

# Unit 6: WWI and 1920s

## Vocabulary

1. Neutrality
2. Unrestricted Submarine Warfare
3. Zimmerman Telegram
4. The Great Migration
5. Espionage Act
6. Eugene Debs
7. Fourteen Points
8. League of Nations
9. Communism
10. Socialism
11. Red Scare
12. Eighteenth Amendment
13. Nineteenth Amendment
14. Mass Production
15. Henry Ford
16. Consumerism
17. Harlem Renaissance

### SSUSH15 Analyze the origins and impact of U.S. involvement in World War I.

- a. Describe the movement from U.S. neutrality to engagement in World War I, including unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmerman Telegram.
- b. Explain the domestic impact of World War I, including the origins of the Great Migration, the Espionage Act, and socialist Eugene Debs.
- c. Explain Wilson's Fourteen Points and the debate over U.S. entry into the League of Nations.

### SSUSH16 Investigate how political, economic, and cultural developments after WW I led to a shared national identity.

- a. Explain how fears of rising communism and socialism in the United States led to the Red Scare and immigrant restriction.
- b. Describe the effects of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments.
- c. Examine how mass production and advertising led to increasing consumerism, including Henry Ford and the automobile.
- d. Describe the impact of radio and movies as a unifying force in the national culture.
- e. Describe the emergence of modern forms of cultural expression including the origins of jazz and the Harlem Renaissance.

People		WWI MAIN CAUSES
Henry Ford	Woodrow Wilson	Militarism
Louis Armstrong	Irving Berlin	Alliances
Langston Hughes	John Steinbeck	Imperialism
Zora Neale Hurston	Eugene Debs	Nationalism
Vladimir Lenin		

The Crime of the Ages—Who Did It?



Source: John McCutcheon, *The Chicago Tribune*; H. H. Windsor, *Cartoons Magazine* (adapted)

# Unit 6 Explained

## ***Neutrality to Involvement***

In August 1914, war broke out in Europe with Austria-Hungary and Germany on one side and France, Great Britain, and Russia on the other side. The intense fighting soon spread beyond the fields, forests, and hillsides of Europe to include the seas around Western Europe and out into the eastern Atlantic.

In the United States, tensions ran high, especially as newspapers reported on the destruction and loss of life in Belgium, a neutral country. Americans, who in large part came from the nations at war, tended to support their native lands. President Woodrow Wilson was worried that supporters of each side would drag the United States into the war. Furthermore, Wilson worried that violence might occur in the United States between Americans supporting one side or the other. To calm the potential for violence, Wilson went before Congress on August 19, 1914 to ask for a declaration of neutrality, stating that, "The United States must be neutral in fact, as well as in name...."

### **Why was tensions high in the US?**

### **What did Wilson ask for from Congress?**

Even with the Congressional declaration of neutrality, the actions of the United States tended to favor the Allies (i.e., the British and the French). The United States was in a recession in 1914. American businessmen and farmers saw the war as a business opportunity. The United States was eager to trade throughout Europe, but the British had established a blockade not only against German ports but neutral ports as well.

Germany also relied heavily on imported foodstuffs to feed its population and chemicals for its industries. The British Royal Navy outnumbered the German Imperial Fleet and was able to place an effective blockade on Germany's Baltic Sea ports, as well as neutral ports in northwest Europe. By early 1915, Germany decided to expand submarine attacks from strictly Allied warships to also include

any commercial ships belonging to both belligerent and neutral nations. This action began what is known as unrestricted submarine warfare. America's neutrality was in jeopardy.

### **What is unrestricted submarine warfare?**

### **Why did Germany do this?**

German submarines were very effective, sinking an average of two ships each day in the first quarter of 1915. In March 1915, the first American was killed off the British coast. The United States reacted with outrage. Attacks on ships carrying Americans increased until May 1915, when the British liner Lusitania was sunk off the Irish coast. There were 128 Americans on board the Lusitania and all were killed. President Wilson reacted by issuing a series of notes to Germany warning against further attacks on American shipping. Germany acquiesced but then on August 19, 1915 the Arabic was sunk, killing three Americans. The Germans feared that the United States would declare war and ordered submarine commanders to cease attacks on passenger liners.

### **What happened to the Lusitania?**

### **Why did Germany stop attacking passenger ships?**

Unrestricted submarine warfare was renewed in February 1917. Anticipating reaction by the United States, the German government instructed its ambassador to the United States to approach the Mexican government and ask them to join Germany in a war against the United States. The telegram was sent by Germany's foreign minister, Arthur Zimmerman, and was not favorably received by the Mexican government. The secret communication was intercepted by British intelligence and given to President Wilson. American neutrality was no longer prudent. The security of the United States was being threatened.

### **What was the Zimmerman telegram?**

In February 1917, President Wilson responded to German attacks and threats by severing diplomatic relations with Germany. Public opinion in the United States was split over whether to get involved in the European war. Some groups favored continuing the neutrality policy. Some groups favored war and loyalty was divided between both sides. However, when the Zimmerman Telegram was published in the newspapers, American public opinion swelled to support war against Germany. The President reluctantly knew after this point, war with Germany was inevitable. Despite his reticence, Wilson went before Congress on April 2 to ask for a declaration of war, which was granted.

**What changed public opinion against Germany?**

**What happened on April 2<sup>nd</sup>?**

### ***Domestic Impact of WW1***

World War I impacted Americans in a number of ways. The war increased the power of the Federal government and changed the demography of the United States. America was impacted economically, politically, and socially by the nation's involvement in World War I.

President Wilson was correct in his assessment of the American people when he said every man would pay a penalty for non-conformity. In June 1917, at the request of the Wilson administration, Congress passed the Espionage Act. The law provided penalties for spying, sabotage, and obstructing the war effort. The law also banned the use of the United States Mail to send anti-war materials.

**What was the Espionage act?**

On June 30, 1918 Eugene Debs was arrested after making a series of speeches against the war urging American men not to fight. He was a prominent Socialist, four-time candidate for the presidency, and union leader. The courts convicted Debs under the Espionage Act and sentenced him to 10 years in prison. He was also permanently disenfranchised.

**Why was Eugene Debs sentenced to prison?**

Another impact World War I had on the United States was the shift in population demographics. The migration of Blacks from the South to the North actually began before World War I, as families sought to escape sharecropping and Jim Crow violence. However, the trend accelerated during the war years and was known as the Great Migration.

One factor that prompted the population shift was that defense manufacturing jobs became available in the North as soldiers were drafted to serve in the war. Prior to the war, northern factory owners preferred immigrant workers. They typically only used Blacks as strike-breakers. The war temporarily ended immigration and opened new opportunities for Blacks. During the period, 1.5 million Blacks from the South moved to Northern cities. During the 1910s and 1920s, Chicago's Black population grew by 148 percent; Cleveland's by 307 percent; Detroit's by 611 percent.

**What was the great migration?**

**Why did blacks migrate?**

**What cities saw the largest population changes?**

### ***Wilson's Fourteen Points***

In January 1918, President Wilson spoke to Congress about the war aims of the nation. His plan ultimately became known as the Fourteen Points and was designed to create a lasting peace in the world. Once negotiations for the Treaty of Versailles were completed in June 1919, the United States was divided over whether to join the League of Nations - a vital component of the Treaty. Wilson's Fourteen Points became a guide for the negotiations at Versailles to secure peace after World War I. Some of Wilson's suggestions were accepted, some modified, and some rejected by the countries represented at the peace conference.

The Points included the following:

1. Open diplomacy (no more secret treaties)
2. Freedom of the seas
3. End international trade barriers

4. Reduce armaments
5. Impartial dealings with colonies and their natives 6-13. Group of points dealing with the right of self-determination for the people of eastern and central Europe 14. Create an international organization, the League of Nations, to help keep the peace.

### **What was the 14 points?**

### **Summarize some of the terms of it.**

During the postwar treaty negotiations, Wilson worked hard to get as many of his Fourteen Points as possible included in the treaty. The Fourteenth Point, which proposed a League of Nations, was one that President Wilson was particularly committed to securing for world peace. After much negotiation, the League of Nations was included in the final provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. The treaty drafted at Versailles had to be ratified by the United States Senate as the final step for implementation in the United States. It was not ratified.

### ***Rise of Socialism and Communism: The Red Scare***

The German philosopher Karl Marx developed a new theory in the mid-nineteenth century that combined history and economics. Marx held that history was composed of a series of revolutions in which those who were oppressed overthrew their oppressors and established new political and economic forms. Marx also said that those in power, who ultimately became oppressors themselves, gradually corrupted these new systems. He held that the final revolution would be between the capitalists and the workers. Marx's theory became known as a more extreme form of socialism, which is known as communism.

### **What is communism?**

The idea of a worker controlled economic system appealed to industrial workers worldwide. In 1901, the Socialist Party of America was created. In 1917, communist revolutionaries known as Bolsheviks overthrew the czar in Russia. The new Bolshevik authority established the Union of Soviet

Socialist Republics and was led by Vladimir Lenin. Lenin called for a worldwide revolution to destroy capitalism. America thus became a pivotal target for communist infiltration.

### **What happened in 1917 in Russia?**

The fear of the spread of communism in the United States was heightened by Karl Marx's prediction of a worker revolution. The wave of fear and action to protect the United States from such ideological crisis became known as the Red Scare. For the most part, Americans were unified to protect the nation's identity as a democratic and capitalist country from communism.

### **What was the Red Scare?**

Terrorists twice attacked United States Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. These incidents, coupled with the violent labor strikes, led the United States Justice Department and the FBI to stage a series of raids against suspected anarchists and communists. Hundreds were arrested across the nation. However, civil libertarians claimed the Palmer Raids lacked legal standing and targeted people's beliefs rather than their actions. Most of those arrested were later released but 556 people were deported as a result of the Palmer Raids.

### **What was the Palmer raids?**

The Red Scare was also a factor that led to new restrictions on immigration. Other factors included two ideas that grew particularly strong during the post-World War I era of the 1920s. By 1924, this conservative reaction against immigrants resulted in the passage of the National Origins Acts. The main provision of the laws was to establish the Quota System, which set limits on the number of immigrants who could enter the United States from each country.

The Red Scare was perceived by many to be a threat to the foundations of the United States. Although sometimes overstepping individual civil liberties, there were strong efforts after World War I to protect and enhance the national identity of the United States.

### **What happened as a result of the red scare?**

## **What is the Quota system?**

### ***18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Amendments***

Social changes during World War I led to two constitutional amendments. An undercurrent related to the growing national identity of the period can be found in the passage of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments.

Congress passed the Eighteenth Amendment in 1917 and it was ratified in 1919. The provisions of the amendment prohibited the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors.

The effect of the Eighteenth Amendment was not completely positive. Organized crime and smuggling alcohol brought tremendous profits to those willing to break the law for financial gain. Speakeasies and bootleggers profited from the banning of alcohol.

In the 1930s the Twenty-First Amendment that made alcohol legal again was ratified. The Twenty-First Amendment repeals, or cancels out, the Eighteenth Amendment. One reason the government was keen on making alcohol legal again was to levy taxes on it during the financial difficulties of the Great Depression.

### **What is the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment?**

### **What happened as a result of the amendment?**

The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote. Ratification of the amendment in 1920 was fueled by the country's gratitude for women's economic contribution during World War I. Women had filled jobs in factories after men volunteered and were drafted into military service.

The effect of the Nineteenth Amendment was greater equality and independence for women. Gender roles began to change during the 1920s after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

### **What is the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment?**

### **What did it lead to?**

## ***Consumerism and Henry Ford***

The 1920s was a time of increased consumer buying. People were purchasing new automobiles and household appliances through various means of financing. The new mode of individual transportation changed society by making the population more mobile and able to live greater distances from their jobs. Advertising of cars and new household appliances was largely through nationwide campaigns on the radio, in magazines, and at the movies.

Henry Ford was the developer of the first mass produced automobile - the Model T. While the idea of mass production was not new, Ford used an improved continuous assembly line to quickly build automobiles.

The automobile led to huge social changes in America. People began moving to the suburbs because of their widespread ownership of cars. There was also a new need for improved roads and highways. Travel was more independent and vacations for pleasure became popular.

### **What is consumerism?**

### **What did Henry Ford do?**

### ***The Impact of Radio and Movies***

The period after World War I marked the beginning of mass media, especially commercial radio and movies.

The first radio broadcasts were used to relate the election results of the 1920 Presidential Election. By 1925, there were 600 radio stations across the United States. By 1923, nearly three million Americans had radios. Music, stories, sporting events, and news were soon being broadcast nationwide. A stronger national, rather than regional, identity emerged in the United States.

### **How did radio impact elections?**

### **What did radios create?**

Radio helped to create a common cultural experience for thousands of Americans. Advertisers were quick to realize the marketing potential of radio. They began using radio to mass market the multitude of consumer goods that were developed in the period, such as washing machines, electric

toasters, and laundry soap. Products and brands were becoming more widespread due to the vast market radio offered.

### **How did radios led to the sale of goods?**

Movies had a similar beginning. The first movies were silent films but by the late 1920s, the first movies with sound were available to audiences. Radio and movies were a unifying force on national culture because the styles actors and actresses wore, activities they were engaged in, and products they were using was all being watched and listened to by Americans from all parts of the country simultaneously.

### **What was the impact of movies and radio?**

### ***Harlem Renaissance***

The Harlem Renaissance marked the first significant artistic movement coming out of Black culture. Centered in the Harlem borough of New York City, the movement produced notable works of literature, music, dance, and visual art. Writers included W.E.B. DuBois and Langston Hughes. Hughes' poetry used the rhythms of Black music, particularly blues and jazz. This allowed Hughes to experiment with a very rhythmic free verse. Harlem's Cotton Club was an important location, where White audiences were exposed to ideas of the Harlem Renaissance - including Jazz.

### **What emerged out of Harlem renaissance?**

Although Jazz was not born out of the Harlem Renaissance, it was the first true American music. The musical form was so influential that the era of the 1920s is often referred to as the Jazz Age. Born in the Deep South, Jazz was thought to have originated from the musical traditions brought by slaves from West Africa combined with western musical instruments and techniques. Jazz, as a musical style, is easy to recognize but hard to define. Jazz has elements of different genres of music but is most noted for its improvisations.

By the 1920s, there were several different types of Jazz, including Dixieland that originated in New Orleans. Famous Jazz musicians included Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. Jazz also influenced composers such as Cole Porter and the Gershwin

Brothers who composed Rhapsody in Blue and the Jazz opera Porgy and Bess.

### **Where does Jazz come from?**

### **How did jazz change in the 1920.**

### **Who were famous jazz musicians?**