

IOWA PEACE HEROES

Helping Victims of War

When World War I began in August of 1914, Herbert Hoover, the only Iowa-born President of the United States, was living in London with his wife, Lou Henry, and two sons, Allan and Herbert, Jr. At age 40, Hoover had worked as a mining engineer in 12 countries, and had become a self-made millionaire. More important, Hoover was known as a man who could solve problems and get things done.

The American ambassador to England asked for Hoover's help when war broke out.

Hoover worked to feed and clothe the 120,000 Americans stranded in Europe and even helped them to get back home.

After that, Hoover agreed to establish and direct the Commission for the Relief of Belgium (CRB), to help Belgians caught up in the battle. Over the next four years, Hoover and his associates provided \$1 billion in "relief"—five million tons of food and 55 million

pounds of clothing, fabric, buttons, thread and sewing needles—to about 10 million people including three million children and pregnant women in Belgium and Northern France.

The CRB raised and spent \$25 million dollars a month, using 40 ships and 500 canal boats to get large quantities of food to starving people. Hoover himself crossed the North Sea 40 times during the war to persuade both British and German officials to allow the relief for Belgium to continue. By the end of the war, 33 CRB ships had been lost to mines and submarine torpedoes, despite being promised free passage.

When the United States entered the war, President Woodrow Wilson asked Hoover to organize an American campaign to save food to feed both soldiers and starving people. Americans began to proclaim that "Food Will Win the War," and agreed to eat foods as unusual as whale steaks and parsnip cutlets. Children gave up candy, and began chewing sugarless gum. Mondays became "Meatless Mondays," so people didn't eat meat. Wednesdays became "Wheatless Wednesdays," so people didn't eat bread. Making do without one food group or another one day a week was not a great sacrifice, but it made a difference to the war effort.



Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum

The war ended in November of 1918, but not Hoover's famine relief work. He continued to feed people in 21 different nations over the next five years. His "European Children's Fund" fed six million children during those years. Hoover even persuaded President Warren Harding to spend \$20 million to feed the Soviet Union, where famine and disease threatened 15 million citizens.

After the war, Hoover was praised for having helped to feed and clothe more than 200 million victims of war and revolution. It was work he would continue many years later.

—*Kim Marie Smith* ✎

Creating Jobs

Harry Lloyd Hopkins was another Iowan who worked to help the poor and to achieve world peace. Hopkins was born in Sioux City, Iowa, in 1890. His family moved frequently until finally settling in Grinnell in 1901.

After his graduation from Grinnell College in 1912, Hopkins moved to New York City. During the 1920s, he worked to help the increasing number of unemployed people in the huge city. When millions of people lost their jobs in the Great Depression (1929-1934),

Hopkins helped the governor of New York, Franklin D. Roosevelt, to provide emergency aid for the poor in that state.

Roosevelt was elected U.S. president in 1933, and in 1934, he appointed Harry Hopkins to head the Work Projects Administration (WPA). During the four years Hopkins directed the WPA, the program created jobs for 15 million Americans. Many people who lived through the Depression years still remember Hopkins as a champion of the unemployed.

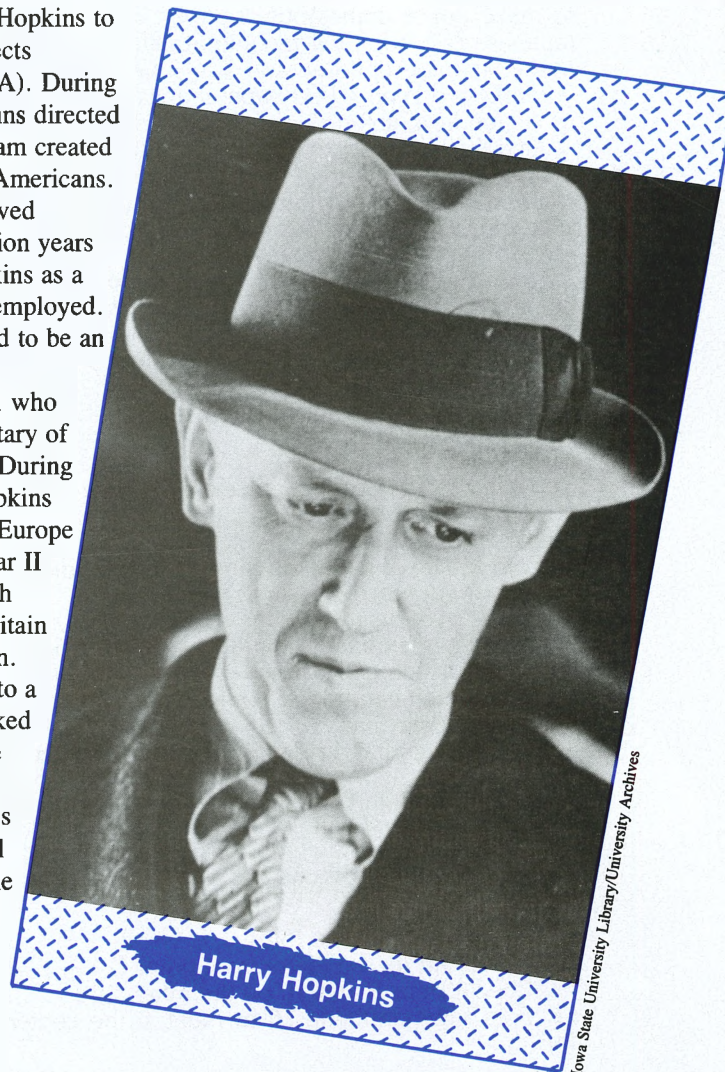
Hopkins continued to be an important adviser to President Roosevelt, who appointed him secretary of commerce in 1938. During the early 1940s, Hopkins made many trips to Europe to discuss World War II military strategy with America's allies, Britain and the Soviet Union.

As the war came to a close, Hopkins worked hard to convince the leaders of other countries that nations should form a global alliance. In 1945, the United Nations Charter was drafted to help keep the nations of the world at peace.

Thanks to people like Harry Hopkins, the UN today acts as a strong influence for peace.

—*Jean C. Florman* ✎

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