

5. Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai) on Indian Service in World War I and the Ongoing Struggle for Freedom and Citizenship, 1919

. . . Brave warriors, you left your humble homes . . . to fight for the principles that throbbed in your hearts, namely, freedom, equality, democracy, humanity and justice. . . .

. . . [Y]ou have demonstrated to the world by taking up arms for your country and standing shoulder to shoulder with your pale face comrades that the Indian race is not helpless and incompetent for freedom and citizenship.

From Carlos Montezuma, "The Duty of Every Indian Soldier Who Entered the War," *Wassaja* (February 1919).

When you entered the war, you have may not have thought of this, but it is a real fact.

Now, what is your duty? Carry on the fight—not as you experienced in the front, but for the freedom and citizenship of your race. What did you fight for? Freedom. . . . Your sacrifice for your country would be a mockery were you to stop this side of freedom of your people. They have not equal rights, they have not democracy, they have not humanity and they have not justice.

. . . You have been loyal to your country. Your country is indebted to you. . . . Your mission, at this hour, is to preach the gospel of truth that your race is ready for freedom and citizenship. . . . You should proclaim this truth everywhere and let it be heard in the hall of Congress. You have fought a good fight for your country, now it is your turn to ask the country to give you what you have helped to win for your race. . . . [S]tand before the world and ask the people of the United States to let your people go free from under the bondage of the Indian Bureau, so that they may enjoy the rights and privileges of citizenship. . . .