

4 WAR THOUGHTS OF AN OPTIMIST

about the rights and wrongs of this war. We know that however clouded by pettinesses here and obscured by selfishnesses there the origin of the war may have been, the struggle to-day is to decide whether democracy or feudalism shall prevail in the world. No amount of special pleading can blind us to this fundamental fact. And we Americans who feel as I do, knowing that our land has been dedicated to democracy and has until now been the foremost exponent of democracy in the world, believe that the United States of America ought to be taking a leading part in the defence of that democracy by and for which she lives.

We, therefore, quarrel with President Wilson and his do-nothing policy. We think he has failed the people whom he has been chosen to lead. To him in large measure has the honour of our country been entrusted, but what account can he give of his stewardship? Under our form of government no means is yet provided for obtaining at a crisis like this the judgment of the people, and of necessity on the administration rests the formulating of our national position.

We hold that Mr. Wilson, to be true to our history, to our ideals, to the soul of our nation, must cease to preach an unprotesting neutrality which for us may become craven and sordid.