

## What The American Legion Can Do

By Col. Henry J. Reilly  
(From Legion Booklet)

Many seem to think that with the signing of the armistice the world saw the end of a period of trouble and is now about to embark upon a period of peace and quiet. Anyone who even glances at daily newspapers can readily see that this is far from being true. Morning and evening, every day, they contain nothing but records of trouble within the United States, and trouble without in every continent in the world. In other words, the great war was the beginning of another one of those periods through which the world periodically passes and in which great changes take place. No living American can escape being affected one way or another by both the internal and external questions with which the United States has to deal at the present time.

Take the internal troubles which we have to face; for instance, such as the present steel strike. A man may not be a member of one of the labor unions having to do with this strike; he may not be a stock owner in any of the steel mills. Nevertheless, he cannot escape being indirectly affected, because on the result of this strike will depend the future relations of the employer and the employe. These relations will affect everything produced in this country. As every man is a consumer, anything affecting production affects him.

Take the League of Nations, which is now the most important question having to do with the external affairs of the United States of America. The whole question of our relationship with foreign countries for years to come will be directed along one or another of two separate channels, depending upon whether or not we accept or reject this league. Our foreign relations govern our trade to a very large extent. Our foreign trade is of interest to every consumer. All citizens are consumers. Our foreign relations prevent or bring on wars. Even though it may not have been admitted before the war, it is to be doubted if anyone can be found to dispute the fact that vitally influences the life of every man, woman and child in the country.

The nearly five million men who served during this war in the army, navy and marine corps know that there were many mistakes made; that there were many shortcomings, not only in organization, armament, equipment and training, but also tactically on the battlefield—and,

what is of the most importance, in the question of the handling of the human being. Each can cite one or more incidents which directly affected him or came under his personal observation. Each is more or less inclined to blame some individual or collection of individuals whom he can name. It is to be doubted, however, if any fairminded man who really thoroughly investigates can come to any other conclusion than that all the errors made came from only one thing, and that was our utter failure as a people to seriously consider the the war, and to carefully build up a question of national defense prior to system which would insure military success on the battlefield while at the same time fully meeting American ideas as to democracy.

Prior to the war, the average American did not pay any particular attention to national defense because he did not think it affected him. We had not been in the war many months before every American found that it vitally affected him, and that he had to suffer from past neglect of this question, "what is everybody's business is nobody's business" and "let George do it," having been the principles on which we operated.

The nearly five millions who served, having suffered because of past indifference to public questions, should get together and see that the nation as a whole and the individuals making it up will never again permit any great national question to be neglected. The American Legion, to which every man and woman who served honorably in the army, navy or marine corps during the recent war is eligible, is an organization to get together those who served for the purpose of upholding and advancing true Americanism, which, after all, means nothing more than a "square deal" for everybody. This can only be gotten by universal interest, understanding of, and action upon every question which comes up. Every citizen has a vote and this vote, understanding handled, is his means of action. In unity there is strength.

Join the American Legion and help put the soldier benefit bills now before Congress on a basis which is fair to the soldier and to the country as a whole; help put through a national defense act founded on military efficiency and American democracy, and not upon personal pride, prejudice, or the rivalries of the regular army, National Guard and national armies; help bring out the whole question of the League of Nations so clearly that every voter will really

understand what this document means; help to force every candidate for every position to clearly state his principles and those elected to live up to them, instead of playing politics for personal advantages; help oppose, on the one hand, the radical who says that there is no good in the country and nothing but revolution can better the wrongs which do exist, and, on the other hand, the reactionary, an equally bad citizen, who

maintains that everything in the country is so perfect that no reform is necessary. Above all, vote every time you have an opportunity and see that everyone else entitled to this great privilege does so.

Stick together! Join the American Legion!

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### NEW TAX RULING

Taxes for 1919, extended in Cook county on the basis of one-half the full, fair valuation of property, as provided in a statute in force last July, will stand, it was ruled this week in the Supreme Court. The new taxes will be assessed on one-half the valuation, therefore, instead of one-third as in the past.

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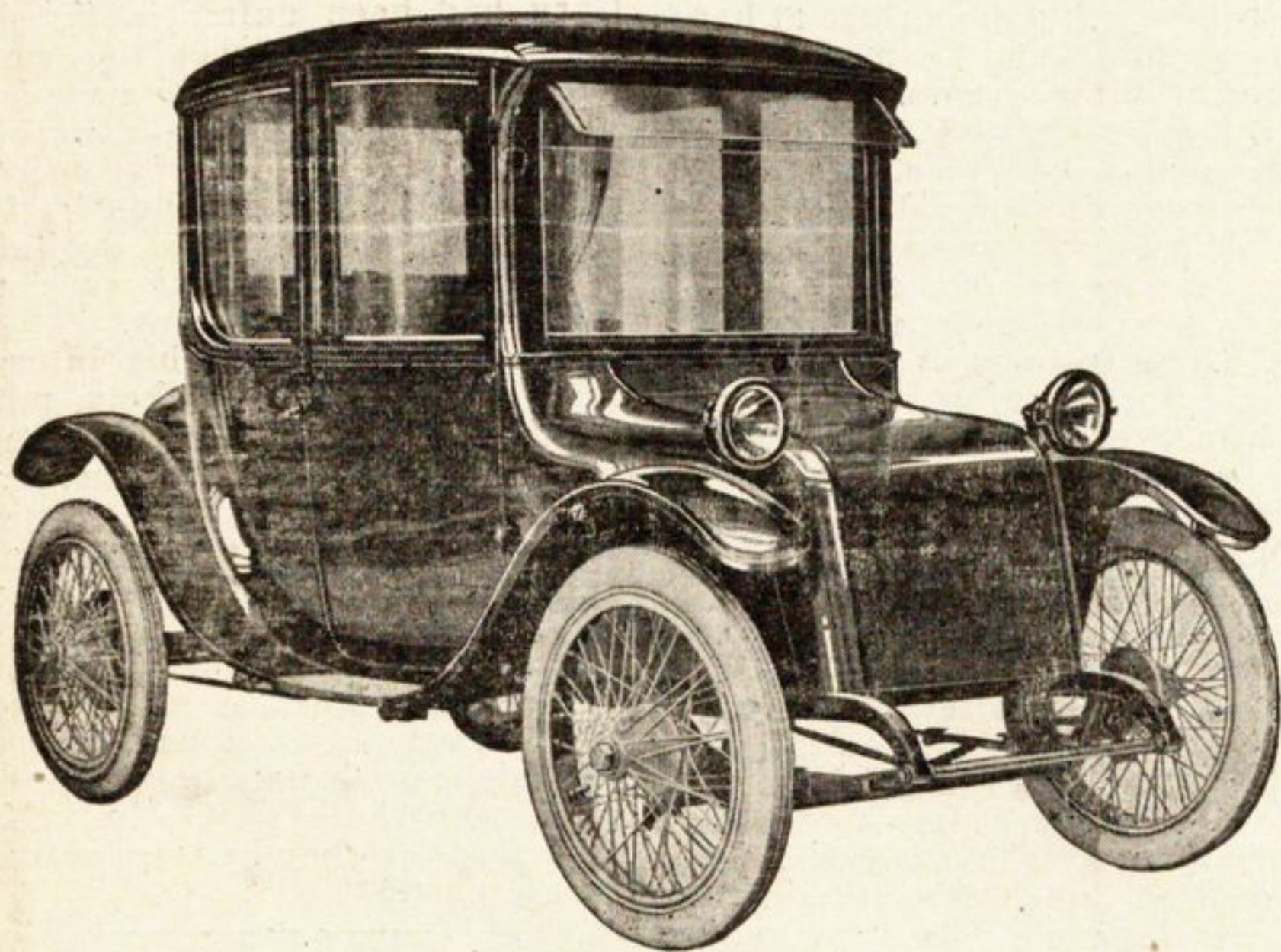
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