

Questions

1. Under what circumstances did Roosevelt propose to intervene in the affairs of Caribbean nations? Why would he abstain from intervention?
2. What was Roosevelt's view of Caribbean nations? Of the United States in relation to those nations?
3. What kind of precedent was involved in this proclamation of "an international police power"?

21-9 The Zimmermann Telegram (1917)

Arthur Zimmermann

Arthur Zimmermann, the German foreign minister, proposed an alliance between Germany and Mexico to Mexican president Venustiano Carranza. The proposal was dispatched by telegram on January 19, 1917, but was intercepted, deciphered, and then made public on March 1, 1917. News of Zimmermann's offer angered U.S. citizens, especially those in states that bordered Mexico, and Wilson cited the proposed alliance in his war message to Congress as evidence that imperial Germany wanted to "stir up enemies against us at our very doors."

Source: "The Zimmermann Telegram Decoded," Decimal File 862.20212/69 (1910-1929), General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives.

We intend to begin unrestricted submarine warfare on the first of February. We shall endeavor in spite of this to keep the United States neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal of alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support, and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The settlement in detail is left to you.

You will inform the President [of Mexico] of the above

most secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the United States is certain and add the suggestion that he should, on his own initiative, invite Japan to immediate adherence and at the same time mediate between Japan and ourselves.

Please call the President's attention to the fact that the unrestricted employment of our submarines now offers the prospect of compelling England to make peace within a few months. Acknowledge receipt.

Zimmermann

Questions

1. What was to be the basis of a German-Mexican alliance?
2. What historical grievance were the Germans trying to exploit?

Questions for Further Thought

1. In what ways could John Hay's Open Door notes (Document 21-7) and the Roosevelt Corollary (Document 21-8) have antagonized the very people they ostensibly sought to protect? How might such feelings reveal themselves?
2. A number of factors, among them economic and strategic considerations and the presence or absence of other regional and outside powers, influence a nation's foreign policy. What factors influenced American foreign policy in the Far East? in the Caribbean?

The United States in World War I

When the Great War began in August 1914, both the Allies and the Central Powers expected victory within a matter of weeks. No one anticipated a war that would last four years and consume 14.5 million lives.

In the Napoleonic Wars a century before, opposing armies had fired at one another with muskets across an open field. In 1914, the tactics remained largely the same, but the weapons had changed profoundly. With the use of machine guns and high-powered rifles, frontal assaults caused ruinous casualties. Combat on the Western Front quickly evolved into trench warfare. Now opposing armies faced one another from the confines of a 25,000-mile network of trenches protected by barbed wire, running across Belgium and France. Periodically, an army would mount an offensive, with soldiers pouring into the disputed no-man's land in attempt to achieve a knockout blow. Casualties in a single battle often numbered in the hundreds of thousands on each side. Poison gas and artillery barrages added to the horror of a soldier's existence.

The war did not directly affect the United States at first, as President Woodrow Wilson tried to maintain a policy of neutrality. Although cultural ties and aggressive British propaganda generated sympathy for the Allies, such support was not universal. German Americans tended to support the old country, and Irish Americans were cool to the English, who appeared to be more interested in liberating Belgium than in freeing Ireland. Leading progressives, socialists, and pacifists all argued against the war, and Henry Ford financed the voyage of the "peace ship," the passengers on which hoped to negotiate an end to the conflict. But circumstances conspired against Wilson. As the British navy swept the German merchant marine from the Atlantic, American trade with the Allies grew.

The Germans attempted to neutralize this trade advantage through U-boat, or submarine, warfare, although there was a high political cost. The unannounced attacks struck many as uncivilized, even cowardly, especially when the targets included passenger liners, such as the *Lusitania*. In today's terms, the "collateral damage" was considered too high. Indeed, on different occasions in 1915 and 1916, President Wilson convinced the Germans to abandon unrestricted submarine warfare. But in January 1917, as Germany's position grew worse, the U-boat attacks were resumed on an unrestricted basis. This was an intolerable situation and four months later Congress declared war on Germany.

The war transformed American society, at least for its duration, and government grew in response to the demands of this global conflict. Major agencies were created to channel the activities of government officials, civilian and military, and the business, agriculture, and labor sectors. Among these agencies were the War Industries Board, which coordinated the wartime mobilization of industry; the National War Labor Board; the Food Administration; the Railroad War Board; and the Committee on Public Information, the government's propaganda arm. Business was the best organized of the private-interest groups, but the labor movement benefitted from wartime prosperity and from favorable decisions of the War Labor Board relative to union organization, working hours, overtime pay, and equal pay for women. The wartime labor shortage increased opportunities for everyone, including African Americans, Mexican Americans, and women. And women not only saw economic gains. President Wilson's call to "make the world safe for democracy" helped set the stage, after decades of agitation and struggle, for the enfranchisement of women with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Document 21-10 is Woodrow Wilson's April 2, 1917, war message to Congress. Document 21-11 is drawn from a speech by Senator Robert M. La Follette opposing the declaration of war. Document 21-12 is a reproduction of a U.S. propaganda poster. In Document 21-13, Hervey Allen describes combat on the Western Front. Document 21-14 excerpts the report of Bernard M. Baruch, chairman of the War Industries Board, on the board's activities. Document 22-15 is from George Creel's history of the Committee on

Public Information. In Document 21-16, Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), along with Nettie Rogers Shuler, reflects on why it took the United States so long to realize women's suffrage.

21-10 War Message to Congress (1917)

Woodrow Wilson

Running on the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War," Woodrow Wilson defeated the Republican challenger, Charles Evans Hughes, in the November 1916 presidential election. However, spurred by the sequence of events, Wilson started his second term by reluctantly reversing his campaign position. On April 2, 1917, he called the newly elected Congress into a special session and asked for a declaration of war. With a Senate vote of 82-6 and a House vote of 373-50, Congress complied.

Source: Woodrow Wilson, Declaration of War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917; Records of the United States Senate; Record Group 46; National Archives.

Gentlemen of the Congress:

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the third of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the first day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meagre and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed. The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved

and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meagre enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded. This minimum of right the German Government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world. I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of non-combatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind.

It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral

and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

When I addressed the Congress on the twenty-sixth of February last I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavour to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all. The German Government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned their right to defend. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be. Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual; it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents. There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs: they cut to the very roots of human life.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the governments now at war with Germany, and, as incident to that, the extension to those governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as possible be added to theirs. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the navy in all respects but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war at least five hundred thousand men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed and can be handled in training. It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the Government, sustained, I hope, so far as they can equitably be sustained by the present generation, by well conceived taxation.

I say sustained so far as may be equitable by taxation because it seems to me that it would be most unwise to base the credits which will now be necessary entirely on money borrowed. It is our duty, I most respectfully urge, to protect our people so far as we may against the very serious hardships and evils which would be likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.

In carrying out the measures by which these things are to be accomplished we should keep constantly in mind the wisdom of interfering as little as possible in our own preparation and in the equipment of our own military forces with the duty, — for it will be a very practical duty, — of supplying the nations already at war with Germany with the materials which they can obtain only from us or by our assistance. They are in the field and we should help them in every way to be effective there.

I shall take the liberty of suggesting, through the several executive departments of the Government, for the consideration of your committees, measures for the accomplishment of the several objects I have mentioned. I hope that it will be your pleasure to deal with them as having been framed after very careful thought by the branch of the Government upon which the responsibility of conducting the war and safeguarding the nation will most directly fall.

While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world what our motives and our objects are. My own thought has not been driven from its habitual and normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months, and I do not believe that the thought of the nation has been altered or clouded by them. I have exactly the same things in mind now that I had in mind when I addressed the Senate on the

twenty-second of January last; the same that I had in mind when I addressed the Congress on the third of February and on the twenty-sixth of February. Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbour states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honour, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own. . . .

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured

security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretence about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them. . . .

I have said nothing of the governments allied with the Imperial Government of Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right and our honour. The Austro-Hungarian Government has, indeed, avowed its unqualified endorsement and acceptance of the reckless and lawless submarine warfare adopted now without disguise by the Imperial German Government, and it has therefore not been possible for this Government to receive Count Tarnowski, the Ambassador recently accredited to this Government by the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary; but that Government has not actually engaged in warfare against citizens of the United States on the seas, and I take the liberty, for the present at least, of postponing a discussion of our relations with the authorities at Vienna. We enter this war only where we are clearly forced into it because there are no other means of defending our rights. . . .

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, Gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

Questions

1. Outline Wilson's case against Germany.
2. How did Wilson frame the United States' involvement in the conflict? According to Wilson, what were Americans to fight for?
3. In what ways does this speech foreshadow Wilson's Fourteen Points and his support for the League of Nations?

21-11 Anti-War Speech (1917)

Robert M. La Follette

In declaring America's war aims to be idealistic, not selfish, President Woodrow Wilson sought to distinguish between Germany's leaders and the German people, with whom the United States had "no quarrel," and for whom only felt "sympathy and friendship" (Document 21-10). Among the six senators and fifty representatives who would have nothing of Wilson's case for war, none was more sharply critical than Senator Robert M. La Follette (1855–1925). In the following speech, given on April 4, La Follette rebuts the president point by point.

Source: From *Congressional Record*, Senate, 65th Congress, 1st Session (April 4, 1917), 227–229, 233, 234.

In his message of April 2 the President says:

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things [referring to German submarine methods of warfare] would in fact be done by any Government that had heretofore subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the sea, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up with meager enough results indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view at least of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded.

The recognition by the President that Germany had always heretofore subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations is a most important statement. Does it not suggest a question as to why it is that Germany has departed from those practices in the present war? What the President had so admirably stated about international law and the painful stage by which it has been builded up is absolutely true. But in this connection would it not be well to say also that it was England, not Germany, who refused to obey the declaration of London, which represented the most humane ideas and was the best statement of the rules of international law as applied to naval warfare? Keep that in mind. Would it not have been fair to say, and to keep in mind, that Germany

offered to abide by those principles and England refused; that in response to our request Germany offered to cease absolutely from the use of submarines in what we characterized an unlawful manner if England would cease from equally palpable and cruel violations of international law in her conduct of naval warfare?

The President in his message of April 2 says:

The present German warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations.

Again referring to Germany's warfare he says:

There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind.

Is it not a little peculiar that if Germany's warfare is against all nations the United States is the only nation that regards it necessary to declare war on that account? If it is true, as the President says, that "there has been no discrimination," that Germany has treated every neutral as she has treated us, is it not peculiar that no other of the great nations of the earth seem to regard Germany's conduct in this war as a cause for entering into it? Are we the only nation jealous of our rights? Are we the only nation insisting upon the protection of our citizens? Does not the strict neutrality maintained on the part of all the other nations of the earth suggest that possibly there is a reason for their action, and

that that reason is that Germany's conduct under the circumstances does not merit from any nation which is determined to preserve its neutrality a declaration of war?

Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Spain, and all the great Republics of South America are quite as interested in this subject as we are, and yet they have refused to join with us in a combination against Germany. I venture to suggest also that the nations named, and probably others, have a somewhat better right to be heard than we, for by refusing to sell war-material and munitions to any of the belligerents they have placed themselves in a position where the suspicion which attaches to us of a desire for war profits can not attach to them.

On August 4, 1914, the Republic of Brazil declared the exportation of war material from Brazilian ports to any of these powers at war to be strictly forbidden, whether such exports be under the Brazilian flag or that of any other country.

In that connection I note the following dispatch from Buenos Aires, appearing in the Washington papers of yesterday:

President Wilson's war address was received here with interest, but no particular enthusiasm. . . . Government officials and politicians have adopted a cold shoulder toward the United States policy—an attitude apparently based on apprehension lest South American interests suffer.

The newspaper *Razon's* view was illustrative of this. "Does not the United States consider this an opportune time to consolidate the imperialistic policy everywhere north of Panama?" it said.

This is the question that neutral nations the world over are asking. Are we seizing upon this war to consolidate and extend an imperialistic policy? We complain also because Mexico has turned the cold shoulder to us, and are wont to look for sinister reasons for her attitude. Is it any wonder that she should also turn the cold shoulder when she sees us unite with Great Britain, an empire founded upon her conquests and subjugation of weaker nations? There is no doubt that the sympathy of Norway, Sweden, and other countries close to the scene of war is already with Germany. It is apparent that they view with alarm the entrance into the European struggle of the stranger from across the sea. It is suggested by some that our entrance into the war will shorten it. It is my firm belief, based upon such information as I have, that our entrance into the war will not only prolong it, but that it will vastly extend its area by drawing in other nations.

In his message of April 2, the President said:

We have no quarrel with the German people—it was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war; it was not with their previous knowledge or approval.

Again he says:

We are, let me say again, sincere friends of the German people and shall desire nothing so much as the early reestablishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us.

At least, the German people, then, are not outlaws. What is the thing the President asks us to do to these German people of whom he speaks so highly and whose sincere friend he declares us to be?

Here is what he declares we shall do in this war. We shall undertake, he says—

The utmost practicable cooperation in council and action with the Governments now at war with Germany, and as an incident to that, the extension to those Governments of the most liberal financial credits in order that our resources may, so far as possible, be added to theirs.

"Practicable cooperation!" Practicable cooperation with England and her allies in starving to death the old men and women, the children, the sick and the maimed of Germany. The thing we are asked to do is the thing I have stated. It is idle to talk of a war upon a government only. We are leagued in this war, or it is the President's proposition that we shall be so leagued, with the hereditary enemies of Germany. Any war with Germany, or any other country for that matter, would be bad enough, but there are not words strong enough to voice my protest against the proposed combination with the entente allies. When we cooperate with those Governments we indorse their methods, we indorse the violations of international law by Great Britain, we indorse the shameful methods of warfare against which we have again and again protested in this war; we indorse her purpose to wreak upon the German people the animosities which for years her people have been taught to cherish against Germany; finally when the end comes, whatever it may be, we find ourselves in cooperation with our ally, Great Britain, and if we can not resist now the pressure she is exerting to carry us into the war, how can we hope to resist, then, the thousandfold greater pressure she will exert to bend us to her purposes and compel compliance with her demands?

We do not know what they are. We do not know what is in the minds of those who have made the compact, but we are to subscribe to it. We are irrevocably, by our votes here, to marry ourselves to a nondivorceable proposition veiled from us now. Once enlisted, once in the copartnership, we will be carried through with the purposes, whatever they may be, of which we now know nothing.

Sir, if we are to enter upon this war in the manner the President demands, let us throw pretense to the winds, let us be honest, let us admit that this is a ruthless war against not only Germany's army and her navy but against her civilian

population as well, and frankly state that the purpose of Germany's hereditary European enemies has become our purpose. . . .

Just a word of comment more upon one of the points in the President's address. He says that this is a war "for the things which we have always carried nearest to our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government." In many places throughout the address is this exalted sentiment given expression.

It is a sentiment peculiarly calculated to appeal to American hearts and, when accompanied by acts consistent with it, is certain to receive our support; but in this same connection, and strangely enough, the President says that we have become convinced that the German Government as it now exists—"Prussian autocracy" he calls it—can never again maintain friendly relations with us. His expression is that "Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend," and repeatedly throughout the address the suggestion is made that if the German people would overturn their Government it would probably be the way to peace. So true is this that the dispatches from London all hailed the message of the President as sounding the death knell of Germany's Government.

But the President proposes alliance with Great Britain, which, however liberty-loving its people, is a hereditary monarchy, with a hereditary ruler, with a hereditary House of Lords, with a hereditary landed system, with a limited and restricted suffrage for one class and a multiplied suffrage power for another, and with grinding industrial conditions for all the wageworkers. The President has not suggested that we make our support of Great Britain conditional to her granting home rule to Ireland, or Egypt, or India. We rejoice in the establishment of a democracy in Russia, but it will hardly be contended that if Russia was still an autocratic Government, we would not be asked to enter this alliance with her just the same. Italy and the lesser powers of Europe, Japan in the Orient; in fact, all of the countries with whom we are to enter into alliance, except France and newly revolutionized Russia, are still of the old order—and it will be generally conceded that no one of them has done as much for its people in the solution of municipal problems and in securing social and industrial reforms as Germany.

Is it not a remarkable democracy which leagues itself with allies already far overmatching in strength the German nation and holds out to such beleaguered nation the hope of peace only at the price of giving up their Government? I am not talking now of the merits or demerits of any government, but I am speaking of a profession of democracy that is linked in action with the most brutal and domineering use of autocratic power. Are the people of this country being so well represented in this war movement that we need to go abroad to give other people control of their governments? Will the President and the supporters of this war bill submit it to a vote of the people before the declaration of war goes

into effect? Until we are willing to do that, it illy becomes us to offer as an excuse for our entry into the war the unsupported claim that this war was forced upon the German people by their Government "without their previous knowledge or approval." . . .

With Germany likewise our relations were friendly. Many hundreds of thousands of the subjects of Germany had emigrated to this country, and they and their descendants had shown themselves to be in every way most worthy and desirable citizens. The great Civil War which saved the Union was successful largely through the services rendered by Germans, both as officers and as men serving in the ranks. B. A. Gould, in a work dealing with some of the phases of the Civil War, and prepared soon after its close, among other things, presented a table of the relative number of foreign-born soldiers in the Union Army. I quote from that table as follows:

English	45,508
Canadian	52,532
Irish	144,221
German	187,858
All other foreign born	48,410

Later and more careful investigation of the statistics show that there were in reality 216,000 native Germans in the Union Army, and, besides this, more than 300,000 Union soldiers who were born of German parents.

More than one-half a million of the men who carried the musket to keep this Government of ours undivided upon the map of the world were men who are now having their patriotism and loyalty to this country questioned, with secret-service men dogging their footsteps.

Who does not remember, among the most gallant and distinguished officers in the Union Army, Schurz, Sigel, Rosecrans, and scores of others? It is well to recall also that when President Lincoln issued his call for volunteers they volunteered much more largely from the German-settled States of the Middle West than from the war-mad States of the East. Is history to repeat itself?

The German people, either in this country or in the fatherland, need no tribute from me or from anyone else. In whatever land they have lived they have left a record of courage, loyalty, honesty, and high ideals second to no people which have ever inhabited this earth since the dawn of history. If the German people are less likely to be swept off their feet in the present crisis than some other nationalities, it is due to two facts. In the first place, they have a livelier appreciation of what war means than has the average American, and, in the second place, German speaking and reading people have had an opportunity to get both sides of the present controversy, which no one could possibly have, who has depended for his information solely on papers printed in English and English publications.

I have said that with the causes of the present war we have nothing to do. That is true. We certainly are not re-

sponsible for it. It originated from causes beyond the sphere of our influence and outside the realm of our responsibility. It is not inadmissible, however, to say that no responsible narrator of the events which have led up to this greatest of all wars has failed to hold that the Government of each country engaged in it is at fault for it. For my own part, I believe that this war, like nearly all others, originated in the selfish ambition and cruel greed of a comparatively few men in each Government who saw in war an opportunity for profit and power for themselves, and who were wholly indifferent to the awful suffering they knew that war would bring to the masses. The German people had been taught to believe that sooner or later war was inevitable with England and France and probably Russia allied against her. It is unfortunately true that there was much in the secret diplomacy of the years immediately preceding the breaking out of the war in 1914 to afford foundation for such belief. The secret treaty between France and England for the partition of Morocco, while making a public treaty with Germany, the terms of which were diametrically opposite to those of the secret treaty, did much to arouse the suspicion and hostility of the German people toward both France and England. . . .

At this point, sir, I say, with all deference but with the absolute certainty of conviction, that the present administra-

tion made a fatal mistake, and if war comes to this country with Germany for the present causes it will be due wholly to that mistake. The present administration has assumed and acted upon the policy that it could enforce to the very letter of the law the principles of international law against one belligerent and relax them as to the other. That thing no nation can do without losing its character as a neutral nation and without losing the rights that go with strict and absolute neutrality. . . .

Jefferson asserted that we could not permit one warring nation to curtail our neutral rights if we were not ready to allow her enemy the same privileges, and that any other course entailed the sacrifice of our neutrality.

That is the sensible, that is the logical position. No neutrality could ever have commanded respect if it was not based on that equitable and just proposition; and we from early in the war threw our neutrality to the winds by permitting England to make a mockery of it to her advantage against her chief enemy. Then we expect to say to that enemy, "You have got to respect my rights as a neutral." What is the answer? I say Germany has been patient with us. Standing strictly on her rights, her answer would be, "Maintain your neutrality; treat these other Governments warring against me as you treat me if you want your neutral rights respected."

Questions

1. What do you consider to be the strongest and weakest points of La Follette's argument against President Wilson's war message?
2. Why did La Follette and the president refer to the German people in positive terms? Might they have done so for somewhat different reasons?

21-12 Wartime Propaganda Poster (c. 1917)

Posters propagandized the war for a number of purposes, both specific and general—to encourage men to enlist in the armed forces, to encourage the purchase of government bonds, to ensure compliance with various wartime programs such as food conservation, and, above all, create support for the war effort. Note: Although the imagery in the poster is strikingly similar to that found in *King Kong*, the film classic did not appear until 1933.

Source: *Destroy This Mad Brute*, war poster. The Art Archive, Eileen Tweedy. Reference number: AA348779

Questions

1. In what ways does the poster portray traditional gender roles?
2. Based on the poster, what was the United States fighting for?
3. What else strikes you about the poster?



21-13 German Dugouts (1918)

Hervey Allen

Poet and novelist Hervey Allen (1888–1949) joined the National Guard after his graduation from the University of Pittsburgh in 1915. Before going to France, Allen served with the expeditionary force that pursued Pancho Villa in Mexico. The following excerpt from Allen's wartime diary, *Toward the Flame*, offers a firsthand account of soldiering on the Western Front.

Source: Excerpted from *Toward the Flame: A War Diary* (1934; University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968, 111–119). Copyright 1926, 1934 by Hervey Allen. Copyright 1954, 1962, by Ann Andrews Allen.

I awoke to hear the pleasant clinking of mess pans. The rain had stopped, but the forest was still dripping, and the mud was deep and peculiarly slippery. The captain and I crawled out, both about the same time, and made our way to the kitchen where a savory mess was being dished out, smoking hot gobs of bread and canned sweet potato, a favorite and frequent delicacy at the front. Paul and some of the other French soldiers were helping. By this time the men were happy again. A little rest and something to eat were doing wonders. The captain and I were not much behind the rest of the company as trenchermen, although I avoided eating much meat at the front.

We were issued beef in immense quantities, sometimes having to bury a whole quarter of it. It became tainted very easily, where of course there was no possible means of refrigeration. This meat ration came wrapped in burlap, generally reasonably fresh; but once open, it had to be carried around in the ration carts, and unless quickly cooked, it spoiled very rapidly, especially in those summer days along the Marne when the sun was hot.

Another thing which hastened the destruction of perishable food was the immense amount of decay all along the front. All those rotten woods were filled with dead horses, dead men, the refuse, excrement and the garbage of armies. The ground must have been literally alive with pus and decay germs. Scratch your hand, cut yourself in shaving, or get a little abrasion on your foot, and almost anything could happen. Bichloride tablets were invaluable; I always threw one into my canvas basin for good luck.

During the meal, Lieutenant Scott, who had been assistant division gas officer for a while, but who had now returned to the company, joined us, and mentioned that he was making all arrangements for a new gas alarm, having found some empty brass shells used for that purpose "over there" — and he pointed to a cape of trees that ran out from a wood-island into the surrounding fields.

That part of the world consisted of a great level plateau, prairie-like fields interspersed with woods, the "bois" of the French maps, like islands of all sizes and shapes. We were then camped in one of these wood "islands," and across "there," where the lieutenant had pointed, was another "island" in which were the remnants of a German battery. The captain and I strolled across after dinner, letting the warm sun dry us off.

The guns were still in their pits, as "Fritz" had left very suddenly here. The guns pointed their noses up at a high angle like hounds baying the moon, but they were silent now. The wood was full of little dugouts, walks, and houses. The Germans had evidently stayed here a long time. Out in the field were a large number of big shell craters in a line, *one, two, three . . .* where our 220's had evidently been ranging on the battery. They had come quite near, within fifty yards or so.

Along the edge of these thickets were a number of graves. I was greatly impressed by them. The crosses were well carved out of new wood, and the grave mounds carefully spaded. Here were wreaths of wax flowers, evidently sent from home,

and a board giving the epitaph of the deceased, with his rank and honors: "He was a good Christian and fell in France fighting for the Fatherland, *Hier ruht in Gott* [Here he rests in God]." Verily, these seemed to be the same Goths and Vandals who left their graves even in Egypt; unchanged since the days of Rome, and still fighting her civilization, the woods-people against the Latins. Only the illuminating literary curiosity of a Tacitus was lacking to make the inward state of man visible by the delineation of the images of outer things.

We entered some of the dugouts, small, mound-like structures with straw inside. Some of the officers' were larger. There was a little beer garden in the middle of the wood with a chapel and a wreathed cross near by, white stones and twisting "rustic" paths. The railings and booths along these paths were made from roots and branches cleverly bent and woven, and sometimes carved. It reminded me of American "porch furniture" of a certain type. All quite German. Cast-off boots, shell-timers, one or two coats, and shrapnel-bitten helmets lay about with round Boche [an insulting nickname for "German"] hats, "the little round button on top." Picture post-cards and magazines, pistol holsters, and one or two broken rifles completed this cartoon of invasion.

All the litter of material thus left behind was useless. I noticed the pictures of some fat, and rather jolly-looking German girls, and piles of a vast quantity of shells. We looked around thoroughly, but were very wary of traps. I remember making up my mind to make for one of these dugouts in case we were shelled. One always kept a weather eye open.

About all this stuff there was at that time the dire taint of danger. Somehow everything German gave one the creeps. It was connected so intimately with all that was unpleasant, and associated so inevitably with organized fear, that one scarce regarded its owners as men. It seemed *then* as if we were fighting some strange, ruthless, insect-beings from another planet; that we had stumbled upon their nests after smoking them out. One had the same feeling as when waking up at night and realizing that there are rats under the bed.

The captain and I walked along the edge of the wood, encountering our French contingent on the way. They were "at home" in an old German dugout, happily squatted around several small fires, preparing their meal as *they* liked it. After a good deal of difficulty, they had prevailed on our mess sergeant to issue them their rations in bulk so that they could do their own cooking. Such little differences of customs are in reality most profound. Our physical habits were more like the Germans'!

The non-commissioned gas officer picked us up here. He was carrying back the big brass shell for a gas alarm. It gave forth a mellow musical note when touched with a bar of iron or a bayonet. The Germans had used this one themselves for that purpose, so it already had the holes and wire for suspending it. . . .

We moved before it was light, which is very early in summer time in France. The dim columns of men coming out of the woods, the lines of carts and kitchens assembling

in the early, gray dawn, all without a light, and generally pretty silently, was always impressive.

In a few minutes we were headed back in the direction from which we had come. There was a full moon, or one nearly so, hanging low in the west. As I jolted along, on legs that seemed more like stilts than limbs with knees, the heavy equipment sagged at every step, and seemed to clink one's teeth together weakly. At last the weariness and the jangle took on a fagged rhythm that for me fell into the comfort of rhyme.

We were beginning to be pretty tired by now and even here needed relief. One no longer got up in the morning full of energy. Hunger, dirt, and strain were telling, and we felt more or less "all in" that day in particular. One was consciously weak.

Nevertheless the country was beautiful; the full moon just sinking in the west looked across the smoking, misty valleys at the rising sun. There was a gorgeous bloody-gold color in the sky, and the woods and fields sparkled deliciously green, looking at a little distance fresh and untouched. But that was only a distant appearance, for this was the country over which two days before the Americans had driven the Germans from one machine gun nest to another, and on from crest to crest. A nearer approach showed the snapped tree-trunks, the tossed branches and shell-pitted ground, and at one halt that we made, Nick called me down a little slope to see something.

There was a small spring in a draw beside the road, where two Germans were lying. One was a big, brawny fellow with a brown beard, and the other a mere lad. He looked to be about 14 or 15 with a pathetically childish chin, but he carried potatomasher bombs.¹ They had evidently stopped here to try to fill their canteens, probably both desperate with thirst, when they were overtaken by our men. The young boy must have sheltered himself behind the man while the latter held our fellows back a little. There was a scorched place up the side of the ravine where a hand grenade had exploded, but the big German had been surrounded, and killed by the bayonet right through his chest. His hands were still clutching at the place where the steel had gone through. He was one of the few I ever saw who had been killed by the bayonet. The boy was lying just behind him. His back appeared to have been broken, probably by a blow with the butt of a rifle, and he was contorted into a kind of arch, only his feet and shoulders resting on the ground. It was he who had probably thrown the grenade that had exploded near by. The little spring had evidently been visited by the wounded, as there were blood and first-aid wrappings about. I refused to have the company water tank filled there.

¹ Potatomasher bombs were German hand grenades, so named for their mallet-like shape. Allied hand grenades were baseball-shaped with notched indentations so that they scattered fragments; they became known as "pineapples."

Questions

1. Describe conditions at the front.
2. How did Allen regard the enemy?
3. What did he find at the small spring? What does that scene indicate about the unpredictability of combat?

21-14 The War Industries Board (1917–1918)

Bernard M. Baruch

Central to the management of industry during wartime was the War Industries Board. Bernard M. Baruch (1870–1965), who became chairman of the WIB in 1918, here reports on its activities and suggests a peacetime role for such an organization based on wartime experience.

Source: Bernard M. Baruch, *American Industry in the War: A Report of the War Industries Board* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1921), 65–67, 69, 100.

Curtailement plans were carried out not by agreement among the concerns of an industry but by agreement between the industry as a group, on the one hand, and the Government,

on the other. Many new trade practices were inaugurated in the same way. In many instances curtailement was the negative result of positive action in some other direction. This

problem has already been considered at some length in the chapter on priorities. The plans and results of the Board's activities in carrying forward the conservation program are explained at some length in Part II of this book, in connection with the work of the various commodity sections dealing with the particular industries affected. Reference, by way of illustration, to some of these will be of general interest.

The conservation schedules for makers of men's and youth's clothing limited the length of sack coats and the length and sweep of overcoats, reduced the size of samples, and restricted each manufacturer to not more than 10 models of suits per season, resulting in a saving of 12 to 15 per cent in yardage. The number of trunks carried by traveling salesmen of dry goods houses underwent an average reduction of 44 per cent. The schedule for the women's garment industry was calculated as capable of saving 20 to 25 per cent in yardage.

The standardization of colors together with certain restrictions in styles of sweaters and analogous knitted articles released 33 per cent of the wool ordinarily used in that industry. A schedule providing that hosiery, underwear, and other knit goods, with certain small exceptions, should be packed for shipment in paper covered bales instead of pasteboard boxes resulted in a large saving in shipping space, while at the same time it released pasteboard to be used as a substitute for tin plate in the manufacture of containers for articles for which tin plate had been forbidden. It was estimated that this schedule would have effected an annual saving of 17,312 carloads of freight space, 141,000,000 cartons, and nearly a half million wooden packing cases. . . .

The manufacturers of automobile tires agreed to a reduction from 287 styles and sizes of tires to 32, with a further reduction to 9 within two years. This had a tendency to release a large amount of rubber and capital tied up in stocks everywhere. A schedule was issued also to the rubber clothing and the rubber footwear industries, the former eliminating 272 styles and types and agreeing to bale their product instead of shipping it in cartons. Even bathing caps were restricted to one style and one color for each manufacturer.

Savings in the agricultural implement industry are among the most important effected. Implement manufacturers were able to simplify manufacturing operations and reduce their stocks of raw materials; manufacturers, dealers, and jobbers found it possible to do business with smaller stocks of finished products; the steel mills saved, because every variation in size or shape had required a different set of rolls, and so on. Schedules were issued to manufacturers of portable grain elevators, plows and tillage implements, grain drills and seeders, harvesters, mowers, hay rakes, ensilage machinery, spring-tooth harrows, farm wagons and trucks, land rollers and pulverizers, and cream separators. The number of sizes and types of steel plows was reduced from 312 to 76; planters and drills from 784 to 29; disk harrows from 589 to 38; buggy wheels from 232 to 4; spring-wagon wheels from 32 to 4; buggy axles from over 100 to 1; buggy springs from over 120 to 1; spring wagons from over 25 to 2; buggy

shafts from 36 to 1; buggy bodies from over 20 to 1 style, two widths; spring-wagon bodies from 6 to 2. . . .

The experience of the Conservation Division has clearly demonstrated that there are many practices in American industry which cost the ultimate consumers in the aggregate enormous sums without enriching the producers. These are often due to competitive demands, real or assumed. Many salesmen, in order to please the whims of particular customers, will insist upon the manufacture of new styles or new shapes of articles, requiring increased expense to the manufacturers and increased expense to both wholesalers and retailers in carrying more lines of stock; these in turn causing increased expense in maintaining salesmen and providing them with samples as well as in advertising. The consumer, the general public, is no better served by the satisfaction of these unreasonable demands, but the public ultimately pays the bill. We may well draw from this war experience a lesson to be applied to peace, by providing some simple machinery for eliminating wasteful trade practices which increase prices without in the remotest degree contributing to the well-being of the people. There is enough natural wealth in this country, and there is enough labor and technical skill for converting that wealth into objects of human satisfaction to provide abundantly for the elemental comforts of every person in the land. The problem before our Nation to-day is to bring about such adjustments of the industrial processes as lead toward that long-sought condition of life. . . .

The question, then, is what kind of Government organization can be devised to safeguard the public interest while these associations are preserved to carry on the good work of which they are capable. The country will quite properly demand the vigorous enforcement of all proper measures for the suppression of unfair competition and unreasonable restraint of trade. But this essentially negative policy of curbing vicious practices should, in the public interest, be supplemented by a positive program, and to this end the experience of the War Industries Board points to the desirability of investing some Government agency, perhaps the Department of Commerce or the Federal Trade Commission, with constructive as well as inquisitorial powers—an agency whose duty it should be to encourage, under strict Government supervision, such cooperation and coordination in industry as should tend to increase production, eliminate waste, conserve natural resources, improve the quality of products, promote efficiency in operation, and thus reduce costs to the ultimate consumer.

Such a plan should provide a way of approaching industry, or rather of inviting industry to approach the Government, in a friendly spirit, with a view to help and not to hinder. The purpose contemplated is not that the Government should undertake any such far-reaching control over industry as was practiced during the war emergency by the War Industries Board; but that the experiences of the war should be capitalized; its heritage of dangerous practices should be fully realized that they might be avoided; and its heritage of wholesome and useful practices should

be accepted and studied with a view to adapting them to the problems of peace. It is recommended that such practices of cooperation and coordination in industry as have been found to be clearly of public benefit should be stimulated

and encouraged by a Government agency, which at the same time would be clothed with the power and charged with the responsibility of standing watch against and preventing abuses.

Questions

1. What most strikes you about the wartime operations of the War Industries Board, as described by Baruch?
2. What lessons for postwar America did Baruch see in the operations of the WIB?

21-15 The Home Front: The Four Minute Men (1920)

George Creel

Washington fought the propaganda war through the Committee on Public Information, which was headed by journalist George Creel (1876–1953). The CPI used speakers, movies, posters, and pamphlets to spread its message. This excerpt on the Four Minute Men comes from Creel's history of the CPI, *How We Advertised America*.

Source: George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information That Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1920), 84–88, 90–92.

There was nothing more time-wasting than the flood of people that poured into Washington during the war, each burdened with some wonderful suggestions that could be imparted only to an executive head. Even so, all of them had to be seen, for not only was it their right as citizens, but it was equally the case that the idea might have real value. Many of our best suggestions came from the most unlikely sources.

In the very first hours of the Committee, when we were still penned in the navy library, fighting for breath, a handsome, rosy-cheeked youth burst through the crowd and caught my lapel in a death-grip. His name was Donald Ryerson. He confessed to Chicago as his home, and the plan that he presented was the organization of volunteer speakers for the purpose of making patriotic talks in motion-picture theaters. He had tried out the scheme in Chicago, and the success of the venture had catapulted him on the train to Washington and to me.

Being driven to the breaking-point has certain compensations, after all. It forces one to think quickly and confines thought largely to the positive values of a suggestion rather than future difficulties. Had I had the time to weigh the proposition from every angle, it may be that I would have decided against it, for it was delicate and dangerous business to turn loose on the country an army of speakers impossible of exact control and yet vested in large degree with the authority of the government. In ten minutes we had decided upon a national organization to be called the "Four Minute Men," and Mr. Ryerson rushed out with my appointment as its director.

When the armistice brought activities to a conclusion the Four Minute Men numbered 75,000 speakers, more than

7,555,190 speeches had been made, and a fair estimate of audiences makes it certain that a total of 134,454,514 people had been addressed. Notwithstanding the nature of the work, the infinite chances of blunder and bungle, this unique and effective agency functioned from first to last with only one voice ever raised to attack its faith and efficiency. As this voice was that of Senator Sherman of Illinois, this attack is justly to be set down as part of the general praise.

The form of presentation decided upon was a glass slide to be thrown on the theater-curtain, and worded as follows:

4 MINUTE MEN 4
(Copyright, 1917. Trade-mark.)

.....
(Insert name of speaker)

will speak four minutes on a subject
of national importance. He speaks
under the authority of
THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION
GEORGE CREEL, Chairman
Washington, D.C.

A more difficult decision was as to the preparation of the matter to be sent out to speakers. We did not want stereotyped oratory, and yet it was imperative to guard against the dangers of unrestraint. It was finally agreed that regular bulletins should be issued, each containing a budget of material

On the outside of politics women fought one of the strongest, bravest battles recorded in history, but to these men inside politics, some Republicans, some Democrats, and some members of minority parties, the women of the United States owe their enfranchisement.

And if we have made here a case for our assertion that American politics was an age-long trap for woman suffrage, we hope that we have not failed to make, as well, a case for these higher-grade American politicians who rescued woman suffrage from that trap and urged it forward to its goal.

Questions

1. Catt points to a number of reasons for why women's suffrage took so long. What were they? What was the vicious circle she mentions?
2. How does Catt portray American politics?

Questions for Further Thought

1. Both Woodrow Wilson in Document 21-10 and Robert M. La Follette in Document 21-11 drew on American traditions and ideals to make their respective cases for and against participating in the war in Europe. What were some of these ideals, and how did these writers use them to build their contrasting arguments?
2. Compare and contrast the rhetoric of Albert J. Beveridge's speech (Document 21-3) with Woodrow Wilson's war message (Document 21-10).
3. What do the text and documents on the war and postwar periods suggest about the relationship between foreign and domestic developments between 1917 and 1920?

The Treaty of Versailles

The terms of the peace proved politically divisive, as the U.S. Senate refused—on two votes late in 1919 and on a final roll call early the next year—to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, which would have involved the United States in the League of Nations.

Document 21-17 contains the heart of President Wilson's "Fourteen Points" speech dealing with war aims in January 1918. Document 21-18 reproduces select articles from the Treaty of Versailles. In Document 21-19, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge states his opposition to the League of Nations (see Article 10 of the Treaty of Versailles in Document 21-18).

21-17 Fourteen Points (1918)

Woodrow Wilson

President Wilson (1856–1924) set out his Fourteen Points as the basis for a lasting peace in an address before Congress on January 8, 1918. The timing of his speech reflected his concern that V. I. Lenin's Bolsheviks, who had seized power in Russia late in the previous year, were propagandizing a revolutionary ending of the war even as they were negotiating with the Germans to extricate Russia from that war, however harsh Germany's terms. Such a peace would free German forces to concentrate on the Western Front. Addressing war-weary Europe, Wilson sought to deal with the Bolsheviks, rally the Allies, and appeal to elements within the Central Powers.

Source: Woodrow Wilson's Message to Congress, January 8, 1918; Records of the United States Senate; Record Group 46; National Archives.

I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

VII. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of

their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international laws is forever impaired.

VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

XI. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

XII. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

Questions

1. Which of the Fourteen Points concern specific nations or peoples? What guiding principle did Wilson advocate in determining their futures?
2. Of points I through V, which do you think was most important? Why?
3. What was the immediate importance of point VI and the symbolic importance of point VII?

21-18 Treaty of Versailles, Select Articles (1919)

The Allies were willing to base peace negotiations with Germany on President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points (Document 21-17), but British, French, and Italian leaders did