, "The Butte Bulletin: A Newspaper of Montana Progressivism" (Master's thesis, University of Washington, 1967), pp. 10-15; and Kurt Wetzel, "The Making of an American Radical: Bill Dunn in Butte" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1970), pp. 10-12, 26-27.

lawyers in Butte had helped finance the Weekly Bulletin.²²

Earlier in January, Campbell had praised the federal government for keeping secret the hanging of thirteen black soldiers in Texas until the day of their execution. That wise move, he said, prevented President Wilson from being inundated with letters urging that he commute their sentences. "There are too many folks writing to the president and heads of government as it is," Campbell said, advocating a minimum of correspondence to top federal officials because of the time required to read and answer the mail.²³

Three days later, the Helena editor broke his own rule about the mail and wrote Attorney General Gregory to complain about Wheeler's failure to investigate a certain case. "I do not feel that I could personally lay this matter before the United States District Attorney here without being exposed to criticism . . . ," he said in the letter.²⁴ One

²²Wheeler recalled putting up \$1,000 because he thought "we ought to have an independent paper, at least a weekly, in Butte." Wheeler interview, March 20, 1970. Halvorson, "The Butte Bulletin," pp. 12-15; Wetzel, "The Making of an American Radical," pp. 26-27.

There is some question whether the Weekly Bulletin was a direct descendant of the Strike Bulletin as Campbell claimed. This contention was adamantly denied by the Weekly Bulletin staff. Robert Amick, thesis in progress, University of Montana, Ch. I, p. 4. His thesis is a history of the Butte Bulletin.

²³Helena Independent, January 4, 1918, p. 4.

²⁴Letter, Will A. Campbell, editor of the Helena Independent to Thomas W. Gregory, United States attorney general, January 7, 1918, Department of Justice File, 186233-61-17.

of Gregory's assistants, John Lord O'Brien, acknowledged receiving Campbell's letter and said the Department of Justice would give it "appropriate attention." O'Brien added: "The fact that you reported the matter will be kept confidential."²⁵

Meanwhile, a controversial decision by Judge Bourquin in federal court in late January 1918, aroused the ire of Campbell and many other Montanans and stepped up calls for a special session of the legislature to enact tough state laws to suppress dissent. A rancher from Rosebud County, Ves Hall, had been accused by the federal government of violating the 1917 National Espionage Act. That law prohibited persons from making false statements that could interfere with the country's military operations or foster insubordination or disloyalty among the troops. Hall was accused of calling President Wilson "a British tool, a servant of Wall Street millionaires and the richest and crookedest _____ ever President." He allegedly said that he would leave the country to avoid the draft and that he hoped Germany would win the war. Germany, Hall reportedly said, had every right to sink ships and kill Americans without warning.²⁶

²⁵Letter, John Lord O'Brien, assistant to the United States attorney general, to Will A. Campbell, editor of the Helena Independent, January 24, 1918, Department of Justice File, 186233-61-17.

²⁶Gutfeld, "The Ves Hall Case," p. 167.

A special assistant handled the prosecution of the case because Wheeler was out of state. Wheeler, though, later recalled that he considered the case against Hall to be a weak one but consented to let his special assistant proceed because "there was a lot of agitation in Rosebud County. . . ." ²⁷

After hearing the evidence, Judge Bourquin stunned many Montanans by granting Hall's lawyer's motion for a directed verdict. He acquitted Hall without referring the case to a jury. The judge said he found Hall's statements "unspeakable" but added that

the declarations were made at a Montana village of some sixty people, sixty miles from the railway, and none of the armies or navies were within hundreds of miles so far as appears. The declarations were oral, some in badinage with the landlady in a hotel kitchen, some at a picnic, some on the street, some in hot and furious saloon argument. ²⁸

Consequently, Bourquin concluded, charges that Hall attempted to interfere with the armed forces were "unjustified, absurd and without support in evidence." ²⁹

The decision provoked a flurry of protesting editorials in Montana newspapers, led by Will Campbell's Helena Independent. The Helena editor sharply criticized Bourquin for freeing "a man who had slandered, libeled and lied about the

²⁷Wheeler, Yankee from the West, p. 154.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

country we love." A second editorial the same day ridiculed the decision by saying people now could make all the seditious statements they wished so long as they were said out of the hearing range of the army and navy.³⁰ A few days later, Campbell said his newspaper could interpret public opinion "very well indeed, and to say the decision of Judge Bourquin was a disappointment to the people of Montana is putting it mildly."³¹

At the same time, Campbell expressed even stronger opinions in a letter to Senator Myers. Judge Bourquin's acquittal of Ves Hall, he said, could incite violence because Montanans had reached the end of their patience. He asked Myers to see if Bourquin could be removed from Montana during the war and predicted: "There is going to be trouble, deep, wide and serious and don't you forget it." Campbell also said that Montanans "are determined to rid the state of Wobblies, disloyalists and traitors" because sedition was running "wild."³²

Campbell's managing editor, Guy LaFollette, wrote a similar letter to Washington. He complained to Attorney General Gregory about the Hall decision, accused Bourquin

³⁰Helena Independent, January 28, 1918, p. 4.

³¹Ibid., February 3, 1918, p. 4.

³²Letter, Will A. Campbell, editor of the Helena Independent, to Henry L. Myers, United States senator, January 28, 1918, Department of Justice File, 189730-2.

of showing pro-German bias and requested that the judge be transferred out of Montana.³³

Obviously influenced by Hall's acquittal, Governor Sam Stewart called for a special session of the Montana legislature less than a week after Bourquin's decision. It was to convene on February 14.

Campbell, of course, was pleased by the news and urged passage of a state sedition law "which will get every offender behind the bars who cannot be reached through the federal courts."³⁴

Governor Stewart, in his proclamation calling the special session, recommended legalizing the Montana Council of Defense and the various home guards across the state but was most concerned over the need for a state sedition act. Without such a law, he said, "the people of the different communities may be provoked into becoming a law unto themselves and as a result unwarranted and illegal violence may occur."³⁵

In his address to the special session, Stewart clearly tried to appeal to the emotions of the legislators to gain support for his proposals. As one historian has written:

³³Letter, Guy LaFollette, managing editor of the Helena Independent, to Thomas W. Gregory, United States attorney general, February 2, 1918, Department of Justice File, 189730-2.

³⁴Helena Independent, February 3, 1918, p. 4.

³⁵House Journal of the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, February 14, 1918-February 25, 1918 (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1919), pp. 1-2.

In the Annals of State of the State messages, marked ordinarily in Montana by extraordinary pedestrianism, Stewart's address is remarkable for the high pitch of its frenzy and the admixture of tear-jerking sentimentality and violent references to "traitors in our midst," "poisoned tentacles" and "vipers circulating the propaganda of the junkers." He was confident that the special session would act to protect that "mother" so that she would not awaken to find that disloyalty had destroyed her boy and "that the timber of her manhood has decayed, that the luster of her womanhood is tarnished."³⁶

The governor's approach apparently worked, for the legislators agreed that harsh laws were needed in Montana during the wartime years. They enacted all of Stewart's recommendations except for the legalization of home guards. Among the laws passed were:

--The Montana Criminal Syndicalism Act, which outlawed the advocacy of "crime, violence, force, arson, destruction of property, sabotage or any other unlawful acts or methods . . . as a means of effecting industrial or political revolution." The maximum penalty for persons convicted of the crime was a \$1,000 fine and a five-year jail sentence.³⁷

--The Montana Sedition Act, which made it a crime during wars for persons to "utter, print, write or publish any disloyal, profane, violent, scurrilous, contemptuous

³⁶Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 173.

³⁷Laws Passed by the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly (Helena: State Publishing Co., n.d.), pp. 14-16.

slurring or abusive language" about the United States government, constitution, soldiers or their uniforms. Violators could be fined \$20,000 and imprisoned for twenty years.³⁸

--The Montana Council of Defense Act, which gave legal status to the Council. It also vested in the Council virtual blanket powers to promulgate orders, if not inconsistent with the federal and state constitutions and laws, "which are necessary or proper for the public safety and for the protection of life and public property. . . ."

Persons who violated Council orders could be fined \$1,000 and imprisoned for a year. The Council also received a \$25,000 appropriation.³⁹

But the legislature did not stop with these bills. Also introduced were resolutions calling for the resignations of Bourquin and Wheeler. The Bourquin resolution was tabled, while the one aimed at Wheeler failed by a single vote.⁴⁰

In an editorial directed toward Wheeler's patron, Senator Walsh, more than anyone, Campbell said Wheeler's "very narrow escape" should tell those responsible for his

³⁸Ibid., pp. 28-29. The sedition law passed by the Montana Legislature was basically the same bill Senator Myers had introduced in the United States Senate in 1917. It later was adopted as the federal Sedition Act in 1918. For a legislative history of the sedition and syndicalism acts, see Evans, "Montana's Role," pp. 91-95.

³⁹Laws Passed by the Extraordinary Session, pp. 3-6.

⁴⁰Gutfeld, "The Ves Hall Case," p. 173.

appointment that "there is a strong feeling in this state against the young man from Butte because of the failure of successful prosecution in slacker and espionage cases." Campbell added that the Independent had hoped Wheeler would reverse his previous position and prosecute some of these cases to justify his reappointment, "but that hope has almost gone glimmering. . . ." ⁴¹ Campbell had denounced Wheeler a few weeks earlier for a speech the district attorney delivered to the Nonpartisan League in Great Falls. Montanans understood the difficulties in obtaining convictions before Judge Bourquin, Campbell wrote, but they "do not expect Mr. Wheeler to be in sympathy with the Wobblies just because he cannot convict them in his court." ⁴²

Although the special session of the legislature had no power to get rid of Bourquin and Wheeler, it did impeach a district court judge for a related controversy. The judge was Charles L. Crum, of Rosebud County, who presided over the Fifteenth Judicial District. Crum had testified as a character witness for Ves Hall during his federal espionage trial. After the trial, Crum was involved in an altercation with Felkner Haynes, a Rosebud County attorney who had prosecuted Hall in federal court while serving as a special prosecutor during Wheeler's absence from the state. Press

⁴¹Helena Independent, February 27, 1918, p. 4.

⁴²Ibid., February 10, 1918, p. 4.

accounts said that Crum later pulled a pistol on Haynes after he accused the judge of being pro-German. "G__d__ you," Crum supposedly shouted at Haynes. "I'll kill you like a dog, you have published me in eastern Montana as a traitor and I'll kill you like a dog."⁴³

Crum, accused of making disloyal and seditious remarks among other charges, resigned his judgeship after the House of Representatives voted to impeach him, but he continued to claim his innocence. Despite the resignation, the Senate continued with the proceedings and found him guilty of all six articles of impeachment.⁴⁴

Editorials in the Helena Independent predictably condemned Crum but also said his case was part of a perplexing, larger problem. The real tragedy, Campbell wrote, was that there existed "a core of men prominent in our public and business life, whose sympathies are apparently not with the American government." He went on to say:

The Crum case is unfortunate, tragic, pitiful. But far and beyond that, the condition is fraught with danger. Here and there we pick out and know public officials who are not doing everything possible to help America win the war. The Independent, like many other

⁴³Gutfeld, "The Ves Hall Case," p. 173.

⁴⁴Christine Coburn, "The Impeachment of Judge Crum," Montana Journalism Review 19 (1976):41-50. This study, which evaluated press coverage of the Crum proceedings, criticized the Independent's biased news coverage of the impeachment.

newspapers and thinking men, is at an absolute loss to account for the feeling. Some of it comes from anti-British sentiment; some of it is inspired by the German spy system, but we fear a large part of it comes from narrow-minded partisan prejudice which has no place whatever in the times.

. . . The question to this newspaper is not so much "Is Judge Crum guilty?" as "What in the name of high heaven could possibly cause a man of Judge Crum's standing to feel as he is alleged to feel and to say the things he has been accused of saying, against the administration and against the government of the United States?"⁴⁵

A later Independent editorial held the press of Montana partially responsible for the state's having to go to the expense of impeaching Judge Crum. He said:

If the newspapers had done their duty by their country and had not feared to injure the tender feelings of Judge Charles L. Crum, public opinion would have forced that seditious jurist out of office and saved Montana the expenditure of a goodly sum to mete out justice to the enemy sympathizer.

Let's have publicity of a kind which will drive the snakes and skunks into hiding or behind prison walls.⁴⁶

To meet this goal, Campbell proposed that newspapers run a daily column entitled, "TALKS WITH OUR PRO-GERMANS." He suggested interviews with "the man or woman who knocks the allies and damns our government" so that "his neighbors may know him for what he is--a sly enemy to his country."⁴⁷ Campbell

⁴⁵Helena Independent, February 25, 1918, p. 4.

⁴⁶Ibid., March 24, 1918, p. 4.

⁴⁷Ibid.

apparently could not find anyone to interview or changed his mind because such a column never appeared in the Independent.

Campbell criticized Crum as well as those who had testified in his behalf: "How any American after reading and hearing of the utterances of Crum damning the flag and country which he lived in and held office in, could still believe he was innocent as the Roundup persons did, is one of those mysteries which puzzle the public at times."⁴⁸

And so the special legislative session ended after impeaching a judge who had already resigned in disgrace⁴⁹ and enacting some tough, far-reaching legislation to eliminate in Montana dissent and opposition to the war.

⁴⁸Ibid., March 25, 1918, p. 4.

⁴⁹It is worth noting that Wheeler called the impeachment "a tragedy, for I thought Crum was a fine and honorable man." Wheeler, Yankee from the West, p. 155.

CHAPTER IX

AN INVIGORATED COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

In a certain county in Montana, people of German extraction have withdrawn their children from the public schools and have placed them in German church schools where only German is taught. That is absolutely un-American and such citizens should go back to their native land and stay there.¹

--Will A. Campbell, urging
a ban on the use of the
German language in Mon-
tana, April 3, 1918.

By most accounts, the original Montana Council of Defense appointed by Governor Sam Stewart in 1917 had performed well despite its limited authority and lack of money. The Council had encouraged increased agricultural production though it had no money for promotional efforts, assisted the military with registration and recruitment of men and helped run the Liberty Bond fund-raising campaigns. One study said the Council had been "highly successful in all its endeavors." As proof, it cited a 30 percent increase in the spring crop production and the state's exceeding its quotas in both fund-raising and soldiers.²

¹Helena Independent, April 3, 1918, p. 4.

²Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," pp. 11-23.

But it became apparent to Governor Stewart in early 1918 that the Council, of which he was ex-officio chairman, needed money and legal authority to resolve some of the problems facing wartime Montana. Stewart was especially worried by what he perceived as threats by the Industrial Workers of the World and others opposed to the war. He called a special session of the Montana Legislature, which, among other actions, granted greatly increased powers to the Council, appropriated it \$25,000, and authorized the issue of \$500,000 in bonds with proceeds to be lent to farmers.

In early March, Stewart appointed members of the newly invigorated Montana Council of Defense. As governor, he remained as ex-officio chairman, and Charles D. Greenfield, commissioner of agriculture and publicity, continued as ex-officio secretary. Three holdovers from the former council were reappointed. They were Will A. Campbell, Helena, editor of the Helena Independent; Charles J. Kelly, Butte, president of the Company-controlled Daly Bank and Trust Company and president and manager of the Hennessy Mercantile Company; and Mrs. Tylar B. Thompson, Missoula, former president of the Montana Federation of Women's Clubs. New members named were Newton T. Lease, Great Falls, a contractor and former mayor and Republican legislator; Sidney M. Logan, Kalispell, a lawyer and former Republican mayor; Samuel Sansburn, Bloomfield, a farmer; Charles V. Peck,

Danvers, a farmer, stockman and later president of the Montana Loyalty League; Ignatius D. O'Donnell, Billings, farmer and bank director; and Mortimer M. Donoghue, Butte, plumber and president of the conservative Montana Federation of Labor.³

Wasting little time, the new Council gathered in Helena on March 15 for its first meeting. The Council's decision to conduct its meetings behind closed doors ensured that Will Campbell, the only newspaperman there, would control what news would be released to a great extent.⁴ After endorsing Governor Stewart's appointments to the county councils of defense, the state organization enacted the first of its seventeen orders. Order Number One, designed "to prevent as far as possible riots, affrays, breaches of the peace and other forms of violence during the period of war," required written permission from the governor before any parades or public demonstrations could be held.⁵ Although the Council minutes did not indicate the precise reason for the enactment of the order, a subsequent news story in the Independent did. The story pointed out that the order was aimed at stopping the St. Patrick's Day parade planned in

³Ibid., pp. 20-23. Helena Independent, March 7, 1918, p. 1. Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 177-178.

⁴Montana, Minutes of the Montana Council of Defense Meetings, March 15, 1918 to August 21, 1921, p. 2. This material, kept in the Montana Historical Society Library in Helena, hereafter will be cited as Minutes.

⁵Minutes, pp. 4-5. All of the orders are reprinted in the appendix of this thesis.

Butte by the Pearce-Connelly Club, which the newspaper labeled a pacifist organization. The front-page story also boasted that the new Council "will play the most important part of any organization in the state during the present war." Although the author of the newspaper story--and later ones about the Council--was not identified, it is not unreasonable to assume that Campbell was the source, if not the writer, of the account.⁶

Between Council meetings, Campbell continued to write outspoken editorials about the IWW and other dissenters. One told of law enforcement officials in Butte, Bozeman and Missoula intervening to save "the worthless lives of pro-Germans" from mobs and warned: "They will do well if they refrain from cheering the kaiser any more."⁷ Another editorial endorsed a proposal before the South Dakota Legislature to require all "loafers" to work during the war.⁸ The Helena editor also supported an effort by the city council in Terry, a small town in eastern Montana, to require a Nonpartisan League organizer, Mickey McGlynn, to sign a pledge that he would not make any statements to stir up class hatred or strife before he was allowed to make a speech there. "But why not adopt the Terry way in all Montana cities and towns?"

⁶Helena Independent, March 16, 1918, p. 1.

⁷Ibid., March 26, 1918, p. 4.

⁸Ibid.

Campbell asked.⁹

Perhaps only half-jokingly, Campbell wrote that the "best thing that could happen to America right now would be a moratorium on elections during the period of war." The next best thing, he wrote, would be for Congress to adjourn and "to go to work pitching hay or handling a pick or helping make shells and guns or doing some kind of useful war work."¹⁰

Campbell voiced approval when the Helena school board banned the instruction of German, a move he had advocated repeatedly for some time. He quoted from a Baltimore newspaper, the Manufacturer's Record, which claimed that teaching German was "part of a persistent political propaganda intended to wean the people away from their Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic origins and divide the national interest and sympathy." The editor also noted--or warned--that colleges had not yet acted to ban instruction of German.¹¹

Campbell rushed to the defense of the Council of Defense when it was criticized. The Glasgow Democrat had complained that Valley County farmers received only \$50,000 of the \$125,000 they sought from the Council's \$500,000 seed fund. Campbell insisted that the money had been distributed

⁹Ibid., March 27, 1918, p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., March 29, 1918, p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., April 3, 1918, p. 4.

fairly and warned that Valley County risked bringing itself "into disrepute by such tactics as are discussed by the Democrat."¹²

He also demanded the resignation of United States Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory for failing to crack down on Wobblies and other radical groups and making the public believe "there is an exaggeration of enemy activities" in this country.¹³

News that Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin planned a visit to Montana to promote the sale of Liberty Bonds drew a sarcastic comment from the Helena editor. He pointed out that sales had exceeded the state's quotas in the two previous bond issues "without a bit of encouragement from Jeannette." But, he reasoned, Rankin's presence might be beneficial because she "can reach a class, if she will, which it would be hard for most people to approach" to buy bonds--the radical socialists, pacifists, Wobblies, and Nonpartisan League members.¹⁴

The Liberty Bond drive was serious business with Campbell, who also served on the Lewis and Clark County campaign committee. It took out a three-column by ten-inch advertisement in the Independent to announce that one Reinholdt Kleinschmidt had refused to buy any bonds "without

¹²Ibid., April 10, 1918, p. 4.

¹³Ibid., April 17, 1918, p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., April 14, 1918, p. 4.

good reason." The notice, signed by Campbell and the other committee members, said Kleinschmidt had been summoned by the committee, and "[a]rgument and persuasion failed to alter his decision Not to Subscribe."¹⁵ An editorial in the same edition of the Independent called attention to the advertisement and added: "The spirit of some people with regard to buying Liberty bonds is contemptible, disloyal and bordering on treason," which necessitated the local committee's "drastic" action in identifying Kleinschmidt.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the Council of Defense enacted three more orders at its April meeting. Order Number Two expanded a 1907 state law outlawing vagrancy. Except for Indians, persons not holding down "legitimate" jobs five days a week without a sufficient excuse could be jailed up to ninety days.¹⁷ Order Number Four called the attention of railroad officials and county attorneys to state laws that prohibited "the stealing of rides on railroad trains" and directed that the laws be enforced. It was clearly a move aimed at the Wobblies, who often hopped freight cars for transportation.¹⁸

But the most significant order passed at the April 22 Council meeting revealed Campbell's unmistakable role, an

¹⁵Ibid., April 19, 1918, p. 3.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁷Minutes, pp. 18-21.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 25-26.

influence over other members that led one historian to refer to the Council of Defense as "Will Campbell's gang."¹⁹ The Council's Order Number Three banned the use of the German language "in public and private schools and in the pulpits of the state," which Campbell had urged for months. Further, the Council ordered that a dozen books about Germany be removed from the shelves of public and school libraries across Montana and directed librarians and school officials to withdraw any other books containing "German propaganda."²⁰

In addition to Campbell's urging, the Council was responding to a letter from John G. Brown, a Helena lawyer, who said he was "astonished" to find that one textbook used in forty-two Montana high schools, Ancient World by Willis Mason West, contained "distinctly German propaganda." Brown was shocked by the book's claim that "the great contribution to modern civilizations were the Roman contributions and the Teutonic contributions."²¹ The Council later retained Brown to check out other books about Germany in school libraries.²²

The order had a far-reaching impact in Montana, which had areas with large numbers of German immigrants who spoke only their native tongue but were forced to worship in English,

¹⁹Interview with Jules A. Karlin, Department of History, University of Montana, November 18, 1965, as cited in Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," p. 32.

²⁰Minutes, pp. 23-24.

²¹Ibid., pp. 21-23.

²²Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 186.

a language most did not understand. It also was directly responsible for the migration of a number of Mennonite families who fled Montana for Canada.²³

Once again it took a front-page news story in the Independent filled with opinion to explain the Council's reasoning further. The ban was necessary, the story said, because educators, school boards "and weak-kneed public officials were inclined to temporize with the question of abolishing the use of German textbooks." Moreover, it said, "arguments were made [by these officials] every day for retention of the German language books."²⁴

In an apparent reversal of past positions, a later Independent editorial said the newspaper did not object to teaching German in colleges "provided the subject matter was truthful." After all, the editorial said, German language students should find it easy to write textbooks "which will deal with the miserable and barbaric record of the Junkers and their bestial kaiser and Prussian military gang."²⁵

The Council of Defense also adopted its official slogan, "Work, War or Jail," after enacting its order aimed at putting vagrants to work. As an Independent editorial said, a "loafer" faced these choices: "get into the army,

²³For details of what amounted to religious persecution in Montana, see Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," pp. 95-106, and Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 187-189.

²⁴Helena Independent, April 23, 1918, p. 1.

²⁵Ibid., May 5, 1918, p. 4.

exercise his flabby muscles or flaccid brain with constructive effort or polish the bench of a jail cell while the chain gang prepares to receive him with hoots of derision."²⁶

Campbell also served notice that the state's new sedition law was not to be taken lightly. He applauded judges in Townsend and Red Lodge who had sent "two kaiser lovers" to prison for sedition. The men should have realized that "their affection for the brute across the sea would have been best locked tightly within their traitorous bosoms," an Independent editorial said. Strict enforcement of the law, it said, would show "other slink-eyed skulkers" that "their immunity from grief is practically over."²⁷

Despite the sedition act and other tough laws on the books, Montanans still took the law into their own hands when the need arose. In Miles City, a mob that included prominent businessmen grabbed Mickey McGlynn, the same Nonpartisan League organizer who had to sign an oath in Terry, as he was trying to deliver a speech in Custer County. McGlynn reportedly had objected to a rumor that a train full of Belgian children, whose arms supposedly had been cut off by Germans, was going to cross Montana. "The Germans never did that; it was done in the factories of Chicago," McGlynn reportedly said. "They were sent through the country to create feeling against the

²⁶Ibid., April 24, 1918, p. 4.

²⁷Ibid., April 29, 1918, p. 4.

German nation." The mob hauled McGlynn to the basement of the Elks Club, beat him up and took him to a train and ordered him to leave town. McGlynn later was charged with sedition.²⁸

Although silent on the mob action, Campbell praised Miles City officials for arresting McGlynn. He said it was "the proper way to handle these characters who are coming into Montana from all directions as rapidly as Boss Townley can collect them. . . ." He urged county attorneys to prosecute such characters and reminded them that a "peppery" attorney general, Sam C. Ford, and a "determined" Montana Council of Defense stood behind them.²⁹

But Campbell apparently had not bothered to check with the "peppery" attorney general, which became clear at the Council's next meeting on May 27. Ford undoubtedly shocked Campbell, for he read a remarkable letter that criticized the mob action in Miles City and presented an eloquent defense of Montanans' civil rights. Ford said:

The right of free speech and the right to make public addresses have been denied individuals in the counties to which I refer by violence and in direct violation of the law, and the denial has been effected by intimidation and forcible coercion.

²⁸Wheeler, Yankee from the West, p. 148. Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," pp. 86-88. He was found guilty of the charge, but the conviction was later reversed by the Montana Supreme Court.

²⁹Helena Independent, May 14, 1918, p. 4. The editorial referred to McGlynn as "Comrade McGlynn" in the headline.

Furthermore, it is common knowledge that in many cases members of county councils of defense have participated in these unlawful proceedings. . . .

The freedom of the press, and the unrestricted right of public assemblage and free speech are absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a republican form of government. The constitution of the United States and the state guarantee that these rights shall be preserved inviolate to all citizens.

It is true that we are at war and that the life of the nation is at stake; and that these conditions may so effect [sic] the minds of over-zealous patriots and persons of hysterical tendencies as to lessen their power to clearly analyze civil rights; . . . nevertheless, it is also true that the primary purpose of this war is to uphold the fundamental principles of freedom and to prevent autocratic government, the rule of might, from being established on this continent.

The open encouragement or the tacit acquiescence in the mob spirit and lawlessness, whether mobs are of representative citizens or the so-called lower orders of society, is fraught with serious menace to our society and to the most precious liberties of the people of this state. Disloyal and seditious utterances in the press or speech should be promptly and fully punished, and adequate laws for that purpose exist in the federal and state codes. But it lies in the legal right of no citizen nor set of citizens to pre-judge the utterances of any man and forbid him to express his opinion on any subject. The loyalty and disloyalty of any man's utterances are to be determined only in the expression of them and all persons are held accountable for what they say under the civil and criminal laws.³⁰

The attorney general also called on the Council of

³⁰Minutes, pp. 31-35.

Defense to take action "to reinforce and assist" local authorities in repressing mob violence. He added:

As I understand it, the sole reason for the creation of the state council of defense and the county councils, in respect to their police powers, was to add to the existing authorities an extraordinary body charged specifically with the duty of supporting the constituted authorities in the enforcement of the law; with the suppression of all lawlessness, and with the duty of doing everything in its power to maintain respect for the law, solidify the citizenry for all legal, proper and patriotic purposes and win this war.

I wish to urge you with all possible emphasis that the state council of defense . . . cooperate to the fullest extent of its powers . . . in the suppression of the lawlessness described and in the vindication of the right of free speech and the right to make public addresses in the state of Montana.³¹

Ford was especially angry at Miles City officials for their "farcical" prosecution of persons accused of beating up McGlynn. He had ordered the Custer County attorney to investigate after McGlynn had identified four or five members of the mob. Instead, the county attorney brought charges against twenty-one men, some of whom were not even in town at the time. Ford questioned whether this move was made "for the purpose of discrediting the proceeding and defeating the ends of justice." An angry Ford personally had gone to Miles City to order charges dropped against some of the twenty-one defendants, only to learn that a justice of the peace had

³¹ Ibid., p. 37.

dismissed charges against everyone without hearing a word of evidence. The defendants' lawyer claimed McGlynn had been deported for his own protection because of "anticipated violence."³²

The Council of Defense, apparently aware of the damaging ramifications of Ford's comments, asked that he withhold his written statement from the press, but Ford had already released it.³³ If Ford would not suppress the letter, Will Campbell could at least make sure that many Helena residents never learned of it. The Helena Independent's account of the closed-door meeting the next day did not mention Ford's remarks at all.³⁴

In other business, the Council passed Order Number Five, which forced Montana bars to shut down fifteen minutes before trains carrying troops passed through a town and to remain closed until fifteen minutes after they left. It also prohibited serving alcoholic beverages to soldiers in or out of uniform and men who had received their draft or enlistment notices and were waiting to be inducted.³⁵

Council members also heard from Professor Willis Mason West of the University of Minnesota, author of Ancient

³²Ibid., pp. 32-33.

³³Ibid., p. 38.

³⁴Helena Independent, May 28, 1918, pp. 1, 6. Ford later became governor of Montana in 1941 and served to 1949. He died November 25, 1961, at age 79.

³⁵Minutes, pp. 39-40.

World, a book the Council had banned earlier. Although West made a "masterly" presentation that left no question about his own loyalty, Campbell's newspaper reported that it was "extremely improbable" that the Council would lift its ban because of the "arrogant and impudent attitude of the defiant publishers." The article said the book publishers "had intimated that they wanted trouble" by sending letters to Montana teachers "practically asking them to defy the order" and hinting that they might file a legal challenge testing the Council's ban.³⁶

Meeting again the next day, the Council of Defense made plans to conduct a hearing to investigate a strange spy case involving a suspected double agent.³⁷

Although the Council had no specific power to hold such hearings, the problem was solved quickly. Council members, interpreting their authority from the legislature as a blank check, adopted Orders Number Seven and Eight. Order Number Seven empowered the Council to conduct hearings and investigations "in all matters pertaining to the public safety and the protection of life and property." In addition, it gave the Council the power to subpoena records and to compel persons to testify at the hearings. Order Number Eight established specific procedures for the hearings.³⁸

³⁶Helena Independent, May 28, 1918, pp. 1, 6.

³⁷Minutes, pp. 41-42.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 45-49.

CHAPTER X

THE INQUISITION, PART ONE

Ordinarily it becomes a custom of people generally to kind of size up the temperment of a man's loyalty, the degree of a man's loyalty, by the number of Liberty Bonds he buys. Would you mind telling the Council how [many] you bought?¹

--Will A. Campbell, questioning a witness before the Montana Council of Defense about his loyalty.

June 2, 1918.

The ostensible purpose of the Montana Council of Defense's unprecedented hearings in late May and early June of 1918 was to investigate charges of espionage in Butte and elsewhere in Montana. But it is clear from the verbatim transcripts of the testimony of these hearings that the real purpose was to interrogate two men whose actions had angered the Council, Burton K. Wheeler, United States district attorney for Montana, and Bill Dunn,² editor of the radical

¹Montana, Testimony at Hearings Held at the State Capitol May 31, June 1 and 2, 1918, by the Montana Council of Defense, p. 788. Verbatim transcripts of the testimony appear in these two volumes, which hereafter will be cited as Testimony. Copies of the transcripts are on file at the Montana Historical Society Library.

²Although his real surname was Dunne, the Bulletin editor went by Dunn during much of this period. Hence he will be referred to as Dunn.

Butte Weekly Bulletin. The hearings were to produce some classic confrontations between Council members, led by a zealous Campbell, and two men who were not intimidated in the least by the state board.

Before the hearings began, a joint meeting of the state and county councils of defense on May 28 set the stage for the verbal battle with Wheeler. They passed a resolution, which was to be sent to President Wilson and the Senate, asking that Wheeler not be reappointed to the district attorney's position. His reappointment "to this important position in the present critical condition of our State and Nation would be inimical and injurious to the best interests of this State and the peace of its people," the resolution said. It passed twenty-eight to seven, but individual votes were not recorded. Wheeler was given no chance to respond before the resolution was adopted.³

In fact, the state Council had begun to move against Wheeler in secret a month earlier when Montana's senior senator, Henry L. Myers, sought its advice on Wheeler's reappointment. Governor Stewart polled Council members privately and found they unanimously preferred Myers' own choice, E. C. Day of Helena, but the vote was not made public.⁴

³Minutes, p. 49. Montana, Proceedings of the State Council of Defense and the County Councils of Defense at the Senate Chamber, State Capitol, May 29, 1918, p. 20. This is a verbatim transcript of the joint meeting. A copy may be found in the Montana Historical Society Library. It will be cited hereafter as Proceedings.

⁴Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," pp. 63-67.

Apparently unaware of the state Council's behind-the-scene maneuvering, C. A. Thurston, a member of the Dawson County Council, submitted the resolution critical of Wheeler. State Council member N. T. Lease, although critical of Wheeler, opposed the resolution because it was a political matter and warned it "would stir up a lot of antagonism of the state." In response, Thurston drew applause when he said: "It is a question at this time whether a man is either an American or he is not an American."⁵

The state Council, however, later voted to withhold its endorsement of the resolution until completion of the hearings, which would focus on some of the specific complaints against Wheeler.⁶

Although the resolution thus lay dormant, the damage had been done. Will Campbell may have been willing as a Council member to hold back on his judgment of Wheeler, but he could not as a newspaperman. The next day his Helena Independent gave prominent play to a story about the Wheeler resolution and reprinted it in a two-column box on the front page.⁷

The Council's first hearing began May 31 with an investigation of the bizarre case of Eberhardt von Waldreu,

⁵Proceedings, pp. 14, 19.

⁶Minutes, p. 49.

⁷Helena Independent, May 30, 1918, p. 1.

alias Charles Stone, who had been hired by the Lewis and Clark County Council of Defense to infiltrate a German spy ring supposedly operating in Butte. But von Waldreu, long suspected of being a German spy himself, was arrested on espionage charges by W. W. Byrn, a special investigator for the United States Department of Justice in Butte. Ordinarily, Byrn and Wheeler worked closely together since the district attorney prosecuted those arrested by the federal agent, but in this case Wheeler was out of town and not consulted. Nevertheless, the Lewis and Clark County Council, angry at the arrest of its spy, blamed Wheeler for undermining its undercover efforts to infiltrate the spy ring. The county council members wanted von Waldreu released so he could testify in several pending spy and sabotage cases.⁸

The other hearing before the Council was at the request of Oscar Rohn, a Butte mine operator who had been accused publicly of disloyalty and conspiring with a man convicted of spying, Carl von Pohl. Rohn had hired von Pohl to pose as a pro-German worker to find out which of his miners were sympathetic to the enemy. After von Pohl's arrest and conviction, many Butte residents believed Rohn was guilty of the same crimes although no charges were filed. The mine operator had asked Wheeler to clear his name, but Wheeler refused because he had no evidence and was reluctant to make

⁸Fritz, "Montana Council of Defense," p. 67.

a statement in the event Rohn was ever convicted.⁹

Before the hearings began, Council members had to decide whether to hold the sessions in public or behind closed doors. Some favored secret meetings, but Campbell joined several others who expressed concern over public reaction to what M. M. Donoghue called "star-chamber proceedings."¹⁰ To help the Council decide, Wheeler, Rohn and Byrn were called in and asked their opinions.

Wheeler immediately seized the offensive. He ignored the question at hand and said he was unaware of the purpose of the meeting. The outspoken district attorney said he had been told he was subpoenaed "for the purpose of trying me, so to speak." He offered to resign if anyone could prove he had been derelict in his duties. But, he added quickly, since he knew he had not been derelict, he had no intention of resigning.¹¹

Finally answering the question posed by the Council, Wheeler said he preferred an open hearing but would be unable to provide any confidential information in public. If the hearings were to be public, Wheeler asked for assurances that his testimony would not be "jumbled up" or "misquoted" in the newspapers, which turned out to be a direct attack on Campbell.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Testimony, pp. 5-6.

¹¹Ibid., p. 10.

Wheeler specifically criticized a story in the Helena Independent that left the "nasty insinuations" that he, not Rohn or von Waldreu, was on trial before the Council. Although not apologetic, Campbell admitted that the article left an erroneous impression and was written in bad English.¹²

Wheeler also questioned the propriety and authority of the Council of Defense to conduct hearings. "I don't think it is the province of this council to either exonerate anybody or to try anybody," the district attorney said.¹³ He also expressed doubts that the Council had authority to issue subpoenas and compel persons to testify.¹⁴

He then asked the Council about the resolution opposing his reappointment. While convinced that most Council members were not playing politics on the issue, Wheeler told the others that if they were not, "then you have been grossly misrepresented in the various newspapers."¹⁵

With that off his chest, Wheeler sat down and let the Council determine whether to open the meetings to the public. In the end, members voted to have secret hearings but to transcribe the proceedings. They later relented and allowed reporters to sit through portions of the hearings. In closing the sessions, Council members were persuaded by

¹²Ibid., pp. 10-11, 20-22.

¹³Ibid., pp. 12-13.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 24-25.

Assistant Attorney General Sam Mitchell, who said: "If the public does not have confidence in the State Council of Defense, why the State Council of Defense is a useless body." Without public confidence, he said, "you can hold all the public sessions or private sessions that you please and you won't accomplish anything."¹⁶

Thus meeting behind closed doors, the Council of Defense began its investigation of von Waldreu. Testimony revealed that he had been thrown out as an officer in the German army for gambling and moved to the United States where he worked for several German-language newspapers. He also served a one-year prison sentence at the state penitentiary in Deer Lodge for forging checks. Despite this background, the Lewis and Clark County Council of Defense hired von Waldreu as a secret agent.¹⁷

Wheeler, who was allowed to sit in on the hearing, questioned the value of an information ferreted out by someone with von Waldreu's background. T. A. Marlow, chairman of the Lewis and Clark County Council, replied: "If you want to catch thieves, you don't use a Sunday School teacher to do it."¹⁸

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 27-28.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 37-43.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 106.

Before long, Council members had their long-awaited chance to grill Wheeler. Most of their questions were totally unrelated to either the von Waldrew or Rohn investigations but instead zeroed in on Wheeler's performance as district attorney and, eventually, his patriotism. This interrogation covers nearly 100 pages of the transcript of the testimony.

Council members dredged up past issues one by one, questioning Wheeler intensely about each: Judge Crum and the Ves Hall case, the hanging of Frank Little and why he was not deported, the beating of Mickey McGlynn, a Wheeler speech to the Nonpartisan League. Wheeler stood firm. Council members claimed that McGlynn, the Nonpartisan League organizer who had been beaten and run out of Miles City, bore a letter from Wheeler congratulating him on "the splendid work he was doing in Montana." Wheeler denounced the report as "a downright qualified lie."¹⁹

Campbell then began questioning Wheeler about his patriotism. Though Wheeler was a part-owner of Campbell's newspaper, relations between them had been strained for several years, perhaps partially because Wheeler had successfully prosecuted Campbell for contempt of court in 1915.²⁰

¹⁹Ibid., p. 345.

²⁰Campbell and the Independent Publishing Company were found guilty of contempt for information in a news

Why, Campbell asked, had Wheeler not made any addresses on behalf of the Liberty Bond drive, War Savings Stamps or the Red Cross? Wheeler replied that he had spoken on behalf of Liberty Bonds several times at the Butte Masonic Hall. Emphasizing that he had never been asked to deliver such speeches, Wheeler said he was "only too glad and willing" to do so.²¹

Professing no desire to delve into Wheeler's personal affairs, Campbell proceeded to do just that in another attempt to humiliate the district attorney. Campbell, who told another witness that a man's loyalty could be measured

story about a man on trial for mail fraud. The story contained information on the defendant's previous criminal background, which was not part of the trial record, that Judge Bourquin held to be prejudicial. Campbell and the newspaper were fined \$617.95 and court costs. In re Independent Publishing Co. et al., 288 Federal Reporter 787 (1915).

The decision was upheld by the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. In re Independent Publishing Co. et al., 240 Federal Reporter 849 (1917).

Campbell devoted one editorial to deny emphatically that the contempt charge clouded his judgment of Wheeler's performance as district attorney. The editorial suggested it was Wheeler himself who provided the information on the defendant's previous criminal background to an Independent reporter, although the newspaper did not disclose this fact in its responses to the contempt charge.

The editorial said: "Had the court known at the time that the district attorney was in any way responsible for the publication of the story, it might have been B. K. Wheeler who was hauled up for contempt instead of the editor of The Independent. This newspaper played not only very fair with Mr. Wheeler but protected him from the ire of the judge." Helena Independent, April 20, 1918, p. 4.

²¹Testimony, pp. 368-369.

by the extent of his Liberty Bond purchases,²² asked Wheeler: "Would you mind telling the Council how many Liberty Bonds you have bought?" Between \$500 and \$750 worth, Wheeler replied. Campbell then asked Wheeler to reveal his personal worth. "I don't care to go into my private worth for publication over the State," Wheeler snapped, but he later relented and under questioning disclosed his holdings, debts and the fact that he paid about \$1,400 in income taxes that year.²³

A Wheeler comment about the subsidized press of Montana prompted a new line of inquiry from Campbell. At the editor's request, Wheeler ticked off some of the newspapers he believed were subsidized by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, including Campbell's Helena Independent.²⁴ Pressed by Campbell for further explanation about the Independent's status, Wheeler said he based his judgment on "what I have seen of the editorials and a good many of the articles." Asked who controlled the Independent, Wheeler replied: "I would judge from some of the stuff that appears there that it is absolutely controlled by someone other than the principal owners of the paper."

²² See the introductory quotation to Chapter 10. The question was asked of Rohn.

²³ Testimony, pp. 369-377.

²⁴ Other newspapers named by Wheeler were the Butte Miner, owned by W. A. Clark; the Anaconda Standard, owned by the Marcus Daly interests; and the Butte Daily Post and Great Falls Tribune, both, like the Independent, partially owned by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, in his opinion. Testimony, pp. 445-447.

Curiously, Campbell kept questioning and finally Wheeler had enough. "I absolutely and unqualifiedly think the Helena Independent is absolutely subsidized and subservient," he told Campbell bluntly.²⁵

Campbell responded by calling Wheeler a Socialist, which he had implied earlier in an editorial, and the district attorney replied:

I am not a socialist, never have been a socialist and never expect to be a socialist. Not only that, I feel, however, absolutely that a great many of the principals [sic] of socialism are correct, and they are being adopted by the democratic and republican parties but I feel this, that as far as the socialist party is concerned, and the socialist ideas, that they are so impractical that they cannot be carried into effect and that they are purely Utopian ideas.²⁶

The Council continued its hearings into the von Waldreu, von Pohl and Rohn cases, but the real issue remained Wheeler's performance as district attorney. As one news story in the Independent aptly said, it appeared that "Mr. Wheeler was himself under examination."²⁷

Later in the hearings, an angry Wheeler delivered his strongest attack on the Council. He asked the state Council to notify President Wilson that it did not officially take part in the passage of the resolution against his reappointment.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 446-449.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 450.

²⁷ Helena Independent, June 2, 1918, p. 1.

He accused the Council of playing politics and added:

How would you like to have some little body of men get together in a secret meeting and pass resolutions and send them to Washington condemning you whichever way you voted upon it. . . .

I defy anybody to come before this State Council of Defense to prove one single thing that was said before the County Council of Defense and say that they based it upon facts. Not one of those men was under oath when they made the charges. . . .

I say to you, gentlemen of this Council, that you are taking a mighty serious step. You are doing me, and you are doing the prosecution and the government . . . a mighty serious injury. I will say to you frankly, so far as I am concerned, as to whether or not this Council approves or recommends my appointment . . . does not make one bit of difference to me, one way or another. That is immaterial to me. I know that there are men on this board that have done everything in their power to prevent my re-appointment in Washington. There is no question that they have done every single possible thing in the world to prevent my re-appointment in Washington, and it has been done for political reasons.²⁸

Campbell, who obviously was Wheeler's primary target, replied, "I don't just get you." Because someone believes there "might be a better man" for the district attorney's job could not be considered playing politics, Campbell said.²⁹

Wheeler accused Campbell of sending a telegram advising against his reappointment to Louis Penwell, a friend of

²⁸ Testimony, pp. 1289-1291.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 1292.

Senator Walsh, that contained "absolutely false and unfounded statements."³⁰

The embattled district attorney then demanded to know how the state Council members had voted on the resolution and whether they considered the charges made against him before the county councils to be true.³¹

Wheeler became furious and challenged the legality of the Council, asking:

Under what pretext, I ask you, can you go before the people of the State and say that you passed upon these things that you are going to pass about the von Waldreu matter, that you are going to subpoena witnesses and me before this State Council of Defense, to ascertain whether or not there is anything in these complaints?³²

The Council would take that up later, Campbell replied, concluding that phase of the hearings.³³

After the hearings ended, the state Council of Defense voted to reaffirm the previously passed resolution opposing

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 1295-1301. According to the testimony, seven of the eleven Council members attended the May 29 meeting at which the resolution urging against Wheeler's reappointment was considered. Two members, Donoghue and Governor Stewart, abstained from voting; Kelly, Campbell and O'Donnell were out of the room at the time; Peck voted against it, and Logan for the resolution. It was revealed that another member had voted for the resolution, but he was never identified. Thus members of the county councils, which had 45 total votes, cast the deciding ballots.

³² Ibid., p. 1301.

³³ Ibid., p. 1302.

Wheeler's reappointment. The state Council said it lacked sufficient evidence "to warrant it in dissenting from said resolution." It added:

The Council does not desire to impugn either the integrity or the professional ability of Mr. Wheeler, but the Council is of the opinion that at this critical time in our Nation's history, when internal dissensions must be avoided in order that they may not grow into serious proportions, all federal and state officials must not only possess honesty and ability but must be vigorous and enthusiastic in the suppression of internal disorders.³⁴

In actions directly related to the official investigations but certainly overshadowed by the Wheeler resolution, the Council of Defense agreed with federal authorities that von Waldreu was an alien enemy. However, it asked that he be confined in the Lewis and Clark County jail so he could be used as a witness in espionage trials. Council members also ruled that Rohn was not guilty of sedition or disloyalty but had been indiscreet in hiring aliens such as von Pohl.³⁵

Campbell's newspaper, which had called the hearings "the most determined effort ever made in the state to get at the bottom of alleged sedition and espionage cases," provided full details of Wheeler's appearance before the Council of Defense.³⁶ One news story reported that Wheeler "worked

³⁴Minutes, p. 62.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 58-61.

³⁶Helena Independent, June 1, 1918, p. 1.

himself into a white rage" and made an "impassioned denunciation" of the actions of the state and county councils.³⁷

Another Independent story praised the Council for "the most remarkable hearing ever conducted in Montana" and "the greatest show-down ever held."³⁸

Others have interpreted the hearings quite differently. One historian charged that Campbell had "relentlessly forged scraps of hearsay into unethical weapons in attempts to debase Wheeler's character and question his national loyalty."³⁹ Another historian wrote:

To read the record of Wheeler's inquisition today is at once depressing and encouraging--depressing, because here was a governmental body at the service of corporate interests coldly and viciously accusing Wheeler of disloyalty to his country and wrapping its own views in the flag of patriotism; encouraging, because under this barrage of bigotry and hypocrisy, Wheeler stood up to them.⁴⁰

It is impossible to assess the impact the Council's hearings and resolution opposing Wheeler's reappointment had on public opinion. But in October, Wheeler at last bowed to mounting pressure and stepped down as district attorney as a

³⁷ Ibid., June 6, 1918, p. 1.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Richard T. Ruetten, "Burton K. Wheeler: A Liberal Under Pressure" (Master's thesis, University of Oregon, 1957), p. 42.

⁴⁰ K. Ross Toole, Montana: An Uncommon Land (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959), p. 218.

favor to his benefactor, Senator Walsh, who was up for re-election that year. Democrats feared that Wheeler's record as district attorney might cost Walsh votes.⁴¹

Ironically, Walsh felt political pressure over Wheeler's performance in large measure because of Campbell's critical editorials in the Independent, of which the senator was part-owner. Even before the dispute over Wheeler surfaced, Walsh had complained privately about the Independent: "It is rather unfortunate to be placed in the position in which I find myself of being held responsible for every fool thing that that [sic] the Independent does or says without being in any effectual manner to control either."⁴²

Walsh also was unhappy with Campbell's criticisms of Wheeler and "intimated to Campbell that the ability to judge the conduct of public officials was absent in the editor's background."⁴³ In another example of his displeasure with Campbell, Walsh said:

⁴¹For Wheeler's version, see Wheeler, Yankee from the West, pp. 162-164. Also see Ruetten, "Burton K. Wheeler: A Liberal Under Pressure," pp. 44-49. Ruetten said Wheeler was one of the "unique examples of a public official who conducted his office candidly, he was victimized by war hysteria and the exploitation of the situation by the copper interests." Ibid., p. 49.

⁴²Letter, Thomas J. Walsh, United States senator, to Jerre C. Murphy, April 6, 1916, as cited in Bates, "Senator Walsh of Montana," pp. 25-26.

⁴³Ruetten, "Burton K. Wheeler: A Liberal Under Pressure," p. 38. Walsh hinted this in a letter to Campbell on April 23, 1918.

Two years earlier, Walsh had confided in a letter to Kenneth Romney, March 4, 1916, that Campbell "seems incapable of mastering the political features of his job." Ibid.

It is quite like Campbell to inaugurate a crusade against Wheeler, and then when the public mind has been poisoned by the grossest kind of misrepresentation, with no newspaper support to act as an antidote, to take a poll of the committee. He had, in a recent number of the paper, what purported to be a dispatch coming from Washington to the effect that Wheeler had dragooned me into the position I took by threatening to become a candidate against me for the Senate. The alleged dispatch, which was sent papers all over the State by him or copied from the Independent, was written in the office of that paper. No such dispatch ever went out of Washington, no such communication was ever made by Wheeler. . . .⁴⁴

During this same period, Wheeler told Walsh he was trying to work with all elements apparently in an effort to save his job. "But," according to one account, "he could not bring himself, he said, to associate with editor Campbell of the Independent, whom he characterized as a political grafter, selling out to the interests--and for a small price."⁴⁵

In any event, Campbell and the Council prevailed in this instance as Wheeler resigned. A pleased Campbell wrote in an editorial:

Never before have the people of Montana realized the importance of the office of United States district attorney in this state as they have during the last year and a half.

⁴⁴Letter, Thomas J. Walsh, United States senator, to David G. Browne, April 29, 1918, as cited in Ruetten, "Burton K. Wheeler: A Liberal Under Pressure," p. 38.

⁴⁵Bates, "Senator Walsh of Montana," p. 62. As evidence, he cited letters from Wheeler to Walsh on August 23, 1918, and September 3, 1918.

Whether or not traitors, sedition spreaders, spies of the enemy, white slavers and similar criminals, shall be brought to justice rests first with the United States attorney. People of Montana know now after eighteen months' experience in a world war, what a real United States district attorney would mean to a state. So closely do the duties of the office touch the lives of almost every citizen in the state, that in the future the greatest of care will be demanded in selecting men to fill the office.⁴⁶

Once again, others have evaluated Wheeler's performance as district attorney differently than Campbell. The author of one national history of the period praised Wheeler for refusing "to succumb to the wartime hysteria and the antiradicalism then widespread in Butte as in the country at large." Wheeler was "rigorously neutral" in his "calm enforcement of the federal laws" and thus "won the enmity of local officials and businessmen."⁴⁷

Campbell's and Wheeler's paths would cross many times in the future,⁴⁸ but the Helena editor had won his confrontation.

⁴⁶Helena Independent, October 19, 1918, p. 4.

⁴⁷Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, pp. 110-111.

⁴⁸For example, Ruetten wrote: "Despite periodic honeymoons, the editor attacked Wheeler throughout the 1920's. The senator's [Wheeler's] reputation as a 'dry' during prohibition did not daunt the imaginative Campbell. 'Wheeler poses as a dry among the women of Montana, speaking from the church pulpits which will admit him,' the editor pontificated during the 1928 primary campaign. 'But for recreation he turns over an automobile now and then following a gay party . . . scattering the contents over the landscape, until,

Campbell experienced less success initially with his other chief nemesis, Bill Dunn, editor of the Butte Weekly Bulletin.

it is said, the odors brought prohibition snoops for many miles.'" Helena Independent, July 16, 1928, p. 4, as cited by Reutten, "Anaconda Journalism: The End of an Era," p. 6.

CHAPTER XI

THE INQUISITION, PART TWO

Do you know of me being retained
or working or growing fat or lean in
the service of big business?¹

--Will A. Campbell,
interrogating Bill
Dunn, editor of the
Butte Weekly Bulletin,
June 5, 1918.

Midway through its unprecedented hearings in late May and early June 1918, the Montana Council of Defense suddenly decided to expand its investigation to include the Butte Weekly Bulletin. The ostensible reason was a letter the Council received May 29 from the Montana Newspaper Publishers Association complaining about the Buttetin and questioning its right to be sent through the mail. The letter, accompanied by a file of issues of the Bulletin, said:

The press of the United States and of Montana is rendering loyal service by promoting every war activity for which its help has been asked. The editions of the newspaper submitted are not in accord with the spirit of the times and seem to hinder and delay the war program for which your Council is striving by creating dissension

¹Testimony, p. 1337.

and prejudice at a time when loyalty and unity of purpose is earnestly sought.²

But judging from the tone of Council members' later questioning of the Bulletin staff, it was this May 31 editorial, "Turn on the Light," that really provoked the investigation:

"At first blush," as one of our prominent acquaintances puts it, we should say that the convention of state and county councils of defense protesting B. K. Wheeler's reappointment will receive about as much consideration from President Wilson and Senator Walsh as a prohibition resolution at a meeting of the Brewery Workers' Union.

And that is more than it deserves, if we can stop to consider how this gang got together. Our governor can hardly be said to be friendly to Mr. Wheeler. The governor appointed the State Council of Defense, the state council appointed the county councils.

All have grown lean and gray, or fat and bald in the service of the big business. All are tried and trusted lieutenants of the same old political gang. They are all birds of a feather and they flock together at Helena supposedly working for the state but apparently for political reasons of their own.

We can imagine no better nucleus for a political machine than the present state and county organizations.

The resolutions condemning Wheeler passed by 25 to 7. Each county has three representatives. Where then

²Ibid., p. 1314. The letter was signed by L. L. Jones of the Daily Missoulian, J. K. Hester of the Butte Miner and J. D. Scanlan of the Miles City Star (and the Custer County Council of Defense).

were the rest of the forty-two counties' faithful fakirs? Evidently some were not present or what is more probable they refrained from voting, the stunt being too raw even for their calloused consciences.

Gentlemen of the State Council of Defense, you should change the last word to offense, for by these putrid tactics you offend the nostrils of every right minded citizen in the state that you knowingly misrepresent.

Another thought strikes us. If we are not mistaken Mr. Kelly is a member of the Council of Defense. B. K. Wheeler had this gentleman tried and convicted for using undue influence with a federal jury. Mr. Kelly was fined \$500 and the court of appeals recently upheld the decision.

Can it be possible that Mr. Kelly is using state machinery to avenge himself on Mr. Wheeler?

We are unwilling to believe it but anything can happen these days.

If there is to be a hearing on this matter, let it be in public, in the light of day and not in some dark corner of the capitol building.

The public is heartily tired of star-chambered sessions. Turn on the light.³

The outspoken editorial was vintage Bill Dunn, the brilliant and radical editor of the Bulletin. Short and stocky, Dunn was an electrician by trade, a former prize

³Ibid., pp. 1081-1083. Bound volumes and microfilm of the Bulletin are at the Montana Historical Society Library. Copies of the Bulletin from December 1917 to August 1918 are missing. Thus it was necessary to rely on the Montana Council of Defense Testimony for this editorial.

Although the two volumes of testimony are entitled Testimony at Hearings Held at the State Capitol May 31, June 1 and 2, 1918, by the Montana Council of Defense, they also include testimony from hearings on the Bulletin on June 3, 4, and 5, 1918.

fighter and a veteran labor organizer who settled in Butte during the war and tried to unify the striking workers.⁴

As he would so often, Dunn touched some raw nerves with his editorials on the Council of Defense. Dunn was summoned to appear before the Council on June 4 and, like Wheeler, he did not back down. As one account said: "Dunne's appearances were unique because he was one of the three or four witnesses with courage to face the ominous and self-righteous super-patriots without exhibiting fawning repentance; in fact, Dunne acted quite the opposite."⁵

Under questioning, Dunn admitted that his editorial, "Turn on the Light," erroneously had confused Council member Charles Kelly with Dan Kelly, the man Wheeler had prosecuted. He insisted that an explanatory paragraph had been omitted from the editorial without his knowledge.⁶

More questions about the editorial followed, and finally Dunn asked: "Is the purpose of having the Bulletin staff over here to find out what they know about the Rohn case, or is it to investigate the Bulletin Publishing Company?" Governor Stewart told Dunn that Rohn's case was under investigation at that time, and it would be determined later whether to look into the Bulletin.⁷

⁴Wetzel, "Making of an American Radical," pp. 4-28.

⁵Ibid., p. 80.

⁶Testimony, p. 1083.

⁷Ibid., pp. 1082-1085.

Will Campbell began questioning Dunn and demanded that he retract the erroneous portion of the editorial that left the impression the Council member, Charles Kelly, had tampered with a jury. Dunn was amenable to the request but pointed out that Company-controlled newspapers had employed similar tactics against labor leaders like himself. Using the opportunity to raise a similar complaint with his fellow newspaper editor, Dunn criticized Campbell's Independent for printing the statement made by one hearing witness calling him "the most dangerous man in Montana." Campbell rejected Dunn's request for an apology, prompting Dunn to remark: "Well, I have no objections, if you will just explain to whom I am dangerous."⁸

Campbell had already pointed out the mistake over Kelly to his newspaper's readers in an editorial entitled "BUTTE BULLETIN LIES." He called the mistake "a deliberate falsehood and just such a misrepresentation as the Bulletin makes in every issue."⁹

The Rohn hearings ended, but Dunn and his colleagues from the Bulletin were called to the witness stand June 5 as the Council decided to investigate the weekly newspaper after all. First on the stand was R. B. Smith, managing editor and business manager of the Bulletin.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 1095-1097.

⁹ Helena Independent, June 3, 1918, p. 4.

Campbell asked him if he agreed with Dunn's editorial that Council members had "grown lean and gray, or fat and bald, in the service of big business." Smith replied that he could not say and added that he did not necessarily agree personally with everything printed in the Bulletin. However, Smith said, the Bulletin was "an independent newspaper with a favor to labor" that gave a "hearing" to everyone.¹⁰

Smith disputed as false the headline on an Independent article that said: "I.W.W. CHIEFS MUST APPEAR AND EXPLAIN POLICY AND STATUS OF PAPER THEY PUBLISH." None of the paper's four staff members belonged to the IWW, Smith said, adding that the IWW in Butte did not approve of the Bulletin and had condemned it in a "very long and lengthy resolution."¹¹

In response to the Montana Newspaper Publishers Association's challenge of the Bulletin's patriotic contributions, Smith said the weekly had run without charge two advertisements promoting the sale of Liberty Bonds and War Trading Stamps. To his knowledge, Smith said the Bulletin had not published a single editorial criticizing the conduct of the war or the government's war aims. However, the newspaper reserved the right to criticize any individual, including the President, Smith said.¹²

¹⁰Testimony, pp. 1305-1308.

¹¹Ibid., p. 1312.

¹²Ibid., p. 1315.

After a brief appearance by Leo Daly, secretary of the Bulletin Publishing Company, Dunn returned to the witness stand. Asked by Governor Stewart if he had referred to the Council members present when he said they had grown lean and gray or fat and bald serving big business, Dunn replied: "Why, I should hope so."¹³ Campbell then pointed to each Council member and asked the same question. Only Donoghue, president of the Montana Federation of Labor, had not grown lean and gray or fat and bald serving big business, Dunn said, careful not to lump the labor leader with the other Council members.¹⁴ This exchange between Campbell and Dunn followed:

Campbell: You are acquainted with myself?

Dunn: Yes.

Campbell: Do you know of me being retained or working or growing fat or lean in the service of big business?

Dunn: Well, I believe that you are extremely sympathetic towards Big Business.

Campbell: But not to your knowledge have I grown bald or lean or gray or fat in the service of Big Business?

Dunn: Well, it all depends what you mean by the service of Big Business, or . . .

¹³Ibid., p. 1335.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 1334-1336. Dunn, however, pointed out that he and Donoghue differed on some policies and added that "occasionally I have thought that Mr. Donoghue's actions were more beneficial to the corporations than they were to the men that he represented."

Campbell: What do you mean?

Dunn: I would like to have in understood by the Council that it is possible that I have a way of describing certain symptoms of the present form of society, that are not thoroughly understood by the people who don't know me or don't know my view. For instance, when I say that a man is a tool of a cooperation [sic] I don't necessarily mean that that man has accepted bribes from cooperations [sic], or that he is against me, or is this, or that; I mean that his feelings are such that he believes honestly and sincerely that the support of the cooperation [sic] is for his best interests as well as the best interests of the community.

Campbell: Accepting your definitions of what you mean by big business [sic], how could you say that Mr. Peck, Mr. Logan, Mr. Sansburn, Mr. Greenfield or Mrs. Thompson, men whom you don't know, you don't know their politics, you don't even know where they live, how could you say that those men and those women have grown fat and lean in the service of Big Business?

Dunn: I assumed, Mr. Campbell, that any one who is appointed on this State Council of Defense is more or less politically safe. I don't think that any one has reason to differ with men from that view.¹⁵

The two editors discussed journalism principles after Dunn defended his editorial by saying "that a person in writing articles of this kind does not have to nor are they supposed to stick strictly to the facts in the matter." Campbell, pointing out that the Bulletin's slogan was "The Truth is Good Enough," found Dunn's cavalier attitude toward accuracy difficult to believe and asked where he had received his

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 1336-1338.

journalism training. "Principally through observation," Dunn replied, sarcastically adding that "a Helena Independent is on our exchange list." Realizing that his editorial could cause him trouble, Dunn again assured the Council that his newspaper "is willing to make amends insofar as it is necessary," and the matter was dropped.¹⁶

But the Bulletin editor was not contrite for long. The accused became the accuser as Dunn lashed out at the Council for "setting itself up on a pinnacle." Although the Council was no better or worse than any other similar constituted body, Dunn said if he had been governor, he could have chosen a council "that would have answered the political purposes better than this one does." His chief criticism of the Council members was that they believed "society as now constituted is right and just," while he advocated "a complete reconstruction of the present form of society."¹⁷ Asked to explain further, Dunn provided a lecture on the classical Marxism he favored.¹⁸

Further Council interrogation tried to demonstrate connections between Dunn and Wheeler in an obvious attempt to discredit the United States attorney. When Wheeler had testified in the Rohn hearing, the Council had tried without success to link the two Butte men. In response to questions

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 1334-1339.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 1341-1344.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 1344-1345.

about Wheeler, Dunn said, "I don't mean to say that Mr. Wheeler is the millinium [sic], but he is an improvement on most of the politicians in this state, in my opinion."¹⁹

And so the questioning went, with Dunn being asked about the IWW, Frank Little, the Butte strike, socialism and other topics. He answered some of the Council's questions directly and parried with them on others. When N. T. Lease asked if "all citizens, especially at this time, should support the constituted authority, both of states and nations," Dunn had a ready reply. "Oh yes, all legally constituted authority undoubtedly," he said in an obvious reference to the questions raised about the Council's own status.²⁰

In the end, the Council deferred any decision about the Bulletin until members received copies of the newspaper to study.²¹

By any account, Dunn had performed well in his initial appearance before the Council. As one account said, "In a demonstration of quick thinking and forceful rhetoric, Dunne had met the Council on its own grounds and fought it to a draw."²² But the supreme compliment came from the most

¹⁹Ibid., p. 1346.

²⁰Ibid., p. 1366.

²¹Minutes, p. 58.

²²Wetzel, "The Making of an American Radical," p. 93.

unlikely source of all, Will Campbell's Helena Independent, which disagreed with everything Dunn stood for but had to admire his artful performance. An inexplicable front-page story, which marked the first and only time Dunn drew praise from Campbell's newspaper, said:

Mr. Dunn gave every evidence of capacity to be dangerous or otherwise, according to the channel into which he might choose to direct his talents. Dunn--cold as a wedge, keen as a razor, widely informed, personally dispassionate, of ready wit and spontaneous mental action--proved more than a match for all those who cross-examined him. Not a single damaging admission was procured from him during the hours he occupied the witness stand. He gave evidence of ability to be ingratiating, courteous, arrogant and almost insulting, all within the space of a moment. At times he was verbose, at others almost sullenly reticent. He gave dissertations upon political and economic conditions, argued philosophical questions, discussed concrete events and generally covered the widest sort of range. No fox ever avoided with more keen scent every effort to involve him in difficulty. Evidently, in Mr. Dunn's bright lexicon, there are no such words as faux pas.²³

For all his public praise of Dunn, Campbell, however, was scheming behind the scenes and wanted to pursue the troublesome Bulletin matter further and at a higher level if necessary. He enlisted the help of John H. McIntosh, the manager of the Montana Employers' Association, who had denounced the Bulletin at the hearings and was planning a trip

²³Helena Independent, June 6, 1918, p. 1.

east later in June. As McIntosh explained in a letter to Governor Stewart:

While in Washington, D.C., it has been suggested by Will Campbell that I call at the Department of Justice and also at the office of the third Assistant Postmaster General and make to them a statement regarding the pernicious and seditious activity of the Butte Bulletin and the man Dunn.²⁴

Moreover, Bulletin files were sent to Postmaster General Sidney Burleson for review in response to "prodding" by the Montana Newspaper Publishers Association. C. D. Greenfield, secretary of the Council of Defense, took this action without informing the Bulletin staff.²⁵

Meanwhile, the Council of Defense kept itself busy with mundane, noncontroversial projects throughout most of the summer of 1918. Campbell, though, kept up his steady drumbeat of editorials on patriotism and the war. One Helena Independent editorial said it was not enough to be an American or to be anti-German. One must be a "pro-American to be a real American," his editorial said.²⁶ He reprinted from the Miles City Star an editorial that praised the state's "fearless" Council of Defense and said: "With power in the hands of such men as the council comprises the future of

²⁴Letter, John H. McIntosh to Governor Samuel V. Stewart, June 9, 1918, as cited in Halvorson, "The Butte Bulletin," pp. 74-75.

²⁵Wetzel, "The Making of an American Radical," pp. 93-94.

²⁶Helena Independent, June 14, 1918, p. 4.

democracy is safe.²⁷ On his editorial page, Campbell ran a box with an American flag that included this quotation from General John J. Pershing: "I will smash the German line in France if you will smash that damnable Hun propaganda at home."²⁸

Later in the summer, the Council took action that set the stage for another confrontation with Dunn and the Bulletin. On August 5, the federal War Industries Board's Pulp and Paper Section ordered that no new newspapers were to be established during the war to conserve newsprint. Meeting a week later, the Montana Council of Defense adopted Order Number Twelve to carry out this directive. But the Montana Council went one step further and ordered that no newspaper or magazine published less than six times a week could convert to a daily during the war.²⁹

The Council's move appears to have been aimed directly at the Butte Bulletin. R. B. Smith, the newspaper's managing editor, had informed the Council in June of the Bulletin's plans to publish daily eventually.³⁰ It had planned to convert to a daily for nearly a year with June 1, 1918, as the original target date. That date was moved back to August 1,

²⁷ Ibid., June 15, 1918, p. 4.

²⁸ Ibid., June 28, 1918, p. 4.

²⁹ Minutes, pp. 83-86.

³⁰ Testimony, p. 1313.

but the late arrival of printing equipment delayed the change until August 20, eight days after the Council's order.³¹

The Weekly Bulletin greeted the Council's order with defiance in this editorial, "The State Council Again," written by Dunn:

Using the prevailing sentiment to boost the game of the exploiting interests of the state is the latest stunt of the handpicked gang who masquerade under the title of the State Council of Defense. They have declared against any more daily papers during the period of the war, knowing that thousands of people in this state are anxiously awaiting the first issue of the Daily Bulletin, that they may be able to obtain the truth on matters affecting the independent-minded people of Montana.

Once before, when we stated as our opinion that the Council was dominated by the same slimy political gang, whose actions are a stench in the nostrils of decent people, we were hauled before that body and given the third degree. We were willing at that time to take their vociferous protestations of innocence at their face value and did so.

But their latest dictum stamps them as what they are and have always been, the tools, the willing, cringing tools of the autocratic forces of the state.

Fortunately, they have no legal status or authority. They can fulminate to their heart's content against anything and everything that menaces their master's interest, but--no one need pay any attention to them.

³¹Butte Daily Bulletin, March 10, 1919, p. 1. In February and March, 1919, the Bulletin reprinted a verbatim transcript of the Council of Defense's second set of hearings on the newspaper, which took place in September 1918.

The Daily Bulletin will be on the streets when the plant is ready, and if we are interfered with, we will take it to the highest courts of the land. If the Council had boldly stated that the Bulletin was dangerous to the privileged interests of the state, and that as loyal servants they were compelled to throw every possible obstacle in its path, we should have respected them as honest though ignorant. But by their hypocritical attitude, they have shown that they dare not fight on the issue of right or wrong.

Our feeling for them is therefore one of pity mixed with contempt. On second thought, our feeling is mostly contempt.³²

The Bulletin kept its word, and on August 20, 1918, a daily newspaper rolled off its presses. Two days later, a front-page story in Campbell's Independent pointed out that the Bulletin had defied the Council's order.³³ An editorial in the Independent the next day predicted a showdown that would lead to "grief for the handful of agitators" in Butte who violated the order. According to the editorial, Council members faced only one choice--"act now or lay the resignation of every member on the desk of Governor Stewart and admit they constitute a big bluffing society."³⁴

Once again, Campbell was manipulating behind the scenes trying to thwart the Bulletin's publishing plans. The federal War Industries Board sent the newspaper staff a telegram forbidding the Bulletin from converting to a daily without

³²Butte Weekly Bulletin, August 16, 1918, p. 4.

³³Helena Independent, August 22, 1918, p. 1.

³⁴Ibid., August 23, 1918, p. 4.

permission from the board.³⁵ The Bulletin staff claimed it did not receive the telegram, and the Western Union office in Butte had no record of it.³⁶ Campbell had his own theory and wired the following explanation to the federal board in Washington:

I believe Western Union telegraphic office has been looted by linemen, member union which W. D. Dunn, President Bulletin Publishing Company is head agitator and walking delegate and by Leo Daly one publishers Bulletin formerly employe Western Union here. Copy of your message August 20th delivery sheet and records pertaining to it all disappeared and from what I can learn believe other government telgrams [sic] have suffered like fate. Manager admits it is entirely possible files have been extracted by Bulletin people or members electricians union acting for Bulletin people. Says he has no idea how message, copy and delivery sheet disappeared unless Daly and certain linemen stole them from files.³⁷

Meanwhile, Campbell kept federal authorities posted about the Bulletin's attempts to secure newsprint by rail shipment. In a telegram to Thomas Donnelley, chief of the War Industries Board's Pulp and Paper Section, Campbell suggested that a federal marshal seize the shipment when it arrived "for such disposition as your board may make of it."

³⁵Letter, Thomas F. Donnelley, chief, Pulp and Paper Section, War Industries Board, to Charles D. Greenfield, secretary, Montana Council of Defense, September 10, 1918, as cited in Wetzel, "Making of an American Radical," p. 96.

³⁶Butte Daily Bulletin, February 27, 1919, p. 8.

³⁷Department of Justice file, 195397-8, 9, as cited in Wetzel, "Making of an American Radical," p. 96.

The Montana Council of Defense stood ready to "carry out any orders or desires of your board," Campbell said.³⁸

The Bulletin encountered other difficulties obtaining newsprint. One shipment was placed on the wrong train at Deer Lodge and wound up in Chicago instead of Butte, prompting the Bulletin staff to charge that someone had tampered with the newsprint. In addition, the War Industries Board ordered a boycott placed on newsprint sales to the Bulletin in response to protests from the Montana Newspaper Publishers Association. The Bulletin, which cut its size but kept publishing anyway, sought an explanation from the federal board and insisted it had not received the official notification forbidding conversion to a daily. The newspaper demanded a hearing on the matter, and the Pulp and Paper Section of the War Industries Board suggested that the proceeding be conducted by the Montana Council of Defense.³⁹

Obviously more than willing to help out, the Montana Council of Defense called a hearing for September 9. It subpoenaed the three Bulletin staff members for their second appearance before the Council in little more than three months.⁴⁰

³⁸Telegram, Will A. Campbell to Thomas F. Donnelley, n.d., Montana Historical Society Library, Archives, Marguerite Greenfield collection, Inventory Box 4, Butte Bulletin file.

³⁹Wetzel, "Making of an American Radical," pp. 96-97.

⁴⁰Minutes, pp. 89-90.

After questioning Smith about the Bulletin's difficulties obtaining supplies, the Council members summoned the witness they wanted to interrogate the most--Bill Dunn. Their questions strayed far from the purpose of the hearing--the alleged violation of the federal and state orders--just as they had at the earlier hearing, as the Council zeroed in on Dunn's stinging editorial, "The State Council Again."

Asked by Governor Stewart if his editorial criticism of the Council had been fair, Dunn tried to set the members straight as to the intended purpose of the hearing, saying:

I will answer that in this way, Governor, that as I understand it, the matter for the Council to decide and the reason we are here is to find out whether or not we are governed by the recent order of the War Industries Board and affected by that order. Now, my personal opinion of the State Council of Defense, or the Bulletin's opinion of the State Council of Offense-Defense; pardon me; it was unintentional, it was not sarcasm--should not enter into the proposition as I see it.⁴¹

Campbell soon joined in and dominated the questioning. He prefaced his first inquiry with the comment that he always had "to ask one or two questions or I wouldn't retain my job." The Helena newspaper editor pressed Dunn about the paragraph in the editorial that claimed the Council had no legal authority. Dunn refused to answer questions, insisting that the one paragraph could not be considered in isolation from

⁴¹Butte Daily Bulletin, March 7, 1919, p. 5.

the rest of the editorial. This exchange followed:

Campbell: Did you mean what you said in there when you said that no one need pay any attention to them? Did you mean that when you wrote it?

Dunn: I am not going to answer--

Campbell: Did you mean that?

Dunn: I am not going to answer any such question as that yes or no. Any witness has a right to explain his answer.

The questioning continued, and in frustration Dunn finally explained that he was recommending resistance of the Council of Defense through the proper channels by challenging its legality in court. Dunn made it clear that he continued to believe the Council lacked any legal authority.⁴²

Tempers rose as Dunn, Campbell and Stewart engaged in this heated and prophetic three-way discussion:

Campbell: From the beginning, the inception of this IWW trial in Chicago, the Butte Bulletin has certainly been a consistent supporter and booster and explainer for the IWW down there, who are now found guilty. I want to tell you that I believe that article that you published in that paper, in which Mr. Dunn admits that he advised all of his readers that the State Council [sic] of Defense had no authority whatever, that nobody need pay any attention to it, that when he wrote that, when you published it, when Daly circulated it, that you are just as guilty of sedition as Bill Haywood is, and I hope to God that someone will prosecute you because that is the very thing that Haywood is going to the penitentiary for right now.

⁴²Ibid., March 7, 1919, p. 5, and March 8, 1919, p. 4.

Dunn: I am willing any time anybody thinks I am guilty of sedition or disloyalty to stand trial. That is the reason I asked for a hearing. I am not trying to sidestep anything. I believe I have got certain rights and want to determine whether I have them or not. I simply claim that from our viewpoint this crowd, this staff of the Bulletin, has not been treated right on many occasions. . . .

Stewart: Now, Mr. Dunn.

Dunn: You seem to assume, Governor, that the moment a man steps out of private life--or lady either for that matter--and takes an official position, they are immune from criticism.

Stewart: No, I don't.

Dunn: Your statement would lead us to infer that. That is the impression I got. If the reverse is true, simply because I don't happen to be a member of the State Council of Defense, I have no redress. They can vilify me and say anything they like about me and stay within the law. But if I am a member of the Council, I can call them before the Council and give them a grilling. I can ask about the circulation of their paper; I can ask who finances it; I can ask what his religion is; where they are born; what they intend to do a year from now; any questions I see fit to ask them I can do it all because I happen to be a member of the state Council of Defense appointed by the Governor of the State of Montana. That to me is simply absurd, because the moment the right of criticism is taken away, right then government ceases to be a democracy. I maintain that I have the right, the Bulletin has the right, to criticize the State Council of Defense as a body or as individuals. If we say anything libelous we can be prosecuted for it. If the matter is seditious, there are courts to settle that, although personally to me it appears to be a far-fetched proposition.

Now we are before the State Council of Defense. We are subpoenaed for one reason or another. The minute the matter is known the daily press of this state proceeds to open their mud batteries on us. They started this morning. If they don't write special articles, stating absolute untruths, they so arrange their headlines that the public will get an entirely wrong impression.

We are the only paper in this state, with one or two exceptions, possibly, who are opposed to the Anaconda Mining Company, and it is public knowledge that this state is controlled by the Anaconda Mining Company, I don't care who denies it. It is known throughout the United States that that is the fact, just the same as in other states they are owned by other corporations. They own the industries, they can bring enough pressures on the officials to do their bidding, whether the officials want to do it or not. . . .

We know that practically every paper in the state is under the thumbs of corporations. They publish their stuff for them, starting in Libby, Montana, down to the Livingston Enterprise, the Billings Gazette, the Miles City Star, the Butte Miner, the Anaconda Standard, and the Helena Independent. Because for some years there has not been a paper that fought these interests, naturally the things that we are doing and say look a little worse than they really are. . . . We will not attack a man's personal character, except where the matter is of public interest, public welfare, for instance, if a man had some trouble with his wife, I would not think of saying anything about it. If he bribed a jury, that is public welfare, and that is a different proposition entirely.

That is the way we intend to fight on principle. I know and am absolutely certain that our views are not the views of the members of this body. That is one of the reasons why we are over here. There is absolutely no chance to get together on

the proposition, absolutely none, because you think differently than we do. We can't make you see our point of view, however, much as we try. There are, however, questions of fairness that we might be able to approach one another on, but outside of that it is simply a question of whether or not a paper, or a group or a movement which is opposed to the dominating interests of a state or a nation can be persecuted and be put out of business by those interests. That is the only thing there is to it.⁴³

Thus the second hearing ended with nothing more resolved than in the first. As they had previously, Council members, particularly Campbell, had used the proceeding as a forum to question Dunn about his editorials instead of the ostensible purpose of the hearing. Neither Dunn nor the Council backed down, and the newsprint question remained unresolved. From the Council's standpoint, however, the hearing had not been a total failure. As one study said, the Council had "perverted [the] purpose of the hearing in order to secure evidence to be used in prosecuting the Bulletin staff."⁴⁴

To no one's surprise, Campbell's Independent and Dunn's Bulletin viewed the Council's proceedings quite differently. Campbell predicted a "show down" before the Montana Supreme Court over the Bulletin's apparent defiance of

⁴³Ibid., March 11, 1919, p. 5.

⁴⁴Wetzel, "Making of an American Radical," pp. 99-100.

the Council.⁴⁵ The Bulletin, meanwhile, responded by thumbing its nose at the Council again with this three-column headline on page one: "WHAT WE THINK OF THE STATE COUNCIL OF DEFENSE/WILL BE FOUND ON PAGE TWO, COLUMN FIVE." The entire column was blank.⁴⁶

A few days later, Dunn, Smith and A. B. Maxwell, the Bulletin business manager, were arrested on sedition charges in Butte. They were among forty persons arrested after Butte Wobblies joined a nationwide strike on September 13 to seek the release of Eugene V. Debs and Bill Haywood from prison. The Bulletin staff was accused of printing posters promoting the strike. The three men were released on \$1,000 bonds the next day, but Dunn was promptly rearrested and charged with carrying a concealed weapon. A day later, Dunn was arrested a third time and charged with sedition again under the law passed by the special session of the Montana Legislature earlier that year. This time he was charged, along with Smith and Daly, by authorities in Lewis and Clark County. They were later bailed out at \$5,000 apiece.⁴⁷

As it became clear in Dunn's subsequent trial,

⁴⁵Helena Independent, September 10, 1918, p. 1.

⁴⁶Butte Daily Bulletin, September 11, 1918, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁷Helena Independent, September 15, 1918, p. 1; September 16, 1918, p. 1; September 17, 1918, p. 1; September 18, 1918, p. 1; Butte Daily Bulletin, September 16, 1918, p. 1.

Campbell once again had been maneuvering secretly against the Butte newspaper. As a Bulletin subscriber, Campbell had called the editorial, "The State Council Again," to the attention of Lewis and Clark County Attorney Lester H. Loble as being seditious. This, in turn, prompted Lobel to file charges against Dunn and his associates.⁴⁸

⁴⁸State of Montana v. William F. Dunne, transcript, 4411 (1919), p. 116. A copy of the transcript is on file at the Montana Historical Society Library. Hereafter cited as Transcript.

CHAPTER XII

THE SUPREME COURT AND THE INDEPENDENT'S "GUIDING GENIUS"

The Reds were happy last evening.
Not only was W. F. Dunn, supreme radical, granted a new trial in his sedition case by the Supreme Court of Montana, but the court was flippant enough to gratify the Reds by going out of the way to take a fling at a member of the State Council of Defense.¹

--Will A. Campbell, criticizing the Supreme Court for overturning the conviction of Bill Dunn, May 4, 1920.

Throughout the fall of 1918 and winter of 1919, Will Campbell and his Helena Independent and Bill Dunn and his Butte Bulletin engaged in editorial warfare that certainly must rank as some of the most bitter in the history of Montana journalism. It began in earnest when Dunn was arrested for sedition, a charge filed by the Lewis and Clark County attorney at Campbell's urging.

The two editors' opinions dominated the news columns as well as the editorial pages, beginning with the accounts of Dunn's arrest. The Independent informed readers that sedition was "only one degree removed from the charge of

¹Helena Independent, May 4, 1920, p. 4.

treason" and denounced the three Bulletin staff members who were arrested. Dunn was "a labor agitator from Seattle, imported by the Wobblies of Butte to conduct their labor troubles," according to an Independent news story. The same article called Managing Editor R. B. Smith "a tramp who became president of the Butte Typographical Union" and denounced Leo Daly, secretary of the Butte Bulletin Publishing Company, as "a Sinn Feiner whose meal ticket is furnished by Dunn and his Wobbly crew." The newspaper also described the Bulletin trio's appearance before the Council of Defense earlier that month:

Dunn, Smith and Daly came to Helena a belligerent sort of way, willing to admit that they ran their paper as they pleased, printed whatever they desired, defied the government and told authorities to "go to" whenever they pleased, particularly the Silver Bow county and the state council of defense.²

Next to the news story was a two-column box, which had a headline that said: "DUNN AGREES WITH THEM." It quoted from his testimony before the Council of Defense when Dunn had said: "The Soviet government for which we are working in the United States--it is the form of government which will prevail in this country after the war."³

Dunn at first refused to comment to an Independent reporter about his arrest but later said it was another

²Ibid., September 15, 1918, pp. 1, 8.

³Ibid.

battle in "the old fight, and for the present I seem to be the goat." Despite attempts by the Council of Defense, Dunn said, the constitution "is still operative."⁴

An Independent editorial the same day asked: "How much longer, in Heaven's name, is a small element in Butte going to be permitted to arrogate to themselves authority to run the state and a portion of the nation."⁵ A separate editorial that day praised Lewis and Clark County Attorney Loble for filing the charges, saying that residents would be praised across the state "for having a county attorney who will go through in the face of an approaching election which has caused some weaker prosecutors to postpone action."⁶ Another editorial informed readers that the Bulletin "troublemakers" had been bailed out of jail and "returned to Butte to resume their nefarious occupation."⁷

The Bulletin, meanwhile, had no doubt as to who was responsible for the arrests. As Montana's only independent newspaper, the Bulletin said it had begun "to cause uneasiness in the haunts of the copper-collared gentry and the parasite press" and added: "These men who have been called pimps of industry are using every effort, fair or foul, to

⁴Ibid., September 16, 1918, p. 1.

⁵Ibid., p. 4.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., September 18, 1918, p. 4.

suppress a paper that dares to tell the truth."⁸

Dunn devoted an entire editorial to attack Campbell as "one of those mental perverts who sell their somewhat mediocre talents for a chance to worship at the shrine of the powerful exploiting interests." The editorial said Campbell's Independent's name was "sadly inappropriate" because it was one of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company's "publicity organs." The diatribe went on to say:

He has consistently supported the Anaconda Mining Company even in their most iniquitous machinations and has shamelessly justified the grossest forms of political corruption. When anything especially putrid is desired, the matter is placed in the hands of William Campbell and from experience his paymasters know that he will inject into the handling of the matter all of those niceties of rottenness and corruption that so endears him to their hearts.

The activities of Mr. Campbell and his company sheet have never been hindered by the somewhat hampering restrictions of the moral code or by any respect for even the common decencies of daily life.

In common with the rest of the gang of political pirates and industrial autocrats whose mouthpiece and tool he is, he refuses to fight on the merits of any question. It is enough for him to be told by the Sixth Floor that it does not meet with their approval. From then on Mr. Campbell and the Independent will use their best endeavor to further the cause of special privilege, as represented by the Anaconda Mining Company, and to defeat the wishes of the people of the state.

This is the gentleman who, in his capacity as a member of the State Council of Defense, is trying to curry favor with

⁸Butte Daily Bulletin, September 16, 1918, p. 1.

the exponents of Prussianism in this state by putting out of business of the Daily Bulletin and railroading the members of its staff to jail because they dared to criticize him and the rest of the company tools on the council; because they intimated that the council was somewhat more interested in furthering the company's political program than they were in furthering the interests of the people of the state.

If that is a crime, it has been declared such by a company-controlled legislature and a company governor acting under instructions from the paid lobbyists and attorneys of the Anaconda Mining Company.

We are against THAT form of government and the evils that it brings; and if it is a crime, we are willing to suffer for it.⁹

Campbell, in turn, kept up his own editorial attacks and accused the Bulletin of promoting the IWW and Russian Bolshevik government. The Butte newspaper had supported neither cause editorially at the time, but it often carried stories about both movements.¹⁰

After the armistice was signed November 11, 1918, to end the fighting in Europe, Dunn openly supported Bolshevism, which prompted Campbell to observe:

Of course the paper doesn't refer to the horrible deeds of Lenine and Trotzky--the assassinations, the rape and pillage, the drunkenness, the wild orgies of the half-insane peasants of Russia--that would be too transparent. But in approving the soviet government, the Bulletin approves ALL ITS WORKS.¹¹

⁹ Ibid., September 18, 1918, p. 4.

¹⁰ Helena Independent, September 16, 1918, p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid., November 15, 1918, p. 4.

When Dunn referred to returning American soldiers as nothing more than "workers in uniforms," Campbell was outraged and attacked that "misguided and deliberately unfair paper," saying: "The average man who comes out of the army has no idea of joining a force to overthrow the existing government and run it in the future for the exclusive benefit of the soldiers and so-called 'workers' who did not go to war."¹²

For some reason, Campbell remained uncharacteristically silent over Dunn's election to the Montana House of Representatives in November 1918.

Dunn continued to jab at Campbell and the Council right up to the start of his trial in early 1919. One editorial criticized the Council, calling it the "Council of Pretense" and noting that it had done no defending.¹³

Campbell reprinted a cartoon from the Bulletin depicting a farmer and his wife looking hopefully toward the rising sun, which was labeled "socialism." In an editorial, Campbell asked if Montana farmers wanted "to divide their land with the hobos, the shirkers, the bums and nonproducers" as was inevitable under this "cure for all ills."¹⁴

Both the Independent and Bulletin, however, dropped

¹²Ibid., January 27, 1919, p. 4.

¹³Butte Daily Bulletin, January 4, 1919, p. 4.

¹⁴Helena Independent, February 8, 1919, pp. 1, 4.

these issues as peripheral and devoted most of their attention to Bill Dunn's sedition trial when it began in Helena in February 1919. Dunn, who took a leave of absence from the legislature, was represented by four Butte lawyers, including Burton K. Wheeler. The attorneys has unsuccessfully tried to delay the trial because of Dunn's serving in the legislature and also failed in an attempt to have the Montana Supreme Court disqualify District Judge R. Lee Word, Helena, for "bias and prejudice."¹⁵

Campbell was the key witness in the prosecution because he was the Helena subscriber who had received the Bulletin containing the editorial considered seditious by the county attorney. The Helena editor testified that he called the editorial, "The State Council Again," to the attention of County Attorney Loble "with the remark that I thought these people were getting dangerously near or close to the line over there." Despite his frequent editorials attacking Dunn, Campbell professed to have "no personal feelings in the matter." He simply believed the Bulletin had unfairly questioned the authority of the Council of Defense, "which, I thought, had been duly and rightfully constituted."¹⁶

In a role he certainly must have relished, Wheeler had the chance to cross-examine Campbell, the man who had

¹⁵Ibid., February 16, 1919, p. 1; and February 11, 1919, p. 5.

¹⁶Transcript, p. 127.

grilled him before the Council of Defense and attacked him repeatedly in the Independent. Wheeler's questions implied that Campbell had been paid by unnamed persons for writing articles against Dunn, but the Helena editor flatly denied the charge. Asked if he had been "particularly bitter" against Dunn, Campbell replied: "I have been bitter against his methods and against the means and way he makes trouble in this state."¹⁷

Wheeler asked Campbell to elaborate, and it became clear that economic motives had influenced his feelings about Dunn. As Campbell explained:

I merely meant that when there is labor trouble in Butte and the wage scale is raised in the mines, the printers want more wages; which gets it right back to Helena, and, naturally, they expect every town in the state to pay the same scale as Butte pays.¹⁸

But Campbell, realizing he was about to be trapped, quickly backtracked and said:

The motive back of this whole prosecuting against Mr. Dunn was his defiance, threat and refusal to work with us during the war and co-operate with the Council of Defense and continual agitation and stirring up of the men engaged in producing copper during the war.¹⁹

The Helena editor went on to call Dunn "one of the most dangerous men at large in Montana" and said he did what

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 132-134.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 134-135.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 135.

he could to try to halt "that kind of sedition."²⁰

Other Council of Defense members, including Governor Stewart, were called to testify by the prosecution, and large portions of the Council's September hearing on the Bulletin were introduced as evidence, often over Wheeler's objections.

Dunn, who took the witness stand in his own defense, tried to discredit Campbell. He said Campbell had "attacked me bitterly in his newspaper ever since I first was mentioned in the papers in Montana" in the summer of 1917, and "from that time up until just recently he has increased in bitterness, if that was possible."²¹

Dunn delivered his own closing address to the jury, an eloquent and emotional speech that was barely mentioned in the Independent and reprinted in full in the Bulletin. The defendant said his brief experience as a legislator had taught him how laws such as the 1918 sedition act were passed, "particularly laws that are desired by the corporations of the state." Dunn mockingly tried to read to the jury the seventeen orders passed by the Council of Defense to show

how important they are; how much they assisted the United States in winning the war and what a terrible act, terrible crime, was committed by anyone who wrote anything that might be considered as hampering them in the execution of these orders.²²

²⁰Ibid., p. 180.

²¹Ibid., p. 240.

²²Butte Daily Bulletin, February 26, 1919, p. 1.

Judge Word, however, refused to allow Dunn to read the orders.²³

Resorting to either flattery or sarcasm, Dunn praised the Council of Defense members as "eminently respectable" and "reasonably good citizens and good neighbors"--except for Campbell. He pointed out that a "flat-footed" Campbell had admitted wanting Dunn in jail because "it cost him money for his printing labor." Responding to Campbell's charge that he was dangerous, Dunn said, "Well, now, if I am dangerous, I am only dangerous to the corrupt political interests in this state and the people whom I referred to in that article."²⁴

Dunn told the jurors he was charged with sedition in Helena because his enemies knew they could never convict him in Butte. "They bring me over here among strangers, among people whose minds have been poisoned with the ravings of William Campbell and the Helena Independent, and who are all, more or less, indebted to the political machine of the state," Dunn said. Charges also were filed because the copper interests wanted to stop him from running for mayor of Butte, according to Dunn. He concluded by saying:

As a citizen of the United States and of the state of Montana, I not only have the right to express my opinion of a duly constituted state or federal authority or of the Montana Council of Defense, and if

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

I think, as I said in that editorial, that they are not upholding the interests of the people of the state, it is not only my right, but it is my duty, to inform the people of those circumstances, and that is what I did and what I will continue to do as long as I have a pen with which to write and a tongue with which to speak.²⁵

The jury apparently was not convinced and found Dunn guilty of sedition but recommended clemency. Sentencing was set for February 28.²⁶

In its coverage of the trial, the Independent reported that Dunn "threw all caution to the winds in his tirade on the objects of his attack." Although Wheeler had criticized Campbell for "biased and prejudiced" testimony, the Independent responded by quoting County Attorney Loble defending Campbell and his newspaper:

they have both at all times been on the right side in this war. The Independent and Mr. Campbell have never hesitated to throw the light of publicity upon and attack all persons and agencies that have been anti-American the war, and this is why Dunn and the Butte Bulletin have been the objects of these attacks.²⁷

In an editorial the next day, the Independent scoffed at the charge made by Dunn's supporters that Judge Word and the jury had been prejudiced against the defendant. The editorial said:

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Helena Independent, February 25, 1919, p. 1.

²⁷ Ibid.

Probably the conduct of Dunn and his attorney in the court room was the only possible thing which could be said to prejudice any member of the jury, if any member was prejudiced.

Dunn shrugged his shoulders in disgust, laughed defiantly, read a newspaper in the court room "just to kill time" as he told Judge Word. His actions demonstrated that he had no regard for the law nor respect for the courts--he stamped himself by his conduct as a law-breaker.

Mr. Wheeler's conduct of the case was anything but favorable to his client. He had worked hard and with a sincerity and enthusiasm which showed he was heartily in sympathy with Dunn; that his interest was not merely that of a paid attorney but a struggle was going on inside Burton K. Wheeler, his heart was in his work. In this enthusiasm he defied the ethics of court practice and was constantly being called to order by the judge.²⁸

The newspaper also took advantage of Dunn's conviction to pat itself on the back, saying:

If by the insistence of what this newspaper believes to be the best interests of the country and the state, Burton K. Wheeler finds himself out of public office, Dunn convicted for sedition and a number of Butte aliens on the way to Russia, The Independent is willing to take whatever credit belongs to it for its good work.²⁹

A day later, the Independent criticized Wheeler for "resorting to personal abuse of Campbell" during the trial. The editorial gloated that "this newspaper is sustained by the attorney general of the United States, by the senate of the United States and by the jury in Lewis and Clark county, all

²⁸ Ibid., February 26, 1919, p. 4.

²⁹ Ibid.

of whom voted that Wheeler was wrong."³⁰

The Bulletin, meanwhile, responded to the verdict in an emotional editorial that tried to make a martyr of Dunn. To the "browbeaten, accident-haunted, consumption-haunted miners of Butte, [Dunn] stands like a distant mountain to thirst-racked plodders in the desert--a hope for relief, a promise of security, well being and happiness," the editorial said. It went on to say:

William F. Dunn, who has wronged no man, accepted no bribe, betrayed no trust, who has fought with the stubborn bravery of a bull for the cause of humanity, because God and some far distant Irish ancestor planted that cause deep in his tender heart. William F. Dunn, four months after the war has ceased, is convicted in a Montana court of felony--of truthfully criticizing Sam Stewart and Will A. Campbell for flagrant misuse of their official power in trying to suppress the Butte Bulletin.³¹

On February 28, Judge Word, ignoring the jury's plea for clemency, fined Dunn \$5,000 and told him he was lucky he was not sentenced to prison. In a stern lecture, Word attacked Dunn for putting his faith in the bullet instead of the ballot, a charge that had no basis in fact. "Never before have I seen a man with as little apparent regard for laws, courts or juries," Word told Dunn. "Your doctrines go back to the cavemen, who recognized no authority." Dunn

³⁰Ibid., February 27, 1919, p. 4.

³¹Butte Daily Bulletin, February 28, 1919, p. 2.

promptly served notice that he would appeal the decision.³²

Once again, Campbell used the opportunity to brag of his role in the successful prosecution of Dunn. "Has the Independent had the proper estimate of Dunn or not?" an editorial asked. "Was the publisher of the Independent justified in his statement that Dunn is the most dangerous man at large in the state of Montana? The trial judge should know. Read his statement."³³

Campbell continued attacking Dunn throughout the spring of 1919 in an effort to stop the Bulletin editor from being elected mayor of Butte. He urged the election of Dunn's opponent in the Democratic primary election and warned: "Back of Dunn will be every anti-American, every alien sympathizer, every Bolshevik booster and every revolutionist."³⁴ When it appeared that Dunn had won the nomination, Campbell criticized union members for voting "with the scum of creation in favor of the soviet government and Bolshevism."³⁵ As it turned out, Dunn lost the primary election after all and was foiled in his attempt to run as an independent.

The Helena editor kept a keen eye on the activities of both Dunn and Wheeler. When the two Butte men made

³²Helena Independent, March 1, 1919, p. 1.

³³Ibid., p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., March 24, 1919, p. 4.

³⁵Ibid., March 26, 1919, p. 4.

speeches criticizing the Montana Supreme Court, Campbell's newspaper reported the event in this front-page headline: "WHEELER AND DUNN MAKE/INCENDIARY UTTERANCES."³⁶ An editorial a few days later attacked the men, saying: "If Wheeler loses a case, the courts are corrupt. If Dunn is convicted of a felony, the courts are copper collared and know no such thing as justice." Wheeler was edging "dangerously close to the line where the courts will have to take notice of his conduct," the Independent said, and Montanans were wondering if the Butte attorney "will be able to spit in the very faces of our learned judges with impunity."³⁷

Dunn, for his part, lashed out at Campbell at every opportunity. One editorial called Campbell "a part of the stench in the nostrils of the people of Montana."³⁸ Another Bulletin editorial quoted from a blast at Campbell leveled by the New Northwest, a Missoula newspaper, which compared the Helena editor to Edward Morrissey, the top detective on the Butte police force, who had been charged with beating and killing his wife. In the editorial, which hit below the belt, the New Northwest said:

³⁶Ibid., April 8, 1919, p. 1.

³⁷Ibid., April 13, 1919, p. 4.

³⁸Butte Daily Bulletin, April 17, 1919, p. 2. The same editorial advised Campbell, who had attacked Senator William Borah of Idaho, to be careful because "if Old Biased and Prejudiced R. Lee Word hears of this it may cost another \$5,000."

Of the two men, Morrissey, who goes home drunk and beats up his wife, and Campbell, who goes to his office drunk and writes some vile insinuation against some man fighting the Anaconda company-- of the two men, of these two methods . . . the writer respects Morrissey and his methods far more than Campbell and Campbell's methods.³⁹

The same editorial in the Bulletin quoted from a description of Campbell appearing in the rival Helena Record-Herald, which

compared the chinless editor to a diseased kidney exhaling a noxious, offensive or poisonous stench, similar to that exuded by a genus of mammals of which the best known species is the common skunk.⁴⁰

Another Bulletin editorial called Campbell "as clumsy, as heartless and as cowardly a pirate as ever sailed the main."⁴¹ One tongue-in-cheek editorial chastised the New Northwest for running a cartoon depicting Campbell as a snake coiled in the folds of the American flag. Dunn wrote that he had "a complete knowledge of the snake family, both the real and the 'spiritual,' and we would rather fraternize with any or all of them than with Campbell."⁴²

Between these editorial salvos, R. B. Smith, managing editor of the Bulletin, stood trial in Helena for sedition

³⁹Butte Daily Bulletin, July 11, 1919, p. 2.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., August 4, 1919, p. 2.

⁴²Ibid., October 17, 1919, p. 4.

and also was found guilty. One of his lawyers, Louis P. Donovan, had told jurors not to be "deceived by preconceived notions poured into your heads by the copper press in this city and by the fact that Will A. Campbell, the complaining witness in this case, has used columns of the Independent to assail the defendant." Donovan asserted that Campbell had "'pussy-footed' to the county-attorney with the edition in question in order to 'stir up' something against the Bulletin."⁴³

Wheeler, another of Smith's lawyers, said it was nearly impossible for anyone reading the Independent regularly to have avoided forming a biased opinion against his client. Noting that Campbell, age thirty-eight, published patriotic news for a profit, while Smith, age forty-seven, had tried to join the military during the war. Wheeler asked: "Who is the real patriot? The fact shows that while Campbell and his ilk were securing more dollars in an effort to put the Bulletin out of business, Smith was trying to enlist."⁴⁴

The Independent noted that Wheeler was "in fine vitriolic form" when addressing the jury and added:

A considerable part of his argument was used in "paying his respects" to Will A. Campbell, . . . whom he accused of being

⁴³ Ibid., June 28, 1919, p. 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

not only the "instigator and prosecuting witness" in the cases, but a "persecutor" of the defendant, all, declared Wheeler, "out of his greed for power."⁴⁵

The Helena newspaper also accused Wheeler of venturing "dangerously near the 'dead line'" when attacking what he called "biased and prejudiced courts."⁴⁶

Judge Word ignored the jury's recommendation that Smith's fine be set at \$1,000. Instead, he imposed one of \$4,500.⁴⁷

The appeals of Dunn and Smith's cases dragged on into 1920, and Campbell and Governor Stewart grew impatient. Campbell attacked Attorney General Sam C. Ford for failing to file the state's briefs in response to the appeal of Dunn's conviction. To Campbell, it appeared that Ford, who was considering running for governor, was delaying action to curry favor with Dunn. If Ford filed the appeal brief, Dunn was likely instead to endorse Wheeler for governor, Campbell reasoned, adding: "To elevate such a man as Dunn to a position where he can dictate to the high public officials of Montana is the apotheosis of phlegm."⁴⁸

After the Independent ran a letter from Governor Stewart urging Ford to file the briefs promptly, a sarcastic Dunn responded with an open letter in the Bulletin. Stewart's

⁴⁵Helena Independent, June 29, 1919, pp. 1, 8.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Butte Daily Bulletin, July 1, 1919, p. 1.

⁴⁸Helena Independent, February 27, 1920, p. 4.

decision to publish the letter in the Independent showed "a certain discriminating judgment that you unfortunately rarely display," Dunn wrote in the Bulletin. The open letter to Stewart continued:

It was typical of your unswerving loyalty to your friends and associates--many of whom lend a doubtful prestige to your otherwise admirable administration--that you selected the Independent for your official mouth-piece in this important matter. I recall that Mr. Campbell led the self-sacrificing patriots who composed the Council of Defense--and who are now mostly engaged in the worthy and lucrative work of the Loyalty League--in the campaign to purge the state of all elements who refused to swear allegiance to the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. and yourself as the representative of this corporation that I know you believe typifies all that is best in our national life.⁴⁹

Ford, in time, filed the necessary briefs, and on May 3, 1920, the Montana Supreme Court handed down its long-awaited decisions in the Dunn and Smith appeals.

In a decision that must have surprised many Montanans, the court overturned Dunn and Smith's convictions and ordered new trials because of numerous technical errors made by Judge Word.⁵⁰ The court's rulings were unanimous, with one

⁴⁹Butte Daily Bulletin, March 4, 1920, p. 4.

⁵⁰The court did not discuss accusations that Judge Word was biased against the Bulletin editors and their attorney, Wheeler. One study, however, said: "Evidence of Word's partiality can be found in the transcript of the Dunne trial. Seventy of [County Attorney] Loble's objections were sustained, while five were overruled. Only seven objections

judge not participating because he was absent. The court ruled on the Smith case and applied it as a precedent to overturn Dunn's conviction.⁵¹ Referring to the editorial "The State Council Again," the court said:

It appears from the evidence that Mr. Campbell exhibited the editorial to the county attorney, and that afterward it was reprinted in the Helena Independent, a newspaper of which Mr. Campbell is the guiding genius. In each instance there was a publication, but not such a publication as constituted a crime. . . .

So far as this record discloses, the defendant was not responsible for the editorial becoming known to any person in Lewis and Clark county other than Mr. Campbell, who was then a . . . member of the Montana Council of Defense. Can it be said, then, that in the hands of Mr. Campbell alone the published editorial was calculated to incite or inflame resistance to the council: Who but Mr. Campbell could be incited or inflamed to resistance, and is it within the range of probabilities that he would be incited to resist the very organization of which he was a member. We think not.⁵²

Obviously disgusted, Campbell buried the story of the court decision on page four of the Independent. To further irritate him, J. R. Wine, Loble's successor as Lewis and Clark county attorney, announced his intention to move for

raised by Wheeler were sustained, but forty-one were overruled." Wetzell, "Making of an American Radical," p. 107.

⁵¹State v. Smith, 57 Montana 563 (1920), 190 Pacific 107 (1920). State v. Dunn, 57 Montana 591 (1920), 190 Pacific 121 (1920).

⁵²State v. Smith, 57 Montana 563 (1920), pp. 588-589.

dismissal of the charges against Dunn and Smith.⁵³ Further proceedings would be "futile," Wine said, if the convictions could not be sustained on the basis of evidence brought out at Dunn and Smith's earlier trials.⁵⁴

If the decision upset Campbell, the court's calling him the "guiding genius" of the Independent enraged him. Campbell responded in the following bitter editorial:

The Reds were happy last evening.

Not only was W. F. Dunn, supreme radical, granted a new trial in his sedition case by the Supreme Court of Montana, but the court was flippant enough to gratify the Reds by going out of the way to take a fling at a member of the State Council of Defense.

After pointing out technical errors in the trial of Dunn for sedition, the court drops into a lighter vein and refers to a member of the State Council of Defense, who was a witness for the state in the Dunn case, as "the guiding genius of the Helena Independent."

Thanks, gentlemen and judges, for the compliment, if it was intended as such, but this newspaper will leave it to the members of the bar of Montana; to the judges of Supreme Courts in other states, to sensible men and women of this state if they ever in their reading, found a Supreme Court which would try to be funny in an important opinion, by referring to a newspaper writer and publisher as "the guiding genius."

In years to come, no doubt, when the opinions of the Supreme Court of Montana are read in the musty volumes of sheep,

⁵³Charges against the third Bulletin staff member, Leo Daly, had been dismissed earlier. Unlike Dunn and Smith, Daly never stood trial for sedition.

⁵⁴Helena Independent, May 4, 1920, p. 4.

the head of the Independent Publishing Company will be pointed out as a "genius" who at one time guided the destinies of Montana's oldest morning newspaper, and lawyers yet unborn will no doubt search the reports of the Montana Supreme Court for more interesting little personal references to witnesses who have appeared in our courts in criminal cases.

It is really quite a remarkable thing for men who are supposed to be serious to thus indulge in jocular personalities. . . .

It was evidently written by the judge whose campaign slogan two years ago was "technicalities of the law must give away and not stand in the way of substantial justice."

But in the Dunn case, this judge . . . permits technicalities to reverse an important criminal case, when the judges must really feel that substantial justice has not been done in the matter.

To add to the gaiety and show, the flippancy of some of the judges, one of them inquired interestedly at noon Monday whether or not the "guiding genius" of the Independent had suffered a "stroke" as a result of the action of the Supreme Court. On being informed that the "stroke" had not arrived yet, he predicted that the stroke would undoubtedly be experienced by the said "genius" as soon as the decision became known.

The people of the state will be glad to read the decision in full. It should be placed in the hands of every man and woman in Montana, and of course, every aspiring young attorney will want to read the document. There should be some provision made for sending this work out and telling the people of Montana that the more or less fortunate head of the Independent Publishing Company is really a "genius."⁵⁵

Campbell wallowed in self-pity the next day in

⁵⁵Ibid.

another lengthy editorial that traced the Dunn controversy and defended the Council of Defense. Council members had received no compensation for their work, "save in the satisfaction of a duty well performed," he wrote, yet nothing was "too harsh or abusive" for the Bulletin to say about them.⁵⁶

An editorial filler in the Independent the same day took after an unidentified Supreme Court justice, saying: "We know not which member of the august quartet of the supreme bench of Montana wears the cap and bells, but we pause long enough to remark that he has, to say the least, a queer idea of the duties of a court jester."⁵⁷

Dunn, gloating over the court's decision, could not resist needling Campbell and extending this "sympathy" to his fellow editor:

The best we can offer in the way of surcease to his sorrow is for Brother Campbell to take a look at his personal bank balance, then refer back to the same prior to the time when he took unto himself the guardianship of the "loyalty" of the citizens of the state of Montana, at so much per. To further assuage his grief, we offer to Brother Campbell the consoling information that contributors [to the Montana Loyalty League], whose money he conscripted in the name of "loyalty" are not wondering whether they will get it back, but how in hell they ever let loose of it.

⁵⁶ Ibid., May 5, 1920, p. 4.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Calm yourself, Brother; steel yourself for further adversity; fortify yourself by having always handy the personal bank balance sheet, for our ouija board tells us that your future looks dark and gloomy with the advent of the "new order."

Keep the bank balance ever ready-- imitate a man--and take your medicine.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Butte Daily Bulletin, May 8, 1920, p. 2. In an earlier editorial, the Bulletin, while pleased with the court decision, viewed it as just one round in the newspaper's lengthy battle against "a contemptible clique of partisans, whose cowardly and mean subservience to the invisible powers that prey caused them to engage in an effort to destroy every fundamental liberty, every inherent right, every guarantee of the constitution, and that the servile servants of the copper bureaucrats did not attain a full measure of success in their foul design is due to the support given to the Daily Bulletin by the workers and other citizens who believed it their duty to protect the rights and liberties of every citizen and to maintain unimpaired the qualities, guarantees and the supremacy of the constitution." Butte Daily Bulletin, May 3, 1920, p. 4.

CHAPTER XIII

A LOYALTY LEAGUE TO SMASH HUN PROPAGANDA

Newspapers, like men, are known
by the company they keep.¹

--Will A. Campbell, listing the newspapers opposing the Montana Loyalty League, March 1, 1919.

The Montana Council of Defense's work simmered down considerably after the Dunn and Wheeler hearings and Butte Bulletin investigation in 1918. As the war wound down, the Council concentrated on more innocuous and considerably less controversial projects.²

Will Campbell, however, found another cause in which to channel his ever-abundant energies. He was a founder and executive secretary and treasurer of the Montana Loyalty

¹Helena Independent, March 1, 1919, p. 4.

²Order Number Thirteen, for example, allowed county councils of defense to permit farmers to burn stubble fields not in timbered areas. Order Number Seventeen, the Council's final one, required groups sponsoring dances and other benefits to raise money for war activities to obtain permission first from county councils of defense. This step was necessary because some promoters had spent most of the proceeds for expenses instead of turning the money over to charity. Minutes, pp. 82-83, 96-97.

League, which was formed July 23, 1918.³ The League's headquarters was at the Helena Independent's office, and its motto was: "This is My War." Its letterhead contained a quotation from General Pershing: "I will smash the German line in France if you will smash that damnable Hun propaganda at home."⁴ The Loyalty League adopted the following pledge for members to sign:

"This is my war" and the undersigned hereby affirms that it is the duty of all the people in the United States, without regard to class, nationality, politics or religion, faithfully and loyally to support the government of the United States in carrying on the present war for justice, freedom and democracy to a triumphant conclusion and voluntarily gives this pledge to uphold every honorable effort for the accomplishment of that purpose, and if it becomes a matter of politics, the undersigned will encourage and vote at all times for men and women for public office who have stood and will stand at all times for the sound and efficient conduct of the war; who think of America first of all and of themselves not at all. I shall not permit any man to say that we are fighting a war that is not justified or that we are fighting because we are slaves of men of wealth, and I will rebuke all

³Evans, "Montana's Role," p. 101. Other Loyalty League officers were C. V. Peck, Danvers, president; Sidney Logan, Kalispell; Reverend J. F. McNamee, Helena; Joseph Smith II, Deer Lodge; Samuel Sansburn, Bloomfield; and J. A. Gilluly, Lewistown, all vice presidents. Like Campbell, Peck, Logan and Sansburn were also members of the Montana Council of Defense. Fritz, "The Montana Council of Defense," p. 77.

⁴Letter, Will A. Campbell to C. D. Greenfield, September 8, 1918, Montana Historical Society Library, Archives, Montana Council of Defense papers, Box 2.

who attribute ulterior motives to the government for which our boys are fighting "Over There." Any deviation on my part from the above pledge shall in itself sever my membership in the Montana Loyalty League.⁵

As was his role with the Council of Defense, it appears that Campbell also was the most influential officer of the Loyalty League. Similarly, he used his newspaper as a mouthpiece to promote the League and attack its critics. One editorial bragged of the fledgling League's influence in shaping the platforms of both the Democratic and Republican parties in Montana. Noting that both parties had adopted planks condemning groups seeking to divide the country, Campbell wrote:

The Loyalty League is gratified at the stand taken by both parties as the league recognizes the fact that the IWW and other organizations seeking to tell the farmers and working men that they should at this time join hands in an industrial revolution, is one of the most dangerous pieces of Hun propaganda and capable of doing great harm, when the country is at war.⁶

In another editorial, Campbell tore into E. B. Craighead, former president of the University of Montana and editor of the New Northwest published in Missoula, for questioning the motives of the Loyalty League. The Helena editor noted that Craighead had inferred from reading the League's pledge

⁵Helena Independent, October 7, 1918, p. 4.

⁶Ibid., September 16, 1918, p. 4.

that it opposed the Nonpartisan League. After referring to Craighead's "big juicy head," Campbell mockingly said: "Probably Craighead knows for once what he is talking about."⁷

Craighead, never one to avoid a fight, struck back, informing readers that the New Northwest had been the first "to warn the public against Will A. Campbell and the notorious Loyalty League." Craighead went on to say in the editorial:

We knew that Campbell was sowing the seeds of hate among the people of the state for the purpose of collecting funds to be administered by himself. What we knew would happen in time has come about much sooner than we had anticipated. The indignation of the people is now focussed on Campbell and there is not a decent newspaper in the state that will dare to defend him. Doomsday also awaits the Loyalty League which, under the management of patriotic men, might have become a power for good in the state. Under the management of Will Campbell it has become an institution scored and hated by the very men who long contributed generously to its support.⁸

The two editors had clashed earlier over a letter sent to some Montanans on July 29, 1918, less than a week after the Loyalty League was formed. Campbell had sought

⁷Ibid., October 7, 1919, p. 4. For more information about Craighead, see Lyle E. Harris, "Dr. E. B. Craighead's New Northwest, 1915-20" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1967).

⁸New Northwest, January 16, 1920, p. 4.

opinions as to which legislative candidates would be "most worthy in view of the fact that the country is at war, irrespective of party or political affiliations." Another question asked which candidates would be the safest "to shape war legislation." His list of questions continued:

Are any of the candidates radical labor agitators or socialistic in their personal ideas of government? Are any of the candidates bitterly opposed to union labor or holding such views as they would not give labor a square deal? Who, if any of the candidates, have been endorsed by the Nonpartisan League or are they considered generally as the candidates of the leaders of the League? Are the leaders of the Nonpartisan League in your county good, sensible and honestly loyal farmers or are they of the radical socialistic element?⁹

Campbell's letter explained that the Loyalty League members aimed to do all they could "to keep our business life normal, our industries running, our people united and co-operating with one another during the war." Loyalty League members "do not believe this is any time to change the existing social, political or economic system," the letter concluded.¹⁰

Craighead, in a sharply worded editorial on August 23, 1918, replied that the Loyalty League letter was a move to fight the Nonpartisan League "behind the mask of patriotism; to fire upon the Nonpartisans individually and collectively, using the Montana Council of Defense as a stronghold for their

⁹ Ibid., August 23, 1918, p. 8, quoting from Campbell's letter.

¹⁰ Ibid.

protection." The New Northwest editor, implying that the existing economic system needed drastic changes, charged that the Anaconda Copper Mining Company had profits of \$47 million in 1916 and the Montana Power Company "is piling up wealth beyond the dreams of avarice" during the wartime years. "We shall find it hard to believe that the governor will permit the State Defense Council to get behind a movement so crude and raw," Craighead said of the Loyalty League.¹¹

Later in 1918, the New Northwest reported that Campbell had been sued for libel by Attorney General Sam C. Ford. The charges stemmed from Campbell's comments two years earlier about Frank Edwards, the unsuccessful Republican candidate for governor in 1916. Craighead accused Campbell of using "criminal libel" to help defeat Edwards at the polls and added: "The time is coming in Montana when dirty corporation sheets will not be able to blackmail out of the state progressive men whom they find in their way."¹² There is some question whether the lawsuit actually was filed or merely threatened because the New Northwest never mentioned it again, no reference ever appeared in the Helena Independent and no record of the case appears in the First District Court files in Helena.¹³

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., October 18, 1918, p. 1.

¹³Harris, "Dr. E. B. Craighead's New Northwest," p. 89, n.

The Loyalty League, meanwhile, published a pamphlet entitled "Some Plain Facts" warning Montanans of the dangers posed by leaders of the Nonpartisan League. The author of the twenty-four-page document was not identified, but the vitriolic language and heavy-handed attacks on Bill Dunn and the Butte Bulletin certainly resembled the unmistakable style of Will Campbell. Quotations from the Nonpartisan and Socialist leaders were listed in the pamphlet, which said: "Any unprejudiced person upon reading the same can see the close connection of the officials and the similarity of objects of the Nonpartisan League and Socialist party."¹⁴

It emphasized that the Loyalty League would not criticize the individual farmers who made up the Nonpartisan League membership for whom it had "the highest admiration for their loyalty, honesty and intelligence." The pamphlet also pledged the Loyalty League's cooperation "with every farmer and labor organization whose object is not Socialism and whose leadership is consistently loyal to America."¹⁵

After a lengthy diatribe against socialism, the Loyalty League ran a "Who's Who" list of Nonpartisan League leaders. Among the forty-two persons singled out for attack was Dunn, with his sedition conviction termed proof of his

¹⁴"Some Plain Facts," Montana Loyalty League, 1919, p. 1, Montana Historical Society Library, Archives, Montana Council of Defense papers.

¹⁵Ibid.

danger to the country. The Loyalty League broadside also named the Butte Bulletin as one of the Nonpartisan League's staunchest allies and "the Montana organ of the radical wing of the Socialists."¹⁶

Relatively few Montanans had the chance to participate in the superpatriotic activities of the state and local councils of defense. Thousands, however, were given the opportunity to join the Montana Loyalty League, which claimed 60,000 members in the state.¹⁷

Campbell's enemies accused him of profiteering from patriotism through his Loyalty League work. Dunn charged in the Butte Bulletin that Campbell had discovered "what soft money there is to be made by establishing patriotism." Campbell, Dunn wrote, was "the tireless searcher for those of weak mentality and well-filled purses who fall into a trance when Bill makes a couple of passes with the flag." The "devout William" worshipped a god named Mammon, whose temple was the sixth floor of the Hennessy Building in Butte, headquarters of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, the Bulletin said.¹⁸

Another Bulletin editorial referred to Campbell's "lucrative activities" as head of the Loyalty League, which had "commercialized filth and slander." It concluded:

¹⁶Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁸Butte Daily Bulletin, March 19, 1919, p. 4.

We hope that the dollar patriots of whom Mr. Campbell is so delightful an example do not depend solely upon the flag to cover their nakedness. The work of stripping the flag from them is going on apace and unless they reinforce its protection with B.V.D.s they are going to risk arrest for indecent exposure in the very near future.¹⁹

Burton K. Wheeler also attacked Campbell's role in the Loyalty League. The Butte attorney contended in a speech in Miles City that Campbell was paid \$13,000 a year by the Loyalty League, according to the New Northwest, which said Wheeler's assertion was never denied. In the same article, the New Northwest said conservative estimates showed that the Loyalty League had raised \$500,000 "to be expended under the direction of Will A. Campbell!"²⁰ Wheeler explained how the system worked:

The League would solicit banks, merchants and businessmen of all kinds for contributions which they dared not refuse. Campbell, in turn, obtained a great deal of printing business in the thousands of pamphlets printed by the League "exposing the disloyal Nonpartisan League and the IWW." Campbell also received a great deal of advertising for the paper to carry the numerous patriotic appeals issued by the Loyalty League.²¹

In March 1919, Campbell finally responded to criticism of his role as secretary of the Loyalty League and the organization itself. He wrote:

¹⁹Ibid., December 20, 1919, p. 2.

²⁰New Northwest, January 2, 1920, p. 10.

²¹Wheeler and Stoddard, Wheeler MSS, Box 26, Folder 16, p. J-2c.

These newspapers are opposed to the Montana Loyalty League and it would make no difference who was secretary of the league.

The Butte Bulletin, whose editor has been convicted of sedition.

The New Northwest, whose editor was deposed from the presidency of the state university.

The Appeal to Reason, which was barred from the United States mails.

The Socialist, Milwaukee, whose editor is under sentence of twenty years in the penitentiary for sedition.

Solidarity, the IWW paper, whose editor is in Leavenworth penitentiary for sedition.

The Nonpartisan Leader, published by "Anarchist Island" Dorman, in Great Falls.

The Montana Record-Herald, edited by a near socialist.

Newspapers, like men, are known by the company they keep.²²

The Independent editor later ran a box on page one of his newspaper listing the newspapers opposed to the Montana Loyalty League.²³

Like the Council of Defense, the Loyalty League eventually faded out of existence after the war ended. Yet Campbell's Loyalty League came in for criticism from sources other than his old enemies such as Dunn and Wheeler. J. M. Kennedy, a member of the Lincoln County Council of Defense, delivered this stinging attack, which was reprinted in the

²²Helena Independent, March 19, 1919, p. 4.

²³Ibid., January 4, 1920, p. 1. Listed were the Butte Bulletin, New Northwest, Montana Nonpartisan, (Libby) Western News, Billings Star, (Plentywood) Producers News, Milwaukee Leader, Solidarity, and "a lot of small fry 'kept' papers."

Butte Bulletin:

Thousands and thousands of dollars have been wasted upon the propaganda of the Loyalty league, and what is the harvest? Hatred, contempt, ignominy! For the great fortune spent, the returns are exclusively statewide discord, hand against hand, class against class, injury to farmers, injury to business, injury to finance, injury to everybody and not one dollar's worth of good done--all in the name of loyalty.²⁴

The Bulletin, reminding readers that Campbell was the "moving spirit" behind the Loyalty League, said Kennedy's comments ought to convince Campbell "the good old days of capitalizing loyalty and profiteering patriotism are over."²⁵

The New Northwest also could not resist quoting Kennedy since he was one critic of the League whose patriotism or loyalty could not be questioned in the slightest. It reprinted these comments by Kennedy about the Loyalty League:

For any organization . . . to operate a political propaganda machine under the name of loyalty, and to brand all those who differ in politics with them as disloyal, is so badly hypocritical and dishonest that whatever influence the publications of such a body might otherwise have is lost when its name is attached to it.²⁶

Craighead also continued to attack Campbell at every opportunity in the New Northwest. On October 19, 1919, the

²⁴Butte Daily Bulletin, January 12, 1920, p. 2.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶New Northwest, January 16, 1920, p. 4.

front page of Craighead's newspaper carried a two-column-by-six-inch box that said: "The New Northwest dedicates this space to Will A. Campbell, Editor of the Helena Independent, Sec. of the Montana Loyalty League. A Snake Coiled in the fold of Old Glory."²⁷ Craighead later called for Campbell to be "pilloried at the bar of public opinion" because he was a "representative of men who employ thugs and hirelings and blackmailers for the purpose of terrorizing progressive men and women."²⁸

Although the Loyalty League may have disappeared eventually from public view, Campbell certainly did not. He flailed at the Nonpartisan League often. One front-page cartoon depicted a bloody hand rising from what was labeled "chaos" and "murder." The caption said: "This is Hand Townley and Dunn/Ask People of Montana to Grasp."²⁹

He previously had attacked Townley and Dunn for a cartoon published in the Butte Bulletin critical of the American Legion. The Bulletin cartoon pictured the American Legion as a wolf in sheep's clothing biting a man representing labor. Campbell condemned

these two seditionists, A. C. Townley, head of the Nonpartisan League, and W. F. Dunn, advocate of the Russian Soviet government and head of the One

²⁷Ibid., October 19, 1919, p. 1.

²⁸Ibid., January 2, 1920, p. 10.

²⁹Helena Independent, May 1, 1920, p. 4.

Big Union movement in Montana, [who] picture the American Legion as a "Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" leaping at the throat of labor--picture the boys who fought and won as tools of capitalism sneaking up behind labor, willing to let the life blood of the workers flow to serve the money power.

No more hideous libel has ever been published on American soldiers. No more cowardly and dastardly piece of work could have been conceived by the Socialistic heads of the Nonpartisan League and the One Big Union. That the soldiers will resent such an attack goes without saying.³⁰

These editorials represent only a fraction of Campbell's steady barrage against the Nonpartisan League, which in his mind had replaced the Wobblies as the foremost public enemy in Montana.

Once again, some persons questioned Campbell's motives in attacking the Nonpartisan League. United States Senator Thomas J. Walsh, a part-owner of the Helena Independent who had expressed concern earlier over the newspaper's stands on other issues, confided to one man that he thought Campbell was "richly paid" for his relentless criticism of the Nonpartisan League.³¹ The senator had told Campbell the same thing earlier in less blunt terms:

I have no fault to find with your opposition to the Nonpartisan League, but I want to submit that your opposition is

³⁰Ibid., March 27, 1920, p. 4.

³¹Letter, Senator Thomas J. Walsh to George H. Pew, November 1, 1920, as cited in Bates, "Senator Walsh of Montana," p. 183.

weakened when you turn your paper into an organ for that purpose. . . . The very reasonable and natural inference is that the paper does not devote so much space to the subject without being compensated for it.³²

³²Letter, Senator Thomas J. Walsh to Will A. Campbell, March 15, 1920, as cited in Bates, "Senator Walsh of Montana," p. 164.

CHAPTER XIV

PEACE AND BOLSHEVISM

But through the confusion and uncertainty our duty appears clear. We must rebuild the house in which we live more wisely and permanently. We must have a house to fit all of a common family, not one so cramped by caste architecture that a large part of the family must sleep and eat out in the woodshed. We must scrub the blood off our doorstep and sweep the garbage of hate from the corners of our rooms. Where the battlesmoke has darkened the windows, doors and furnishings, we must repaint in colors of beauty. And we must dedicate the house to the bloodily demonstrated principle that right is might and shall prevail, in her peace and war.¹

--Will A. Campbell, reacting to the signing of the armistice that ended World War I, November 12, 1918.

With this lofty if somewhat militaristic message, Will Campbell greeted the end of the war. Unfortunately, as his editorials in the Helena Independent amply demonstrated, Campbell was unable to live up to the high ideals he had proposed. War or no war, Campbell was unable to "sweep the garbage of hate from the corners." If anything, he stirred up even more hatred with his editorials on radicals, immigration, the proposed League of Nations and other emotion-

¹Helena Independent, November 12, 1918, p. 4.

packed topics.

Never one to turn the other cheek, Campbell urged citizens a few days later to demand that "pro-German talkers be prosecuted and locked up where their poison spreading days will be forever at an end."² He warned a day later that not everyone who bought Liberty Bonds during the war was patriotic and not everyone who celebrated the allies' victory was a loyal American. Many of them had worked against American interests during the war, he said, and were "selfish scoundrels" who "should be tagged and remembered as such."³ Another editorial denounced the American war critics, charging that nine out of ten of them "remained bravely at home all through the war and criticized the government." Campbell described the typical critic as having a "mushy head" and a "mouth filled with words of dissent, venom oozing at every pore, rolling eyeballs glinting with slinking hate."⁴

In numerous editorials Campbell advocated deporting "our rabid 'undesirable' alien enemies."⁵ As he said in one

²Ibid., November 16, 1918, p. 4.

³Ibid., November 17, 1918, p. 4. Campbell apparently changed his mind about assessing a person's patriotism by the number of Liberty Bonds he purchased. Earlier, he had told one witness who was called before the Council of Defense, that people customarily sized up someone's loyalty by the number of Liberty Bonds he had bought. Testimony, p. 788.

⁴Helena Independent, December 8, 1918, p. 4.

⁵Ibid., February 5, 1919, p. 4.

editorial, "there is no reason why they should be permitted to stay in the country whose hospitality they betrayed."⁶ He chided the Department of Justice for failing to deport the "infernal no-goods" it had rounded up.⁷ In another editorial, Campbell reminded readers that the troublemakers were not all aliens technically but said:

Whether naturalized or not, foreign or native born, an anti-American element is an "alien" element. It is alien to the constitution. It matters not whether a man's ancestors came over in the Mayflower or whether he landed last week in an immigrant ship or as a first cabin passenger on a liner. If he plots against the American system and has no love for the flag, he is a traitor and a public enemy.⁸

Campbell, who as a member of the Council of Defense had led the fight to ban the German language in Montana, wanted the language to continue to be verboten after the war's end. Returning American soldiers who had fought the Germans should not be subjected to hearing that language again, he said. Moreover, he warned that German literature would be highly suspect for at least a generation.⁹ He later urged the Montana Legislature to continue the ban. "If the Hun language is ever to stage a 'come-back' it must be at a

⁶Ibid., August 12, 1919, p. 4.

⁷Ibid., November 14, 1919, p. 4.

⁸Ibid., August 13, 1919, p. 4.

⁹Ibid., November 19, 1918, p. 4.

time considerably remote from the present and when that time arrives, the teaching of it should be confined to the institutions of higher learning," Campbell wrote.¹⁰ Only specialists long past high school age would ever need to refer to the few German science books that had not been translated to other languages, according to Campbell. Instead, he suggested that school students should take Spanish, which would benefit them more in business dealings, or French, which "unlocks a vastly better literature."¹¹

The Independent editor, who had clamored for action against radicals, had nothing but praise for the nationwide raids against the Union of Russian Workers ordered by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer in November 1919.¹² Although Campbell had criticized Palmer in the past as a "grandmother" afraid to take action, he complimented the attorney general for responding to the public demand to "nail the reds, radicals and trouble-makers."¹³ Two months later, Campbell called Palmer the best attorney general in years for "battling valiantly to rid the country of the bomb-throwing anarchists."¹⁴ His only complaint about the controversial

¹⁰ Ibid., December 12, 1918, p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid., April 30, 1919, p. 4.

¹² See Murray, Red Scare, pp. 195-200.

¹³ Helena Independent, November 15, 1919, p. 4.

¹⁴ Ibid., January 7, 1920, p. 4.

Palmer raids was that the Department of Justice had not included Finlander Hall in Butte in its efforts.¹⁵

Campbell had not forgotten about his old enemies, the Wobblies. He endorsed a California law making it a felony to belong to the IWW. "Every American father who is anxious for the protection of his home, who guards the purity of his wife and daughters, who believes in America, should use his influence in having more laws passed like the California law," he said.¹⁶

Given his hatred of the IWW, Campbell was particularly upset that the Wobblies remained active in Butte after the war. The only solace Campbell could offer to embarrassed Montanans who felt the state was disgraced nationally because of the IWW activities was to remember that "Butte is not Montana." He added:

Politicians used to think Butte was Montana and there are some of them still staggering around with that idea. But these are back number politicians, the kind with eyes rolled backward until only the white of the eyeball shows.

Butte has tolerated radicals of all kinds. The town's normal condition is strife and unrest and trouble and it has become more than ever the resort of slackers, disloyalists and bad actors ever since the great war began. There are dozens of professional agitators, each with a special graft for living

¹⁵ Ibid., November 9, 1919, p. 4.

¹⁶ Ibid., October 28, 1919, p. 4.

easy on the dupes, who make Butte their headquarters.¹⁷

Campbell also bemoaned the fact that nothing could be done to stop distribution of radical newspapers that urged the overthrow of the government. Tougher laws were needed, he said, so that persons involved in these newspapers could be found guilty of overt acts against the government and be deported.¹⁸ His concept of freedom of the press apparently did not extend to those with whom he disagreed.

The Helena editor favored deporting radicals as well as restricting immigration. As he wrote in one editorial, "In the 'melting pot' there are some metals that will not blend, like zinc and tin and lead. The zinc must be kept out." He did not identify the zinc but clearly was referring to Germans, Italians, Russians and others. The immigrant who believes in the "doctrine of force has no conception of the doctrine of freedom," Campbell said.¹⁹

He was not totally against allowing certain immigrants into the United States but favored making room for them by deporting radical aliens. As a result, the country would not be flooded with cheap labor, he said.²⁰

¹⁷Ibid., December 27, 1919, p. 4.

¹⁸Ibid., December 13, 1919, p. 4.

¹⁹Ibid., October 22, 1919, p. 4.

²⁰Ibid., December 22, 1919, p. 4.

Another editorial called on Congress to revise the immigration laws to prohibit Germans from immigrating to the United States. Most Americans would strongly oppose having more of their former enemy settling in this country, Campbell said.²¹ He also accused Congress of cowardice for not restricting immigration because it "fears the hyphenated vote." With several million Americans unable to find work, no more immigrants were needed at that time, he said.²²

Campbell made it clear that he did not favor a permanent policy of excluding immigrants but only a temporary measure that "seems demanded by economic and patriotic consideration alike." He claimed that millions of foreign-born in the United States were "very imperfectly assimilated" but placed most of the blame with "those native-born citizens who neglect and sneer at the foreigner." Common sense, he wrote, dictated against an influx of immigrants "until the people already here have been weaned from their old-world allegiance and taught to look at life as citizens of the United States."²³

When not criticizing immigrants or the IWW, Campbell turned his editorial attacks with increasing frequency to Bolshevism in the United States. He explained to readers

²¹Ibid., May 19, 1919, p. 4.

²²Ibid., January 21, 1921, p. 4.

²³Ibid., January 17, 1921, p. 4.

that Bolshevism, in "plain American," was similar to the doctrines of the "more wild-eyed of our IWWs," which means "industrial warfare unrestrained and unintelligent." There was little danger of Bolshevism catching hold in the United States, he said, because the country, while not perfect, lacked the symptoms for this "disease to break out on us."²⁴

Although he advised readers there was little to fear, Campbell regularly scoffed at the "tiresome parlor Bolsheviks," those Americans who spent ten days in Russia and returned as experts. "They don't know anything about the stuff they pretend to peddle," Campbell said, but then endorse the "villainous doctrines of the archcriminals, Lenine and Trotzky."²⁵ He mocked these persons as

"rocking chair pinks" [who] are a class composed largely of neurotic men and women of wealth who have nothing to do. To kill the ennui of spending money they have gone in for bolshevism. The women have bobbed their hair and the men have gone in for flaring bow ties and horn-rimmed spectacles and all are contributing to the upkeep of the radicals who have endangered the peace and security of this nation.

These persons would probably have gone in just as ardently for collecting china or rugs or ancient armor, if somebody had called their attention to it first, but the fact is they are furnishing the money which sustains the radical foreign language newspaper and the soviet sheets printed in the American language

²⁴Ibid., December 24, 1918, p. 4.

²⁵Ibid., March 11, 1919, p. 4.

and pay, too, for the soap-boxers and the anarchists who plot to kill public men and overturn the government....²⁶

Another editorial criticized a "venomous and bloodthirsty" letter sent by an unknown Bolshevik and dismissed its author as typical of that ilk--"cowardly and playing safe by writing anonymous letters or sending bombs through the mail."²⁷

Campbell's most scathing attack on Bolshevism accompanied a front-page cartoon the Independent reprinted from the Denver Post. It showed a raving madman with a skull-shaped lapel pin with IWW written on it and a streamer labeled Bolshevism. His strongly worded editorial said:

Take a good look at this face.

At the thick, selfish lips.

At the narrow, ugly eyes--eyes that see nothing except self-centered objects, eyes that speak cruelty and treachery; forehead makes you think of the pictures of some slinking animal, hair unkempt and stringing, like you have seen streaming about the head of a madman, glowering between the bars of his cage in the insane ward.

This is not a caricature. It is not overdrawn. You can see his type speaking from a soap box on a corner, or arguing the laws of a country whose language he cannot even speak.

THIS MAN IS A BOLSHEVIST! AND HE WANTS TO RUN AMERICA!

He is the man who is seeking to sow the seeds of discord in the ranks of labor. He is the man who would crush every industry that has been built in this country, declaring that he can rebuild it in better fashion.

²⁶ Ibid., January 10, 1920, p. 4.

²⁷ Ibid., May 15, 1919, p. 4.

DO YOU BELIEVE IT?

He is the man who would change our laws, our modes of living, our rules of fair play and good conduct. He is the man who would shatter our ideas and send our constitution crashing downward to oblivion. He says that he knows better laws, better conduct, better ideals and laws and a better constitution.

Look at those eyes. At those thick, leering lips, at those fang-like teeth. His whole visage speaks just one word:

DESTRUCTION!

America has been too good, too soft-hearted. It has let this sort of man through its gates because he whined outside and pleaded for the sheltering arms of a great nation. Now, like a serpent, he is seeking to destroy that which fed him and protected him. He is a Bolshevik, an anarchist, a destroyer.

His gods are stagnation and laziness. His ideas are inefficiency and destruction. By the perverted workings of a madman's brain, he only creates to tear down--his soft hands will not work upon anything except that which will do men harm. . . .

He is the man who is responsible for every unjust demand of labor today. His insidious poison is the cause of the strikes, the dissensions, the troubles and bomb plots which beset this country. IT IS TIME TO GET RID OF HIM.

Beware the man who talks Bolshevism. He is following some leader like this. Beware the man, who directly or indirectly, assails the laws of the United States. He is a blind sheep trailing behind a madman.

This is America, where Americans and only Americans should live. This man is not an American--he is a venomous serpent of destruction. STAMP HIM OUT! [Emphasis in original.]²⁸

²⁸ Ibid., November 17, 1919, p. 1.

The Independent editor, in his calmer moments, offered his usual solution: "Run them all out! We don't want them."²⁹ But Campbell predicted that few Bolsheviks would want to leave the United States and go to Russia "as long as three square meals a day, plenty of spending money poor 'moonshine' and a comfortable bed are in sight." Those leaving this country also would lose what Campbell called the "opportunity to indulge in loot when the 'revolution' comes."³⁰

Campbell saved some of his most bitter harangues for the Republican United States senators who opposed President Wilson's proposed peace settlement, particularly the League of Nations. The editor strongly supported the league, predicting it would have "a tremendous moral influence with any bellicose or predatory or swashbuckling member" because of its combined economic and military power.³¹

Although some Republican senators, particularly Henry Cabot Lodge and William E. Borah, opposed Wilson's peace proposals, Campbell said that Republican voters across the country supported the Democratic President's efforts. "The critics that start back fires at home will get their own fingers nicely scorched," he predicted.³² He later said that

²⁹Ibid., December 31, 1919, p. 4.

³⁰Ibid., November 17, 1919, p. 4.

³¹Ibid., January 21, 1919, p. 4.

³²Ibid., March 6, 1919, p. 4.

Wilson's Senate critics would only serve "to plunge the world again into another war so that the cannon-makers and munition manufacturers may continue to supply big armies and navies."³³

When the Senate finally adjourned in late 1919 without acting on the peace treaty, Campbell was outraged. He criticized Lodge and "his gang of peace-wreckers" for their "caterwauling and display of rotten partisanship." He accused this "vicious cabal" of conspirators of playing "recklessly with the future of mankind" and concluded:

Possibly the opponents of the league may find when they reach home and consult with their friends--if they have any--that there should be a change in attitude. Possibly when the regular session opens in December they may be in a better frame of mind. A sojourn away from the noxious air of Washington, with its propaganda mills and its lobbies, is beneficial.³⁴

Although he often concentrated on these international issues after the war ended, Campbell did not ease up on his political opponents in Montana. Jeannette Rankin, Burton K. Wheeler, Bill Dunn, the Nonpartisan League, and Butte Bulletin all were targets of continuing vitriolic editorials in the Helena Independent.

Rankin's opposition to the peace terms offered by the allies to Germany angered Campbell. He wrote that the

³³Ibid., June 12, 1919, p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., November 21, 1919, p. 4.

former congresswoman had criticized the peace terms, "if hard on Germany, in the name of American womanhood and American farmers, who have really repudiated her and those she represents."³⁵

In 1920, Campbell correctly sensed he was witnessing a revolution of sorts in Montana politics, and he did not like it. The Nonpartisan League suddenly emerged as a powerful force in state politics as farmers, facing extremely hard times because of a drought, began to organize. They were joined by organized labor and other progressives advocating major reforms.

To Campbell and the Helena Independent, it was a conspiracy on the part of A. C. Townley, head of the Nonpartisan League, and Bill Dunn, whom Campbell insisted on calling a Wobbly, to seize control of the state. The Independent ran an opinionated front-page news story of the Montana Federation of Labor's convention in Great Falls and blasted the labor group for passing a resolution condemning the American Legion as "undemocratic and aristocratic." The labor convention also adopted resolutions calling for a merger with the Nonpartisan League, repeal of the state espionage, sabotage and criminal syndicalism laws, diplomatic recognition of Russia and the pardon of Eugene V. Debs. Guy LaFollette, who covered the convention for the Independent

³⁵Ibid., May 29, 1919, p. 4.

called the gathering "a regular radical holiday" as farm and labor groups tried to organize into the Farmers' Co-operative Congress.³⁶ The next day's Independent carried a five-column headline on page one that said: "TOWNLEY-DUNN OUTFIT CARRYING THINGS WITH/HIGH HAND, BOAST OF PLOTS TO CONTROL STATE." LaFollette's story noted that Townley and Wheeler spent several hours attacking "abuse of newspapers in general" and the Helena Independent and Butte Miner in particular.³⁷

Campbell devoted several editorials to denounce the convention, which he labeled "Townley-Dunn's Menagerie."³⁸ One editorial said:

Well, it's all over and the people of the state, straight union men and Montana farmers who really farm, and citizens generally now understand fully what Townley and Dunn propose. They have placed the two organizations [the Non-partisan League and Montana Federation of Labor] over on the side of wild-eyed radicalism of the reddest type and there is no turning back--no suave deception as to the lineup.

It's as plain as a pikestaff and for that the voters of the state are grateful.

This fall we will understand exactly how we are to vote. We will vote either for a government of the people--a democracy--or for revolution by force.

³⁶ Ibid., February 26, 1920, pp. 1, 6.

³⁷ Ibid., February 27, 1920, p. 1.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 4.

From now on keep an eye on the candidate who seeks to compromise with the forces of revolt.³⁹

Another Independent editorial attacked some unidentified convention delegates, saying:

But checking up the ranters and agitators who spewed venom they dared not spew during the war, it is certain that not one of them fought in the war and if the truth were known they were either lukewarm or in sullen opposition to the fight against Germany and her allies. They were and are a yellow lot.⁴⁰

These men, Campbell wrote in a separate editorial, were "slackers and skulkers, too cowardly to fight in the open and secretly carrying on a vicious under-the-surface campaign. . . ."⁴¹ In neither case did the Helena editor offer proof to support his broad allegations.

Politics took a decided turn for the worse later in 1920 for the conservative Montana political establishment, which included the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, Campbell and the Independent as well as most other newspapers, and other Company sympathizers. As one historian wrote, 1920 was "l'annee terrible for the Company and its supporting interests."⁴² For once Montana voters that year had a

³⁹Ibid., February 29, 1920, p. 4.

⁴⁰Ibid., February 28, 1920, p. 4.

⁴¹Ibid., March 12, 1920, p. 4.

⁴²Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana," pp. 246-280. This article remains the best general account of the politics of the period.

choice between two progressive candidates for governor-- Democrat Burton K. Wheeler and Republican Joseph M. Dixon.⁴³

As an ostensibly Democratic newspaper, Campbell's Independent followed that party's primary race with the most interest, particularly the candidacy of its old enemy, Wheeler. The Independent frequently referred to Wheeler as the IWW and Nonpartisan League candidate for governor, although only the latter organization endorsed him.⁴⁴ Another editorial lamented the downfall of Wheeler--rather prematurely as it turned out--who was run out of Dillon by a mob, saying:

Candidly, the Independent is sorry for Burt K. Wheeler. A young man, under forty years of age, with a gentlemanly manner from an old New England family, endowed by God or his family history with a good mind, he came to Montana a number of years ago and no young man who entered this state had greater promise of honorable promotion to public place. He had everything to live for and everything before him, but as time went on, he apparently sought the friendship of the low elements, of those who despised organized government, even sought to overthrow the best government on which the sun has ever shone.

⁴³For the best specific account of the 1920 gubernatorial race, see Jules A. Karlin, Joseph M. Dixon of Montana: Part 2, Governor Versus the Anaconda, 1917-1934 (Missoula: University of Montana Publications in History, 1974), pp. 10-61.

⁴⁴For example, see Helena Independent, June 25, 1920, p. 4, and July 3, 1920, p. 4.

This young man, who held for a brief time the position of United States district attorney, was practically driven from Dillon, one of the best cities in all Montana, the other evening because he came there to advocate what his friend Dunn preaches--anarchy.

Humiliation indeed, is the position of B. K. Wheeler. The people of Dillon may have dealt wrongly with the problem, but the fact that Wheeler has reached down to levels so low that any number of people in a city like Dillon, could be prevailed on to run him out of town like a cheap mountebank and dangerous citizen shows what people all over the state think of Wheeler. He has sought company so low that people in a city like Dillon refused to stand for his own presence in their public buildings.⁴⁵

Campbell later dismissed candidate Wheeler as "only a creature of W. F. Dunn, Butte labor agitator and advocate of the soviet" and little more than "mate of the pirate ship" run by Dunn, "the Captain Kidd of this gang." If Montana voters went "completely crazy" and elected Wheeler governor, he would be no more than a rubber stamp for Dunn, the editorial said, adding:

Mr. Dunn will issue all the pass out checks for the penitentiary, name the various commissioners and issue the calls for special sessions of the legislature to take over the various industries of Montana, shorten the hours of work on the farms and set the minimum amount of wages to be paid by farmers to the comrades engaged for brief periods in harvesting, sheep shearing and ditch digging. Mr.

⁴⁵Helen Independent, July 3, 1920, p. 4. Wheeler escaped from a mob and spent the night in a railroad boxcar, prompting newspapers to refer to him as "Boxcar Burt." Wheeler, Yankee from the West, p. 175.

Wheeler will countersign such orders on the line marked by Fellow Worker Dunn (xSign Here _____).

The question before the voters is simply "Does Montana want William F. Dunn of Butte for Governor?"⁴⁶

Although anyone could file for office in the primary election, the political parties nominated their own preferred slate at conventions. The Independent endorsed the Democratic party slate and published the names of these candidates in a box on the editorial page prior to the August 24 primary election. Conspicuously absent from the list was the name of Burton K. Wheeler; instead the party and newspaper backed Lieutenant Governor W. W. McDowell.⁴⁷

To the disgust of Campbell and other conservative Democrats, Wheeler won the primary handily, defeating McDowell by a margin of nearly two to one. Dixon, meanwhile, won the Republican nomination, edging H. L. Wilson by about 3,000 votes and Secretary of State Sam C. Ford by about 5,000 votes.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Helena Independent, July 30, 1920, p. 4.

⁴⁷Ibid., July 30, 1920, p. 4.

⁴⁸Official results in the Democratic primary showed Wheeler with 35,228 votes; McDowell, 17,798 votes; and Thomas E. Carey, 4,418 votes. In the Republican contest, Dixon had 18,718 votes; Wilson, 15,765 votes; Ford, 12,271 votes; Robert L. Clinton, 2,604 votes; Daniel W. Slayton, 2,029 votes; and Ronald Higgins, 1,481 votes. Ellis Waldron, An Atlas of Montana Politics Since 1864 (Missoula: Montana State University Press, 1958), p. 175.

The Independent reacted to the election results with this banner headline across the front page: "TOWNLEY NAMES HIS TICKET IN THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES OF MONTANA."⁴⁹

Campbell devoted two editorials--one short and the other long--to analyze the election. The short editorial said that Montana voters must like war, "so instead of eliminating Wheeler and his associates," they gave them "another sixty days of fighting."⁵⁰ In the other editorial, Campbell said the Montana Development Association, a merchants group, and other backers of Dixon had their work cut out for them because the radicals are "smacking their lips" and were

never so much encouraged and the work-
ingman and the farmer who has hesitated
to join with them will be shown the
prize almost within reach--the picture
of a state controlled by the farmers,
the workers and the "wage slaves." The
dream of the socialistic age is almost
within their grasp--join us now, comrade
and fellow worker, and we will overthrow
the capitalistic class, the Anaconda
Copper company and the Montana Develop-
ment association, the republican party--
we have beaten the democrats--and all
our enemies and masters.

That kind of appeal will bring hun-
dreds.⁵¹

Thus Campbell and other conservative Montana Democrats were forced to throw their support behind Republican Dixon,

⁴⁹Helena Independent, August 27, 1920, p. 1.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 4.

⁵¹Ibid.

the champion of the despised Theodore Roosevelt.⁵² Campbell said Dixon's only chance of winning was to bring about a fusion of Democrats and Republicans, but he predicted that the outlook was not encouraging. Many "regular" Democrats, he said, were bitter because Republicans had not joined them to try to oust Wheeler in the primary. These Democrats "are saying openly that if the republicans are determined to take a chance with Townleyism, let them take it," the Helena editor wrote.⁵³

Although clearly uncomfortable supporting Dixon, Campbell did so, following the line of reasoning espoused by United States Senator Henry L. Myers, a Democrat, who said the "so-called democratic ticket was not nominated by democrats and hasn't an honest democrat on it." Myers told a rally in October he repudiated the Democratic state ticket because "I refuse to be swallowed by a combination of socialism and bolshevism." Myers urged loyal Democrats to reject the slate of Townley and Dunn by voting for the Republican candidates.⁵⁴

Democratic support, coupled with the Republican successes nationally, helped elect Dixon governor on November 2, 1920. He defeated Wheeler by 36,238 votes, garnering

⁵²Dixon was the national campaign manager for Roosevelt's unsuccessful race for president on the Bull Moose party ticket in 1912.

⁵³Helena Independent, August 29, 1920, p. 4.

⁵⁴Ibid., October 9, 1920, pp. 1, 3.

111,113 votes compared to his opponent's 74,875 votes.⁵⁵

An Independent editorial congratulated Dixon and said he had the newspaper's support as long as he carried out the policies he had pledged.⁵⁶ The newspaper's support, however, proved to be extremely short-lived.

Typically, the Independent also tried to claim partial credit for Wheeler's defeat, reminding readers that the newspaper

had fought Townley, Dunn and Wheeler for four years. It condemned them at a time when it was not so popular to fight a movement which was misbranded "a farmers' movement." It was not a personal matter between Wheeler and the Independent--it was because Wheeler sought bad company and apparently reveled in such associates as Dunn and his outfit.⁵⁷

Campbell then went through the litany of the downfall of Burton K. Wheeler, the bright young man who had fallen in with a bad crowd. Trying to buttress his case, Campbell dredged up such irrelevant points as the time Wheeler, "a wealthy man," told the Council of Defense that he had bought only \$600 or \$700 worth of Liberty Bonds. He went on to say:

But this newspaper is tired of the work of the demagogue who wants to get into office by heaping abuse on corporations and making personal attacks on men who have acquired opulence in this world

⁵⁵Waldron, An Atlas of Montana Politics, p. 178.

⁵⁶Helena Independent, November 5, 1920, p. 4.

⁵⁷Ibid.

by their own efforts and ability. This paper knows that within the memory of these demagogues themselves, the men at the head of our big industries, were not away down ranks, and that they have not attained to places which it is impossible for other men to reach if they will.⁵⁸

A day later, the Independent scoffed at charges from Wheeler's supporters that the Butte candidate "has been hounded by the interests and the kept press ever since he came to Montana." Campbell replied in an emotional defense of the state's corporate interests:

The "Interests" and the "Kept Newspapers" do not hound anyone, until they are attacked by demagogues, ambulance chasing lawyers, grafting labor leaders, fly-by-night agitators, non-property holders who want to force exorbitant tax rates on those who do own property and the more brilliant class of parlor socialists.

If B. K. Wheeler has been rewarded with defeat, it is because Wheeler was the offender. The "Interests" are not in the habit of picking out struggling young attorneys and "hounding them," but no one could blame them for retaliating against a man who sought to build up his political and financial fortunes by defaming the men at the head of our big industries--men who themselves came here as young attorneys and built themselves up not by chasing ambulances, but by concerning themselves with constructive work for the development of the State of Montana.

B. K. Wheeler was not "hounded" by the Independent, but if there was any hounding done, Wheeler was doing it. Wheeler was the aggressor in all his movements against this newspaper. . . .

⁵⁸ Ibid., November 6, 1920, p. 4.

It has been B. K. Wheeler and his law partners and associates who put the O.K. on much of the trouble stirred up by Bill Dunn and the Butte Bulletin. They have encouraged the outfit in its career of character assassination and its determination to close up the mines and turn them over to the government.

Would you say the Anaconda Copper Mining company was hounding B. K. Wheeler when it simply tried to put an end to trouble in the Butte camp? . . .

"Hounding Wheeler!" The expression is so absurd that it makes people laugh when they know the damage that young man tried to do this state. If he was hounded, it was because he called the trouble on himself by trying to ride into high office by making such threats as he did when his tongue slipped and he said "If I am elected governor, I will drive the Anaconda Copper Mining Company from the State of Montana."

A few days later he discovered his mistake and said "No, I will not drive the Anaconda Company from Montana, but I will drive them out of politics."

The people of Montana have decided that the Anaconda Mining Company can stay in the state.⁵⁹

Campbell also claimed the election results vindicated the Montana Loyalty League that he helped found. Noting that the league had been mocked by some as the "Oilty League" and "Royalty League," Campbell said the much-criticized organization in fact had laid "the foundation stones of a campaign which resulted in the defeat of Townley and Dunn at the elections Tuesday." The Independent editor added: "That the Loyalty League deserves a vote of thanks from the people of Montana, there is no doubt, and were it an individual, it

⁵⁹Ibid., November 7, 1920, p. 4.

might be in order for some of its early critics to extend an apology also."⁶⁰

Just as Campbell attacked Wheeler with relish during these postwar years, the Independent editor also rarely missed a chance to lash out at his foremost nemesis, Bill Dunn. He held Dunn and the Butte Bulletin responsible for labor unrest in Butte in April 1920, despite the absence of any evidence linking the Bulletin editor to the trouble. "Dunn's defiance of constituted authority and of law and his advice to his dupes to pay no attention to either, have borne fruit," Campbell said. Although federal troops would restore order in the Mining City, Campbell predicted that "trouble will be stirred to the boiling point again by the radical element of which Dunn is the leader."⁶¹

The Helena editor mocked Dunn who had announced he would leave Montana if he was successful in helping elect Wheeler governor in 1920. Campbell wrote:

Of course the "proviso" is one which makes it certain that Bill will continue to remain with us, but even if the state went entirely crazy and elevated the Dunn ticket, would it be too much to hope that Bill would take passage for Russia and get his fill of Bolshevism undiluted and undefiled?⁶²

After Wheeler's defeat, Campbell quoted an angry Dunn,

⁶⁰Ibid., November 4, 1920, p. 4.

⁶¹Ibid., April 24, 1920, p. 4.

⁶²Ibid., August 14, 1920, p. 4.

who vowed that the Bulletin would work unremittingly to hasten "the day of reckoning for these human cockroaches," a reference to those who opposed Wheeler. The Independent editor needled Dunn by saying: "William seems to have had a bad day. His ideas are scrambled and though chastened by the recent election, he is still sore."⁶³

In June 1921, the Bulletin temporarily quit publishing because of financial troubles. Campbell noted the Bulletin's passing with this bitter editorial:

The Butte Daily Bulletin is dead and o'er its grave no mourner weeps.

It preached destruction and died by its own hand. The seed it sowed in Butte brought forth unrest, unemployment and want. The Bulletin starved to death in its own home where it had invited the wolf of hunger and despair to make its abode. To be mourned a newspaper, like a man, must have accomplished some good in the world; must at least have been kind and considerate if only to a few.

The Bulletin was a lying, libeling, scandal monger. It tried to see how mean, cruel, daring, unthinking and unfeeling it could be. It tossed its red-stained harpoons at "capitalists" one day and the next it raved about the "wage slaves" who failed to heed its call and seize the mines of Butte, the government of the State and march on to the abyss of a national upheaval.

Its editor was a gun-toting carpet-bagger convicted of sedition and turned loose on a technicality through the mistaken kindness of a jurist. Its business manager was convicted of sedition. Its former circulation manager was a fugitive from justice, suspected of being a porch-

⁶³ Ibid., November 10, 1920, p. 4.

climber and a stick-up man. Its god-- Big Bill Haywood of the IWW--is in Russia, not only a fugitive from justice but an embezzler of the funds of the comrades. Townley, who backed it for a time, is under sentence for conspiring to hinder the draft and his sentence is affirmed.

The only thing which the Butte Bulletin set out to accomplish has been realized. It wanted the mines closed down so that the miners would be out of work and desperate. If the miners were desperate for food and their families in want, the Bulletin figured, the crisis would come. Then miners would be driven by its abuse and its ravings to commit acts of violence and actually seize the private property. . . .

The suspension of the hydra-headed poison-slinger was not unexpected. Dunn and his gang had wrung the last dollar from the workmen of Butte. . . .

But as we said: the Bulletin is dead. Obscurity for its promoters, backers, editors and its many misdeeds will be enough. If by then the Bulletin enterprise shall be remembered or forgotten, decent men will be satisfied.⁶⁴

The obituary was premature, for the Bulletin resumed publication as a weekly July 15, 1921, and was published until January 11, 1924.

Dunn left the country for a visit to Europe but returned to Butte later in 1921. Campbell said that rumors had indicated Dunn had been arrested in Europe or Russia for lack of proper passports, but the Helena editor dismissed them as probably unfounded. "From the standpoint of box-office drawing power, however, Bill probably wishes he had

⁶⁴Ibid., June 3, 1921, p. 4.

been jailed a few times," Campbell wrote. "Jail experience in a capitalistic government burnishes up the halo and makes the wearer look like a martyr."⁶⁵

Thus the war had long ended on the battlefields of Europe, but not necessarily for Will Campbell. He continued to view complex issues in simple terms of black and white--us versus them, right versus wrong, once an enemy, always an enemy. This myopia extended to his editorial about Montana issues and politicians. Once someone had crossed Campbell, the Helena editor never forgot and he never forgave, unless of course the Anaconda Copper Mining Company directed otherwise.

⁶⁵Ibid., November 7, 1921, p. 4. Dunn later turned to communism and became a co-editor of the Daily Worker in New York. He died September 23, 1953.

CHAPTER XV

DEFANGING AN EDITOR

Had fate allotted him a seat in a large city, he might have become one of the greatest newspapermen of his time.¹

--The Helena Independent
commenting on the death
of Will A. Campbell,
December 15, 1938.

Peace terms to formally end World War I were finally signed by the United States and Germany on August 25, 1921, nearly three years after the fighting ended. A day later, Governor Joseph M. Dixon issued an order terminating the existence of the Montana Council of Defense.² Dixon's stroke of the pen officially ended the controversial Council of Defense, which in fact had been nearly moribund since the fighting ended.

Although Will Campbell achieved his notorious reputation in some quarters mostly for his Council activities, he continued to be involved in state political controversies for some time. Campbell and the other Company editors helped defeat Dixon--the same man they had reluctantly endorsed in

¹Helena Independent, December 15, 1938, p. 5.

²Minutes, p. 111.

1920--when he sought re-election four years later through a continuous and relentless attack in the press. As historian Jules A. Karlin described the Company press during the Dixon years:

In crises--and Dixon's four years in Helena were almost a continual crisis--the units of the "anvil chorus" or the "interlocking press" reacted as organs, rather than newspapers. The nominally Republican editors shared the same opinions as their Democratic counterparts. They failed to distinguish between their news columns and their editorial pages. They distorted; they often indulged in ferocious personal abuse; and they invented. They sustained the momentum of an attack by reprinting editorials and purported news stories from their confreres. This unity was enforced by instructions which both the Clarks and The Company provided their editors.³

Campbell's slashing attacks on Dixon perhaps reached a nadir when he accused Dixon of being a spendthrift for buying a gravy boat for \$12.50 for the governor's mansion. As it turned out, the gravy boat was part of a set of dishes ordered by Campbell's friends, Governor and Mrs. Sam Stewart, before they left office, but that distinction was never printed in the Independent, which used the infamous dish as a symbol of Dixon's alleged reckless spending. After Dixon was defeated for re-election in 1924, some of his supporters planned a testimonial dinner in his behalf. Campbell wondered sarcastically whether the gravy boat would be the centerpiece

³Karlin, Joseph M. Dixon of Montana: Part 2, p. 68.

for the banquet.⁴

Just as abruptly as Campbell turned on Dixon, he embraced the candidacy of his one-time bitter enemy, Burton K. Wheeler, for the United States Senate in 1922. Campbell wrote that Wheeler apparently had "foresaken the evil political company he sought" in 1920.⁵ ACM, which wanted to elect a Democratic state legislature to kill some of Dixon's tax proposals, left Democrat Wheeler alone in that campaign, and he in turn left the Company alone to win the Senate seat.⁶

Campbell, however, was upset two years later when Wheeler bolted the Democratic party to run as Robert LaFollette's vice presidential candidate on the Progressive party ticket. The Independent accused Wheeler of betraying the Democratic party that elected him in an effort to gain publicity.⁷

By the early 1930s, the Company inexplicably changed the editorial policies of its newspapers, including the Independent. One historian described the change:

⁴Ibid., pp. 138-139; 206-207. Karlin's book is replete with examples of similar press attacks on Dixon.

⁵Helena Independent, May 14, 1922, p. 12.

⁶Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, pp. 269-270. Wheeler served in the Senate from 1923 to 1947. After his defeat in the 1946 Democratic primary election, Wheeler practiced law in Washington, D.C., until his death in 1975 at age 92.

⁷Helena Independent, July 20, 1924, p. 1.

Gone were the blasting editorials, the diatribes, the big black alliterative headlines. Someone, somehow, even pulled the fangs of Will Campbell.

If the vituperation was gone, so was aggressive reporting and imaginative writing. So was the thorough coverage of local and state news which did not affect the Company. Talent departed along with invective. The Company simply dropped a great, gray blanket over Montana.⁸

Another historian said of the change: "Even Will Campbell appeared to have mellowed, though an occasional recrudescence was to be expected. The vulgar commentary of company editors was slowly replaced by innocuous platitudes from anonymous figureheads."⁹

The tone of the Independent's editorial page became as dull as any of the other Company newspapers' editorial pages, filled with noncontroversial editorials on world affairs but ignoring state and local issues. As one observer wrote:

Editorial policy became not only neutral, but sterile as well. A variety of historical exotic or otherwise irrelevant topics graced the editorial pages, constituting in all probability the blandest diet of editorial comment ever served to any group of American newspaper readers.¹⁰

⁸Toole, Twentieth Century Montana, p. 273.

⁹Ruetten, "Anaconda Journalism: The End of an Era," p. 7.

¹⁰Thomas Payne, "Montana: Politics Under the Copper Dome," in The Montana Past: An Anthology, ed. by Michael P. Malone and Richard B. Roeder (Missoula: University of Montana Press, 1969), p. 310.

Such policies continued until the Company finally sold its newspapers to the Lee Newspaper chain in 1959.

Campbell, meanwhile, was in failing health during this period. He stepped down as editor June 30, 1938, for "an extended vacation."¹¹ Less than six months later, he was dead at age fifty-seven, dying of heart disease at Fairfax Sanitarium near Seattle.¹² The Independent obituary said:

Mr. Campbell was an indefatigable worker and his devotion to his profession perhaps shortened his life. It was not unusual to find him at his labor at 5 a.m., and he often remained until midnight, to return as early as before, the next day. He could do a prodigious amount of work with seemingly little effort. He was considered the peer of any reporter who ever entered the state--and he had few peers; his editorials were remarked for their clarity as well as their vigor. As an executive he possessed the faculty of instant decision and almost uncanny judgment. Had fate allotted him a seat in a large city, he might have become one of the greatest newspapermen of his time.

During his incumbency, the Helena Independent, while titularly democratic, was independent at all times in spirit as well as in name. As all men in his position must have, he had critics but his bitterest foe never denied his ability or his courage.¹³

¹¹Helena Independent, June 30, 1938, p. 1.

¹²Great Falls Tribune, December 16, 1938, p. 1.

¹³Helena Independent, December 15, 1938, p. 5.

An editorial in the Independent contained similarly overblown statements about Campbell's reputation as a newspaperman. It claimed Campbell made the Independent "one of the best known daily newspapers in America, a publication whose opinions were respected far outside its legitimate field of circulation."¹⁴

Other Company newspapers also praised Campbell. The Daily Missoulian said that few men "were better informed as to political conditions in Montana and the nation."¹⁵ The Montana Standard in Butte called him "courageous, charitable and intensely human" and said he had been able to do the work of two men."¹⁶

The independent Miles City Star commented:

During the quarter of a century that Mr. Campbell guided the fortunes of the Helena Independent he came to be known as a militant editor. Sometimes somewhat vituperative in his language, yet behind his barrage of words, as many came to know him, there were the human qualities of his nature. A storm today for Mr. Campbell was followed by sunshiny weather on the morrow. He was a stickler for journalism proprieties and amenities, offering no quarter for those whom he would be inclined to criticize and the soul of kindly courtesy extended to others.

. . . No reader ever misunderstood what Mr. Campbell wrote in criticism or

¹⁴ Ibid., December 16, 1938, p. 4.

¹⁵ Daily Missoulian, December 16, 1938, p. 14.

¹⁶ Montana Standard, December 17, 1938, p. 4.

defense of a given activity, a characteristic which commanded the admiration of all with whom he came in contact in life.

. . . He made friends readily and as easily alienated them by the force and sharpness of his written comment. Yet withal, he was regarded as one of the most substantial and earnest of citizens, loyal to family and friend and patriotically devoted to his government which he ever praised and defended because it is based upon foundations of liberty and freedom. . . .¹⁷

Thus Campbell was remembered as a hard-working and hard-hitting newspaperman, his battles of the World War I period largely forgotten by 1938. Yet his role in these crucial war years cannot be overlooked.

In some ways, Campbell aptly symbolized the war-time years. He was a talented man overtaken, like the nation, by an obsessive hysteria. Instead of using his influential newspaper to help set the country he loved straight, Campbell was at the forefront of the movement to strip away rights that were guaranteed in the Constitution he venerated.

Two historians of the era have described how patriotic Americans like Campbell failed when they could have set a courageous example:

The duty of the supporters of war was to answer the war opponents and not to jail them. Under a democratic system of government, free discussion, not repression, is the way to achieve unity.

¹⁷Miles City Star, December 19, 1938, p. 4.

The power to maltreat or imprison those who entertain dissenting opinions is a tyrannical power. It is the prime characteristic of despotic governments and wherever it has been used it has injured the nation. There certainly is no excuse for its use among free people.¹⁸

¹⁸Peterson and Fite, Opponents of War, p. 302.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Following are the seventeen orders passed by the Montana Council of Defense:

ORDER NUMBER ONE (March 15, 1918)

In order to prevent as far as possible riots, affrays, breaches of the peace and other forms of violence during the period of war, it is therefore

Ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that no parade, procession or other public demonstration, funerals excepted, be held on any of the streets, highways, or public places within the State of Montana without the written permission of the Governor as ex-officio chairman of this Council, and the Governor is hereby requested to enforce this order by all the means at his command, both civil and military.

This order shall be in effect from this date and shall continue in force until the end of the war in which the United States is now engaged, unless sooner revoked by this Council.

ORDER NUMBER TWO (April 22, 1918)

Whereas it is highly important that the civil and industrial resources of the State may be most effectively applied toward maintenance of the defense of the State and Nation, and toward the prosecution of the existing war, and to the end that the State and Nation may have the full measure of the powers of the State and the inhabitants thereof, especially of the manpower of the State of Montana; and

Whereas it has been found impossible to fully protect the interest of the State and enforce upon those of the people who are unwilling to voluntarily do their part, a fair measure of responsibility and usefulness; and

Whereas, Section 8828 of the Revised Codes of Montana, 1907, is not fully adequate to meet the exigencies of the occasion, which Section now reads as follows:

"8828: VAGRANT: 1. Every person (except an Indian) without visible means of living, who has the physical ability to work, and who does not seek employment, or labor when employment is offered to him.

"2. Every healthy beggar who solicits others as a business.

"3. Every person who roams about from place to place without any lawful business.

"4. Every idle or dissolute person, or associate of known thieves, who wanders about the streets at late or unusual hours of the night, or who lodges in any barn, shed, outhouse, vessel or place other than such is kept for lodging purposes, without the permission of the owner or party entitled to the possession thereof.

"5. Every lewd and dissolute person, who lives in and about the houses of ill fame, or who lives with or upon the earnings of a woman of bad repute; and

"6. Every common prostitute and common drunkard.

"Is a vagrant and punishable by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding ninety days" and

Whereas, the Montana Council of Defense deems it advisable that said Section be supplemented and made broader and more comprehensive, as well as more specific in relation to the employment of the people of the State in useful and legitimate occupations.

Now, therefore, the Montana Council of Defense in its regular meeting assembled, does hereby make the following order to-wit:

The duty is hereby imposed upon every adult person having the necessary physical and mental capacity and ability to do so, to work and engage in some legitimate occupation for at least five days during each calendar week for the period of the existing war.

Any person without sufficient excuse who shall fail, neglect or refuse to so engage in some useful and legitimate occupation as provided in this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished in accordance with Section 5 of Chapter 1, Laws of the State of Montana passed by the extraordinary session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly.

Any person not so engaged in some legitimate occupation for the five days stated each week, must register with the city clerk, if a resident of an incorporated city, with the county clerk and recorder or some justice of the peace of the county of which he is a resident, setting forth the reason why he is not engaged in some legitimate occupation.

ORDER NUMBER THREE (April 22, 1918)

It is hereby ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that use of the German language in public and private schools and in the pulpits of the state be and the same is hereby forbidden. It is further ordered that the following named publications be withdrawn by the librarians of all public and school libraries from circulation and use in the state. That is to say:

Ancient World by Willis Mason West.
Writing and Speaking German by Prof. Paul Pope.
About the Great King and Other Things by Betz.
From the First to the Last Shot by Wachenhausen.
William the Victorious by Karl Zastro.
Peter Moor's Journey to the Southwest by Gustav Frenssen.
German Song-book by Hohlfeld.
First German Reader by Walter Krause.
German Composition by Prof. Paul Pope.
Selections for German Composition by Harrs.

Librarians and school authorities of the state are further requested to carefully examine all publications in their respective libraries and to withdraw from circulation and use all German text books or books which in the judgment of such school authorities or librarians contain German propaganda, whether such books or publications are enumerated above or not.

ORDER NUMBER FOUR (April 22, 1918)

Whereas, the laws of Montana prohibit the stealing of rides upon railroad trains; and

Whereas, it has come to the attention of the Montana Council of Defense that sundry individuals are riding upon the railroad trains of the State of Montana without full compliance with the law, and that certain employes of the railroad companies are not thoroughly and strictly enforcing the law in that respect. Therefore it is hereby

Ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that the attention of all railroad companies be called to this matter and that a copy of these resolutions be sent to representatives of all the railroad companies doing business in the State of Montana, and also that a copy thereof be furnished to all County Attorneys and Sheriffs, and other peace officers in the State, with instructions that the same be rigidly enforced.

Reference is had to Sections 8882, 8883, 8884 of the Revised Codes of Montana, 1917, which read as follows:

"8882: STEALING RIDES UPON CARS OR LOCOMOTIVES: It shall be and hereby is declared to be a misdemeanor for any person to enter upon, ride upon, or secure passage upon, any railroad car or locomotive or tender, of any description, other than a car used for carriage of passengers, with intent thereby to obtain a ride without payment therefor, or fraudulently obtain carriage upon any such car, locomotive or tender.

"8883: STEALING RIDES ON TRUCKS, RODS OR BROKEN BEAMS: It shall be and is hereby declared to be a misdemeanor for any persons excepting railroad employes in the performance of their duty, to take passage or ride upon, or enter for the purpose of taking passage or riding upon, the trucks, rods, brake-beams or any part of any car, locomotive or tender not ordinarily and customarily used, or intended for the resting place of a person riding upon or operating the same.

"8884: TRAINMEN CONSTITUTED PEACE OFFICERS: Every conductor, engineer or other person in charge of the operation of cars or trains, or locomotives, upon any railroad, are, while so engaged or employed, hereby constituted public executive officers, of the class of peace officers, and of the grade of a constable in each county wherein their train or car, or cars, or locomotives may from time to time happen to be, and are hereby given the same authority as other peace officers to with or without a warrant arrest and prosecute persons violating any provisions of this Act. PROVIDED HOWEVER, that the persons mentioned herein shall not be entitled to receive fees for any arrest or prosecution which may be made or prosecuted under this Act. And PROVIDED FURTHER, that none of the persons herein shall be authorized to hold said office or exercise its function unless at the time he shall be a citizen of the United States, and shall have been a citizen of this State for at least one year next preceding his exercising the functions thereof."

ORDER NUMBER FIVE (May 27, 1918)

The furnishing or serving of intoxicating liquors to men who have been called to the service of the country in any branch of military or naval service is hereby prohibited.

This Order shall extend to men who have received notice from Local Boards, or other governmental authorities of the United States, directing them to appear for examination or induction into the service, and shall also apply to men already inducted into the service who are passing through the State of Montana, or who are in and about the State for any purpose.

A violation of this Order shall be punished in accordance with the provisions of Section 5 of Chapter 1 of the Session Laws of the Fifteenth (Extraordinary) Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana.

This order shall be held to prohibit the sale, barter, gift or serving of intoxicating liquors in any forms or under any conditions to the men of the United States Army or Navy, whether in uniform or otherwise, as hereinbefore set forth.

In order to fully carry out the intent and purpose of this Order, authority is hereby given and granted to County Councils of Defense of the various Counties of the State to order the absolute closing of the saloons, bars and other places where intoxicating liquors are handled during the mobilization of men for military or navel service and during the movement of troops or men called to the colors, and enroute to their places of mobilization or training. Said saloons, bars and other places where intoxicating liquors are sold to be closed fifteen minutes before the arrival of troop trains, and to remain closed until fifteen minutes after the departure of said troop trains.

ORDER NUMBER SIX (May 28, 1918)

It is hereby ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that several County Councils of Defense be and they are hereby authorized to make any order which they may in any specific instance deem necessary or proper to enforce the provisions of the laws of the State of Montana relating to herd districts; provided that this power shall not be exercised except in cases where a herd district has heretofore or may hereafter be created in accordance with existing provisions of law, it is being understood that the authority hereby conferred is intended to enable County Councils to give immediate effect to the acts of the Boards of Commissioners in connection with the creation of herd districts.

ORDER NUMBER SEVEN (May 28, 1918)

It is hereby ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that the chairman shall have full power and authority to call a meeting of the Montana Council of Defense for the purpose of conducting hearings and investigations in all matters pertaining to the public safety and the protection of life and property. Full power and authority is hereby granted to the chairman and secretary to issue subpoenas and to compel the attendance of witnesses at such hearings, and the production of papers, books, accounts, documents and

testimony in any investigation, hearing or proceeding. Each witness who shall appear and attend any hearing upon being subpoenaed so to do shall be entitled to receive, if demanded, for his attendance, the same fees and mileage allowed by law to a witness in civil cases in the District Court, the same to be paid out on order of said Council. All testimony given at such hearings shall be transcribed and filed with the secretary. And the said Council shall have full power and authority to take such action and to make such recommendations as in the judgment of the Council shall be necessary and proper.

ORDER NUMBER EIGHT (May 28, 1918)

It is hereby ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that in all hearings before said Council the following rules of procedure shall govern in so far as the same shall be applicable and subject to change at any time by a majority vote of the Council.

RULE I

Upon calling a meeting of the Montana Council of Defense for the purpose of conducting a hearing, subpoenas shall be issued for the attendance of witnesses, signed by the chairman and countersigned by the secretary, which said subpoenas shall be substantially in the following form:
[A sample subpoena was shown.]

RULE II

All witnesses shall be examined by a member of said Council or by the Attorney General or by one of his assistants, or by some person designated by the said Council. Any member of the said Council shall be permitted at any time to examine a witness testifying before the said Council.

RULE III

The chairman or secretary shall administer an oath of affirmation to all witnesses substantially in accordance with the provisions of Part IV, Title IV, Chapter III of the Code of Civil Procedure of the State of Montana.

RULE IV

All persons whose utterances or conduct shall be under investigation at a hearing before said Council may be permitted to be represented by counsel, who shall have the power to cross-examine all witnesses, and upon a majority vote of the said Council may be permitted to introduce testimony.

RULE V

The chairman shall preside at all such hearings, and the secretary shall keep a record of such hearings, and for that purpose may employ a stenographer who shall transcribe all testimony and shall be paid for his service upon the order of said Council. The chairman shall rule upon the admissibility of all testimony subject only to be reversed by a majority vote of said Council.

RULE VI

After all testimony shall have been introduced, the said Council shall go into executive session and shall take such actions and make such reports or recommendations as the said Council shall deem necessary or proper for the public safety and the protection of life and property.

RULE VII

These rules may be amended at any time by a majority vote of the said Council, and the said Council shall make all new rules at any hearing which shall be deemed necessary or proper.

ORDER NUMBER NINE (June 24, 1918)

It appearing to the Montana Council of Defense that, owing to the extremely dry weather conditions now prevailing through the State of Montana, disastrous fires are liable to occur not only in the timbered areas but on the ranges and in the harvest fields, and that in the event of fires originating through carelessness or otherwise, not only will valuable property be destroyed but large numbers of men will be called into service for the purpose of fire fighting; and it further appearing to the Council that it is of extreme importance not only that crops and timber shall be protected against fire but that the man power [sic] of the state be conserved for the purpose of harvesting and taking care of the crops at a time when the danger from forest and prairie fires is the greatest.

Now therefore it is hereby ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that during the months of June, July, August and September, of each year, during the continuance of the war in which the United States is now engaged, the burning of slashings, underbrush, timber, stumps, straw, grass, weeds or waste matters of any kind, whether located upon land belonging to the State of Montana, the government of the United States, railway rights of way, public roads or private property, is prohibited.

It is further ordered that campers shall, before leaving camp even temporarily, see to it that all camp fires are completely extinguished and the ground around such fire saturated with water or the ashes and coal covered with dirt to a sufficient depth to insure the complete extinguishment of the fire and the safety of adjacent timber and grass.

It is further ordered that any person violating the provisions of this order shall be punished as provided by Section Five, Chapter One, of the Session Laws of the Fifteenth Extraordinary Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana.

It is further ordered that it is hereby made the duty of every sheriff, deputy sheriff, constable, game warden, all deputy game wardens, state fire wardens and all deputy wardens, county councils of defense and all other peace officers within the State of Montana to strictly enforce this order.

ORDER NUMBER TEN (June 24, 1918)

Whereas from the present indications it appears to the Council that there will be a shortage of labor in the State of Montana during the harvest season of 1918 and the Council deems it important that every precaution be taken to assure as large a supply of labor as possible for the harvesting of crops and carrying on of other important war activities:

It is recommended that between the first day of August and the first day of October, 1918, retail and wholesale merchants in the State of Montana shall so arrange their business by co-operation and co-ordination, or otherwise, as to limit the delivery of goods, wares and merchandise to customers to one delivery in each twenty-four hours to the end that teamsters, and motor-truck drivers be released for service in the harvest fields and other necessary war activities.

ORDER NUMBER ELEVEN (June 24, 1918)

Whereas, the State Fire Marshal reports that in the past five months there have been in Montana 249 fires entailing a property loss of more than half a million dollars; and

Whereas, 151 of these fires entailing a loss of \$107,195 were from strictly preventable causes, and the others entailing a loss of \$290,296 were reported as the result of unknown causes; and

Whereas, 24 of these fires resulting in the loss of \$145,585 are reported as being due to incendiarism; and

Whereas, but 13 of these fires causing a loss of \$2,055 resulted from unpreventable causes; and

Whereas, it is essential for the well-being of this State and Nation that every effort be put forth to conserve and preserve property of all kinds; and

Whereas, in the near future on the farms and ranches of this State there will be produced food stuffs for men and beast aggregating in value several millions of dollars, and

Whereas, for the successful prosecution of the war and for the sustenance of the people of this country and her allies, it is vitally necessary that the conservation of these food stuffs and of the property of every kind and character be recognized as a duty which devolves upon everyone, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana Council of Defense calls upon all those who have property of every character and description in their possession or under their charge to exercise the utmost vigilance in preventing its destruction by fire. The Council calls upon all peace officers, city and county, to exercise the utmost diligence in the apprehension of those guilty of incendiarism and upon all public officials to cooperate to the fullest extent with the State Fire Marshal in reducing to a minimum the losses by fire in this State.

ORDER NUMBER TWELVE (August 12, 1918)

In order to better carry out the purposes of the order of the War Industries Board, Pulp and Paper Section, which read as follows:

"Because of the absolute necessity of curtailing the use of paper, the Pulp and Paper Section of the War Industries Board has ruled that during the war no new newspapers shall be established."

It is hereby ordered by the Montana Council of Defense that no new newspapers shall be established in the State of Montana during the war, or until further order of this Council.

It is also ordered that no weekly or monthly newspaper or magazine published less often than six times a week shall be changed during the period of the war into a daily newspaper or magazine.

ORDER NUMBER THIRTEEN (August 12, 1918)

Whereas, it has been found that Order Number Nine, of the Montana Council of Defense, forbidding the burning of slashings, underbrush, timber, stumps, straw, grass, weeds or waste matter of any kind during the months of June, July,

August and September, whether upon land belonging to the State of Montana, the government of the United States, railway rights of way, public roads or private property, prevents the proper cultivation and preparation of land for crops in the non-timbered areas of the state; therefore it is hereby ordered that said Order Number Nine be and the same is hereby amended by the addition of the following section to said Order Number Nine:

Permission may be granted by County Councils of Defense to burn stubble fields not in timbered areas. Suitable precautions designed to prevent the spread of the fires beyond the field being burned over must be prescribed by County Councils before permission for such burning is granted.

ORDER NUMBER FOURTEEN (September 9, 1918)

Whereas, it will be wise and expedient to close saloons in some localities in Montana on Thursday, September 12, 1918, Registration Day, it is therefore

Ordered, that County Councils of Defense be and the same are hereby empowered to close saloons on the day above mentioned when in their discretion same may be necessary and to enforce the order of closing.

ORDER NUMBER FIFTEEN (September 9, 1918)

It is hereby ordered that Order Number Nine, relating to the burning of brush and other waste matter, be modified as follows:

In any case where hardship would be suffered by the strict enforcement of Order Number Nine, and in cases where there is no danger of fire spreading to adjacent lands, permission may be granted to any National Forest Supervisor or by the State Forester or any of his deputies or the sheriff of any county to burn brush, stumps or other waste matter during the month of September, 1918. Provided that no permit shall be granted except in cases where the officer granting the same has a personal knowledge of the land sought to be burned over.

ORDER NUMBER SIXTEEN (September 9, 1918)

The scarcity of labor in the state of Montana is the necessity for the promulgation of the following order:

Authority is hereby granted and given to the county attorneys of the various counties to release from imprisonment any person, confined in a county jail upon a conviction for the commission of a misdemeanor; provided that said person shall be so released for the purpose of working at some essential occupation. The time during which said person is engaged in some essential occupation shall apply upon and reduce the term of imprisonment in the same manner and to the same extent as if said person were actually confined in said jail. A person so released who discontinues working after a release, as aforesaid, shall be returned to the county jail to complete his sentence, and it is hereby made the duty of any one employing such a person to notify the sheriff, or any police officer, when any such person so released shall discontinue working.

ORDER NUMBER SEVENTEEN (October 7, 1918)

Whereas, it has been brought to the attention of the Montana Council of Defense that dances, entertainments, benefits, etc. are being given in the state, the proceeds of which are advertised as being for general war activities; and

Whereas, it has been found that in a number of instances in which such entertainment and dances have been given that the promoters have used most of the proceeds for expense; therefore it is hereby

Ordered, before announcements are made that any dance, benefit or money raising proposition is under the auspices of or for the benefit of any war aid society or any war activity, consent to proceed with the same must be obtained from the County Council of Defense in the county in which the dance, benefit or other entertainment is to be given.

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