

**Objective:** To examine the tensions on the homefront and the start of U.S. involvement in the war. USHC 5.4



*(below)*  
*Eugene V.*  
*Debs*

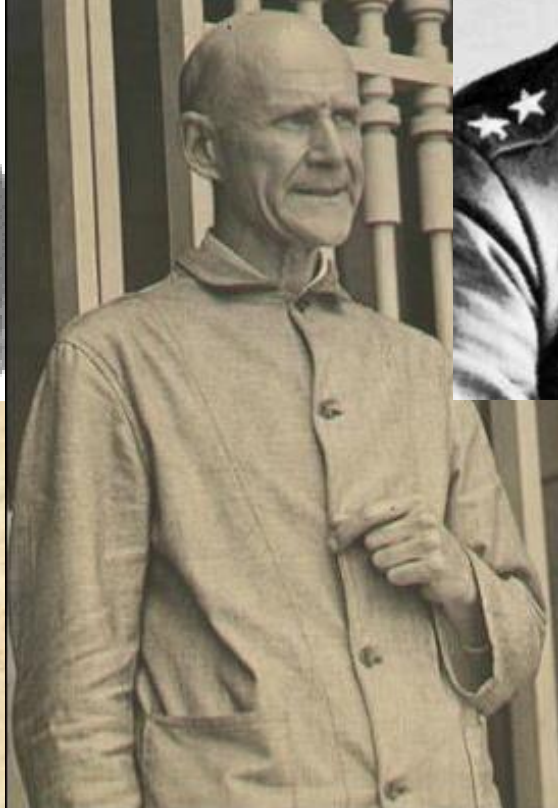


*(above)*  
*General John*  
*J. Pershing*

*(below)*  
*soldier,*  
*Harlem Hell*  
*Fighters*

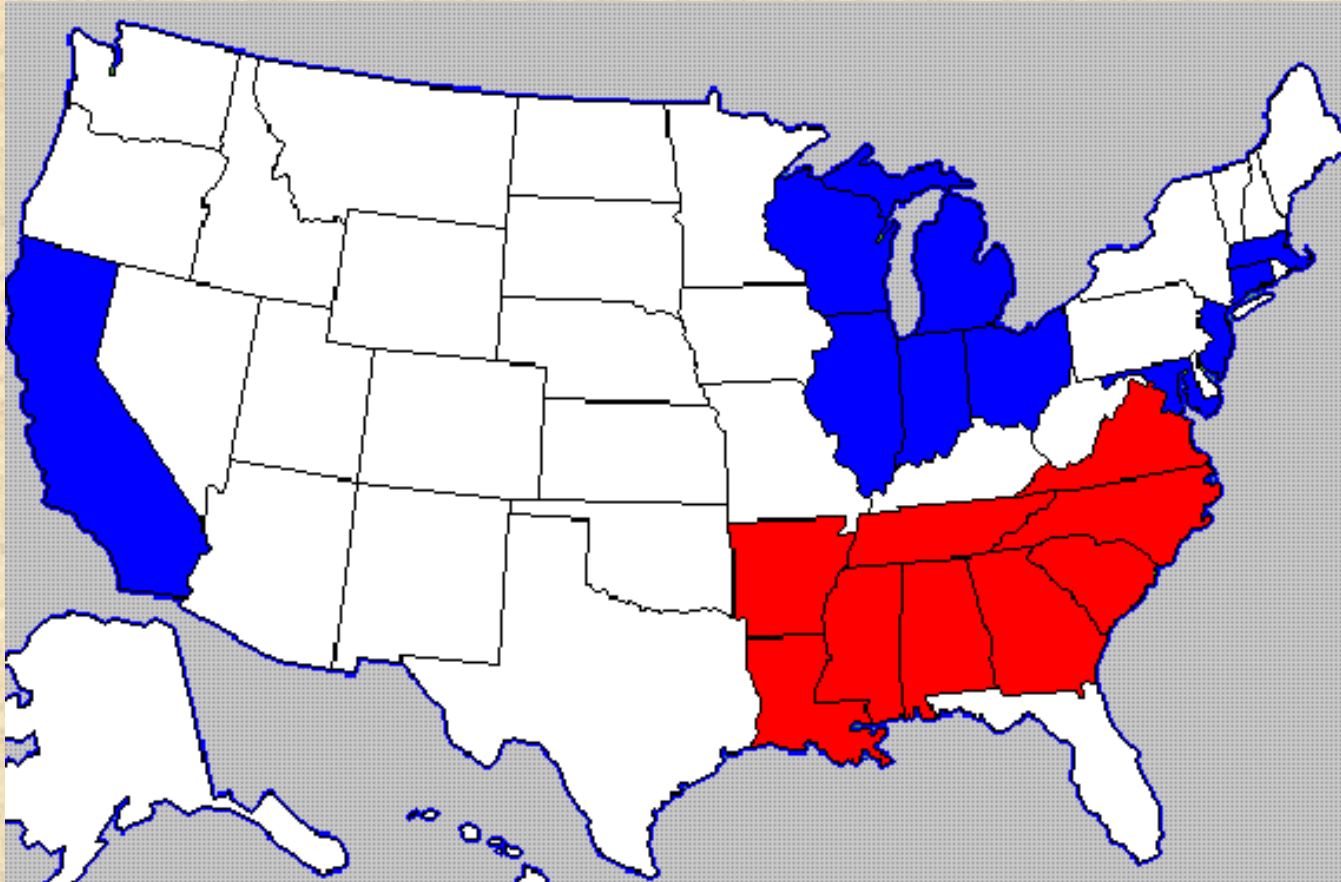


*(above)*  
*German-*  
*American*  
*Robert*  
*Prager*



## Tensions and Protests

- African-Americans faced prejudice and racial violence as they left the South for the North.



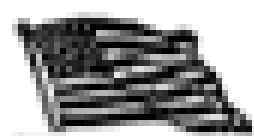
*The states in blue had the ten largest net gains of African-Americans during the Great Migration, while the states in red had the ten largest net losses.*





- German Americans faced discrimination and their loyalty to the U.S. was questioned.

*"Where he can be kept out of mischief?"  
November 1917,  
Des Moines Register*



## **GERMAN ENEMY OF U. S. HANGED BY MOB** **PERSHING'S SOLDIERS REPULSE RAID BY TEUTONS**



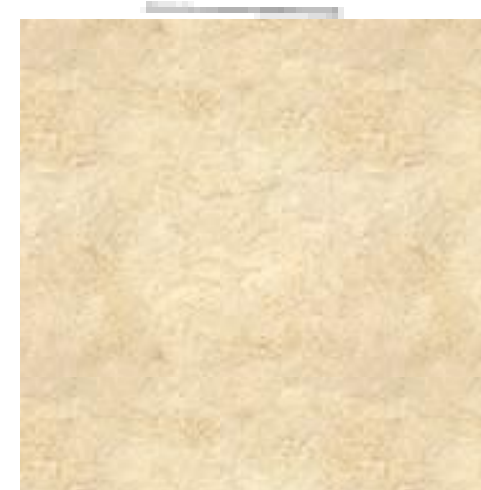
**Robert Paul Prager - from  
The Chicago Daily Tribune**

**We do not want a stigma marking  
Collinsville, and I implore you to go  
to your homes and discontinue this  
demonstration.**

**- Mayor J H Siegel**

### **COLLINSVILLE MAN KILLED FOR ABUSING WILSON**

**Robert P. Prager Taken from Jail  
and Strung Up to Tree by 300  
Men and Boys After Officers  
Are Overpowered.**



## Patriotic Murder

"Among the more regrettable and bloody episodes of this kind of wartime hysteria took place in the Midwest when a mob seized a German-American man named Robert Prager.

They stripped him of his clothes, bound him with cloth made from an American flag and lynched him in front of a crowd of some 500 or more people – all of whom cheered the effort on. The perpetrators of the lynching were arrested and brought to trial.

A jury acquitted them in 20 minutes saying that what they had done was patriotic murder.

Robert Prager, in fact, was a young man who had tried to enlist in the American navy and was then rejected for medical reasons. He had been known to say publicly political opinions of a socialist sort. He was thought to be (mistakenly, I believe) some kind of a pacifist. And his worst crime was that he was German-American.“ – Prof. David Kennedy, Stanford University



# **“Nobody Would Eat Kraut”: Lola Gamble Clyde speaks about Anti-German Sentiment in Idaho During World War I**

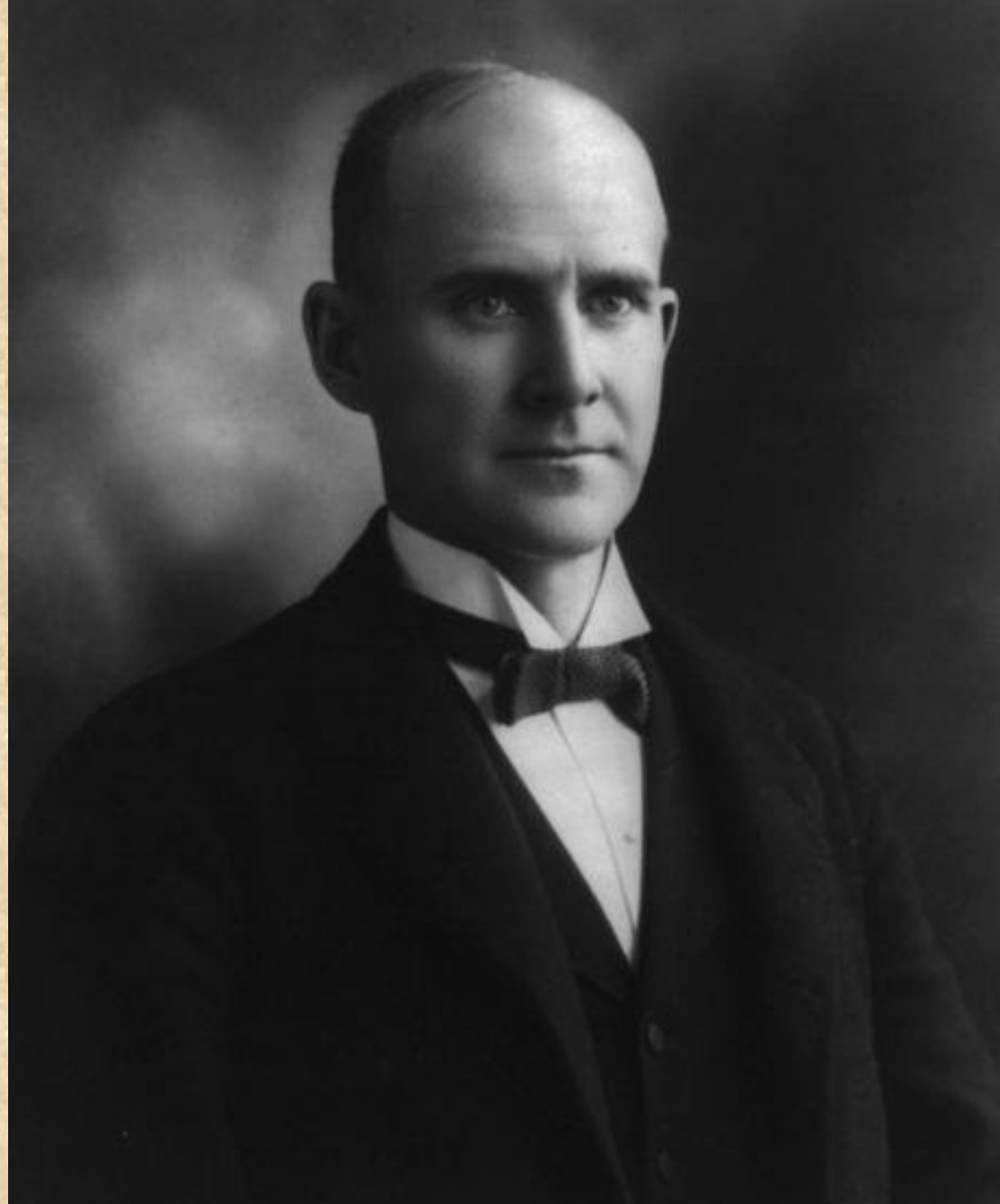
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**Lola Gamble Clyde :** There were some boys that got draft deferments for this and other reason, and they rode 'em on a rail and they took off their clothes and tarred and feathered some of them. Some of them as old men dying still resented and remembered those violent episodes. I remember when they smashed out store windows at Uniontown that said Kraut on it. And Kraut on the window. Nobody would eat Kraut. Throw the Kraut out, they were Germans. You know. And all that was pretty vile, you know. I remember even the great Williamson store, he went in and gathered up everything that was made in Germany, and had a big bonfire out in the middle of the street, you know. Although he had many good German friends all over the county that had helped make him rich. And there was all that went on, you know. And some people changed their name. And if it was a German name—we'll just change our name. We don't want anything to do with it. And there was lots of that kind of hysteria going on.

**Interviewer:** This deferment business, this was German boys who didn't have to go into the army?

**Clyde:** That's right. Some of them said that their fathers were sick and dying, and their father had so much land they had to stay home and farm it for them and they got what they called then farm deferments. And a lot of those men felt badly later, because they didn't share in the great adventure that the other boys had had. And there was a great resentment against them. A lot of them stayed home and married the belle of the town, you know, and didn't have to go to war and all the other kids resented that and held it against them, you know even after they all got to be old men they still remembered, you hadn't gone and you chickened out.

- Many Progressives opposed the war. In response, the U.S. made it illegal to criticize the government or to interfere with the war.
- Nearly 1,600 people were arrested for breaking these laws.
- Eugene Debs, Socialist candidate for President, was arrested for protesting the draft.



*Eugene V. Debs (1855 – 1926)*



# SOCIALIST PARTY

CANDIDATES

1912



EUGENE V. DEBS  
FOR PRESIDENT



EMIL SEIDEL  
FOR VICE PRESIDENT

VOTE

WORKINGMEN

YOUR TICKET

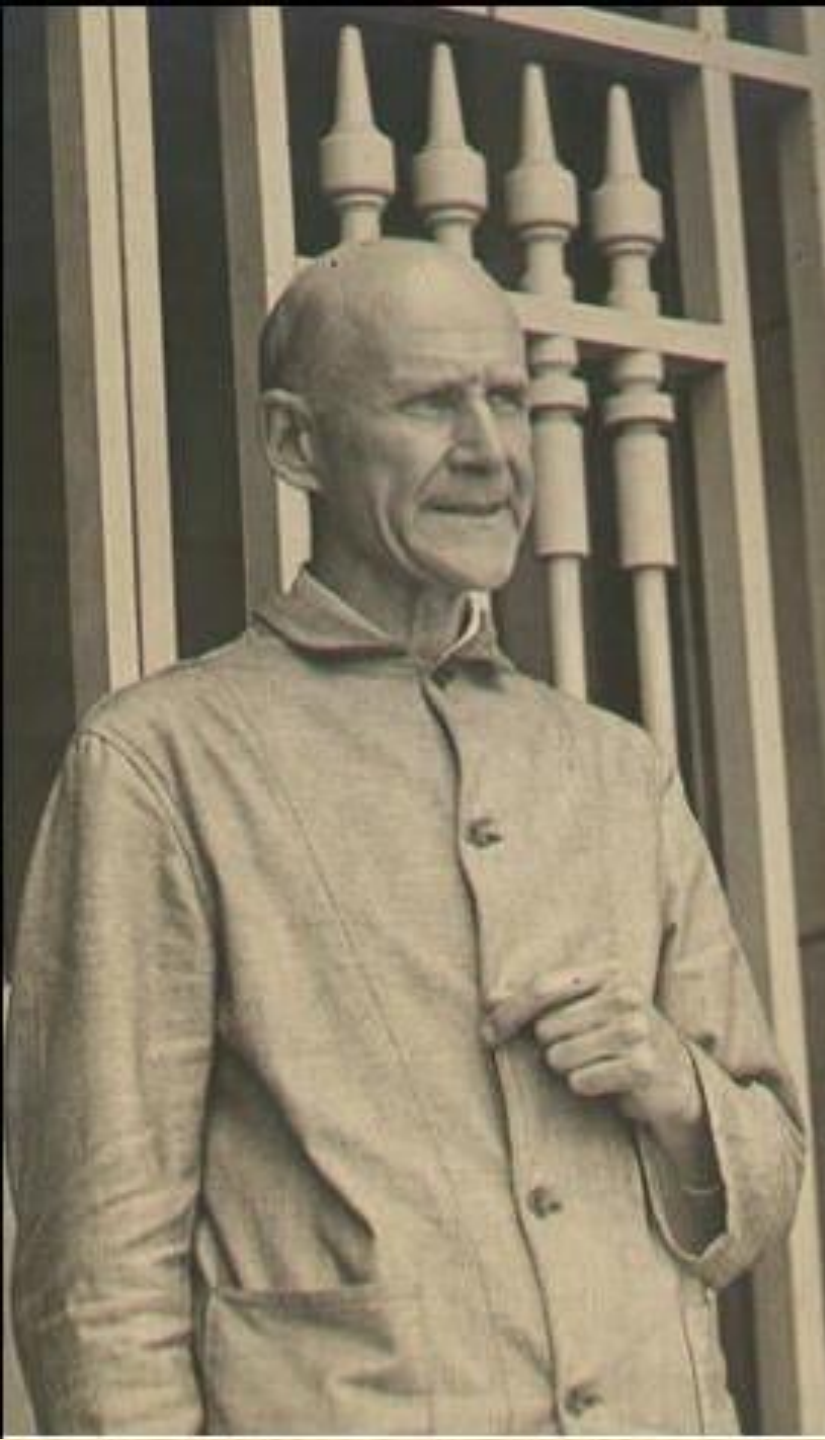
UNITE AT THE BALLOT BOX



ANYHOW  
THERE ARE  
WORSE PLACES  
THAN A FRONT  
PORCH!!

Yours for  
The Presidency  
Eugene V. Debs

Berryman



*The Espionage Act of 1917 was passed shortly after the U.S. entered World War I. It made it a crime for a person to interfere with the operation or success of the armed forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies. It was punishable by a maximum \$10,000 fine (almost \$170,000 in today's dollars) and 20 years in prison.*

*Debs in the Atlanta Penitentiary*





## Americans in France (1918)

- The majority of American forces in France were led by General John J. Pershing.

## From the Battlefields of France - audio

“Three thousand miles from home, an American army is fighting for you. Everything you hold worthwhile is at stake.

Only the hardest blows can win against the enemy we are fighting.

Invoking the spirit of our forefathers, the army asks your unshrinking support, to the end that the high ideals for which America stands may endure upon the earth.”

- General John J. Pershing, France, 1918

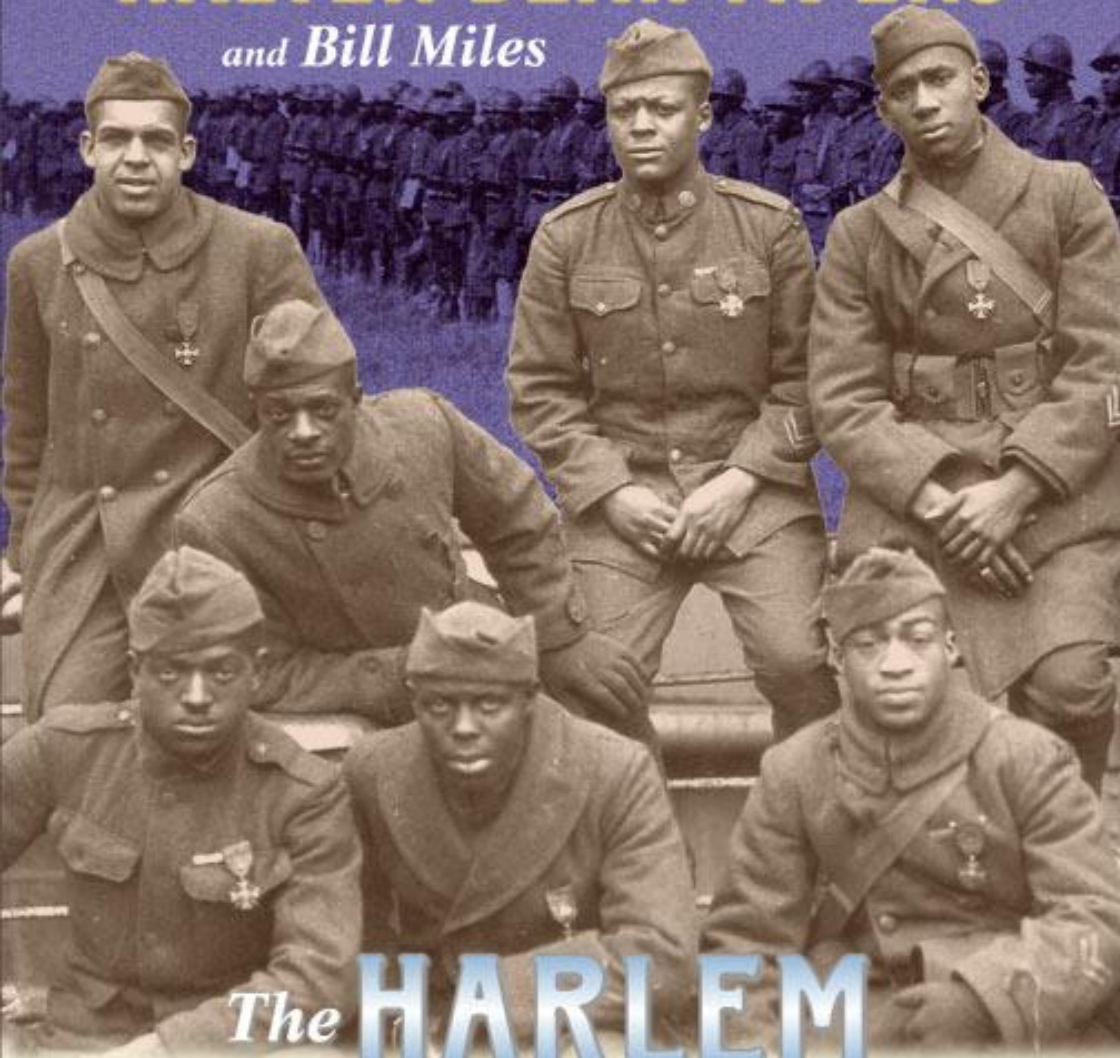


*Trench warfare; African-American soldiers fighting alongside their French allies*



# WALTER DEAN MYERS

*and Bill Miles*



## *The* HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS WHEN PRIDE MET COURAGE

- An African-American regiment, known as the Harlem Hell Fighters, fought alongside French troops against the Germans.







*Reproduction of a painting by H. Charles McBarron of the Hell Fighters*



*"True Sons of Freedom."  
by, Charles Gustrine  
(1918)*

More than 350,000 African Americans served in segregated units during World War I, mostly as support troops. Several units saw action alongside French soldiers fighting against the Germans, and 171 African Americans were awarded the French Legion of Honor.







*New York's famous 369th regiment (Harlem Hell Fighters) arrive home from France*



*Honoring New York's famous 369th regiment (Harlem Hell Fighters)*