

## World War 1 America and Global Conflict

### Overview

- The “Great War” -- or World War I -- officially began with the assassination of Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand by 19-year-old Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip. (June 28, 1914)
- Austria-Hungary had recently annexed Bosnia, much to Serbia’s anger. The Austro-Hungarians attacked Serbia on July 28.
- Russia began a mobilization on July 29 to protect Serbia.
- Germany was an ally of Austria-Hungary. Demanded Russia stop mobilizing. France and Germany both mobilize their troops.

### Overview

- Germany: First strike plan (von Schlieffen Plan). Knock France out before fighting the Russians.
- To get to France, Germany would need to pass through neutral Belgium. This brought the British into the War on August 4.
- Within a week of the official launch of the war, all of Europe’s Great Powers were involved. *Austria-Hungary & Germany* made up the Central Powers while Russia, France, Serbia and Britain made the Allies.

### Discuss

- What was the spark for World War I? Who was involved?
  - Which country was the first to attack? What happened then?
  - Which countries made up the Central Powers? Which made up the Allied Powers?
- WHY?

- Imperialism
- Militarism
- Nationalism
- Alliances

### WHY???

- Imperialism - The “great” nations of Europe (along with China, Japan, and USA) were competing for territory. By the early 20th century most world territories were independent, or claimed by another power. To make your empire bigger, you had to fight another power!
- Militarism - Decisions in many countries were being made either entirely on military interest, or with great regard to military interest.
- Nationalism - Nations act in their own self interest, and when two nations interests collide, war results. Ethnic minorities in European nations like Serbia and Austria-Hungary also played a role. Many of these peoples wished to be free from rule by a foreign power.
- Alliances - Designed to bolster the national defense of a nation, a complicated alliance system took shape in Europe. This had been designed to keep the peace in a Europe with several Great Powers.
- All of these factors combined to start World War 1.

### Progress and Stalemate

- The Germans entered France through Belgium with great success, only to be stopped 30 miles outside of Paris by the French and British.
- Neither side could gain the advantage, and for months both armies fought in trenches, in horrible conditions.
- The Central Powers had to withdraw some troops to go and fight Russia, whose poorly trained army had invaded Germany and Austria-Hungary. This likely prevented victory in the West.

### War Grows

- End of 1914 - Ottoman Empire joins Central Powers.
- Spring 1915 - Italy joins the Allies.
- Fall 1915 - Bulgaria joins Central Powers.
- 1916 - Romania joins Allies.

### Modern warfare with old tactics

- Machine Guns, Rapid Fire Artillery & Hand Grenades all saw use in WW1.
- Poison Gasses including Chlorine and Mustard Gas were also used. Chlorine gas creates hydrochloric acid in the lungs, leading to death. Mustard Gas causes burns and skin blisters.

- Commanders thought numerical superiority would win, ordered troops up and over trenches to attack. These troops were mowed down by machine guns.
- Battle of the Somme, British lost 20,000 in one day.

#### American Response

- America began the war as neutral, but the people were hardly so.
- German and Irish Americans favored the Central Powers.
- Most Americans, however, favored the allies, including recent immigrants from Austria-Hungary and other areas.
- Americans also did not like Germany's leader, Kaiser Wilhelm II, because he was a dictator.
- Americans were also engrossed by British accounts of the war, telling of atrocities committed by the Germans. These stories were often untrue, having been made up by British media to rile up public opinion.

#### Neutrality

- American investments overseas had increased, from \$700 million in 1897 to \$3.5 billion in 1914. German ships in the North Atlantic threatened that trade.
- Many American leaders urged "Preparedness" for war.
- President Wilson began to increase the size of the military, and began training troops.
- American peace movement also began at this time, in the hopes of keeping the country out of war.

#### American Neutrality

- Most Americans did not want to go to war in Europe.
- Woodrow Wilson re-elected in 1916 with the slogan "He kept us out of war"
- Americans were beginning to come around to the idea of war, and the preparedness campaign intensified.
- German action would finally propel America into the fight.

#### German Submarine Warfare

- Submarines were a relatively new war technology that changed how navies fought.
- German submarines or "U Boats" could fire on a target secretly.
- Germany began firing on allied ships in the North Atlantic, including those carrying American passengers.
- The Germans claimed that these ships were carrying weapons and supplies to the allies.
- Unrestricted Submarine Warfare: no warning before firing on surface ships.

#### The Lusitania

- German use of U-Boats against Britain helped to turn public opinion in the United States.
- May 7, 1915, a German U-Boat fired on the Lusitania, a British passenger ship, which was carrying 128 Americans.
- The ship sank in 18 minutes, taking 1,200 passengers down with it.

#### Promises, Promises

- The American public was upset over German "barbarism".
- Wilson urged patience and sent protests to the Germans.
- The Germans promised that before sinking passenger ships, U Boats would surface, and ships could submit to German inspection.
- March 24, 1916 - Germany torpedoed the *Sussex*, a French passenger ship, with 2 Americans on board.
- Germany issued the "Sussex Pledge", to warn before attacking with U Boats.

#### Neutrality?

- Wilson became angry with Germany over the repeated broken promises.
- Wilson continued the preparedness program, and also authorized American banks to make loans to the allies.
- January 31, 1917, Germany suspends the Sussex pledge and resumes unrestricted submarine warfare.
- On February 3, America breaks diplomatic ties with Germany, Wilson asks for permission to arm American merchant ships.

#### The Zimmerman Note

- As Wilson and others continued to hope for peace, the British intercepted a cable from the German foreign minister, Arthur Zimmerman, and the leaders of Mexico.

- Germany promised Mexico land in the American southwest (Texas, New Mexico and Arizona) if they would declare war on the United States.
- Mexico was in the midst of civil war at this time, and could not have mounted a successful invasion.
- Despite this, the telegram edged Americans closer to war.

#### Revolution in Russia

- Russia had paid dearly for its entry into the war, with 1.5 million dead, 2.5 million captured, and even more wounded troops.
- The autocratic government of the Czar could not take care of those at home, due to resources for the war.
- March 1917, Czar Nicholas II is forced to give up the throne, and is replaced by a republican system of government.
- America had not wished to be allied with the autocratic Czar, so his removal from power allowed the U.S. to enter the war with fewer reservations.

#### America into the fray

- From March 16 to March 18, 1917, Germany sank 3 American ships, The City of Memphis, the Illinois, and the Vigilancia.
- March 20, Wilson's cabinet recommends war.
- April 2, Wilson issues a war message to congress, it passed with wide support.
- April 6, 1917, America enters the war in Europe!
- Germany felt the U.S. Would not be ready in time to be a threat, that it would defeat the allies in Europe before the U.S. could get there.

#### Back in the Hall of Justice...

##### Battle-ready?

- America's standing army — 100,000 men
- < 16 other European nations.
- 15,500 Marines on other missions.
- National Guard — 132,000 members.

##### Americans to the Front

- America sent 14,500 troops. The Americans were under the command of General John J. (Blackjack) Pershing.
- America also sent support in its mighty Navy, as well as supplies, weapons and \$3 billion in loans.
- Selective Service Act, or draft, bolstered the army. 24 million men registered, and 3 million were drawn to serve in the army. The American force going to Europe was known as the American Expeditionary Force.
- Women also served, 11,000 as nurses and combat support, 14,000 in civilian positions abroad.

##### Training and Deployment

- New American soldiers were put through basic training. They learned basic combat skills, and were told about German crimes in Belgium and other areas.
- Troops were transported in convoys across the Ocean, with unarmed transport ships surrounded by Navy destroyers. These Navy ships were equipped with Hydrophones to detect and help destroy submarines.
- Merchant ship losses were cut in half by the convoy system. No ships were sunk on the way to Europe, a few on the return trip.

##### Soldiers

- American soldiers (Doughboys) arrived on the front in June 1917. Pershing kept command of his forces, independent of European commanders
- The American soldiers, few in number, were energetic and strong. These fresh troops made a lot of difference.
- African Americans were also drafted, some serving in combat with distinction, but most made to do menial labor for the army.
- One regiment, the 369th Infantry, was a black regiment known as the Harlem Hell Fighters. They convinced their white commanders to loan them to the French army. They were integrated into the french units, and earned France's highest honor for combat.

##### Bolshevik Revolution

- In Russia, a group of Socialist/Communist revolutionaries, led by Vladimir Lenin, seized control of the country.

- Lenin had been banished from Russia by the Czar, but Germany, seeking to further weaken the Russian army, sent him back.
- Russia signed a truce and a formal peace Treaty with Germany in March 1918.
- This freed German troops to support fighting on the Western front. German forces broke through allied lines, nearly getting to Paris.

#### Americans save Paris

- Pershing dispatched American troops to the front to blunt the German attack.
- The American troops helped stop the German offensive and begin turning them back in France.
- American soldiers were ordered not to retreat or fall back. At the battle of Château-Thierry, half of the American force was killed or wounded, but they would not give an inch.
- 28,000 American troops joined French forces for the 2nd Battle of the Marne, the Allies forced the Germans back across the river and into retreat, this ended German hopes of defeating the allies.

#### Counter-Attack

- 250,000 American troops were arriving in France each month.
- Using a new weapon called a tank, the allies were able to break German lines.
- The German field commanders began to urge the kaiser to seek a peace settlement. The allies insisted on total surrender.
- At St. Mihiel, 500,000 American troops and 100,000 French troops continued to push the Germans back out of France.
- The final assault included over 1 million American troops.

#### War in the Air

- Planes in World War 1 were made of wood frames covered in canvas. America had 55 planes to start the war, but soon manufactured many more.
- They were first used to scout enemy positions, later machine guns would be added as planes would fight each other in dogfights.
- The Germans used planes to drop bombs on enemy cities, like London. Americans and the allies used planes in the final assault on Germany, dropping bombs to confuse the enemy.

#### The end is near!

- 1918 - Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire sign separate peace.
- October 1918, Austria-Hungary splinters
  - Poles, Hungarians, Czechs and Slovaks.
- German sailors lead a mutiny
- November 10, Kaiser Wilhelm II flees to Holland.
- November 11, 1918, a Germans sign an armistice in a French rail car.

#### Flu Outbreak

- The last few months of the war coincided with an outbreak of the influenza virus that killed more people than the war did.
- The first wave arrived with American troops and disabled some 500,000 German soldiers. It then vanished, only to reappear a few months later. This strain of flu affected people equally, regardless of age, and could kill in days.
- 30 Million people worldwide would die from this strain of flu.

#### Aftermath

- America loses 50,000 soldiers
- 8 million soldiers lost from all sides
  - average of 5,000 a day.

#### The Home Front

- War requires sacrifices at home as well as in the field.
- In order to effectively make war, those on the home front need to be supportive of the effort. When a government loses the support of its people, it can also lose the war, or be forced to pull out of the war short of its goals.

#### Paying for War

- The government began a massive program to raise money from the American people to fight the war.

- Liberty Bonds allowed the public to give money to the government to fight, in return the bond holder could redeem the bond after the war for the original value, plus interest.
- Liberty bonds raised over \$20 billion for the war.
- Boy and Girl Scouts sold bonds on street corners, colorful art posters urged the public to buy bonds, and popular figures were employed to implore the public to support the cause.

#### SOCIALISM... kinda

- During war it is often necessary for more centralized planning of the economy.
- During World War 1 factories used to create one type of good, were often converted to produce a war good, like guns, ammunition, tanks, submarines, etc...
- The War Industries Board was in charge of rationing raw materials, determining what supplies were needed, and telling factories what to produce.
- The National War Labor Board and the War Labor Policies Board kept American workers and unions from disrupting the war effort.

#### Rationing at home

- The Lever Food and Fuel Control Act allowed the President to regulate production and distribution of food and fuel vital to the war effort.
- This power was used to manage how much food people bought (rationing), and also how much was produced, with sharp increases in farm production.
- The Food Administration, under Herbert Hoover, also set up price controls to ensure that fair prices were being charged for essential items.

#### Other food sacrifices

- The food administration encouraged the women at home to sacrifice for the war.
- Herbert Hoover asked women to make one “meat-less” meal a week to save for the war, also one “wheat-less” meal per day.
- The administration also discouraged between-meal snacks, and second helpings.
- The Fuel administration also encouraged Americans to save through gas-less days, and the practice of “daylight savings time”. This increased daylight hours for work and reduced usage of artificial (electric) light.

#### Loyalty

- In war, a loyal home-front population is a supportive one.
- The government controlled access to information, censoring what Americans could see.
- There were calls for restrictions on immigration to guard against espionage (spying).
- Congress passed a law mandating a literacy test for immigrants

#### Civil Liberties in Jeopardy

- Anti German feelings bordered on hysteria as Americans feared influence by “the Huns”. The work of German authors, artists, and composers disappeared, anything with a “German” name was re-named. This included German Shepherds becoming “Police Dogs”, hamburger becoming “Salisbury Steak” and German Measles becoming “Liberty Measles”.
- Attacks on, and hatred of, German Americans was also at all time highs.

#### Repression

- Despite Wilson’s message of democracy, he often used his powers to infringe on American democratic rights.
- 1918 - Congress passes the Sedition Act making discussions which were “disloyal” to America against the law.
- The government pursued 1,500 cases with the Sedition Act, winning over 1000 convictions.

#### Labor

- Moderate AFofL leader Samuel Gompers promised that American Labor would comply with the war effort.
- Radical Socialist union the I.W.W. and leaders like Eugene V. Debs, believed that workers had no stake in the outcome of the war because it was between imperialist capitalist nations only concerned for power. Anti-War movements rallied around this sentiment.
- Police and vigilantes hounded IWW workers and organizers, including those in Butte, Montana, like organizer Frank Little.

#### Roles for Women and Minorities

- As immigration from Europe all-but stopped, Southern blacks were migrating to the north for factory jobs at a prodigious rate.
- 500,000 African Americans joined the Great Migration to the north.
- As a result of World War 1, 400,000 American women joined the industrial work-force, doing work that was considered for many years, for men only.
- After the war, however, these two groups would once again be marginalized by a still racist and sexist society.

#### Planning the post-war peace

- Before the war ended, President Wilson already had a plan for managing the peace that would eventually come.
- Wilson's plan was called the Fourteen Points because of its number of provisions, among them an end to the entangling alliances that helped to start the war.
- Wilson also called for removal of trade barriers, decreased military forces, and self-determination for Austria-Hungary's ethnic minorities.

#### Peace in Paris

- Wilson decided to lead the American delegation to the Paris Peace Conference.
- Wilson chose not to name any top Republicans to the delegation, despite the fact that the Republican Senate would get the final OK on the treaty.
- Wilson was not interested in monetary or territorial gain, but rather in establishing a "community of power" to assure that such a war would never happen again.

#### Wilson Compromises

- European powers Great Britain, France and Italy were interested in punishing the Germans for the war and making them pay in money, land, and other goods.
- At Paris, Wilson's 14 points were rejected, except his proposal for a League of Nations.
- One of the provisions of the League was that an attack on one League nation was an attack on all of them. (VERY CONTROVERSIAL!!!)
- Congress used this plank and other parts of the treaty to kill it.

#### Japanese Proposal

- The equality of nations being a basic principle of the League of Nations, the High Contracting Parties agree to accord as soon as possible to all alien nationals of states, members of the League, equal and just treatment in every respect making no distinction, either in law or in fact, on account of their race or nationality.
- This proposal, by Japan, was adopted by 11 of the 17 delegates present in the League of Nations committee. The Committee was chaired by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson.

#### Japanese Proposal

- Despite the majority vote, Wilson declared the proposal defeated. Adoption would have dealt a blow to Imperialism!
- Strong opposition from the British convinced Wilson to declare that the vote on the proposal would need to be unanimous.
- The rejection of the Racial Equality clause helped to turn Japan away from cooperation with the West, starting wheels in motion for an increasingly militarized Japan, and their involvement in what would become World War 2.

#### Japanese disappointed

- Failure of racial equality provision,
- Did not receive territory it wanted (was promised).
  - Forced to give back German colonies in Pacific
- Did receive Shandong region of China, but
  - China disputed the claim

#### Italy Snubbed

- Italy promised South Tyrol and part of the Dalmatian coast
- Also wanted other parts of Austro-Hungarian empire.
- Italy lost 600,000 men in battle
- Marginalized by Britain, France and the U.S. at Paris. Awarded only part of what had been promised.
- Italian Prime Minister left in a rage.

### Middle East

- Ottoman Empire divided amongst European powers
- peoples of those areas desired freedom.
- New nations were carved out, paying no attention to ethnic and existing political boundaries.
- Protectorship system for nations — Jordan, Iraq and Syria.
- Palestine would now allow Jewish immigration and settlement, enforced by the British.

### The Treaty of Versailles

- The French demanded harsh penalties against Germany. Wilson was too weak politically to budge the French.
- The map of Europe was re-drawn to carve 9 new nations from parts of Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary.
- The divisions led to large numbers of ethnic minorities in the new countries, including large German populations.
- Many of these new nations were meant to serve as a buffer between Russia and the rest of Europe.

### Germany Humiliated

- Britain and France insisted that the Germans admit sole guilt for war..
- Germany to pay reparations of \$55 billion dollars.
- Germany lost Alsace Lorraine, country divided
  - East Prussia no longer contiguous
  - Germany lost ALL colonial possessions

### The Treaty at Home

- Wilson returned from Paris and immediately set off around the country to sell the Treaty.
- Wilson's time in Paris arguing for the treaty, and then his cross-country barn-storm tour took its toll.
- Wilson suffered a stroke and was paralyzed on his left side. He was an invalid for the remainder of his term.
- Presidential decisions were made by Wilson through his wife, Edith.
- The senate rejected the Treaty 3 times.

### Formal end to hostilities

- The senate passed a formal end to hostilities that would end the war. Wilson vetoed. The resolution finally passed after Wilson left office.
- America was now a "creditor nation" with European countries owing the U.S. \$11.5 billion.
- The American people began to support an "isolationist" foreign policy, despite growing U.S. Power in the world.
- The government cancelled war contracts after the soldiers returned home, and jobs became more scarce.
- A "post-war gloom" would descend on the country, with many wondering why the war had been fought, with many of the ideals abandoned.