

The United States Enters World War I

On January 31, 1917, however, the German government resumed unrestricted submarine warfare. After five U.S. vessels were sunk, Wilson on April 2, 1917, asked for a declaration of war. Congress quickly approved. The government rapidly mobilized military resources, industry, labor, and agriculture. By October 1918, on the eve of Allied victory, a U.S. army of over 1,750,000 had been deployed in France.

In the summer of 1918, fresh American troops under the command of General John J. Pershing played a decisive role in stopping a last-ditch German offensive. That fall, Americans were key participants in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, which cracked Germany's vaunted Hindenburg Line.

President Wilson contributed greatly to an early end to the war by defining American war aims that characterized the struggle as being waged not against the German people but against their autocratic government. His Fourteen Points, submitted to the Senate in January 1918, called for: abandonment of secret international agreements; freedom of the seas; free trade between nations; reductions in national armaments; an adjustment of colonial claims in the interests of the inhabitants affected; self-rule for subjugated European nationalities; and, most importantly, the establishment of an association of nations to afford "mutual guarantees of political

independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

In October 1918, the German government, facing certain defeat, appealed to Wilson to negotiate on the basis of the Fourteen Points. After a month of secret negotiations that gave Germany no firm guarantees, an armistice (technically a truce, but actually a surrender) was concluded on November 11.

1. What American president asked for a declaration of war on April 2, 1917?
 - a. Herbert Hoover
 - b. Theodore Roosevelt
 - c. William Howard Taft
 - d. Woodrow Wilson
2. What general led American troops in Europe during World War I?

3. Which of the following was **not** included in Wilson's Fourteen Points?
 - a. establishment of an association of nations
 - b. free trade between nations
 - c. increase in American protectorates in Asia
 - d. reductions in national armaments
4. When was an armistice declared?

Postwar Unrest

The transition from war to peace was tumultuous. A postwar economic boom coexisted with rapid increases in consumer prices. Labor unions that had refrained from striking during the war engaged in several major job actions. During the summer of 1919, race riots occurred, reflecting apprehension over the emergence of a "New Negro" who had seen military service or gone north to work in war industry.

Reaction to these events merged with a widespread national fear of a new international revolutionary movement. In 1917, the Bolsheviks had seized power in Russia; after the war, they attempted revolutions in Germany and Hungary. By 1919, it seemed they had come to America. Excited by the Bolshevik example, large numbers of militants split from the Socialist

Party to found what would become the Communist Party of the United States. In April 1919, the postal service intercepted nearly 40 bombs addressed to prominent citizens. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer's residence in Washington was bombed. Palmer, in turn, authorized federal roundups of radicals and deported many who were not citizens. Major strikes were often blamed on radicals and depicted as the opening shots of a revolution.

Palmer's dire warnings fueled a "Red Scare" that subsided by mid-1920. Even a murderous bombing in Wall Street in September failed to reawaken it. From 1919 on, however, a current of militant hostility toward revolutionary communism would simmer not far beneath the surface of American life.

1. Race relations improved during the summer of 1919.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. Who seized power in Russia in 1917?
 - a. Bolsheviks
 - b. Fascists
 - c. Mensheviks
 - d. Nazis
3. Who authorized federal roundups of radicals and deported many who were not citizens?
4. Do you believe that the "Red Scare" was justified? Explain your answer.