

Chapter 30

The War to End Wars

I. War by Act of Germany

- A. By January 22, 1917, Woodrow Wilson still wanted the U.S. to avoid war. He gave a speech and called for "peace without victory" (defeating Germany without embarrassing them).
- B. Germany responded with an iron fist. They announced they would erase the **Sussex pledge** and turn to a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. This meant any ship, warship or civilian, belligerent or peaceful, was fair game to German u-boats.
 - i. Woodrow Wilson sought to arm merchant ships. But, he was met with opposition by a group of Midwestern senators.
- C. The "last straw" came in the **Zimmerman note**.
 - i. German foreign secretary sent a secret telegram from Germany to Mexico. The telegram, however, was intercepted by British spies.
 - ii. In the note, Germany encouraged Mexico to wage war against the U.S. After a victory, Mexico would regain Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.
- D. Meanwhile, German u-boats were indeed sinking ships. Four unarmed American merchant ships were sunk by German subs.
- E. And to the east, Vladimir Lenin's communist revolution overthrew the Russian czar.
- F. President Wilson decided the time had undoubtedly come for the U.S. to enter the war. On April 2, 1917, Wilson asked Congress to declare war. Congress declared war on April 6, 1917.

II. Wilsonian Idealism Enthroned

- A. The challenge now was to lead many reluctant Americans into war.
 - i. Six senators (including the first congresswoman, **Jeanette Rankin**) and 50 representatives had voted *against* the war.
- B. Stopping u-boats would not be convincing enough to Midwesterners. Thus, Wilson's new slogan and purpose for the war was to, "make the world safe for democracy."
 - i. This slogan laid out a very idealized goal: *not* to fight for the riches or war, but to free others from the tyranny of autocrats.
 - ii. Wilson successfully sold the idea. Americans eagerly joined the effort to "hang the Kaiser." The expense was Wilson's initial goal of "peace without victory."

III. Wilson's Fourteen Potent Points

- A. Wilson became the de facto moral leader of the war. In January of 1917 he gave his **Fourteen Points Address** to Congress.
- B. The Fourteen Points laid out Wilson's idealistic goals. Oddly, before ever *entering* the war, Wilson was laying out his goals for peace *after* the war. The main points were...
 - i. Abolishing secret treaties.
 - ii. Freedom of the seas.
 - iii. Removal of economic barriers between nations.
 - iv. Reduction of armaments.
 - v. Changing colonial claims to help both colonizers and native peoples.
 - vi. "**Self-determination**" where groups choose their government for themselves.
 - vii. A committee called the **League of Nations** to hopefully settle international disputes peacefully. This was idealistic Wilson's *most* desired point.

IV. Creel Manipulates Minds

- A. In order to ratchet up and to keep up the war's enthusiasm in America, the **Committee on Public Information** was created to sell the war.

B. **George Creel** headed up the committee and was very successful using the following tactics:

- i. He sent out 75,000 "four-minute men" to give patriotic speeches.
- ii. Posters were pasted everywhere saying things like "Battle of the Fences" or encouraging people to buy war bonds.
- iii. Leaflets and pamphlets told of the idealistic goals of the war.
- iv. Although radio and TV hadn't been invented yet, the movies had. Creel used movie shorts (often featuring America's first big movie star, Charlie Chaplin) or propaganda films like "The Kaiser", "The Beast of Berlin" or "To Hell with the Kaiser".
- v. Songs helped sell the war too, especially "Over There".

C. Perhaps a drawback of Creel's success was that he was *too* successful. Americans entered the war with too-lofty ideals. The reality was a dirty war in the trenches, with no glorious battle, high casualties, and a generation of disillusioned young men who survived. This would be later immortalized in Hemingway's novels *The Sun Also Rises* and especially in *A Farewell to Arms*.

V. Enforcing Loyalty and Stifling Dissent

A. German-Americans (about 8% of the U.S. population) were largely loyal to the United States. However, rumors and gossip spawned the wide belief that they were actually spies and saboteurs loyal to Germany. Some were tarred-and-feathered or beaten.

B. Anti-German feelings affected all.

- i. German names were re-branded. For example, German composers like Beethoven were not performed by orchestras, sauerkraut became "liberty cabbage," dachshunds became "liberty pups."

C. Congress joined the general mood by passing two anti-foreign laws.

- i. The **Espionage Act of 1917** sought to prosecute "spies". 1,900 prosecutions followed under the Espionage Act.
 - a) Noteworthy was **Eugene V. Debs**, the leader of the Socialist. He was sentenced to ten years under the law.
 - b) Also targeted were members of the **Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.)**, a group that held the goal of creating an international labor union. The leader of the I.W.W., **William D. Haywood**, also was convicted under the Espionage Act.
- ii. The **Sedition Act of 1918** sought to prosecute anyone engaging in "seditious" activity.
 - a) Essentially any activity interpreted as anti-government could be prosecuted--a very general definition that could be applied widely.
 - b) Both the Espionage and Sedition Acts pushed the boundaries of the First Amendment, and likely flat-out broke them.
 - c) Notably, these two laws were very similar to the Alien and Sedition Acts of the 1790's, under President Adams'.
 - d) After the war, presidential pardons were given to many of those jailed under these laws. Eugene Debs was pardoned by President Warren G. Harding in 1921.

VI. The Nation's Factories Go to War

A. The U.S. entered the war very unprepared. Wilson had taken a few steps early on, including (1) forming a Council of National Defense to study economic mobilization, (2) increasing shipbuilding, and (3) increasing the size of the army (although the U.S. still ranked 15th in the world in size).

B. The first major problem was mobilizing industry. There was much ignorance everywhere and reluctance by states-rights advocates who didn't want the federal government ramming things down their throats.

- i. Somewhat late, in March of 1918, Wilson appointed **Bernard Baruch** leader of the War Industries Board to orchestrate industry in the war effort. Baruch was a savvy stock speculator and very able, but the Board's powers were a bit weak. America's love of *laissez-faire* (government staying out of business) was strong even in time of war.

VII. Workers in Wartime

A. Americans went to work in large measure, motivated by the governments "work or fight" policy.

- B. Former Pres. Taft headed the **National War Labor Board** to settle any worker disputes and thus keep folks on the job.
 - i. Businesses were encouraged to keep wages high and hours long.
 - ii. The government did *not* agree to workers' top desire--a government guarantee to organize labor unions.
- C. **Samuel Gompers**, head of the American Federation of Labor (AF of L), loyally supported the war.
 - i. Some smaller unions, including the I.W.W., did not support the war. The "I Won't Work" union engaged in some sabotage in complaint of poor working conditions.
 - ii. The AF of L, however, benefited from its work and loyalty. By war's end, membership had more than doubled to over 3 million and wages in certain industries had increased by 20%.
- D. Problems still remained.
 - i. Wartime inflation threatened to negate the wage increases.
 - ii. Strikes ran rampant--there were some 6,000 strikes, often violent.
 - a) For example in 1919, over 250,000 steel workers struck (America's largest strike). Steel officials would not bargain. Instead, 30,000 African-American workers were brought in to keep the mills going. Violence followed, a dozen workers were killed, and the strike failed.
- E. African-Americans began moved north during the war by the tens of thousands seeking jobs. Appearing in formerly all-white neighborhoods, tension and sometimes violence resulted. Chicago and St. Louis are good examples.

VIII.

Suffering until Suffrage

- A. While the men were at war, many women took jobs.
- B. Women working created a split in the women's movement--those against and for the war.
 - i. Against the war, the National Woman's party were pacifists. The party was led by a Quaker, Alice Paul. She organized marches and hunger strikes against Germany.
 - ii. Most women supported the war. The **National American Woman Suffrage Association** backed Pres. Wilson's efforts. They argued that women must engage in the war effort in order to participate after the war. They gained Pres. Wilson's endorsement of women's suffrage.
- C. Several states began granting women the right to vote including New York, Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. Several western states had already granted women's suffrage. The domino effect had begun.
- D. In 1920, the **Nineteenth Amendment** was passed granting women the right to vote nationwide.
- E. A **Women's Bureau** emerged after the war with the goal of protecting women's newfound rights in the workplace. However, most women left the jobs and returned to the homes after the war.
 - i. Congress also essentially endorsed the traditional role of women as homemakers by passing the **Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act** (1921). The law gave instruction on maternal and infant health care.

IX.

Forging a War Economy

- A. Mobilization to a wartime economy would be fueled by emotion and patriotism rather than the rule of laws.
- B. Since he'd successfully organized a voluntary food drive for Belgium, **Herbert Hoover** was chosen to head up the **Food Administration**.
 - i. Hoover relied on voluntary efforts, not mandates of law.
 - ii. Slogans were very successful in drumming up support and food. Examples were "meatless Tuesdays" and "wheatless Wednesdays."
 - iii. Most Americans planted "victory gardens" in their backyards to grow their own vegetables.
 - iv. No grains were to be wasted on making alcohol. This also helped propel the prohibition movement. In 1919, one year after the war ended, the **Eighteenth Amendment** was passed prohibiting alcoholic drinks.
- C. The increased need for food was because the U.S. had to feed citizens at home, package food to ship to soldiers, *and* feed the allies in Europe.

- i. Hoover's program and people's efforts were very successful. Food production increased by 25% and food exports to Europe tripled.
- ii. His program was mimicked by others.
 - a) The **Fuel Administration** encourage folks with "heatless Mondays", "lightless nights," and "gasless Sundays." "Daylight saving time" was also started to conserve fuel since there was one less dark hour to light up.
 - b) The Treasury Dept. sought money for the effort through Liberty Loan and Victory Loan drives. People were also encouraged to buy "war bonds."
 - The government collected \$21 billion, 2/3 of America's war effort. The other 1/3 of the cost was paid via increased taxes.

- D. Although voluntary efforts were the preference, the government did exert its power at times.
 - i. The government took over the railroads in 1917 when they got log-jammed.
 - ii. And, they seized many ships for the war.

X. Making Plowboys into Doughboys

- A. Americans had envisioned a somewhat secondary role in the war effort. By 1917, however, it became clear that the European Allies were out of men, money, and everything else. America would have to go "all in" to the war.
- B. To gain the needed soldiers, a draft was started by the **Selective Service Act** (a draft hadn't been used since the Civil War).
 - i. All men, age 18 to 45, were required to register. A man couldn't purchase his exemption either, as in the Civil War.
 - ii. Despite some fussing, the draft was relatively smooth and successful. The army swelled to 4,000,000 men.
 - iii. Troops were supposed to get six months training, but usually they were just shuffled off to war.
- C. Women served in the military for the first time.
- D. Blacks also served, still in segregated units. Racial attitudes of the time still held that black soldiers shouldn't be trained for combat, but rather should serve in support roles.

XI. Fighting in France—Belatedly

- A. In Russia, the communist **Bolsheviks** had taken over in late 1917. By early 1918, Russia had pulled out of the war. With the Eastern Front now dormant, the result was that German soldiers could now relocate over to the Western Front.
- B. Despite the Allies urging, America was late getting "over there." Partly that was due to the huge tasks of logistics, of organizing, and partly it was due to America's desire to train the troops and keep them under American officers.
- C. Americans began spilling over to Europe and first served as Allied replacements in the quieter sections. Others served in Belgium, Italy, and even Russia to prevent Russia from falling to Germany. Some troops went to Siberia to hold back Japan's interests there.
 - i. The Bolsheviks disliked these interventions by capitalists trying to undermine their communist revolution.

XII. America Helps Hammer the "Hun"

- A. The Allies knew Germany would make a big push in the Spring of 1918--and they did.
- B. French commander **Marshal Foch's** motto was, "To make war is to attack." But, really, France was just hanging on until America arrived.
- C. U.S. soldiers arrived en masse in the Spring of 1918. America's main roles in the war were (1) in stopping the German assault on Paris, (2) providing a much-needed boost to morale, and (3) providing supplies.
 - i. American soldiers helped stop Germany at **Château-Thierry**, only 40 miles from Paris.
 - ii. Americans helped at the **Second Battle of the Marne** which started the German withdrawal.
 - iii. Americans helped stop Germany at the southern flank at **St. Mihiel**.
 - iv. American **Gen. John J. Pershing** didn't want to just *help* in the war. He wanted Americans to fight on their own.

- a) U.S. Marines proved themselves at **Belleau Wood**. Due to their fierce fighting they were given the nickname "Teufel Hunden" by the Germans--"Devil Dogs."
 - b) Pershing engaged in the **Meuse-Argonne** offensive, the largest military endeavor in American history to that time. The numbers were huge, and with the machine gun in use, so were casualties.
 - c) **Sgt. Alvin C. York** became a hero when he killed 20 Germans and captured 132 others, by himself.
 - D. By this time, Germany's back was broken and was about to give up. To speed the psychological process, the Allies were distributing propaganda leaflets encouraging Germany to surrender.
- XIII. The Fourteen Points Disarm Germany
 - A. Wilson achieved his goal of kicking the Kaiser out of power. Many Germans were sick of war and the Kaiser fled to Holland.
 - B. Germany quit fighting at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 (Nov. 11, 1918). This was an armistice only (a cease-fire). An official surrender would have to come later amongst the politicians.
 - i. This day became known as "**Armistice Day**" and then later, "Veterans' Day."
 - C. Even more than losses on the battlefield, what really stopped the Germans was the possibility of seemingly endless American troops and supplies.
- XIV. Wilson Steps Down from Olympus
 - A. Both at home and across the world, Woodrow Wilson's popularity was flying high at the end of the war. Still, in the mid-term elections of 1918, Republicans gained a slim majority in Congress.
 - B. Wilson decided to personally travel to Europe peace talks. Republicans were not happy about this--to them it seemed like he was showing off.
 - i. Worse still for Wilson was that he didn't invite a single Republican along on the trip. **Henry Cabot Lodge** was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations committee, but Wilson and he despised one another.
 - ii. Leaving out Republicans alienated them even more and would prove to be a costly mistake.
- XV. An Idealist Battles the Imperialists in Paris
 - A. The "Big Four" met at the **Paris Peace Conference** in 1919 to settle terms of peace. The Big Four were **Vittorio Orlando** (Italy), **Georges Clemenceau** (France), **David Lloyd George** (Britain), and **Woodrow Wilson** (U.S.).
 - B. Conflicting ambitions ruled the conference. Britain and France wanted to punish Germany, Italy wanted money or land, the U.S. wanted to heal wounds through Wilson's League of Nations.
 - C. Wilson's big dream was the League of Nations to "end all wars." He'd "sell the ranch" to get the League. So he bargained with Britain and France.
 - i. Britain and France agreed to go along with the League, Wilson reluctantly agreed to go along with punishment.
 - ii. The **War Guilt Clause** was included doing two things: (1) it formally placed blame on Germany, a proud and embarrassed people, and (2) it charged Germany for the costs of war, \$33 billion.
- XVI. Hammering Out the Treaty
 - A. Meanwhile, back in the U.S., opposition to the Treaty of Versailles was growing. A 2/3 vote by the U.S. Senate is needed to approve a president's treaty. A group, led by **William Borah** and **Hiram Johnson**, desired isolation and/or it would be unwise to turn American decision-making over to a group of foreign nations (the League of Nations).
 - B. Europe noticed the American opposition--this put them in a better bargaining position. They set out to use their new power.
 - i. Clemenceau pressed for the Rhineland and Saar regions (in between France and Germany). This went against Wilson's idea of "self-determination." Wilson agreed to:
 - a) Let France occupy the region for 15 years, then let the people vote: France or Germany? (they voted Germany).

- b) The "Security Treaty" saying the U.S. and England would come to France's aid if they ever needed help.
 - ii. Italy wanted the strategic seaport of Fiume. Again, this interfered with self-determination. Talks broke down and Italy turned against Wilson.
 - iii. Japan wanted China's Shantung peninsula and German islands in the Pacific. Yet again, this was not self-determination. Wilson eventually agreed to let Japan keep the islands and the peninsula on the promise that the Shantung would go back to China later on.
- XVII. The Peace Treaty That Bred a New War
- A. Germany was forced to sign the **Treaty of Versailles**. Many Germans had hoped Wilson's Fourteen Points would be built into the treaty, but due to necessary bargaining, few made it. The Germans felt betrayed. This would be a main crying point by **Adolf Hitler** in the near future.
 - B. Wilson had been forced to bargain--no bargaining would've meant no treaty. Now, he was a fallen hero. Liberals felt he'd "sold out" and imperialists felt he was too soft.
- XVIII. The Domestic Parade of Prejudice
- A. Upon his return to the U.S., Wilson entered a whirlwind of opposition on many sides.
 - i. Isolationists didn't want to get in "entangling alliances," as Washington and Jefferson had warned against.
 - ii. "Hun-haters" thought the treaty was too soft; liberals thought it was too tough.
 - iii. "Hyphenated Americans" felt the treaty too harsh on their home country. Irish-Americans thought it gave Britain too much world power.
- XIX. Wilson's Tour and Collapse (1919)
- A. **Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge** did not want the Treaty of Versailles approved in the Senate. He felt he could not defeat it outright, but intended to change it to a favorable form.
 - B. To stall, he held meetings and read the 264 page document aloud in the Senate. The slow-down began to confuse public opinion on the Treaty.
 - C. While bogged down in the Senate, Wilson decided to take his case on the road--to appeal to the people themselves. It would be a physically grueling summer tour.
 - i. Early on, Wilson's tour went somewhat poorly. Midwestern tour stops had lots of German-Americans who weren't enthusiastic.
 - ii. Also, "irreconcilable" senators (Borah and Johnson) followed Wilson's tour and made stops at the places he'd just spoken.
 - iii. The western mountains and Pacific Coast welcomed Wilson warmly. After a speech in Pueblo, CO, Wilson collapsed due to exhaustion. Days later, a stroke paralyzed half of his body. He laid in the White House for months, essentially inactive as president.
- XX. Defeat Through Deadlock
- A. Henry Cabot Lodge drew up fourteen "reservations" to the Treaty of Versailles. His goal was to protect the Monroe Doctrine, the Constitution, and retain America's right to rule herself, rather than an international committee.
 - i. Of special concern was Article X of the Treaty. It required the U.S. to help a League nation that is attacked. Lodge and the Congress wanted to retain that right themselves. Lodge tacked on amendments to make those changes.
 - B. By voting time, with the amendments in place, the roles had been switched--Lodge was now *for* the treaty and Wilson was now *against* it.
 - i. Wilson personally despised Lodge and would not accept Lodge's perversions of the Treaty of Versailles. Though weak, he convinced Democrats to vote *against* Lodge's amended version of the treaty. The treaty failed to get Senate approval, 55 yes to 39 no (it needed a 2/3 vote to pass).
 - ii. Surprised at the defeat, the treaty was brought up for a second vote. It failed a second time, with a 49 yes to 35 no vote. The U.S. never did accept the Treaty of Versailles or, thus, the League of Nations.

iii. The treaty was not ratified due to many reasons. A major one was Wilson's refusal to compromise. Wilson was a man of high ideals--he would not compromise his ideals in the reality of politics.

XXI. The "Solemn Referendum" of 1920

- A. Twice voted down and still unratified, Wilson planned to take his case straight to the people in a "solemn referendum." This was simply unrealistic in the dirty world of politics.
- B. By 1920, the Republicans had reorganized. Teddy Roosevelt's death in 1919 helped draw the Republicans back together. They drew up a party platform to appeal to both those *for* and those *against* the League of Nations. Their candidate would court both sides.
- i. **Warren G. Harding** was chosen as the Republican candidate and **Calvin Coolidge** as V.P. candidate. Harding was chosen largely because he was folksy and looked like a president. He ran saying America wanted to take a break from Wilsonian high-mindedness and just "return to normalcy," a non-word, but he was probably right.
 - ii. The Democrats chose Ohio governor **James M. Cox** (pro-League of Nations) and for V.P., a young **Franklin D. Roosevelt**.
- C. Harding won the election in a big way (16 million to only 9).
- i. Notably, Socialist party candidate **Eugene V. Debs** got almost 1 million votes--a substantial number. This raised the alarm that socialism/communism was growing in the U.S.

XXII. The Betrayal of Great Expectations

- A. The ultimate irony of WWI was that it was billed the "war to end all wars," and yet it did much to start the biggest war ever, World War II.
- B. At end of WWI, the door was open for the U.S. to become the world's leader, but instead, America retreated into isolationism. American isolationism helped lead to WWII in several ways:
- i. Without allies to help in time of need, France went ahead and built up a massive military.
 - ii. Punishment of Germany led to considerable suffering. This opened the door for Adolf Hitler to gain support with wild ideas. Isolationism would also allow Hitler Germany to re-arm themselves largely without interruption.

Chapter 31

American Life in the Roaring '20s

I. Seeing Red

- A. Following WWI, America's mood changed to isolationism and anti-foreigner. "Radicals" were shunned and foreigners were expected to change their ways to American.
- B. A "**Red Scare**" (a fear of communism) emerged. This fear was fueled by (1) the recent Russian revolution, (2) Eugene Debs growing numbers, (3) loads of strikes, and (4) a series of mail bombs.
- i. The logic went that communism was from Europe--all the more reason to shun foreigners and their ways.
 - ii. Right or wrong, people blamed the bombs on the reds. **Atty. Gen. Mitchell Palmer** vowed to round up the reds. He arrested about 6,000 people; some were deported. He slowed down a bit after a bomb blew up his house.
- C. Again, free speech, such as explaining one's political views, was under fire.
- i. States passed laws outlawing advocacy of violence for social change.
 - ii. Some elected officials were denied seats on the legislature because they were Socialists.
- D. The faces of the Red Scare were Sacco and Vanzetti.