

Dr.suess goes to war



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I choose the category of America First. Unrelated to WWII, I think this issue recurs in different times in history, because of the U. S disregard to immigration, where citizens from other worn-torn areas comes to this country for refuge. Because of propaganda and the influence from the media and congress, many citizens concerns come from a place of ignorance, and not place of compassion. That congress uses as an advantage to refuse Jewish immigrants entry to this country for their own unknown ploy. Also, it seems like in World War II, U. S has played the neutral role by being first, on the sidelines, only contributing to the fight, by producing weapons and aircrafts. While during this time, congress debates three years throughout WWII, on whether they wanted to play a strong contributing part in it. Also, both political cartoons show the behavioral pattern of America, to get this country to fight is by bringing the threat home.

In the cartoon above, it shows a mother reading her children a bedtime story about misdeeds of " Adolf the Wolf". I think from Seuss' illustration demonstrates that the mother is symbolizing congress, you can see from her reassuring smile to the story book that this is how congress uses how naïve people at this time about the lives of the many Jewish people who was facing discrimination from Nazis at that time. Knowing this, it helped congress pushed their agenda that immigration could introduce the danger of Nazi spies and communism by using media outlets like, broadcaster Father Charles Coughlin. While, I think antisemitism obviously played a part of refusing Jewish people entry, but also there was economic disadvantage.

Although, I find it quite odd how America at that time, was so against communism and maybe somewhat against unfair treatment towards Jewish

people. But during my research on this topic, I found evidence that Hitler's "Master Race" ideology or more specifically, Nuremberg Laws was inspired by Jim Crow. During the climatic rise of Jim Crow, Hitler was admired by America's segregation laws.

Astonishing, Hitler wasn't the first to spew the concept of superior race. By the early 1900's, California became the third state and capital of the movement "American Eugenics". Using, the method of ethnic cleansing or more into specifics by cleaning some Americans with sterilization, barring marriages of people from different racial backgrounds and most notably, segregation.

Seuss' cartoon "Relatives? Naw... Just three fellers going along for the ride!" in the comic you can see a mother kangaroo carrying roos in her pouch, each little kangaroo has a description of on their side displaying the words Nazis, fascists and communist, while mother kangaroo had the description of America First. I think the mother kangaroo is a representation of how America protects the many philosophies that were being develop during the war. Even in the picture, the America First symbol has their eyes wide open navigating through the forest, while the other symbols have the eyes closed, nose stuck up in the air with smug look on their faces. I think the comic shows that America was aware how dangerous these ideas were affecting many people around the world. Although, I believe the government might of not agree with the reforms happening in European country, but I think they were more concern about keeping best interest for America, even if meant others were getting harm.

In the late 1930's, Hitler was taking over various of small countries across Europe. As the progression of Nazism quickly spilling over, the American people became nervous. Because of the casualties from WWI and many Americans felt that with Britain's military power, that could handle Germany without the aid of American soldiers. With the influence of the people, congress pass a law limiting the American government to support any party fighting in the war.

Throughout the protest, Roosevelt was still communicating with Churchill. Churchill was trying to persuade the 32nd president into supporting the war by trying to appeal to Roosevelt with both of their feelings of Britain winning the war. Unfortunately, something else had the president's attention. Even before the start of WWII, the talk of isolationism was always on tip of everybody's tongue after the destruction of WWI. With, Charles Lindbergh becoming the poster child for the American First Committee, Lindbergh started to plea to the public with opposing Roosevelt for wanting to involve America in European affairs. At first, Roosevelt agreed with AFC to keep up the behavior of isolation, until the decline of the European powers and the start of Sino-Japanese War. By that time, Roosevelt started to appeal to Americans with helping the cause, but to no avail, many people still protest with rejection because of the fear of risking their lives to help Europe save theirs.

I can only imagine how Seuss felt, seeing many people around him have so much disdain into helping others protect their freedom because of fear potentially losing ours. As from the cartoon " We clams can't be too careful" Two clams rooted into the sand, while looking into distance, one clam has

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the look of sickening dread whereas the other clam has their neck elongated, looking on into water with a look of confusion as a ship passes by them. I think the clam in the back symbolizes people like AFC, whose hate or fear for Hitler generates a lot of protest for America to not be involved. It's like in the comic, their hiding behind this small hump, so the ship wouldn't see them. I feel that can maybe translate to the government refusal to aid in World War by using the Neutrality Act as an excuse to why congress wouldn't let troops go fight. I think second is people like Seuss, who can't understand why the U.S couldn't help. Maybe even questioning why isolationists are so concern about saving American people from risking their lives, when there were many people, especially Jewish people who are getting killed because religious and ethnic background.

In Conclusion, I find Dr. Seuss' political cartoons prolific. From the many historical movies to books, and sometimes even in the interpretation from old political cartoons. America is always seen as being heroic, and never at fault for their actions. Especially, when comes to immigration of Jewish refugees, no one hardly talks about how harsh people were during this war when came to help the people who didn't have a home even worse, a country to be safe in. In a way, it's devastating that it's been 73 years since, Jewish people were freed from concentration camps. And till this day were still denying people a chance to make new life for themselves because we fear the unknown, and let fear cause our ignorance. But, just like Seuss, we can make a way for people to be free, by standing up and speaking out when it's wrong. I think that's what he would've wanted us to learn from his

political cartoons, and children's books, that we can learn from each other by understanding and not by unfamiliarity.