

CHAPTER 31

The U.S. in World War I

1. U.S. Enters the War (pp. 705–707)

a. Early in 1917, President Wilson pressed for a compromise end to the bloodshed by proposing the concept of “peace without _____.” However, desperate to use its strongest weapon to best advantage, the Germans declared “unlimited _____ warfare,” vowing to sink all ships in the war zone. This resulted in the sinking of four unarmed American merchant vessels. Meanwhile, public sentiment was aroused when the _____ note was intercepted—seemingly an attempt by the Germans to recruit _____ (a country) as an ally in the event of war with the United States. Wilson finally asked Congress for a declaration of war in April of 19____. It is pretty clear on pages 705–706 that the authors think that Wilson had little choice but to jump into this war. Wilson, they say, “was forced to lead a hesitant and peace-loving nation into war” against “Germany’s warlords.” *** Do you fully buy this interpretation? Do you think that U.S. involvement could reasonably have been avoided? If so, how?

b. Because of America’s traditional hostility toward involvement in Europe’s wars, Wilson played to his own idealistic inclinations by framing the war as a crusade “to make the world safe for _____” and a “war to end _____.” Americans would be fighting not as just another greedy warmonger, but to help remake a corrupt world and avoid future tragedies. These ideas were formalized in Wilson’s famous _____ Points Address, in which he spelled out the democratic structure of the new world order he hoped to create. This address ended with the proposal for a new international organization that came to be called the League of _____. *** In his “Peace Without Victory” speech of January 1917, Wilson had seen the war as a grubby nationalistic conflict that could be settled by a territorial compromise. One year later, in his “Fourteen Points” speech, he saw the war as a moral crusade in which righteousness belonged to only one side. What had changed in the year between January 1917 and January 1918?

c. *** Do you see any connection between Wilson’s widening of the war goals into a moral crusade and Lincoln’s issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation nearly fifty years earlier?

2. The Home Front (pp. 707–715)

a. The U.S. mounted a vast pro-war and anti-German propaganda machine headed by George _____ and his Committee on _____ Information. With new laws like the _____ Act of 1917 and the _____ Act of 1918, free speech and other civil liberties were suspended and antiwar leaders such as Eugene V. _____, the perennial Socialist candidate for president, were put behind bars. *** List one argument in favor of and one argument against the restriction of civil liberties during wartime.

(1) For restrictions:

(2) Against restrictions:

b. The demand for labor during the war buildup brought many southern blacks to northern cities and put large numbers of women to work, eventually prompting Wilson's reluctant support for women's suffrage, which was passed in 19____ as the _____ Amendment. Typical of the voluntary nature of the domestic buildup was the call by Food and Drug administrator (and future president) Herbert _____ to grow "_____ gardens" and make "_____ loans" to the government to finance the war effort. This spirit of self-denial may have aided the eventual passage of Prohibition in 1919 in the form of the _____ Amendment. To raise the needed armies, a draft law was reluctantly passed and ultimately, the size of the army was raised from 200,000 to about _____ million men, and, for the first time, women.

3. **Fighting in Europe (pp. 715–718)** After the communistic _____ seized power late in 1917, Russia withdrew from the war, leaving Germany free for a massive push on the _____ front. Significant American forces did not arrive in Europe until the late spring of 19____, over one year after U.S. entry into the war. Under French Marshall _____ and U.S. Gen. "Black Jack" _____, American forces had a significant role in only two major battles, but it was the threat of unlimited American reserves that helped influence Germany to surrender on November 11, 19____ (now called Veterans Day). The chart on page 717 shows that about _____ Americans were killed in WW I (about the same as in Vietnam), a number which amounted to only about _____ percent of the total killed by all parties to this most horrific armed conflict to date. The country that incurred the greatest number of casualties was _____.

4. **Versailles Treaty (pp. 718–722)** Wilson's personal venture to the Paris Peace conference in January 19____ shows the disillusionment that often develops when idealism confronts cold power politics. At Versailles, he met with leaders of the victorious powers, including David Lloyd _____ of Britain and Georges _____ of France, who were more interested in punishing Germany than in remaking the world. While in Paris, Wilson made few efforts to convert domestic critics of a League of _____, including Senate Republican leader Henry Cabot _____. In the end, Wilson lost stature and few were happy with the treaty, which was extremely harsh on Germany (setting the stage for Hitler and World War II) and carried out few of the liberal ideas on self-determination contained in Wilson's _____ Points. However, Wilson thought that the centerpiece League of Nations would eventually cure these injustices.

5. **Failure to Ratify (pp. 722–725)**

a. With Senator _____ delaying Senate action on the treaty, Wilson took off on a speaking tour that resulted in his incapacitation from a stroke. Lodge then proposed approving the treaty with a series of (just coincidentally) fourteen formal _____ designed to protect American sovereignty and foreign policy flexibility in the face of a new League of Nations. Wilson twice refused to accept Republican modifications to the treaty. The U.S. therefore never ratified the Treaty and never joined the League. By the time the Republican Warren G. _____ was elected president in 1920, America had grown tired of Wilson's internationalism, moralism, and idealism. In one of history's great ironies, the U.S. never joined the League (and largely doomed it to failure), for which its president had been the primary advocate. In an unusually strong opinion, the authors conclude that the U.S. failure to ratify an admittedly flawed treaty was "tragically shortsighted," weakening an international structure that might have averted a second world war. *** Do you agree with this? If so, who was primarily responsible for the failure to ratify?

b. *** Can you think of any way that one country could approve a treaty "with reservations" without opening it up to proposed amendments from all other signing countries?

VARYING VIEWPOINTS
Woodrow Wilson: Realist or Idealist

1. The second paragraph of this essay lists three elements of the Wilsonian vision of American foreign policy. *** Pick ONE of these elements and write a short personal opinion as to its desirability and practicality in today's world.

(1) Isolationism is dead:

(2) U.S. should export its political and economic ideas:

(3) U.S. should push for a cooperative international system (i.e. support U.N., etc.):

2. Paragraphs 3 and 4 present a useful summary of the debate between foreign policy "realists" and "idealists" that continues today. Briefly, what are the essentials of these two viewpoints? *** Into which of these two camps do you think you would be inclined to fall and why?

(1) "Realists" (George Kennan/Henry Kissinger):

(2) "Idealists" (Arthur Link):

(3) Your view: