

1914-1918

World War 1

A Necessary War?

# The European powers 1878-1914

The unification of Germany and Italy (page 110) seemed for a time to have resolved the major questions which had disturbed the peace of Europe since 1848. Bismarck, the architect of German unification, concentrated after 1871 on building a system of alliances that would ensure the future of the new empire, mainly by isolating France, which proved unable to reconcile itself to the rise of the new German empire, and for almost 20 years he succeeded in convincing the rest of Europe of Germany's conservative and pacific intentions. In time, however, the alliances that had seemed defensive became aggressive and destabilising. Meanwhile, although the achievements of Bismarck and Cavour reduced nationalist fervour in central Europe, they stirred up a hornet's nest in the Balkans, where the struggles of various national groups for independence from the Turks inevitably involved the neighbouring powers, Russia and Austria (which, after its exclusion from Germany in 1866 became far more interested in the Balkans: map 1).

Revolts in the Balkans between 1875 and 1878, culminating in Russian intervention and war with the Turks, resulted in the treaty of Berlin (brokered by Bismarck) which either confirmed or established the independence of Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and Bulgaria and granted Austria a mandate to govern Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1879 Germany and Austria signed a defensive alliance, expanded to include Italy in 1882 (map 2a). Russia, satisfied that Slav interest had been met in the Balkans, turned increasingly to her interests in Central Asia and the Far East. The main European rivalries were now between Britain and Russia in Asia, and Britain and France in Africa. Britain remained isolated in Europe, while France and Russia signed an alliance in 1894 as a counterweight to the strength of the alliance bloc based around Germany.

The situation changed after 1897, however, when Germany began to seek a 'place in the sun'. This was not unreasonable; but by then most places in the sun had been occupied by others, and German policy – which involved building a High Seas Fleet to rival that of Britain – therefore seemed a constitute a threat to the established imperial powers. As a result, Britain resolved its differences with France in 1904, and with Russia in 1907, and France settled its longstanding dispute with Italy in 1902. Thereafter, the Triple Entente with France and Russia became thelynch-pin of British foreign policy, the only firm assurance against the German 'threat'. Germany, on the other became concerned with the danger of 'encirclement' by a hostile ring constructed by Great Britain (map 2b).

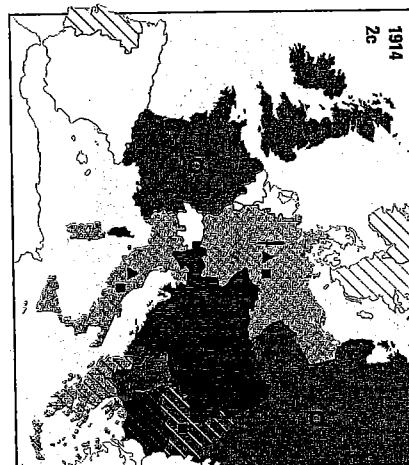
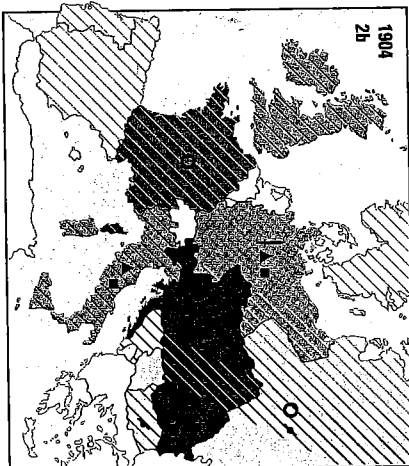
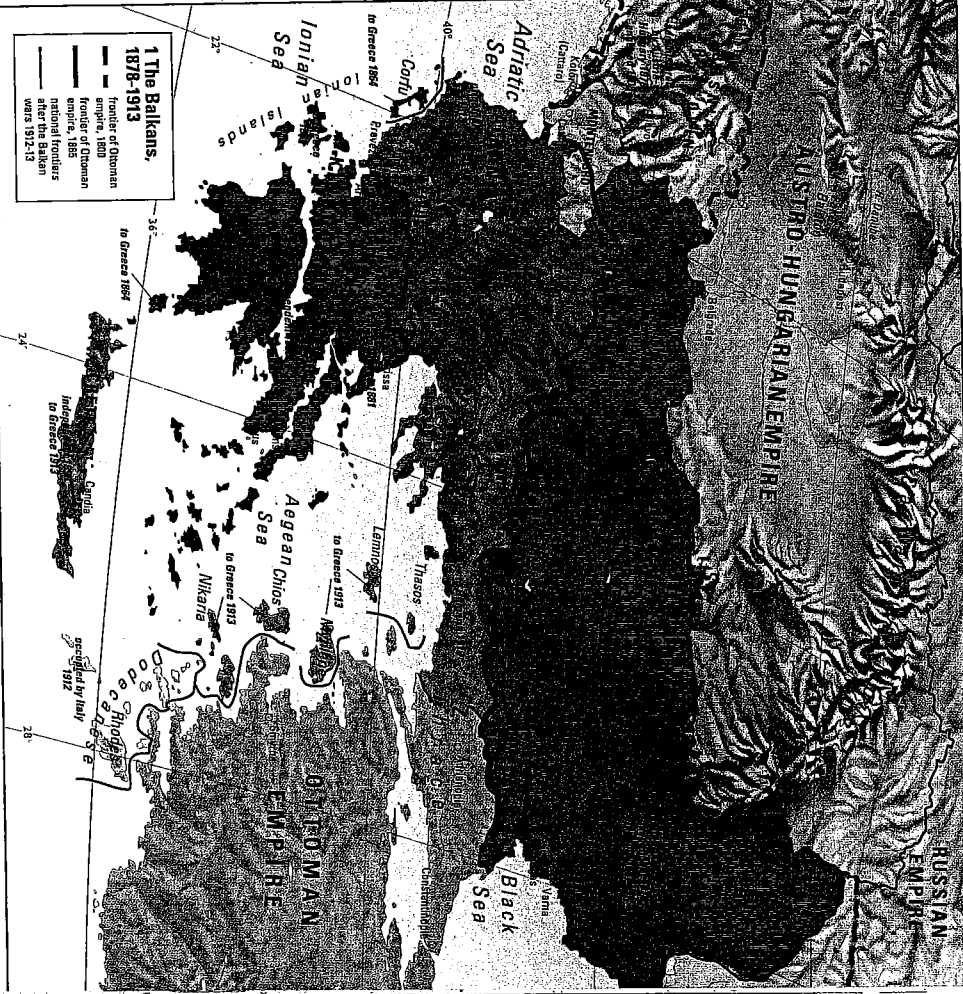
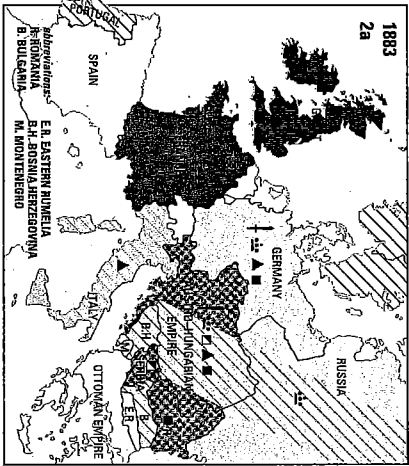
As a result, a dangerous simplification of alignments occurred into a bi-polar system: the Triple

Alliance and the Triple Entente drew tighter, and Germany in particular grew closer to its only dependable ally, Austria. When Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, Germany gave her qualified support, though enough to rekindle Austro-Russian antagonism in the Balkans. During the Balkan wars (1912-13), in which a Russian-sponsored Balkan League consisting of Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria attempted to drive the Turks out of Europe, the two diplomatic systems still cooperated, but Austria stood aglance at the consequent enlargement of Serbia – which almost doubled its size – and feared Serb agitation for an independent south Slav state (map 2c).

The assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne in Sarajevo (Bosnia) in June 1914 provided what seemed to the Austrian government like its last chance to deal with Serbia before it grew too powerful, and Germany threw its entire weight behind its ally. Russia, however, could not afford to leave Serbia in the lurch and began to mobilize against Austria. Germany regarded this as a direct threat, and also began to mobilize. However, fearing attack from Russia's allies in the West, German Grand Strategy called for an immediate attack on France – in the hope that it could be knocked out of the war before Russia advanced in force. On 28 July, Austria declared war on Serbia; on 1 August 1914 Germany declared war on Russia, and two days later on France. The diplomatic system created by Bismarck, coupled with the volatile situation in the Balkans, had produced a world war (page 124).

## 2 European alliances

- ↑ Austro-German alliance (the Dual Alliance) 1879-1918
  - ⬆ Three Emperor's Alliance 1881-87
  - ◻ Austro-Serbian Alliance 1881-85
  - ▲ Triple Alliance 1882-1915
  - ◼ Austro-German-Romanian Alliance 1882-1916
  - Franco-Russian Alliance 1894-1917
  - ◊ Russo-Bulgarian military convention 1902-13
- shaded, similar and identical colours indicate an enmity or community of interests



# Imperialism 1830-1914

Until 1830, the search for oriental luxuries remained the driving force behind European imperialism, and (with the important exception of India: page 90) the European stake in Asia and Africa remained confined to trading stations and the strategic outposts necessary to protect trade. Thereafter two new factors transformed the situation. First came the enforced 'opening' of the key markets - Turkey and Egypt (1838), Persia (1841), China (1842), Japan (1858) - to European, particularly British, commerce. Then, from the 1870s, a new phase of the Industrial Revolution (page 94) provoked a search for raw materials to feed the new industries. In the scramble for these resources between 1880 and 1914, Europe added almost 9 million square miles (23.4 million km<sup>2</sup>) - one-fifth of the land area of the globe - to its overseas colonial possessions.

France and Britain took the lead. The former conquered Algeria after 1830, annexed Tahiti and the Marquesas in the 1840s, expanded its colony in Senegal in the 1850s and began the conquest of Indo-China in 1859. Britain, both to forestall the French and to safeguard its position in India, claimed sovereignty over Australia and New Zealand (page 100),

and acquired Singapore (1819), Malacca (1824), Hong Kong (1842), Burma (1852), and Lagos (1861) (map 1).

The same imperatives underlay British expansion after 1880, except that the number of competitors to forestall increased. Thus the French empire grew between 1871 and 1914 by nearly 4 million square miles (10.4 million km<sup>2</sup>) and 47 million people (mainly in north and west Africa and Indo-China, where Laos and Tongking were added to Cambodia and Cochinchina, but she also secured Madagascar and some Pacific islands); Germany also acquired an empire of 1 million square miles (2.6 million km<sup>2</sup>) and 14 million colonial subjects (in South-West Africa, Togoland, the Cameroons, Tanganyika and the Pacific islands); Italy obtained several outposts in Africa; the United States annexed the Philippines, Guam, Hawaii and some Caribbean islands; and Russia began to expand in central Asia. Britain too managed to acquire extensive new territories in Africa which almost linked Cape Town with Cairo, more Pacific islands (including Fiji), and parts of the Indonesian archipelago (map 2). She added 8 million subjects to her empire and, by 1914, exercised authority over a fifth of the world's landmass and a quarter of its peoples.

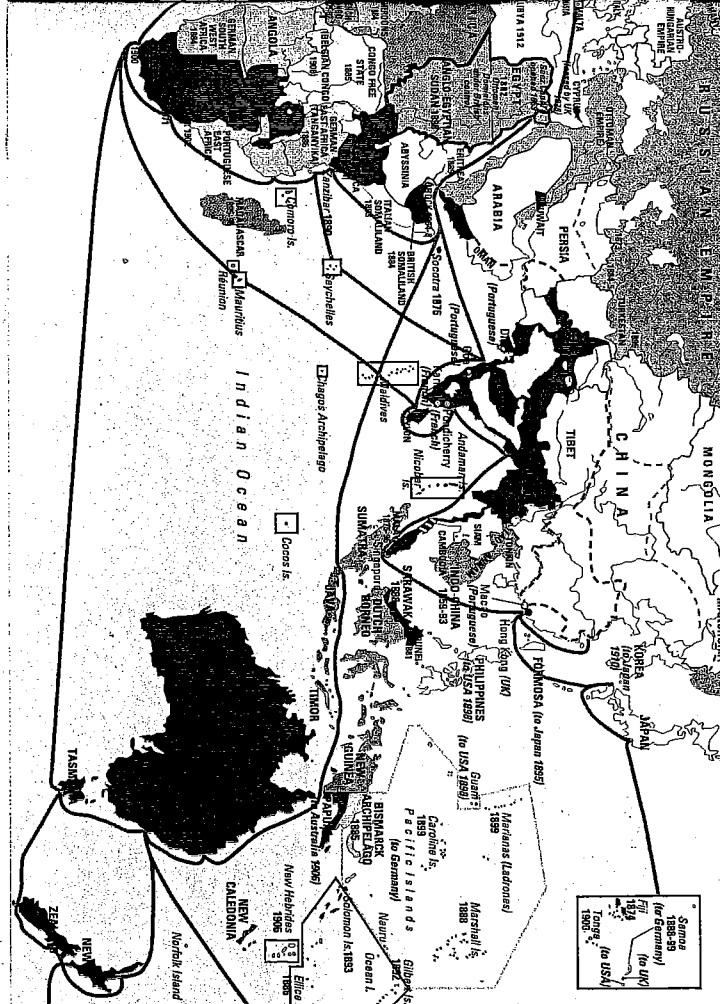
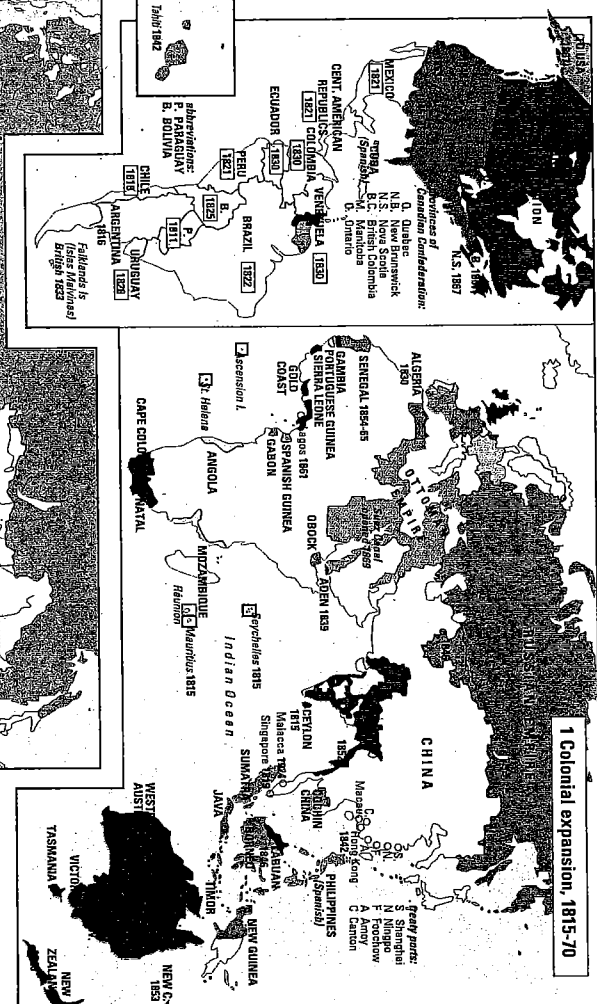
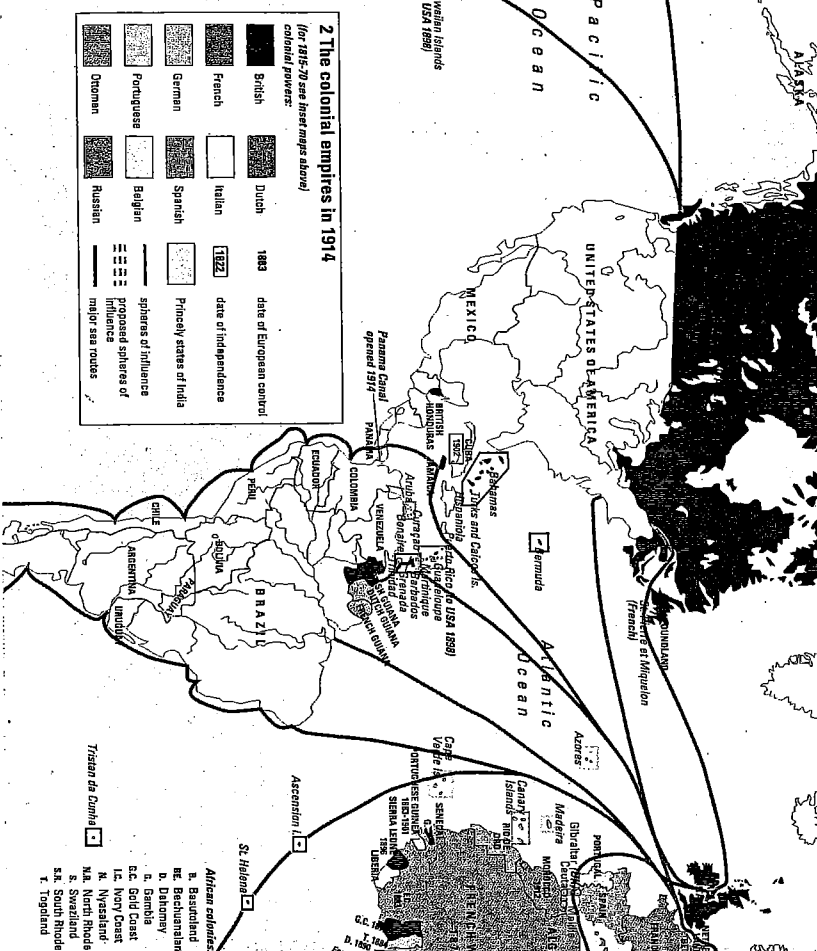
In retrospect, the fragility of these European empires, so hastily assembled, is obvious. None of the imperial powers possessed the resources to govern them effectively and European imperialism proved more ephemeral than anyone at the time imagined; yet it left an indelible mark on the peoples of Africa and Asia, propelling them willingly or unwillingly into the 20th century.

## 2 The colonial empires in 1914

(for 1875-79 see first map above)

Colonial power	1883	1882	date of independence
British	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
Dutch	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
French	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
German	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
Italian	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
Spanish	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
Portuguese	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
Belgian	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]
Austrian	[Pattern]	[Pattern]	[Pattern]

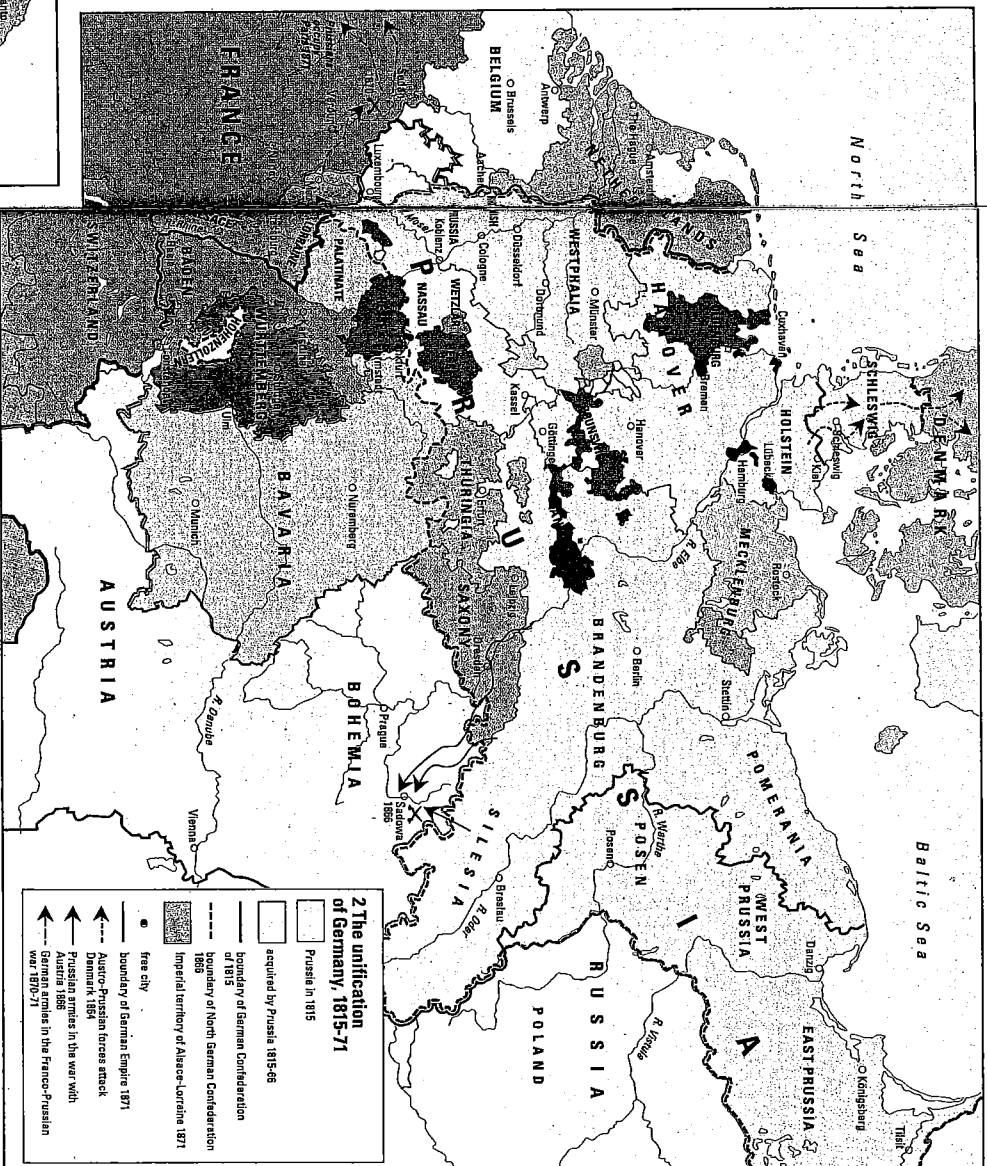
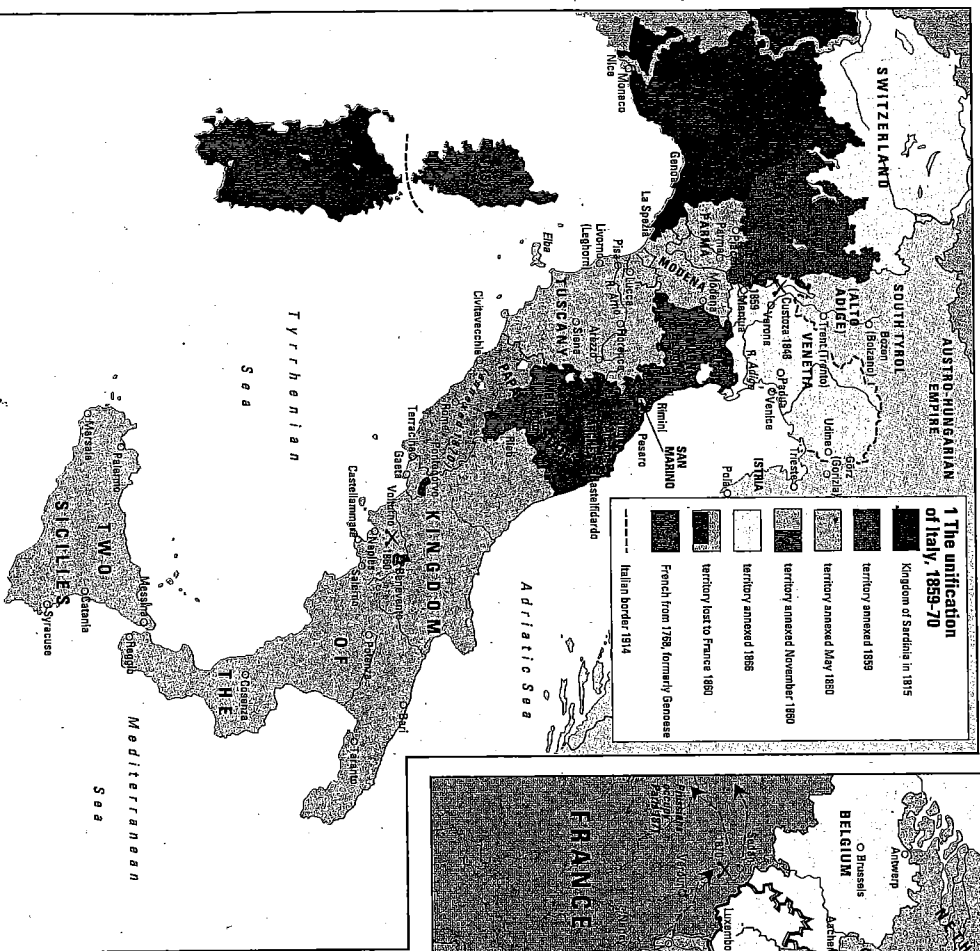
proposed spheres of influence  
major sea routes



# Nationalism in Europe 1815-1914

Nationalism flourished in Europe in the wake of the French Revolution (page 93), but it remained confined largely to the middle classes and proved relatively short-lived. The Great Powers at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 aimed to restore Europe (as far as possible) to its pre-war condition by combating both liberalism and nationalism and by creating a barrier around France. To that end Holland received the Austrian Netherlands (later Belgium); Prussia took over Westphalia and much of the Rhineland; Sardinia-Piedmont annexed Genoa; Russia retained Finland and most of Poland; and Austria gained Venetia and Lombardy.

By 1830, however, when a new wave of liberal and national agitation arose, the Great Powers no longer worked in unison, enabling Greece (page 102) and Belgium to obtain independence. In 1848-9, when an outburst of nationalism erupted into full-scale revolution, the solidarity of the conservative powers – coupled with divisions among the nationalists themselves – still sufficed to maintain



the status quo. Shortly afterwards, a new generation of statesmen began to use nationalism for their own ends. Cavour sought a unification of Italy along conservative lines, in the interests of Piedmont-Sardinia, and was hostile to the more revolutionary nationalism of Garibaldi and Mazzini. Bismarck in Prussia, too, wanted unification to achieve his aim of conservative, Prussian-dominated German state. Both used diplomacy and war to achieve their objectives: Cavour allied with France before attacking Austria in 1859, securing the unification of Italy (except for Venetia and the Papal States) by 1861 (see map 1). Bismarck allied with Austria in order to defeat Denmark (1864), then in concert with Italy attacked Austria (1866), and finally defeated France (1870-1),

achieving in the process the unification of Germany (map 2). Liberal nationalists later endorsed both achievements, but neither satisfied the nationalism they had aroused. Italy still laid claim to the Alto Adige and Istria; Bismarck's 'Small German' solution, which excluded Austria, disappointed those who hankered after a Greater Germany. Nevertheless, the four short wars fought between 1859 and 1871 solved the Italian and German questions, and re-drew the map of Central Europe. Moreover, the Great Powers now remained at peace for over four decades, and although nationalist grievances continued to fester, territorial disputes within Europe ceased to divide most governments.



# The world economy on the eve of the Great War

The integration of the world's economy into a single interdependent whole formed one of the principal developments of the period 1870-1914. Europe (and to a lesser extent the United States) stood at the heart of this process, emitting the impulses that opened up the remaining areas of the globe to Western exploration and exploitation.

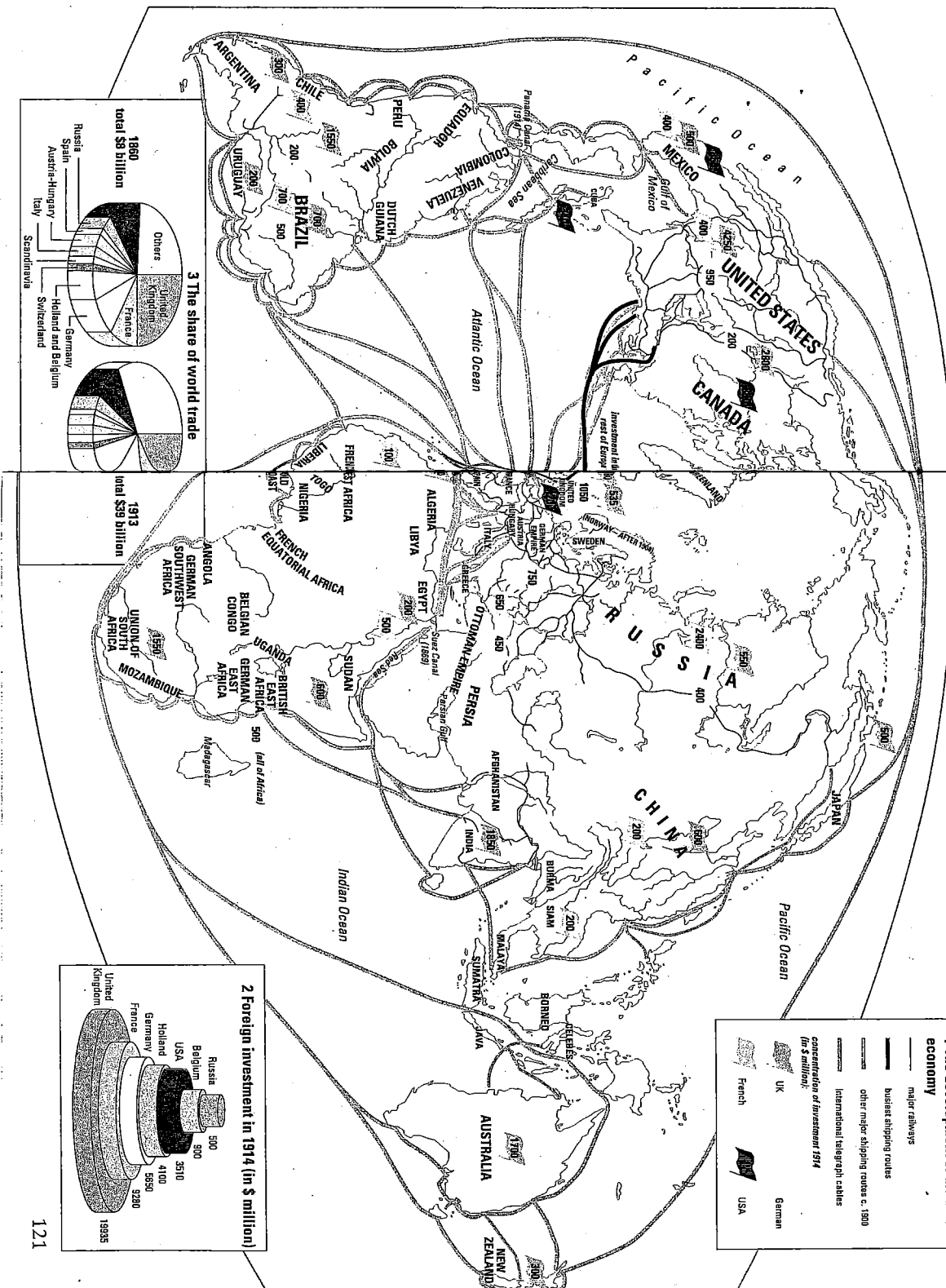
Three interrelated aspects deserve special attention. First came the development of better means of communication. In 1870, railways remained largely confined to Europe (60,400 miles, 97,250 km of track) and North America (56,300 miles, 90,600 km); the rest of the world could boast only 9,100 miles (14,650 km). By 1911, however, the total network of tracks had increased to 657,000 miles (1,06 million km) - 175,000 miles (280,000 km) of them outside Europe and North America - and included some spectacular transcontinental links: across the United States (four between 1869 and 1893), Canada (1885), Russia (1904) and the Andes (1910). The expansion of world shipping was equally striking, with not only a spectacular rise in the total tonnage, but a shift from sail to steam which increased the speed and regularity of shipments. However, the main shipping traffic, both passenger and freight, took place among the advanced countries and the white dominions, or between them and the producers of the raw materials they required. Canal construction also continued apace - above all the Suez Canal, completed in 1869, which carried 437,000 tons in 1870 and over 20 million in 1913; and the Panama Canal, completed in 1914, which carried 5 million tons of cargo in its first year. These spectacular totals reflected the enormous savings in distance - 41 per cent for vessels sailing from Liverpool to Bombay, 60 per cent for vessels sailing from New York to San Francisco.

Finally, messages travelled around the world with increasing speed. Cables laid beneath the oceans linked the continents - between Britain and North America (1858), from Vancouver to Brisbane (1892) - followed by telephones (with international lines from 1887) and wireless stations (from 1897). These developments paralleled a boom in commerce.

Foreign trade tripled in volume between 1870 and 1914, although (again) most of the activity occurred among the industrialized countries, or between them and their suppliers of primary goods or their new markets. In 1913, only 11 per cent of the world's trade took place between the primary producers themselves. Britain ranked as the world's largest trading nation in 1860, but by 1913 it had lost ground to both the United States and Germany: British and German exports in that year each totalled \$2.3 billion, and those of the United States exceeded \$2.4 billion.

Britain remained the world's financial capital, however, as well as its largest lender, with almost \$20 billion in foreign investments by 1914 - slightly more than those of France, Germany, Holland and Belgium combined. The United States and Russia were in fact net borrowers of foreign capital. Investments within Europe and North America on the whole assisted and accelerated economic advancement, helping to create the costly infrastructure (such as railways and other public works) for

developing nations that would in time repay these debts. By contrast, investments in non-industrial regions (such as the Russian and Ottoman empires) and overseas territories that lacked both the knowledge and the power to direct the capital flow, served to colonize rather than develop them, destroying native industries and creating dangerous political and economic pressures which would, in time, produce conflict between rich nations and poor nations and demands for a new economic order (page 160).



# The First World War 1914-1918

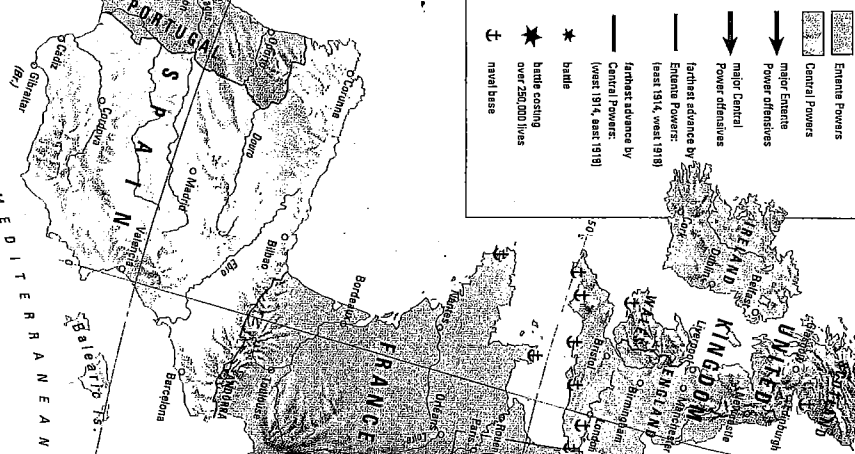
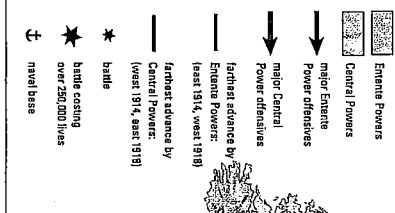
All the war-plans of the Great Powers in 1914 envisaged a short war. The German Schlieffen Plan called for an attack on northern France through Belgium, leading to the rapid collapse of the French government before Russia had time to mobilize (page 118). It almost succeeded: the Germans came within 40 miles of Paris, but not before Russian armies had invaded East Prussia. Although their advance was halted at Tannenberg (August), important German reserves were diverted from the Western front just as a spirited counter-attack by French and British troops began at the Marne (September). The two sides now spread their forces out and dug in, until their trenches stretched from the Channel coast to Switzerland.

The war in the west (map 2) turned into a war of attrition. Each side launched repeated offensives, with appalling casualties but little gain, for railways were able to bring up reinforcements before the slow-moving front-line troops could make good any advantage. In 1916 the British, under Field Marshal Douglas Haig, made a major frontal assault on German lines at the river Somme. On the first day of the battle there were 60,000 British casualties, moved down as they advanced through the barbed wire. Haig threw his forces into an unwinable conflict for another four months. Both sides experienced terrible losses and little was achieved.

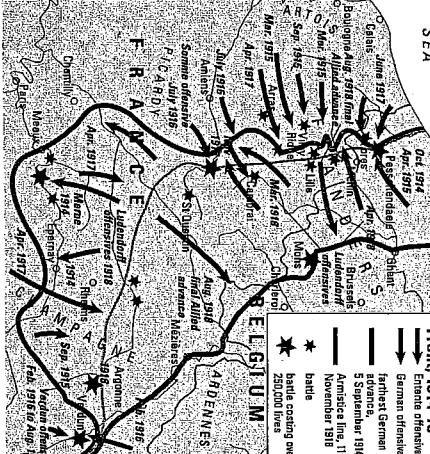
Neither side could break the trench stalemate by pursuing alternative strategies. The British and French attempted a series of attacks from the rear: in the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia against the Ottoman empire, which entered the war in November 1914 on the side of the Central Powers (Germany and Austria); on Austria's southern frontier after Italy declared war in May 1915; at Salonika in Greece in support of Serbia. All failed. The Germans countered by building a fleet of submarines with the express intention of bringing Britain to its knees by attacking vulnerable food imports on which Britain relied. In 1917 unrestricted submarine warfare failed to reduce Britain's food supply by more than a fraction, but provoked the United States into war with Germany.

On the eastern front, which stretched for twice the distance of that in the west, warfare remained more mobile and both Germany and Austria scored major successes. In 1915 the former overran a huge area of Poland, whose resources it ruthlessly exploited, while the latter occupied most of Serbia. In 1917 the combination of huge losses and economic chaos broke the fighting spirit of the Russian forces and provoked revolution and military collapse (page 126). At the peace of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 Germany gained the Ukraine, Poland, Finland and the Baltic provinces.

1 The Great War in Europe, 1914-8



2 The Western Front, 1914-18



Instead of moving its forces across to the West, however, Germany sent its troops to occupy these new territories – even Finland – and at the same time launched a final, all-out offensive in the West, in an attempt to break the deadlock. Once again it came close to success but the Allied line held and in July, aided by tanks and reinforced by American forces and money, a counter-attack began that not only pushed the German army back towards the German frontier, but that won the war. The German line began to fall back and morale collapsed: by October 1918, with Austria close to disintegration and with Germany facing a grave political crisis at home, the Berlin government sued for an armistice, granted on 11 November 1918.



At the peace conferences held in and around Paris in 1919, the victors imposed upon Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria notable losses of territory, huge reparations and stringent reductions in their armed forces. The draconian nature of the settlement made it inevitable that, although over 8 million men had perished in the fighting, and the financial cost of the war totalled over \$186 worldwide, it would not be (as so many had hoped) 'the war to end all wars'.

## THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF WAR

### THE ASSASSINATION OF THE CROWN PRINCE OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

Despite all the major reasons why the war might have started, the actual incident which started W.W. I took place in a small corner of Europe called Sarajevo, a city in Bosnia, a region of Austria-Hungary.

Both Serbia and Bosnia were regions which had broken away from Turkey. Bosnia was taken over by Austria-Hungary; Serbia became an independent state. Both were small and weak and each country looked for help from other countries. Serbia was also unfriendly to Austria-Hungary, her neighbour to the north. Russia (as a member of the Entente) and Austria-Hungary (as a member of the Alliance) were automatically on opposite sides of the fence on most important issues.

On June 28th, the Crown Prince of Austria, named Franz Ferdinand, paid a visit to Sarejevo to inspect troops. The following passage explains the events of that fateful day:

The murderers were little more than teenagers. They knew little about European politics and didn't realize what their actions would cause. They wanted Bosnia to be part of Serbia and thought that the terror of guns and bombs was the only way to achieve that goal.

They were all very frightened that June morning. One of the murderers, Princep, had seen his intended target, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand shopping in the marketplace at Sarajevo. Princep and his friends were scattered along a road called the Appel Quay. This was to be the road the Archduke would take when visiting the town.

Franz and his wife Countess Sophie arrived at the train station at 9:30 a.m. Their limousine was the second car in the motorcade. Also riding in the motorcade were soldiers and town officials.

Countess Sophie was a beautiful woman, in a white ruffled dress with high collar and large white hat. Franz Ferdinand wore a military uniform with blue coat and black trousers. Among the cheering spectators were two of Princep's terrorist friends. These boys were so frightened that they did nothing to harm the Archduke.

As the cars drove along the road, they passed a terrorist named Cabrinovic. Cabrinovic had a bomb which he threw at the Archduke's car.



Franz Ferdinand saw it coming and deflected the bomb into the road, damaging the next car in the motorcade. Several people were injured. "After I threw the bomb," said Gabrinovic later, "I noticed how calmly Ferdinand turned towards me, and gave me a long, cold stare."

Gabrinovic then swallowed some poison and jumped into the river but did not die. He was fished out and placed under arrest. While this was happening, the rest of the motorcade sped on to the town hall, where the mayor was waiting. But by now Franz Ferdinand had become angry and decided to cancel the rest of the tour.

He decided to leave Sarajevo but wished to first visit some wounded soldiers. It was decided that instead of driving along the planned route, the Archduke's car would continue along the Appel Quay. In all of the confusion, no one told the chauffeur about the change of route.

When the driver turned to drive along the planned route, the Mayor told him to turn back on the Appel Quay. As he slowed to turn around, Princep stepped forward and fired two shots from his revolver.

The first shot struck the Archduke in the throat. The second hit his wife, Sophie in the stomach. The blood was dripping down his blue tunic from his mouth and throat. When he saw his wife lying on the seat, Franz yelled, "Sophie! Sophie! Don't die, I beg you. Stay alive, if only for the sake of the children." She died as he shouted these words. Within minutes, the Archduke was dead as well. Princep swallowed some poison, but it didn't work. He was revived by police who then beat him up.

At 10:15 a.m., Franz Ferdinand was dead. Princep had no idea what Franz Ferdinand's death would do to bring about the war. Austria-Hungary invaded Serbia, blaming it for the assassination. Russia supported its friend and declared war on Austria-Hungary. Germany declared war on Russia and started to attack France. Britain declared war on Germany when Belgium was invaded. The "great powers" were at war by August, 1914.



# Classroom

## VIDEO

Teacher's Notes

# CAUSES OF WORLD WAR I



Duration: 23 min

## INTRODUCTION

World War I is often referred to as The Great War, or *the war to end all wars*. It was the most significant event of the Twentieth Century.

The loss of life was so great and the level of destruction so appalling, that the war achieved a status that no previous war has attained. While World War II was longer, bloodier, and more destructive, it can be argued that this war was one of the results of the Great War.

While historians differ as to the causes of the war, the roots can be found in the war between the most powerful of the German states, Prussia, and France in 1870. This war resulted in a French defeat and the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to the newly created German nation. Furthermore, it illustrated the potential of nationalism to be a dynamic influence in shaping future events.

The video examines the impact of the basic or underlying causes of the war - The Alliance System, Imperialism, Militarism and Nationalism. It also examines how the tension was maintained between the two hostile alliances by the crises in Morocco and the Balkans. Finally there is an examination of the excuse used by Austria-Hungary to spark off this terrible conflict and the timetable of death that followed.

An examination of documentary film provides an added dimension to the study of the causes of the war.

Also a study of the war allows students to make use of a wide variety of sources. As well as an examination of film and photographs, a range of other sources are available, such as letters, diaries, speeches, newspapers, posters, cartoons, official documents, poetry and memoirs.

## Understanding the issues.

**Map Study:** Examine a map of Europe in 1870 and a map of Europe in 1914.

What changes occurred during this period?  
How do you think the balance of power in Europe was altered?

**Research:** Why was the French desire for revenge

## Franco-Prussian War?

What was the status of Russia in Europe prior to 1914, under the rule of the last two Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II?

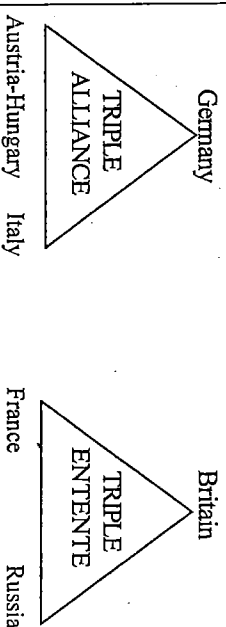
What problems did the Austro-Hungarian Empire face with a variety of nationalist groups?

**Definitions:** Ultimatum, mobilisation, neutrality, pacifism, annexation, colonialism, militarism, propaganda.

**Discussion:** The role of film and photography as a vehicle for propaganda.

## THE ALLIANCE SYSTEM

In 1870 Europe was the richest and most advanced continent and its peoples enjoyed a level of prosperity superior to anywhere else in the world. European powers controlled vast empires that covered most of the world. By 1907 Europe was divided into two armed camps, involving all of the major powers. While the alliances were meant to increase the security of each country, instead they ensured that a war that involved any of these powers would probably involve all of them.



**Germany** was the dominant partner in the Triple Alliance and was the most powerful European state. After their success in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, Bismarck the German Chancellor, realised peace was necessary for his new country to become a nation. He believed the best way to keep Europe at peace was to keep France isolated and to keep on friendly terms with Britain. As part of his strategy, he made treaties between Germany and the Dual Monarchy Austria-



refrained from any naval build-up or any attempt to carve a colonial empire, to avoid any antagonism with Britain.

In 1882, Italy joined the alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, creating the Triple Alliance. However Italy's membership of this alliance could be said to be at best lukewarm.

With the accession to power of the new Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1888, and the dismissal of Bismarck, Germany's foreign relations began to change. The alliance with Russia was allowed to lapse in 1890, with the result that Russia found a new alliance with France in 1893. Bismarck's policies were further weakened by the Kaiser, with the construction of the second most powerful navy next to Britain and the creation of a German colonial empire.

Britain was a key member in the Triple Entente. Britain had become increasingly concerned about the growing naval strength of Germany. As the *naval race* between the two powers developed, relations between the two became more and more strained.

The result of this situation was that Germany in effect drove Britain into the arms of Germany's enemies. Britain solved her long standing differences with France and formed the Entente Cordiale in 1904. In 1907 Britain overcame her differences with Russia and reached a similar arrangement. The Triple Entente was now created in opposition to the Triple Alliance.

### *Understanding the issues.*

Map Study: Examine a map of Europe in 1914.

Distinguish between the members of each alliance.

Explain the problems faced by the Triple Alliance in the event of warfare.

Research: Why did both Turkey and Bulgaria join the alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1914? Why did Italy withdraw from the Triple Alliance?

Discussion: To what extent can Europe be regarded as a *power keg* at the beginning of 1914?

Film study: What does the video reveal about the relationship between Germany and her allies?

### **IMPERIALISM**

Imperialism is sometimes referred to as the *grab for colonies*. By the late nineteenth century the Industrial Revolution had affected all the major European nations. Industrialists demanded that their governments should gain more colonies or *spheres of influence*, for their own advantage.

Colonies became increasingly important for the following reasons:

- \* a source of raw material
- \* a market for manufactured goods and investment
- \* an outlet for surplus population
- \* strategic reasons
- \* prestige for the mother country

The rivalry of the powers for colonies in such regions as Africa and China caused a number of crises, which increased tension among the already hostile powers. Germany who started late in the race for colonies following her unification in 1870, was particularly aggressive in claiming *a place in the sun*.

### *Understanding the Issues*

Map study: Using a map of Africa in 1914, list the colonies controlled by Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Portugal and Spain.

Research: What was the aim of the Conference of Berlin in 1884? How successful was it in solving disputes in Africa? What was the Fashoda incident? Why did it create antagonism between Britain and France? In what ways was the partition of China different to the situation in Africa?

Film study: What does the film reveal about Germany's acquisition of colonies?

Definitions: Spheres of influence, extraterritoriality, mandate.

### **MILITARISM**

Militarism is often referred to as the *arms race*.

The build up of rival alliances was accompanied by an armaments race between the two blocs. Each side believed that it was essential to build up their armies and their stockpile of weapons so as to be stronger than the other side. This build up heightened the fear and suspicion between the two blocs, with neither being able to stop for fear the other side would become stronger.

The German army was the most powerful in Europe. It was well equipped and well trained. Like all European armies except the British, it was based on conscription or compulsory military service. The peacetime German army numbered 866,000 in 1914. When mobilisation was completed the army numbered 5 million, with another 4 million trained older men available as required.

The Russians, French and Austro Hungarians employed a similar system. Britain unlike the other major European powers did not have a large conscript army. Britain relied on her navy, which was the most powerful in Europe, to protect her and her colonies.

Both Germany and France formulated war plans in preparation for the outbreak of war. Germany had the Schlieffen Plan, devised by Alfred von Schlieffen, the Head of the German High Command from 1892-1906. France devised the notorious Plan 17.

### *Understanding the issues*

Map study: Germany had the Schlieffen Plan, France had plan 17. Outline on a map the intended direction of each plan. Mention the success of each plan when used in 1914.

Research: The following weapons were all used during World War I. Outline the nature of each weapon and make a list of those that were available at the outbreak of war.

Hand grenades, rifles, machine guns, trench mortars, howitzers, heavy artillery, aircraft, zeppelins, dreadnoughts, mines, submarines, tanks, barbed wire, gas, flame throwers.

Which of the following countries had conscription during the war and which failed to introduce conscription? Australia, Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Russia.

Film study: What does the film reveal about British and German naval policies?

What flaws are revealed about the Schlieffen Plan in the film?

## NATIONALISM

Nationalism is more than just loyalty and patriotism, and can be defined as the strong identification of people with those of a nation or state. The aim of nationalist movements was the establishment by the subject people of a new independent state for their own racial group. In the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, nationalism developed into a struggle between the powers to dominate each other.

This can be illustrated in a number of ways:

- In the last decade of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth century, Britain was in a dominant position and led Europe in economic and colonial fields. Her position of superiority aroused great jealousy especially in France and Germany.
  - France, humiliated by her defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, wanted revenge against Germany.
  - Germany's unification upset the balance of power in Europe and led to new alliances and colonial rivalry.
  - The Austro-Hungarian Empire felt threatened by Slav nationalism and was opposed to Slav nationalism in the Balkans.
  - Russia hoping to extend her power in the Balkans became an advocate of Slav nationalism.
- Nationalism was potentially a powder keg that could plunge the world into a major conflict.

### *Understanding the issues*

#### Map study:

Examine a map of Europe in 1914 and one in 1918. List the nations whose boundaries had changed and list those who had been created.

#### Research:

Austria-Hungary was made up of an unsettled mixture of nationalities, less than half of whom spoke either the Austrian or Hungarian language. Make a list of the more important of these national groups.

#### Discussion:

War was considered by some as a way of advancing civilisation, in that it eliminated weak and decadent races.

## CRISES PRECEDING THE WAR

A series of crises which began in 1905, eventually led to the outbreak of war in 1914. Each of these crises revealed the state of tension between the different powers and all of them threatened to involve the world in conflict.

### *Moroccan crises*

A dispute between France and Germany over Morocco broke out in 1905, and led to the Algeiras Conference of 1906. The conference showed the unity of the other powers against Germany, and made Germany more determined than ever to take revenge on France.

The second Moroccan crisis was the Agadir Incident of 1911. This incident threatened to involve Britain in the quarrel between France and Germany and potentially to start a war. This conflict was settled with some concession made to save Germany's dignity.

These events showed that while the powers were prepared to argue, they were not yet ready to go to war over a colonial dispute.

### *The Balkan crises*

Europe's worst trouble spot was the Balkans. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, with the Ottoman Empire in decline, Greece, Rumania, Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro seized their independence.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Balkans were still in a chaotic mess, with arguments over borders and a continuing conflict with Turkey. Also the Balkans had two rival powers on their borders, Russia and Austria-Hungary, both of whom were suspicious of each other and keen to secure some advantage. Between 1908 and 1914 the Balkans were in turmoil. After the Young Turk Party seized power in Turkey in 1908, Austria-Hungary took advantage of the situation to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina despite Russian protests.

In the First Balkan War of 1912, the Balkan League made up of Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro and Serbia defeated the Turks. Arguments followed on the division of the spoils and in 1913, the Second Balkan War took place, with Bulgaria crushed by a combination of Greece, Serbia, Rumania and Turkey.

The Balkan wars created even more problems. Austria-Hungary was concerned at Serbia's growing power.

Turkey worried about her future, turned to Germany for help. Bulgaria sought revenge against Serbia. Russia became more concerned about the intentions of Austria-Hungary in the region.

### *Understanding the issues*

#### Research:

Examine the role of Nationalism and Imperialism in both the crises in Morocco and the Balkans.

#### Discussion:

The Moroccan and Balkan crises kept up the tension between the powers and ensured that even a minor incident could spark a conflict.

## THE ASSASSINATION OF ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND - THE SPARK THAT IGNITED THE WAR

Austria-Hungary was afraid that many of her national groups would prefer to unite with Serbia to form a united Slav state, and was looking for an excuse to crush Serbia in a war. This opportunity came about on June 28, 1914, when the Austrian heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated while on a state visit to the newly annexed province of Bosnia by a Bosnian student, Gavrilo Princip.

While there was no direct evidence that the Serbian government was involved, the Austro-Hungarian government saw this as their opportunity and on July 23, issued an ultimatum to Serbia designed to be so harsh that it was unacceptable. They had also been given encouragement by Germany with the so called *blank cheque*. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. The Russian government ordered its army to mobilise and as other powers became involved the countdown to the Great War had begun.

### *Understanding the issues*

Discussion: Why did the major powers allow themselves to be dragged into the war over the issue of the assassination, when war had been averted over more important issues?

#### Film Study:

From your study of this video, what role can documentary film play in the understanding of historical issues such as the causes of the war?  
What care could an historian take when using documentary film?

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# The Treaty of Versailles

This reading comes from the resource *Facing History and Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior* (<https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/resources/facing-history-and-ourselves-holocaust-and-human-behavior>).

## Introduction

In the wake of World War I, the goal of preventing future wars was of the highest priority for the countries most directly impacted by the destruction. Historian Margaret MacMillan states, “The Paris Peace Conference is usually remembered for producing the German treaty, signed at Versailles in June 1919, but it was always about much more than that...the international order had to be re-created on a new and different basis.”

What elements did this new “international order” include? How would a new balance of powers be established following the devastating human toll of World War I? The “Treaty of Versailles” reading introduces readers to several of the key developments that came out of these negotiations; and also challenges us to consider the toll the provisions of the treaty had on each country that was involved.

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When the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917, President Woodrow Wilson vowed that this would truly be “the war to end all wars.” He argued that the war would have been fought in vain if the world returned to the way it was in 1914. The President revealed his goals in a 1918 speech. In it, he listed fourteen points essential to achieving lasting peace. In his view, the most important was the final one. It called for a “league of nations,” where nations would resolve differences around a table rather than on a battlefield.

Wilson based his proposals on a single principle: “It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak. Unless this principle be made its foundation, no part of the structure of international justice can stand.”

Wilson also believed that frustrated nationalism had caused the war. Thus he reasoned that if each ethnic group in Europe had its own land and government, there would be less chance of another war. He called the idea self-determination. As a result, the Austro-Hungarian, German, Ottoman, and Russian empires all disappeared. In Europe, each was divided into independent nations. The victors did not even consider

applying that principle to the rest of the world. When the Japanese asked that a statement opposing racial discrimination be written into the treaty, the idea was rejected. When a young Vietnamese nationalist known as Ho Chi Minh asked to address the allies, the victors refused to let him speak. Europe's map might be redrawn but not the maps of Asia or Africa. Both continents would continue to be ruled by Europeans.

Many Europeans were more interested in punishing the Germans than in preventing another world war. After all, the United States had been at war for just one year. Its European allies had been fighting for over four years. David Lloyd George of Britain demanded that Germany pay for the trouble it had caused; Vittorio Orlando of Italy insisted on a share of Germany's colonial empire. And France's Georges Clemenceau required not only the return of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine but also assurances that his nation would be safe from future German aggression.

Therefore the treaty contained the following articles:

80. Germany will respect the independence of Austria.

81. Germany recognizes the complete independence of Czechoslovakia.

87. Germany recognizes the complete independence of Poland.

119. Germany surrenders all her rights and titles over her overseas countries.

159. The German military forces shall be demobilized and reduced not to exceed 100,000 men.

181. The German navy must not exceed 6 battleships, 6 light cruisers, 12 destroyers, and 12 torpedo boats. No submarines are to be included.

198. The Armed Forces of Germany must not include any military or naval air forces.

231. Germany and her Allies accept the responsibility for causing all the loss and damage to the Allied Powers.

233. Germany will pay for all damages done to the civilian population and property of the Allied Governments. [The figure was later set at \$33 billion].

428. To guarantee the execution of the Treaty, the German territory situated to the west of the Rhine River will be occupied by Allied troops for fifteen years.

431. The occupation forces will be withdrawn as soon as Germany complies with the Treaty.

Not surprisingly, Germans felt betrayed by the treaty. One German newspaper, *Deutsche Zeitung*, denounced it with these words. "In the place where, in the glorious year of 1871, the German Empire in all its glory had its origin, today German honor is being carried to its grave. Do not forget it! The German people will, with unceasing labor, press forward to reconquer the place among the nations to which it is entitled. Then will come vengeance for the shame of 1919." That view was widely shared

Even German Communists opposed the agreement. A number of non-German observers and some

historians also considered the treaty too harsh. Others noted that it was not nearly as vindictive as the one Germany forced on Russia just a year earlier. When Wilson arrived in Paris, he was cheered. By the time the Treaty of Versailles was completed in May of 1919, his popularity had dimmed not only abroad but also at home. Many Americans felt that Europe's problems were not their concern. They preferred isolation to a continuing involvement in world affairs. So, despite Wilson's pleas, the United States did not join the League of Nations. The League also began its work without Germany and the USSR. Both were viewed as "outlaw" nations. As a result, the League was an international peacekeeper that failed to include three key nations.

**Source Document:** See more about the Treaty of Versailles, and an image from the original document: *The Weimar Republic: The Fragility of Democracy*

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## Connections

1. What does the word vindictive mean? Was the Treaty of Versailles vindictive? The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk?
2. Before the war ended, Woodrow Wilson said, "I am convinced that if this peace is not made on the highest principles of justice, it will be swept away Germany in the 1920s 121 by the peoples of the world in less than a generation." What is a "just peace"? Why is it difficult to hold on to? What aspects of society work against peace? Why was it so hard to make peace in 1919? To keep the peace? What would it take to achieve a lasting peace today?
3. In small groups, evaluate the Treaty of Versailles. What criteria did your group use to make its evaluation? What criteria did the victors use? The Germans? What similarities do you notice? What differences seem most striking?
4. Reading 3 described how Erzberger and the other signers of the armistice agreement came to be characterized as the "November criminals" who "stabbed Germany in the back." How do you think the terms of the treaty affected that view? How does a nation experience shame?
5. A democratic leader once said that it is impossible to lead if no one is following. What do you think he was saying about leadership in a democracy? Suppose leaders had put aside their political differences and worked out a treaty based on Wilson's Fourteen Points. Would their people have accepted such a treaty?
6. Woodrow Wilson believed that the war was caused by "frustrated nationalism." He maintained that the best way to reduce the chances of another war was through "self-determination." Wilson's Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, feared "self-determination" would have the opposite effect. In a letter to Wilson, he asked, "Will it not breed discontent, disorder and rebellion? The phrase is simply loaded with dynamite. It will raise hopes which can never be realized. It will, I fear, cost thousands of lives. What a calamity that the phrase was ever uttered!"



What misery it will cause!" What is frustrated nationalism? Self-determination? Was the former the cause of the World War I? Was the latter a way to prevent another war? Support your opinion with evidence from current events.

7. Study a map of Europe before and after World War I. List the differences between the two maps. How do you account for differences? To what extent is self-determination reflected in your list of differences?
8. The fighting in the Balkans in 1992 prompted columnist A. M. Rosenthal to write, "Bosnians, Serbs, Croats, Albanians, Macedonians, Muslim or Christian, come out of a world where for centuries loyalties were built on the importance of separateness. The separate clan, tribe, family and village gave protection. The histories and fantasies of the individual group gave meaning and texture to life. The separateness created fear of others, which was intensified when the outsider was too close, a neighbor. Leaders used the fears to build their own power – feudal dukes once, now onetime Communist bosses like President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia are building new power on old separations."<sup>9</sup> Are his comments true of world leaders after World War I? Are they true of other leaders in today's world? What is he suggesting is the proper role of a leader? Do you agree?

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### Additional Resources

Professor Henry Friedlander argues that the Germans were more disturbed about losing the war than they were about the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. This argument is developed in his videotaped lecture, "The Rise of Nazism," available from the Facing History Resource Center and summarized in Elements of Time, page 341.

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### End Notes

1 Quoted in Modern Germany by Koppel Pinson (Macmillan, 1954), 398.



# THE FIRST WORLD WAR: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

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# Introduction BY DAVID THOMSON

This book is dedicated  
to the memory of  
David Thomson  
January 1912 – February 1970

The Great War of 1914–18 still appears as a cataclysmic event, even though over half a century has elapsed since it ended. The great powers of Europe had avoided war with one another for some forty-three years. In August 1914 they seemed to stumble into it unintentionally. Everyone thought that the battle would be short and that they would be 'home in time for Christmas'. In fact the war was to last for four years and people were driven by events to abandon their optimistic and consoling misapprehensions. Instead they persuaded themselves, with equal fallaciousness, that they were engaged in the last general conflict, a 'war to end wars'. Certainly no government expected, or was adequately prepared for, the extravagant sort of warfare in which it found itself embroiled.

Naturally enough, the causes of this surprising and unwanted war have, ever since, been a matter of controversy among both politicians and historians. Even today, the relative importance of the different policies, conflicting interests, circumstances and personalities which contributed to its outbreak remains in dispute. Dr Andrew has given an explanation which most western historians would probably now accept.

The most intractable conflict of all was the Balkan rivalry between Russia and Austria-Hungary. Britain, France, Italy and even Germany, had repeatedly shown that over colonial disputes they were all, in the end, prepared to seek a settlement without war. The French desire for revenge against Germany for 1871, and for recovery of Alsace and Lorraine, had never quite died, but it had died down. But the clash between the two ancient dynastic empires of Russia and Austria-Hungary seemed to be beyond compromise. Linked as it was with rival hot-headed nationalist movements in the Balkans on one hand, and through the system of great alliances with the fears and tensions of Europe on the other, here was the flash-point of the explosion.

The Great War (as it was called throughout the years covered by this volume) began, then, as a civil war in Europe. Only in 1917 did it become more genuinely a world war. But for various reasons the conflict was, from quite an early stage, world-wide in its repercussions and its future consequences. This came about because of the vast colonial empires of the major European powers, which collectively dominated world trade, and not least because the war released the

momentous new world force of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The new idealism which crept into allied statements of peace-aims, notably through President Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points', roused the hopes of disunited nationalities. The victory of the western maritime powers of Britain, France, the United States, Belgium, and the Commonwealth, proclaimed a new world made 'safe for democracy'.

What most wrecked these hopes, highest at the moment of the Paris peace conference of 1919, were the uncontrollable effects of the war on the pre-war world economy. It was not simply that vast wealth and millions of lives had been destroyed, or that individual countries, notably Great Britain, had now lost their lucrative overseas investments and become debtor-nations. What mattered most in a material sense was that the pre-war economy, the fabric of international trade and investment, was hopelessly disrupted and dislocated. With the central market of Germany temporarily gone, the Russian market closed, industrial production everywhere distorted by war-time needs, Europe needed more drastic and deliberate reconstruction than was possible in the desperate conditions of the immediate post-war years. Politics, as Maynard Keynes pointed out, seemed destined to frustrate economic recovery at every point. It created a host of new states whose frontiers often made little economic sense, it exaggerated attempts to exact monetary reparations from Germany, it insisted on the repayment of war-debts, and it sought too hasty a return to 'normalcy'.

Economics, as it were, had its reprisals on politics. The resulting mass unemployment of the inter-war years, the slumps induced by the shrinkage of international trade, the revulsions of inflamed nationalism, especially important in Italy and in Germany, ruined hopes of democracy's survival in the worst-hit countries. Militant, ruthless authoritarian movements arose during the nineteen-twenties, and were quick to learn from the successful Bolsheviks the potency of a single-party state monopolising all the resources of modern terror, propaganda and state power. The dictatorships of Mussolini in Italy and of Hitler in Germany were, in a real sense, consequences of the Great War.

It is one of the merits of Dr Andrew's book that it brings out clearly these continuities. Fascism was perhaps the chief

beneficiary of the war, for it could hardly have gained power and flourished so much without war's aftermath. But another beneficiary was communism, and not only because the collapse in war of both the tsarist regime and the liberal provisional government which succeeded it in 1917 opened the door to Lenin's Bolshevik Party.

Communist agents and propagandists exploited fully the conditions of unrest and distress which prevailed after the war. They saw in them the best guarantee of a world proletarian revolution. It took nearly two decades to prove that the fears their methods aroused did far more to help fascism than to promote communism. Repeatedly, communist agitation was the perfect excuse for fascist *coups*, and weak parliamentary democracies did not give place to proletarian dictatorship, only to fascist dictatorship.

Economic crisis, then, gave rise to political crisis, and to revolution, during the inter-war years: and political crisis gave rise to international crisis, and eventually to a second world war. The new League of Nations was gravely weakened from birth by the exclusion of Soviet Russia and Germany, and by the abstention of the United States, its chief sponsor. We cannot but speculate whether it might have succeeded more but for the mounting challenges of Italy, Japan, and Germany. Perhaps it could have achieved fuller international co-operation in social and economic affairs, but still without succeeding in its ultimate purpose of preventing war. But once aggressive military movements were in complete power in Japan, Italy and Germany, and these three powers even drew together in common cause under the misleading title of the 'Anti-Comintern Pact', a major war was probably inevitable. The collapse of the League of Nations as a peace-keeping organisation and the inertia of its major props in Europe, Britain and France, increased the probability.

In these ways, there are certain links of cause and effect between the two world wars. It would be oversimplifying to see them entirely, as Winston Churchill once suggested, as parts of one 'Thirty Years' War'; or one great German challenge to the rest of Europe. The strongest evidence to the contrary is the role in contemporary history of China and Japan: and the author does well to devote a special chapter to explaining this role. Both during and after the Great War, Japan progressively rose to a position

of supremacy in Asia. It was above all, as the author shows, China's chronic division and weakness that made this possible.

The shifting balance of power in the Far East is as much a part of world history, helping to explain the drift of events during the inter-war years, as is the rise of fascist dictatorships in Europe. It has even been suggested, with some reason, that the Second World War should be seen as having begun not in 1939, parochially, with a German attack on Poland, but in 1937, when Japan embarked on full-scale war against a disintegrating China. In the same sense, China's communist revolution is probably the most important single event amid the complex aftermath of the Second World War.

During the last twenty-five years the serious study of so-called 'contemporary history' (i.e. twentieth-century history) has become both fashionable and respectable. Much harm was done by the ignorance and the myths about the peace-settlement of 1919 and the Allied treatment of Germany in the nineteen-twenties, and it is entirely to the good that research and better perspective have now made possible more objective accounts of those years.

The author is a young Cambridge historian who has researched into early twentieth-century diplomatic history, and—as this book shows—he is professionally well qualified to state clearly the results of modern thought and study relating to the period. His book, together with the carefully chosen illustrations, will be warmly welcomed as an up-to-date, concise, and remarkably well-balanced explanation of these dramatic and terrible years.

It remains for other contributors to deal with the coming and the outcome of the Second World War. There is little doubt that, just as the causes of the First must be looked for in the whole sequence of events from at least 1871 onwards, and in the unique situation which they had produced by 1914, so historians will trace the origins of the Second back to the events here chronicled. History never divides sharply into separate phases, and it is wise to recall how small a part conscious human intention plays in determining the outcome of great events. Nobody went to war in 1914 to precipitate a communist revolution in Russia, or to set up a League of Nations, or to provide a home for the Jews in Palestine, yet these were among its most important consequences. The moral to be

drawn from this period is, perhaps, that modern warfare is not only an exceptionally extravagant mode of action, but also a most unreliable and uncontrollable means of achieving one's aims in the twentieth century.

*The illustrations were selected by the author in collaboration with the publishers.*

# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

## WORDS TO KNOW

prolong	obligation
peril	blokes
discord	incubation
dominions	imperialism
entail	allegiance
shrink	Boches
abide	anglicizers
endurance	implemented
conscription	imperial
perturbations	exemption

### Question 1

If you were a young man in 1914, what would influence your decision to join, or not join, the Canadian military for overseas service? If you were a young woman, what would encourage you to volunteer, or not volunteer, as a nurse or ambulance driver for overseas service?

BEFORE READING

## Support for the War

When war broke out on August 4, 1914, it received almost universal support across Canada. The Montreal newspaper *La Patrie* wrote "There are no longer French Canadians and English Canadians. Only one race now exists, united ... in a common cause."

Evidence 1.4

Posters such as these are a snapshot of the time in which they were produced:

If you were newly arrived in Canada, what would these posters suggest to you about your new country? Suppose you were a young Canadian in 1914. How would these posters affect your attitude toward volunteering?

Be the next man  
to put the "I" in

**FIGHT**

and join  
the



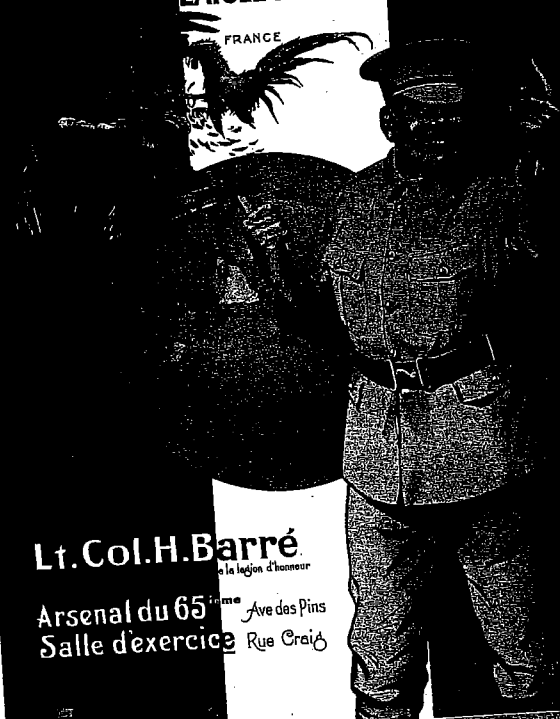
AFFILIATED WITH  
MCGILL UNIVERSITY CONTINGENT  
CANADIAN OFFICERS'  
TRAINING CORPS

.....Headquarters.....

197 PEEL ST.  
MONTREAL.

A. A. MAGEE LT. COL.

**CANADIENS FRANCAIS**  
VENEZ AVEC NOUS DANS LE  
**150<sup>ieme</sup> BATAILLON C.M.R.**  
AIDER A LA VICTOIRE DU COQ GAULOIS SUR  
L'AIGLE PRUSSIEN



Lt. Col. H. Barré  
la légion d'honneur

Arsenal du 65<sup>ieme</sup> Ave des Pins  
Salle d'exercice Rue Craig



## Question 2

One of the first issues the Canadian government faced was to decide what Canada's contribution to the war effort would be.

1. Prepare an organizer like the one below for the two points of view in Evidence 1.5 and 1.6.

Source	Position/role	View of why Canada is at war	View of what Canada should do to help the war and why

2. How are the two views the same? How are they different?

DURING READING

### Evidence 1.5

Sir Robert Borden, leader of the Conservative party and prime minister of Canada.

On August 19, 1914, during a debate in the House of Commons on what role Canada should play in the war, Prime Minister Borden declared his intentions.



“It is not fitting that I should prolong this debate. In the full dawn of the greatest war the world has ever known, in the hour when peril confronts us such as this Empire has not faced for a hundred years, every vain or unnecessary word seems a discord. As to our duty, all are agreed: we stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain and the other British dominions in this quarrel. And that duty we shall not fail to fulfill as the honour of Canada demands. Not for love of battle, not for lust of conquest, not for greed of possessions, but for the cause of honour, to maintain solemn pledges, to uphold principles of liberty, to withstand forces that would convert the world into an armed camp; yea, in the very name of the peace that we sought at any cost save that of dishonour, we have entered into this war; and, while gravely conscious of the tremendous issues involved and of all the sacrifices that they may entail, we do not shrink from them, but with firm hearts we abide the event.”

■ Read the first three sentences. What does Borden think Canada should do? Why?

■ For what reasons does Borden say Canada is not going to war? Do you agree?

■ Refer to the last sentence. What does Borden imply when he says “of all the sacrifices that they may entail [require], we do not shrink from them”?

### Evidence 1.6

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, leader of the Liberal party, former prime minister, and leader of the Opposition.



In the same debate on Canada's role, Laurier declared his position.

“We are British subjects, and today we are face to face with the consequences which are involved in that proud fact. Long we have enjoyed the benefits of our British citizenship; today it is our duty to accept its responsibilities and its sacrifices. We have long said that when Great Britain is at war, we are at war; to-day we realize that Great Britain is at war and that Canada is at war also. ...

If my words can be heard beyond the walls of this House in the province from which I come, among the men whose blood [from] which I come, among the men whose blood flows in my own veins, I should like them to remember that, in taking their place, today in the ranks of the Canadian army to fight for the cause of the allied nations, a double honour rests upon them. The very cause for which they are called upon to fight is to them doubly sacred.”

■ Read the first sentence. What does Laurier mean?

■ Read the first paragraph. What reasons does Laurier give for his view?

■ Read the first sentence in the second paragraph. Who are “among the men whose blood [from] which I come”? Consider where Laurier is from.

■ Read the rest of this paragraph. What is Laurier suggesting?

## Support for the War Weakens, and Conscription

By 1916, support for the war was weakening, especially in Quebec.

### Question 4

As you examine the evidence in this section, put yourself in the role of each of the people/groups discussed. What would you do in that particular person's/group's position and why? Use an organizer such as the one below to help track your answers.

Source	Point of view	My response and reason

#### Evidence 1.8

Henri Bourassa, French Canadian nationalist publisher of *Le Devoir*.

In an editorial on August 2, 1916, Bourassa outlined his arguments against continuing participation in the war.

“There is among the French Canadians a larger proportion of farmers, fathers of large families, than among any other ethnic element in Canada. Above all, the French Canadians are the only group exclusively Canadian. ... They look upon the perturbations [disturbances] of Europe, even those of England or France, as foreign events. Their sympathies naturally go to France against Germany; but they do not think they have an obligation to fight for France, no more than the French of Europe would hold themselves bound to fight for Canada against the United States. ...

English Canada, not counting the blokes, contains a considerable proportion of people still in the first period of national incubation [development]. Under the sway of imperialism, a fair number have not yet decided whether their allegiance is to Canada or to the Empire, whether the United Kingdom or the Canadian Confederacy is their country.”



#### Evidence 1.9

“The enemies of the French language, of French civilization in Canada are not the Boches [the Germans] ... but the English-Canadian anglicizers ...”

— Henri Bourassa in 1915, referring to the Ontario government's refusal, despite outraged calls for change from French Canadians all across Canada, to change Regulation 17. This regulation, which Ontario had implemented in 1912, limited the use of the French language in schools, even where there was a large French-speaking population.

As early as 1915, Bourassa had concluded that the war was serving Britain's imperial interests, not Canada's interests.

- Read the first sentence. What does Bourassa suggest about French Canadians? How does Bourassa think French Canadians are different from other Canadians?
- Read further in this paragraph. What is Bourassa saying about the role of French Canadians in the war?
- Read the second paragraph. What is Bourassa saying about English Canada?
- What conclusion does Bourassa draw about Canada's role in the war?

SECTION ONE WHAT WOULD YOU DO? TO VOLUNTEER OR NOT TO VOLUNTEER?

### Question 5 (parts a, b, c, d)

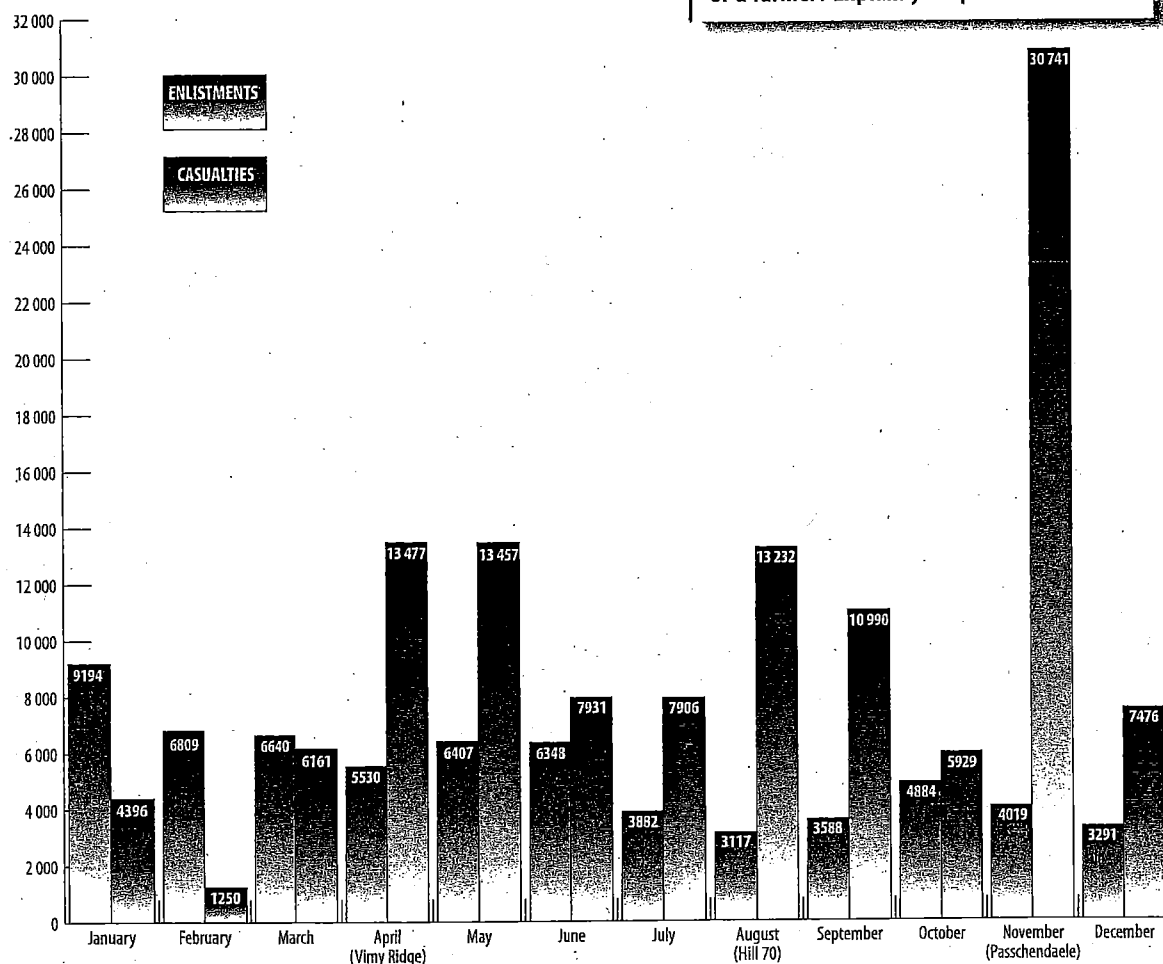
## Question 6

In December 1914, Prime Minister Borden had told the Canadian people that "there has not been, there will not be, compulsion or conscription." However, by 1916, Canadian forces in Europe needed 7 000 men annually just to replace losses. By 1917, enlistments were so low that the army often sent wounded soldiers back to the front before they had fully recovered from their wounds.

Enlistments versus casualties, 1917.

What would you do if you were prime minister and were faced with these statistics? Assume that you, like Borden and other leaders, believed that the war would go on for a long time yet. What would be your stand if you were a French Canadian or a farmer? Explain your position.

### Evidence 1.10



Source: Data from Statistics Canada.

On August 28, 1917, the government reluctantly passed the *Military Service Act*, which allowed conscription of single men between the ages of 20 and 35 if necessary. In November 1917, Borden and a new Union party, made up of the Conservative Party and English-speaking Liberals, won the federal election. On January 1, 1918, the new government began to enforce the *Military Service Act*.

French Canadians in particular opposed conscription, sometimes violently. While the strongest and most violent reaction was in Québec, there were demonstrations else-

where as well. In June 1918, farmers from across Canada staged a massive protest in Ottawa. They complained that the exemptions from military service given to their sons at the beginning of the war were being taken away—at a time when their sons were desperately needed at home. Labour leaders, too, opposed conscription and considered calling a general strike in protest.

Conscription raised about 120 000 soldiers, of whom 47 000 men went overseas. However, the war ended before most of these men faced combat.

Evidence 1.11

## Question 7

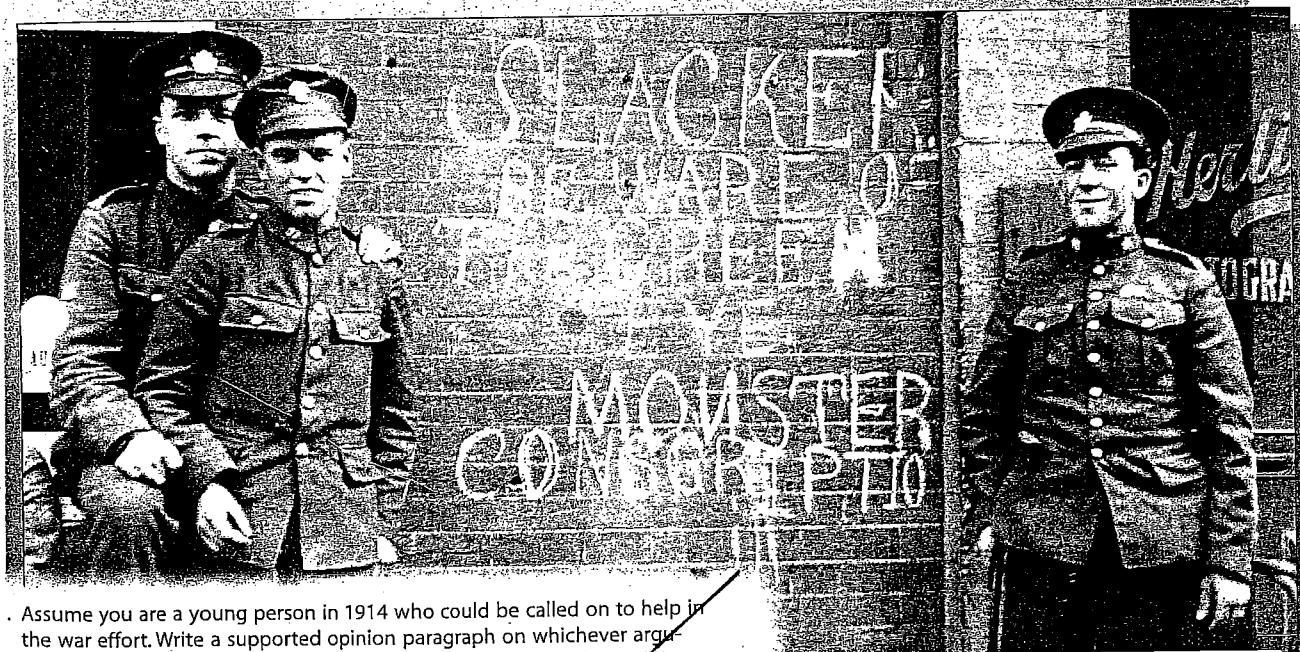
What do these statistics suggest about voluntary enlistments among Canadian-born? How might the evidence explain some French Canadians' reluctance to join the Canadian army?

Source: Adapted from Dr. Serge Durlinger, *Military History: Dispatches: Backgrounds in Canadian Military History* (Ottawa: Canadian War Museum, May 6, 2005).

## SOME STATISTICS TO THINK ABOUT

- When war was declared, only 10 percent of the population of Canada was British-born. Yet of the 33 000 troops that went to Britain in October 1914, two-thirds had been born in the British Isles and had immigrated to Canada in the 15 years before 1914.
- By the end of the war in 1918, of English-Canadian volunteers, 70 percent were recent immigrants from Britain.
- One thousand French Canadian volunteers were in the first contingent to go to Britain.
- French Canadians who volunteered for overseas service did not, at the outset of the war, have any regiments of their own. They were scattered throughout the army, serving under English-speaking officers. Instruction manuals were in English. French-Canadian soldiers, no matter how worthy, were generally not promoted to high officer positions. Even after a French regiment was formed, many French volunteers continued to be scattered throughout English-speaking companies.
- In Quebec, most recruitment was carried out by Protestant, often English-speaking, clergy.
- Most Canadian-born men of military age, regardless of language, did not volunteer. Included among these Canadians were farmers; immigrants from European countries other than Britain and France; labourers; and married men. Farmers and labourers argued that they and their families, including service-aged sons, were needed to carry out the work of growing food and manufacturing supplies for the war effort. As well, Doukhobors, Mennonites, and Hutterites, along with many other Canadians, were pacifists and resisted going to war.

Evidence 1.12



Assume you are a young person in 1914 who could be called on to help in the war effort. Write a supported opinion paragraph on whichever argument presented in Section One you would support and why. (An opinion paragraph presents a clear opinion or point of view on a topic. Begin with a clear topic sentence, such as whether you would support the war effort in 1914. In the body of the paragraph, provide reasons and evidence, including facts, examples, or quotations to support your opinion. Use key words to persuade the reader of your opinion. End with a concluding sentence.)

In small groups of four to six, debate one of the following statements:

- a) Canada should have provided any support Britain requested (military, supplies, etc.).
  - b) Conscription was the only possible solution to the shortage of voluntary enlistments in 1917.
- ignore
- i. Create two posters, one to represent Borden's position (Evidence 1.5) or Laurier's position (Evidence 1.6) in 1914, and another to represent Bourassa's position in 1915 and 1916 (Evidence 1.8 and 1.9).

AFTER READING

From 1916 on, and especially during the conscription crisis, in English Canada there were often efforts to shame men into enlisting. Here, soldiers stand by a sign denouncing men who did not sign up for the war. Members of the women's organization Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and others pinned a white chicken feather on men who were not in the services to expose them as "cowards."

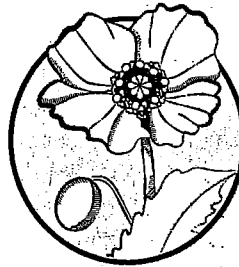
What impact would this action have on the men who had not enlisted? What would you have done in response, and why?

Question 8

SECTION ONE WHAT WOULD YOU DO? TO VOLUNTEER OR NOT TO VOLUNTEER?

BY ALICE TAYLOR

# CHANGED BY WAR

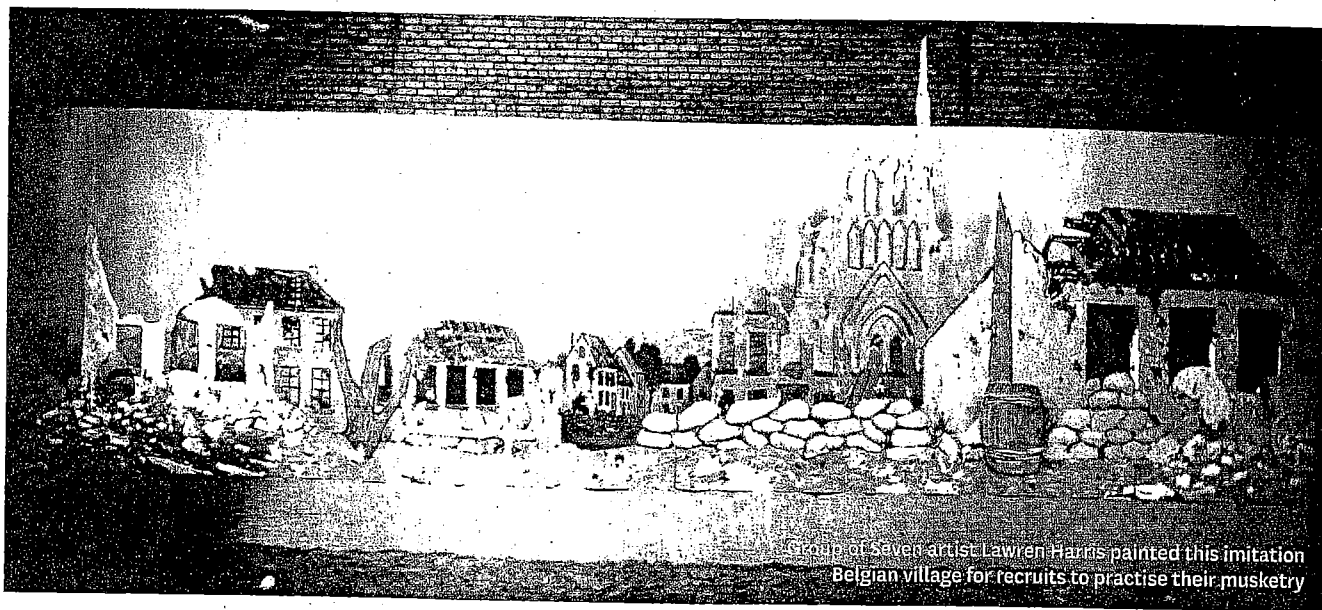


1914 TO 1918

THE FIRST WORLD WAR CHANGED CANADIAN SOCIETY PROFOUNDLY, and transformed the University of Toronto no less. A quiet teaching university became first a military training camp for thousands of young volunteers, then a research powerhouse as buildings, resources and brilliant minds were turned over to the greater war effort. The vignettes that

follow commemorate the diverse contributions made a century ago by the U of T community during the war. They offer a window into private moments, acts of kindness, bravery and personal sacrifice. Above all, they illustrate a common commitment to find reasons for hope even in a time of loss.





Group of Seven artist Lawren Harris painted this imitation Belgian village for recruits to practise their musketry

## “NOTHING LACKING BUT THE ROAR OF BATTLE”

accounts of trench life offer stark descriptions of filth, disease, injury and death. Apart from being cold, wet and hungry for days, even months on end, soldiers faced near constant bombardment. “Thirteen months and more had some of us sat in trenches,” recalled UC alumnus Corporal R. A. Utley, “taking what the Germans chose to give us in the shape of shells and sniper’s bullets.”

While nothing could prepare recruits for the grim realities of trench warfare, the University of Toronto did what it could to equip its student soldiers for what was coming. Beginning in 1914, the military used Hart House (which was under construction throughout the war) as a training ground. Recruits marched in the Great Hall, the Royal Flying Corps set up workshops in the gymnasium, and the Military Hospitals Commission Command trained medical personnel, including women nurses and rehabilitation specialists, in what are now the Debates and Music Rooms. When wounded soldiers began returning home, large portions of the building were devoted to rehabilitation.

Under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Vincent Massey (who would become Canada’s first native-born Governor General), students also trained under combat-like conditions in the unfinished basement that would later become the Hart House theatre. Lieutenant Lawren Harris, a member of the musketry staff (who would go on to fame as a Group of Seven artist), used his paintbrushes to create an imitation Belgian village that spanned one side of the room.

Between 1914 and 1918, millions of soldiers inhabited the trenches that lined the battlefields of the Western Front. First-hand

The shell-shattered replica depicts the main thoroughfare of a village after a German attack. The foreground is dominated by broken trees, rubble and sandbags that seem ineffectual against the destruction. Almost defiantly, a cathedral towers above the scene while smaller houses lie in ruins.

A trench accommodating up to 20 men faced the village. Trainees passed messages along the trench and life-like German marionettes appeared in the windows of bombed-out buildings. Student snipers popped up from behind sandbags and fired at the moving targets. “It is very real,” one observer reported. “Nothing seemed lacking but the noise and roar of battle to transfer me to a sector of the Western Front.”

STUDENT SNIPERS  
POPPED UP FROM  
BEHIND SANDBAGS  
AND FIRED AT THE  
MOVING TARGETS

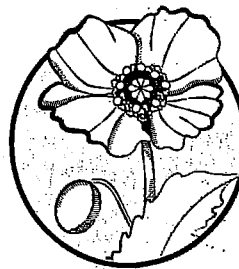
In what must have seemed a quaint memory to those facing the genuine roar of battle, similar scenes were staged across Toronto in the early years of the war. High Park and the CNE were likewise transformed into training sites, complete with trenches and faux German targets. The *Globe* reported that throngs of Torontonians turned out at the Exhibition grounds to inspect mock trenches

that were “modelled on the latest kinds in use in Flanders and France.” Soldiers, many of whom were Varsity men, performed battles, bayonetting sacks painted to resemble Kaiser Wilhelm II, Crown Prince Wilhelm and others as a large crowd of onlookers cheered.

Hart House officially opened on Remembrance Day, 1919, exactly a year after the end of the war. On this occasion Vincent Massey remarked, “The bricks and mortar are but the bones, the community must provide the spirit.” Throughout the war, the soldiers, students, faculty, staff and volunteers who passed through Hart House personified Massey’s call to action by demonstrating a spirit of sacrifice, devotion and deep commitment to service.

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Farmerettes from U of T dug a few "trenches" of a different sort



## FARMERETTES HELP AT HOME

summer breaks planting and hoeing in service of Canada's war effort. In 1917 and 1918 hundreds of U of T "farmerettes" signed up for national service on Ontario farms, replacing the labour of men lost to military service.

The young women performed all but the heaviest agricultural tasks. In the fields, they planted, weeded and pruned the crops. At harvest time, they picked and packed fruits and vegetables for shipping, and then travelled into town to help sell the produce at market. Living conditions ranged from YWCA-sponsored residences to musty military tents.

Food production was critical to Canada's wartime economy. Farmers were expected to do their patriotic duty by maximizing output to feed troops at home and abroad. The government also entreated young men and women to do their part.

Ontarians took great interest in the farmerettes. Most hailed from urban areas and had little-to-no experience with farm work. Newspapers focused on the novelty and offered regular (and frequently patronizing) updates on how the women were coping with the demands of farm life.

Dressed in loose-fitting bloomers and straw sun hats, U of T's women undergraduates spent their

*The Toronto Daily Star* tempted readers with headlines such as: "Plucky Farmerettes Put in Hard Work: But it is not a Bed of Roses, as One City Girl Found Out"; "Mary Feeds her Little Lamb, also Pigs and Other Farm Pets"; and even "One Farmerette Sat on Snapping Turtle, She Thought it was a Nice Smooth Stone."

Reports from the farmerettes themselves characterize the experience as both gruelling and gratifying. Many com-

plained of intense heat, long hours, low pay and poor working conditions. The women protested their rates of pay and the length of the season and through collective action managed to negotiate better wages and conditions.

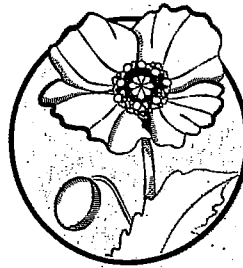
Yet despite these challenges, farmerettes were intensely proud of their contributions to Canada's war effort: "The main motive of the college girl, in spending her holiday in war work, was to serve her country," related related Mossie Waddington (BA 1911 Trinity, MA 1913, PhD 1919), who would become Dean of Women at University College and

later at Trinity College. Many women also felt a sense of liberation as they stepped into non-traditional roles. Their work on farms and in factories and offices challenged gender norms and practices. "In agriculture," declared Margaret Wrong in the *Varsity Magazine Supplement*, "it has been proved that women can take the place of men without injury to health or to the work in hand."

IN 1917 AND 1918  
HUNDREDS OF U OF T  
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## FORGOTTEN WARRIORS

Thanks to a best-selling book, hit play and Hollywood movie, millions know the tale *War Horse*, a fictionalized account of the important and dangerous role horses played in the First World War. Millions of animals, including horses, mules, dogs, pigeons and even glow-worms served on both sides of the conflict. These animal soldiers transported troops and supplies, carried the wounded, detected poisonous gas, hunted rats, delivered messages and offered comfort and companionship to homesick soldiers. And the glow-worms? They were piled into glass jars and provided dim light in the trenches for men to read letters, maps and reports.

In the heat of battle and through the long periods of inactivity, soldiers formed intense bonds with their animals. Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae, known to millions as the author of the war poem "In Flanders Fields," brought his horse Bonfire with him when he shipped overseas to serve as a field surgeon.

McCrae (BA 1894 UC, MD 1910) wrote: "I have a very deep affection for Bonfire, for we have been through so much together, and some of it bad enough. All the hard spots to which one's memory turns the old fellow has shared, though he says so little about it."

This tenderness spilled over into correspondence. Charming letters from Bonfire to McCrae's nieces and nephews back in Canada were signed with his hoof:

"I HAVE A VERY DEEP AFFECTION FOR BONFIRE, FOR WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH TOGETHER, AND SOME OF IT BAD ENOUGH"

From Bonfire to Jack Kilgour  
August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1916

*Did you ever have a sore hock? I have one now... I am glad you got my picture. My master is well, and the girls tell me I am looking well, too. The ones I like best give me biscuits and sugar, and sometimes flowers... Another one sends me bags of carrots. If you don't know how to eat carrots, tops and all, you had better learn, but I suppose you are just a boy, and do not know how good oats are.*

—Bonfire (signed with a horseshoe)

McCrae also befriended at least two dogs while overseas. Mike, a one-eyed terrier, and Bonneau, who accompanied him on patient rounds.

The fate of Mike and Bonneau isn't known. Sadly, McCrae died of pneumonia and meningitis in January of 1918. Bonfire, who survived the war, led McCrae's funeral procession, McCrae's boots reversed in his stirrups.



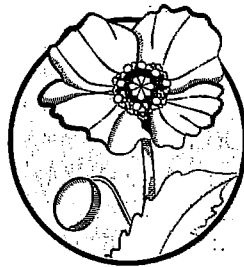
John McCrae with Bonneau in Europe



Bonfire leads John McCrae to the front, 1916

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The plasma filtration process in the production of tetanus antitoxin

## WAGING WAR ON INFECTION

A century before the First World War, the main weapon of the War of 1812 was a muzzle-loading musket

that fired up to four shots a minute to a distance of roughly 90 metres. The machine guns used on the battlefields of the First World War could fire hundreds of rounds per minute with a range of several thousand metres. The weapons of modern warfare mangled tissue and fractured bone, creating the perfect conditions for infection and disease. Many soldiers fighting on the “tetanus-laden” battlefields of Belgium and Northern France became infected with tetanus (also called lockjaw), which had a mortality rate of between 40 and 80 per cent.

In 1914, 32 per cent of the British wounded contracted tetanus. Taken by surprise by the high rates of infection, the British and Allied command looked to Canada and the University of Toronto for help. Dr. John FitzGerald – U of T Medicine graduate, faculty member and public health pioneer – played a critical role in preventing tetanus and other infectious diseases in the Canadian and allied armies.

In May 1914, at FitzGerald’s urging, the university took over the fledgling antitoxin laboratory that he had established a year earlier in a backyard stable at 145 Barton Avenue, near

the intersection of Bloor and Bathurst streets. FitzGerald opened his lab using \$3,000 of his wife’s inheritance. With new equipment, a hired technician and five horses he began producing safe and inexpensive diphtheria antitoxin that would eventually be made available to all Canadians, regardless of class or income.

After war broke out, military demand for antitoxins and vaccines prompted FitzGerald to move his lab to a farm donated by brewer and philanthropist Albert E. Gooderham.

The lab would eventually become the world-famous Connaught Antitoxin Laboratories. U of T President Robert Falconer and U of T’s board of governors approved a plan for the laboratory to produce enough tetanus antitoxin for every Canadian soldier at a much-reduced rate. In a message to Prime Minister Robert Borden, Falconer characterized it as the university’s “patriotic duty that we in Canada should manufacture tetanus antitoxin for our own expeditionary forces.”

The expanded labs produced a host of life-saving medication for the war effort, including tetanus antitoxin, anti-typhoid vaccine, diphtheria antitoxin, anti-meningitis serum and smallpox vaccine.

By the war’s end, vaccines and the practice of giving wounded soldiers tetanus shots had reduced the rate of infection to 0.1 per cent, making the anti-tetanus program one of the most successful health campaigns in wartime medicine.

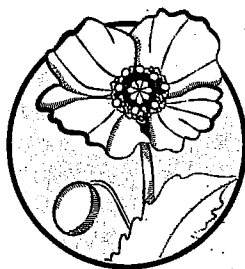
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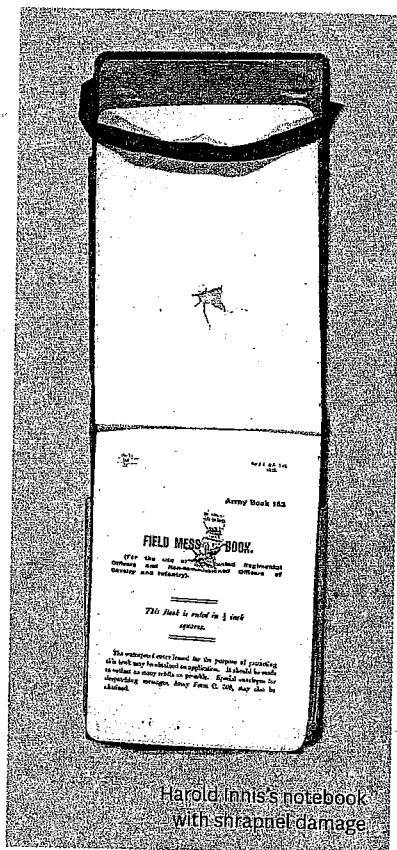


1914 TO 1918

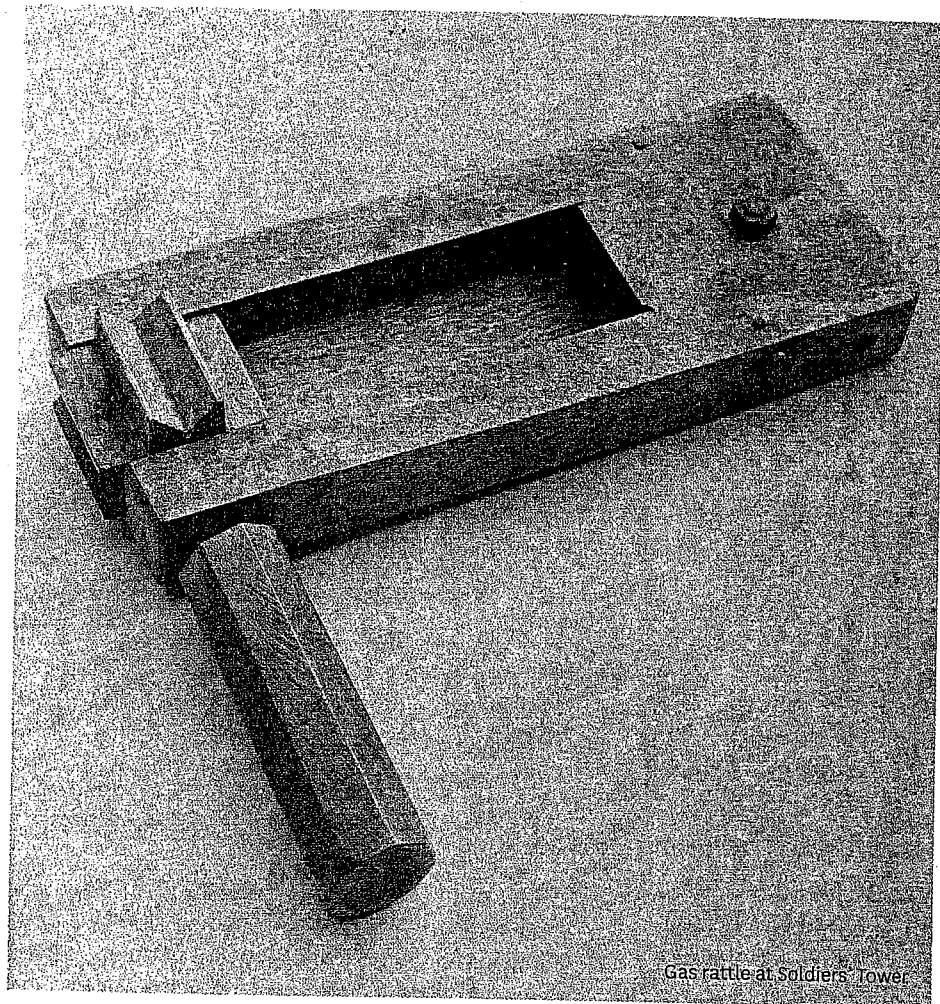
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## OBJECTS OF SALVATION



Harold Innis's notebook  
with shrapnel damage



Gas rattle at Soldiers' Tower

The noisy rat-a-tat produced by this First World War rattle (on display in the Memorial Room at Soldiers' Tower) warned all those within earshot of an impending poison gas attack. In the trenches the only criteria for alarm devices were that they be loud and distinctive – but as a bonus, rattles didn't require use of the lungs. Soldiers used wooden rattles, klaxon horns and steel triangles, but also made alarms from whatever materials they had available, such as empty shell cases and church bells.

Poison gas caused more than a million casualties in the First World War. Widespread use of lethal gas began in April of 1915 during the Second Battle of Ypres in western Belgium. This battle, known as the Canadian Army's "Baptism of Fire," gave Canada's soldiers a reputation as a force to be reckoned with. Yet, in 48 hours of fighting, 6,035 Canadians – one in every three soldiers in the First Division – were injured or killed. More than 2,000 died. The University of Toronto suffered many casualties at Ypres, including medical student Norman Bethune (BSc Med 1916) who was wounded in the fighting and spent three months recovering in a British military hospital.

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Prof. Harold Innis was another member of the U of T community who was gassed during his service overseas. Pictured on our cover in 1917 wearing a gas mask around his neck, a "very tired" Innis had just come off duty as a signaller with the Fourth Battery of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Western Europe.

On April 9, 1917 at Vimy Ridge, gas shells hit between his feet but "did no damage other than to release a rather stifling chlorene (sic) gas." A few months later Innis was not so lucky when shrapnel from a German shell ripped through his right thigh. The wound was severe but not lethal, thanks in large measure to his avowed "habit of carrying around great quantities of stuff in my rucksack." Books and other equipment stopped additional shell fragments from entering his body. The pictured Field Message Book, which now belongs to the Harold Innis collection at U of T Archives, was among the objects that may have saved his life.

Archives, was among the objects that may have saved his life.

For two more stories of U of T at war, visit [magazine.utoronto.ca](http://magazine.utoronto.ca).

## FIRST WORLD WAR FOUGHT WITH "LIQUID COURAGE"

BY RICHARD FOOT  
The National Post

It was a potent weapon of the First World War, and for Canadian soldiers entrenched on the Western Front it arrived each week in gallon jars marked with the letters S.R.D.-Special Red Demerara, 86-proof Jamaican rum.

According to a new study based on the words of troops writing home from the front, there was more than patriotism and professional discipline behind the fighting spirit of Canadian soldiers in Europe. Most importantly, there was rum.

"Rum was essential for providing some men with liquid courage, while for others, it helped to control nerves or simply to dull them," writes historian Tim Cook in *Canadian Military History*, an academic journal published by the Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont.

"Rum was an institutionalized and regimented part of the ritual of enduring the war."

Wrote one Canadian soldier in a letter home: "Under the spell of this all-powerful stuff, one almost felt that he could a German dead or alive, steel helmet and all."

Historians have known for decades that alcohol fortified the morale of soldiers on both sides of the war. When the Canadian army arrived in Europe in 1915, it adopted the British practice of administering to troops the daily "rum ration", a tradition started centuries ago in the Royal Navy.

Now Mr. Cook has produced the first scholarly study of rum's importance in the daily lives of Canadian troops. His article "Demon Rum and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War" says rum preserved in soldiers the will to fight and helped produce the victories at Passchendaele and Vimy Ridge that brought pride to Canada.

People tend to focus on the buddy system, that soldiers fought for their pals in the trenches," said Mr. Cook in an interview. "Well, the thing I found while reading through their diaries and letters is this little three-letter word kept popping up-rum."

Mr. Cook, a First World War author, says the drink was essential for the Canadian army in several ways: It boosted the morale of troops in the appalling trenches; it helped men sleep at night under the constant barrage of explosives; and because rum was issued by senior ranks and sometimes withheld as punishment, it helped enforce a hierarchical structure of the army.

But rum's primary purpose was as a combat motivator. When dregs were ladled out to soldiers minutes before an attack, it suppressed the fear of rational men, terrified of climbing out of their trenches into the teeth of enemy fire.

"If we had not had the rum we would have died," wrote Private G. Boyd, who fought for Canada at Passchendaele.

Often rum was overused. At the Battle of Amiens in 1918, a Lieutenant Lunt of Canada's 4th Battalion was passing out rum on the firing line when he came across one soldier so scared his teeth were chattering.

"Lunt plied him with four double rum shots before the shaking stopped," writes Mr. Cook. "when they finally attacked, Lunt remembered seeing the young lad stumbling forward in a drunken daze before he was shot in the face."

The great irony is that back home, the temperance movement was in full swing. By 1917, all provinces except Quebec had been convinced to enact prohibition. Prohibitioners then wanted to revoke all alcohol privileges for the army overseas.

While some soldiers did refuse their rum rations, most greeted the movement with anger.

"Oh you psalm-singers, who raise your hands in horror at the thought of the perdition the boys are bound for, if they should happen to take a nip of rum to keep a little warmth in their poor battered bodies," wrote Harold Baldwin, a Canadian infantryman.

"I wish you could all lie shivering in a hole full of icy liquid, with every nerve in your body quivering with pain, with the harrowing moans of the wounded forever ringing in your ears, with hell's own dm raging all around."

From: *National Post*, March 17, 2000.

### Questions:

1. What did one Canadian soldier feel drinking the rum did for him and other soldiers during World War I?
2. When did the tradition of the daily rum ration actual begin?
3. What did the historian find that rum did for some soldiers during World War I?
4. Besides the facts in the above question, in what other ways was rum essential for the Canadian troops in the trenches during World War I?
5. How was rum used as a combat motivator during World War I?
6. What were the dangers of the overuse of rum during the war? Use the example from the story.
7. What was the great irony of the use of rum during World War I and what was the soldiers' reaction to this?

# THE U.S. in WWI

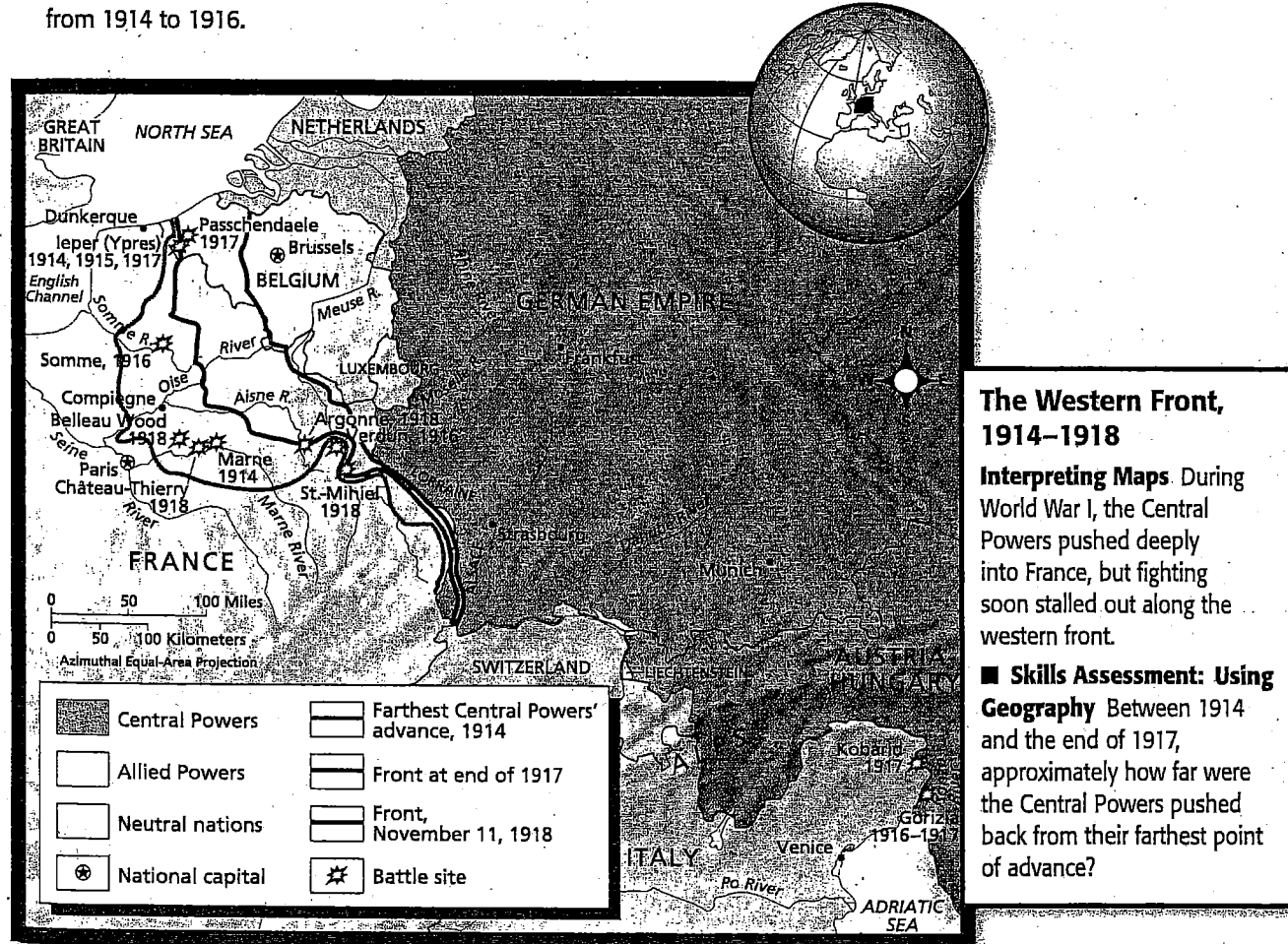
**Naval warfare.** The British decided to blockade the North Sea to keep merchant ships from reaching Germany. At first the blockade was aimed at cutting off the flow of raw materials to German factories. Eventually the blockade became an attempt to ruin the German economy and starve the German people.

Germany also set up a blockade. It used U-boats to sink ships that were carrying food and arms to the British. In May 1915 a German submarine sank the British passenger liner *Lusitania* off the coast of Ireland. The *Lusitania* was carrying a cargo of war materials as well as passengers to England. Nearly 1,200 people were killed, including 128 Americans. **Woodrow Wilson**, the U.S. president, denounced the attack. He warned Germany that the United States would not tolerate another such incident. Wary of provoking the neutral Americans into entering the war, Germany cut back its submarine attacks.

In May 1916 the only large naval battle of the war was fought, at the Battle of Jutland, in the North Sea off the coast of Denmark. Both Germany and Great Britain claimed victory. However, the German navy remained in port for the rest of the war.

**The stalemate.** By late 1915 the war in the west had become a stalemate on land as well as on sea. Military leaders on both sides began to wonder whether they could ever break through the other's line of trenches. As both armies continued their attacks, small areas of land changed hands again and again. Thousands and thousands of lives were snuffed out. The conflict had become a **war of attrition**—a slow wearing-down process in which each side was trying to outlast the other.

✓ **READING CHECK: Sequencing** Describe the progress of the war from 1914 to 1916.



## Holt Researcher

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KEYWORD: Holt Researcher

FreeFind: Woodrow Wilson

After reading more about Woodrow Wilson on the Holt Researcher, write an analysis of his influence on political events of the 20th century.

## The United States and World War I

Most Americans had agreed with President Wilson's declaration in 1914 that the United States should be neutral and that the war was strictly a European affair. Nevertheless, the war soon affected the United States. As the most highly industrialized neutral nation, it supplied food, raw materials, and munitions to both sides. According to international law, however, if a ship carried **contraband**—war materials supplied by a neutral nation to a belligerent one—the goods could be seized. At first American investors and business people dealt with both sides. As the British blockade of Germany tightened, however, Americans traded more and more with the Allies.

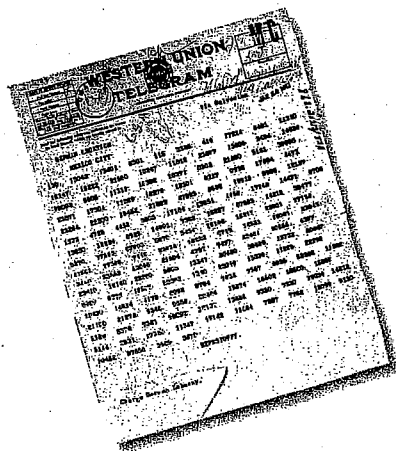
British propaganda had a great influence on Americans. Stories about German **atrocities**—brutal acts against defenseless civilians—angered Americans. They did not realize that many of the stories were exaggerated or not true.

Early in 1917 several developments pushed the United States toward war. One incident involved a high official in the German foreign ministry, **Arthur Zimmermann**. In January, Zimmermann sent a secret telegram to the German ambassador in Mexico proposing an alliance between Germany and Mexico. Germany offered to help Mexico regain Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas if it would fight on Germany's side. The British intercepted the telegram and decoded it. It was then published in American newspapers. Americans were enraged.

Another development was the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare by the Germans, who declared a "war zone" around Britain. German U-boats sank many ships. Many Americans died as a result of these attacks.

Then, in March, revolutionaries in Russia overthrew the autocratic czarist government. All the major Allied countries had now moved toward democracy, while none of the Central Powers had. Americans were more likely to participate in a war fought for democratic ideals. President Wilson addressed Congress, saying that "the world must be made safe for democracy." On April 6, 1917, Congress voted to declare war on Germany.

✓ **READING CHECK: Analyzing Information** How was the United States affected by the war before 1917?



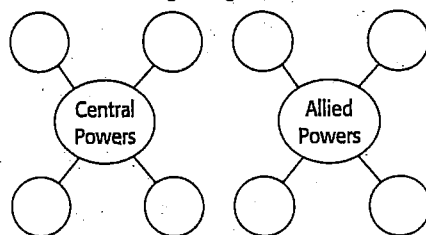
This coded telegram from Berlin to the German embassy in Mexico proposed an alliance between Mexico and Germany.

### SECTION 2 REVIEW

1. **Define** and explain the significance:  
propaganda  
war of attrition  
contraband  
atrocities

2. **Identify** and explain the significance:  
Central Powers  
Allied Powers  
U-boats  
Woodrow Wilson  
Arthur Zimmermann

3. **Comparing and Contrasting** Copy the diagram and use it to show the advantages and disadvantages each side had at the beginning of the war.



4. **Finding the Main Idea**

- How did new technology change the way the war was fought?
- What principles were proclaimed by the United States for declaring war?

5. **Writing and Critical Thinking**

**Supporting a Point of View** Design a poster encouraging Americans to support the war.

**Consider:**

- the atrocities committed, such as the sinking of the *Lusitania*
- the idea of making the world "safe for democracy"

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## SECTION



### READ TO DISCOVER

- 1 What events led to the Russian Revolution?
- 2 How did the Communists come to power?
- 3 How did its revolution affect Russia's participation in World War I?

### IDENTIFY

Mensheviks  
Bolsheviks  
Vladimir Lenin  
Communist Party  
Red Army

### WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

Russia continues to undergo dramatic changes. Use [cnnfyi.com](http://cnnfyi.com) or other **current event** sources to investigate what Russia's government is like today. Record your findings in your journal.

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# The Russian Revolution

(Russia leaves WWI)

#### The Main Idea

Growing problems in Russia came to a crisis during World War I, finally leading to revolution.

#### The Story Continues

*Years of war, poverty, and class struggle had brought an end to the czarist regime in Russia. One Russian described how the revolution began for him. "The streets were full of people. The trams [streetcars] weren't running, overturned cars lay across the tracks. I did not know it then, I did not understand what was happening. I yelled along with everyone, 'Down with the czar!' ... I yelled again and again. ... I felt that all of my familiar life was falling apart, and I rejoiced in its destruction."*

## Russia in World War I

World War I showed Russia's economic weaknesses. The huge country did not have sufficient food, appropriate armaments, or adequate roads to supply its army. When the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, supplies from outside Russia were sharply cut. The Allies had counted on the large number of Russian soldiers. However, Russia's army was not only poorly equipped but also poorly led. The corrupt, inefficient government could not deal with the problems of modern warfare. Russian war losses were enormous.

By the spring of 1917 the Russian people had lost faith in their government and in the czar. The elected legislative body, the Duma, had little power. Although serfdom had been abolished in 1861, debts, rents, and taxes kept most Russian peasants poor. Strikes and street demonstrations broke out in Petrograd, the capital. When the Duma demanded government reforms, the czar dissolved it.

In the past the government had always been able to use the army against disturbances. This time, however, the soldiers sided with the demonstrators. Encouraged by the army's defiance of the czar, the Duma refused to disband. In March 1917 the czar abdicated, giving up the throne. He and his family were soon imprisoned. The Russian monarchy, and with it the rule of the Russian aristocracy, had come to an end.

✓ **READING CHECK: Identifying Cause and Effect** What were the problems that led to the Russian Revolution?

## Lenin and the Bolsheviks

With the overthrow of the czar a temporary government was set up. It would rule Russia until a constitutional assembly could be elected. While the new rulers of Russia tried to restore order, however, another group was working for more radical change.

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies had been organized when unrest had begun in Russia. *Soviet* is the Russian word for "council." The leaders of the Petrograd Soviet were socialists. They believed that political equality must be coupled with economic equality. Similar soviets were organized elsewhere in Russia. Radical members called for immediate peace and land reforms.



## Holt Researcher

go.hrw.com

**KEYWORD:** Holt Researcher

**FreeFind:** Vladimir Lenin

After reading more about Vladimir Lenin on the Holt Researcher, write an analysis of his influence on political events of the 20th century.

The provisional government, however, pledged to continue the war. It also opposed the changes demanded by the more radical revolutionaries.

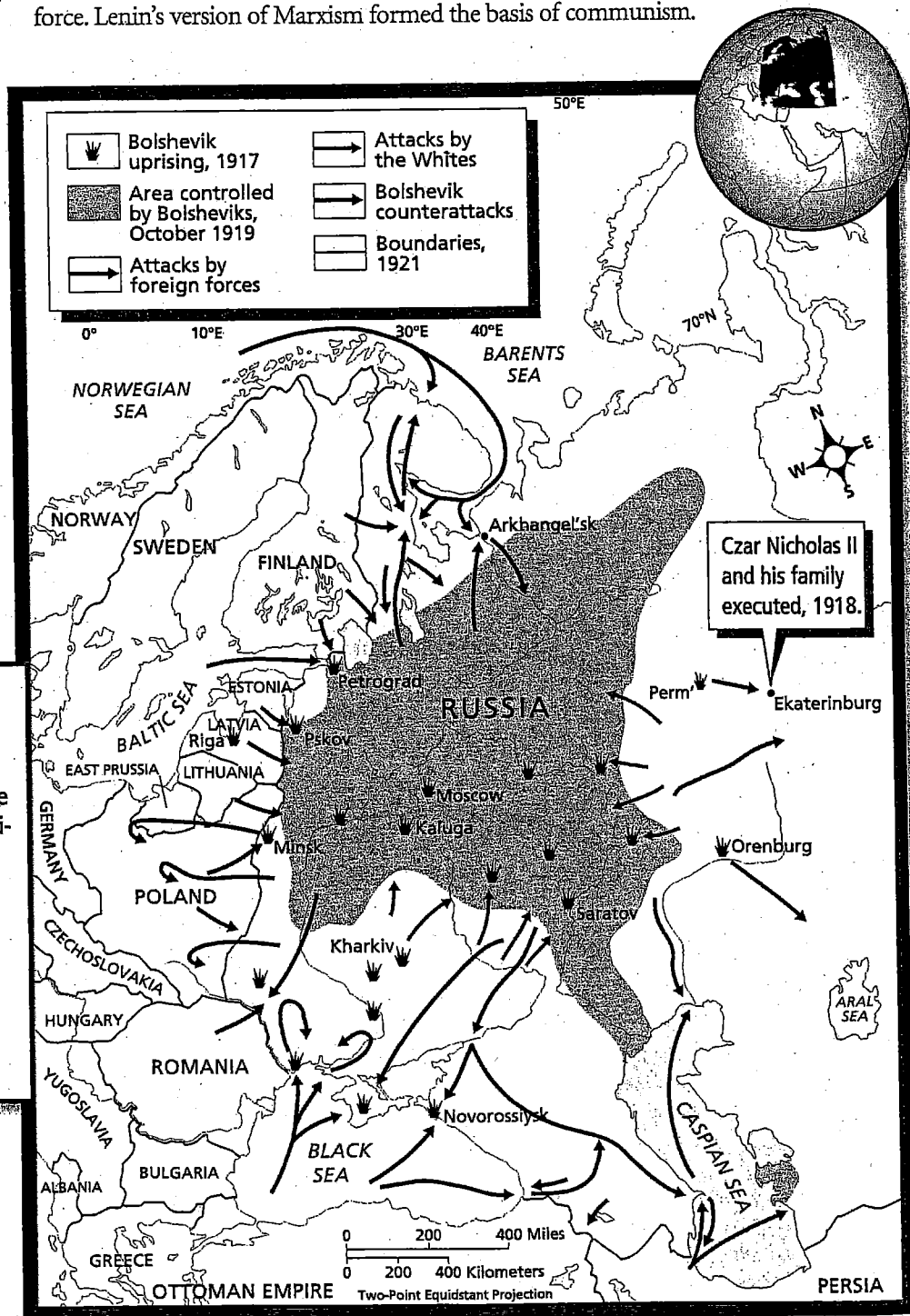
Two factions fought for control of the soviets. The moderate **Mensheviks** lost out to the more radical **Bolsheviks**. The leader of the Bolsheviks was **Vladimir Lenin**, a revolutionary socialist. Lenin demanded that all governing power be turned over to the soviets. The Bolsheviks' slogan of "peace, bread, and land" appealed to the war-weary and hungry Russian people. Lenin was a Marxist—a follower of Karl Marx. However, Russia had comparatively little industry and only a small working class. Lenin believed, therefore, that social forces in Russia might not move as Marx had predicted. He set up a small group of leaders to train Russian workers to become a revolutionary force. Lenin's version of Marxism formed the basis of communism.

### Revolutionary Russia, 1917–1921

**Interpreting Maps** The Bolsheviks faced opposition from some foreign forces as well as from internal opponents.

#### Skills Assessment:

**Locate** What major cities were in the area controlled by the Bolsheviks?





On November 7, 1917, the Bolsheviks overthrew the provisional government and took control of Russia. This is sometimes called the October Revolution for the month that it happened in the Russian calendar. In 1918 the Bolsheviks renamed themselves the **Communist Party** and dissolved the constitutional assembly because they did not have a majority in it.

✓ **READING CHECK: Finding the Main Idea** Why did the Bolsheviks come to power?

## Peace and Civil War

Despite continuing losses, the provisional government had kept Russia in the war. Lenin's new government, however, signed a peace treaty with the Central Powers in March 1918 at the city of Brest Litovsk. Desperate for peace, the Russians accepted the harsh terms dictated by the Germans. Russia agreed to give up a lot of territory.

The new regime then turned its attention to Russia's internal political problems. The Communists faced great opposition. Their opponents included the Mensheviks and other socialist factions, and groups who wanted to restore the monarchy. Civil war broke out early in 1918. To prevent any chance of the monarchy coming back to power, the Communists executed the imprisoned czar and his entire family in July 1918.

The civil war lasted about three years. The Communists forces were called the **Red Army**, adopted from the symbolic color of the European socialist revolutionaries. Their right-wing, counter-revolutionary opponents were known as the Whites. The destruction of the civil war mirrored that caused by World War I.

The Allies were angered by the separate peace treaty Communist Russia had signed with the Central Powers. They tried to get Russia to renew fighting Germany, but the Communists stood by the treaty they had signed. The Allies also feared that the Communists would encourage the spread of revolution to their own countries. The Allies contributed arms, money, and even troops to the White forces. By 1921, however, the Communists had won. In 1922 the Communists renamed the land they ruled the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or the Soviet Union.

✓ **READING CHECK: Evaluating** Why did the peace treaty between Communist Russia and the Central Powers anger the Allies?

## HISTORY MAKER



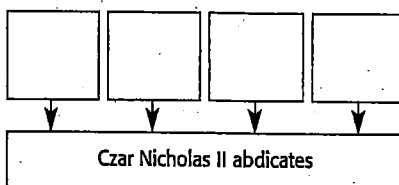
**Vladimir Lenin**  
(1870–1924)

Vladimir Lenin's life changed when his older brother was executed for conspiring to overthrow the emperor. Throwing himself into revolutionary activities, Lenin was arrested and exiled. After his return he became the first leader of the new Soviet Union, which championed the ideals of socialism. Considered one of the greatest revolutionaries of all time, Lenin became a hero for many later communist leaders. *Why is Lenin important?*

## SECTION 3 REVIEW

1. **Identify** and explain the significance:
- Mensheviks
  - Bolsheviks
  - Vladimir Lenin
  - Communist Party.
  - Red Army

2. **Sequencing** Copy the diagram and use it to show what led to the czar's abdication.



3. **Finding the Main Idea**

- a. How did Lenin and the Bolsheviks come to power in Russia?
- b. Why did the Russians pull out of the war?

4. **Writing and Critical Thinking**

**Analyzing Information** Design a flyer that the Bolsheviks might have used to organize a rally during 1917.

**Consider:**

- what issues they thought were important
- the conditions in Russia during World War I



**Homework Practice Online**

keyword: SH3 HP18

## In Review

1. Why did the young men from Newfoundland suffer such horrible casualties at the Battle of the Somme?
2. a) Briefly describe the nature of the war from a soldier's viewpoint.  
b) How does this reality compare with the image presented at the outset of war?
3. Describe the impact of weapons such as tanks, aeroplanes, and submarines on the course of the war.
4. In your view, should Canada have been involved in the First World War? Explain your answer.
5. What was the significance of the US entry into the war?
6. Outline the major reasons for Germany's defeat.

## The Search For Peace

Ending the First World War had been a long and difficult struggle. President Wilson looked to a new world body—the League of Nations—to provide **collective security**, that is, a system to ensure world peace with the support and action of the world's nations and to prevent future conflicts. Designing a fair peace proved to be equally challenging. The Allies had the difficult task of redrawing the map of Europe and establishing the conditions for a lasting peace. But the process seemed doomed from the start. The new communist government in Russia was refused representation at the talks. Decision-making power rested in the hands of three governments—Britain, France, and the United States.

The Paris Conference, convened on 18 January 1919, was the largest and most important diplomatic gathering since the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Thirty Allied nations were given seats at the conference. The defeated nations were not given any status at the negotiations, so their fate would be decided for them. While all present had

a voice in the terms of the peace treaty, the real decision-making power lay with the three leading victorious nations.

The damage the war had inflicted was horrendous. Ten million lives had been lost. The direct financial costs were estimated at \$180 billion, with another \$150 billion in indirect costs. Four great empires had crumbled: Hohenzollern Germany, Habsburg Austria-Hungary, Romanov Russia, and Ottoman Turkey. The task that lay before the peacemakers was to establish political and economic stability in Europe and to ensure that the First World War was, in US President Woodrow Wilson's words, truly "the war to end all wars."

The United States was regarded with great hope by millions of war-weary Europeans. President Wilson offered a vision for a new world order along with the moral authority and economic power to get things done. Wilson joined the American peace delegation in Paris. His personal participation in the peace process and his pledge "to make the world safe for democracy" was welcomed in Europe with great hope and enthusiasm.

### WILSON AND THE FOURTEEN POINTS

Wilson believed that war was caused by three major factors: secret diplomacy among nations; the tendency of dominant nationalities to oppress ethnic minorities; and autocratic governments ruled by elites. He believed that these causes of war had to be removed if the world was to have lasting peace. Wilson's **Fourteen Points**, announced on 8 January 1918, addressed these key issues.

Wilson hoped the Fourteen Points would be the basis for a new world order, but as the hard realities of negotiations proceeded, these principles gradually receded to the background. Key decisions

were made in secret by the big powers. Revenge and power politics dominated. In time, the high public expectations based on Wilson's idealistic statements would be shattered.

### THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE: DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS

The major powers had different expectations at the Paris Peace Conference that began on 18 January 1919. The United States was determined to establish a new international order based on Wilson's Fourteen Points. Added to this idealism was the practical desire to resume the free flow of trade so that American business could continue to prosper. Britain, too,

### Wilson's Fourteen Points

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.</p> <p>II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war.</p> <p>III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.</p> <p>IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.</p> <p>V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based on the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty, the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.</p> <p>VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and... assistance of every kind that she may need and may herself desire.</p> <p>VII. Belgium... must be evacuated [by the Germans] and restored.</p> | <p>VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, the wrong done to France in the matter... of Alsace-Lorraine... should be righted.</p> <p>IX. A readjustment of frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.</p> <p>X. The people of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safe-guarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.</p> <p>XI. Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated... Serbia accorded free access to the sea.</p> <p>XII. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule...[should be allowed] autonomous development.</p> <p>XIII. An independent Polish state... should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations...[and should] be assured a free and secure access to the sea.</p> <p>XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike. "The world must be made safe for democracy."</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



**Figure 2.13**

For each of Wilson's points, indicate whether you agree or disagree. Be prepared to explain your choices. In your opinion, which point is the most important? Why?

was eager to establish a peaceful atmosphere in which business could flourish. France, where the northern provinces had been a vast battlefield and where the dead numbered over 1 million, wanted assurances that it would be able to rebuild without threat from neighbouring Germany. Thus each country had different expectations of the peace treaty.

The United States was a new player in the affairs of Europe. The long tradition of American diplomacy had been one of isolation. Essentially, the Americans were eager to revert to that policy. Their greatest national interest in the peace process was to maintain their robust economy. To that end, the US placed pressure on Britain and France to repay their war loans. These war allies in turn decided to pass on this financial burden to Germany.

### *French Objectives*

France had two basic goals at the peace conference: national security and financial **reparations** (payments). To ensure national security, France wanted to remove the threat from German military power. In the pre-war years, Germany had developed into a powerful military and economic nation. To keep Germany in check, France had forged an alliance with Russia. Now, with Russia in the hands of the Bolsheviks, France had to find other guarantees of security. France demanded the return of Alsace-Lorraine, which had been seized by Germany following the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. The Allies accepted this without question. But France also demanded the German Rhineland to serve as a buffer zone between the two countries. Seizure of this territory clearly violated Wilson's principle of **national self-determination**, which called for individual nationalities to have their own state and protected

borders, and the demand was rejected. However, if France could not have the Rhineland, it demanded that the region be neutralized. The compromise was a **demilitarized zone**. Germany was prohibited from placing troops or fortifications within 50 km of the east bank of the Rhine River. As insurance, the Allies would occupy the west bank for 15 years. This settlement, combined with other military restrictions and a pledge of immediate military assistance from Britain and the United States in the event of German aggression, satisfied France's security concerns.

The other French goal was to gain financial compensation for losses during the war. Northern France had been devastated after four years of German occupation. Furthermore, the German army had destroyed what was left of the region when they withdrew in 1918. Mines were flooded, railways destroyed, and fields torn apart by shells and trenches. To make up for the German destruction of French coal mines, France was awarded coal rights in Germany's Saar Valley until 1935.

French premier Georges Clemenceau demanded that Germany pay full reparations for war damages. The Americans felt that reparations should be limited to what Germany could afford to pay in 30 years. But the French disagreed, demanding that Germany pay whatever damages were assessed with no time limit. Eventually Clemenceau agreed to the 30-year limit on the condition that it be

### NETSURFER

[WWW.BBC.CO.UK/EDUCATION/MODERN/VERSAILL/VERSAHTM.HTM](http://WWW.BBC.CO.UK/EDUCATION/MODERN/VERSAILL/VERSAHTM.HTM)

The BBC's Modern World History pages are an excellent source for more information, documents, visuals, etc., on the Treaty of Versailles. This is a very helpful source for initial research for projects or assignments. Scroll down the homepage to learn about each of the leaders who attended the peace conference.

extended if necessary. In 1921, Germany was presented with a reparations bill of more than \$30 billion, of which the French share was 52 per cent. It was impossible for Germany to pay this amount, and by 1922 the country had already fallen behind in its payments. The German economic crisis soon turned to political crisis.

### **British Objectives**

The key British objective at the conference was to ensure the security of the sea lanes to its empire. This meant that German sea power had to be crippled. This was achieved by reducing the German navy to a token force of six warships, prohibiting German submarines, and redistributing German colonies to the Allies. Britain was not prepared to support French demands for huge reparation

payments or territorial gains. If Germany were forced to pay massive reparations to France, the result would be a weak Germany and a strong France. In 1919, Britain was beginning to fear the spread of Bolshevism more than it feared the rise of Germany. Both British Prime Minister Lloyd George and Liberal Party colleague Winston Churchill felt that if Germany were weakened too much, it could fall into the hands of communist Russia. So Britain began to soften its stand on reparations.

### **THE PEACE OF PARIS, 1919**

When the Allies established the terms of the **Treaty of Versailles**, Germany was invited to Versailles for the formal signing on 18 June 1919. Germany signed the treaty, but only under protest. The Germans

## **The Main Terms of the Treaty of Versailles**

### **1. Territorial Changes**

- a) Alsace-Lorraine to be returned to France
- b) Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia to receive German border areas
- c) Poland re-established as an independent state with access to the Baltic Sea (the Polish Corridor to Danzig)
- d) Danzig to be a free city under the League of Nations
- e) Germany to give up all overseas colonies to the League of Nations; mandates for administering former German colonies assigned to Britain, France, and Japan

### **2. Military Terms**

- a) German army reduced to 100 000 troops
- b) Germany forbidden to have an airforce
- c) Most German naval vessels, including the submarine force, to be handed over to the Allies
- d) Germany forbidden to have heavy military frontier fortifications

### **3. Admission of War Guilt**

- a) Germany forced to accept responsibility for starting the war

### **4. Reparations**

- a) Germany to pay war reparations to France and Belgium for damages caused during the war
- b) Germany to pay reparations for shipping damages by turning over part of its merchant marine fleet

### **5. Other Terms**

- a) Germany to cede Saar coal mines to France for fifteen years
- b) Allied troops to occupy the Rhineland for fifteen years
- c) East bank of Rhine to be demilitarized

**Figure 2.14**

**B1**

The Treaty of Versailles was one of the most important documents of the twentieth century. Its failure helped shape global politics for decades to come. Review the terms of the treaty and indicate which terms you support, which ones you reject, and why.

were particularly incensed by the War Guilt clause that stipulated that Germany accept sole responsibility for the war: "The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies." It was a clause that would have serious repercussions in the years to come.

In the months following the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, separate treaties were signed with Austria (the Treaty of St. Germain, 1919); Bulgaria (the Treaty of Neuilly, 1919); Turkey (the Treaty of Sevres, 1920); and Hungary (the Treaty of Trianon, 1920). Seven new countries were created from the former Russian, Turkish, and Austro-Hungarian empires, including Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. Millions of ordinary people found themselves living as minorities in new countries or in different countries after the boundaries were redrawn. The new Europe became a breeding ground for political tension and unrest. Europe needed stability to heal the wounds of war but turmoil was its destiny.

### *The League of Nations*

The League of Nations came into being with the signing of the treaty. This international organization of nations was part of Woodrow Wilson's vision of a new world order. Ironically, the United States Senate rejected the treaty and along with it the League of Nations. Even without American membership, however, the League was a step towards the establishment of an international arbitrator of disputes, although it came to be seen as a European rather than a world body.



**Figure 2.15**

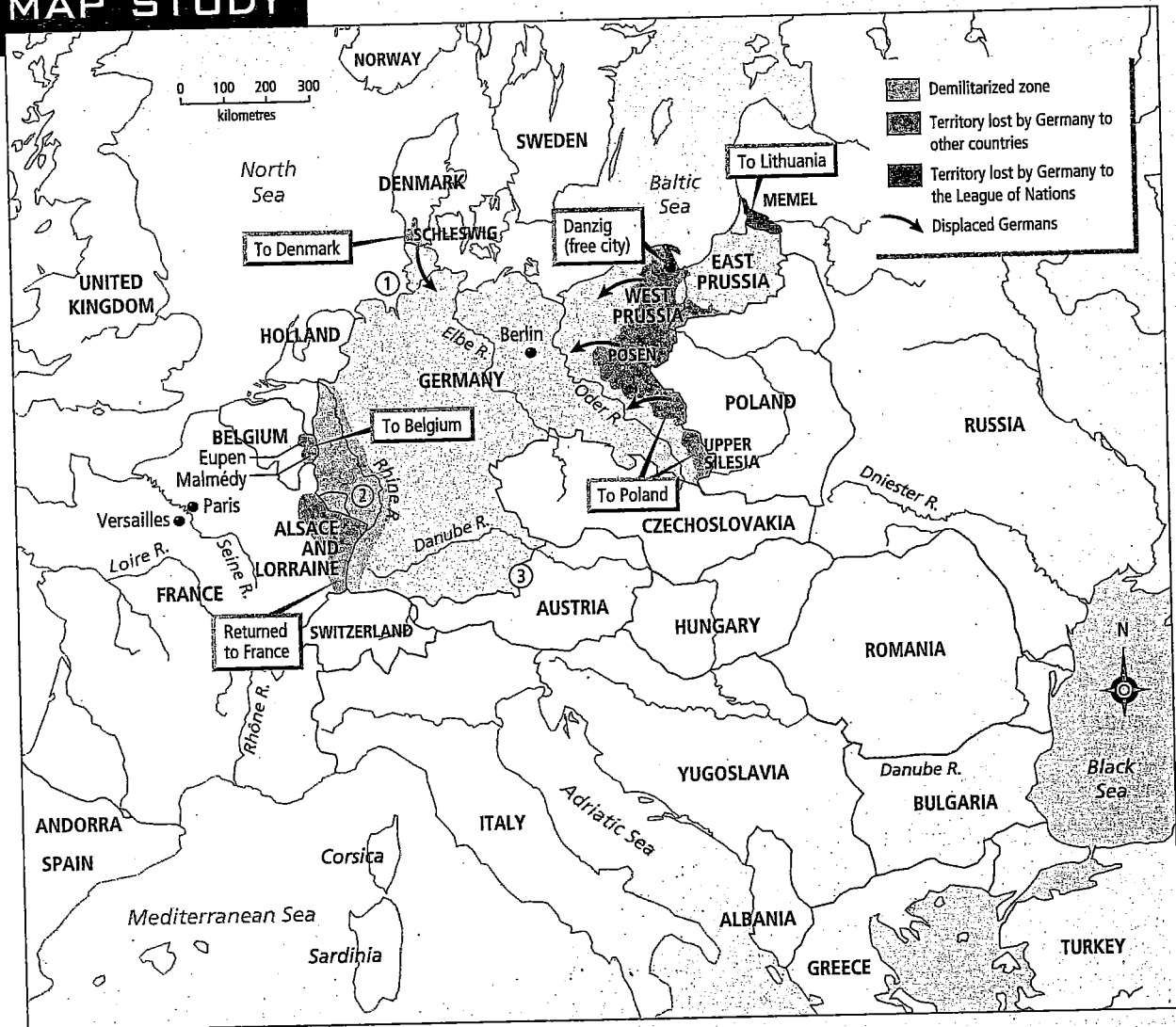
The "Big Three"—British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau, and American President Woodrow Wilson—shaped and signed the Treaty of Versailles. In your opinion should the defeated nations have had any input into the treaty? Explain.

(B2)

### **EVALUATING THE TREATY**

The Treaty of Versailles created controversy that continues even to this day. German colonies across the globe were taken away. The territorial, military, and economic terms infuriated and humiliated Germany. Later German leaders used the hated treaty to illustrate how unfairly the world was treating Germany. Instead of resolution, the treaty encouraged revenge.

## MAP STUDY

**Figure 2.16**

The Price of Defeat: Germany's Losses by the Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles redrew the map of Europe and parts of the globe. Compare this map with the map of Europe in 1914 (see page 37).

1. All German overseas colonies lost. Displaced Germans returned to Germany.
2. Saar coalfields placed under French rule for fifteen years.
3. Union between Austria and Germany forbidden.

**Interpreting**

1. What evidence is there that the principle of national self-determination was violated?
2. What new nations were created in Europe?
3. What impact might this have on political stability in the region? Explain.
4. In your view, were German losses justified? Explain.

(C1)



Reparation payments were blamed for Germany's staggering inflation and economic collapse. To make these payments, the government printed paper money until the currency was worthless. By 1923, the German economy was in ruins. Furthermore, the military restrictions imposed on Germany were seen as harsh and humiliating. Thousands of demobilized German troops, resenting the terms of the treaty and disgruntled

with a political system that had been incapable of striking a better deal in Paris, joined right-wing political groups. The treaty provided fertile ground for propaganda against the Allies' treatment of Germany and it was employed with great success. German violations of the treaty grew bolder and more flagrant until finally Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party effectively killed the Treaty of Versailles in the early 1930s.

## In Review (C2)

1. What were the key objectives of France, Britain, and the United States at the Paris Peace Conference? In your opinion, which country was most successful in achieving its objectives? Explain your answer.
2. Why did Wilson's idealism not gain much support at the peace conference?
3. In your opinion, do Wilson's Fourteen Points have any relevance in today's world? Explain.
4. How would you have changed the Treaty of Versailles and why?
5. In general, what do you think should be the central purpose of a treaty that ends a serious conflict?
6. How did the Treaty of Versailles help the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party?

## Summary

When war broke out in 1914, the mood was almost festive. Most people believed it would be a short war that would solve many of the problems of the competing nations. As the war dragged on, it became a battle of attrition: who could continue to supply soldiers and weapons in order to outlast the others.

The war cost Europe dearly in terms of human lives and almost ruined the

continent economically. The cost of feeding and equipping the military forces was staggering. The destruction left vast areas of Belgium and France in ruins. But while the economies of both the victors and the vanquished in Europe were severely damaged, the American economy was strengthened by the war. Even though most European countries recovered by 1924, they faced a new order in which the international economic **balance of power** had shifted from Europe in favour of the United States.

# Viewpoints

## ISSUE: Was the Treaty of Versailles a fair and reasonable treaty?

### Background

Under the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the victorious allies imposed the conditions of peace upon Germany. The key players drafting the treaty were American president Woodrow Wilson, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, and French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau. The expectations were that a just and fair treaty based on the idealism of Wilson's Fourteen Points would emerge from the Paris Peace Conference. To many observers, however, the true spirit of the Fourteen Points was sacrificed and replaced with a series of tough measures designed to cripple Germany.

Economist John Maynard Keynes was a delegate at the peace conference. He abandoned the proceedings in protest over the harsh and unrealistic demands of the treaty. In his famous book *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Keynes denounced the treaty.

Twenty years after the Treaty of Versailles, the world was engulfed in the Second World War when historian Paul Birdsall published his review of the Paris Peace settlement. In it, he praised Woodrow Wilson and his idealism as well as the overall peace settlement he had inspired. Read each of these viewpoints carefully and complete the questions that follow. (You may want to refer to the Skill Path "Analysing a Reading" on page 14 before beginning.)

### John Maynard Keynes

There are two separate aspects of the peace which we have imposed on the enemy—on the one hand its justice, on the other hand its wisdom and its expediency.

#### Its justice

The nature of the terms which we were entitled in justice to impose depends, in part, on the responsibility of the enemy nations for causing so tremendous a calamity as the late war, and in part on the understanding on which the enemy laid down his arms at the time of the armistice. In my own opinion, it is not possible to lay the entire responsibility for the state of affairs out of which the war arose on any single nation.

But I believe, nevertheless, that Germany bears a special and peculiar responsibility for the war

itself for its universal and devastating character, and for its final development into a combat without quarter for mastery or defeat. A criminal may be the outcome of his environment, but he is none the less a criminal.

Even so, however, it was our duty to look more to the future than to the past, to distinguish between the late rulers of Germany on the one hand and her common people and unborn posterity on the other, and to be sure that our acts were guided by magnanimity and wisdom more than by revenge or hatred.... Above all, should not the future peace of the world have been our highest and guiding motive?...

#### The treaty's wisdom

With these brief comments I pass from the justice

of the treaty, which can not be ignored even when it is not our central topic, to its wisdom and its expediency. Under these heads my criticism of the treaty is double. In the first place, this treaty ignores the economic solidarity of Europe, and by aiming at the destruction of the economic life of Germany it threatens the health and prosperity of the Allies themselves. In the second place, by making demands the execution of which is in the literal sense impossible, it stultifies itself and leaves Europe more unsettled than it found it. The treaty, by overstepping the limits of the possible, has in practice settled nothing.

#### Indemnity demands

I believe that it would have been a wise and just act to have asked the German Government at the peace negotiations to agree to a final settlement, without further examination of particulars. This would have provided an immediate and certain solution, and would have required from Germany a sum which, if she were granted certain indulgences, it might not have proved entirely impossible for her to pay. This sum should have been

divided up among the Allies themselves on a basis of need and general equity.

#### The blank check

No final amount is specified by the treaty itself, which fixes no definite sum as representing Germany's liability. This feature has been the subject of very general criticism that is equally inconvenient to Germany and to the Allies themselves that she should not know what she has to pay or what they are to receive. The method, apparently contemplated by the treaty, of arriving at the final result over a period of many months by an addition of hundreds of thousands of individual claims for damage to land, farm buildings and chickens, is evidently impracticable, and the reasonable course would have been for both parties to compound for a round sum without examination of details. If this round sum had been named in the treaty, the settlement would have been placed on a more businesslike basis.

Source: John Maynard Keynes, "The Peace of Versailles," *Everybody's Magazine*, 1920 (September) pp. 36-41.

#### Paul Birdsall

The simple thesis of those who oppose the treaty is that the doctrinaire and unrealistic program of Wilson collapsed under the impact of the power politics of Europe. Nationalist aims triumphed over his principles. There was division of the spoils of war... in defiance of his principles of self-determination. Keynes in his disillusionment has fixed the legend of a Carthaginian Peace\* in Wilsonian disguise.

This is caricature, not history, but like most successful caricature it has enough verisimilitude [truth] to be plausible.... The 'Reparation' chapter of the Treaty of Versailles, besides being a clear violation of the Pre-Armistice Agreement with Germany, proved in the outcome to be the most disastrous section of the treaty.

The prosaic [sad] truth is that elements of good and bad were combined in the treaties. There were Carthaginian features like the Reparation settlement and Wilsonian features like the League of Nations. The territorial settlement in Europe was

by no means the wholesale, iniquitous, [unfair] and cynical perversion of Wilson's principles of self-determination which has been pictured. The populations of central Europe are hopelessly mixed and, therefore, simple self-determination is impossible.

The treaty was essentially a compromise between Anglo-American and French conceptions of a stable international order. On the one hand, immediate French concern for military security was taken care of by the limitation of German armaments, demilitarization of the Rhineland area and Allied military occupation for a fifteen-year period, and—finally—an Anglo-American treaty of military guarantee. They represented the minimum price which English and American negotiators had to pay for French abandonment of their traditional policy of entirely dismembering Germany. They were a realistic concession to French needs without violating the Fourteen Points in any important particular.

The Reparation settlement was the chief stumbling block, partly because of impossible financial demands. In both financial and political results it proved disastrous. The Reparation issue emphasized more than any other the necessity of continuing Anglo-American cooperation to make effective Anglo-American conceptions of a world order.

The defection of the United States destroyed the Anglo-American preponderance which alone could have stabilized Europe. It impaired the authority and prestige of the League at its birth and it precipitated an Anglo-French duel which reduced Europe to the chaos from which Hitler emerged to produce new chaos. Practically and immediately, it destroyed the Anglo-American treaty of military guarantee which was to have been one of the main props of French Security.

English sentiment was already developing the guilt-complex about the whole Treaty of Versailles which, among other factors, paralysed English foreign policy from Versailles to Munich. It would be interesting to speculate as to how much that guilt-complex was the result of the brilliant writing of John Maynard Keynes. Devastatingly accurate and

prophetic in its analysis of the economic aspects of the treaty, his *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* included the whole treaty in one sweeping condemnation as a "Carthaginian Peace," and his caricatures of the leading negotiators at Paris immediately fixed stereotypes which still affect much of the writing about the Paris Peace Conference.

Only too late did British and French leaders observe that Hitler was less concerned about rectification of the "injustices" of the *Diktat* of Versailles than with the conquest of Europe. The muddle and confusion in liberal and democratic communities about the real character of Versailles contributed to the stupidity of Allied policy from Versailles to Armageddon.

Source: Paul Birdsall, *Versailles Twenty Years After*, (1941), in I.J. Lederer (ed.), *The Versailles Settlement: Was It Foredoomed to Failure?* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Co.), 1960.

\* Carthaginian Peace refers to the complete destruction of the city state of Carthage by Rome in 202 BCE and 146 BCE. A "Carthaginian peace" is one where the enemy is completely destroyed and unable to rebuild.

### Analysis and Evaluation

1. What does Keynes believe should have been the guiding motive when the Allies designed the treaty? Do you agree? Explain.
2. How would Keynes have settled the issue of German compensation for the war?
3. According to Birdsall what was the result of the fact that the US did not join the League?
4. What blame does Birdsall lay on Keynes' criticism of the treaty? Is this fair in your opinion? Explain.
5. Decide which of the viewpoints you tend to support and explain why. Be sure to use specific information from this textbook, the readings, and other sources to support your position. If you do not agree with either author, explain your own view.

(D)