World War I

U.S. Entry into World War I

- Violations of U.S. Neutrality
  - Examples: Lusitania, Sussex sinking
  - Temporary pause in German sinking of ships
- Zimmerman Note: British intercept a German proposal to Mexico for a joint alliance
  - Ask Mexico to attack the U.S. and they would be allowed to recover lost territory
- Spring 1917 Germany returns to unrestricted submarine warfare
- April 1917 Congress declares war against Germany

Key factors:
1) German attacks on American shipping
2) Zimmerman Telegram proposing alliance with Mexico
3) Wilson's desire to be involved in the post-war settlement

Wilson ask Congress to declare war April 1917
Neutrality proved difficult
June 1914 World War I Begins
America enters the war April 1917
Just 34 months later!!!!
Wilson ask Congress to declare war April 1917

Three key factors
1) German attacks on American shipping
2) Zimmerman Telegram proposing alliance with Mexico
3) U.S. economic investment in allies

Wilson ask Congress to declare war April 1917

Mobilizing for War
- The United States was entirely unprepared for war
- Selective Service Act: organizes a draft for soldiers to fight in the war - American Expeditionary Force headed by General Pershing
- Total War effort: all aspects of the country mobilizes for the war effort
- War was financed by war bonds and income taxes from the 16th amendment

Federal Agencies:
- National War Labor Board: help mediate labor disputes and prevent strikes
- AFL supported the war effort / IWW opposes the war
- War Industries Board: set production priorities for war
- U.S. Food Administration: Headed by Herbert Hoover encouraged Americans to conserve food for war effort
- WWI boosted support for the 18th Amendment (prohibited sale, consumption, manufacture, or transport of alcohol)
  - 1) Conserve resources 2) Also due to Anti-German sentiment in the U.S.

Silencing Dissent
- Committee of Public Information headed by George Creel: promote the U.S. war effort with propaganda
- Espionage Act (1917): prohibited interference with the draft or war effort
- Sedition Act (1918): banned anybody from criticizing the government
- Anti-German sentiment increases
  - Nativists attack all things German (“The Huns!”)
The Supreme Court supports the argument that freedom of speech could be restricted. Congress had the power to restrain speech if it posed a clear and present danger.

**Schenck v. U.S. (1919)**

Charles Schenck was arrested under the Espionage Act for mailing leaflets to men eligible for the draft. The Supreme Court supports the argument that freedom of speech could be restricted. Congress had the power to restrain speech if it posed a clear and present danger.

**Security & Liberty in Times of Crisis**

- Civil War: Lincoln suspension of Habeas Corpus

**Social Impact on the Home Front**

- **Great Migration**: Starting in 1910 large migration of African Americans to northern cities
  - Crappy racial relations
  - WWI: Job opportunities in northern factories as white men drafted for the war
- Nearly 400,000 African Americans served in segregated units
- Race riots will break out in many cities in 1919
- Women will play a key role in wartime factories
- Sacrifices of women on the home front during WWI leads to 2/3 majority finally supporting the 19th Amendment (grants women’s suffrage)
Wilson’s 14 Points

- What: Wilson’s proposal for the postwar world
  - Goal of preventing another world war
- How:
  - Guarantee freedom of the seas
  - Eliminate economic trade barriers
  - Military reduction
  - No more colonies
    - Self determination: self gov’t, no colonization
    - No more secret treaties
  - Called for the formation of a League of Nations to help prevent another world war

Big Four

David Lloyd-George of Great Britain, Vittorio Orlando of Italy, Georges Clemenceau of France & Woodrow Wilson of US

Conflicting interests represented at the Peace Conference
Treaty of Versailles

- Much of Wilson's 14 Point proposals were rejected by the allied powers
- Wilson did get the League of Nations included
- Has to get it approved by the Republican controlled Congress
- Republicans in Congress hated the idea of the U.S. joining the League of Nations
  - Henry Cabot Lodge leads the opposition to the treaty

Battle over the League of Nations

- Tradition of isolationist policies
  - George Washington warned about permanent foreign alliances
- Opposition over Article X (nations would have to help other nations out)
- Fear the League would force U.S. to deal with foreign issues around the world
- Desire amongst many to be isolationist following World War I
- Congress rejects the treaty

Super Important Point – Many mark the U.S. rejection of the League of Nations as a withdrawal of the United States from international affairs in the 1920s.