World War I

The “War to End All Wars”
1914-1918

VUS.9b
American entry into World War I ensured Allied victory!
General Causes of WWI:

Europe had become a “powder keg” ready to explode...
General Causes of WWI:

- **Nationalism:** focusing on self-interest of each nation;
- **Imperialism:** competition for colonies and control of trade

The nations of Europe were rapidly building their naval power in order to protect their overseas markets. This is a German battleship.
General Causes of WWI:

- **Militarism:** increased arms race and using military as diplomatic tool
- **Alliance System:** Europe formed two large “armed camps” (Allies and Central Powers)

The assassination of the Austrian prince provided the spark to ignite World War I. Austria declared war on Serbia. Within weeks the continent was at war in 1914!
MAP OF MILITARY ALLIANCES IN WORLD WAR I

Red = Allied Powers
Purple = Central Powers
Gray = Neutral
U.S. Attempted to Stay Neutral:

- There was strong sentiment to stay out of the war.
- U.S. avoided involvement for 3 years.
- President Wilson vowed to stay neutral in 1916....
U.S. JOINED THE FIGHT IN 1917:

- German use of unrestricted submarine warfare was attacking American ships.
- Sinking of *Lusitania*, a passenger ship carrying Americans.
- Zimmerman Telegram which encouraged Mexico to attack the U.S.
U.S. JOINED THE FIGHT IN 1917:

- American social and economic ties to Allied powers
- Russia left the war under its communist revolution
- To make the world “safe for democracy” (Woodrow Wilson)

The Russian Communist Revolution of 1917 was inspired by Lenin. After destroying the Tsar, Russia created became the Soviet Union, and drew a peace agreement with Germany.
AMERICANS TIPPED THE BALANCE!

- Use of American resources at the front and behind the lines
- Infusion of fresh troops boosted morale
- Fighting stopped on November 11, 1918 with an armistice

One of many recruiting posters from the United States
Could this be a lasting peace?

- Wilson’s Plan
- The Treaty of Versailles
- Failure of the League of Nations
While American entry into World War I ensured Allied victory, THE FAILURE TO CONCLUDE A LASTING PEACE LEFT A BITTER LEGACY.
Wilson’s Plan for a Lasting Peace
The 14 Points Included:

• **Self-determination:** that national boundaries be decided based on people, and they should establish their own governments

• **Freedom of Seas:** open trading to all peaceful nations

• **No secret treaties or alliances** should be formed

• **Mandate System:** Colonial policies should consider the interests of the people

• **Arms should be reduced**

• **League of Nations:** to provide peaceful means of solving disputes rather than war
Meeting at Versailles:

- Britain, France and Italy wished to punish Germany and Austria.
- Central Powers and U.S.S.R. were not invited to attend the conference.
- Wilson was forced to concede (give in) most of his 14 Points!

In 1919, the Big 4 met in Paris to negotiate the Treaty; Lloyd George of Britain, Orlando of Italy, Clemenceau of France, and Woodrow Wilson of the U.S.
The Treaty of Versailles

- Many new nations were formed as land was taken from the defeated nations.
- **Mandates** (captured colonies) were given to Allies to rule.
- Germany had to pay war **reparations** ($33 billion).
- Germany had to sign a “war guilt clause”.
- The **League of Nations** was formed.
Comparing political maps of Europe:

Notice how many new nations were formed by the Treaty of Versailles. What problems could this cause?
America Opposed the Treaty

- Felt it was too punitive
- Objected to foreign policy decisions being made by international organizations (the League of Nations)
- Senate refused to ratify the treaty
- Senate refused to join the League of Nations!
Weaknesses of the Treaty

- Germany was humiliated and destroyed
- Allies had ignored the needs of the new Soviet government
- International instability was created in the new nations and mandates
- U.S. returned to isolationist policies
These failures will lead to:

A global depression AND World War 2