

people to war, and are still incessantly repeated, rest on falsehood; that neither the Russians nor the French attacked us in the opening days of August, 1914, that the sword was *not* pressed into our hands to "defend ourselves to the last breath of man and horse," that we were not called upon "to protect our holiest possessions, the Fatherland, our very hearth, against a ruthless attack." Whoever says that this is a preventive war, necessarily in so doing expresses the view that every sentence which was then spoken and written, and which is still being spoken and written, to induce in the nation a belief in a war of defence is an untruth; that the German people have been deceived, that they have been led to the slaughter-house and stirred to enthusiasm for something which was in fact non-existent, for a fancy, for a dream.

So far as this negative aspect is concerned, the advocates of the preventive war and of the war of conquest are in agreement to the extent of denying that it is a war of defence. If they desire to be logical, the former group must also acknowledge that the German people have been deceived. No one, however, falsifies the truth out of mere pleasure, and since every deception must have a reason and an aim, these men must further admit that if the German people had known the truth, if they had known that they were not directly menaced, that they had not been attacked, they would not have allowed themselves to be involved in the war, or at least to be involved in it with such unanimity and enthusiasm. Those who adhere to the view that the war is a preventive war are bound to admit the deception, and they could at most plead in its justification that the deception was necessary, because defence against a present attack was comprehensible to the simple and sound sense of the nation, whereas the prevention of a future attack would have appeared incomprehensible and inexcusable as a ground for war. Everyone who denies that this is strictly a war of defence must therefore pass the same moral judgment on the behaviour of the German Government towards their own people; he may justify in any way he chooses the German war of aggression, he may consider it as an aggressive war which was necessary to prevent future aggressive