

Discover the Fascinating Story of Wendell Willkie's Quest to Unite the World during Wartime

About Wendell Willkie

Wendell Lewis Willkie was an extraordinary American figure who rose to prominence during a critical period in history. Born on February 18, 1892 in the small town of Elwood, Indiana, Willkie became one of the most influential individuals of his time. He achieved fame not only in the realms of business and politics but also through his bold endeavors to foster unity and build a global community.

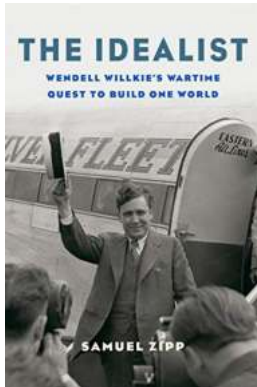
Early Life and Business Career

Willkie grew up in a modest family, where his father worked as a lawyer and farmers' trust manager. With a strong academic aptitude, he excelled in his studies and soon developed an interest in the field of law. After completing his education at Indiana University and later at Harvard Law School, Willkie embarked on a successful law career in Akron, Ohio.

However, it was in the corporate world where Willkie truly left an indelible mark. His talents were recognized by the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation, an energy utility firm based in New York City, which hired him as its general counsel. Willkie's strategic thinking and relentless efforts contributed significantly to the expansion of the corporation, and he eventually rose to become its president.

The Idealist: Wendell Willkie's Wartime Quest to Build One World by Samuel Zipp (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 4.9 out of 5



Language	: English
File size	: 63408 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 416 pages



The 1940 Presidential Election

Wendell Willkie's ambition stretched beyond the business realm. In 1940, he surprised the nation by entering the race for the presidency as a Republican candidate, challenging the incumbent President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Willkie's campaign garnered widespread attention due to his progressive ideas and his belief in an America that embraced internationalism.

Although Willkie lost the election to Roosevelt, his campaign brought him both recognition and respect. He used his newfound platform to advocate for a united world free from the clutches of nationalism.

Wartime Efforts and One World Concept

As the world was grappling with the ravages of World War II, Willkie undertook a remarkable journey across the globe. His mission was to understand the dynamics of world affairs firsthand, with the hope of fostering greater understanding and cooperation among nations.

Willkie's travels took him to Europe, the Soviet Union, the Middle East, China, and several other countries affected by the war. Armed only with hopeful idealism

and a desire for global unity, he met with numerous leaders, soldiers, and ordinary citizens, listening to their stories and sharing his vision of a harmonious post-war world.

The Legacy of Wendell Willkie

Despite facing criticism and skepticism upon returning to the United States, Willkie's efforts ultimately left a lasting impact on the world stage. His tireless advocacy for international cooperation and his belief in the strength of unity resonated with people around the globe.

Tragically, Wendell Willkie passed away on October 8, 1944, before seeing his dream of a united world come to fruition. However, his legacy inspired the establishment of organizations such as the United Nations, which aimed to prevent future global conflicts through diplomacy and cooperation.

Wendell Willkie's remarkable wartime quest to build one world remains an inspiring tale of vision, determination, and internationalism. His journey epitomizes the power of individuals to shape the course of history through their bold ideas and actions.

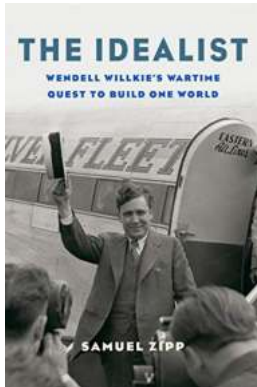
Today, as we face new challenges and strive for a better future, we can draw inspiration from Willkie's unwavering belief in the possibility of a united world. His story serves as a reminder that even during the darkest times, the pursuit of global unity and cooperation remains essential for creating a peaceful and prosperous world.

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“The Idealist is a powerful book, gorgeously written and consistently insightful. Samuel Zipp uses the 1942 world tour of Wendell Willkie to examine American attitudes toward internationalism, decolonization, and race in the febrile atmosphere of the world’s first truly global conflict.”

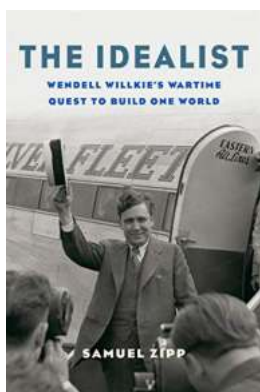
—Andrew Preston, author of *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*

A dramatic account of the plane journey undertaken by businessman-turned-maverick-internationalist Wendell Willkie to rally US allies to the war effort. Willkie’s tour of a planet shrunk by aviation and war inspired him to challenge Americans to fight a rising tide of nationalism at home.

In August 1942, as the threat of fascism swept the world, a charismatic Republican presidential contender boarded the Gulliver at Mitchel Airfield for a seven-week journey around the world. Wendell Willkie covered 31,000 miles as President Roosevelt’s unofficial envoy. He visited the battlefield in North Africa with General Montgomery, debated a frosty de Gaulle in Beirut, almost failed to deliver a letter to Stalin in Moscow, and allowed himself to be seduced by Chiang Kai-shek in China. Through it all, he was struck by the insistent demands for freedom across the world.

In *One World*, the runaway bestseller he published on his return, Willkie challenged Americans to resist the “America first” doctrine espoused by the war’s domestic opponents and warned of the dangers of “narrow nationalism.” He urged his fellow citizens to end colonialism and embrace “equality of opportunity for every race and every nation.” With his radio broadcasts regularly drawing over 30 million listeners, he was able to reach Americans directly in their homes. His call for a more equitable and interconnected world electrified the nation, until he was silenced abruptly by a series of heart attacks in 1944. With his death, America lost its most effective globalist, the man FDR referred to as “Private Citizen Number One.”

At a time when “America first” is again a rallying cry, Willkie’s message is at once chastening and inspiring, a reminder that “one world” is more than a matter of supply chains and economics, and that racism and nationalism have long been intertwined.



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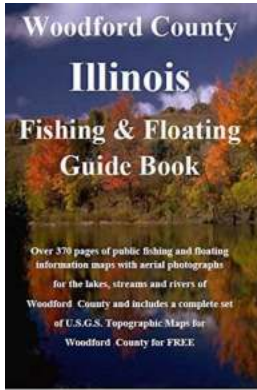
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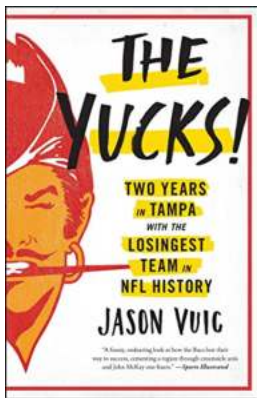
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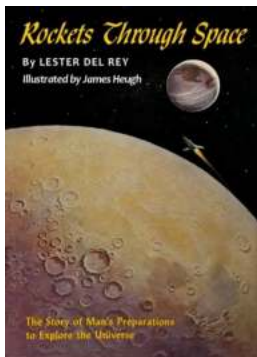
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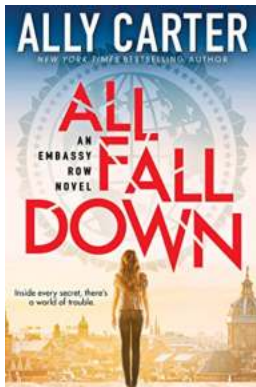
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