

LaFollette War Speech

Since the declaration of war the triumphant war press has pursued those Senators and Representatives who voted against war with malicious falsehood and
Line recklessly libelous attacks, going to the extreme limit of
5 charging them with treason against their country.

I have in my possession numerous affidavits establishing the fact that people are being unlawfully arrested, thrown into jail, held incommunicado for days, only to be eventually discharged without ever
10 having been taken into court, because they have committed no crime. Private residences are being invaded, loyal citizens of undoubted integrity and probity arrested, cross-examined, and the most sacred constitutional rights guaranteed to every American
15 citizen are being violated.

It appears to be the purpose of those conducting this campaign to throw the country into a state of terror, to coerce public opinion, to stifle criticism, and suppress discussion of the great issues involved in this
20 war.

I think all men recognize that in time of war the citizen must surrender some rights for the common good which he is entitled to enjoy in time of peace. But sir, the right to control their own Government
25 according to constitutional forms is not one of the rights that the citizens of this country are called upon to surrender in time of war.

Rather in time of war the citizen must be more alert to the preservation of his right to control his
30 Government. He must be most watchful of the encroachment of the military upon the civil power. He must beware of those precedents in support of arbitrary action by administrative officials, which excused on the plea of necessity in war time, become
35 the fixed rule when the necessity has passed and normal conditions have been restored.

More than all, the citizen and his representative in Congress in time of war must maintain his right of free speech. More than in times of peace it is necessary that
40 the channels for free public discussion of governmental policies shall be open and unclogged. I believe, Mr. President, that I am now touching upon the most

important question in this country today—and that
is the right of the citizens of this country and their
45 representatives in Congress to discuss in an orderly
way frankly and publicly and without fear, from the
platform and through the press, every important phase
of this war; its causes, the manner in which it should
be conducted, and the terms upon which peace should
50 be made. I am contending, Mr. President, for the great
fundamental right of the sovereign people of this
country to make their voice heard and have that voice
heeded upon the great questions arising out of this war,
including not only how the war shall be prosecuted but
55 the conditions upon which it may be terminated with a
due regard for the rights and the honor of this Nation
and the interests of humanity.

I am contending for this right because the exercise
of it is necessary to the welfare, to the existence, of this
60 Government to the successful conduct of this war, and
to a peace which shall be enduring and for the best
interest of this country.

Suppose success attends the attempt to stifle all discussion of the issues of this war, all discussion
65 of the terms upon which it should be concluded, all discussion of the objects and purposes to be accomplished by it, and concede the demand of the war-mad press and war extremists that they monopolize the right of public utterance upon these
70 questions unchallenged, what think you would be the consequences to this country not only during the war but after the war?

It is no answer to say that when the war is over the citizen may once more resume his rights and feel some
75 security in his liberty and his person. As I have already tried to point out, now is precisely the time when the country needs the counsel of all its citizens. In time of war even more than in time of peace, whether citizens happen to agree with the ruling administration or
80 not, these precious fundamental personal rights—free speech, free press, and right of assemblage so explicitly and emphatically guaranteed by the Constitution should be maintained inviolable.

1. The position that LaFollette takes is best described as

- A. a law-maker suggesting a new piece of legislation.
- B. an impartial observer arbitrating a legal issue.
- C. a dissenter arguing for a cause.
- D. a pacifist arguing against international conflicts.

2. In the passage, LaFollette draws a distinction between

- A. rights that are appropriately and inappropriately sacrificed during war.
- B. moments when free speech is and is not necessary.
- C. just wars and wars sought for economic interest.

D. the interests of the Nation and the interests of humanity.

3. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

A. Lines 6-11 ("I have...crime")

B. Lines 21-27 ("I think...war")

C. Lines 30-31 ("He must...power")

D. Lines 50-57 ("I am...humanity")

4. As used in line 8, "incommunicado" most nearly means

A. justified.

B. sequestered.

C. luxuriously.

D. available.

5. Lines 32-36 suggest that

A. some rights are necessarily given up during war time.

B. restrictions on civil powers are always arbitrary.

C. the Government must be watchful of the military.

D. temporary restrictions may become permanent.

6. Based on the information in the passage, citizen governance is necessary in all of the following situations EXCEPT

A. electing legislators and executives.

B. negotiating a peace treaty.

C. declarations of war.

D. decisions about military strategy.

7. The principal rhetorical effect of the phrase in lines 48-50, ("its causes...peace should be made") is to

A. argue against granting free speech during war by emphasizing the difficulties faced by the military and the President.

B. suggest the numerous points at which citizens should exercise their free speech during times of war.

C. discuss three reasons why members of the press are currently unable to speak frankly without fear.

D. show that LaFollette believes that the citizens understand the dynamics of war far better than the President.

8. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

A. Lines 11-15 ("Private...violated")

B. Lines 16-20 ("It appears...war")

C. Lines 30-36 ("He must...restored")

D. Lines 37-41 ("More than...unclogged")

9. The author's attitude toward "the attempt to stifle" (line 63) can be described as

A. sympathetic.

B. apathetic.

C. frustrated.

D. morose.

10. As used in line 83, "inviolable" most nearly means

A. secretly.

B. freely.

C. unbreakable.

D. personally

Question	Correct Answer
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	B
5	D
6	A
7	B
8	D
9	C
10	C