

The End of World War I: A Flawed Peace

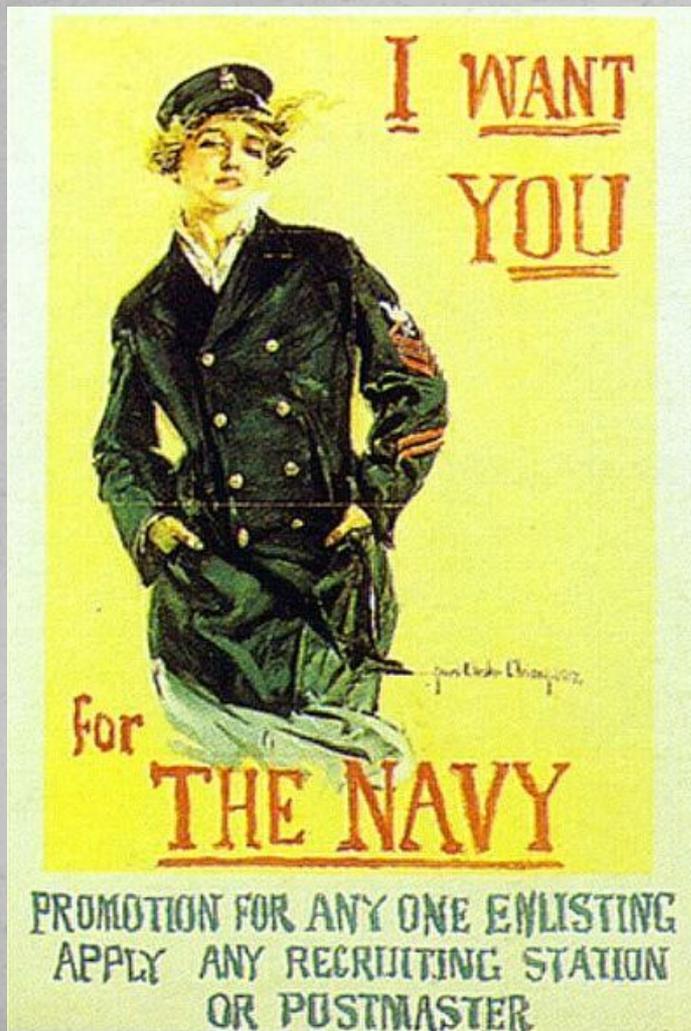


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What Happened After the US Entered the War?



- US not really prepared for such a large scale war to start. It takes a while to get up to speed.
- Congress passes “The Draft” which enlists 2.8 million men.
- New troops arriving at the Western Front at a rate of 10,000 a day.
- “We were just holding out until the US came.” – My Great-Grandfather

War of Attrition

Nation	Total Number of servicemen engaged in the war.	Number of deaths.	Number of soldiers wounded.	Number of men taken prisoner or reported missing.
Austria	7,800,000	1,200,000	3,620,000	2,200,000
Britain (inc Empire)	8,904,467	908,371	2,090,212	191,652
France	8,410,000	1,357,800	4,266,000	537,000
Germany	11,000,000	1,773,700	4,216,058	1,152,800
Italy	5,615,000	650,000	947,000	600,000
Russia	12,000,000	1,700,000	4,950,000	2,500,000
Turkey	2,850,000	325,000	400,000	250,000
United States	4,355,000	126,000	234,300	4,500

Attrition = a wearing down or weakening of resistance, especially as a result of continuous pressure or harassment.

(Dictionary.com)

Russian Revolution



- Attrition is especially felt in Russia as hundreds of thousands are dying on the Eastern Front – bad strategies, bad leadership, bad supplies, etc. Russians lose their desire to keep fighting.
- Revolution changes government, then Russia makes a peace treaty with Germany in December 1917. It gives up a LOT of land (Finland, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, and more) in order to get out of the war.
- World War I now mostly on the Western Front.

The 1918 Influenza Epidemic

- The “Spanish” influenza virus kills an estimated 50 million people worldwide from 1918-1919.
- About 1/3 of the entire world population infected.
- Estimates range somewhat widely, but some have half of US deaths in WWI being from the flu.



A converted gym at Iowa State University, treating flu patients. At least 53 people at Iowa State died during the flu epidemic.

The Western Front in 1918



By mid-September, 1914 the German forces are pushed back to what would become the Western Front.

RE-PLAY



Western Front, March 20, 1918

- Trench warfare makes for rapid changes in technology. Now poison gas, airplanes, tanks being used. Eventually ends the stalemate on French and German border.
- Germany running out of soldiers, while US is sending 10,000 more a day.
- Allied “blockade” of Germany results in thousands starving. Loss of will to fight.
- In October 1918, the German navy mutinies (rebels).

Hey, does that line look familiar?

Armistice: The Great War Ends

- On November 11th, 1918 at 11 AM (“the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month” – November 11th is now Veterans Day in the US) an end to fighting is declared. The Allies are victorious.
- About 8.5 million soldiers have been killed (many millions of civilians die during this time period as well).



The Treaty of Versailles

- France wants to make sure that Germany is punished with the Treaty of Versailles, which is signed on June 28th, 1919.
- President Woodrow Wilson's "14 Points" peace plan is shot down.
- Germany is forced to accept ENORMOUS burdens. Full blame for the war – "The War Guilt Clause." "Reparations" to Allies (100,000 tons of Gold?). No Air Force, submarines, limited Army/Navy. Territory taken away, more... Ouch.

