

# Propaganda: How America "Sold" WWI

The American government relied on propaganda to encourage citizens to support the war. The Four Minute Men program was one of the most successful propaganda programs of World War I. In merely 18 months, 75,000 people delivered 1.5 million speeches to millions of people across the country.

These speeches covered all aspects of the war, encouraging people to conserve food, buy Liberty Bonds (war bonds issued by the government to help pay for the war), enlist for military service, and give their support to the war effort. They could be delivered in any public place, such as movie theaters, street corners, county fairs, and even churches and synagogues.

The Committee on Public Information (CPI) provided guidelines on how to write these speeches. The following is an adapted example on how to encourage the purchase of Liberty Bonds:

1. **Have an opening** to grab the attention and interest of the audience.
2. **Write a body** to present facts that will appeal to the rationality of the audience.
3. **Have an emotional appeal** to stir sentiment and make the audience want to act and to buy Bonds.
4. **Have an ending** that summarizes your closing appeal.

**DIRECTIONS** Choose an issue or cause of today and write your own Four Minute Men speech. Follow the guidelines of the CPI to write your speech. For more information and guidelines, check out [bit.ly/GreatWarFourMinuteMen](http://bit.ly/GreatWarFourMinuteMen).



COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION, WASHINGTON, D. C. DEPARTMENT OF "FOUR-MINUTE MEN"

MINUTE MEN  
MANHATTAN PLACE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

**WHY WE ARE FIGHTING.**

To all Four-Minute Men:

It is clear that the time has come to impress upon the people the necessity of winning the war and winning it quickly. Personal responsibility and the success of every war measure must be developed.

The National Government has made clear its aims in the President's addresses and the statements of its responsible officials. These and "How the War Came to America," and the "War Message and Facts Behind It" are available from which to draw facts and arguments. The literature in your hands. They are the basis of your preparation.

Our immediate task is four-minute speeches, extracts from the speeches, on the necessity of winning the war and the consequences of defeat.

You should prepare at once for these speeches. Master thoroughly the above pamphlet (to cover mainly) the material before, during, and after home and away from the things that your people need. To be more vigorously and effectively a few pages, are one point. Don't try to cover all.

We wish to impress upon all Four-Minute Men the necessity of studying their speeches to four minutes. We have a definite agreement with the newspapers exhibitors in this effort. It is our duty to respect this agreement. Four minutes is long enough. Talking overtime is a distinct evidence of lack of preparation and a breach of our contract with the meeting picture interests. Let preparation be your motto.

**1. Why, then, do we fight President's address?**

The President's address is the best to read, the best to study, the best to use. It is the best to use in the words of the President, the Secretary of the Treasury.

Why are we fighting Germany? The best answer is that we are fighting for a world of peace and freedom. We are fighting for a world in which the rights of all nations are respected. We are fighting for a world in which the rights of all people are respected. We are fighting for a world in which the rights of all nations are respected. We are fighting for a world in which the rights of all people are respected.

It is our duty to study the President's address, the Secretary of the Treasury's address, the War Message and Facts Behind It, and the literature in your hands. They are the basis of your preparation. They are the basis of your preparation. They are the basis of your preparation.

It is our duty to study the President's address, the Secretary of the Treasury's address, the War Message and Facts Behind It, and the literature in your hands. They are the basis of your preparation. They are the basis of your preparation. They are the basis of your preparation.

It is our duty to study the President's address, the Secretary of the Treasury's address, the War Message and Facts Behind It, and the literature in your hands. They are the basis of your preparation. They are the basis of your preparation. They are the basis of your preparation.

TOP: Poster promoting the purchase of Liberty Bonds. LEFT: A newsletter telling Minute Men what their speeches should be about.