

# *American History: Chapter 21*

America and the Great War

# Relevant Key Concepts

## Key Concept 7.2

I. World War I and its aftermath intensified ongoing debates about the nation's role in the world and how best to achieve national security and pursue American interests.

- A. After initial neutrality in World War I, the nation entered the conflict, departing from the U.S. foreign policy tradition of noninvolvement in European affairs, in response to Woodrow Wilson's call for the defense of humanitarian and democratic principles.
- B. Although the American Expeditionary Forces played a relatively limited role in combat, the U.S.'s entry helped to tip the balance of the conflict in favor of the Allies.
- C. Despite Wilson's deep involvement in postwar negotiations, the U.S. Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles or join the League of Nations.
- D. In the years following World War I, the United States pursued a unilateral foreign policy that used international investment, peace treaties, and select military intervention to promote a vision of international order, even while maintaining U.S. isolationism.

# The “Big Stick”: America and the World, 1901 - 1917

- Roosevelt, “civilized,” and “uncivilized” nations
- Japan and Russia fight in the Russo-Japanese War (1905)
  - Japan humiliates Russia with a superior Navy
  - Japan secretly asks Teddy Roosevelt to help reach peace agreement
    - Wins Nobel Peace Prize in 1906
- 1906 San Fran school Board segregates Asian students
  - Tensions between the US and Japan mount
- TR and Japan reach “Gentlemen’s Agreement”
  - Japan would stop immigrants from coming to US by withholding passports
  - Nativism

# The “Big Stick”: America and the World, 1901 - 1917

- Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine:
  - Germany and Britain have a lot of money owed to them by LA countries
    - TR feared they would become involved, violating the Monroe Doctrine
  - Roosevelt Corollary:
    - In future financial instances, US would intervene, pay off debts
  - Impact of Corollary?
    - US now more involved in Latin America
    - Resentment from many in Latin America
- Panama Canal
  - Canal was vital to US interests
    - Cut down travel time for shipping and military
  - Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901
    - Gave US right to build canal and right to fortify it
  - Colombia (then controlled Panama) rejected treaty to give US right to build canal
  - November 3, 1901 Rebellion starts in Panama (influenced by US)

# The “Big Stick”: America and the World, 1901 - 1917

- Dollar Diplomacy:
  - Wall Street bankers encourage to invest in areas of strategic concern to the US
  - Helped other countries, while made money for US
- Wilson and Mexico:
  - US had many financial interests in Mexico
  - Mexico saw a series of leaders during a revolution beginning in 1910
  - “Pancho” Villa:
    - Planned his own rebellion
    - Furious at Wilson for abandoning him
    - Killed dozens of Americans
      - General John Pershing crossed in to Mexico, never caught Villa

# The Road to War

- Allied Powers:
  - Britain, France, and Russia
- Central Powers:
  - Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Austria-Hungary
- **MAIN** Causes of WWI
  - **M**ilitarism
  - **A**lliances
  - **I**mperialism
  - **N**ationalism
- Archduke Franz Ferdinand was killed on June 28, 1914

# The Road to War

- Wilson urged neutrality at the start
  - US traded significantly with Britain and France
  - His policy draws heavily from George Washington's Farewell Address
- Unrestricted submarine warfare:
  - Germany sank all enemy ships
  - Lusitania: 128 Americans died
  - Sussex: French ship sank by Germany, leads to....
    - Sussex Pledge: Germany pledged to not sink ships without a warning first
- Election of 1916:
  - "He kept us out of war"
- Zimmermann telegram:
  - Germany urged Mexico to attack US, Mexico would get land back from US
  - The note, along with Germany re-instituting unrestricted submarine warfare, brought the US into the war
- April 2, 1917, Wilson asked for declaration of war

# “War Without Stint”

- Russia withdrew in 1918:
  - Gave up significant amount of land
- National draft instituted (1<sup>st</sup> time since Civil War)
  - 3 million men
  - 2 million volunteered
  - 5 million in American Expeditionary Force (AEF)
  - Women could enlist, although not in combat
- 400,000 African Americans enlisted
  - Hoped to improve their status
- Trench warfare:
  - “No-man’s land”
  - Poisonous gas
  - Flamethrowers
- High casualty rates, especially from influenza



# The War and American Society

- How was the war financed?
  - “Liberty Bonds”
  - Income taxes – thanks 16<sup>th</sup> amendment!
- Herbert Hoover:
  - Relied on volunteering and rationing
- National War Labor Board:
  - Resolved labor disputes
- Unions:
  - IWW (Industrial Workers of the World):
  - AFL:
    - Led by Samuel Gompers, favored the war
    - Membership increases
- “Great Migration”
  - Mass movement of African Americans from the South to the industrial North (NY, Chicago, Cleveland)
- Red Summer:
  - Race riots of 1919

# The Futile Search for Social Unity

- Committee on Public Information (CPI)
  - George Creel: pro-war material
  - “4 minute men”
  - Promoted self-censorship
- Espionage Act of 1917
  - Prosecuted anti-war individuals
  - Upheld by *Schenck v. US* (1919)
  - Eugene V. Debs (again 1 person) convicted and sentenced to ten years
- Sedition Act of 1918
  - Strengthened the Espionage Act
  - Restricted free speech and ability to criticize government..... sound familiar?
- Immigrants were most often targeted
  - German Americans
  - “liberty cabbage”

# The Search for a New World Order

- 14 Points:
  - Wilson's plans for post-war world
  - Self-determination, no alliance, freedom of the seas, etc.
  - League of Nations:
    - World organization committed to solving disputes
    - US Senate disliked Article X - called for members to give assistance to others if needed
      - Would take away Congress' war-declaring powers, end isolation
- Russian Civil War:
  - "Reds" v. "Whites"
    - Wilson and US supported the "Whites"
    - Soviet Union was not recognized by US until 1933

# The Search for a New World Order

- To ratify the treaty or not.....
  - Henry Cabot Lodge (Republican Senator) was against the treaty
    - Wrote 14 reservations
  - Many senators detested Article X
  - Wilson went on a speaking tour across the country
    - “Irreconcilables” followed his tour
  - Senate never ratifies the treaty

# A Society in Turmoil

- Postwar Recession: 1919 – 1920
- The year of strikes, 1919:
  - Strikes were associated with radicalism
  - MA governor Calvin Coolidge was critical of strikes
- African Americans didn't gain rights after fighting
  - Banned from parades in Europe
- Red Summer (don't confuse with communism):
  - Race riots of 1919 - Chicago
- Marcus Garvey:
  - Promoted black nationalism
  - United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)
    - Back to Africa movement

# A Society in Turmoil

- “Red Scare” of 1919-20 (1<sup>st</sup> Red Scare)
  - Crusade led by Attorney General Mitchell Palmer against suspected communists
  - 1,000s of Americans were arrested:
    - 3 guns discovered
  - Impact of the Red Scare:
    - Business people used it to help break unions
- Sacco and Vanzetti
  - Two Italian immigrants (anarchists, atheists, draft dodgers) charged with murder, found guilty and executed
  - Showed tensions between immigrants and nativists
- Election of 1920:
  - Push to “return to normalcy”