

Why Fight?

TEAM MATES

The United States is in this war for good and sufficient reasons of its own. Its aim is to lick Germany. To lick Germany quickly and thoroughly it must work in complete harmony with its Allies. Therefore, any man who, by word or thought or implication, seeks to destroy that harmony is doing his part in messing the job of the United States and therefore in prolonging the war.

England's purpose in this war is sincere and honorable. So is France's. So is Japan's. So is Italy's. So—God knows!—is Belgium's. So it is with all our other Allies.

We know all this, but there will be those who will come amongst us and hint in an underhanded way that such is not the case. They will tell us that we are fighting England's battle, France's battle, Siam's battle, Liberia's battle—any battle but our own. They will ask us, for example, why we, who fought two wars against England, are found on her side today. They will ask us why we are over here in Europe at all, butting in on a fight that doesn't concern us.

The answer to all such questioners and insinulators is this: We are over here to fight the battle of the United States, first, last and all the time. If, in fighting that battle, we help other nations to fight theirs, all right; for they in their turn will help us—as they have helped us in the past—to fight ours. We are here as members of a team, and it is only by team work with our Allies, the other members of that team, that we shall win out. Anybody who, by open word or insinuation, questions the integrity of our Allies thereby questions our own. If he is their enemy, he is ours, and should be dealt with as such.

Trying to promote dissension among the Allies is the main object of German propaganda today, as it has been for some time. Germany knows well the motto of one of our own States, "United we stand, divided we fall," and is therefore seeking to divide us. The only way to meet that propaganda is to nail, and nail hard and quick, the spreader of it. Whether he is sowing it of his own accord or repeating it second hand makes no difference, for he is thereby playing our enemy's game. And there is an ugly word of two syllables coined expressly to describe such a man.

Comment écrire la guerre!

HOW TO STOP THE WAR.

Do your part to put an end to the war! Put an end to your part of it. Stop fighting! That's the simplest way. You can do it, you soldiers, just stop fighting and the war will end of its own accord. You are not fighting for anything anyway; What does it matter to you who owns Metz or Strassburg, you never saw those towns nor knew the people in them, so what do you care about them? But there is a little town back home in little old United States you would like to see and if you keep on fighting here in the hope of getting a look at those old German fortresses you may never see home again.

The only way to stop the war is to stop fighting. That's easy. Just quit it and slip across "No Man's Land" and join the bunch that's taking it easy there waiting to be exchanged and taken home. There is no disgrace in that. That bunch of American prisoners will be welcomed just as warmly as you who stick it out in these infernal trenches. Get wise and get over the top.

There is nothing in the glory of keeping up the war. But think of the increasing taxes you will have to pay the longer the war lasts the larger those taxes at home will be. Get wise and get over.

All the fine words about glory are tommy rot. You haven't got any business fighting in France. You would better be fighting the money trust at home instead of fighting your fellow soldiers in grey over here where it doesn't really matter two sticks to you how the war goes.

Your country needs you, your family needs you and you need your life for something better than being gassed, shot at, deafened by cannon shots and rendered unfit physically by the miserable life you must live here.

The tales they tell you of the cruelties of German prison camps are fairy tales. Of course you may not like being a prisoner of war but anything is better than this infernal place with no hope of escape except by being wounded after which you will only be sent back for another hole in your body.

Wake up and stop the war! You can if you want to. Your government does not mean to stop the war for years to come and the years are going to be long and dreary. You better come over while the going is good.

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Battling Interpretations: Scrutinizing Sources to Get at the Truth

Essential questions

- 1) What was American morale like, and how did this impact the outcome of the Meuse-Argonne offensive?
- 2) How trustworthy are military-published descriptions of wartime events? Is an independent media necessary?
- 3) How important was American involvement in events like the St. Mihiel offensive, the Meuse-Argonne offensive, the battle for Montfaucon Hill, and the armistice to the outcome of the war?

Part I: Blue Book Preface: After skimming through the text with your classmates, jot down answers to the following questions.

- 1) What is the purpose of the Blue Book? Why was it written?
- 2) Who do you think is the intended audience for the Blue Book? What type of people might have read it?
- 3) The Blue Book was published in 1938. What was going on at that time that might have affected perceptions of the United States military or our actions during World War I? What was the overall foreign policy of the United States at this time?
- 4) You are going to read excerpts from the Blue Book and from the *Stars and Stripes*, a military newspaper, written by soldiers and published during World War I. In what ways do you think these two texts might differ?

Part II: Complete the following chart based on the sources assigned by your teacher.

Topic: _____	Source #1: Blue Book	Source #2: The Stars and Stripes
What is the overall tone of this source?		
Why is this source being written?		
What does it define as the goal of this part of the battle?		
Who does it mention as playing important roles in this event?		
What is the outcome of this event?		
How does it impact the rest of the war?		

Part III: Using both sources together, answer the following questions.

- 1) What are some similarities between the two sources?

- 2) How do the two sources differ? What accounts for the differences between the two sources?

- 3) Do you find one source more trustworthy than the other? Explain your answer.

- 4) What was morale like during this event or battle?

- 5) How important was this event or battle to the outcome of the war?