

War Dictionary

Berkman, Alexander
1917

From the final issue of the Blast (vol. 2, no. 5., June 01, 1917) before the US government arrested, imprisoned, and deported Berkman, its editor, for denouncing the imperialist First World War and urging workers to resist conscription. From <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alexander-berkman-war-dictionary>.

Allies: The fairies of Democracy.

Barbarians: The other fellows.

Congress: The valet of Woodrow the First.

Censorship: The rape of Free Speech.

Conscription: Free men fighting against their will.

Civilization: In God We Trust.

Democracy: The voice of the Gallery Gods.

Free Speech: Say what you please, but keep your mouth shut.

Huns: Loyal patriots from Central Europe.

Humanity: Treason to government.

Justice: Successful target shooting.

Kaiser: A President's ambition.

Liberty Bond: A bone from a bonehead.

Liberty Loan: The bread line of the Unborn.

Loyal Citizen: Deaf, dumb, and blind.

Militarism: Christianity in action.

Patriotism: Hating your neighbor.

Registration: Funeral march of Liberty.

Sedition: The proof of Tyranny.

Slacker: Jesus Christ.

Trenches: Digging your own grave.

Un-American: Independent opinion.

Un-Democratic: Ideals.

Uniform: Government strait-jacket.

Victory: Ten million dead.

War: The propaganda of Democracy.

Which is the braver? The man who falls in line with the great majority or he that faces the wrath of millions for conscience sake?

Do not confound us with the pacifists. We believe in fighting. Aye, we have been fighting all our lives – fighting injustice, oppression, and tyranny. Almost single handed at that.

We are not pacifists. But we want to know what we are fighting for, and we refuse to fight for the enemies and the exploiters of humanity.