

EXTRACTS FROM THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF
HONORABLE ANDREW J. PETERS, MAYOR OF BOSTON

(Delivered February 4, 1918)

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The gigantic task which we are called upon to perform is one which requires the mobilization of all our resources, material and moral. We can not all of us fight for democracy on the plains of France. We can all help win the battle for democracy by our loyalty and sacrifice at home. To be effective, the national government must have the cooperation and support of every unit of government, state and city. The great municipal agencies must shape their policies to strengthen and support the central power.

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Improvements which are not strictly necessary must be postponed.

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Whether naturalized or native born, we are all Americans, and the success or failure of America in this world conflict will be our success or failure, and the assurance of peace for democracy when won will be a blessed heritage for us to pass on to our children.

The future of our city is woven closely in the future of America, and I shall seek the cooperation of the national government in bringing about important improvements.

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The support which our municipality pledges to the national government can nowhere be more effective than in the field of finance. The enormous and imperative needs which the national government must meet by the sale of bonds require that the competition in the sale of securities by other agencies should be restricted as far as possible. The Federal Government is entitled to the first call upon every dollar available for investment, just as much as it is entitled to the first call upon every man available for military service. Local bonds must necessarily compete in the market with our

national securities, and their issue, therefore, should be restricted to the lowest possible amount. The President has already called upon the Federal Reserve Board in Washington to pass on the issuance of all securities and to discourage such as are not found to be of urgent public importance through their connection, directly or indirectly, with the one paramount necessity of the war.

In recognition of these conditions, the War Efficiency Committee of the Public Safety Committee of Massachusetts addressed an appeal over a month ago to the mayors and mayors-elect of every city in the Commonwealth, urging the necessity of great restraint in the issuance of municipal bonds, and the postponement, whenever possible, of any municipal undertakings which would further increase the demand for materials or labor urgently required for the purposes of the Federal Government. Strictly local improvements, in particular, should in general be postponed until a more favorable time. Such loans as are issued should be chiefly devoted to the general benefit of the whole city - to improving its present equipment and facilities, to promoting the general health and safety of its inhabitants, and to facilitating transportation, commerce and industry.

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The first step in this plan of municipal economy was the adoption by the City of Boston a few years ago of the segregated budget. Not only has this budget been the means of saving a considerable sum of money, but it has enabled the City Council to gain a far better knowledge of the purpose for which each appropriation is made.

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The European war has already placed heavy burdens on the people of the United States. These burdens are felt not only in the increased taxes imposed by the Federal Government and by state and municipal governments, but in the

advancing prices of commodities in general use. That the people of Boston possess the will and the ability to carry their share of such added burdens will not be questioned by anyone who is familiar with the history of the city and of the contributions of its citizens to the success of every war in which our nation has been engaged. The city's interests are so closely identified with the national interests, its people are so firmly devoted to the promotion of the nation's welfare, and are so enthusiastic to establish throughout the world the great ideals of democracy for which all lovers of liberty and justice are struggling, that they will not hesitate to make any sacrifice which the exigencies of the war demand.

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Our city government commences this year under the difficult conditions of war, and we are facing, together with our whole country, new and untried problems. I have confidence that the people of Boston will respond to the call for public service. You can not legislate a good government on a people. Whether they shall have a good government or not depends on their patriotism and ideals. The situation calls to our minds the words in which President Lincoln addressed Congress in 1862. He said:

"Fellow citizens, we can not escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance will save the one or the other of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the latest generation. We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope on earth."

Boston will do its part in the great struggle, its citizens will render to the national government its full due, and we who are responsible for the municipal government will try to place it on a new plane of uprightness, frankness and efficiency.

2/25/18