The period between 1914 and 1945 was one of the most destructive in the history of humankind. As many as 60 million people died as a result of World Wars I and II, the global conflicts that began and ended this era. As World War I was followed by revolutions, the Great Depression, totalitarian regimes, and the horrors of World War II, it appeared to many that European civilization had become a nightmare. By 1945, the era of European domination over world affairs had been severely shaken. With the decline of Western power, a new era of world history was about to begin.

**Primary Sources Library**

See pages 998–999 for primary source readings to accompany Unit 5.

Use *The World History Primary Source Document Library CD-ROM* to find additional primary sources about The Twentieth-Century Crisis.
“Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.”

—Winston Churchill
International Peacekeeping

Until the 1900s, with the exception of the Seven Years’ War, never in history had there been a conflict that literally spanned the globe. The twentieth century witnessed two world wars and numerous regional conflicts. As the scope of war grew, so did international commitment to collective security, where a group of nations join together to promote peace and protect human life.

**Europe**

**The League of Nations**

At the end of World War I, the victorious nations set up a “general association of nations” called the League of Nations, which would settle international disputes and avoid war. By 1920, 42 nations had sent delegates to the League’s headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, and they were eventually joined by another 21.

The United States never joined. Opponents in the U.S. Senate argued that membership in the League went against George Washington’s advice to avoid “entangling alliances.” When the League failed to halt warlike acts in the 1930s, the same opponents pointed to the failure of collective security.

The League of Nations was seen as a peacekeeper without a sword—it possessed neither a standing army nor members willing to stop nations that used war as diplomacy.
The United Nations

After World War II, the United States hosted a meeting to create a new peacekeeping organization. Delegates from 50 nations hammered out the Charter of the United Nations. To eliminate the root causes of war, the UN created agencies that promoted global education and the well-being of children. In 1948, United States delegate Eleanor Roosevelt convinced the UN to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which committed the UN to eliminate oppression. The headquarters for the UN are located in New York City.

South Africa

The Power of World Opinion

By 1995, the UN had taken part in 35 peacekeeping missions—some successful, some not. It also had provided protection for over 30 million refugees. The UN used world opinion to promote justice. In 1977, it urged nations to enforce economic sanctions and an arms embargo against South Africa until apartheid was lifted. In 1994, South Africa held its first all-race elections. Many believed this was a major triumph for collective international action.

Why It Matters

The UN hopes to use collective international actions to promote peace around the world. Often this involves preventing injustice and improving living conditions. What are some recent UN actions that support these principles?
War and Revolution 1914–1919

Key Events
As you read this chapter, look for the key events of World War I, the Russian Revolution, and the Paris Peace Conference.
- Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist.
- Militarism, nationalism, and alliances drew nations into war.
- The United States’s entry into the war helped the Allies.
- The impact of the war at home led to an increase in the federal government’s powers and changed the status of women.
- The Russian Revolution ended with the Communists in power.
- Peace settlements caused lingering resentment.
- The League of Nations was formed.

The Impact Today
The events that occurred during this period still impact our lives today.
- World War I led to the disintegration of empires and the creation of new states.
- Communism became a factor in global conflict as other nations turned to its ideology.
- The Balkans continue to be an area of political unrest.

The Battle of the Somme was one of the bloodiest battles of World War I.

**Battle of the Somme by Richard Woodville** The Battle of the Somme was one of the bloodiest battles of World War I.

**Bolsheviks in Russia**

- **1917** Russian Revolution begins
- **1917** United States enters the war
- **1918** Germany agrees to truce
- **1919** Allies sign Treaty of Versailles
- **1919** People celebrating the end of the war

**Chapter Overview**
Visit the Glencoe World History Web site at [wh.glencoe.com](http://wh.glencoe.com) and click on Chapter 23—Chapter Overview to preview chapter information.
On July 1, 1916, British and French infantry forces attacked German defensive lines along a front about 25 miles (40 km) long near the Somme River in France. Each soldier carried almost 70 (32 kg) pounds of equipment, including a rifle, ammunition, grenades, a shovel, a mess kit, and a full water bottle. This burden made it “impossible to move much quicker than a slow walk.”

German machine guns soon opened fire. “We were able to see our comrades move forward in an attempt to cross No-Man’s-Land, only to be mown down like meadow grass,” recalled one British soldier. Another wrote later, “I felt sick at the sight of this carnage and remember weeping.”

Philip Gibbs, an English journalist with the troops, reported on what he found in the German trenches that the British forces overran: “Victory!... Groups of dead lay in ditches which had once been trenches, flung into chaos by that bombardment I had seen. . . . Some of the German dead were young boys, too young to be killed for old men’s crimes, and others might have been old or young. One could not tell because they had no faces, and were just masses of raw flesh in rags of uniforms. Legs and arms lay separate without any bodies thereabouts.”

In the first day of the Battle of the Somme, about 21,000 British soldiers died. After four months of fighting, the British had advanced five miles (eight km). About one million Allied and German soldiers lay dead or wounded.

Why It Matters

World War I (1914–1918) devastated the economic, social, and political order of Europe. People at the time, overwhelmed by the size of the war’s battles and the number of casualties, simply called it the Great War. The war was all the more disturbing to Europeans because it came after a period that many believed to have been an age of progress. World War I and the revolutions it spawned can properly be seen as the first stage in the crisis of the twentieth century.

History and You

Look online or in the library for a speech delivered by Woodrow Wilson or another leader, explaining the reasons for entering the war. Analyze the arguments. How might someone opposed to the war counter those arguments?
On June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, was assassinated in the Bosnian city of Sarajevo. One of the conspirators described the scene:

"As the car came abreast, [the assassin] stepped forward from the curb, drew his automatic pistol from his coat and fired two shots. The first struck the wife of the Archduke, the Archduchess Sophia, in the abdomen. She was an expectant mother. She died instantly. The second bullet struck the Archduke close to the heart. He uttered only one word: ‘Sophia’—a call to his stricken wife. Then his head fell back and he collapsed. He died almost instantly."

—Eyewitness to History, John Carey, ed., 1987

This event was the immediate cause of World War I, but underlying forces had been moving Europeans toward war for some time.

**Nationalism and the System of Alliances**

In the first half of the nineteenth century, liberals believed that if European states were organized along national lines, these states would work together and create a peaceful Europe. They were wrong.

The system of nation-states that emerged in Europe in the last half of the nineteenth century led not to cooperation but to competition. Rivalries over colonies
and trade grew during an age of frenzied nationalism and imperialist expansion.

At the same time, Europe’s great powers had been divided into two loose alliances. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed the **Triple Alliance** in 1882. France, Great Britain, and Russia created the **Triple Entente** in 1907.

In the early years of the twentieth century, a series of crises tested these alliances. Especially troublesome were the crises in the Balkans between 1908 and 1913. These events left European states angry at each other and eager for revenge. Each state was guided by its own self-interest and success. They were willing to use war as a way to preserve the power of their national states.

The growth of nationalism in the nineteenth century had yet another serious result. Not all ethnic groups had become nations. Slavic minorities in the Balkans and the Hapsburg Empire, for example, still dreamed of creating their own national states. The Irish in the British Empire and the Poles in the Russian Empire had similar dreams.

**Internal Dissent**

National desires were not the only source of internal strife at the beginning of the twentieth century. Socialist labor movements also had grown more powerful. The Socialists were increasingly inclined to use strikes, even violent ones, to achieve their goals.

Some conservative leaders, alarmed at the increase in labor strife and class division, feared that European nations were on the verge of revolution. In the view of some historians, the desire to suppress internal disorder may have encouraged various leaders to take the plunge into war in 1914.

**Militarism**

The growth of mass armies after 1900 heightened the existing tensions in Europe. The large size of these armies also made it obvious that if war did come, it would be highly destructive.

**Conscription**, a military draft, had been established as a regular practice in most Western countries before 1914. (The United States and Britain were
exceptions.) European armies doubled in size between 1890 and 1914.

With its 1.3 million men, the Russian army had grown to be the largest. The French and German armies were not far behind, with 900,000 each. The British, Italian, and Austro-Hungarian armies numbered between 250,000 and 500,000 soldiers each.

Militarism—aggressive preparation for war—was growing. As armies grew, so too did the influence of military leaders. They drew up vast and complex plans for quickly mobilizing millions of men and enormous quantities of supplies in the event of war.

Military leaders feared that any changes in these plans would cause chaos in the armed forces. Thus, they insisted that their plans could not be altered. In the 1914 crises, this left European political leaders with little leeway. They were forced to make decisions for military instead of political reasons.

**Reading Check** Examining What was the effect of conscription on events leading up to World War I?

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It was against this backdrop of mutual distrust and hatred that the events of the summer of 1914 were played out.

**Assassination in Sarajevo** On June 28, 1914, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife Sophia, visited the Bosnian city of Sarajevo (SAR•uh•YAY•VOH). A group of conspirators waited there in the streets. The conspirators were members of the Black Hand, a Serbian terrorist organization that wanted Bosnia to be free of Austria-Hungary and to become part of a large Serbian kingdom.

The conspirators planned to kill the archduke, along with his wife. That morning, one of the conspirators threw a bomb at the archduke’s car, but it glanced off and exploded against the car behind him. Later in the day, however, Gavrilo Princip, a 19-year-old Bosnian Serb, succeeded in shooting both the archduke and his wife.

**Austria-Hungary Responds** The Austro-Hungarian government did not know whether or not the Serbian government had been directly involved in the archduke’s assassination, but it did not care. It saw an opportunity to “render Serbia innocuous [harmless] once and for all by a display of force,” as the Austrian foreign minister put it.

Austrian leaders wanted to attack Serbia but feared Russian intervention on Serbia’s behalf, so they sought the backing of their German allies. Emperor William II of Germany and his chancellor responded with a “blank check,” saying that Austria-

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"Till the world comes to an end, the ultimate decision will rest with the sword."

—Emperor William II of Germany
Hungary could rely on Germany’s “full support,” even if “matters went to the length of a war between Austria-Hungary and Russia.”

Strengthened by German support, Austrian leaders sent an ultimatum to Serbia on July 23. In it, they made such extreme demands that Serbia had little choice but to reject some of them in order to preserve its sovereignty. On July 28, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

**Russia Mobilizes** Russia was determined to support Serbia’s cause. On July 28, Czar Nicholas II ordered partial mobilization of the Russian army against Austria-Hungary. **Mobilization** is the process of assembling troops and supplies and making them ready for war. In 1914, mobilization was considered an act of war.

Leaders of the Russian army informed the czar that they could not partially mobilize. Their mobilization plans were based on a war against both Germany and Austria-Hungary. Mobilizing against only Austria-Hungary, they claimed, would create chaos in the army. Based on this claim, the czar ordered full mobilization of the Russian army on July 29, knowing that Germany would consider this order an act of war.

**The Conflict Broadens** Indeed, Germany reacted quickly. The German government warned Russia that it must halt its mobilization within 12 hours. When Russia ignored this warning, Germany declared war on Russia on August 1.

Like the Russians, the Germans had a military plan. It had been drawn up under the guidance of General Alfred von Schlieffen (SHLEE•fuhn), so was known as the Schlieffen Plan. The plan called for a two-front war with France and Russia, who had formed a military alliance in 1894.

According to the Schlieffen Plan, Germany would conduct a small holding action against Russia while most of the German army would carry out a rapid invasion of France. This meant invading France by moving quickly along the level coastal area through Belgium. After France was defeated, the German invaders would move to the east against Russia.

Under the Schlieffen Plan, Germany could not mobilize its troops solely against Russia. Therefore, it declared war on France on August 3. About the same time, it issued an ultimatum to Belgium demanding the right of German troops to pass through Belgian territory. Belgium, however, was a neutral nation.

On August 4, Great Britain declared war on Germany, officially for violating Belgian neutrality. In fact, Britain, which was allied with the countries of France and Russia, was concerned about maintaining its own world power. As one British diplomat put it, if Germany and Austria-Hungary won the war, “what would be the position of a friendless England?” By August 4, all the great powers of Europe were at war.

**Reading Check** Evaluating What was the Schlieffen Plan and how did it complicate the events leading to World War I?

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**Checking for Understanding**

1. Define conscription, mobilization.


3. Locate Serbia, Bosnia.

4. Explain why Great Britain became involved in the war.

5. List the ethnic groups that were left without nations after the nationalist movements of the nineteenth century.

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**Critical Thinking**

6. Analyze How did the creation of military plans help draw the nations of Europe into World War I? In your opinion, what should today’s national and military leaders have learned from the military plans that helped initiate World War I? Explain your answer.

7. Sequencing Information Using a diagram like the one below, identify the series of decisions made by European leaders in 1914 that led directly to the outbreak of war.

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**Analyzing Visuals**

8. Examine the painting of Emperor William II of Germany shown on page 719 of your text. How does this portrait of the emperor reflect the nature of leadership before World War I?

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**Writing About History**

9. Expository Writing Some historians believe that the desire to suppress internal disorder may have encouraged leaders to take the plunge into war. As an adviser, write a memo to your country’s leader explaining how a war might be advantageous with regard to domestic policy.
Main Ideas
• The stalemate at the Western Front led to new alliances, a widening of the war, and new weapons.
• Governments expanded their powers, increased opportunities for women, and made use of propaganda.

Key Terms
propaganda, trench warfare, war of attrition, total war, planned economies

People to Identify
Lawrence of Arabia, Admiral Holtzendorff, Woodrow Wilson

Places to Locate
Marne, Tannenberg, Masurian Lakes, Verdun, Gallipoli

Preview Questions
1. How did trench warfare lead to a stalemate?
2. Why did the United States enter the war?

Reading Strategy
Organizing Information Identify which countries belonged to the Allies and the Central Powers. What country changed allegiance? What country withdrew from the war?

Preview of Events

1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919

1914 to 1915: Illusions and Stalemate

Before 1914, many political leaders had thought that war involved so many political and economic risks that it would not be worth fighting. Others had believed that diplomats could easily control any situation and prevent war. At the beginning of August 1914, both ideas were shattered. However, the new illusions that replaced them soon proved to be equally foolish.

Government propaganda—ideas spread to influence public opinion for or against a cause—had worked in stirring up national hatreds before the war. Now, in August 1914, the urgent pleas of European governments for defense against

Voices from the Past
Stefan Zweig, an Austrian writer, described the excitement Austrians felt going to war in 1914:

“What did the people know of war in 1914, after nearly half a century of peace? They did not know war; they had hardly given it a thought. They still saw it in the perspective of their school readers and of paintings in museums; brilliant cavalry attacks in glittering uniforms, the fatal shot always straight through the heart, the entire campaign a resounding march of victory—’We’ll be home at Christmas,’ the recruits shouted laughingly to their mothers in August of 1914. . . . The young people were honestly afraid that they might miss this most wonderful and exciting experience of their lives; . . . that is why they shouted and sang in the trains that carried them to the slaughter.”

—The World of Yesterday, Helmut Ripperger and B. W. Buebsch, trans., 1943

Europeans went to war in 1914 with remarkable enthusiasm.
aggressors fell on receptive ears in every nation at war. Most people seemed genuinely convinced that their nation’s cause was just.

A new set of illusions also fed the enthusiasm for war. In August 1914, almost everyone believed that the war would be over in a few weeks. People were reminded that almost all European wars since 1815 had, in fact, ended in a matter of weeks. Both the soldiers who boarded the trains for the war front in August 1914, and the jubilant citizens who showered them with flowers as they left, believed that the warriors would be home by Christmas.

**The Western Front** German hopes for a quick end to the war rested on a military gamble. The Schlieffen Plan had called for the German army to make a vast encircling movement through Belgium into northern France. According to the plan, the German forces would sweep around Paris. This would enable them to surround most of the French army.

The German advance was halted a short distance from Paris at the First Battle of the Marne (September 6–10). To stop the Germans, French military leaders loaded two thousand Parisian taxicabs with fresh troops and sent them to the front line.

The war quickly turned into a stalemate, as neither the Germans nor the French could dislodge each other from the trenches they had dug for shelter. These trenches were ditches protected by barbed wire. Two lines of trenches soon reached from the English Channel to the frontiers of Switzerland. The Western Front had become bogged down in trench warfare that kept both sides in virtually the same positions for four years.

**The Eastern Front** In contrast to the Western Front, the war on the Eastern Front was marked by mobility. The cost in lives, however, was equally enormous.

At the beginning of the war, the Russian army moved into eastern Germany but was decisively defeated at the Battle of Tannenberg on August 30 and the Battle of Masurian Lakes on September 15. As a result of these defeats, the Russians were no longer a threat to German territory.

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**Trench Warfare**

Warfare in the trenches of the Western Front produced unimaginable horrors. Battlefields were hellish landscapes of barbed wire, shell holes, mud, and injured and dying men. The introduction of poison gas in 1915 produced new forms of injuries. One British writer described them:

“I wish those people who write so glibly about this being a holy war could see a case of mustard gas... could see the poor things burnt and blistered all over with great mustard-coloured suppurating [pus-forming] blisters with blind eyes all sticky... and stuck together, and always fighting for breath, with voices a mere whisper, saying that their throats are closing and they know they will choke.”

Soldiers in the trenches also lived with the persistent presence of death. Because combat went on for months, soldiers had to carry on in the midst of countless bodies of dead men or the remains of men blown apart by artillery barrages. Many soldiers remembered the stench of decomposing bodies and the swarms of rats that grew fat in the trenches.

Daily life in the trenches was predictable. Thirty minutes before sunrise, troops had to “stand to,” or be combat-ready to repel any attack. If no attack came that day,
Austria-Hungary, Germany’s ally, fared less well at first. The Austrians had been defeated by the Russians in Galicia and thrown out of Serbia as well. To make matters worse, the Italians betrayed their German and Austrian allies in the Triple Alliance by attacking Austria in May 1915. Italy thus joined France, Great Britain, and Russia, who had formed the Triple Entente, but now were called the Allied Powers, or Allies.

By this time, the Germans had come to the aid of the Austrians. A German-Austrian army defeated the Russian army in Galicia and pushed the Russians far back into their own territory. Russian casualties stood at 2.5 million killed, captured, or wounded. The Russians had almost been knocked out of the war.

Buoyed by their success, Germany and Austria-Hungary, joined by Bulgaria in September 1915, attacked and eliminated Serbia from the war. Their successes in the east would enable the Germans to move back to the offensive in the west.

**Reading Check** **Contrasting** How did the war on the Eastern Front differ from the war on the Western Front?

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**British soldiers in the trenches**

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**1916 to 1917: The Great Slaughter**

On the Western Front, the trenches dug in 1914 had by 1916 become elaborate systems of defense. The lines of trenches for both sides were protected by barbed wire entanglements up to 5 feet (about 1.5 m) high and 30 yards (about 27 m) wide, concrete machine-gun nests, and other gun batteries, supported further back by heavy artillery. Troops lived in holes in the ground, separated from each other by a strip of territory known as no-man’s-land.

**Tactics of Trench Warfare** The unexpected development of trench warfare baffled military leaders. They had been trained to fight wars of movement and maneuver. The only plan generals could devise was to attempt a breakthrough by throwing masses of men against enemy lines that had first been battered by artillery. Once the decisive breakthrough had been achieved, they thought, they could return to the war of movement that they knew best.

At times, the high command on either side would order an offensive that would begin with an artillery
barrage to flatten the enemy’s barbed wire and leave the enemy in a state of shock. After “softening up” the enemy in this fashion, a mass of soldiers would climb out of their trenches with fixed bayonets and hope to work their way toward the enemy trenches.

The attacks rarely worked because men advancing unprotected across open fields could be fired at by the enemy’s machine guns. In 1916 and 1917, millions of young men died in the search for the elusive breakthrough. In 10 months at Verdun, France, in 1916, seven hundred thousand men lost their lives over a few miles of land. World War I had turned into a war of attrition, a war based on wearing the other side down by constant attacks and heavy losses. (See page 998 to read an excerpt from Arthur Guy Empey’s Over the Top in the Primary Sources Library.)

### War in the Air

By the end of 1915, airplanes had appeared on the battlefront for the first time in history. At first, planes were used to spot the enemy’s position. However, planes soon began to attack ground targets, especially enemy communications.

Fights for control of the air occurred and increased over time. At first, pilots fired at each other with handheld pistols. Later, machine guns were mounted on the noses of planes, which made the skies considerably more dangerous.

The Germans also used their giant airships—the zeppelins—to bomb London and eastern England. This caused little damage but frightened many people. Germany’s enemies, however, soon found that zeppelins, which were filled with hydrogen gas, quickly became raging infernos when hit by antiaircraft guns.

**Reading Check**  
**Explaining** Why were military leaders baffled by trench warfare?

### Widening of the War

Because of the stalemate on the Western Front, both sides sought to gain new allies who might provide a winning advantage. The Ottoman Empire had already come into the war on Germany’s side in August 1914. Russia, Great Britain, and France—the Allies—declared war on the Ottoman Empire in November.

The Allies tried to open a Balkan front by landing forces at Gallipoli (guh•LIH•puh•lee), southwest of Constantinople, in April 1915. However, Bulgaria entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, as Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire were called. A disastrous campaign at Gallipoli forced the Allies to withdraw.

In return for Italy entering the war on the Allied side, France and Great Britain promised to let Italy have some Austrian territory. Italy on the side of the Allies opened up a front against Austria-Hungary.

By 1917, the war that had started in Europe had truly become a world conflict. In the Middle East, a British officer known as Lawrence of Arabia, in 1917, urged Arab princes to revolt against their Ottoman overlords. In 1918, British forces from Egypt destroyed the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East. For their Middle East campaigns, the British mobilized forces from India, Australia, and New Zealand.

The Allies also took advantage of Germany’s preoccupations in Europe and lack of naval strength to seize German colonies in the rest of the world. Japan, a British ally beginning in 1902, seized a number of German-held islands in the Pacific. Australia seized German New Guinea.

**Reading Check**  
**Describing** What caused the widening of the war?
Entry of the United States

At first, the United States tried to remain neutral. As World War I dragged on, however, it became more difficult to do so. The immediate cause of United States involvement grew out of the naval war between Germany and Great Britain.

Britain had used its superior naval power to set up a naval blockade of Germany. The blockade kept war materials and other goods from reaching Germany by sea. Germany had retaliated by setting up its own blockade of Britain. Germany enforced its blockade with the use of unrestricted submarine warfare, which included the sinking of passenger liners.

On May 7, 1915, the British ship *Lusitania* was sunk by German forces. There were about 1,100 civilian casualties, including over 100 Americans. After strong United States protests, the German government suspended unrestricted submarine warfare in September 1915 to avoid antagonizing the United States further. Only once did the German and British naval forces actually engage in direct battle—at the Battle of Jutland on May 31, 1916, when neither side won a conclusive victory.

By January 1917, however, the Germans were eager to break the deadlock in the war. German naval officers convinced Emperor William II that resuming the use of unrestricted submarine warfare could starve the British into submission within six months.

When the emperor expressed concern about the United States, he was told not to worry. The British would starve before the Americans could act. Even if the Americans did intervene, Admiral Holtzendorff assured the emperor, “I give your Majesty my word as an officer that not one American will land on the continent.”

The German naval officers were quite wrong. The British were not forced to surrender, and the return to unrestricted submarine warfare brought the United States into the war in April 1917.
did not arrive in large numbers in Europe until 1918. However, the entry of the United States into the war not only gave the Allied Powers a psychological boost, but also brought them a major new source of money and war goods.

**Reading Check** Evaluating Why did the Germans resort to unrestricted submarine use?

### The Home Front: The Impact of Total War

As World War I dragged on, it became a **total war**, involving a complete mobilization of resources and people. It affected the lives of all citizens in the warring countries, however remote they might be from the battlefields.

Masses of men had to be organized and supplies had to be manufactured and purchased for years of combat. (Germany alone had 5.5 million men in uniform in 1916.) This led to an increase in government powers and the manipulation of public opinion to keep the war effort going. The home front was rapidly becoming a cause for as much effort as the war front.

**Increased Government Powers** Most people had expected the war to be short, so little thought had been given to long-term wartime needs. Governments had to respond quickly, however, when the war machines failed to achieve their goals. Many more men and supplies were needed to continue the war. To meet these needs, governments expanded their powers. Countries drafted tens of millions of young men for that elusive breakthrough to victory.

Throughout Europe, wartime governments also expanded their power over their economies. Free-market capitalistic systems were temporarily put aside. Governments set up price, wage, and rent controls; rationed food supplies and materials; regulated imports and exports; and took over transportation systems and industries. In effect, in order to mobilize all the resources of their nations for the war effort, European nations set up **planned economies**—systems directed by government agencies.

Under conditions of total war mobilization, the differences between soldiers at war and civilians at home were narrowed. In the view of political leaders, all citizens were part of a national army dedicated to victory. As United States president **Woodrow Wilson** said, the men and women “who remain to till the soil and man the factories are no less a part of the army than the men beneath the battle flags.”

**Manipulation of Public Opinion** As the war continued and casualties grew worse, the patriotic enthusiasm that had marked the early stages of World War I waned. By 1916, there were signs that civilian morale was beginning to crack under the pressure of total war. War governments, however, fought back against the growing opposition to the war.

Authoritarian regimes, such as those of Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, relied on force to subdue their populations. Under the pressures of the war, however, even democratic states expanded their police powers to stop internal dissent. The British Parliament, for example, passed the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA). It allowed the government to arrest protesters as traitors. Newspapers were censored, and sometimes their publication was even suspended.

Wartime governments made active use of propaganda to arouse enthusiasm for the war. At the beginning, public officials needed to do little to achieve this goal. The British and French, for example, exaggerated German atrocities in Belgium and found that their citizens were only too willing to believe these accounts.

As the war progressed and morale sagged, governments were forced to devise new techniques for motivating the people. In one British recruiting poster, for example, a small daughter asked her father, “Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?” while her younger brother played with toy soldiers.

**Total War and Women** World War I created new roles for women. Because so many men left to fight at the front, women were asked to take over jobs that had not been available to them before. Women were employed in jobs that had once been considered
beyond their capacity. These included such occupations as chimney sweeps, truck drivers, farm laborers, and factory workers in heavy industry. For example, 38 percent of the workers in the Krupp Armaments works in Germany in 1918 were women.

The place of women in the workforce was far from secure, however. Both men and women seemed to expect that many of the new jobs for women were only temporary. This was evident in the British poem “War Girls,” written in 1916:

There’s the girl who clips your ticket for the train,
And the girl who speeds the lift [elevator] from floor to floor,
There’s the girl who does a milk-round [milk delivery]
in the rain,
And the girl who calls for orders at your door.
Strong, sensible, and fit,
They’re out to show their grit,
And tackle jobs with energy and knack.
No longer caged and penned up,
They’re going to keep their end up
Till the khaki soldier boys come marching back.

At the end of the war, governments would quickly remove women from the jobs they had encouraged them to take earlier. The work benefits for women from World War I were short-lived as men returned to the job market. By 1919, there would be 650,000 unemployed women in Great Britain. Wages for the women who were still employed would be lowered.

Nevertheless, in some countries the role played by women in wartime economies had a positive impact on the women’s movement for social and political emancipation. The most obvious gain was the right to vote, which was given to women in Germany, Austria, and the United States immediately after the war. Most British women gained the vote in 1918.

Many upper- and middle-class women had also gained new freedoms. In ever-larger numbers, young women from these groups took jobs; had their own apartments; and showed their new independence.

**Reading Check** Summarizing What was the effect of total war on ordinary citizens?

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**People In History**

**Edith Cavell**

1865–1915—British nurse

Edith Cavell was born in Norfolk, England. She trained as a nurse and moved to Brussels in 1907 to head the Berkendael Medical Institute.

After the outbreak of war, the institute became a Red Cross hospital. Cavell worked to shelter French and British soldiers and help them reach safety in the Netherlands.

Outraged, German military authorities in Brussels put her on trial for aiding the enemy and ordered her to be shot. Before her execution, Cavell said, “I am glad to die for my country.” To arouse anti-German sentiment, both the French and British used her as an example of German barbarism. The Germans insisted they had the right to execute a traitor—whether man or woman.
Passengers boarding the British liner *R.M.S. Lusitania* in New York on May 1, 1915, for the voyage to Liverpool, England, knew of Germany’s threat to sink ships bound for the British Isles. Britain and Germany had been fighting for nine months. Still, few passengers imagined that a civilized nation would attack an unarmed passenger steamer without warning.

Built eight years earlier, the *Lusitania* was described as a “floating palace.” German authorities, however, saw her as a threat. They accused the British government of using the *Lusitania* to carry ammunition and other war supplies across the Atlantic.

With her four towering funnels, the liner looked invincible as she left New York on her last voyage. Six days later, at 2:10 P.M. on May 7, 1915, Walther Schwieger, the 30-year-old commander of the German submarine U 20, fired a single torpedo at the *Lusitania* from a range of about 750 yards (686 m).

Captain William Turner of the *Lusitania* saw the torpedo’s wake from the navigation bridge just before impact. It sounded like a “million-ton hammer hitting a steam boiler a hundred feet high,” one passenger said. A second, more powerful explosion followed, sending a geyser of water, coal, and debris high above the deck.

Listing to starboard, the liner began to sink rapidly at the bow, sending passengers tumbling down her slanted decks. Lifeboats on the port side were hanging too far inboard to be readily launched, those on the starboard side too far out to be easily boarded. Several overfilled lifeboats spilled occupants into the sea. The great liner disappeared under the waves in only 18 minutes, leaving behind a jumble of swimmers, corpses, deck chairs, and wreckage. Looking back upon the scene from his submarine, even the German commander Schwieger was shocked. He later called it the most horrible sight he had ever seen.
News of the disaster raced across the Atlantic. Of 1,959 people aboard, only 764 were saved. The dead included 94 children and infants.

Questions were immediately raised. Did the British Admiralty give the *Lusitania* adequate warning? How could one torpedo have sunk her? Why did she go down so fast? Was there any truth to the German claim that the *Lusitania* had been armed?

From the moment the *Lusitania* sank, she was surrounded by controversy. Americans were outraged by the attack, which claimed the lives of 123 U.S. citizens. Newspapers called the attack “deliberate murder” and a “foul deed,” and former President Theodore Roosevelt demanded revenge against Germany. The attack on the *Lusitania* is often credited with drawing the United States into World War I. However, President Woodrow Wilson—though he had vowed to hold Germany responsible for its submarine attacks—knew that the American people were not ready to go to war. It was almost two years before the United States joined the conflict in Europe.

A British judge laid full blame on the German submarine commander, while the German government claimed that the British had deliberately made her a military target. Tragically, inquiries following the sinking of the *Lusitania* revealed that Captain Turner had received warnings by wireless from the British Admiralty,
but took only limited precautions as he approached the area where the U 20 was waiting.

Rumors of diamonds, gold, and valuables locked away in Lusitania’s safes have prompted salvage attempts over the years. To date, no treasure has ever been reported.

Perhaps the biggest puzzle has been the hardest to solve: Why did the liner sink so fast? Newspapers speculated that the torpedo had struck munitions in a cargo hold, causing the strong secondary explosion. Divers later reported a huge hole in the port side of the bow, opposite where munitions would have been stored.

Hoping to settle the issue, a team from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, sponsored by the National Geographic Society, sent their robot vehicle Jason down to photograph the damage. Fitted with cameras and powerful lights, the robot sent video images of the wreck by fiber-optic cable to a control room on the surface ship, Northern Horizon. A pilot maneuvered Jason with a joystick, while an engineer relayed instructions to the robot’s computers. Other team members watched for recognizable objects on the monitors. In addition to using Jason to make a visual survey of the Lusitania, the team of researchers and scientists also used sonar to create a computerized, three-dimensional diagram of how the wreck looks today.

From this data, it was discovered that the Lusitania’s hull had been flattened—in part by the force of gravity—to half its original width. But when Jason’s cameras swept across the hold, looking for the hole reported by divers shortly after the sinking, there was none to be found. Indeed, no evidence was found that would indicate that the torpedo had detonated an explosion in a cargo hold, undermining one theory of why the liner sank.

Questions about her cargo have haunted the Lusitania since the day she went down. Was she carrying illegal munitions as the Germans have always claimed? In fact, she was. The manifest for her last voyage included wartime essentials such as motorcycle parts, metals, cotton goods, and food, as well as 4,200 cases of rifle ammunition, 1,250 cases of shrapnel (not explosive), and 18 boxes of percussion fuses. However, the investigation conducted by the Woods Hole team and Jason suggested that these munitions did not cause the secondary blast that sent the Lusitania to the bottom.

So what did?

One likely possibility was a coal-dust explosion. The German torpedo struck the liner’s starboard side about 10 feet (3 m) below the waterline, rupturing one of the long coal
bunkers [storage bins] that stretched along both sides. If that bunker, mostly empty by the end of the voyage, contained explosive coal dust, the torpedo might have ignited it. Such an occurrence would explain all the coal that was found scattered on the seafloor near the wreck.

The Lusitania’s giant funnels have long since turned to rust, an eerie marine growth covers her hull, and her superstructure is ghostly wreckage. Yet the horror and fascination surrounding the sinking of the great liner live on. With today’s high-technology tools, researchers and scientists at Woods Hole and the National Geographic Society have provided another look—and some new answers—to explain the chain of events that ended with the Lusitania at the bottom of the sea.

4 Homer, a small robot, (opposite page) explores a hole in the stern of the Lusitania that was cut by a salvage crew to recover silverware and other items.

5 A provocative poster (left) depicted drowning innocents and urged Americans to enlist in the armed forces.

6 Alice Drury (above left) was a young nanny for an American couple on the Lusitania. She and another nanny were caring for the couple’s children: Audrey (above right), Stuart, Amy, and Susan. Alice was about to give Audrey a bottle when the torpedo hit. Alice wrapped Audrey in a shawl, grabbed Stuart, and headed for the lifeboats. A crewman loaded Stuart, but when Alice tried to board, the sailor told her it was full. Without a life jacket and with Audrey around her neck, Alice jumped into the water. A woman in the lifeboat grabbed her hair and pulled her aboard. Audrey’s parents were rescued too, but Amy, Susan, and the other nanny were lost. Alice and Audrey Lawson Johnston have remained close ever since.
Guide to Reading

Main Ideas
- The czarist regime in Russia fell as a result of poor leadership.
- The Bolsheviks under Lenin came to power.
- Communist forces triumphed over anti-Communist forces.

Key Terms
soviet, war communism

People to Identify
Alexandra, Grigori Rasputin, Alexander Kerensky, Bolsheviks, V. I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky

Places to Locate
Petrograd, Ukraine, Siberia, Urals

Preview Questions
1. What promises did the Bolsheviks make to the Russian people?
2. Why did civil war break out in Russia after the Russian Revolution?

Reading Strategy
Categorizing Information Using a chart like the one below, identify the factors and events that led to Lenin coming to power in 1917.

Voices from the Past

John Reed, an American journalist, described an important event that took place in St. Petersburg, Russia, on the night of November 6, 1917:

"After a few minutes huddling there, some hundreds of men began again to flow forward. By this time, in the light that streamed out of the Winter Palace windows, I could see that the first two or three hundred men were Red Guards [revolutionaries], with only a few scattered soldiers. Over the barricade of firewood we clambered, and leaping down inside gave a triumphant shout as we stumbled on a heap of rifles thrown down by the guards who had stood there. On both sides of the main gateway the doors stood wide open, and from the huge pile came not the slightest sound."

—Eyewitness to History, John Carey, ed., 1987

Reed was describing the Bolshevik seizure of the Winter Palace, seat of the Russian Government, by Bolshevik revolutionaries. This act led to a successful revolution in Russia.

Background to Revolution

As you will learn, out of Russia’s collapse in 1917 came the Russian Revolution. Its impact would be felt all over the world.

Russia was unprepared both militarily and technologically for the total war of World War I. Russia had no competent military leaders. Even worse, Czar
Nicholas II insisted on taking personal charge of the armed forces despite his obvious lack of ability and training.

In addition, Russian industry was unable to produce the weapons needed for the army. Many soldiers trained using broomsticks. Others were sent to the front without rifles and told to pick one up from a dead comrade.

Given these conditions, it is not surprising that the Russian army suffered incredible losses. Between 1914 and 1916, two million soldiers were killed, and another four to six million wounded or captured. By 1917, the Russian will to fight had vanished.

**Beginnings of Upheaval** Czar Nicholas II was an autocratic ruler who relied on the army and bureaucracy to hold up his regime. Furthermore, he was increasingly cut off from events by his German-born wife, Alexandra. She was a willful and stubborn woman who had fallen under the influence of Grigori Rasputin (r•SPYOO•tuhn), an uneducated Siberian peasant who claimed to be a holy man. Alexandra believed that Rasputin was holy, for he alone seemed able to stop the bleeding of her son Alexis. Alexis, the heir to the throne, had hemophilia (a deficiency in the ability of the blood to clot).

With the czar at the battlefront, Alexandra made all of the important decisions. She insisted on first consulting Rasputin, the man she called “her beloved, never-to-be-forgotten teacher, savior, and mentor.” Rasputin’s influence made him an important power behind the throne. He did not hesitate to interfere in government affairs.

As the leadership at the top stumbled its way through a series of military and economic disasters, the Russian people grew more and more upset with the czarist regime. Even conservative aristocrats who supported the monarchy felt the need to do something to save the situation.

For a start, they assassinated Rasputin in December 1916. It was not easy to kill this man of incredible physical strength. They shot him three times and then tied him up and threw him into the Neva River. He drowned, but not before he had managed to untie the knots underwater. The killing of Rasputin occurred too late, however, to save the monarchy.

**The March Revolution** At the beginning of March 1917, a series of strikes led by working-class women broke out in the capital city of Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg). A few weeks earlier, the government had started bread rationing in Petrograd after the price of bread had skyrocketed.

Many of the women who stood in the lines waiting for bread were also factory workers who worked 12-hour days. A police report warned the government:

> “Mothers of families, exhausted by endless standing in line at stores, distraught over their half-starving and sick children, are today perhaps closer to revolution than [the liberal opposition leaders] and of course they are a great deal more dangerous because they are the combustible material for which only a single spark is needed to burst into flame.”

Rasputin (shown upper right corner) had great influence over Czar Nicholas II and his family, shown here in a 1913 photograph. How was Rasputin able to influence Russian political affairs?
On March 8, about 10,000 women marched through the city of Petrograd demanding “Peace and Bread” and “Down with Autocracy.” Soon the women were joined by other workers. Together they called for a general strike. The strike shut down all the factories in the city on March 10.

Alexandra wrote her husband Nicholas II at the battlefront, “This is a hooligan movement. If the weather were very cold they would all probably stay at home.” Nicholas ordered troops to break up the crowds by shooting them if necessary. Soon, however, large numbers of the soldiers joined the demonstrators and refused to fire on the crowds.

The Duma, or legislative body, which the czar had tried to dissolve, met anyway. On March 12, it established the provisional government, which mainly consisted of middle-class Duma representatives. This government urged the czar to step down. Because he no longer had the support of the army or even the aristocrats, Nicholas II did step down, on March 15, ending the 300-year-old Romanov dynasty.

The provisional government, headed by Alexander Kerensky (keh•REHN•skee), now decided to carry on the war to preserve Russia’s honor. This decision to remain in World War I was a major blunder. It satisfied neither the workers nor the peasants, who, tired and angry from years of suffering, wanted above all an end to the war.

The government was also faced with a challenge to its authority—the soviets. The soviets were councils composed of representatives from the workers and soldiers. The soviet of Petrograd had been formed in March 1917. At the same time, soviets sprang up in army units, factory towns, and rural areas. The soviets, largely made up of socialists, represented the more radical interests of the lower classes. One group—the Bolsheviks—came to play a crucial role.

Later, the woman claiming to be Anastasia came to the United States. While in New York, she registered at a Long Island hotel as Anna Anderson and soon became known by that name. In 1932, she returned to Germany. During the next 30 years, she pursued a claim in German courts for part of the estate left to Empress Alexandra’s German relatives. In the 1960s in the United States, she became even better known as a result of a popular play and film, Anastasia.

In 1968, Anna Anderson returned to the United States, where she died in 1984. In 1994, DNA testing of tissues from Anna Anderson revealed that she was not the Grand Duchess Anastasia. In all probability, Anna Anderson was Franziska Schanzkowska, a Polish farmer’s daughter who had always dreamed of being an actress.

The woman claiming to be Anastasia convinced many people of the authenticity of her claim. What do you think might have motivated her to act out the part of Anastasia for so many years?
The Rise of Lenin

The Bolsheviks began as a small faction of a Marxist party called the Russian Social Democrats. The Bolsheviks came under the leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov (ool•YAH•nuhf), known to the world as V. I. Lenin.

Under Lenin’s direction, the Bolsheviks became a party dedicated to violent revolution. Lenin believed that only violent revolution could destroy the capitalist system. A “vanguard” (forefront) of activists, he said, must form a small party of well-disciplined professional revolutionaries to accomplish the task.

Between 1900 and 1917, Lenin spent most of his time abroad. When the provisional government was formed in March 1917, he saw an opportunity for the Bolsheviks to seize power. In April 1917, German military leaders, hoping to create disorder in Russia, shipped Lenin to Russia. Lenin and his associates were in a sealed train to prevent their ideas from infecting Germany.

Lenin’s arrival in Russia opened a new stage of the Russian Revolution. Lenin maintained that the soviets of soldiers, workers, and peasants were ready-made instruments of power. He believed that the Bolsheviks should work toward gaining control of these groups and then use them to overthrow the provisional government.

At the same time, the Bolsheviks reflected the discontent of the people. They promised an end to the war, the redistribution of all land to the peasants, the transfer of factories and industries from capitalists to committees of workers, and the transfer of government power from the provisional government to the soviets. Three simple slogans summed up the Bolshevik program: “Peace, Land, Bread,” “Worker Control of Production,” and “All Power to the Soviets.”
The Bolsheviks Seize Power

By the end of October, Bolsheviks made up a slight majority in the Petrograd and Moscow soviets. The number of party members had grown from 50,000 to 240,000. With Leon Trotsky, a dedicated revolutionary, as head of the Petrograd soviet, the Bolsheviks were in a position to claim power in the name of the soviets. During the night of November 6, Bolshevik forces seized the Winter Palace, the seat of the provisional government. The government quickly collapsed with little bloodshed.

This overthrow of the provisional government coincided with a meeting in Petrograd of the all-Russian Congress of Soviets, which represented local soviets from all over the country. Outwardly, Lenin turned over the power of the provisional government to the Congress of Soviets. The real power, however, passed to a Council of People’s Commissars, headed by Lenin.

The Bolsheviks, who soon renamed themselves the Communists, still had a long way to go. Lenin had promised peace, and that, he realized, would not be an easy task. It would mean the humiliating loss of much Russian territory. There was no real choice, however.

On March 3, 1918, Lenin signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany and gave up eastern Poland, Ukraine, Finland, and the Baltic provinces. To his critics, Lenin argued that it made no difference. The spread of the socialist revolution throughout Europe would make the treaty largely irrelevant. In any case, he had promised peace to the Russian people. Real peace did not come, however, because the country soon sank into civil war.

Triumph of the Communists

How had Lenin and the Communists triumphed in the civil war over what seemed to be overwhelming forces? One reason was that the Red Army was a well-disciplined fighting force. This was largely due to the organizational genius of Leon Trotsky. As commissar of war, Trotsky reinstated the draft and insisted on rigid discipline. Soldiers who deserted or refused to obey orders were executed on the spot.

Furthermore, the disunity of the anti-Communist forces weakened their efforts. Political differences created distrust among the Whites and prevented them from cooperating effectively with one another. Some Whites insisted on restoring the czarist regime. Others believed that only a more liberal and democratic program had any chance of success.

Civil War in Russia

Many people were opposed to the new Bolshevik, or Communist, regime. These people included not only groups loyal to the czar but also liberals and anti-Leninist socialists. These groups were joined by the Allies, who were extremely concerned about the Communist takeover. The Allies sent thousands of troops to various parts of Russia in the hope of bringing Russia back into the war. The Allied forces rarely fought on Russian soil, but they did give material aid to anti-Communist forces.

Between 1918 and 1921, the Communist (Red) Army was forced to fight on many fronts against these opponents. The first serious threat to the Communists came from Siberia. Here an anti-Communist (White) force attacked westward and advanced almost to the Volga River before being stopped.

Attacks also came from the Ukrainians in the southwest and from the Baltic regions. In mid-1919, White forces swept through Ukraine and advanced almost to Moscow before being pushed back.

By 1920, however, the major White forces had been defeated and Ukraine retaken. The next year, the Communist regime regained control over the independent nationalist governments in Georgia, Russian Armenia, and Azerbaijan (A• zuhr•BY•JAHN).

The royal family was another victim of the civil war. After the czar abdicated, he, his wife, and their five children had been taken into captivity. In April 1918, they were moved to Ekaterinburg, a mining town in the Urals. On the night of July 16, members of the local soviet murdered the czar and his family and burned their bodies in a nearby mine shaft.

Identifying Who opposed the new Bolshevik regime?

Describing What was the impact of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on Russia?
The Whites, then, had no common goal. The Communists, in contrast, had a single-minded sense of purpose. Inspired by their vision of a new socialist order, the Communists had the determination that comes from revolutionary zeal and convictions.

The Communists were also able to translate their revolutionary faith into practical instruments of power. A policy of war communism, for example, was used to ensure regular supplies for the Red Army. War communism meant government control of banks and most industries, the seizing of grain from peasants, and the centralization of state administration under Communist control.

Another Communist instrument was revolutionary terror. A new Red secret police—known as the Cheka—began a Red Terror aimed at the destruction of all those who opposed the new regime (much like the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution). The Red Terror added an element of fear to the Communist regime.

Finally, the presence of foreign armies on Russian soil enabled the Communists to appeal to the powerful force of Russian patriotism. At one point, over a hundred thousand foreign troops—mostly Japanese, British, American, and French—were stationed in Russia in support of anti-Communist forces. Their presence made it easy for the Communist government to call on patriotic Russians to fight foreign attempts to control the country.

By 1921, the Communists were in total command of Russia. In the course of the civil war, the Communist regime had transformed Russia into a centralized state dominated by a single party. The state was also largely hostile to the Allied powers, because the Allies had tried to help the Communists’ enemies in the civil war.

Reading Check
Contrasting Why did the Red Army prevail over the White Army?

“It was just 8:40 when a thundering wave of cheers announced the entrance of the presidium [executive committee], with Lenin—great Lenin—among them. A short, stocky figure, with a big head set down in his shoulders, bald and bulging. Little eyes, a snobbish nose, wide, generous mouth, and heavy chin. Dressed in shabby clothes, his trousers much too long for him. Unimpressive, to be the idol of a mob, loved and revered as perhaps few leaders in history have been. . . .

Now Lenin, gripping the edge of the reading stand, letting his little winking eyes travel over the crowd as he stood there waiting, apparently oblivious to the long-rolling ovation, which lasted several minutes. When it finished, he said simply, ‘We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order!’ Again that overwhelming human roar.

‘The first thing is the adoption of practical measures to realize peace. . . . We shall offer peace to the peoples of all the warring countries upon the basis of the Soviet terms—no annexations, no indemnities, and the right of self-determination of peoples. . . . This proposal of peace will meet with resistance on the part of the imperialist governments—we don’t fool ourselves on that score. But we hope that revolution will soon break out in all the warring countries; that is why we address ourselves especially to the workers of France, England and Germany. . . .’

‘The revolution of November 6th and 7th,’ he ended, ‘has opened the era of the Social Revolution. . . . The labour movement, in the name of peace and socialism, shall win, and fulfill its destiny. . . .’

There was something quiet and powerful in all this, which stirred the souls of men. It was understandable why people believed when Lenin spoke.”

—*John Reed, Ten Days That Shook the World*

**Analyzing Primary Sources**

1. Did John Reed agree or disagree with Lenin?
2. How do you know that Reed’s account of Lenin is biased?
End of the War

Guide to Reading

Main Ideas
• Combined Allied forces stopped the German offensive.
• Peace settlements brought political and territorial changes to Europe and created bitterness and resentment in several nations.

Key Terms
armistice, reparation, mandate

People to Identify
Erich von Ludendorff, Friedrich Ebert, David Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau

Places to Locate
Kiel, Alsace, Lorraine, Poland

Preview Questions
1. What were the key events in bringing about an end to the war?
2. What was the intended purpose of the League of Nations?

Reading Strategy
Organizing Information

At the Paris Peace Conference, the leaders of France, Britain, and the United States were motivated by different concerns. Using a chart, identify the national interests of each country as it approached the peace deliberations.

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<th>United States</th>
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Preview of Events

1917
1918
1919
1920

1918
Germany agrees to an armistice

1919
Treaty of Versailles signed at the Paris Peace Conference

Voices from the Past

On September 15, 1916, on the Western Front, a new weapon appeared:

We heard strange throbbing noises, and lumbering slowly towards us came three huge mechanical monsters such as we had never seen before. My first impression was that they looked ready to topple on their noses, but their tails and the two little wheels at the back held them down and kept them level. . . . Instead of going on to the German lines the three tanks assigned to us straddled our front line, stopped and then opened up a murderous machine-gun fire. . . . They finally realized they were on the wrong trench and moved on, frightening the Germans out of their wits and making them scuttle like frightened rabbits.

—Eyewitness to History, John Carey, ed., 1987

The tank played a role in bringing an end to World War I and foreshadowed a new kind of warfare.

The Last Year of the War

The year 1917 had not been a good one for the Allies. Allied offensives on the Western Front had been badly defeated. The Russian Revolution, which began in November 1917, led to Russia’s withdrawal from the War a few months later. The cause of the Central Powers looked favorable, although war weariness was beginning to take its toll.

On the positive side, the entry of the United States into the war in 1917 gave the Allies a much-needed psychological boost, along with fresh men and material. In 1918, American troops would prove crucial.
A New German Offensive  For Germany, the withdrawal of the Russians offered new hope for a successful end to the war. Germany was now free to concentrate entirely on the Western Front. Erich von Ludendorff, who guided German military operations, decided to make one final military gamble—a grand offensive in the west to break the military stalemate.

The German attack was launched in March 1918. By April, German troops were within about 50 miles (80 km) of Paris. However, the German advance was stopped at the Second Battle of the Marne on July 18. French, Moroccan, and American troops (140,000 fresh American troops had just arrived), supported by hundreds of tanks, threw the Germans back over the Marne. Ludendorff’s gamble had failed.

With more than a million American troops pouring into France, Allied forces began a steady advance toward Germany. On September 29, 1918, General Ludendorff informed German leaders that the war was lost. He demanded that the government ask for peace at once.

Collapse and Armistice  German officials soon discovered that the Allies were unwilling to make peace with the autocratic imperial government of Germany. Reforms were begun to create a liberal government, but these efforts came too late for the exhausted and angry German people.

On November 3, sailors in the town of Kiel, in northern Germany, mutinied. Within days, councils of workers and soldiers were forming throughout northern Germany and taking over civilian and military offices. William II gave in to public pressure and left the country on November 9.

After William II’s departure, the Social Democrats under Friedrich Ebert announced the creation of a democratic republic. Two days later, on November 11, 1918, the new German government signed an armistice (a truce, an agreement to end the fighting).

"The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies."

_Treaty of Versailles, Article 231, 1919_

"None of the powers wanted a European War. . . . But the verdict of the Versailles Treaty that Germany and her allies were responsible for the War, in view of the evidence now available, is historically unsound. It should therefore be revised."

—Sidney Bradshaw Fay  
*Origins of the World War, 1930*
The empire had been replaced by the independent republics of Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, along with the large monarchical state called Yugoslavia. Rivalries among the nations that succeeded Austria-Hungary would weaken eastern Europe for the next 80 years.

The empire had been replaced by the independent republics of Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, along with the large monarchical state called Yugoslavia. Rivalries among the nations that succeeded Austria-Hungary would weaken eastern Europe for the next 80 years.

Reading Check Describing What happened within Germany after the armistice?

The Peace Settlements

In January 1919, representatives of 27 victorious Allied nations met in Paris to make a final settlement of the Great War. Over a period of years, the reasons for fighting World War I had changed dramatically. When European nations had gone to war in 1914 they sought territorial gains. By the beginning of 1918, more idealistic reasons were also being expressed.

Wilson’s Proposals

No one expressed these idealistic reasons better than the U.S. president, Woodrow Wilson. Even before the end of the war, Wilson outlined “Fourteen Points” to the United States Congress—his basis for a peace settlement that he believed justified the enormous military struggle being waged.

Wilson’s proposals for a truly just and lasting peace included reaching the peace agreements openly rather than through secret diplomacy; reducing armaments (military forces or weapons) to a “point consistent with domestic safety”; and ensuring self-determination (the right of each people to have its own nation).

Wilson portrayed World War I as a people’s war against “absolutism and militarism.” These two enemies of liberty, he argued, could be eliminated only by creating democratic governments and a “general association of nations.” This association would guarantee “political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.”

Wilson became the spokesperson for a new world order based on democracy and international cooperation. When he arrived in Europe for the peace conference, he was enthusiastically cheered by many Europeans. Wilson soon found, however, that more practical motives guided other states.

The Paris Peace Conference

Delegates met in Paris in early 1919 to determine the peace settlement. At the Paris Peace Conference, complications became obvious. For one thing, secret treaties and agreements that had been made before the war had raised

Revolutionary Forces

The war was over, but the revolutionary forces it had set in motion in Germany were not yet exhausted. A group of radical socialists, unhappy with the moderate policies of the Social Democrats, formed the German Communist Party in December 1918. A month later, the Communists tried to seize power in Berlin.

The new Social Democratic government, backed by regular army troops, crushed the rebels and murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht (LEEP-KNEHKT), leaders of the German Communists. A similar attempt at Communist revolution in the city of Munich, in southern Germany, was also crushed.

The new German republic had been saved from radical revolution. The attempt at revolution, however, left the German middle class with a deep fear of communism.

Austria-Hungary, too, experienced disintegration and revolution. As war weariness took hold of the empire, ethnic groups increasingly sought to achieve their independence. By the time the war ended, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was no more.

“In estimating the order of guilt of the various countries we may safely say that the only direct and immediate responsibility for the World War falls upon Serbia, France and Russia, with the guilt about equally divided.”

—Harry Elmer Barnes
The Genesis of the World War, 1927

“As Germany willed and coveted the Austro-Serbian war and, in her confidence in her military superiority, deliberately faced the risk of a conflict with Russia and France, her leaders must bear a substantial share of the historical responsibility for the outbreak of general war in 1914.”

—Fritz Fischer,
Germany’s Aims in the First World War, 1961

You Decide

1. Write a quote of your own that reflects your views on which nation caused World War I. Support your quote with passages from the text.
the hopes of European nations for territorial gains. These hopes could not be totally ignored, even if they did conflict with the principle of self-determination put forth by Wilson.

National interests also complicated the deliberations of the Paris Peace Conference. David Lloyd George, prime minister of Great Britain, had won a decisive victory in elections in December of 1918. His platform was simple: make the Germans pay for this dreadful war.

France’s approach to peace was chiefly guided by its desire for national security. To Georges Clemenceau (KLEH•muhn•SOH), the premier of France, the French people had suffered the most from German aggression. The French desired revenge and security against future German aggression. Clemenceau wanted Germany stripped of all weapons, vast German payments—reparations—to cover the costs of the war, and a separate Rhineland as a buffer state between France and Germany.

The most important decisions at the Paris Peace Conference were made by Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George. Italy, as one of the Allies, was considered one of the so-called Big Four powers. However, it played a smaller role than the other key powers—the United States, France, and Great Britain, called the Big Three. Germany was not invited to attend, and Russia could not be present because of its civil war.

In view of the many conflicting demands at the peace conference, it was no surprise that the Big Three quarreled. Wilson wanted to create a world organization, the League of Nations, to prevent future wars. Clemenceau and Lloyd George wanted to punish Germany. In the end, only compromise made it possible to achieve a peace settlement.

Wilson’s wish that the creation of an international peacekeeping organization be the first order of business was granted. On January 25, 1919, the conference accepted the idea of a League of Nations. In return, Wilson agreed to make compromises on territorial arrangements. He did so because he believed that the League could later fix any unfair settlements.

Clemenceau also compromised to obtain some guarantees for French security. He gave up France’s wish for a separate Rhineland and instead accepted a defensive alliance with Great Britain and the United States. The U.S. Senate refused to ratify this agreement, which weakened the Versailles peace settlement.

**The Treaty of Versailles** The final peace settlement of Paris consisted of five separate treaties with the defeated nations—Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The Treaty of Versailles with Germany, signed at Versailles near Paris, on June 28, 1919, was by far the most important.

The Germans considered it a harsh peace. They were especially unhappy with Article 231, the so-called War Guilt Clause, which declared that Germany (and Austria) were responsible for starting the war. The treaty ordered Germany to pay reparations for all the damage to which the Allied governments and their people had been subjected as a result of the war “imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.”

The military and territorial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles also angered the Germans. Germany had to reduce its army to a hundred thousand men, cut back its navy, and eliminate its air force. Alsace and Lorraine, taken by the Germans from France in 1871, were now returned. Sections of eastern Germany were awarded to a new Polish state.

German land along both sides of the Rhine was made a demilitarized zone and stripped of all weapons and fortifications. This, it was hoped, would serve as a barrier to any future German military moves westward against France. Outraged by the “dictated peace,” the new German government complained but, unwilling to risk a renewal of the war, they accepted the treaty.
A New Map of Europe  As a result of the war, the Treaty of Versailles, and the separate peace treaties made with the other Central Powers—Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey—the map of Eastern Europe was largely redrawn. Both the German and Russian empires lost much territory in eastern Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Empire disappeared.

New nation-states emerged from the lands of these three empires: Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Hungary. New territorial arrangements were also made in the Balkans. Romania acquired additional lands from Russia, Hungary, and Bulgaria. Serbia formed the nucleus of a new state, called Yugoslavia, which combined Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

The Paris Peace Conference was supposedly guided by the principle of self-determination. However, the mixtures of peoples in eastern Europe made it impossible to draw boundaries along neat ethnic lines. Compromises had to be made, sometimes to satisfy the national interests of the victors. France, for example, had lost Russia as its major ally on Germany’s eastern border. Thus, France wanted to strengthen and expand Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania as much as possible. Those states could then serve as barriers against Germany and Communist Russia.

As a result of compromises, almost every eastern European state was left with ethnic minorities: Germans in Poland; Hungarians, Poles, and Germans in Czechoslovakia; Hungarians in Romania, and the
 combination of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Albanians in Yugoslavia. The problem of ethnic minorities within nations would lead to later conflicts.

Yet another centuries-old empire—the Ottoman Empire—was broken up by the peace settlement. To gain Arab support against the Ottoman Turks during the war, the Western Allies had promised to recognize the independence of Arab states in the Ottoman Empire. Once the war was over, however, the Western nations changed their minds. France took control of Lebanon and Syria, and Britain received Iraq and Palestine.

These acquisitions were officially called mandates. Woodrow Wilson had opposed the outright annexation of colonial territories by the Allies. As a result, the peace settlement created the mandate system. According to this system, a nation officially governed another nation as a mandate on behalf of the League of Nations but did not own the territory.

The War’s Legacy  World War I shattered the liberal, rational society that had existed in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe. The death of almost 10 million people, as well as the incredible destruction caused by the war, undermined the whole idea of progress. Entire populations had participated in a devastating slaughter.

World War I was a total war—one that involved a complete mobilization of resources and people. As a result, the power of governments over the lives of their citizens increased. Freedom of the press and speech were limited in the name of national security. World War I made the practice of strong central authority a way of life.

The turmoil created by the war also seemed to open the door to even greater insecurity. Revolutions broke up old empires and created new states, which led to new problems. The hope that Europe and the rest of the world would return to normalcy was, however, soon dashed.

Identifying What clause in the Treaty of Versailles particularly angered the Germans?
Interpreting Military Movements on Maps

Why Learn This Skill?
Although wars begin over many different issues, they end as fights to control territory. Because wars are basically fought over land, maps are particularly useful tools for seeing the “big picture” of a war.

Learning the Skill
The map key is essential in interpreting military maps. The key explains what the map’s colors and symbols represent. Use the following steps to study the key:

- Determine the meanings of the colors on the map. Usually, colors represent different sides in the conflict.
- Identify all symbols. These may include symbols for battle sites, victories, and types of military units and equipment.
- Study the arrows, which show the direction of military movements. Because these movements occur over time, some maps give dates showing when and where troops advanced and retreated.

Once you have studied the key and the map, follow the progress of the campaign that is shown. Notice where each side began, in which direction it moved, where the two sides fought, and which side claimed victory.

Practicing the Skill
The map on this page shows the Middle East front during World War I. Study the map and then answer the following questions.

- On which side did Arabia and Egypt fight?
- Who won the battle at the Dardanelles?
- Describe the movement of the Central Powers offensives.
- When did the Allies win the most battles in the Middle East?

Applying the Skill
Choose a military map from this text or select one from another source. Study the map selection carefully. Write a paragraph about the war or conflict as it is depicted in the map. You should respond to issues such as where most of the fighting occurred; the year in which the most significant advance was made, and by whom; and whether or not there was a decisive victory by either side. Attach a copy of the map to your report.

Glencoe’s Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 2, provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.
Using Key Terms

1. The practice of requiring young people to join the military, which was followed by many nations before World War I, was called _____.

2. Before World War I, many European nations completed the _____ of their military by assembling troops and supplies for war.

3. The development of _____ baffled military leaders who had been trained to fight wars of movement.

4. World War I became a _____, or war based on wearing the other side down by constant attacks and heavy losses.

5. World War I involved a complete mobilization of resources and people that affected the lives of all citizens in the warring countries—a situation called _____.

6. European nations set up _____, or systems directed by government agencies to mobilize the entire resources of their nations.

7. Councils of workers and soldiers called _____ challenged the provisional government established after Nicholas II stepped down.

8. _____ is the term used to describe the Communists’ centralization of control over its economy.

9. Germany was required by the Treaty of Versailles to make payments called _____ to the nations that won the war.

Reviewing Key Facts

10. **Government** How did the British government try to eliminate opposition from the people who were opposed to World War I?

11. **Culture** Explain the social changes promised by the Bolshevik slogans.

12. **History** State the significance of the following dates: 1914, 1917, and 1918.

13. **Culture** Describe the role and contribution of women during World War I. What was their status after the war?

14. **History** Why were Alexandra and Rasputin able to control the czar’s government during much of World War I?

15. **Government** How did international alliances help to draw nations into World War I?

16. **History** Why was a “breakthrough” such an important military goal during the war?

17. **Government** What did the creation of a League of Nations have to do with Woodrow Wilson’s willingness to sign the Treaty of Versailles?

18. **History** Why did Russia withdraw from the war? How did that affect Germany?

19. **Science and Technology** What innovations in military warfare occurred during World War I?

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**Chapter Summary**

The outline below shows four themes of the chapter.

**Cooperation: Alliance System**
- Two loose alliances form in Europe: the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) and the Triple Entente (France, Great Britain, and Russia).
- Alliances draw France and Great Britain into a conflict in which they have no direct interest.

**Conflict: World War I**
- Combat takes the forms of trench warfare on the Western Front, a war of movement on the Eastern Front, and German submarine warfare in the waters surrounding Great Britain.
- For the first time in history, airplanes are used for reconnaissance, combat, and bombing.

**Revolution: Russian Revolution**
- Military and economic crises lead to a spontaneous revolution that ends the reign of the czars.
- The Bolsheviks overthrow the provisional government and establish a Communist regime.

**Internationalism: Peace of Paris**
- The peace is a compromise between international and national interests.
- Germany’s reparation payments, military reductions, and territorial losses create a lasting bitterness that helps spark World War II.
Analyzing Maps and Charts

Using the chart above, answer the following questions:

27. Which of the Big Three nations at the Treaty of Versailles wanted to punish Germany for World War I?

28. What was the effect of the Treaty of Versailles on Germany’s military?

29. What territory did France regain after the war?

Critical Thinking

20. Decision Making Compare Lenin’s beliefs and goals with those of Woodrow Wilson. Which leader had the greater impact on world history? Why?

21. Analyzing Why do some people feel that it is unlikely that a lasting peace could have been created at the end of World War I?

Writing about History

22. Persuasive Writing Both Britain and the United States passed laws during the war to silence opposition and censor the press. Are the ideals of a democratic government consistent with such laws? Provide arguments for and against.

Analyzing Sources

Reread the quote below, which appears on page 719, then answer the questions below.

“...I cannot tell you how exasperated people are getting here at the continual worry which that little country [Serbia] causes to Austria under encouragement from Russia... It will be lucky if Europe succeeds in avoiding war as a result of the present crisis.”

23. Where is Vienna located? Is the ambassador neutral in his comments or does he favor one country over another?

24. Compare the ways in which the actual events that started World War I mirror this ambassador’s concerns.

Applying Technology Skills

25. Interpreting the Past Use the Internet to research the total costs of World War I. Determine how many people, both military and civilian, were killed or wounded on both sides. Also find the monetary costs of the war for both sides. Create a table that clearly shows your findings.

Making Decisions

26. Some historians argue that the heavy psychological and economic penalties placed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles created the conditions for World War II. How might the treaty have been written to alleviate worldwide concern over German militarism without exacting such a heavy toll?