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INTERVENTION AND REACTION: FLORIDA NEWSPAPERS AND UNITED STATES ENTRY INTO WORLD WAR I

by C. PETER RIPLEY *

FLORIDA NEWSPAPERS largely ignored the war in Europe until 1917. In early January there was only an occasional mention of the international situation except for brief reports on the fighting. But by mid-February the possibility, and in some cases the inevitability, of United States involvement in the war was a major editorial topic. A month later a majority of the papers favored America's joining the crusade to make the world "safe for democracy."

The *Miami Herald* was the first Florida daily to show an editorial interest in German-American relations. When President Woodrow Wilson's offer to negotiate peace was ignored by the entente in early January, the *Herald* reported that the only future negotiations leading to peace would be those "carried on at the point of the bayonet and at the mouths of cannon."¹ But it was not suggested that the cannons and bayonets be American, and the tone of the editorial indicated that the only real affront was to American pride. Two weeks later the *Herald* acknowledged that the majority of the people did not want war "and would not consent to . . . entering it unless . . . attacked."²

In February the possibility of the United States entering the war became a matter of increasing concern for Floridians. The first incident receiving wide press coverage was German resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare against neutral merchant vessels.³ The *Miami Herald* took the lead among the

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1. *Miami Herald*, January 13, 1917.

2. *Ibid.*, January 26, 1917.

3. After the sinking of the French passenger ship *Sussex* on March 24, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson threatened to sever diplomatic relations with Germany unless that nation ceased waging submarine warfare against neutral merchant ships. Germany agreed to the *Sussex* pledge until January 31, 1917, when it announced that unrestricted

militants. It announced that in view of the American position that "the seas must be open to . . . legitimate errands," the German action appeared to be deliberate provocation. The *Herald* prematurely concluded that "we now can only await the overt act."⁴ Joining the *Herald* was the *St. Petersburg Daily Times*. In its first strong editorial on the war the *Times* reasoned that since the start of the conflict, the United States had assumed the role of protecting neutral rights at sea and could not very well abandon its position in the face of the German threat. Without prescribing a course of action the *Times* announced that America "must act!"⁵

The resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare was quickly followed by the severance of German-American diplomatic relations and an increase in neutral ship losses. By mid-February almost all Florida papers were describing their readers' increased awareness of the international situation. On February 15, the *Tampa Morning Tribune* proclaimed that "the spirit of militarism is now sweeping the country in every direction."⁶ A few days later the *Tribune's* Sunday magazine section printed a full page poem entitled "We Are Ready, Brother Wilson." The President was assured that the nation and its resources were pledged to support him and "to defend the Motherland!"⁷

The *Miami Herald*, still the most jingoistic of the state's papers, announced that while all Americans deplored war, they should remember that "there are worse things for a nation than . . . armed conflict." One of the "things" mentioned as less desirable was being deprived of "rights on the oceans."⁸ The *St. Petersburg* paper informed its readers that the President had done everything possible to avoid breaking diplomatic relations and that he had "followed his ever-patient policy to the end."⁹ When the *Times* endorsed Wilson's actions and as-

submarine warfare against neutral ships would resume on February 1. German leaders apparently believed that the potential successes of that policy in defeating England outweighed the dangers of United States entry into the war.

4. *Miami Herald*, February 1, 1917.

5. *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, February 3, 1917.

6. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, February 15, 1917.

7. *Ibid.*, February 25, 1917.

8. *Miami Herald*, February 10, 1917.

9. *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, February 4, 1917.

sured him that he had “the undivided loyalty of the American public,” it was representative of the position of most Florida papers.¹⁰

Although a majority of the papers applauded Wilson as he and the country moved toward war, there were other positions represented in the state. The *Gainesville Daily Sun* supported the President when he severed diplomatic relations with Germany and recommended giving him authority to act as he thought best. This recommendation was qualified, however, by the hope that the President would use “all his wisdom and skill to avert an open rupture with Germany and a formal declaration of war.”¹¹ While the Gainesville paper gave Wilson qualified support, the Madison *Enterprise-Recorder* was hostile to his policies. In an editorial on the rupture of diplomatic relations the *Recorder* lamented, “nothing but war is very much expected.” Moreover, it implied that the United States was not without responsibility for the tense situation between the two countries: “this country has hardly treated Germany exactly right in some ways.” The Madison editor noted that American neutrality allowed the allies to obtain supplies and munitions, while the British blockade denied the Germans the same privilege. He concluded, “we have been neutral in letter but not in spirit.”¹²

Critical editorial comments appeared when Wilson asked Congress for authority to arm American merchant vessels and to employ “other instrumentalities” if necessary. The wide powers implied by “other instrumentalities” were ostensibly requested because Congress was to adjourn in nine days, and Wilson felt he needed authority to act decisively and quickly if the necessity arose. The request was blocked in the Senate by seven Republicans and five Democrats led by Robert M. La Follette who filibustered against the bill. Wilson retaliated by damning the Wisconsin senator and his fellow dissenters as a “little group of willful men.” With few exceptions the press picked up the phrase, rushed to Wilson’s assistance, and joined the denunciation. The *Miami Herald*, quoting President Wilson, described the filibuster as the “most reprehensible tactic ever

10. *Ibid*; *Jasper News*, February 9, 1917; *Starke Bradford County Telegraph*, February 16, 1917; *Fort Myers Daily Press*, February 27, 1917.

11. *Gainesville Daily Sun*, February 11, 1917.

12. *Madison Enterprise-Recorder*, February 9, 1917.

adopted in a civilized country” and accused the twelve senators of betraying the United States.¹³ In an editorial, headlined, “Wilson Powerless in Face of Grave National Danger,” the *Tampa Morning Tribune* protested that the safety of America was being jeopardized by the senators and that they deserved to have their “twelve names on [the] nation’s roll of dishonor.”¹⁴

The *Panama City Pilot*, not content with simply denouncing LaFollette for his actions, extended its criticism to the voters who elected him. It noted that LaFollette opposed the armed neutrality bill in the senate, and four Wisconsin representatives opposed it in the house.¹⁵ Because Wisconsin contained a large foreign population, particularly of German origin, the *Pilot* reasoned that the congressional dissenters had been sent to Washington “by the votes of . . . traitorous Germans.” The editorial argued, “It is time this country stopped giving refuge to German spies and Teutonic anti-American propagandists who are responsible for these disloyal utterances.”¹⁶ If the *Pilot* was the most illogical in its writings against LaFollette, the *Tampa Morning Tribune* was the most persistent. As late as April 4, long after armed neutrality ceased to be an issue, an editorial entitled “The Senator From Berlin” appeared. Denouncing LaFollette as a traitor, it called for the eradication of “such dangerous agencies as LaFollette and his like.”¹⁷

Not every Florida paper was a confidant as the *Tribune* that Wilson’s policy of armed neutrality was best for the nation. At least two journals opposed the policy and defended “the little group of willful men.” The *Florida Times-Union* announced that it would follow the will of the majority in the senate but protested the denunciations aimed at those who “believe they are performing a patriotic duty in obeying the voice of conscience while justified by the law.” In an analysis of the situation the Times-Union pointed out that recalcitrant senators violated no law in opposing either the wishes of the President or the senate majority: “they are responsible to their constituents but not to the President [or] to the body where

13. *Miami Herald*, March 5, 1917.

14. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, March 5, 1917.

15. Congress did not pass the armed neutrality bill, but Wilson was able to arm merchant ships under statute law without specific authority from congress.

16. *Panama City Pilot*, March 8 1917.

17. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 4, 1917.

they are units.”¹⁸ As the controversy continued, the *Times-Union* suggested that Wilson’s request of congress for “other instrumentalities” was, in fact, a request for authority to declare war, and that authority, as defined by the Constitution, belonged to congress alone.¹⁹ The senators were therefore characterized as defenders of the Constitution while Wilson emerged in the eyes of the Jacksonville paper as a usurper of power in this ingenious bit of role-switching.

In a more home-spun manner the Madison *Enterprise-Recorder* also defended the opposition. Responding specifically to the *Tampa Tribune*, the *Recorder* stated that the senators were “clearly . . . not deserving of the abuses . . . heaped upon them” and proposed that the country was not in full agreement with the President’s policy of armed neutrality. The writer admitted that he was not “firmly convinced” what the best policy would be and further admitted his pleasure that “the duty of that decision does not devolve upon this country paper.” The editorial ended with a philosophical defense of the senators: “In our judgment of men and their motives, we should at all times exercise temperance and self-restraint.”²⁰

Temperance and self-restraint were scare qualities in the Florida press in March 1917. Throughout the month editorial attitudes became increasingly militant. When three unarmed American ships were reported sunk on March 16, the news media generally agreed that war now existed except for the actual declaration:²¹ The *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, in an editorial entitled ‘A State of War,’ contended that Germany “has no respect for American vessels.” When her submarines approached an armed American merchant ship, Germany would then make the decision of whether or not the United States Navy would be involved in the conflict.²² The *Miami Herald* announced: “This is war!” The sinkings revealed the “diabolical determination” of Germany to force America into war. The *Herald* concluded: “This is the overt act which the American people have been expecting.”²³ The *Tampa Morning Tribune*

18. Jacksonville Florida Times-Union, March 7, 1917.

19. *Ibid.*, March 9, 1917.

20. Madison *Enterprise-Recorder*, March 16, 1917.

21. The three ships were *City of Memphis*, *Illinois*, and *Vigilancia*.

22. *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, March 20, 1917.

23. *Miami Herald*, March 19, 1917.

speculated on March 20, that the sinkings would force Wilson to ask for a declaration of war, which "public sentiment will support."²⁴ It recognized that the sinkings did not alter the situation immediately but projected they would "further inflame American sentiment against the buccaneers." The militant *Tribune* insisted that "a state of war now exists." More than the arming of merchant vessels was needed: "We must at once begin aggressive warfare against German submarines with the full power of the navy, backed by the whole strength of the nation."²⁵

In contrast, the *Florida Times-Union*, the only major paper in Florida critical of the American position, asked why war was any more imperative in 1917 than it was a year earlier. There was little change on the international scene, it claimed, and suggested that in 1916 popular votes were more important to the Wilson administration than diplomatic problems.²⁶ The Jacksonville paper shifted its position after the sinkings. It acknowledged that the American policy would not permit such actions, that American ships had been sunk, and that they would continue to be sunk. With this in mind the *Times-Union* suggested that congress be assembled and the United States start preparing for war rather than drifting in that direction for another four years.²⁷

The Artisan, a labor union weekly published at Jacksonville, made a similar shift in policy. In late February it protested the "war fever," described the "state of the public mind" as being much the same as it had been on the eve of the Spanish-American War, and blasted reactionary politicians and the press for trying to "stampede the people."²⁸ Less than a month later, while not favoring the war, *The Artisan* acknowledged its inevitability due to the sinkings.²⁹ In a lengthy editorial *The Artisan* outlined labor's position. Considering the condition of labor unions in 1917, it is not surprising that the statement was oriented to self-interest. Generally it stated that because modern warfare required the support of all segments of society, the various segments should have a say in the course

24. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, March 20, 1917.

25. *Ibid.*, March 20, 1917.

26. Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, March 3, 1917.

27. *Ibid.*, March 20, 1917.

28. Jacksonville *The Artisan*, February 24, 1917.

29. *Ibid.*, March 24, 1917.

of the nation, that "justice between men" at home was a fundamental step to preparedness for war, and that "the rights, interests and welfare of workers" could not be sacrificed in the name of "national safety." After outlining the terms necessary for labor's cooperation with the government, *The Artisan* issued a warning to union members. Workers were cautioned to keep one eye on the foreign enemies and the other on "exploiters at home."³⁰

While the *Times-Union* and *The Artisan* modified their positions, the Madison *Enterprise-Recorder* maintained its anti-interventionist posture up to the declaration of war. Just three days prior to Wilson's war message this Florida weekly protested that "much of the United States is war-mad." The paper was convinced that unrestricted submarine warfare was a desperate effort by Germany to end the war quickly because of critical shortages at home. While not defending the submarine policy, much concern was expressed for the German people who were reported to be suffering under a government over which they had no control. Of the situation in both countries the *Enterprise-Recorder* stated: "Influenced by the constant nagging of those who are profiting . . . by the war, cowered into submission and approval by cries of molly coddle, jellyfish and pacifist, dazzled by military trappings and splendor, this great nation is about to seize upon poor, bleeding Germany, whose rulers truly have grossly sinned, but whose people are as noble a race of God's children as any of us."³¹

The usually militant *St. Petersburg Daily Times* agreed in part with the *Recorder's* appraisal. While not protesting America's pending involvement in the war, the *Times* felt it should be clearly stated that we would be at war against the ruling military autocracy and not against the German people.³² Regardless of the opinion of the *St. Petersburg* and Madison papers, congress made little distinction between the German people and the military autocracy in its declaration of war of

30. *Ibid.* The policy statement was made by the officers of the National and International Trade Unions of America. One specific demand was that labor be represented on "all agencies determining and administering national defense." On April 28, 1917, *The Artisan* announced that representatives from labor were serving on the National Committee of Defense.

31. Madison *Enterprise-Recorder*, March 30, 1917.

32. *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, March 27, 1917.

April 6. But the declaration did affect at least a segment of the Florida press. The previously critical *Times-Union* announced that with the declaration of war "all discussion closes [and] every American worthy of the name will bend his energies to ending the war through victory." Although previously opposed to giving Wilson authority to use "other instrumentalities," once war was declared the *Times-Union* urged congress to give the President "anything reasonable" to insure success.³³ The *Enterprise-Recorder* was less enthusiastic in its call for unity. It pointed out that it "was one of those that did not think conditions absolutely necessitated war," but now it was "only proper for all Americans to stand by our country." The hope was for an early and just peace.³⁴

Consistent with its past attitude the *Miami Herald* proclaimed that the American people wanted the war-wanted it because it would "put an end to the greatest danger that ever threatened civilization," and because it would bring "peace and [the] universal reign of democracy."³⁵ The *Tampa Morning Tribune* joined the consensus: American participation in the war would make the world "safe for democracy." The *Tribune* announced that it "has now become a war for the extermination of military autocracy . . . and [for] the guarantee of permanent peace throughout the world." Reflecting this mood, the *Tribune* thought that American involvement would mean not only a quicker end to the war but also the end of the "discredited system of hereditary monarchy . . . , the leveling of all titled aristocracies, [and] the establishment of the rule of the people in every land under God's sun."³⁶

Many of Florida's rural weeklies, which had shown small concern with the international situation, acknowledged the declaration of war in their own way and called for a united effort. The Titusville *East-Coast Advocate* felt, "It is not the fault of the United States that she has declared war, but the fault of Germany, who has ruthlessly murdered our men, women, and children on the high seas."³⁷ The Bartow paper credited Wilson with using "force and logic" to justify his

33. Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, April 6, 1917.

34. Madison *Enterprise-Recorder*, April 13, 1917.

35. *Miami Herald*, April 7, 1917.

36. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 7, 1917.

37. Titusville *East-Coast Advocate*, April 13, 1917.

position. It announced that "the great bulk of the people are sorry that it seemed necessary to take this final step, but having taken it there should be no half-hearted support of the government."³⁸ From Starke came word *that* while many opposed the war, there was no other alternative under the circumstances. "Better to be poor with honor than rich with shame," philosophized that city's *Bradford County Telegraph*.³⁹ It appears the *Jasper News* gave the declaration of war the least attention of any Florida paper. Reflecting its rural readers' more immediate problems, its first edition after the declaration gave wider coverage to the problem of ticks, their effect on milk yield, and the necessity of their eradication than to the conflict.⁴⁰

There were aspects of the war at home that soon received considerable attention. A major concern was rising prices and America's obligation to supply foodstuffs to the allies. The Florida press did much to make its readers aware of the problem of food production. The papers printed President Wilson's pleas to the farmers and expressed gratitude to the Florida commissioner and the national secretary of agriculture for their assistance in the war effort.⁴¹ Prior to the war the *Tampa Morning Tribune* encouraged all urban dwellers to plant gardens in their back yards,⁴² and the St. Petersburg paper claimed that the success of the allied cause depended on the efficiency of American agriculture.⁴³ The *Miami Herald* told the state's farmers that if they were serious about the war there would be no need to bring food products into the state for they should be able to feed Florida's residents.⁴⁴ Jacksonville's citizens were offered an imaginative solution to the food problem by the *Florida Times-Union*. It recommended that the city allow its people to cultivate gardens on public-owned lots, and reported that the idea was "widely applauded from all sides." The Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce assumed responsibility for coordinating the program, and *the Times-Union* provided seeds,

38 Bartow Courier-Informant, April 10, 1917.

39 Starke *Bradford County Telegraph*, April 13, 1917.

40: Jasper News, April 13, 1917.

41. *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, April 4, 1917; Jasper News, April 20, 1917.

42. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, March 19, 1917.

43. *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, April 4, 1917.

44. *Miami Herald*, April 10, 1917.

implements, and fertilizers.- By April 15, the project was well underway.⁴⁵

The *Courier-Informant* of Bartow introduced a news item with: "Serve Your Country/Raise More to Eat/Save What You Raise." Offering practical advice, it suggested limiting crops to those which could be produced abundantly in the available soil and climate. Specifically, "it would be foolish to attempt anything 'but velvet beans' on unused fields; peanuts would pay for themselves by adding fertilizer to the soil; sweet potatoes could be grown easily and cheaply; and hay would be in great demand.⁴⁶ In the jargon of rural America, the *Bradford County Telegraph* described with a minimum number of words the problem and a solution. Part of the war would be won by "vittels" and "the best patriot therefore, is he who raises the most grub. Let us, then be valiant soldiers of the hoe."⁴⁷

Domestic security was also of great concern to Floridians. The Old South paranoia of black revolts emerged briefly in April 1917. The *Tampa Morning Tribune* announced that German agents were seeking to incite southern Negroes to rebel. The news item reported that a German organization centered in Greensboro, North Carolina, was sending agents 'throughout the South recruiting black allies.⁴⁸ They were reported at work in Bradford County, Florida, offering the blacks "complete franchise, freedom, and political and social equality" for aiding the German cause. The Jacksonville marshal's office confirmed rumors that it was investigating activity of that *nature*. Most sources denied that the German agents met with any success. Yet Tampa had armed guards patrolling the city power plant and water reservoirs because of rumors that the Germans had hired Negroes to blow up the plant and poison the water supply.⁴⁹ Despite rumors to the contrary, Florida had little to fear from its Negro population, who, like most Americans, joined in the effort to make the world "safe for democracy."⁵⁰

45. **Jacksonville** *Florida Times-Union*, April 8, 10, 15, 1917.

46. *Bartow Courier-Informant*, May 1, 1917.

47. *Starke Bradford County Telegraph*, April 29, 1917.

48. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 5, 1917.

49. *Ibid.*, April 5, 15, 1917.

50. For Afro-American patriotic rallies and recruitment activities see St. Petersburg *Daily Times*, March 27, April 7, 1917; *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 7, 9, 18, 1917; *Miami Herald*, April 11, 1917; Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, April 2, 11, 12, 1917.

German-Americans were likewise a natural target for those papers concerned with domestic security. The Titusville *East-Coast Advocate* called on all German-Americans to decide where their loyalties lay, and then either take a loyalty pledge or suffer the consequences as traitors.⁵¹ One of the-most critical of German-Americans was the St. Andrews *Bay News*. It acknowledged that many were loyal citizens but suggested that others "are but enemies in disguise, who are plotting against us, and even now are committing acts of treason." All loyal Americans were called on to "search out" these enemies and report them to the authorities.⁵² Acts of reprisal against German-Americans were as common as rumors of activities of German spies. In Plant City a man was arrested and his baggage searched for vials of typhoid and yellow fever germs which, according to rumor, were to be deposited in the county water supply.⁵³ In Tampa a rooming house was fire-bombed, reportedly because two of its lodgers who were "unnaturalized Germans" had been "talking about the United States in a way that . . . stirred considerable feeling."⁵⁴ The caption of a *Tampa Morning Tribune* news item announced, "Teuton Sympathizer, Teaching at Florida Female College, Fired." A piano instructor, Miss Felma Bjerge, refused to remove a picture of the Kaiser and a German flag from her studio and was asked to resign by the board of control. The *Tribune* felt "this is the proper thing to do in such cases We certainly have no place in our educational institutions for teachers who flaunt the enemy colors in the faces of American youth."⁵⁵ Like the blacks, Florida's German-Americans made their confessions of loyalty and their contributions to the war effort.⁵⁶

Closely associated with concern over the activities of German sympathizers and spies was the organization of home guards. Fear over the absence of federal troops in the state prompted Florida papers to promote the organizations. Jack-

51. Titusville *East-Coast Advocate*, April 13, 1917.

52. *St. Andrews Bay News*, April 3, 1917.

53. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 16, 1917.

54. *Ibid.*, April 12, 1917.

55. *Ibid.*, April 21, 22, 1917; *Jasper News*, April 27, 1917.

56. For patriotic activities by German-Americans in Florida see Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, April 6, 1917; *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 9, 11, 1917; Titusville *East-Coast Advocate*, April 27, 1917.

sonville had a public safety committee and a home guard that were "prepared to suppress all disorders."⁵⁷ The Titusville paper carried a private letter seeking volunteers because "the Indian River section from Daytona to Palm Beach is without infantry, cavalry or artillery."⁵⁸ Under similar urging Quincy, Palatka, Mayport, Miami, Bartow, and other Florida cities also created municipal paramilitary groups for local protection.⁵⁹

If Florida papers were worried about internal threats, they were also concerned with the vulnerability of the state's long coastline. A north Florida weekly announced that "a score or more of German submarines [are] reported as being ready to attack Gulf Coast towns." There was particular apprehension about the St. Andrews Bay area which was described as "the largest, deepest, landlocked harbor on the Gulf, with many important towns on its shores, and millions of dollars invested in industries, with not the least protection provided for its defense." The local paper was also distressed because the situation had been repeatedly brought to the attention of congress, *which, it claimed, had failed to respond.*⁶⁰ The *Panama City Pilot* envisioned submarine raids along the coast and even warned that "the enemy *could* effect a landing here in force and establish a base on our territory." It called for congress to take immediate action to provide the area with protection.⁶¹

Miami, Tampa, and Jacksonville also requested protective measures from the federal government. The newspapers in those cities endorsed the requests, but sought to reassure their readers rather than to alarm them. The *Miami Herald* did not minimize the danger but cautioned against being "stampeded by fear of attacks."⁶² The *Tampa Morning Tribune* warned its readers of reacting to rumors that "mysterious warcraft [are] hovering about our coasts" and assured them that the government was aware of all such activities. "Therefore, keep cool, and

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57. Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, April 8, 11, 1917; *The Artisan*, April 28, 1917.
 58. Letter from Philip W. Roberts, March 21, 1917, Titusville *East-Coast Advocate*, March 23, 1917.
 59. Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, April 11, 12, 16, 1917; Bartow *Courier-Informant*, April 24, 1917.
 60. St. Andrews Bay News, April 15, 1917.
 61. Panama *City Pilot*, March 29, April 12, 1917.
 62. *Miami Herald*, April 10, 1917.

do not flush with excitement at every rumor that gains currency on the streets."⁶³

To other activities aiding the war effort the Florida press gave considerable news coverage and strong editorial support. While enthusiasm for the war itself varied, patriotic rallies, Red Cross chapters, National Guard companies, Liberty Bond sales, and military recruitment were all heartily endorsed. In surveying the attitude of Florida newspapers on United States intervention in World War I, certain characteristics become obvious. One is that the majority of the papers reflected the position of the Wilson administration; their editorials on the war became more numerous, and they increasingly supported Wilson and intervention as America moved closer to war. Of this group the *Miami Herald* and the *Tampa Tribune* were the most adamant in their support.

The *Florida Times-Union* and the Madison *Enterprise-Recorder* could on some issues be termed an opposition group. The *Times-Union*, while not favoring intervention, concerned itself primarily with the constitutional question of presidential powers during war-time and with criticizing Wilson generally. The *Enterprise-Recorder* stands almost alone for its reasoned presentation of another point of view and for its opposition to United States policies. It repeatedly pointed out the inconsistency of the conditions of United States neutrality and counseled America against becoming "war mad." A third group of papers, mostly weekly, were largely unconcerned with the war until just prior to United States involvement. They represent that segment of America which in 1917 was rural, parochial, and for the most part concerned with local matters that affected them directly. Regardless of their position prior to April 16, 1917, all papers in Florida supported America's participation in the war after the declaration.

63. *Tampa Morning Tribune*, April 8, 1917.