

Ch. 16 Section 2 Notes

I. 1914 to 1915: Illusions and Stalemate (pages 503–505)

- A.** The events of August 1914 shattered two previously held ideas: that war was not worth fighting and that diplomats could prevent war.
- B.** Government **propaganda**—ideas spread to influence public opinion—had stirred up national hatreds before the war. When the war began, propaganda was used to urge people to defend their own country. The majority of people thought their country's cause was just.
- C.** All European wars since 1815 had only lasted a few weeks. In August, 1914, most people thought the war would be over by Christmas.
- D.** On the Western Front, Germany swept through Belgium into northern France and was stopped a short distance from Paris at the First Battle of the **Marne**. The Western Front turned into a stalemate, with neither side able to push the other out of the system of **trench warfare** they had begun. The trenches stretched from the English Channel nearly to the Swiss border. For four years both sides remained in almost the same positions.
- E.** On the Eastern Front, the war was far more mobile. The Russian army moved into eastern Germany but was defeated at the Battle of **Tannenberg** and the Battle of **Masurian Lakes**, making Russia no longer a threat to invade Germany. The Russians defeated Austria-Hungary and dislodged them from Serbia. The Italians, who had been allied with Germany and Austria-Hungary, broke their alliance in 1915 and attacked Austria-Hungary. The Germans came to the aid of the Austrians and together they defeated the Russians in several battles and drove them back. About 2.5 million Russians had been killed, captured, or wounded. The Russians were almost out of the war. After defeating Serbia, Germany turned its attention back to the Western Front.

II. 1916 to 1917: The Great Slaughter (pages 505–506)

- A.** The trenches on the Western Front included massive tangles of barbed wire, machinegun nests, gun batteries, and heavy artillery. The soldiers lived in holes in the ground. The territory between the two sides was called no-man's-land.
- B.** Military leaders did not know how to fight trench warfare. They were used to mobile battles. The only plan they could devise was to order masses of soldiers to attack the other side and try to break through.
- C.** Each side tried this tactic. They would begin with heavy artillery and then send in thousands of troops. The men who attacked were completely exposed to machine-gun fire. Millions of young men died in these attacks and no breakthrough came. At **Verdun**, France, in 1916, 700,000 men were killed in 10 months. World War I had become a **war of attrition**, where each side tried to wear the other down.
- D.** Airplanes for war were used for the first time in World War I. By the end of 1915, airplanes spotted enemy positions from the air. Later they attacked ground targets. In time, machine guns were mounted on airplanes and they fought each other for control of the air.
- E.** The Germans used their giant gas-filled airships to bomb points in Britain, but stopped when the British realized that they could easily shoot down the airships.

III. Widening of the War (page 506)

- A.** Because the war in the trenches was bogged down, both sides tried to get new allies and to widen the war. In November, 1914, Russia, Great Britain, and France (the Allies) declared war on the Ottoman Empire. In 1915, they tried to open a Balkan front by attacking **Gallipoli**, near Constantinople. Then Bulgaria entered the war on the side of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire (the Central Powers). The Allies withdrew from Gallipoli after a disastrous campaign.
- B.** Italy opened up a front against Austria-Hungary on the side of the Allies.
- C.** In 1918, British forces from Egypt defeated the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East. They used troops from Australia, India, and New Zealand.
- D.** The Allies seized German colonies in the rest of the world. Japan, an ally of Britain, seized German-held islands in the Pacific Ocean.

IV. Entry of the United States (pages 507–508)

- A.** The United States tried to stay neutral in the first years of World War I. This became more difficult as the war dragged on.
- B.** The naval war between Britain and Germany became the reason why the United States joined the war. In order to keep supplies from reaching their enemies, each country enforced a naval blockade of the other. German submarines sank both military and civilian ships, including passenger ships. This practice was called unrestricted submarine warfare.
- C.** In 1915, the Germans sank the British ship *Lusitania*, killing 1,100 civilians and causing strong protests from the American government. The Germans stopped unrestricted submarine warfare for some time until German naval officers such as **Admiral Holtzendorff** convinced the emperor to resume the practice.
- D.** The Germans did not think that the United States would enter the war before the British were starved. However, in April 1917, the United States responded to unrestricted submarine warfare by declaring war on Germany. Though large numbers of American troops did not arrive until 1918, the Allies were given a powerful psychological boost as well as money and supplies.

V. The Home Front: The Impact of Total War (pages 508–509)

- A.** World War I became a **total war** that required a complete mobilization of people and resources. It demanded the total commitment of the countries involved, soldiers and civilians alike. The war had an enormous impact on everyone's life.
- B.** As the war dragged on, governments had to increase their powers in order to obtain the manpower and supplies they needed. Millions of men were drafted into the military. Governments set up planned economies, which included economic controls, food and material rationing, regulated transportation, and controls on imports and exports.
- C.** Governments and leaders such as U.S. president **Woodrow Wilson** saw all citizens as part of the war effort.
- D.** As the casualties mounted in the war, public support for the war waned. Authoritarian governments used force to keep people working. Other governments passed new laws to severely restrict dissent, exercised increased control of news sources, and tried to keep morale up with new propaganda techniques.
- E.** Women assumed new roles during World War I, taking over jobs previously held only by men, including factory and trucking jobs. These changes were generally seen as temporary, lasting only while men were away fighting the war. One positive result of women's role in the war was that in Germany, Austria, and the United States they were given the right to vote not long after the war ended. Women in Britain were given the right to vote in 1918 before the end of the war.