

"Peace is a woman's job..."
Jeannette Rankin and
The Origins



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American Foreign Policy: of Her Pacifism

by Joan Hoff Wilson

Jeannette Rankin remains best known as the first woman elected to the House of Representatives, a feat she achieved in 1916, and as the only member of Congress to have opposed American entrance into **both** World Wars. Montanans have reason to be proud of her accomplishments. Yet for all of the prominence those two antiwar votes brought her, it remains difficult to piece together how she transformed a basically timid and insecure personality and several early career setbacks into a charismatic public personage. No conclusive evidence exists about the exact origins of her early ideas or about the long and indirect path that led first to her career as a suffragist and later as a pacifist. She was careless in the preservation of her private papers, leaving only a spotty record which is frustrating to the historian. Some individuals who knew her personally believe that this neglect reflected Rankin's preoccupation with the present and the future. She was a pragmatist, not a philosopher; a participant, not a preserver.

Even those who remember her strong stands against war forget that she played an important, if sporadic, role in the state's Republican party politics, that she suggested major electoral reforms which have become more popular and relevant with the passage of time, and that she criticized U.S. diplomacy between the World Wars and throughout the Cold War period as well. She was a most remarkable politician, reformer, political organizer, pacifist and conscientious critic. Although the public record documents her achievements and Montanans remember much of her career, the origins of her ideas about American foreign policy remain obscured.

We know that she became an ardent advocate of peace, but we do not know when or why. Why did she adopt pacifism when none of the other members of her family were pacifists? How did she come to take an antiwar position when her brother Wellington, the family member who influenced her most and shared her reform goals during the Progressive Era, opposed his sister's pacifism? Why do people with similar backgrounds, even with the same family environment, perceive the word so differently? And how significant is the fact that Rankin's formative years coincided with the rise of female political leadership in suffrage and other reform movements?

Montanans may never be able to reconstruct Jeannette Rankin's past well enough to answer these questions, but they are questions to be asked. What partial answers emerge give us a new view of Rankin. Tracing the development of her thinking on peace and the central role she saw women playing in achieving a world free from war takes us from her youth in western Montana to her position as a national pacifist leader in the 1920s. What we discover is that Rankin's vote against war in 1917 was more than a singular action; it influenced her political thinking for the rest of her life. The pioneer ideals she accepted in her Montana youth—hard work, honesty and perseverance—blended with her perceptions of women, international conflict and the destructiveness of war to make Jeannette Rankin one of the most unique female figures in American political history.

Rankin's Personality Traits

Born on June 11, 1880, at Grant Creek Ranch six miles from Missoula, Jeannette Pickering Rankin was the oldest of seven children—six girls and one boy. Because her father John Rankin (1841-1904) was a successful rancher and Missoula businessman, the family atmosphere in which she grew up represented an amalgam of western informality and upper middle-class expectations. As a child, therefore, Rankin exhibited seemingly contradictory personality traits stemming in part from this relatively unusual environment. She displayed a capacity for hard work, strong convictions, frontier independence of spirit tempered by the necessity to cooperate. Yet sibling rivalry and insecurity about her intellectual ability also made shyness and stubbornness hallmarks of her personality.

At best these characteristics made Rankin tolerant and innovative when dealing with new situations and ideas; at worst, they produced temper tantrums when she did not get her way or feel appreciated enough, and a single-minded rather than tough-minded approach to domestic and foreign problems. This determined, but essentially non-analytical, mode of operation occasionally turned Rankin's statements into self-fulfilling prophecies. This is not to say that her ideas were wrong. Usually they were overly simplistic: war is an inadequate means for settling disputes so it should be outlawed; limitation of armaments is insufficient so the United States should unilaterally disarm.

Rankin attended public schools in Missoula, graduating from the University of Montana in 1902 with a degree in biology. After teaching briefly in country schools at Grant Creek and Whitehall following graduation, she served a short apprenticeship as a seamstress in Missoula. Following her father's death in 1904, Rankin spent several busy but restless years at home. Because of her mother's increasing withdrawal from normal household duties, Rankin assumed full responsibility for the younger children in the family. In 1908 at the age of twenty-eight she left home to study at the New York School of Philanthropy. Returning to the West she practiced for only a few months as a social worker in Montana and Washington. Unhappy with her newly chosen profession because she could achieve few immediate remedial results, Rankin entered the University of Washington in 1909. While a student there she joined the successful Washington state campaign for suffrage in 1910. This experience marked a turning point in her life because she met a New Jersey journalist and former suffrage campaigner in Colorado, Minnie J. Reynolds, who convinced her that the quest for peace should be incorporated into the suffrage question.

Rankin officially launched her own political career in Montana on February 2, 1911, when she urged the state legislature to grant women the right to vote. For the next twelve months she gained valuable organizational and oratorical skills by working for suffrage groups in New York, California and Ohio. During 1913 and 1914, as a field secretary for the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), she lobbied for female suffrage in fifteen states. In addition, she made a half dozen trips home helping to win the vote for Montana's women in 1914. By 1916 Rankin faced a serious occupational choice. Should she continue to work for national suffrage; become a lobbyist for social legislation; or take advantage of the opportunity to run for Congress from Montana? Choosing the latter, she campaigned successfully on a progressive Republican platform calling for suffrage, protective legislation for children, tariff revision, prohibition and "preparedness that will make for peace." This began her national career, a career that did not end until her death fifty-seven years later.

From this sketchy biography we learn little about Rankin's motivations. Perhaps there are more subtle personality traits that may help us understand her better. At first glance, for example, it does not seem very significant that she happened to be the oldest of seven children, but the research of psychologists tells us that sibling order in a family can make a difference in the careers of professional women.

First-born girls or only-child females constitute the vast majority of any random sampling of professional women. This is because such girls are raised more like boys; often develop closer relationships with their fathers than younger female siblings; and receive more encouragement from both their mothers and fathers to assume nontraditional female roles inside and outside of the family. At the same time, however, first-born girls frequently find that their powerful sibling position turns out to be a mixed blessing. It can produce a personal sense of insecurity or at least ambivalence in the adult woman because she finds herself engaged in nontraditional activities and is not quite sure how to develop a confident female identity in what is considered an unfeminine role.

Sometimes such first-born or only-child women over-compensate by adopting a style known as the "frilly blouse" syndrome in which they attempt to appear and act as stereotypically feminine as possible while pursuing careers normally dominated by men. There are indications that Rankin adopted this defense mechanism by paying excessive attention to her appearance, including wearing carefully coiffured wigs in her later years. Clothes and cosmetics for her many public appearances constituted one of the few examples of extravagance in her otherwise modest lifestyle.



The Rankin family in about 1900. L. to r., John, Mary, Hattie, Jeannette (standing), Edna & Grace, portrait of deceased Phila (d. age 9), Wellington, Olive.

Self-doubt and a sense of inferiority plagued Rankin's entire career, but publicly she demonstrated great self-confidence—partly through impeccable dress. Perhaps she revealed this psychological insecurity most when she repeatedly said in interviews: "I can't stand to be a worm." But like the unprotected worm sunning itself on a warm summer's day, Rankin basked in the limelight during a few historical moments, and gloried in immediate gratification and praise. Thus it seems odd that she did not take the logical step of preserving her own papers to insure lasting interest in, if not approval of, her activities.

In a journal that can no longer be found among her private papers she reportedly wrote the following exhortation to herself upon graduating from college in 1902: "Go! Go! Go! It makes no difference where just so you go! go! go! Remember at the first opportunity go."* Although she could not remember writing this statement, when asked about it in 1972, she expressed the desire in that year to buy a mobile home in order to continue to travel around the coun-

try. From the very beginning, therefore, compulsive travel characterized Rankin's long life. This personality trait also accounted in large measure for her success as a politician and lobbyist.

Yet for all of her activism and professional contacts, Rankin remained a loner. In contrast, many single and married professional women of her generation participated in extensive female networks. Possibly her reliance on her only brother, continuous travel, and involvement with immediate family members substituted for close personal relationships with other female reformers. Although we will never know for certain because so few of her personal letters to and from other professional women now exist, it appears that Rankin did not receive sustained intellectual or emotional support from women friends. The only career women who corresponded frequently with Rankin were journalist Minnie J. Reynolds, author Katharine Anthony and missionary Harriet Yarrow.

In general, western women remain the orphans of women's history. In Rankin's case this traditional neglect has been reinforced by her own personal aloofness, sense of intellectual inferiority, and

* All quoted material marked with an asterisk indicates that the original document (or copy of it) cannot be found among Rankin's officially deposited papers.

absence of intimate male or female friends outside of her immediate family. Since she also believed that her education had been inadequate (her letters and unedited speeches display both grammatical and spelling errors), it is not surprising that she seldom wrote about her career in later years. For these and other reasons, there probably would have been a dearth of personal or reflective information in them.

Sketchy Biographical Sources

It is surprising that none of the historians who have previously written about Rankin has commented upon the inadequacies or, let's say, the peculiar nature of her private papers, which are now at the Schlesinger Library in Cambridge.¹ In particular there is a lamentable absence of personal information about her formative years up to 1907 when she finally left the family home in Missoula, Montana, and struck out on her own. This is because a journal that she kept during college and many private letters to various members of her family—all of which were made available to at least one researcher in the 1950s—are not in the Schlesinger collection. These documents either were lost or passed into private hands in the early 1960s when Wellington Rankin closed and sold the building that housed his law offices in Helena, Montana.² While Jeannette Rankin's letters from 1929 to 1939 to the National Council for the Prevention of War (NCPW) and other peace groups have been preserved,³ very few of her private letters to close friends or relatives before the Second World War have been. Because she did not type, there are almost no carbon copies of her replies to the many inquiries about American diplomacy that she received over the many years when she was not a member of Congress; there is only the notation "answered", marked on the inquiries. To the thousands of letters Rankin received as a Congresswoman concerning her votes against both world wars she understandably sent out standardized form letters repeating her already public remarks.

To make matters worse, Rankin hastily left her Congressional office in 1943, leaving others to pack up her records. As a result, her second term in Congress from 1941 to 1943 is not as completely documented as it should be. She then proceeded to compound these already haphazard archival habits by allowing what remained of the Congressional papers from her first term, 1917-1919, to grow



Rankin in 1907.

mouldy in the basement of her brother's ranch outside of Helena. In the 1950s and 1960s she also permitted segments of her papers to be shipped around the country among a few privileged researchers and acquaintances, so there is no telling how much was misplaced or misfiled in this fashion. In 1972 Rankin admitted to having "lost" a number of letters because she sent them to people who neglected to return them. Among those misplaced in this fashion were over a thousand letters defending her against a

1. Recent cataloging of the Rankin papers has revealed the extent to which they present an incomplete picture of her life, especially for the early years. The sparseness of the Schlesinger collection can only in part be compensated for by the many transcribed interviews of Rankin which exist (see n. 5). In addition to some family and general correspondence, newspaper clippings and scrapbooks, the collection also contains a half-dozen untranscribed tapes with friends in the last years of her life. Brief diary entries she made in 1946, 1955, 1959 and 1962-63 contain no pertinent information.

2. This information about documents missing from officially deposited Rankin papers was confirmed in separate conversations with Harriet Meloy, formerly of the State Historical Society Library, Helena, Montana, February 28, August 19, 1977; with Judge Frances C. Elge of Billings, Montana, March 1, 1977; attorney Louise Rankin Galt of Helena, August 19, 1977; and with Norma Smith of Wenatchee, Washington, January 21, 27, 28, 1977.

3. The bulk of these are located in the Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. They are located in Boxes 65-74 of the National Council for the Prevention of War (NCPW) collection and contain Rankin's correspondence with Frederick J. Libby and the NCPW staff from 1929 to 1954. There is also a separate Rankin folder containing miscellaneous letters and speeches in addition to those cataloged with the Women's Peace Union and the U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at Swarthmore.

4. "Quote can be found in Ted Carlton Harris, "Jeannette Rankin: Suffragist, First Woman Elected to Congress, and Pacifist" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1972), p.304. Information about her careless attitude toward her own papers came from conversations with Belle Fligelman Winestine of Helena, Montana, February 28, 1977, and with Norma Smith. Also see B. F. Winestine to Hannah Josephson, April 16, 1974, Josephson Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, and "Jeannette Rankin: Activist for World Peace, Women's Rights and Democratic Government," Suffragist Oral History Project, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1974 (hereafter cited as JR: UCB Oral History), p. 12.

Ford Hour commentator who said in December 1942, that she was “not clear-out American. . . . I have no use for any woman who stands in the place where a man ought to be—the United States House of Representatives.”⁴

Consequently, lengthy interviews with Rankin and her friends and relatives from 1963 through 1972 constitute a major source of personal information about her career before World War II. In these interviews she and others are often recalling events and ideas more than a half-century old.⁵ From the historian’s point of view any individual’s memoirs, written or oral, are suspect and should be checked against the private and public records.⁶ In Rankin’s case even her most sympathetic and conscientious biographers have seldom been able to cite conclusive primary information to confirm that her memories are indeed correct. A recent study, for example, attempts to document what she meant in her 1916 platform when she called for “preparedness that will make for permanent peace.” The only source cited to prove that she defined it as “a system of ‘coastal defense only’ with no preparations that would lead to participation in a war in a foreign country,” is a 1969 interview—conducted fifty-three years after the fact.⁷ This work also cites the same interview, without confirmation from other sources, to authenticate her initial reactions to the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914.⁸ To date, all studies of her have relied excessively and uncritically on interviews conducted in the last ten years of her life.

Added to this paucity of documentary material about the first two-thirds of her long career, is the lack of public or personal information about her views on foreign policy during the crucial Cold War years, 1945–1963. Although Rankin prophetically told a friend in 1942 that she feared FDR would destroy a sound American foreign policy by having the United States assume “responsibility for the rest of the world,” she wrote and said little about post-World War II diplomatic events, with exception of the Korean War. In January 1947, the *New York Herald Tribune* quoted her as saying that the country was “going straight to war unless we change our course . . . as soon as we get another crop of men ready.” Privately she expressed “great disappointment” over Korea, which she described as the latest of “our adventures in imperialism.” “The [cold] wars [have] succeeded in getting a good war started,” she wrote upon her return from India in

1950. Characteristically she expressed sympathy not only with “the young boys who are having to face this war,” but also with the conscientious objectors who opposed it. Believing “there is lots of peace sentiment but they [sic] are fed up with all this bla[h] about internationalism,” she told the missionary Harriet Yarrow in 1953 that “my heart goes out to the C.O.’s. They can’t carry the load alone.” In vain she hoped for a dramatic event to rally the forces of peace.⁹

Rankin’s comments on American diplomacy during the Cold War are few and far between. She published only one article in the 1950s and it concentrated on justifying her two antiwar votes. Nonetheless, the last paragraph of this 1958 article expressed fear over the country’s “being kept in ignorance” and apprehension about another war. Because she credited Eisenhower with ending the Korean conflict, her admiration for him grew as she came to believe that “the military can’t put anything over on him.” In fact, she voted for him in 1956 and told Yarrow after the election that “we seem to be doing much better about war. Ike seems to be really in earnest [sic] about preventing war. It is the only way his name can live in history—and he knows it.” Her admiration of Eisenhower led Rankin to support Richard M. Nixon for the presidency in 1960 and 1968 (she voted for Barry Goldwater in 1964 and George McGovern in 1972). Judging from her statements, she simplistically assumed that Nixon’s association with Eisenhower had taught him how to avoid war; in the same fashion, she also ignored all the unofficial military incursions and other Cold War activities undertaken during Eisenhower’s two administrations.¹⁰

Influences on Her Thought

Despite these deficiencies in biographical sources, scholars and popular writers have not hesitated to attribute Jeannette Rankin’s foreign policy to a variety of personal characteristics, from a

5. In addition to JR: UBC Oral History, for a complete listing of personal and public interviews with Rankin and her friends see Harris, “Jeannette Rankin,” pp. 361–64, and Doris Buck Ward, “The Winning of Woman Suffrage in Montana” (M.A. thesis, Montana State University, 1974), p. 160.

6. Memoirs often reflect how a person would like to be remembered, rather than what he or she actually thought or did. This was particularly true of Rankin who by her own admission did not like to think about the past, let alone be too concerned with accurate memories. For confirmation of this see JR: UCB Oral History, p. v, and conversation with Norma Smith. Discrepancies are most evident, for example, in her positive views about the World Court and League of Nations in the 1930s compared to her later criticisms of both when interviewed in the 1960s and 1970s.

7. Harris, “Jeannette Rankin,” p. 104. She had earlier defined what she meant by “coastal defense” in a 1942 amendment to the Military Appropriations Bill, but in all likelihood did not develop the concept in detail until some time in the 1930s. See Congressional Record 67 (Part V), p. 4830. This development in her thought can be traced in radio addresses between 1928 and 1939, Folder X, Box 65, NCPW Collection, Legislative Department, Jeannette Rankin Correspondence with Libby and Staff, 1929–1954, Swarthmore College Peace Collection (hereafter cited as NCPW: JR Correspondence).

8. Harris, “Jeannette Rankin,” p. 84.

9. *New York Herald Tribune*, January 24, 1947; *Great Falls Tribune*, June 3, 1951; JR to Libby, November 10, 1948; December 13, 1950—all in Folder VII, Box 68, JR: NCPW Correspondence; JR to Harriet Yarrow, January 20, 1953, Yarrow Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College.

10. Jeannette Rankin, “Two Votes Against War, 1917, 1941,” *Liberation* March 1958, p. 7; *Great Falls Tribune*, October 5, 1959; JR to Harriet Yarrow, January 20, 1953; December 14, 1956, Yarrow Papers; JR to Grace [Mrs. Thomas E. Kinney] May 29, July 19, August 1, 18, 30, September 3, October 1, 17, 25, 1952, Box 1, Ed Sanders interview of Rankin, February 19, 1971, Box 12—all in Jeannette Rankin Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College (hereafter cited as Rankin Papers). More information on Rankin’s checkered voting record on presidential candidates will be presented in the second part of this article.

sense of rugged individualism and self-reliance she allegedly learned on the family ranch in Montana, to the cooperative, humane and democratic inclinations she supposedly gained from her youth on the frontier. More specifically, the influence of her family, especially the progressive politics of her brother, has often been cited as the primary source of her life-long commitment to sexual equality, aid to the downtrodden, and world peace.¹¹

Another influence mentioned by biographers is Rankin's participation in the social justice wing of the Progressive Movement. Social justice Progressives, in contrast to the "scientific" wing which pressed for reform of American political and economic structures, concentrated on providing direct, personal services to the less fortunate through volunteer work and welfare legislation. This work and her early suffrage experiences have been credited with turning her into a humanitarian feminist, an uncompromising pacifist, and an advocate of grassroots or participatory democracy—all by the time she was first elected to Congress in 1916.¹²

Very little convincing evidence can be found for these generalizations, especially those suggesting that her political, social, economic, or foreign policy ideas had western origins. In later years, for example, Rankin denied one of the frequently quoted tales about how her father's antimilitary attitude, which was supposedly occasioned by his experience during the Nez Perce War in 1877, instilled similar sentiments in her.¹³ Apparently her sister Edna, the youngest of the Rankin children, helped to create this story about her father's observations during the Nez Perce excitement. This anecdote was then elevated into a "fact" by historians, one of whom, Hannah Josephson, insisted that her childhood "notions . . . must have been some reflection of your father's ideas," despite Rankin's strong reservations about such an interpretation.¹⁴

Nonetheless, it is evident from a 1916 article that Jeannette believed that the physical environment of the West had a profound impact on both men and women in their struggle against its hardships. Because they shared frontier burdens equally, men and women in western states accepted sexual equality to a greater degree than their eastern counterparts. Although American historians no longer categorically endorse this interpretation of western influences, Rankin's belief in it was a significant factor in her ideas about sexual equality. Otherwise her views on women appear to have been most influenced by Benjamin Kidd, the English sociologist,

although she did not publicly emphasize this intellectual debt until the 1970s.¹⁵

While campaigning for suffrage in New York, Rankin purchased a book Kidd had written a few years before, entitled *Social Evolution*. In this work he tried to popularize a version of reform Darwinism which argued that individuals could not be held exclusively responsible for their successes or failures. Kidd posited this theory in opposition to the popular understanding of social Darwinism that was based on the brutal notion of survival of the fittest. Kidd's reform Darwinism and social justice Progressivism shared an appreciation of the role environment played in individuals' lives.¹⁶

Although Rankin's temperament did not lend itself to reading and reflection, she was evidently even more impressed by a second book Kidd wrote in 1918 called *The Science of Power*. This was after she had cast her vote against World War I, but the work had a profound impact on her thinking because it made the distinction between "force" and "power." According to Kidd, men exercised the former; women the latter. As Rankin later recalled: ". . . force is something you use in the present . . . but power—it's something you can use in the future, and . . . the greatest power in the world was the emotion of an idea[.]" Kidd had attributed this "Emotion of the Ideal" to women, concluding that "it is in the woman that we have the future center of Power in civilization. . . . She is the . . . being to whom the future is greater than the present."¹⁷ Rankin modified Kidd's theories, insisting that men and women had to work together for peace and freedom, but she never gave up the idea that women were more likely to understand why "working for the future" was so important, especially if "peace habits" were to be substituted for war as a means of settling international disputes.¹⁸

Rankin's thinking led her to a singular and

11. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 1-38; Ronald Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin, Progressive-Isolationist" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1959), pp. 1-20; John C. Board, "The Lady from Montana: Jeannette Rankin" (M.A. thesis, University of Wyoming, 1964); idem, "Jeannette Rankin: The Suffrage Years and Before" (seminar paper, n.d.); Hannah Josephson, *First Lady in Congress: Jeannette Rankin: A Biography* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1974), pp. 5-29.

12. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 39-124; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 21-77; Josephson, *First Lady in Congress*, pp. 30-58.

13. JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 189-90.

14. Wilma Dykeman, *Too Many People, Too Little Love: Edna Rankin McKinnon: Pioneer for Birth Control* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974), pp. 21-22; Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 20-21, 27; JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 189-90, 192-93.

15. Rankin, "Why the West Leads in the East in the Recognition of Women," *Chicago Sunday Herald*, December 24, 1916.

16. Although Rankin quoted Kidd in at least one radio address in the 1920s ("Peace Through Political Action") and privately recommended an article condensing his views in 1943, the most publicized acknowledgment of his influence on her thinking occurred in her 90th Birthday Address on June 11, 1970 (see transcript in Box 10, Rankin Papers). A year earlier she also acknowledged Kidd's influence in an interview (see Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," p. 31) and two years later as well (see JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 2-3), but neither the Schaffer nor Board studies of the late 1950s and early 1960s contains any reference to Kidd. It is conceivable that Rankin overemphasized his influence on her in her later years, but there is no denying how cogently she continued to remember his ideas. Norma Smith to author, September 15, 28, 1977.

17. Benjamin Kidd, *The Science of Power* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1918), pp. 194, 203, 219; JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 2-3.

18. JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 3, 66, 277-78; Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 256, 276, 314-16; Jeannette Rankin Interview with Dick Cavett, April 17, 1972, pp. 7-8; "Why I Voted Against War," co-authored by Rankin and John Kirkley in the early 1970s, p. 3, Box 12, Rankin Papers.

powerful conclusion—women and peace were inseparable. For example, when she spoke in support of the most successful disarmament meeting in the interwar years, the Washington Conference on Limitation of Armament (1921-1922), she came directly to the point:

The peace problem is a woman's problem. Disarmament will not be won without their aid. So long as they shirk . . . something will be radically wanting in the peace activities of the public and the state. . . . I am aware that men are disposed to look down on the temperamental pacifism of women (which in spite of all the exceptions is a psychological fact) as something which the manly man would scorn to imitate. However, there is no other way that I can see in which peace can be realized except through forbearance from fighting on the part of men as well as women. . . . Therefore peace is a woman's job.¹⁹

In this same speech Rankin astutely noted that it would be more difficult for women to work for peace than it has been for them to work for suffrage because by joining the antiwar movement they would have to face "the most painful consequence of all—the loss of social approval."²⁰

Already convinced by Kidd that "women have something special to contribute to the progressive civilization: the belief in the power of a sustained passion for the ideal," she proceeded to equate such passion with motherhood. "Her life is given for her children, not by her death, but by her living, and not only in her working and caring day by day, but also in her looking always to the future, towards the fulfillment of her ideal." Rankin reasoned that because "killing is the antithesis of life and negates the very possibility of growing into fullness" it was this "same passion for the ideal, which a mother expresses in her love for her children, which we must achieve and maintain if we want our ideals to mature and flourish in society: self-control, compassion, honesty, integrity, and love must be conceived in our minds, incarnated through our daily actions and living, and patiently sustained in adversity. A dead enemy cannot become our friend. And—just as certainly—the ideal dies within us when we violate it." With this she concluded that "the motherhood of the world must demand that destruction be stopped and the abundance distributed."²¹

19. Rankin, "Peace and the Disarmament Conference," n.d., Box 3, Rankin Papers. Also see radio addresses: "Peace Through Political Action," n.d. [1925 and/or 1928-29] and "Women and Neutrality," July 18, 1935, Folder X, Box 65, NCPW: JR Correspondence.

20. Rankin, "Peace and the Disarmament Conference."

21. Rankin, "Why I Voted Against War," p. 3, and "Women and Neutrality." These are simply two of many similar statements she made over the years.

22. U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary, *Hearings on Amending the Constitution with Respect to Declaration of War*, 73rd Cong., 2nd sess., March 1934, p. 11. Also see 90th Birthday Address and JR: UCB Oral History, p. 66.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Rankin viewed women as the best vehicles in her crusade to inculcate "peace habits" throughout western society in order that the stupidity of war as a diplomatic tool would be universally recognized. In 1934, remarking on her own antiwar vote in 1917, she talked about peace habits.

I voted against war because for 7 years I had been following peace habits and thinking peace. . . . Now the reason the men voted for war was that they had war habits in their tradition, history and hearts. They think in terms of war, and habit is something you use in any emergency. War is an emergency and consequently they reverted to their war habits.²²

She believed that "the work of educating the world to peace is the women's job," was "because men have a natural fear of being classed as cowards if they oppose war." She also thought that since women greatly influenced the education of youth, they should be able to change not only public opinion about war, but other societal values as well.

Rankin urged women to eradicate war as an instrument of diplomacy. For her it was the most important message. Over the years she advocated a variety of ways for women to accomplish this task—ranging from female peace organizations to consumer boycotts.²³ It was the futility of war she decried, as she discussed in 1963 when she once again elaborated on her antiwar votes.

Both of my votes were votes against the war method. They were against war, not against or for the issues that we were told we were fighting for. If you're against war, you're against war regardless of what happens. It is a wrong method of trying to settle a dispute. I can't settle a dispute with a young man by shooting him. And a nation can't settle a dispute with another nation by killing their young men. We kill women and children with bombs, even the land and everything. War is a method, and you can be either for or against it and I'm against it because of its futility, its stupidity and its ultimate destruction of humanity—of civilization.²⁴

This statement and others Rankin made over the years clearly indicate the depths of her pacifism, but they do not indicate the origins of such ideas nor exactly when she began to relate them to Benjamin Kidd's concept of women. Unless her college journal and other pre-World War I letters, which were cited

23. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 182-84, 276, 314-17; JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 31-32, 82, 276-78; John C. Board, "Lady from Montana," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 17, No. 3 (Summer 1967), p. 17; also see "Peace Through Political Action," and *St. Paul News*, April 9, 1925, for still another reference to peace being a woman's job.

24. Transcript of John C. Board interview with Jeannette Rankin, August 29, 30, 1963, p. 52, Box 12, Rankin Papers.

in a 1959 study, are relocated, it will remain impossible to trace back any further the origins of her foreign policy views.

In contrast, it is fairly certain that many of her progressive domestic ideas crystallized during the year she studied at the New York School of Philanthropy in 1908-1909. We know who her instructors were, what classes she enrolled in, and, from the school's records and from one letter to her sister Mary written in February 1909, what books she read. The impact of the economic ideas of Simon N. Patten seemed to have impressed her most. In his book, *The New Basis of Civilization*, Patten stressed that poverty and misery were not inevitable conditions of life and could be eliminated through greater efficiency and reform. By accepting this viewpoint, Jeannette Rankin joined the ranks of the social justice wing of the Progressive Movement at its most simplistic level. Her initial attempts to practice social work in Montana, however, ended in frustration.²⁵

By her own admission Rankin "didn't enjoy going to school" and considered herself a "very poor student". Although she graduated from the University of Montana in 1902 with a B.S. in biology, she later said she was "not prepared to do anything." It was also evident that she felt intellectually inferior to the "well trained college girls" with whom she attended the New York School of Philanthropy and did not display any marked interest in scholarly pursuits.²⁶ In this sense she was a fairly typical progressive activist. Whether she systematically continued her formal education on her own after leaving the School of Philanthropy in 1909 is uncertain. It would appear that only accidental encounters with people or books directed her thinking from that time on.

One of these encounters was the writings of Kidd. An even earlier one, but harder to document, was her association with pacifist Minnie J. Reynolds in the Washington state campaign for suffrage, 1909-1910. Until her death in 1935, Reynolds remained Rankin's closest friend and correspondent. Unfortunately no correspondence between them can now be found in the Rankin papers, although some letters reportedly exist in private hands. It is also possible that another friend, Katherine Devereaux Blake, a New York school principal and co-worker with Rankin in the 1914 Montana suffrage campaign, instilled in her antiwar views. In 1915 Blake supervised the collection of over 355,000 signatures of school children against American entrance into



Rankin accepts bouquet from suffragists in Washington, D.C., in 1917.

World War I. By this time Rankin had also fallen under the influence of the pacifist faction within the suffrage movement led by Jane Addams—a woman she later thought should have been president. As a result of all these associations, especially the one with Reynolds, Rankin later recalled that "one of the first things we had talked about in woman suffrage [was] that it was women's job to get rid of war."²⁷

Rankin's Vote Against War

Pacifism was not unusual among prewar Progressives. It was only Rankin's later insistence on the crucial role that women instinctively could play in preserving peace that proved unusual in the long run. It is clear that her mentor Minnie J. Reynolds already believed that opposing war was as much a woman's issue as suffrage. While Rankin apparently subscribed to this point of view, she repeatedly said that suffrage, not the war in Europe, prompted her to run for Congress in 1916. Given her single-minded approach to issues, this was probably correct. She also insisted that she had not anticipated the outbreak of war in 1914 during her fight for suffrage in Montana, let alone American entrance during her 1916 campaign for Congress.²⁸ However, her platform did in-

25. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 30-35; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 15-19 (quoting February 1909 letter from JR to Mary Rankin).

26. JR: UCB Oral History, p. 282; Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 15-16; B. F. Winestine conversation; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," p. 18 (again quoting material no longer among Rankin's deposited papers). In 1933 Libby chided Rankin for the fact that she "hate[d] to study." See September 18, 1933, Folder III, Box 68, NCPW: JR Correspondence.

27. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 43, 93, 167; JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 80-81, 199; Board, "Lady from Montana," p. 5; Norma Smith to author, September 28, 1977, and comments by Smith at Montana History Conference, Helena, November 4, 1977.

28. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 40-43, 84-85; JR: UCB Oral History, p. 79; Rankin, "Two Votes Against War," p. 4; Board, "Lady from Montana," pp. 5-6.

clude a peace plank and a Montana newspaper described her in the summer of 1916 as an advocate of "a preparedness that will make for permanent peace." Forty-seven years later she claimed to have been very suspicious of Woodrow Wilson's 1916 campaign slogan: "He Kept Us Out of War." In contrast hers was "Let the People Know," but reportedly on Wellington's advice she did not publicly question the President's sincerity while running for Congress.²⁹

Shortly after her election, the *New York Times* quoted Rankin as believing that no war could continue for long without assistance from women. At her first news conference in February 1917, Rankin refused to state whether she was actually a pacifist, although she later indicated that Montanans were well aware of her antiwar position as a result of her campaigning for suffrage and for Congress. Curiously enough, she signed a lecture contract in January 1917, with a clause voiding the agreement if she voted *against* war as a United States Congresswoman. And her first official address under this contract in Carnegie Hall in March did not mention foreign policy at all. Instead, she emphasized such progressive political reforms as the direct popular vote for President, an absentee voter law, and the principle of what later became known through a Supreme Court decision as "one-man-one-vote."³⁰

During these months Rankin appeared unaware that President Wilson was anguishing about whether to recommend to Congress that the United States enter World War I, which had been in progress since 1914. Although the President had first exhorted the American people to be neutral about the European conflict, by the end of 1916 popular sentiment and the international lending policy of the U.S. government clearly favored the coalition of powers led by England over those led by Germany. Following the German return to unrestricted submarine warfare in February 1917, and the disclosure early in March of the infamous Zimmerman note suggesting an alliance between Mexico and Germany, Wilson's cabinet unanimously recommended that he ask Congress for a declaration of war. Still the President hesitated; he was no warmonger. Finally he called a special session of Congress for the evening of April 2. In tense silence the nation's representatives listened to Wilson describe the use of the submarine as "warfare against mankind" and proclaim that "the world must be made safe for democracy." Then they broke into thunderous applause.

Ironically on the morning of that same momentous day, Jeannette Rankin had been introduced on the floor of the House of Representatives as its first

female member. Four days later on April 6, 1917, she cast her first ballot in Congress, against American entrance into World War I, saying: "I want to stand by my country, but I cannot vote for war. I vote no." She was joined on that historic occasion by fifty-six other members of Congress and, contrary to popular accounts, she did not cry.³¹

The *Washington Post* reported at that time that her public record did not indicate how she would vote. In an era before it became famous for investigative reporting, the *Post* had no way of knowing that as early as December 14, 1914, Rankin had written to Stephen J. Stillwell, a member of the New York legislature, about the "brutal useless . . . great economic war" then raging in Europe.³² Only left-of-center Progressives viewed war as a struggle for economic advantage and condemned military confrontation as a primitive method for settling international conflicts. Such a position did not reflect mainstream progressivism. Rankin also privately reiterated the same minority sentiment among Progressives in 1918 when, during the negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles, she wrote the only Republican member of the peace delegation that wars were fought to "protect special economic privileges."³³ However, neither letter surfaced to document her early antiwar position until well after World War II.

In retrospect, what is most important about Rankin's vote against World War I is that it became a part of her persona. Four days after the momentous session in Congress she apologized to her brother for disappointing him. It "was the only way I could go," she lamely wrote him, mindful that he had urged her to vote a "man's vote" for war.³⁴ Then in August 1917, she sent out her first official justification to a Montana constituent. It read in part:

In the campaign last fall, I judged the sentiment in Montana was overwhelmingly against war. Of course, the situation had changed when the vote was taken and yet the letters and telegrams that came to me were sixteen to one against the war resolution. I tried to let Montana people know that whenever a question arose on which I had received no definite instructions I would vote in accordance with my highest ideals.³⁵

31. *New York Times*, April 7, 1917; Board, 1963 interview with Rankin, pp. 32-33; U.S. House of Representatives, Hearings on H. Res. 200, January 27, 1918, p. 204; JR: UCB Oral History, p. 214. No matter how many times Rankin refuted the charge she had cried in casting her vote against war, the story lived on. Typical of the editorials that perpetuated this myth was one which appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution*, April 7, 1917, entitled "The Tears and the Vote." Rankin Folder, CDG-A, Box 130, Swarthmore College Peace Collection (SCPC).

32. *Washington Post*, April 2, 1917: *quote from Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," p. 82.

33. JR to Henry White, November 30, 1918, Box 23, Henry White Collection, Library of Congress.

34. *Helena Independent*, April 26, 1917; Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," p. 120 (quoting JR to Wellington Rankin, April 10, 1917, no longer among Rankin's deposited papers*).

35. *Literary Digest* 55 (August 11, 1917), p. 43.

29. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 104-06; Board, "Lady from Montana," p. 6.

30. *New York Times*, November 19, 1916, *New York Tribune*, March 3, 1917; JR: UCB Oral History, p. 80; Board, "Lady from Montana," pp. 5, 10; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," p. 82 (quoting letter no longer among Rankin's deposited papers*); *Christian Science Monitor*, April 1, 1936.

This moderate statement became Rankin's standard response to the many inquiries she received about her vote during the war. From the floor of Congress, however, her words were more strident. "I still believe war is a stupid and futile way of attempting to settle international difficulties," she said during the debate over declaring war against Austria-Hungary in December 1917. "I believe war can be avoided and will be avoided when the people . . . have the controlling voice in their government. Today special privileged commercial interests are controlling the world."³⁶

Not until the summer of 1935 did Rankin begin to construct a much more elaborate rationalization of her original antiwar vote along these same lines. Obviously she had been influenced in the interim by her work for a variety of peace groups, most notably the NCPW, and the then popular revisionist criticisms of World War I. (Revisionist theories about historical events, especially wars, usually challenge the official explanations of national administrations on the basis of either a reinterpretation of old data or the introduction of newly uncovered facts.) In a private letter written on July 30, 1935, Rankin expressed her growing revisionist viewpoint about World War I.

I knew that we were asked to vote for a commercial war, that none of the idealistic hopes would be carried out, and I was aware of the falseness of much of the propaganda. It [sic] was easy to stand against the propaganda of the militarists but very difficult to go against friends and dear ones who felt that I was making a needless sacrifice by voting against war, since my vote would not be a decisive one.³⁷

By the end of the 1930s Rankin wrote standard revisionist articles against World War I as a matter of course. To this essentially economic argument she began to add highly subjective reasons. Sometimes she was critical of those House members who ignored statements opposing Wilson's war message. "They were stampeded," she later told John C. Board. "But never for one second could I face the idea that I would send young men to be killed for no other reason than to save my seat in Congress." Having not realized at the time how her negative vote might have given courage to others if she had made

her intentions clear, she vowed never again to fail "to let people know ahead what I was going to do." At other times Rankin recalled that she wanted to take a "woman's" stand against war, regardless of its political consequences.³⁸

Finally, writing in *Liberation* magazine in 1958, she repeated all of these reasons and tagged on an anecdote from her college days about how repugnant she had found Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade" because it glorified war and soldiers. In the same article she also insisted that "war had been on everybody's mind" in Montana in 1914, saying: "so we talked about suffrage in relation to war [and] I argued that women should get the vote because that would help keep the country out of war." Moreover, Rankin no longer distinguished between those suffragists who had encouraged her antiwar vote, such as Alice Paul, leader of the militant Woman's Party, and those who had not, such as Carrie Chapman Catt, head of the more moderate National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).³⁹ Clearly time and age worked to embellish, even obliterate, her initial apologetic and defensive responses about voting against war.

The passing years never changed Rankin's antiwar sentiments, however. If anything, her pacifism grew stronger toward the end of her life. On May 18, 1967, for example, she addressed a peace group in Atlanta, Georgia, suggesting that 10,000 determined women could end the war in Indochina. This and similar statements led to the creation of the Jeannette Rankin Brigade that organized a Washington protest march in 1968.

"I was thirty-six when I cast my vote [against World War I]," she confidently wrote with John Kirkley in 1972, "and I have not changed my mind." To biographer Norma Smith, Rankin finally concluded: "It was not only the most significant thing I ever did, it as a significant thing in itself."⁴⁰ So Jeannette Rankin's original opposition to World War I became a *raison d'être* for the rest of her career. That one act must have been disproportionately important to reorient her entire career toward professional pacifism, and this is even more a wonder when we consider that consistency and stubbornness were hallmarks of her personality.

36. *Congressional Record* 56 (Part I), p. 98.

37. "Quoted in Schaffer, 'Jeannette Rankin,' pp. 83-84. Rankin made somewhat similar statements to Harry E. Terrell, May 17, 1935, Folder V, Box 68, NCPW: JR Correspondence, and in a 1935 press release entitled "I Would Vote 'No' Again." Rankin Folder, CDG-A, Box 130, SCPC. This later appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*, April 1, 1936, and still later in a 1938 radio address.

38. *The Christian Herald*, April 1937; *Washington Daily News*, April 6, 1937; Jeannette Rankin, "Beware of Holy Wars," *World Outlook*, November 1938; Board, 1963 Interview, pp. 30-31.

39. "Two Votes Against War," *Liberation*, March 1958, p. 4; Board, 1963 Interview, pp. 28-29.

40. "Why I Voted Against War," pp. 2-3. That she was clearly aware of the antagonism between Catt and Paul was evident from the fact that she met separately with the two groups on the day of her vote against war. Norma Smith conversation and taped interview with Alice Paul. Also see Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 131-32, and JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 61-62.

41. "Why I Voted Against War," p. 3. Quote is from Norma Smith's manuscript.

42. 1918 Election Campaign Pamphlet, Rankin Papers: *Helena Independent*, April 18, 27, 29, 1918. More militant suffragists than Rankin suspected that Wilson stopped opposing the suffrage amendment to enlist women into the war effort. She was much more enthusiastic about selling Peace Bonds in the 1930s. See: JR to Libby, September 4, October 8, 1935, Folder V, Box 68, NCPW: JR Correspondence.

43. Carrie C. Catt to Mary Gray Peck, April 8, 1917, Catt Papers, Schlesinger Library.

Rankin's Dedication to Pacifism

During the remainder of her first term in Congress, Rankin used her position to try to improve the condition of women and limit the negative effects of war on them as consumers and workers. She supported pensions for dependents of American soldiers, public hygiene legislation and protective labor laws in addition to a federal suffrage amendment. Although she endorsed the President's "vigorous presecution of the war," she campaigned only half-heartedly for Liberty Bond drives.⁴¹ This desultory display of patriotism combined with emotions fanned by government-sponsored prowar propaganda to increase suspicions among Montanans about Rankin's as yet undeclared pacifism.

No longer able to run for the House in a statewide election because the legislature had divided Montana into two Congressional districts, she decided to run for the Senate in 1918 despite her growing unpopularity. When she lost her bid for the Republican nomination, she continued in the general election as a senatorial candidate of the newly organized National party, which represented an amorphous coalition of Non-Partisan League farmers, prowar Socialists, antiwar Progressives, and prohibitionists. From the outset it was a hopeless campaign made even worse when suffragist leader Carrie Chapman Catt supported Thomas J. Walsh, Rankin's Democratic opponent. As president of NAWSA, Catt had supported the war effort from the very beginning and after Rankin's vote against war Catt had written a friend that "our Congress Lady is a sure enough joker. Whatever she has done or will do is wrong to somebody, and every time she answers a roll call she loses us a *million votes*."⁴²

Even before April 1917, however, relations between Catt and Rankin had been poor. The former had thrown her weight behind Wilson in the election of 1916—presumably in return for the President's support of a federal suffrage amendment. And prior to the 1916 election there is evidence of personal rivalry between Catt and Rankin because of the condescension the eastern-based leadership of NAWSA had traditionally exhibited toward western suffragists.⁴³ Neither Rankin nor Nevada's Anne Henrietta Martin had been enthusiastically endorsed by eastern suffragists in their bids for House and Senate seats in 1916, 1918, and 1920. Martin and



Carrie Chapman Catt in 1914.

Rankin both felt that they merited high offices in suffragist and later in national peace organizations.⁴⁴

Jeannette Rankin, like many prewar reformers, remained convinced that the war had killed the Progressive Movement and broken the momentum behind the drive for women's rights. Always skeptical about President Wilson's claim that winning the war would make the world "safe for democracy," Rankin pointedly campaigned in 1918 to "make the world safe for humanity."⁴⁵ While this distinction is important, both were overly optimistic. The President tried to compensate with his futile battle over the League of Nations and the former Congresswoman did likewise by turning to the burgeoning postwar peace movement. In the course of the 1920s she became more of a pacifist than a feminist. Both her pacifism and feminism were, however, means to a larger end—humanitarianism.⁴⁶

Beginning in 1915 when she first joined the Woman's Peace Party, Jeannette Rankin's search for peace became a life-long pursuit. She subsequently belonged to the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, the Women's Peace Union, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and finally the National Council for the Prevention of War (NCPW). With the exception of the Georgia Peace Society, which she founded in 1928, none of these organizations lived up to Rankin's idealistic or organizational standards. In

44. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 131, 140; Harriett B. Laidlaw to JR, n.d. [1917], Laidlaw Papers, Schlesinger Library; JR: UCB Oral History, p. 37; conversation with Norma Smith; interview with Dorothy Detzer Denny, Monterey, California, December 11, 1976; "Mabel Vernon," Suffragist Oral History Project, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1976 [hereafter cited as MV: UCB Oral History], pp. 43-44.

45. Otis Graham, *The Great Campaigns: Reform and War in America, 1900-1928* (Prentice-Hall, 1971); JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 56-57, 178, untranscribed interview of JR by Marie Sale, n.p., n.d., reel 4 and transcribed interview of JR by Dick Cavett, April 17, 1972, reel 2 or Folder 205—both in Box 12, Rankin Papers; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," p. 144.

46. JR: UCB Oral History, p. 213; conversation with Norma Smith; interview with Dorothy Detzer Denny, Monterey, CA, December 11, 1976. She did not, for example, participate in efforts to obtain international rights for women in the 1920s and 1930s. See Paula F. Pfeffer, "'A Whisper in the Assembly of Nations': The International Movement for Women's Rights Between the Wars," unpublished paper.

each case either she opposed their top-down organizing tactics or they refused to finance her grassroots approach. In some instances there were ideological differences as well. Thus, she left her position as field secretary with the WILPF in 1925 after it proved impossible to finance her elaborate plan for organizing in the West. Like so many other women who had worked for suffrage in western states, Rankin had difficulty working with the top eastern leadership of the WILPF, especially its strong-minded executive secretary Dorothy Detzer.⁴⁷

The Georgia Peace Society remained her "home base" of pacifist operations from the late 1920s until it languished from lack of funds and support on the eve of World War II. Although she remained a resident of Montana, it was from Georgia that she participated in a number of national projects usually requiring much travel. Between 1921 and 1929, for example, she supported the activities of the Women's Peace Union, whose sole purpose was to outlaw war through a constitutional amendment. The WPU hired her as an official lobbyist for six months in 1929. She left the job disillusioned with the organization's methods. The WPU wanted her to lobby members of Congress while she wanted to organize people at grassroots levels. So in 1929 she stopped lobbying for this particular constitutional amendment.⁴⁸

That same year Rankin began a ten-year association with the National Council for Prevention of War. Once again she was employed as a lobbyist, but this time for the wider variety of National Council antiwar causes. In 1939 this affiliation also ended in acrimony engendered by disagreement over salary cuts due to declining funds and Rankin's feeling that her local peace work in Georgia against Representative Carl Vinson's perennial naval bills had never been sufficiently appreciated by other NCPW leaders. Although Rankin directed much of her dissatisfaction toward NCPW Executive Director Frederick J. Libby, she finally resigned when a rather petty dispute erupted with Education Secretary Florence Boeckel over the contents of a speech.⁴⁹

More important, Rankin conflicted with the National Council after 1936 when she became increasingly critical of the international policies of both Secretary of State Cordell Hull and FDR.⁵⁰

In the late 1930s she came to believe that her associates were not as dedicated to the cause of peace as she was. In an absolute sense she was more committed to pacifism than some co-workers in these interwar years; the cause of peace dominated her life to the degree that she demonstrated little, if any interest, in other pursuits. It should be remembered, however, that such single-mindedness is still considered a "normal" perspective for today's most committed reformers. It is true that Rankin often justified her frenetic traveling as working for world peace even when it was obvious that sometimes she simply wanted to escape from disagreeable situations. No doubt many of her colleagues had difficulty working with her. Occasionally they complained about her so-called dictatorial methods and suspected that she coveted the limelight too much. But these were common charges levied against practically every outstanding female leader of her generation.⁵¹

Although these characteristics made Rankin a very effective lobbyist, she, in turn, resented not being able to work at her own intense pace and on her own terms. Often frustrated and unhappy with her treatment at NCPW headquarters, she finally resigned on April 1, 1939. Despite her private conviction that she and the Executive Director were in basic disagreement over tactics and that "neither she nor any woman on the [NCPW] staff was ever accorded equality with the men," Rankin remained on relatively friendly terms with him. Not even the unconscious sexism that emerges in his correspondence prevented Libby from contributing to her successful 1940 campaign for a second term in Congress.⁵²

47. Marie Louise Degen, *The History of the Woman's Peace Party* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1939), p. 38; JR: UCB Oral History, pp. 13, 102-03; Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 184-85; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 164-77; interview with Dorothy Detzer Denny.

48. Rankin, "Working Politically for Peace in Georgia," January 5, 1932 statement; Elinor Byrns to JR, April 1, May 10, 1929, Caroline Lexow Babcock to JR, May 9, 1929, JR to Byrns, April 6, 1929—all in Rankin Folder, CDG-A, Box 130, SCPC; "Teachers and World Peace," July 1, 1929 radio address, untitled September 6, 1929 radio address, "Outlaw War Constitutionally," September 9, 1929 radio address—all in Folder X, Box 65, National Council for Prevention of War [NCPW]; JR Correspondence, SCPC; Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 185-201; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 173-177.

49. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 202-220; Schaffer, "Jeannette Rankin," pp. 229-230. For representative correspondence over tactical and financial disputes see: Libby to JR, September 19, 1931, July 28, 1938, JR to Libby October 2, 1931, October 24, November 29, 1933, September 4, 1935, January 17, July 21, September 12, 1938, August 7, September 20, 1939, Box 68, NCPW; JR correspondence, SCPC; Norma Smith to author, July 12, 1978.

50. Her earliest criticism of FDR began with an October 24, 1933 letter to Libby, but became most evident in 1938. See: JR to Gladys E. Heinrich Knowles, August 22, 1938, JR to Libby, January 17, 1938, NCPW; JR Correspondence, SCPC; JR to Flora Belle Surles, January 15, 1938, uncataloged Surles Papers, Schlesinger Library.

51. Ted C. Harris, "Jeannette Rankin in Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 58 (Spring 1974), p. 70. In turn, Rankin expressed much discouragement, boredom and fatigue to Surles and NCPW leaders between 1935 and 1940.

52. For her decision to run in 1940 and Libby's support see: JR to Libby, June 4, 1940 and Libby to JR, June 6, 1940, NCPW; JR Correspondence, SCPC; JR: UCB Oral History, p. 84 (quote paraphrased by interviewer from off-tape remarks made by Rankin).

53. For a discussion of nationalism versus internationalism and differences between orthodox and revisionist historians on this issue see: Joan Hoff Wilson, *American Business and Foreign Policy, 1920-1933* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1971); idem, *Ideology and Economics: U.S. Relations with the Soviet Union, 1918-1933* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1974).

54. Joan Hoff Willson, ed., *The Twenties: The Critical Issues* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971); JR: UCB Oral History, p. 113; Harris, Rankin in Georgia," pp. 57-59, 72; John Kirkley, "An Afternoon with Jeannette Rankin," in JR: UCB Oral History, p. 149; Rankin, "There is Continuous Want While the Governments of World are Spending Billions for Armaments," *International Disarmament Notes*, January 18, 1932; Rankin, "Can We Afford War?" *Church Woman*, August-September, 1967. The "Georgian" side to her life will be discussed in the second part of this article.

55. Transcript of Rankin's 90th Birthday Address, June 11, 1970, Box 11, Rankin Papers. For similar remarks see: "Peace Through Political Action," 1925 and/or 1928-1929 radio address, "I'd Still Vote No.," April 6, 1938 radio address—both in Folder X, Box 65, NCPW; JR Correspondence, SCPC.