

## Legacy: West & the World

### Chapter 10 The War to End War: World War I, 1914-1919

#### World War I

##### **Causes of the War: MAIN**

1890 Germany, Bismark dismissed, Kaiser Wilhelm II

**Alliance System:** Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary & Italy) vs. Triple Entente (Britain, France & Russia). Germany was a powerhouse of industry, science, and military. Wilhelm saw Germany as a great nation still rising, wanted to increase navy

**Imperialism:** Germany wanted to increase colonies along with other European powers. Result was an unstable Europe with Germany at the centre.

**Militarism:** German navy increased, Britain's increased, larger military spending... created a Security Dilemma.

**Nationalism:** Modern trend of nationalism, encouraged by many political leaders, led to instability & anti-others sentiments.

**Schlieffen Plan (1905):** German plan to attack France and avoid a two front war. Speed through rail transport was key, knock out France, then attack a slow to mobilize Russia. Inspired confidence among many Germans. War was seen as a way to protect honour & pride. Yet, death rates with new technology was increasing exponentially. 600 000 that died during American Civil War (1861-65) should have been a warning. Still people were emotional and patriotic looking forward to adventure in glorious war.

**Peace & Co-operation:** Many were looking for peace. Alfred Nobel (inventor of dynamite) started his yearly peace prize. Andrew Carnegie started Endowment for International Peace. Initially, Socialists fought for peace. Also, crowned heads of England, Germany and Russia were related... realism was beating out idealism of international co-operation. WWI was seen as the 'people's war', most thought it would be over by Christmas.

**Outbreak of War:** Decay of Ottoman Empire created instability in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary tried to create a multinational empire in a time of nationalism, unsuccessful. Serbians (Slavs) turned to Russia, creating great tension. June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1914... Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria assassinated in Sarajevo. Events unfolded and on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Germany invaded Belgium and WWI began.

**The July Crisis:** Last days of Peace are often studied and interpreted. But Britain stood behind Belgium, and with all the complex alliances, the world was at war.

**Beginning of War:** Germany marched to within 35 miles of Paris, then stopped in Battle of the Marne. French countered and the Western Front was created. Germany knew it now had a two-front war, Russia attacked, and the Eastern Front was created. Russia was huge but very poorly equipped. Battle in Western Front created a huge 725 kilometre front of trenches, barbed wire... a battle of attrition. Became a battle of inches with hundreds of thousands being massacred.



#### Wartime Leadership

Many soldiers mutinied, begged for a different style of war. Marshall Philippe Petain felt that endurance was the way to win. France's Georges Clemenceau and Britain's David Lloyd George tried to inspire hope in the public. 1915 sinking of Lusitania, American ship by German submarine drew Americans closer to war. US declared war on Germany on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1917... "make world safe for democracy". On the Eastern Front Germany was luckier. Russians wanted out of war, revolted against Tsar Nicholas II. Germans transported Vladimir Lenin from exile in Switzerland to Russia... setting loose one of the most powerful revolutionaries in modern history.

### War & Revolution in Russia

"The Russian Revolution of 1917 was one of the pivotal events of modern history. For some it was a socialist's dream, for others a legacy of brutal dictatorship." (p.386)

- In late 1800s revolutionaries tried to turn the peasants against Tsar Nicholas II. Not interested, turned them in to police. Revolution needed to come from revolutionaries. Lenin studied the works of Karl Marx and communism.
- Russia needed to modernize, way behind rest of Europe. Defeat against Japanese in 1905 a major blow to Tsar Nicholas II. Gave people a Duma (parliament). People were losing faith in Tsar, and he in himself. Public support briefly with spirit of war in 1914, but ill equipped Russians lost many battles. On March 8, 1917 March for "Peace & bread" Nicholas tried to turn down, but lost control. He abdicated on March 15, 1917. The new leaders wanted to keep fighting war, but soldiers had enough
- Lenin the Revolutionary
- differed from Marx... Marxist intellectuals would lead the revolution. Democracy would not work. In April 1917 used the slogan: "land, peace, bread". Took control in Oct/Nov 1917. "October Revolution"... Bolsheviks took power from democratic provisional government led by Alexander Kerensky. Lenin centralized power greater than under the monarchy... created a new philosophy Marxist-Leninism.
- Lenin took Russia out of the war, signed Treaty of Brest-Litovsk... lost much of Western border (Poland, Ukraine, Finland, Baltics)... Fought a civil war from 1918-1921... created the U.S.S.R. or Soviet union in 1922.

### WWI: The Last Days

- End of war saw use of propaganda take important role. Also, Lenin's communism vs Wilson's democracy... USSR vs US... a battle that lasted up to 1990.
- Wilson's 14 points presented, idea of League of Nations to maintain and secure peace.

### The Social Impact of War

- terrible weapons created terrible losses. More than 10 million lives lost. Impact of war varied, some saw valour and heroism as defining. Others saw worthless loss of life.
- Victory at Vimy Ridge significant for Canada.
- the map of Europe changed drastically after WWI. Many saw the opportunity to break free of Empires and oppression. Women made some gains, given the vote in some countries for their wartime contributions.

### The End of War

- In April 1917, Americans declared war on Germany, then Austria-Hungary... turned tide of war, with powerful, fresh American troops. After Eastern Front was finished Germans turned to Western Front with full force, simply ran out of men and will. Ludendorff told Wilhelm II that war was lost on Sept 29, 1918. On Nov 9, Wilhelm forced to abdicate. Nov. 11, 1918 Armistice signed.

### The Treaty of Versailles, 1919

- Big 4 made most decisions: France, Britain, Russia, USA... Italy felt slighted. Wilson wanted idealistic peace plan, yet many argued to squeeze Germans, make them pay! **Whom to blame?** Blamed Germany, Article 231 (War Guilt Clause). Wilson wanted to recognize right to self determination... enormous shuffling of map of Europe.

### The Consequences of War

See chart on p.401.. shows extremity of casualties listed by country. Many saw Versailles as the seeds planted for WWII. Wilson tried to build a League of Nations to build and maintain peace. Yet, many Americans were not interested in staying in Europe. In great part, many victor nations did not stick around to enforce the peace... opening the door for WWII.

### The Results of War

- communist revolution, fascist revolution, evolution in military technology. Many historians call the first half of the century a period of war, with brief periods of peace.