

DOWNLOAD PDF SENATOR LA FOLLETTE : THE BOGEY-MAN OF THE SENATE

Chapter 1 : Robert M. La Follette, Sr., Governor of Wisconsin, Senator

Three years later, the Senate awarded La Follette \$5, for his legal expenses in the case. La Follette, a champion of the rights of the people—who received 16 percent of the popular vote when he ran for president on the Progressive party ticket in 1904—died in Washington in

The events of the first few months of 1917, from the resumption of unrestricted submarine attacks to the Zimmerman telegram, broke the back of the antiwar movement and substantially increased enthusiasm for American intervention. But some dissident voices remained. Among the firmest congressional opponents was the progressive Wisconsin senator Robert M. La Follette. A Republican senator from a state with a large agricultural and German-American population, La Follette worried that the war would divert attention from domestic reform efforts. But even in Wisconsin La Follette met opposition; the state legislature censured him, as did some of his longtime progressive allies.

President, I had supposed until recently that it was the duty of senators and representatives in Congress to vote and act according to their convictions on all public matters that came before them for consideration and decision. I shall support the President in the measures he proposes when I believe them to be right. I shall oppose measures proposed by the President when I believe them to be wrong. The fact that the matter which the President submits for consideration is of the greatest importance is only an additional reason why we should be sure that we are right and not to be swerved from that conviction or intimidated in its expression by any influence of its power whatsoever. If, unhappily, on such momentous questions the most patient research and conscientious consideration we could give to them leave us in disagreement with the President, I know of no course to take except to oppose, regretfully but not the less firmly, the demands of the Executive.

President, many of my colleagues on both sides of this floor have from day to day offered for publication in the Record messages and letters received from their constituents I have received some 15, letters and telegrams. They have come from forty-four states in the Union. They have been assorted according to whether they speak in criticism or commendation of my course in opposing war. President, at some time they will be heard. I hope and I believe they will be heard in an orderly and a peaceful way. I think they may be heard from before long. I think, sir, if we take this step, when the people today who are staggering under the burden of supporting families at the present prices of the necessaries of life find those prices multiplied, when they are raised percent, or percent, as they will be quickly, aye, sir, when beyond that those who pay taxes come to have their taxes doubled and again doubled to pay the interest on the nontaxable bonds held by [J. It will be as certain and as inevitable as the return of the tides, and as resistless, too. The President has not suggested that we make our support of Great Britain conditional to her granting home rule to Ireland, or Egypt, or India. We rejoice in the establishment of a democracy in Russia, but it will hardly be contended that if Russia was still an autocratic government, we would not be asked to enter this alliance with her just the same. In the sense that this war is being forced upon our people without their knowing why and without their approval, and that wars are usually forced upon all peoples in the same way, there is some truth in the statement; but I venture to say that the response which the German people have made to the demands of this war shows that it has a degree of popular support which the war upon which we are entering has not and never will have among our people. The espionage bills, the conscription bills, and other forcible military measures which we understand are being ground out of the war machine in this country is the complete proof that those responsible for this war fear that it has no popular support and that armies sufficient to satisfy the demand of the Entente Allies cannot be recruited by voluntary enlistments. While Germany has again and again yielded to our protests, I do not recall a single instance in which a protest we have made to Great Britain has won for us the slightest consideration, except for a short time in the case of cotton. I will not stop to dwell upon the multitude of minor violations of our neutral rights, such as seizing our mails, violations of the neutral flag, seizing and appropriating our goods without the least warrant or authority in law, and impressing, seizing, and taking possession of our vessels and putting them into her own service. If our ships had been sent

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into her forbidden high-sea war zone as they have into the proscribed area Germany marked out on the high seas as a war zone, we would have had the same loss of life and property in the one case as in the other; but because we avoided doing that, in the case of England, and acquiesced in her violation of law, we have not only a legal but a moral responsibility for the position in which Germany has been placed by our collusion and cooperation with Great Britain. We have helped to drive Germany into a corner, her back to the wall, to fight with what weapons she can lay her hands on to prevent the starving of her women and children, her old men and babes. We should not seek to hide our blunder behind the smoke of battle to inflame the mind of our people by half truths into the frenzy of war in order that they may never appreciate the real cause of it until it is too late. I do not believe that our national honor is served by such a course. The right way is the honorable way. Congressional Record—Senate, April 4, ,

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Chapter 2 : Fighting Bob La Follette: The Righteous Reformer - PDF Free Download

La Follette's refusal to support Roosevelt alienated many progressives, and, though La Follette continued to serve in the Senate, he lost his stature as the leader of that chamber's progressive Republicans.

At first, he focused on a railroad regulation bill making its way through the Senate; he attacked the bill eventually known as the Hepburn Act as a watered-down compromise. Aldrich, detested La Follette, viewing him as a dangerous demagogue. Hoping to deprive La Follette of as much influence as possible, Aldrich and his allies assigned La Follette to insignificant committees and loaded him down with routine work. He alleged that the panic had been engineered by the "Money Trust," a group of 97 large corporations that sought to use the panic to destroy competitors and force the government to prop up their businesses. La Follette hoped that he might emerge as the Republican presidential nominee after multiple ballots, but Taft won the nomination on the first ballot of the convention. Taft defeated William Jennings Bryan in the election, and several progressives were victorious in the concurrent congressional elections. Dolliver, La Follette led a progressive faction of Republicans in the Senate that clashed with Aldrich over the reduction of tariff rates. Their fight for tariff reduction was motivated by a desire to lower prices for consumers, as they believed that the high rates of the Dingley Act unfairly protected large corporations from competition and thereby allowed those corporations to charge high prices. The progressives did, however, begin the process of proposing the Sixteenth Amendment, which would effectively allow the federal government to levy an income tax. Ballinger favored the illegal expansion of coal mining on government land in Alaska. La Follette hoped that the league would also form a base of support for a challenge against Taft for the Republican presidential nomination. The league won the endorsement of nine senators, sixteen congressmen, four governors, and well-known individuals like Pinchot and Louis Brandeis, but notably lacked the support of former President Roosevelt. Explaining his refusal to join the league, Roosevelt asserted that he viewed the organization as too radical, stating his "wish to follow in the path of Abraham Lincoln rather than in the path of John Brown and Wendell Phillips. Though his candidacy was bolstered by the popular appeal of his autobiography, many progressive leaders strongly criticized La Follette for focusing on the writing of the autobiography rather than on campaigning across the country. In February, La Follette delivered a disastrous speech shortly after learning that his daughter, Mary, would undergo surgery. He remained neutral in the three-way general election contest between Roosevelt, Taft, and the Democratic nominee, Woodrow Wilson. With the Republican Party split, Wilson emerged triumphant in the election. Presidency of Woodrow Wilson La Follette initially hoped to work closely with the Wilson administration, but Wilson ultimately chose to rely on congressional Democrats to pass legislation. Nonetheless, La Follette was the lone Republican senator to vote for the Revenue Act of 1913, which lowered tariff rates and levied a federal income tax. Vardaman, who directed the farm benefits of the Smith-Lever Act away from African-Americans. Philipp won election as governor. La Follette believed that the League of Nations, a key component of the Treaty of Versailles, was primarily designed to protect the dominant financial interests of the United States and the Allied Powers. Presidency of Warren G. Harding La Follette retained influence in Wisconsin, and he led a progressive delegation to the Republican National Convention. Nationwide, however, the Republican Party had increasingly embraced conservatism, and La Follette was denounced as a Bolshevik when he called for the repeal of the Esch-Cummins Act. Harding, La Follette explored a third party presidential bid, though he ultimately did not seek the presidency because various progressive groups were unable to agree on a platform. Nationwide, the elections saw the defeat of many conservative Republicans, leaving La Follette and his allies with control of the balance of power in Congress. In 1920, La Follette began planning for a third party run for the presidency, sending his allies to various states to build up a base of support and ensure ballot access. Aside from labor unions and farm groups, the CPPA also included groups representing African-Americans, women, and college voters. He had changed his earlier pro-Bolshevik stance after visiting the Soviet Union in 1919, where

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he had seen the impact of Communism on civil liberties and political rights. The convention instead nominated Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, a progressive Democrat who had refused to endorse John W. Davis , the Democratic nominee for president. Du Bois , author Thorstein Veblen , and newspaper publisher E. Counties won by La Follette are marked green. As election day approached, however, those hoping for a La Follette victory became more pessimistic. The various groups supporting La Follette often clashed, and his campaign was not nearly as well-financed as those of Davis and especially Coolidge. Corporate leaders, who saw in La Follette the specter of class warfare , mobilized against his third party candidacy. Republicans campaigned on a "Coolidge or chaos" platform, arguing that the election of La Follette would severely disrupt economic growth. La Follette carried his home state of Wisconsin and finished second in eleven states, all of which were west of the Mississippi River. He performed best in rural areas and working class urban areas, with much of his support coming from individuals affiliated with the Socialist Party. By the mids, the La Follettes had reformed the Progressive Party on the state level in the form of the Wisconsin Progressive Party. The party quickly, if briefly, became the dominant political power in the state, electing seven Progressive congressmen in and La Follette has also influenced numerous other progressive politicians outside of Wisconsin, including Floyd B. Calhoun , and Robert A. Buenker described La Follette as "the most celebrated figure in Wisconsin history.

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Chapter 3 : Senator Robert M. La Follette Sr. of Wisconsin, photograph, ca. | U.S. Capitol Visitor Center

In , Robert M. La Follette, who served in the Senate as a Republican, ran for president on the Progressive Party ticket. Early that year, La Follette was denied the chairmanship of the Interstate Commerce Committee by the Republican caucus.

Senate floor on October 6, Vicious caricatures depicted the Wisconsin senator receiving the German Iron Cross medal and holding a German spiked helmet. For years, the stout, stubborn year-old Republican, with a huge shock of brushed-back white hair, had railed against American involvement in the Great War happening overseas. But it was the events of the fall of that sealed his fate, for better and for worse. Two weeks earlier, speaking without notes in St. Paul, applauded by the crowd, La Follette then ad-libbed a sarcastic attack on the main U. S. But La Follette pointed out “correctly” that the British ocean liner Lusitania had been carrying munitions to England in when a U-boat sank it, killing 1, people, including Americans. It was under these circumstances that La Follette addressed the crowded Senate floor. Instead of acknowledging the rancor, or the expulsion petition, La Follette delivered a sweeping defense of the right to free speech in wartime. Across the country, La Follette warned, governors, mayors and police were preventing or breaking up peaceful meetings about the war. Dissenters were being unlawfully arrested and jailed for no crime. Senator since , La Follette had spent decades as a Progressive reformer , enacting populist government reforms, regulation of big business and progressive taxation while battling machine politicians, monopolies and the wealthy. His anti-war stance emerged from his concern for the working class. As early as , La Follette attacked what President Dwight Eisenhower would later term the “military industrial complex. Two days later, in a Senate speech, La Follette argued that the American people “or his constituents, at the very least” still favored neutrality. In an era before nationwide public opinion polling, he cited straw polls from town meetings, especially in the isolationist Midwest, that recorded overwhelming opposition to war. La Follette ended his April speech with tears falling from his eyes. A hostile spectator in the hallway handed him a rope, as if to say La Follette had hanged himself. For the rest of , as the U. S. Decades of struggle for Progressive causes had strengthened his resolve amid adversity. Weisberger in the book *The La Follettes of Wisconsin*. He backed up his speeches with action. La Follette voted against reviving the military draft. He opposed the Espionage Act, predicting correctly that the Wilson Administration would use it to suppress free speech. He pushed, unsuccessfully, to fund the war through a wealth tax , instead of the massive loans Congress approved. The senator continued to agitate and organize against the war. Then came his speech in St Paul, the outrage, and his follow-up speech in October. La Follette was as defiant as ever. Actually, free speech is even more important in wartime than in peace, he argued. Citizens should be more vigilant about their rights in wartime, La Follette insisted, alert to the danger of the military or public officials assuming too much power. He issued a warning for a nation that would soon transform into a global superpower. The rejoinder speech was met with the expected vitriol. Senator Joseph Robinson of Arkansas walked toward La Follette, shaking his fist, denouncing La Follette to his face as he looked back with disdain. Hearings on the expulsion petition were set to begin just over three months later, on January 8, . It left him near death for months. Facing the threats of expulsion and the possible loss of his son, La Follette gave no more public speeches on the war. Denunciations at home in Wisconsin hurt La Follette most. The state legislature passed a resolution that accused him of sedition. At the University of Wisconsin, a power center of Progressivism, the faculty, including many former allies, voted to 2 to condemn him. Economics professor Richard T. Then the war fever broke. Republicans won a slim, two-vote majority in the Senate, making La Follette, a maverick who at times crossed party lines, a swing vote. A week later, the war ended with an armistice and a German defeat. Later that month, a Senate committee voted against expelling La Follette. The full Senate agreed in January , by a vote of . Before his death, La Follette enjoyed growing respect for his anti-war stance. The Voice of Conscience. In , a Senate committee chaired by John F. Kennedy chose La Follette as one of five outstanding senators commemorated

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with portraits in the Senate Reception Room.

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Chapter 4 : Robert M. La Follette | United States senator | www.nxgvision.com

Robert M. La Follette, Jr. (), was elected in to fill his father's unexpired term in the Senate and was reelected three times thereafter, serving until He generally supported Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, and he drafted the congressional reorganization bill of that streamlined the legislative process in Congress.

Prior to the enactment of this language, there was no such statutory inhibition on the authority of the government to discharge a federal employee, and an employee could be discharged with or without cause for conduct which was not protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The act was passed after the Theodore Roosevelt in and Taft in administrations prohibited federal employees from communicating with Congress without authorization from their superiors. The purpose of this Act was to allow Congress to obtain uncensored, essential information from federal employees. Congress intended to allow the federal workers direct access to Congress in order to register complaints about conduct by their supervisors and to report corruption or incompetence. Kennedy , U. One of the primary purposes of the Act was to protect those who criticize of superiors from official retribution. They were simply horrible The public health officers of Chicago, as soon as their attention was called to the conditions, condemned the situation as they found it; and yet this young man, one of the brightest fellows I have met, was removed from the service because, he had given publicity to these outrageous conditions. The Act was thus the first federal law enacted specifically to protect whistleblowers. Lucas , U. The rule is unjust, unfair, and against the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, which provides for the right of appeal and the right of free speech to all its citizens. Calder ; id. This provision was accompanied by a more specific guarantee that membership in any independent association of postal employees seeking improvements in wages, hours, and working conditions, or the presentation to Congress of any grievance, "shall not constitute or be cause for reduction in rank or compensation or removal of such person or groups of persons from said service. Calder ; see id. The Senate Committee initially took a different position, urging in its report that the relevant language, see id. As to the last clause in section 6, it is the view of the committee that all citizens have a constitutional right as such to present their grievances to Congress or Members thereof. But governmental employees occupy a position relative to the Government different from that of ordinary citizens. Upon questions of interest to them as citizens, governmental employees have a right to petition Congress direct. A different rule should prevail with regard to their presentation of grievances connected with their relation to the Government as employees. In that respect good discipline and the efficiency of the service requires that they present their grievances through the proper administrative channels. Bourne explained, "it was believed by the committee that to recognize the right of the individual employee to go over the head of his superior and go to Members of Congress on matters appertaining to his own particular grievances, or for his own selfish interest, would be detrimental to the service itself; that it would absolutely destroy the discipline necessary for good service. This view did not prevail. After extended discussion in floor debate concerning the right to organize and the right to present grievances to Congress, id. Subsequent legislation[edit] In , the Justice Department argued that Congress does not have a constitutional right to obtain information from civil servants through unauthorized disclosures. Based on its analysis of disclosure laws and its stance on separation of powers, Justice argued that Congress cannot vest "in executive branch employees a right to provide classified information to members of Congress without official authorization. The government-wide prohibition on the use of appropriated funds to pay the salary of any federal official who prohibits or prevents or threatens to prohibit or prevent a federal employee from contacting Congress first appeared in the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act , , Pub. In , the Senate passed a prohibition that applied only to the Postal Service, while the House of Representatives passed a governmentwide prohibition. The conference report adopted the House version, and a government-wide prohibition has been included in every Treasury-Postal appropriations act since fiscal year

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Chapter 5 : LA FOLLETTE, Robert Marion - Biographical Information

A leader in the 20th-century Progressive movement, Robert Marion La Follette was a U.S. representative, governor, and U.S. senator from Wisconsin, and an unsuccessful candidate for the presidency. La Follette was born in the town of Primrose, Wisconsin, the son of settlers from Kentucky.

In an effort to employ the best suited labor management system between unions and employers, the National Labor Relations Act established the National Labor Relations Board. Initial Grievances of the Committee[edit] From to , the La Follette Committee began its assessment of four prominent anti-union practices which suppressed the advancement of organized laborers. From "motion-picture producers to steel makers," the enormous number of companies resorting to espionage, reported the La Follette Committee, prevented the practice of collective bargaining between companies and employees. Spies of corporations befriended victims into creating reports which they used to forewarn employers of potential strikes and assemblies. Spying, the La Follette Committee declared, weakens unions and "incites to violence, preaches strikes, inflames the hot-headed and leads the union to disaster". The Committee affirmed that through the employment of espionage, employees became subjugated to private corporations and were denied constitutional rights. The Committee revealed that when espionage failed to prevent unionism, employers also exploited workers through the use of munitions in anticipation of labor trouble. With the threat of communism sweeping the nation and employers utilizing it as a scapegoat to deter unionization, munitions companies distributed various forms of deterrence. Machine guns, tear gas bombs, and clubs were a few of the hindrances wielded to prevent and disperse union meetings. By preventing workers from freely gathering in public spaces, employers who opposed them with the use of munitions and other forms of physical coercion denied them their constitutional rights of freedom of speech and assembly. Strikebreakers were reported to be the third form of anti-union oppression utilized by employers. The Committee reported many being convicted criminals, and the animosity of the strikers held towards these men creates "violence and bloodshed. Private police agencies offered employers the last form of union oppression. This form of industrial coercion proved to be clear by constitutional protection as the men employed by the corporations were not held accountable to anyone but their employers. Witnesses in industrial communities revealed to the Committee the abusive power of private police; their constant harassment and use of physical violence repressed the First Amendment rights of citizens. Like espionage, munitions utilization, and strikebreaking, private police agencies testified to the incompatibility of industrial tyranny over the liberties of industrial workers. Despite La Follette urging his investigative team to search for infringements on constitutional rights of workers rather than the political affiliations of employers, his work became deemed as a backing to Communism and became resented by those harboring anti-union ideals. Aside from employers, local law enforcement agencies, and growers showing a lack in intimidation from the committee, Republican attorney general Earl Warren demonstrated strong opposition by supporting law enforcement in resisting subpoenas. California laborers of the s were being denied constitutional rights by employers and anti-union officials. The committee found the West Coast region under the control of a convoluted array of employer controlled associations. By calling witnesses to the stand in an effort to expose American Industrial relations, the Committee supported the CIO, as both organizations strove to achieve a common goal of mass unionization. The ability of both organizations to operate in harmony allowed for their shared successes. Similarly, the CIO had no way of securing itself a victory over oppressive labor practices, and the mutually beneficial associations shared among the two organizations proved vital. With word of oppressive practices, most notably espionage, reaching the founders of the Committee before its official establishment, the decision to examine the events in Flint, Michigan, was a unanimous one. With intentions of bringing the tyrannical practices of the company to the attention of the public, the Committee obtained first hand reports of anti-union organizations in Flint. Reports obtained by the Committee also confirmed the involvement of local law enforcement, as they maintained their own espionage

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system set to infiltrate sit-down strikes in the state. Accounts of spies infiltrating the UAW were disclosed at the hearing, as fifty-two members were reported as spies, relaying unionization efforts to those they worked for. Ditzel, to express their disapproval of GM labor policy and their negation of constitutional rights: Congressional disputes resulted from the hearings as the La Follette Committee found legal success with a resolution by Key Pittman of Nevada; referring to the findings of the Committee, Joseph Robinson added an amendment that rebuked any attempts at denying collective bargaining by employers and denounced their utilization of unfair labor practices. With the newly added amendment, a vote approved the Pittman resolution by the Senate.

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Chapter 6 : La Follette, antiwar speech,

But, for the past 12 hours, the physically fit freshman senator from Wisconsin, Robert M. La Follette, has been conducting a filibuster hoping to block adoption of a conference report. Two years earlier, Senator La Follette had delivered a maiden speech that lasted three days and filled pages of the Congressional Record.

The Greatest Speech in the History of the U. Senate Still Resonates Today Note: Robert La Follette and U. Wilson had said that to preserve its honor and freedom, the United States had no choice but to fight Germany. Germany had plunged the world into a new dark age, he told the assembled lawmakers. La Follette defiantly kept his seat and did not join in the applause. The leader of the anti-war faction in the Senate, he would take four hours to make his rebuttal to the President. After reading an anti-war letter from one of his supporters in North Dakota, he began his speech with a warning to the American people about a dangerous trend in the country. As a United States senator, he always had thought that the people deserved his best efforts to speak knowledgeably and honestly about the great issues of the day. Now a new trend could be seen in Washington: La Follette thought the President not only wrong but deceptive in his war message. If democracy mattered so much to the United States government, why did we do nothing and say nothing about the plight of Ireland, Egypt, and India whose teeming millions languished in undemocratic servitude to our wartime ally, Great Britain? Nor had our other major allies—France, Italy, and Russia—covered themselves with glory by advancing the cause of democracy in their empires. As making the world safe for democracy could not in truth be presented as the real reason for our entering the war, it would behoove the American people to discover what actually had motivated our leaders to take this dread step. He guessed that at bottom the Europeans were in the process of wrecking their civilization because of commercial rivalries and imperialistic ambition. Later revelations about secret treaties and historical research in government archives would prove indisputably that the war had broken out in a context of imperialistic striving by all the major combatant nations for territories, markets, and resources. About American motives for intervening in the slaughter-pen of Europe, La Follette could only raise questions and make suppositions. It looked that way to him, especially in view of our alliance with Britain. He did not think of British imperialism, in the manner of so many Americans at that time and in the future, as a charming eccentricity of a brother democracy. It turned out to be a legitimate fear. In its spectacular revelations of the s, the Nye Committee would disclose the precise details of the financial arrangements—above all, the war loans—which had done much to bring America into the war. The President appeared to be unaware of these differences. Half-truths, deceptions, and lies concealed the truth of why we were going to war. It will not be answered because it is unanswerable. He foresaw that the war would have an imperialist outcome, no matter which side won. The Paris Peace Conference at the end of the war confirmed these forebodings, as the victors created a spoils-based international order that would lead to the outbreak of the Second World War twenty years later and prepare the ground for the manifold crises in the Middle East that afflict us today. Lunging from illusion to illusion Moreover, La Follette rightly sensed that intervention in the war would be an irreversible turning point for the United States, the decisive act of unleashing what William Appleman Williams would call the tragedy of American diplomacy. We continue to live the tragedy of American diplomacy today, as our leaders lunge from illusion to illusion with no more idea than President Wilson had about the desolating costs of empire. Richard Drake is professor of history at the University of Montana. He is the author of *The Education of an Anti-Imperialist: Related writings by Richard Drake*:

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Chapter 7 : La Follette Committee - Wikipedia

*The Kaiser's Senator: Robert M. La Follette's Alleged Disloyalty During World War I [Arthur J. Amchan] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This is the story of America's intervention on the side of the Allies in World War I, and the heroic stand of Senator Robert M. La Follette of Wisconsin.*

See Article History Alternative Title: He was the unsuccessful presidential candidate of the League for Progressive Political Action i. Early life and career As a boy growing up in moderately prosperous rural areas, as a student at the University of Wisconsin 1879 , as a county district attorney 1884 , and as a congressman from southwestern Wisconsin, La Follette developed the personality and style that made him a popular leader. He combined an unusually outgoing personality with an extraordinary flair for zealous oratory. He married his college sweetheart, Belle Case, on Dec. Defeated for reelection to Congress in a Democratic landslide of , La Follette returned to Madison to practice law and develop the political organization that within 10 years would elect him governor and allow him to dominate Wisconsin politics until his death. His reputation as an enemy of political bosses began in when he announced that the state Republican boss, Sen. Philetus Sawyer, had offered him a bribe. His oratorical talents, combined with his natural charm, organizational skill, and driving ambition to become governor, made him the leader of his new group of Republicans. Campaign for governor In La Follette began to advocate programs that local-level progressives had popularized during the legislative session a few months earlier. Following their lead, he demanded tax reform, corporation regulation , and political democracy. In particular, he promoted steeper railroad taxes and a direct primary. Elected governor on this platform in , he was reelected in and With these new methods he secured the passage of several progressive laws. Believing that the railroads were the principal subverters of the political process, he persuaded the legislature to tax them on the basis of their property and to regulate them by commission The legislature enacted the direct primary in and state civil-service reform in His appointees to the Tax Commission, given new power by the legislature, equalized tax assessments. United States senator Resigning as governor in , he was elected to the Senate at a time when that institution was widely believed to be a refuge for millionaires. He supported labour legislation because unions were battling the same enemies that menaced consumers and because consumers benefited directly from improvements in working conditions. Morgan and Standard Oil investment banking groups. The high point of his national popularity came in 1911 when he emerged as the leader of newly elected and newly converted progressives in Congress. Having led Republican opposition to the tariff, conservation, and railroad policies of Pres. William Howard Taft , La Follette was widely promoted for the presidency in Most progressives backed La Follette because their first choice, Theodore Roosevelt , had refused to run; later, when Roosevelt entered the race early in , they deserted La Follette. Although he had backed Woodrow Wilson in for the presidency, he was disgusted that the new president ignored the ideas of progressive Republicans and shaped most legislation in the Democratic caucus. Antiwar position Foreign affairs catapulted La Follette back into a leadership position in , this time of the antiwar movement. Since he had argued that U. Confident that the majority opposed U. He led the Senate filibuster against arming U. Pro-war groups demanded his expulsion from the Senate for treason, but a Senate investigating committee exonerated him. As a martyr to the war hysteria , La Follette once again became a popular hero to millions of Americans. Believing that the war had given large corporations nearly complete control over the federal government, La Follette concentrated on exposing the most flagrant corruption of the postwar years. As labour and farm groups despaired of the conservatism of Democrats and Republicans alike in the s, La Follette was frequently mentioned as a presidential candidate for a third party. Declining the pleas of the Farmer-Labor convention that he run in , La Follette accepted the nomination on the Progressive ticket in In the end La Follette carried only the state of Wisconsin, although he placed second in 11 states and polled about one-sixth of the national total. He died in office. He generally supported Pres. That same year, though, he was defeated in the Republican senatorial primary by Joseph McCarthy. Philip Fox La Follette 1893 served

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as governor of Wisconsin in 1933 and 1937. In his first term he secured enactment of the first comprehensive unemployment compensation act in any U.S. state. He and his brother Robert organized a separate Progressive Party in Wisconsin in 1934, but it proved short-lived and returned to the Republican ranks in 1936.

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Chapter 8 : Robert M. La Follette - Wikipedia

Upon La Follette's death, Senator William E. Borah (R-Idaho) noted, "agitation has its place and an indispensable place in the life of free government, and if a man is devoted to his country, as I believe La Follette always to have been, his service is often the.

Fighting Bob La Follette: Includes bibliographical references p. La Follette, Robert M. Robert Marion , " United States " Politics and government " " Progressivism United States politics 4. Wisconsin " Politics and government " " Legislators " United States " Biography. Governors " Wisconsin " Biography. Dull Tools, 1 1 Beginnings: I Want to Die. Just the register of the La Follette Family Collection at the Library of Congress is pages long, describing approximately , documents. I concluded that conference paper by resolving that my next biographical subject be someone who died young, single, and without children, and who either typed what little correspondence survives or wrote with a neat, clear hand. Elwood Mills of SCU is responsible for the excellent quality of the slides used in that presentation as well as for several reproductions presented in this book. Student researchers Ryan Heal and Michelle Pritchard tracked down a variety of sources. Ed Perkins brought his expert editing skills to Chapter Anonymous readers made additional valuable suggestions prior to the publication of versions of Chapters 10 and 12 in the Psychohistory Review. In preparation for the publication of a version of Chapter 4 in the Wisconsin Magazine of History, editor Margaret Dwyer provided valuable insight into the character of and the social and political context of Belle Case La Follette. All of my colleagues, especially Barbara Molony, have been wonderful mentors and sources of support. John Wright made many valuable contributions to Chapter 14 and provided useful advice overall. While providing much appreciated moral support, Paul Finkelman and William McKinley Mac Runyan also offered helpful commentary on several chapters. Several people were especially generous with their particular expertise. Eighty Years of Political Oratory. Capital Times editor John Nichols was generous with his time and expertise concerning both the La Follette family and the founding of that publication. It has been a pleasure to work with the University of North Carolina Press. Katherine Malin brought grace and wit as well as her expertise to the entire copyediting process. Acknowledgments As Bob Cherny and countless others have noted, one never thoroughly understands a subject until one teaches it. Particular thanks go to the students in my Progressive Era and Historical Writing seminars. My dearest friend Sue Ruble, always my champion, brought her expert editing skills to the entire manuscript, correcting an embarrassingly large number of errors and making many valuable suggestions. My family has also been a constant source of encouragement and support. My cousin, Ellen Fehring, graciously shepherded me around Madison, Wisconsin. My mother, Eunice Unger, voluntarily carried out research, sent articles of interest, photocopied entire books, and even hunted down original La Follette campaign buttons in mint condition that are now among my most prized possessions. My husband, Don Whitebread, D. My gratitude, like my love for him, is without measure. To my best friend Megan Lynch and my father Don Unger: To my children, Travis Whitebread and Megan Unger: Thank you for your patience. We can go to the park now. A single-volume biography of Robert La Follette is necessarily limited. I chose to keep my focus on the man and his family and tried to achieve what I thought was the appropriate balance between the personal and the political. His efforts to establish his famed Wisconsin Idea nationwide brought about a truer democracy. He worked to limit the power and wealth of big business and served American consumers by helping to create the Department of Labor, the Tariff Commission, and the Federal Trade Commission and by aiding in the enlargement of the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission. He also labored for civil rights of the racially and economically oppressed. But he himself bears some share of the responsibility. It is not the weakness of ignorance or pretense. It is the weakness of temperament, his habits of thought, and his type of mind. He is an irreconcilable for the same reason that he is a radical and a radical for the same reason that he is an irreconcilable. He is a man who was emotionally melted in the hottest furnaces of opposition ever lighted

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against any public man in our day and who now has run into a mold where he has hardened into a form that nothing can break, nothing can bend, nothing can any more even bruise. He is perfectly antique in his view of the Republic. La Follette thinks there was a difference. He thinks there is such a thing as Americanism. He imagines himself to be trying to put it back into the American Government. Introduction of right and wrong and all opponents as insincere at best, corrupt at worst. Although other contemporaries contended that La Follette himself was a corrupt hypocrite, even most of his enemies were convinced of his sincerity. Clearly, however, in the world of politics, sincerity and devotion are usually abetted by realism and practicality. La Follette, dedicated and ambitious, possessed great vision hobbled by his frequent disdain for political expediency in favor of emotional satisfaction. His long, statistic-laden speeches mesmerized many but alienated others, while his perpetual unwillingness to delegate responsibility frequently led him to misdirect his energies. Frequent illness robbed him of valuable time and energy but gained him love and support. His perception of his wife, Belle, as a kind of emotional and moral thermostat placed severe burdens on their marriage. He is praised for his devotion to integrity because his tenacity led to legislative triumphs unadulterated by compromise. Because he is honest and fearless and stands for something. Given these qualities it is amazing how much the electorate will overlook. While his greatest strengths and most debilitating weaknesses, politically and personally, can be traced back to his earliest beginnings in Primrose, Wisconsin, the path of his political development seems unclear. Was he, at various times, a follower, a leader, a conservative, a Republican, an independent, a progressive, a radical, an insurgent, a pragmatist or merely always an opportunist? Introduction will like what I say except myself, but I hope to be fairly well pleased with it. He was merely a human being, struggling ceaselessly to combat competing feelings of emptiness and grandiosity. The personal and political life of Robert Marion La Follette is a compelling mixture of accomplishment and failure, triumph and tragedy. And it is too much to demand that they be immaculate white giants. Almighty God carves out his ends with dull tools always. Robert La Follette lived out the ancient Chinese blessing or is it a curse? The result is a unique variety of landscapes that, prior to the coming of French explorers, were home to an estimated 20, Native Americans, most notably the Menominee and the Winnebago. Wisconsin, bereft of much of its native population, was awash with succeeding waves of new immigrants. By midcentury, the entire country was on the move with one American in four moving across state lines, and a disproportionate number of its migrants were moving to Wisconsin. Migratory patterns were rarely simple, and instead involved a series of moves, as farms and homesteads were established only to be abandoned in a restless search for greener pastures. His heritage was solidly American in the romantic tradition, the trail of his ancestors into Wisconsin long and complex. His maternal great-grandfather, a Scottish farmhand named John Ferguson, settled in North Carolina after crop failures and political oppression forced him to leave northern Ireland. Bartholomew in the sixteenth century. During the war the Le Follet family name underwent the transformation to its current spelling. All four brothers participated in the battles of Brandywine and Yorktown, and all but Joseph agreed to demonstrate their loyalty to La Fayette by changing the spelling of their name from the masculine to the feminine form. There, on 22 November 8: Joseph La Follette moved from New Jersey to Virginia, but later he and his brothers traveled to Hardin County, Kentucky, where they settled permanently. Thomas Lincoln and Joseph La Follette were appointed, among others, to appraise the estate of a deceased neighbor. In Mary, then twentythree, wed Alexander Buchanan, a farmer. Their daughter Ellen had not yet been born when Buchanan was killed at a barn raising. Mother and daughter remained on the farm. According to family legend, someone coming from Indiana brought a paper with a notice of a party attended by the widow Buchanan. Southern Wisconsin, new home of the La Follette family, offered a very different kind of pioneer experience. Although generally classed as rolling and ferBeginnings: But natural lottery schemes such as these were nothing new to the La Follette clan, nor to most of their neighbors. Despite the leadership of an American-born minority, Wisconsin during its territorial period was a vast mosaic of loosely associated ethnic communities. Irish immigrants began arriving in the s. They were joined by many of their fellow citizens as the toll of the potato famine accelerated, beginning in By

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, a reported quarter-million acres of farmland had been sold to the Germans alone. These additional nationalities made more intricate the existing multi-ethnic mosaic. While they were denied a number of rights and privileges, including the franchise, they were allowed to marry whites, own property, attend public schools, and serve on juries. This mosaic of ethnic and religious heritages produced a unique and complex political character, a character Robert La Follette would grow up with and understand perhaps better than any politician before or since. Josiah, like his brothers, was hardworking and quickly became a successful farmer. The La Follettes were a well-educated clan as well. All were ardent abolitionists and members of the newly formed Republican party, an antislavery coalition of Northern Whigs, independent Democrats, and Free Soilers.

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Chapter 9 : Catalog Record: Speech of Senator Robert M. La Follette | Hathi Trust Digital Library

In the United States Senate, the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, or more formally, Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee Investigating Violations of Free Speech and the Rights of Labor (), began as an inquiry into a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) investigation of methods used by employers in certain industries to avoid collective bargaining with unions.

After securing the nomination, he "traveled to sixty-one counties, gave speeches and spoke to , people. He won the race for governor by , votes. During his first term, he proposed to set up a railroad commission, imposed an ad valorem tax on the railroad companies, and established a direct primary system. The Stalwarts blocked his agenda, and he refused to compromise with them. La Follette began working to unite insurgent Democrats to form a broad coalition. He did manage to secure the passage of the primary bill and some revision to the railroad tax structure. When the legislative session concluded, La Follette traveled throughout Wisconsin reading the "roll call"; that is, he read the votes of Stalwart Republicans to the people in an effort to elect Progressives. During this campaign, La Follette gained national attention when muckraking journalist Lincoln Steffens began to cover his campaign. With the press coverage and his successful re-election, La Follette rose to become a national figure. His message against "vast corporate combinations" attracted more journalists and more progressives. He created an atmosphere of close cooperation between the state government and the University of Wisconsin in the development of progressive policy, which became known as the Wisconsin Idea. The goals of his policy included the recall, referendum, direct primary, and initiative. All of these were aimed at giving citizens a more direct role in government. The Wisconsin Idea promoted the idea of grounding legislation on thorough research and expert involvement. This made Wisconsin a "laboratory for democracy" and "the most important state for the development of progressive legislation". As governor, La Follette signed legislation that created the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library now Bureau to ensure that a research agency would be available for the development of legislation. Nominates self for U. La Follette nominated himself and was confirmed by the State Senate. Senate seat unfilled until January 1, , when he resigned to join the U. He publicly proclaimed this unusual action was done to ensure that his platform was enacted in Wisconsin. Senator La Follette, Sr. La Follette spent the remainder of his life, from January 2, , until his death in , serving in the U. He opposed the prosecution of Eugene V. Debs and other opponents of the war and played a key role in initiating the investigation of the Teapot Dome Scandal during the Harding Administration. A brilliant orator given to periodic bouts of "nerves," La Follette made many enemies over the years, particularly for his opposition to American entry into World War I and his defense of freedom of speech during wartime. Teddy Roosevelt called him a "skunk who ought to be hanged" when he opposed the arming of American merchant ships.