

America's Road to War

Section
AudioSpotlight
Video

Essential Question

Why did the United States enter World War I?

Reading Guide

Content Vocabulary

ganda (p. 713) autocracy (p. 716)

Thematic Vocabulary

(p. 713) revolution (p. 716)

People and Events

imperialism (p. 714)

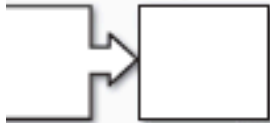
Selective Service Act (p. 717)

Learning Strategy

Diagramming Notes As you read, use a diagram like the one below to compare how Germany's policy toward maritime warfare changed between 1915 and 1917.

Policy in 1915

Policy in 1917



American Diary

In 1914 many Americans believed that the war in Europe was a European conflict in which the United States should not be involved. Mississippi Congressperson Percy E. Quinn strongly opposed building an army just to be ready because "When our country really needs soldiers to defend it, millions of patriots will rush to arms and rally to the flag." That time was drawing near.

—from *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*

U.S. members of the Women's Peace Party arrive in Europe to call for negotiations to end the war.

American Neutrality

Main Idea The United States tried to remain neutral in the war in Europe.

History and You Do you think the newspaper in your city or town reports on national events accurately? Read how propaganda influenced people's ideas about the war in Europe.

President Wilson had to make some difficult decisions. He declared that the United States would be neutral in the war in Europe. Most Americans did not think that the war concerned them. Many shared the view expressed in an editorial in a New York newspaper.

PRIMARY SOURCE

"There is nothing reasonable in such a war . . . and it would be [foolish] for this country to sacrifice itself to . . . a clash of ancient hatreds which is urging the Old World to destruction."

—from the *New York Sun*

Despite pleas for neutrality, Americans soon began to take sides. More than one-third

of the nation's 92 million people were either foreign-born or the children of immigrants. Many naturally favored their countries of origin. Some of the 8 million Americans of German or Austrian descent and the 4.5 million Irish Americans—who hated the British because they ruled Ireland—favored the Central Powers.

Even more Americans, however, including President Wilson, favored the Allies. Ties of language, customs, and traditions linked the United States to Great Britain. President Wilson told the British ambassador: "Everything I love most in the world is at stake." A German victory "would be fatal to our form of government and American ideals."

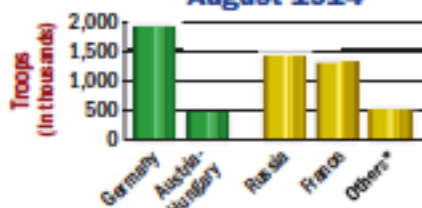
Using Propaganda

To gain support, both sides in the war used **propaganda**. This term describes information used to influence opinion. Allied propaganda **stressed**, or called attention to, the German invasion of neutral Belgium and included horror stories of German atrocities. It called the Germans "Huns" and barbarians.



By the Numbers Land Forces

Size of Armies, August 1914



Central Powers Allied Powers

*Although not yet involved in the war, American troops totaled about 119,250 enlisted men.

Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica; U.S. Census Bureau

German soldier, 1916 ▶



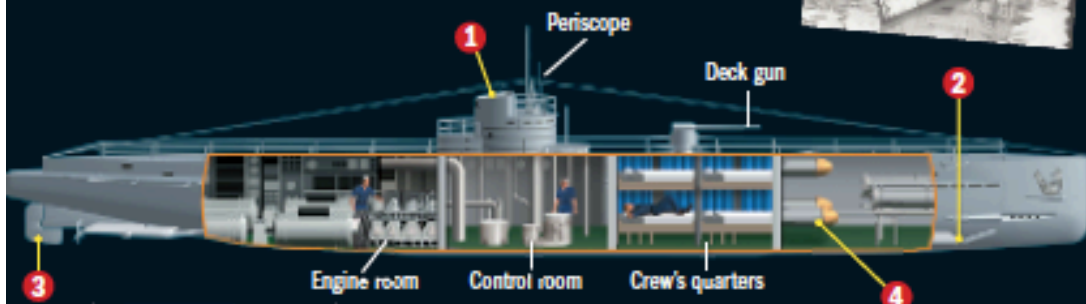
War at Sea: The Submarine

The United States began building its own submarine fleet during the war. The fastest American submarines reached a top surface speed of 14 knots (a little more than 16 miles per hour).

Captured German submarine on display in Hoboken, New Jersey, 1919 ▶



- 1 The conning tower is the attack center.
- 2 The diving rudders guide the submarine to different depths.
- 3 The rudder steers the vessel.
- 4 About 12 torpedoes could be carried at a time.



Critical Thinking

1. **Naming** What part of the craft guided the submarine up and down?
2. **Predicting** How might submarine warfare lead to U.S. entry into the war?

The propaganda from the Central Powers was equally horrible, but because of sympathy for the British, Allied propaganda was more effective in influencing Americans.

America's Early Involvement

Trade between the United States and the Allies helped build support for the Allied cause. As a neutral nation, America sought to trade with both sides. However, Britain's blockade of Germany made this difficult.

Stopping and searching American ships headed for German ports, the British navy often seized the ships' goods. The United States protested that its ships should be able to pass without interference. The British responded with the defense that they were fighting for their survival. "If the American shipper grumbles," wrote a London newspaper, "our reply is that this war is not being conducted for his pleasure or profit." The U.S. government could do nothing about the

blockade. Banned from trading with Germany, it continued trading with Britain.

Indeed, American trade with the Allies soared. In addition, Great Britain and France borrowed billions of dollars from American banks to help pay for their war efforts. All this business caused an economic boom in the United States. It also upset the Germans, who watched the United States—supposedly a neutral nation—helping the Allies.

Submarine Warfare

To stop American aid to Britain, Germany stated in February 1915 that it would sink any vessels that entered or left British ports. President Wilson warned that the United States would hold Germany responsible for any American lives lost in submarine attacks. The Germans ignored Wilson's threat. On May 7, 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed the British passenger liner *Lusitania* near the coast of Ireland. The captain reported:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"I saw a torpedo speeding toward us, and immediately I tried to change our course, but was unable to [maneuver] out of the way. There was a terrible impact as the torpedo struck the starboard side of the vessel, and a second torpedo followed almost immediately."

—from W. T. Turner, captain of the *Lusitania*

More than 1,000 people died, including 128 American citizens, when the *Lusitania* sank. Americans were outraged, and President Wilson denounced the attack. Later it was learned that the ship carried war materials.

Within a few months, several Americans were injured when a German U-boat attacked the unarmed French passenger ship *Sussex*. Germany feared that the Americans might enter the war. To pardon itself, Germany offered money to people who were injured on the *Sussex* and promised to warn neutral ships and passenger vessels before attacking. The *Sussex* Pledge seemed to resolve the issue.

 **Reading Check** **Describing** What is the purpose of propaganda?

The End of Neutrality

Main Idea Relations with Germany worsened, and the United States entered World War I.

History and You Why did the United States enter into a war with Iraq in 2003? Read to learn why the United States finally entered World War I.

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The crisis over submarine warfare led Congress, in the summer of 1916, to pass legislation to strengthen the military. Congress doubled the size of the army and provided funding for the construction of new navy warships. President Wilson still hoped, however, to stay out of the war.

Antiwar sentiment remained very strong. Some Americans saw the nation's military buildup as a step toward entering the war. The phrase "He [Wilson] Kept Us Out of War" became the Democrats' campaign slogan in 1916. Wilson, however, only narrowly defeated the Republican candidate, Charles Evans Hughes.

What If the British Had Not Intercepted the Zimmermann Note?

In January 1917, German foreign minister Arthur Zimmermann proposed that Mexico help Germany if the United States entered the war. A British official intercepted Zimmermann's telegram.



The Telegram

"We shall endeavor . . . to keep the United States of America neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal of alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona."

Reaction to Telegram

The Zimmermann telegram angered Americans and helped build popular sentiment for the war. Then, in mid-March, four American merchant ships were sunk without warning. On April 2, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany.

Critical Thinking

Analyzing If there were no Zimmermann note, do you think the United States would have: (a) entered the war when it did in April; (b) entered the war at a later time; or (c) not been drawn into the war at all? Explain.

On the Brink of War

In January 1917, Germany announced that it would sink on sight all merchant vessels, armed or unarmed, sailing to Allied ports. The Germans knew they risked bringing Americans into the war. However, the Germans believed they could defeat the Allies before the United States became too involved. An angry President Wilson broke off diplomatic relations with Germany.

Then a few weeks later, British agents intercepted a secret telegram sent by the German foreign minister, Arthur Zimmermann. It offered an alliance with Mexico against the United States if war broke out. Newspapers published the Zimmermann telegram, and Americans reacted angrily to the German offer. The telegram set off a new wave of anti-German feeling.

Revolution in Russia

Dramatic events continued to push the United States into the war. First, in March 1917 a **revolution**—a war to overthrow the government—took place in Russia. The Rus-

sian people overthrew the monarchy and established a temporary government that promised free elections. The new Russian government also vowed to continue the fight to defeat Germany.

This change from an **autocracy**, in which one person with unlimited powers rules, to a more democratic government, raised Allies' hopes. Wilson could now argue that the Allies were fighting a war for democracy.

Other critical events took place at sea. In March 1917, within a few days' time, the Germans attacked and sank four American merchant ships. Thirty-six lives were lost.

President Wilson continued to struggle with his conscience. His cabinet, on the other hand, strongly favored war. One government official later explained:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"If we had stayed out of the war and Germany had won there would no longer have been a balance of power in Europe or a British fleet to support the Monroe Doctrine and protect America."

—from "The Duties of the Citizen," 1917

D

R

America Enters the War

President Wilson decided that the United States could no longer remain neutral. On the cold, rainy evening of April 2, 1917, he asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"The world must be made safe for democracy. . . . It is a fearful thing to lead this great, peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars. . . . But the right is more precious than peace."

—from *Democracy Today: An American Interpretation*

Congress did not agree at once to a war resolution. In the end, however, most members agreed that the nation must defend its rights if it wished to remain a great world power. As a result, Congress passed a declaration of war, and Wilson signed it on April 6. Fifty-six members of the House and Senate voted against war. One of those 56 was Jeannette Rankin of Montana—the first woman to serve as a representative in Congress.

S The United States had to raise an army quickly. On May 18, Congress passed the **Selective Service Act**, setting up a military draft. Men aged 21 to 30 registered by the millions. By war's end, some 24 million men had registered. Of them, about 3 million were called to serve. Another 2 million joined voluntarily. In addition, for the first time, women enlisted in the armed forces. They served in noncombat roles, such as radio operators, clerks, and nurses.

C More than 300,000 African Americans joined the armed forces, but they faced discrimination and racism. Most held low-level jobs at military bases. Among the 140,000 African American soldiers sent to Europe, 40,000 fought in combat. Many served with honor, including a regiment that received medals for bravery from France. One of its members, Henry Johnson, was the first American to receive the French Croix de Guerre [Cross of War], a medal for bravery.

Reading Check **Describing** What was the purpose of the Selective Service Act?

Supplying the Allies

Main Idea Russia withdrew from the war, but the American troops helped turn the tide in favor of the Allies.

History and You Can you complete a task more quickly by working alone or by working with a team? Read to learn how the American soldiers fought with the Allies in the war.

In 1917 the Allies desperately needed the help of American soldiers. Years of trench warfare had exhausted the Allied armies. Some French troops refused to continue fighting after a failed offensive in 1917. The British started to run out of war supplies and food, so their people were starving. Furthermore, German submarines were taking a deadly toll on Allied shipping. They sank one of every four ships that left British ports.

American entry into the war made an immediate difference. To ensure that needed supplies reached Great Britain, the U.S. Navy helped the British destroy German submarines. Then **convoys**, or teams, of navy destroyers escorted groups of merchant ships across the Atlantic.

R If German submarines wanted to attack a merchant ship, they had to get past the American ships protecting it. The convoy system worked well. In one year it reduced Allied shipping losses from 900,000 to 300,000 tons per month. With the convoy system, not one American soldier bound for Europe was lost to submarine attack.

Russian Withdrawal

C The Allies also needed more troops because of a second revolution in Russia. In March 1917, Czar Nicholas II, leader of the Russian Empire, gave up his throne in the first revolution. Political leadership was handed to a temporary government that supported the war. This government, however, was unable to solve major problems, such as food shortages, that plagued the nation.

In November 1917, riots broke out over the government's handling of the war and over the scarcity of food and fuel. The **Bolsheviks**, a group of Communists, overthrew the democratic Russian government and established a Communist government. Led by **Vladimir Lenin**, the Bolsheviks wanted to pull out of the war so they could concentrate their efforts on setting up a new Communist state.



Primary Source **Soldiers' IDs**

Dog Tags Before World War I, the U.S. military often had a difficult time identifying dead soldiers after a battle. By 1917, each American soldier was required to wear an identification badge around the neck. Soldiers nicknamed them "dog tags."



Critical Thinking

Making Inferences Why do you think identifying fallen soldiers was an important issue for soldiers and their families?

Lenin took Russia out of the war, and in March 1918, he signed the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** with Germany. As a result of this treaty, Russia lost substantial territory to the Germans. Russia's withdrawal from the war allowed the Germans to move thousands of troops from the Eastern Front, or line of battle, to the Western Front in France.

New German Offensive

In March 1918, the Germans launched a massive attack along the Western Front. German military leaders hoped to drive a wedge in the Allied lines. They wanted to capture the city of Amiens before **proceeding** to Paris. Between March and June 1918, the Germans hammered at Allied lines. They pushed the Allies back to within 40 miles (64 km) of

Paris. After years of stalemate along the Western Front—the area along the French-German border—it looked as if Germany might win the war.

American Troops Arrive in France

In May 1917, General **John J. Pershing** was named supreme commander of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), the American army in Europe. American correspondent Floyd Gibbons described the welcome for the first American troops to arrive in France:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"The sooty girders of the Gare du Nord [railroad station] shook with cheers when the special train pulled in. . . .

. . . A minute later, there was a terrific roar from beyond the walls of the station. The crowds outside had heard the cheering within. . . . Paris took Pershing by storm."

—from "And They Thought We Wouldn't Fight"

History ONLINE

Student Web Activity Visit glencoe.com and complete the Chapter 23 Web Activity about World War I.

Europe During World War I, 1914–1918

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



The AEF was ready for battle in Europe by the spring of 1918. The French and British wanted to use the American soldiers to build up their own troops. However, General Pershing refused. He preferred to keep the AEF a separate force.

Doughboys in Battle

American soldiers, or “doughboys,” saw their first serious fighting in early June 1918. They were nicknamed “doughboys” because of their brass uniform buttons that resembled boiled dough dumplings, a popular food. In June, the AEF helped turn back a German offensive at Château-Thierry on the Marne River east of Paris. The American troops then advanced to nearby Belleau Wood. For 24 hours a day for the next three weeks, American forces fought their way through the forest against a solid wall of German machine-gun fire.

The Americans and the French fought back German attacks on Allied forces along the Marne and the Somme Rivers and stopped the German offensive. General Pershing wrote that the battles had “turned the tide of war.”

The Battle of the Argonne Forest

R The Allies now began an offensive of their own. In mid-September, about 500,000 American soldiers fought and defeated the Germans at Saint Mihiel, east of Verdun. Later that month, more than 1 million American troops joined the Allies in the Battle of the Argonne Forest. It became the most massive attack in American history.

The Battle of the Argonne Forest raged for nearly seven weeks. Soldiers struggled over the rugged, heavily forested ground. Rain, mud, barbed wire, and fire from German machine guns hindered the Allies’ advance. Many lives were lost.

African Americans in World War I

World War I gave African Americans the opportunity to show their loyalty and patriotism. In 1917 the War Department created two divisions of primarily African American combat units. Discrimination remained, however. Units were forced to train separately. Four regiments fought alongside the French, where they were treated as equals and fought valiantly.



“These Negroes are American citizens. Naturally I cannot and will not discriminate against these soldiers.”

—General John Pershing’s response to British protest of using African American troops



The 369th regiment fought on the front lines for 191 days, five days longer than any other U.S. regiment. The entire unit received the French Croix de Guerre medal for bravery. ▶



Critical Thinking

Making Inferences Why do you think some African American soldiers wanted to stay in Europe after the war?

The Battle of the Argonne Forest ended in early November. The Allies had pushed back the Germans and broken through the enemy lines. The Germans now were faced with an invasion of their own country.

W Although the war led to many acts of bravery, the actions of two Americans captured the nation's imagination. During the fighting at Argonne Forest, Corporal Alvin York killed several German soldiers, captured machine guns, and took 132 prisoners. Captain Eddie Rickenbacker was a member of the 94th Aero Squadron. He fought in 134 air battles and shot down 26 aircraft. Both York and Rickenbacker were awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions.

✓ Reading Check **Summarizing** Why was the Battle of the Argonne Forest important?

By early in November, the governments of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire had surrendered to the Allied Powers.

Request for an Armistice

Meanwhile, military leaders in Germany realized they had little chance of winning the war. American troops and supplies had fortified and added new determination to the Allied war effort. In addition, the Germans on the home front were suffering greatly from severe shortages of food and other needed supplies.

On October 4, 1918, the German government appealed to President Wilson for an **armistice**. An armistice is an agreement to end the fighting. Wilson **consented**, or agreed, but only under certain conditions. Germany must accept his plan for peace and promise not to renew hostilities. All German troops must leave Belgium and France. Finally, Wilson would deal only with civilian leaders, not with the military.

While German leaders considered Wilson's demands, political unrest erupted in Germany. On November 3, sailors in Kiel, the main base of the German fleet, revolted. Within days,

The End of the War

Main Idea By late 1918, Germany was losing the war and appealed for an armistice to end the fighting.

History and You Think about the reasons a nation decides to stop fighting a war. Read to learn why Germany asked for peace.

While fighting raged along the Western Front, Germany's allies faced certain defeat. In late 1918, the Ottoman Empire was on the brink of collapse, and a revolution engulfed Austria-Hungary. Street protests in Vienna, Budapest, and other cities led to the end of the centuries-old empire. In October 1918, the ethnic territories within the empire began to break away. Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, for example, declared independence.

groups of workers and soldiers seized power in other German towns. As the revolution spread, the German **kaiser**, or emperor, decided to step down. On November 9, Germany was declared a republic. The new leaders of Germany agreed to Wilson's terms for an armistice.

Peace Begins

The armistice began on November 11, 1918—the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month. Germany agreed to withdraw all land forces west of the Rhine River, withdraw its fleet to the Baltic Sea, and surrender huge amounts of equipment. The fighting stopped, and the Great War ended. President Wilson said:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"Everything for which America fought has been accomplished. It will now be our fortunate duty to assist by example, by sober friendly counsel and by material aid in the establishment of a just democracy throughout the world."
—from "Proclamation of the Armistice with Germany"

✓ Reading Check **Describing** What conditions did Germany accept to end the fighting?

Mobilizing the Nation

Main Idea The United States prepared to fight the war.

History and You If you have a summer job, do you manage the work for someone who is on vacation? Read to learn how the United States had to adjust its workforce during World War I.

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After the United States declared war on Germany in 1917, Americans began focusing their energies on getting ready to fight the war. **Mobilization**, or the gathering of resources and the preparation for war, affected almost every part of American life.

To ensure production of vital war materials, the government created the National War Labor Board in April 1918. The board pressured businesses to grant some of the most important demands of workers. As a result, workers won an eight-hour working day. They also received overtime pay, equal pay for women, and the right to form unions. In return, workers agreed not to go on strike.

Workers During the War

To pay for the war, the United States government sold war bonds and increased taxes. Then industries had to expand in order to produce war materials. During this time, however, there was a labor shortage. Millions of men left their jobs to serve in the armed forces. Also, immigration slowed during the war. Fewer immigrants were arriving to take on the jobs.

The labor shortage provided new job opportunities for women. Many women joined the workforce for the first time by taking on jobs previously held by men.

The prospect of finding good jobs also brought hundreds of thousands of African Americans to Northern cities from the rural South. From 1914 to 1920, between 300,000 and 500,000 African Americans left their homes in the rural South to settle in Northern cities and find jobs. This huge population movement was known as the **Great Migration**. In addition, thousands of Mexicans migrated to the United States in search of jobs.

Primary Source Propaganda Posters

Building Support The Committee on Public Information launched a massive campaign to build support for the war. Posters were an important part of this campaign.



James Montgomery Flagg's depiction of Uncle Sam for the U.S. Army is the most famous American wartime poster.

With millions of men serving in the military, women were needed to take their places in the labor force. ▼



The Food Administration urged people to observe "Wheatless Mondays," "Meatless Tuesdays," and "Porkless Thursdays," and to add to their own store of food by planting "victory gardens." Slogans such as "Serve Just Enough" and "Use All Leftovers" reminded Americans to conserve food.



The government sold war bonds to help pay for the cost of the war. ►

◀ The Food Administration urged people to observe "Wheatless Mondays," "Meatless Tuesdays," and "Porkless Thursdays," and to add to their own store of food by planting "victory gardens." Slogans

Critical Thinking

Synthesizing What common message is found in all four posters?

Producing Supplies

The United States had to produce food not only for its own needs but also for the Allies. President Wilson appointed Herbert Hoover to head a new Food Administration. This agency's campaign encouraged American farmers to produce more and persuaded the public to eat less.

The Food Administration also put price controls on many agricultural products to encourage voluntary **rationing**, or the limitation of use. As a result of such efforts, Americans **consumed**, or used, less food, expanded food production, and increased food exports.

Another government agency, the War Industries Board, supervised the nation's industrial production. The board's responsibilities included overseeing the changeover of factories to produce war-related goods and setting prices for key consumer products. Finally, the Fuel Administration managed the nation's coal and oil. To save energy, the

agency introduced daylight savings time and called for "Heatless Mondays."

Mobilizing Support

The federal government also needed to mobilize public support for the war. Antiwar sentiment remained strong even after the United States entered the war. The president appointed journalist George Creel to head the Committee on Public Information. The purpose of the committee was to promote the war as a battle for democracy and freedom.

The Committee on Public Information launched a massive propaganda campaign. The Committee distributed millions of pro-war pamphlets, posters, articles, and books, and it provided newspapers with government accounts of the war and advertisements. The committee hired speakers, writers, artists, and actors to build support for the war.

Reading Check **Explaining** Why did the United States face a labor shortage during the early days of World War I?

Public Opinion and the War

Main Idea During World War I, the American government approved legislation to control public opinion.

History and You Have you ever spoken out against a government action? Read to learn how the government tried to stop people from speaking out against the war.

World War I helped the American economy. Yet the war had harmful effects on American society. To create a sense of national unity, the government tried to silence opposition. Some Americans became intolerant of those who were different.

Controlling Public Opinion

Even after America entered the war, opposition to it remained strong. Some German Americans and Irish Americans sympathized with the Central Powers. Many **socialists**—people who believe industries should be publicly owned—opposed the war. They thought it would only help rich business owners and hurt working people. **Pacifists**—people who are opposed to the use of violence—were also against the war.

During the war, the Committee on Public Information began trying to silence **dissent**. Dissent is disagreement or opposition. It portrayed people who were against the war as unpatriotic. The **Espionage Act** of 1917 gave the government a new weapon to combat dissent to the war. The law provided stiff penalties for espionage, or spying. People who aided the enemy or interfered with army recruiting also could be penalized.

Congress passed even harsher measures in 1918—the **Sabotage Act** and the **Sedition Act**. These laws made it a crime to say, print, or write any criticism **perceived**, or recognized, as negative about the government. Such acts were considered sabotage—secret action to damage the war effort. Thousands of people were convicted under the laws.

Some people spoke out against these laws and the intolerance they produced. Most Americans, however, believed that in wartime no measure could be “too drastic” toward traitors and disloyal Americans.

Reading Check **Making Inferences** Why do you think Congress passed laws to penalize people who criticized the government?

Making a Peace

Main Idea World War I ended, but the Allies opposed Wilson's plan for peace.

History and You Think about the destruction caused by war. Read to learn why the Allies wanted to punish Germany.

World leaders from 27 nations gathered in Paris, France, in January 1919. They met for the peace conference following World War I. When President Woodrow Wilson arrived in the city, huge crowds cheered him. With great hope, Europeans looked to Wilson to help build a better postwar world, but enormous problems lay ahead.

Europe was in ruins. Its landscape, farms, and towns were destroyed. The human losses were huge. France, Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary each lost between 1 million and 2 million people in the fighting. Millions more were wounded. More than 50,000 Americans were killed in battle, while another

60,000 soldiers died from disease. Estimates put the number of soldiers killed worldwide at nearly 9 million. Millions of civilians also lost their lives.

Europe faced social and political turmoil. Millions of people were homeless and hungry, and civil war raged in Russia. Poles, Czechs, and other peoples struggled to form their own nations. The search for peace and stability was difficult.

Wilson's Fourteen Points

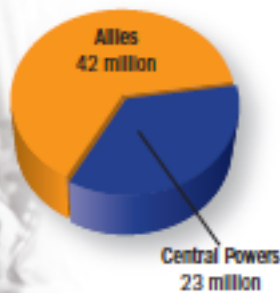
Woodrow Wilson had a vision of a just and lasting peace. He outlined his peace plan in the **Fourteen Points**. Several of the proposals dealt with adjusting boundaries in Europe and creating new nations. These points reflected Wilson's belief in **"national self-determination"**—the right of the people to decide how they should be governed.

Wilson also proposed a number of principles for conducting international relations. They included calls for free trade and freedom of the seas.

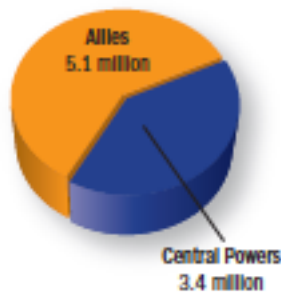


By the Numbers The Human Cost of War

Total Mobilized Forces



Military Deaths



Europe After World War I

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



The Postwar World

- Treaties changed the boundaries of Europe.
- Allied nations weakened the Central Powers by dividing their land.
- Germany's land area was greatly reduced.
- New nations emerged in Eastern Europe, including Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.
- Economic depression aided the rise of dictatorships in Europe and Japan.

Map Skills

Regions Which new nations bordered Germany?

maps in **MOtion** See StudentWorks™
Plus or glencoe.com

In addition, Wilson supported an end to secret treaties or agreements among nations. He also called for limits on arms and peaceful settlement of disputes over colonies.

League of Nations

Wilson's **final**, or last, point was the creation of a **League of Nations**. The League's member nations would help preserve peace and prevent future wars. They would respect and protect one another's independence.

W At first, many Europeans welcomed Wilson's ideas, but problems developed when nations put their own interests first. Also, some of Wilson's points did not provide clear solutions to difficult questions, such as how to **achieve**, or accomplish, self-determination in regions where different ethnic groups lived closely together.

The Allies Disagree

D The Allies did not invite either Germany or Russia to the peace talks. The major participants were called the Big Four. In this group was President Wilson; Prime Minister David

Lloyd George of Great Britain; France's premier, Georges Clemenceau; and Italian prime minister Vittorio Orlando.

The European leaders showed little enthusiasm for the Fourteen Points. Wilson opposed punishing the defeated nations. In contrast, the Europeans sought revenge.

Clemenceau wanted to make sure that Germany could never invade France again. He believed that Germany should be broken up into smaller countries. Both he and Lloyd George demanded that Germany make large **reparations**, or payments, for the damage Germans caused in the war. Wilson struggled to uphold the principles of his Fourteen Points at the Paris meeting, yet he was forced to compromise or give in to the demands of the other Allies.

At the same time, the Allies had to decide how to deal with the new Bolshevik government of Russia. Fearing the spread of communism, France, Britain, and the United States supported anti-Bolshevik forces fighting in a civil war for control of Russia. All three countries sent troops to Russia.

The Treaty of Versailles

On June 28, 1919, the Allies and Germany signed the **Treaty of Versailles**. The treaty dealt harshly with the Germans but because they were defeated, they had no choice but to sign. Under the treaty's terms, Germany had to accept full responsibility for the conflict. It had to pay billions of dollars in reparations to the Allies. Also, Germany had to disarm completely and give up its overseas colonies and some territory in Europe.

The treaty carved up the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires as well. New nations were created and old nations restored. The new nations fulfilled Wilson's vision of national self-determination. Border disputes, however, would lead to future conflicts.

Wilson succeeded in having the League of Nations included in the treaty. He believed that the League would correct any mistakes in the rest of the treaty.

Reading Check **Identifying Cause and Effect** Why didn't Great Britain, France, and Italy support Wilson's Fourteen Points?

Some Republicans viewed it as an opportunity to weaken the Democratic Party before the upcoming elections of 1920. Other senators had sincere concerns about the treaty, particularly the League of Nations. A few senators opposed signing any treaty.

R Lodge vs. Wilson

The most powerful opponent of the treaty was **Henry Cabot Lodge** of Massachusetts. Lodge was head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a longtime foe of President Wilson. Lodge said that membership in the League would mean that:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"American troops and American ships may be ordered to any part of the world by nations other than the United States, and that is a proposition to which I, for one, can never assent."

—from *Vital Forces in Current Events*, 1920

Lodge delayed a vote on the treaty so that opponents could present their cases. He then proposed a number of reservations that would limit America's obligations under the treaty.

C Opposition at Home

Main Idea The U.S. Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations.

History and You Think about how Americans might have felt after World War I. Read to learn how the U.S. Senate reacted to the treaty and the League of Nations.

Wilson presented the Treaty of Versailles to the U.S. Senate for ratification in July 1919. "Dare we reject it and break the heart of the world?" he asked. In spite of Wilson's plea, a difficult struggle lay ahead.

Many Americans had doubts about the treaty. Some thought it dealt too harshly with Germany, while others worried that the League of Nations marked a permanent American commitment to international affairs.

In 1919 the Republicans controlled the Senate, which had to ratify the treaty. Some Republican senators saw the ratification issue as a chance to embarrass President Wilson.

Wilson went on a national tour in September to rally support for the treaty and League of Nations. When he returned to Washington, he suffered a stroke. During the president's illness, his wife, Edith Wilson, shielded him from pressures and took a major role in deciding which issues to raise with him.

The Treaty Is Rejected

In the months after Wilson's stroke, opposition to the treaty grew. In March 1920, the Senate voted on the treaty with Lodge's changes. Opposed by most Republicans and deserted by former supporters, the Treaty of Versailles was rejected in the Senate.

Wilson hoped the 1920 election would be a "great and solemn referendum" on the League. He even considered running for a third term. In the end, however, Wilson did not run. In 1921 the United States signed a separate peace treaty with each of the Central Powers. The United States never joined the League of Nations.

Reading Check **Explaining** Why did the Senate reject the Treaty of Versailles?

Visual Summary

1914

June Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated

July Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia

Aug. Germany declares war on Russia and France, and invades Belgium; World War I begins

1915

May German U-boat torpedoes the British *Lusitania*, killing 128 Americans



1916

Feb. The Germans launch a major offensive at the Battle of Verdun

July Allies begin their offensive at the Battle of the Somme

Nov. Woodrow Wilson wins presidential reelection



1917

Jan. Germany requests an alliance with Mexico if the U.S. entered the war

March Germany attacks and sinks four American ships

April U.S. Congress declares war against Germany

May Selective Service Act sets up a military draft

Dec. Russia's new Communist government pulls out of the war



1918

March Treaty of Brest-Litovsk shifts German troops to the Western Front

Sept.-Nov. Battle of the Argonne Forest turns war in favor of Allies

Nov. Germany becomes a republic; armistice begins

1919

Jan. World leaders meet at Paris peace conference

June Germany and the Allies sign the Treaty of Versailles

1920

March U.S. Senate rejects the Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations



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