

CHAPTER I

A WAR FOR INTERNATIONAL FREEDOM

MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN: The armistice was signed this morning. Everything for which America fought has been accomplished. The war thus comes to an end."

Speaking to the Congress and the people of the United States, President Wilson made this declaration on November 11, 1918. A few hours before he made this statement, Germany, the empire of blood and iron, had agreed to an armistice, terms of which were the hardest and most humiliating ever imposed upon a nation of the first class. It was the end of a war for which Germany had prepared for generations, a war bred of a philosophy that Might can take its toll of earth's possessions, of human lives and liberties, when and where it will. That philosophy involved the cession to imperial Germany of the best years of young German manhood, the training of German youths to be killers of men. It involved the creation of a military caste, arrogant beyond all precedent, a caste that set its strength and pride against the righteousness of democracy, against the possession of wealth and bodily comforts, a caste that visualized itself as part of a power-mad Kaiser's assumption that he and God were to shape the destinies of earth.

When Marshal Foch, the foremost strategist in the world, representing the governments of the Allies and the United States, delivered to the emissaries of Germany terms upon which they might surrender, he brought to an end the bloodiest, the most destructive and the most beneficent war the world has known. It is worthy of note in this connection that the three great wars in which the United States of America engaged have been wars for freedom. The Revolutionary War was for the liberty of the colonies; the Civil War was waged for the freedom of manhood and for the principle of the indissolubility of the Union; the World War, beginning 1914, was fought for the right of small nations to