

Waging Total War and Its Effects

Winning the War

- By 1917, European countries had experienced massive casualties and shortages on the home front.
- The war was about to change with the exit of Russia and entry of the United States.
 - Russia exited the war during the Russian Revolution and Germany went on a massive offensive to achieve victory.
 - The United States entered the war and their reinforcements were too much for the exhausted German military.

Waging Total War

- Definition – Channeling all of the resources of a nation into the war effort in order to achieve victory.
- In order to do this, governments began to take a stronger role in directing economic and cultural aspects of their citizens lives.

Economies Committed to War Production

- Conscription / Draft
 - All of the major nations involved in the beginning used methods of recruitments in order to supply troops, except Britain (1914)
 - **Conscription** - Required all men to be ready for military or other services.
 - In 1916 Britain eventually resorted to a draft as well.
- Government Involvement
 - Raised taxes
 - Borrowed huge amounts of money to fund the war.
 - Rationed food and other products from boots to gasoline.
 - Set regulations such as setting market prices and forbidding strikes.

Economic Warfare

- British blockade to prevent Germany from receiving supplies and sending supplies to their allies.
- International law allowed blockades and confiscation of...
 - Military supplies
 - Raw materials need to make military supplies
 - NOT items such as food and clothing.
- British blockade significantly affected Germany and Austria-Hungary.
 - Had to rely on internal supplies.
 - Winter was known as “the turnip winter” because the potato crop had failed and they resorted to eating turnips.
- German retaliation to the blockade
 - Used U-Boats to create its own blockade.
 - Declared it would destroy all ships that were carrying goods to Britain.
- Lusitania Sinks
 - British ship hit by a U-Boat off the coast of Ireland.
 - 1,200 passengers were killed.
 - Included 128 Americans
 - Claimed it was justified because the ship was supposedly carrying weapons.
- President Woodrow Wilson Responds
 - Threatened to cut off diplomatic relations with Germany.
 - Germany said that from now on, they would surface and give warning before sinking ships.
 - “Unrestricted Submarine Warfare” had stopped momentarily.

Propaganda War

- Total War included controlling public opinion.
 - Even democratic countries censored the press.
- Goal of censorship
 - Keep complete casualties and discouraging news from reaching the public.
 - Literature
 - Movies

- Writings
- Arts
- Propaganda
 - Spreading of ideas to promote a cause or to damage an opposing cause.
 - Examples
 - GB – to motivate military mobilization
 - FRA & GER – encourage people to load money
 - Atrocities – tales of horrible acts against innocent people in order to persuade the opinions of people.

Women Join the War Effort

- Played a critical role in total war efforts
 - Men left to fight; women assumed the roles and jobs of men.
 - Manufactured weapons and supplies
 - Grew food for military
 - Nurses in the field of war
- Gave women a new sense of pride and confidence.
- After decades of struggle, women showed society first had that they deserve to have equal rights.