

## ERNEST LUNDEEN

"America First" was the political creed of Ernest Lundeen. He was unalterably opposed to America becoming entangled in the wars of Europe. On questions of foreign policy he followed in the footsteps of Washington, Monroe, Jackson and Lincoln.

"Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?" Washington asked, and Ernest Lundeen often repeated. "Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice?"

Ernest Lundeen maintained that this advice of Washington in his Farewell Address should be our guide in foreign affairs. He maintained that this advice was as sound in 1917 or 1940 as it was in 1796 when Washington gave it.

He voted against our entry into the World War on April 6, 1917, and against conscription for foreign service in May of the same year. His speech against our entry into the World War reads like a prophecy.

He always supported the legislative program advocated by labor and the farmer. He was a real and consistent friend of the veteran and his dependents. Early in his political career he advocated women suffrage.

He never lost the common touch; laborers and farmers, newsboys and clerks, as well as Governors, Senators and world famous men and women were his intimate friends.

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He was born on a farm near Beresford, S. D., August 4, 1878, the son of the Reverend Charles Henry and Christina C. (Peterson) Lundin. Attended common school near Beresford, S. D., and Harcourt, Iowa. He graduated from the Dayton, Iowa, High School in 1895, and Carleton College in 1901; won state oratorical contest in his senior year at Carleton; studied law at the University of Minnesota and was admitted to the bar May 21, 1906.

He was elected to the Minnesota Legislature in 1910 and re-elected in 1912; elected to Congress in 1916, as a Republican from the Fifth Congressional District. In 1919 he married Norma Ward of San Francisco, and two children were born to them, Ernest Ward and Joan Jessie. Elected Congressman at large in 1932 as a Farmer-Laborite and re-elected in 1934 from the Third Congressional District. He was elected United States Senator in 1936.

Served as a private in Company B, 12th Minnesota Volunteers in the Spanish American War; member of the United Spanish War Veterans; honorary member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; served as 1st Lieutenant, Company F, 1st Regiment, Minnesota National Guard; member of Delta Sigma Rho fraternity; Mason and member of the Methodist Church.

He was killed in an airplane accident a few miles west of Washington, D. C., August 31, 1940, while on his way to Minneapolis.

A brilliant orator, he delivered the Memorial Day Oration at the Arlington National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia, in 1919, upon the invitation of the National Grand Army of the Republic, being the only Minnesotan ever accorded that honor.

A deep student of history, he had a profound conviction that America's problems could only be solved by avoiding the selfish intrigues of European politics and her constant and senseless wars. He had the courage of his convictions and dared as Congressman and Senator to vote in accordance with those convictions. He possessed the essentials of the statesman.

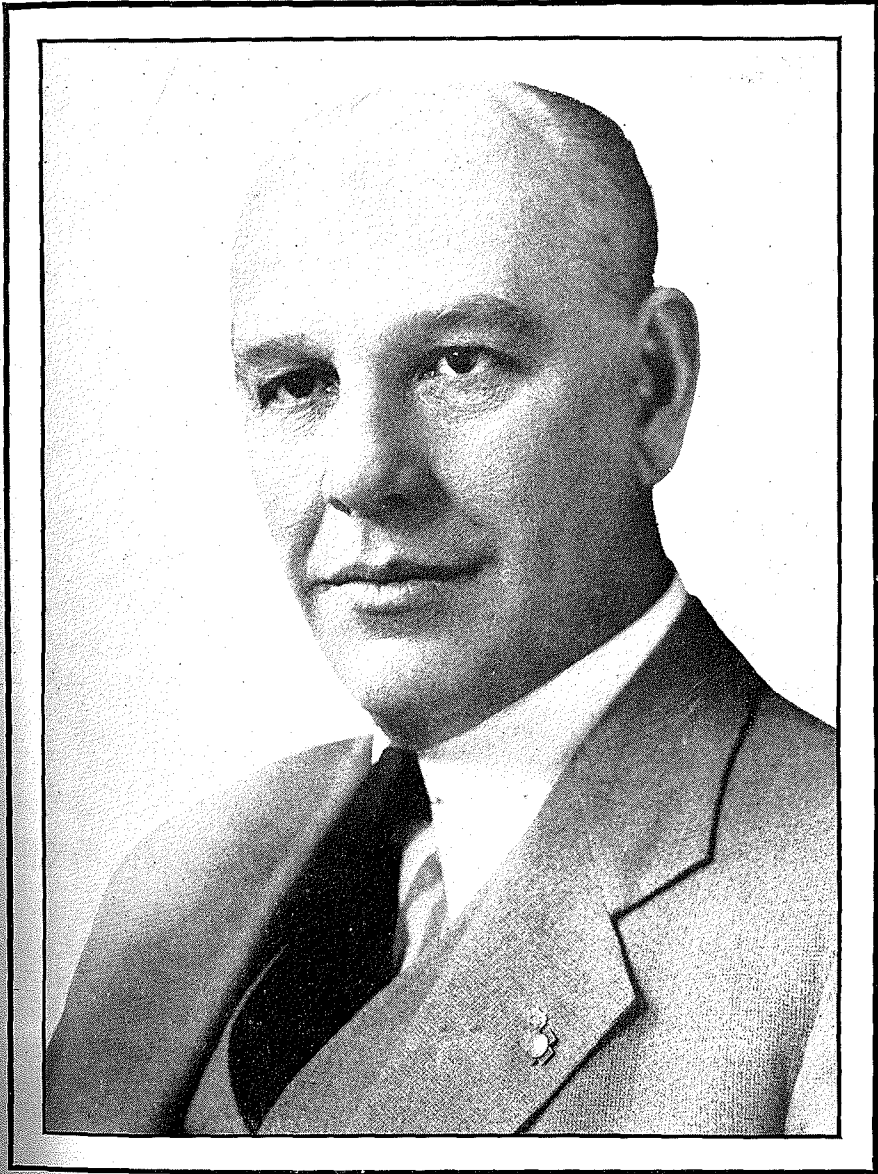
He had an abiding faith in American democracy and the American people. Proud of his Viking ancestors he was, nevertheless, convinced that the thing all Americans must do is put America's welfare above all else and develop an American character that will not tolerate allegiance to a foreign country. This faith is well illustrated by the last sentence of his speech in the U. S. Senate July 11, 1940, when he concluded with this exclamation: "The lamp of liberty will shine on—the symbol of American civilization—a beacon of hope for all mankind."

He believed in Democracy and the ultimate wisdom of the common man. He considered tolerance of opinion the safeguard of a free people. He believed free speech, a free press and a free radio essentials to the maintenance of a free government. The last words he had inserted in the Congressional Record on August 31, 1940, the day of his death, were these: "Because your neighbor doesn't agree with you, it doesn't prove he's a 'fifth columnist.' He may merely be an American exercising his right of free speech under the Constitution. \* \* \* We had better keep the weeds out of the corn."

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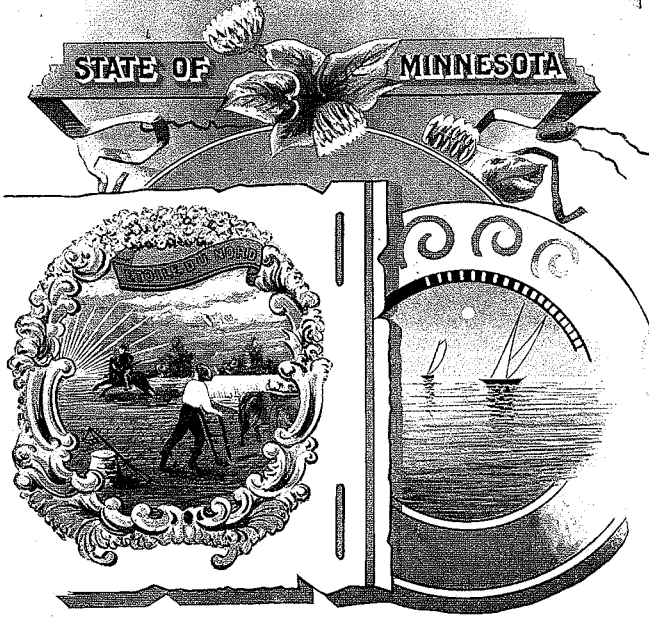
(From Speech by Ernest Lundeen in Congress March 3, 1919.)

"My last word to you, my fellow citizens, is this: Turn again reverently to the pages of America's glorious history. Read and read again the admonitions of the fathers of the Republic. You will find there words of wisdom and a sure compass with which to chart your course, and having read, stand upon the watchtowers of the nation and solemnly guard America, our motherland."



ERNEST LUNDEEN  
1878 - 1940

# The Legislative Manual of the



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