

America & the Great War

American Neutrality

- ⊗ Economic Benefits
 - ⊕ Private US industry served as arsenal (\$2.4 billion) & bank (\$3 billion) for Allies;
 - ⊕ Trade with Central Powers was open, but difficult--no great loss (\$169 million)
- ⊗ Isolationism ⇔ Neutrality
 - ⊕ Re-established cultural & economic ties with England
 - ⊕ Spread of British propaganda to US
 - ⊕ 11 million Americans w/parent from Central Power nation;
 - ⊕ Large urban Irish & Jewish populations did not favor Allies;
 - ⊕ Division exacerbated natural isolation of Americans.
- ⊗ End of Neutrality
 - ⊕ Progressive Idealism
 - ⊕ Response to German Actions & Atrocities
 - ⊕ Final Straw? Zimmerman Telegram

Military Mobilization--Volunteerism

- ⊗ National Defense Act (1916)
 - ⊕ Increased the enlistment of Army & National Guard
 - ⊕ Called for training of "Citizen Soldiers"
- ⊗ Naval Act (1916)--Largest expansion of Navy in US history.
- ⊗ Selective Service Act (1917)--Required registration of all males 21-30 (later 18-45)
 - ⊕ Specifically intended to prepare the nation for battle;
 - ⊕ Also meant to instill patriotism & aid in assimilation of ethnic Americans-- "Heat up the melting pot"

Economic Mobilization--Voluntary Compliance

"It is not the army that we must shape & train for war; it is the nation."--Woodrow Wilson.

- ⊗ Cost of the War
 - ⊕ \$760 million each month;
 - ⊕ \$33.5 billion total, but more than three times that when veterans' benefits & interest on loans paid after war.
- ⊗ Greatest Need: Mobilizing all resources toward war effort
 - ⊕ Americans accepted that the war would require sacrifice;
 - ⊕ But would they accept formal control & regulation?
 - ⊕ Mobilization & the Food Administration

- Herbert Hoover's agency relied on Voluntary Compliance to ↑ production & ↓ consumption
- Prohibition & 18th Amendment were part of this strategy--restrictions on using grain to produce alcohol
- Pushed people to grow "Victory Gardens" & follow "wheatless" Wednesdays & "meatless" Tuesdays;
- ⊕ Never implemented a system of rations.
- ⊕ Voluntary Compliance was a success
 - Farm production increased 25%
 - Food exports to Allies tripled;
 - Policy was used by Fuel Administration & bond drives.
- ⊗ Mobilization & War Industries Board
 - ⊕ Bernard Baruch's agency worked with trade associations to regulate production & costs
 - Late in war after conflicts between military & industry;
 - Some attempts to mobilize labor without recognizing the rights of labor.
 - Most policies were clearly pro-industry
 - Antitrust laws abandoned for duration
 - Competitive bidding was abandoned during war & Cost-Plus contracts guaranteed companies a profit no matter costs cost;
 - ⊕ Despite pro-industry stance, arguments that arms merchants & bankers brought about--Myth

Opposition to Mobilization

- ⊗ Labor Unrest
 - ⊕ Over 6,000 strikes during the war, especially those by the Wobblies;
 - ⊕ Government was forced to form National War Labor Board, prohibiting strikes but also encouraging reform & further recognizing rights of labor.
- ⊗ Henry Ford's Unrest
 - ⊕ Refused to accept War Industry Board's limit on automobile production;
 - ⊕ Baruch threatened to send troops & seize Ford's plants;
 - ⊕ These types of threats were used repeatedly but never came to anything.

The 14 Points & Treaty of Versailles **From Progressive Idealism to Imperialist Reality**

Wilson's 14 Points--January 8, 1918

- ✿ Abolish Secret Treaties;
- ✿ Freedom of the Seas;
- ✿ Remove Economic Barriers;
- ✿ Reductions in Armaments;
- ✿ Adjustments in Colonial Claims;
- ✿ Self-Determination, especially in Austria-Hungary;
- ✿ Realignment & Readjustments for Italy, Russia, Belgium, Balkans, Turkey, Poland & France;
- ✿ Formation of League of Nations

From 14 Points to Treaty of Versailles

- ✿ Clemenceau, Lloyd George & Orlando were not as idealistic as Wilson & politically more savvy;
- ✿ Political Self-Determination limited to European colonies & denied to those in Africa & Asia.
- ✿ Article 231--War-Guilt Clause
 - ⊕ Placed sole blame for war on Germany;
 - ⊕ Obligated Germany to pay \$31 billion in reparations;
 - ⊕ Forced Germany to accept restrictions on military & loss of Sudetenland & Rhineland.
 - ⊕ German bitterness arose out expectations that Treaty of Versailles would more closely mirror 14 Points.

Senate Undermines Wilsonian Idealism

- ✿ Constitution gives the Senate role of "advice & consent" over treaties negotiated by the Executive Branch.
- ✿ Opposition to League of Nations in Senate
 - ⊕ Henry Cabot Lodge bogs down Treaty of Versailles;
 - ⊕ Major fears of US giving up American sovereignty to an international body;
 - ⊕ Irreconcilables (Borah & Johnson) opposed the League on any terms;
 - ⊕ Lodge Reservations--Reserved rights of US to have an independent foreign policy.
- ✿ Wilson Overestimates US Idealism
 - ⊕ Wilson attempted an "end-run" around the Senate, going directly to the people
 - ⊕ Went on a whistle-stop tour to drum up support;
 - ⊕ Fairly successful, but ability to mobilize popular support hindered by a stroke.
- ✿ Wilson's Political Blunder
 - ⊕ Attempted to win support without the Lodge Reservation;

- ⊕ Ordered Democrats to vote w/Irreconcilables against treaty;
- ⊕ 80% of Senators supported the treaty but was never ratified.
- ⊕ US signed separate peace w/Germany on July 25, 1921.

Mobilization gone too far?

Opposition to Difference & Dissent during & after the Great War

Creel's Committee on Public Information

- ⊗ Propaganda seen as necessary for Volunteerism & Voluntary Compliance
 - ⊕ Established voluntary censorship in press;
 - ⊕ Supported newsreels, documentaries & anti-German movies including *The Kaiser: Beast of Berlin*;
 - ⊕ Sent out "Four-Minute Men" to directly drum up support.
- ⊗ Supported several controversial measures
 - ⊕ "100% Americanism" movement whipped anti-German sentiment against recent immigrants;
 - ⊕ Creation of Liberty Leagues in communities across the country, advocated spying on neighbors, especially those with foreign-sounding names.

Restrictions on Dissent & Speech

- ⊗ **Espionage Act** (1917)--Fines & prison for those making statements that impeded draft or promoted insubordination in the military.
- ⊗ **Sedition Act** (1918)--Went further to include anything that impeded sale of war bonds or any "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language used to describe the US government, Constitution, flag or allies.
- ⊗ **Schenck v. US** (1919)--Constitutionality of Espionage Act
 - ⊕ Supreme Court argued that certain speech did not deserve protection on its very face (Shouting fire in a crowded theater);
 - ⊕ Determined wartime represented special circumstances; speech representing a "Clear & Present Danger" could be restricted.

Red Summer & Red Scare

- ⊛ Red Summer (1919)--Limits of Mobilization
 - ⊛ Great Migration part of wartime industrial mobilization;
 - ⊛ Race riots in 2 dozen cities, worst in Chicago.
- ⊛ Red Scare (1919-20)--Mobilization Out of Control
 - ⊛ Anti-Immigrant sentiment turns from Germans to Socialists/Anarchists
 - ⊛ Real fears of bombings--38 mailed to prominent Americans, one exploded on Wall Street, anarchist blown up outside home of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer;
 - ⊛ Major strikes continued across the nation;
 - ⊛ Led to Palmer Raids & deportations of radicals & leftists (4000 alleged communists arrested, 556 aliens deported, most w/out trials)
 - ⊛ No major violence developed, support for Palmer Raids waned.