



Emma Goldman, *Living My Life*

Volume Two

CHAPTER XLV



America needs us more than Russia

States for decades and acquired families and homes. But their hearts dwelt more in Russia than in the country they were enriching by their labour, which nevertheless scorned them as "foreigners." Russia was welcoming them, her doors wide open to receive her sons and daughters. Like swallows at the first sign of spring they began to fly back, orthodox and revolutionists for once on common ground--their love and longing for their native soil.

Our own old yearning, Sasha's and mine, began to stir again in our hearts. All through the years we had been close to the pulse of Russia, close to her spirit and her superhuman struggle for liberation. But our lives were rooted in our adopted land. We had learned to love her physical grandeur and her beauty and to admire the men and women who were fighting for freedom, the Americans of the best calibre. I felt myself one of them, an American in the truest sense, spiritually rather than by the grace of a mere scrap of paper. For twenty-eight years I had lived, dreamed, and worked for that America. Sasha, too, was torn between the urge to return to Russia and the necessity of continuing his campaign to save the life of Mooney, whose fatal hour was fast approaching. Could he forsake the doomed man and the others whose fate hung in the balance?

Then came Wilson's decision that the United States must join the European slaughter to make the world safe for democracy. Russia had great need of her revolutionary exiles, but Sasha and I now felt that America needed us more. We decided to remain.

The declaration of war by the United States dismayed and overawed most of the middle-class pacifists. Some even suggested that we terminate our anti-militarist activities. A certain woman, a member of the Colony Club of New York, who had repeatedly offered to supply money for anti-war work in the European countries now demanded that we discontinue our agitation. Having declined her previous offers, I felt free to tell her that true charity begins at home. I could see no reason for giving up the stand on war that I had maintained for a quarter of a century, just because Woodrow Wilson had tired of his watchful waiting. I could not alter my convictions merely because he had ceased to be "too proud" to let American boys do the fighting, while he and other statesmen remained at home.

With the collapse of the pseudo-radicals the entire burden of anti-war activity fell upon the more courageous militant elements. Our

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