Chapter 29
Wilsonian Progressivism in Peace and War, 1913-1920

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I. Wilson: The Idealist in Politics

• (Thomas) Woodrow Wilson:
  – Second Democratic president since 1861
  • First president from one of seceded southern states since Zachary Taylor, 64 years earlier
  • Wilson’s admiration for Confederate attempt at independence inspired his ideal of self-determination
  • His ideal of faith in masses—if they were properly informed—came from Jeffersonian democracy
  • His inspirational political sermons reflected influence of his Presbyterian minister-father
I. Wilson: The Idealist in Politics (cont.)

- Wilson convinced that Congress could not function properly unless president provided leadership
-Repeated relied on his eloquence to appeal over heads of legislators to the sovereign people
- Wilson suffered from serious defects of personality:
  - Incapable of showmanship like Roosevelt, he lacked common touch

II. Wilson Tackles the Tariff

- Wilson’s programs:
  - Called for assault on ”the triple wall of privilege”: the tariff, the banks, and the trusts
  - He tackled tariff first:
    - Summoned Congress into special session in early 1913
    - In precedent-shattering move, he did not send his message over to Capitol to be read
    - He appeared in person before a joint session of Congress and presented his appeal with stunning clarity and force
    - House soon passed major reductions in Underwood Tariff

II. Wilson Tackles the Tariff (cont.)

- When bill challenged in Senate by lobbyists:
  - Wilson issued message to public urging them to hold their elected representatives in line
  - Public opinion worked; in 1913 Senate approved bill Wilson wanted
  - Provided for a substantial reduction of import fees
  - Landmark in tax legislation:
    - Using recent 16th Amendment, Congress enacted graduated income tax beginning with moderate levy on incomes over $3,000 (average wage earners’ annual income only $740)
    - By 1917, revenue from income tax shot ahead of revenue from tariffs
III. Wilson Battles the Bankers

• Antiquated and inadequate banking and currency system
  • Nation’s financial structure creaked along under Civil War National Banking Act
    – Most glaring defect was inelasticity of currency (1907 panic)
    – Since most banks located in New York, hard to mobilize bank reserves elsewhere in times of panic
  • Calls for reform supported by Louis D. Brandeis in book: Other People’s Money and How the Bankers Use It (1914)

III. Wilson Battles the Bankers (cont.)

• Wilson in June 1913 appeared personally before Congress again and called for sweeping bank reform:
  – Endorsed Democratic proposal for decentralized bank in government hands
  – Opposed Republican demands for huge private bank with fifteen branches
• Federal Reserve Act (1913):
  • Wilson appealed to the sovereign people
  • Most important economic legislation between Civil War and New Deal

III. Wilson Battles the Bankers (cont.)

• Federal Reserve Board:
  Appointed by President
  • Would oversee nationwide system of twelve regional reserve districts
  • Each with its own central bank
  • Final authority of Federal Reserve Board guaranteed a substantial measure of public control
  • Board would be empowered to issue paper money
    – “Federal Reserve Notes”—backed by commercial paper
    – Thus amount of money in circulation could be swiftly increased as needed for legitimate requirements of business
IV. The President Tames the Trusts

• Wilson’s third appearance before Congress led to Federal Trade Commission Act (1914):
  – Presidially appointed commission could research industries engaged in interstate commerce
  – Commission could crush monopoly at source by rooting out unfair trade practices:
    • Including unlawful competition, false advertising, mislabeling, adulteration, and bribery

IV. The President Tames the Trusts (cont.)

– Clayton Anti-Trust (1914):
  • Increased list of practices deemed objectionable:
    – Price discrimination and interlocking directorates (where same individual served as director of supposedly competing firms)
    – Achieved through holding companies (see Figure 29.1)
  • Conferred long-overdue benefits on labor:
    – Exempted labor and agricultural organization from anti-trust prosecution, while explicitly legalizing strikes and peaceful picketing
    – Samuel Gompers, Union leader, hailed act as Magna Carta of labor
V. Wilson at the Peak

- Other progressive legislation:
  - Federal Farm Loan Act (1916):
    - Made credit available to farmers at low rates of interest—long demanded by Populists
  - Warehouse Act (1916):
    - Authorized loans on security of staple crops—another Populist idea
  - Other laws benefited rural areas by providing for highway construction and establishment of agricultural extension work in state colleges

V. Wilson at the Peak (cont.)

- La Follette Seaman’s Act (1915):
  - Required decent treatment and living wage on American merchant ships
- Workingmen’s Compensation Act (1916):
  - Granted assistance to federal civil-service employees during periods of disability
- 1916: Wilson signed law restricting child labor on products flowing into interstate commerce (but Supreme Court later voided it)
V. Wilson at the Peak (cont.)

- **Adamson Act** (1916):
  - Established eight hour day for all employees on trains in interstate commerce, with extra pay for overtime
- **Supreme Court**:
  - Wilson endeared himself to progressives when he nominated prominent reformer Louis D. Brandeis—first Jew to high court
- **Limit on Wilson's progressivism**:
  - Stopped well short of better treatment for blacks

VI. New Directions in Foreign Policy

- Wilson's reaction to earlier foreign policies:
  - In contrast to Roosevelt and Taft, he recoiled at first from aggressive foreign policy
  - Hating imperialism, he was repelled by TR's big-stickism
  - Suspicions of Wall Street, he detested Taft's dollar diplomacy
  - In office only a week, he declared war on dollar diplomacy:
    - Proclaimed government would not support American investors in Latin America and China

VI. New Directions in Foreign Policy (cont.)

- Persuaded Congress to repeal Panama Canal Tolls Act of 1912:
  - It had exempted American coastwide shipping from tolls
  - Thereby provoked sharp protests from injured Britain
- **Jones Act** (1916):
  - Granted Philippines territorial status and promised independence as soon as a "stable government" could be established
  - Wilson's racial prejudices did not expect this to happen for a long time
  - On July 4, 1946—30 years later—United States accepted Philippine independence
VI. New Directions in Foreign Policy (cont.)

• Haiti’s chaotic political situation caused Wilson to assume more active stance abroad
• Political turmoil climaxed in 1914-1915 when outraged populace literally tore to pieces brutal Haitian president
• Wilson dispatched marines to protect American lives and property
• Marines remained in Haiti for nineteen years making Haiti an American protectorate

– In 1916, Wilson used Roosevelt’s corollary to Monroe Doctrine and concluded treaty with Haiti
  » Provided for U.S. supervision of finances and police
  » In 1916, he sent marines to debt-cursed Dominican Republic
  » Came under American control for eight years
– In 1917, United States purchased the Virgin Islands from Denmark
– Uncle Sam tightening its grip in Caribbean Sea, with its vital approaches to Panama Canal (see Map 29.1)
VII. Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

• Mexican revolution (1913):
  – Mexicans resented exploitation by foreign investors
  – In 1913 new revolutionary president murdered and replaced by General Victoriano Huerta:
  – Caused massive migration of Mexicans to United States
  – More than a million Spanish-speaking newcomers came and settled in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California
  – Built highways and railroads, followed fruit harvests as pickers
  – Segregated in Spanish-speaking enclaves:
    » Helped create unique borderland culture that blended Mexican and American folkways

VII. Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico (cont.)

• Revolutionary bloodshed menaced American lives and property in Mexico:
  – Hearst called for intervention in Mexico
  – Wilson again refused to practice diplomacy of his predecessors:
    » Deemed it “perilous” to determine foreign policy “in terms of material interest”
  – Wilson tried to steer a moral course in Mexico
  – Refused to recognize Huerta’s bloody-handed regime
  – In 1914 he allowed American arms to flow to Huerta’s principal rivals, Venustiano Carranza and firebrand Francisco (“Pancho”) Villa
VII. Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico (cont.)

- **Tampico Incident:**
  - Mexico volcano erupted at Atlantic seaport of Tampico in April, 1914:
    - Small party of American sailors arrested
    - Mexicans released captives and apologized
    - Refused demand by U.S. admiral for 21-gun salute
    - Determined to eliminate Huerta, Wilson asked Congress for authority to use force against Mexico
    - Before Congress could act, Wilson had navy seize port of Veracruz to block arrival of German weapons

VII. Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico (cont.)

- Shooting conflict avoided by offer of mediation from ABC powers—Argentina, Brazil, and Chile
- Huerta collapsed in July 1914 under pressure from within and without
- Succeeded by his archival, Venustiano Carranza who resented Wilson's military meddling
- "Pancho" Villa, chief rival to President Carranza,
  - Killed 16 American mining engineers traveling through northern Mexico in January 1916
  - One month later, Villa and his followers crossed border into Columbus, New Mexico and murdered another 19 Americans
VII. Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico (cont.)

- General John J. ("Black Jack") Pershing ordered to break up bandit band
  - His hastily organized force of several thousand mounted troops penetrated deep into Mexico
  - clashed with Carranza’s forces
  - mauled Villistas but missed capturing Villa
  - As tensions with Germany mounted, Wilson withdrew Pershing from Mexico in January 1917

VIII. Thunder Across the Sea

- In Europe, Serb patriot killed heir to throne of Austria-Hungary in summer 1914:
  - Vienna, backed by Germany, presented ultimatum to Serbia
  - Explosive chain reaction followed:
    - Serbia, backed by Russia, refused to back down
    - Russian czar began to mobilize military, menacing Germany on east
    - France confronted Germany on west
    - Germans struck suddenly at France through unoffending Belgium
VIII. Thunder Across the Sea
(cont.)
• Great Britain, its coastline jeopardized by assault on Belgium, pulled into conflagration on side of France
• Now Europe locked in fight to the death
• Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, later Turkey and Bulgaria
• Allies: France, Britain, and Russia, later Japan and Italy
• Americans thanked God for ocean and congratulated themselves on having ancestors wise enough to have abandoned hell pits of Europe
• America felt strong, smug, smug, and secure—but not for long

VIII. Thunder Across the Sea
(cont.)
– Wilson issued neutrality proclamation and called on Americans to be neutral in thought and deed
– Both sides wooed U.S.A., great neutral in West
  • British enjoyed:
    – Cultural, linguistic, and economic ties with America
    – Advantage of controlling transatlantic cables
    – Their censors sheared away war stories harmful to Allies and drenched United States with tales of German bestiality
  • Germans and Austro-Hungarians:
    – Counted on sympathies of transplanted countrymen in America (some 11 million in 1914)

VIII. Thunder Across the Sea
(cont.)
– Some of these recent immigrants expressed noisy sympathy for fatherland
– Most simply grateful to be distant from fray (see Table 29.1)
• Most Americans:
  – Anti-German from outset
  – Kaiser Wilhelm II seemed embodiment of arrogant autocracy
  – Impression strengthened by German’s ruthless strike at neutral Belgium
VIII. Thunder Across the Sea (cont.)

- German and Austrian agents further tarnished image of Central Powers when they resorted to violence in American factories and ports.
- German operative in 1915 absentmindedly left his briefcase on New York elevated car:
  - Documents detailing plans for industrial sabotage discovered and quickly publicized
- Further inflamed American opinion against Kaiser
- Yet great majority of Americans earnestly hoped to stay out of horrible war

IX. America Earns Blood Money

- When war broke out in Europe, U.S.A. in midst of recession:
  - British and French war orders pulled U.S. industry onto peak of war-born prosperity (see Table 29.2)
  - Part of boon financed by American bankers
  - Notably Wall Street firm of J.P. Morgan and Company advanced to Allies enormous sum of $2.3 million during period of American neutrality
IX. America Earns Blood Money
(cont.)

- Germany legally could have had same level of trade with United States
- Was prevented from doing so by British navy
- British imposed blockade with mines and ships across North Sea gateway to German ports
- Over protests from various Americans, British forced American vessels off high seas
- Harassment of American shippers highly effective as trade between Germany and United States virtually ceased

IX. America Earns Blood Money
(cont.)

- Germany did not want to be starved out:
  - Berlin announced submarine war area around British Isles (see Map 29.2)
  - New submarines not fit existing international laws
  - Posed threat to United States—so long as Wilson insisted on maintaining America's neutral rights
    - Berlin officials declared they would try not to sink neutral shipping, but warned mistakes would probably occur
  - Wilson decided on calculated risk:
    - Claimed profitable neutral trading rights while hoping no incidents would cause war
IX. America Earns Blood Money (cont.)

– German submarines (U-boats “undersea boat”) began deadly work
  – In first months of 1915, sank 90 ships in war zone
  – British passenger liner Lusitania torpedoed and sank off coast of Ireland, May 7, 1915:
    » With loss of 1,198 lives, including 128 Americans
  • Lusitania was carrying forty-two hundred cases of small-arms ammunition
    – A fact Germany used to justify sinking
    – Americans shocked and angered at act of “mass murder” and “piracy”
IX. America Earns Blood Money (cont.)

- Talk of war from eastern United States, but not from rest of nation
  - Wilson did not want to lead disunited nation into war
    - By series of strong notes, Wilson attempted to take German warlords sharply to task
    - Policy too risky for Secretary of State Bryan who resigned
    - T. Roosevelt harshly criticized Wilson's measured approach
  - British liner, Arabic, sunk in August, 1915:
    - With loss of two American lives
    - Berlin reluctantly agreed not to sink unarmed and unresisting passenger ships without warning

IX. America Earns Blood Money (cont.)

- Pledge appeared to be violated in March, 1916 when Germans torpedoed French passenger steamer, Sussex
  - Infuriated, Wilson informed Germans:
    - That unless they renounced inhuman practice of sinking merchant ships without warning, he would break diplomatic relations—almost certain prelude to war
  - Germany reluctantly knuckled under Wilson's Sussex ultimatum:
    - Germany agreed to not sink passenger and merchant ships without warning
      - Attached long string to their Sussex pledge
IX. America Earns Blood Money (cont.)

- German Sussex pledge:
  - United States would have to persuade Allies to modify what Berlin regarded as illegal blockade
  - This obviously was something that Washington could not do
  - Wilson promptly accepted pledge, without accepting "string"
  - Wilson won temporary but precarious diplomatic victory—precarious because:
    - Germany could pull string whenever it chose
    - And president might suddenly find himself tugged over cliff of war

X. Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916

- Presidential campaign of 1916
  - Bull moose Progressives and Republicans met in Chicago:
    - Progressives nominated Theodore Roosevelt:
      - TR, who loathed Wilson, had no intention of splitting Republicans again
      - With his refusal, TR sounded death knell of Progressive party
    - Republicans drafted Supreme Court justice Charles Evans Hughes, who had been governor of New York
X. Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916 (cont.)

- Republican platform condemned Wilson’s:
  - Tariff
  - Assault on trusts
  - Wishy-washiness in dealing with Mexico and Germany
- Wilson realized his 1912 win caused by Taft-TR split
  - Used his first term to identify himself as candidate of progressivism and to woo bull moose voters into Democratic fold
- Wilson, nominated by acclamation at Democratic convention in St. Louis
- His campaign slogan, “He Kept Us Out of War”

X. Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916 (cont.)

- On election day:
  - Hughes swept East
  - Wilson went to bed prepared to accept defeat but rest of nation turned tide
    - Midwestern and westerners, attracted by Wilson’s progressive reforms and antiwar policies, flocked to him
    - Final result, in doubt for several days, hinged on California which Wilson carried with 3,800 votes out of about a million

X. Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916 (cont.)

- Final count:
  - Wilson: 277 to 254 in Electoral College
  - 9,127,695 to 8,533,507 in popular column (see Map 29.3)
  - Prolabor Wilson received strong support from working class and from renegade bull moose
  - Wilson did not specifically promise to keep country out of war
XI. War by Act of Germany

• Wilson tried to mediate between two warring sides:
  – January 22, 1917: restated U.S. commitment to neutral rights and called for “peace without victory”
• Germany responded with mailed fist:
  – Announced unrestricted sub warfare on Jan. 31
  – Hoped to defeat Allies before U.S.A. entered war
• Wilson broke diplomatic relations, but moved no closer to war unless “overt” by Germans

XI. War by Act of Germany (cont.)

– President asked Congress for authority to arm merchant ships, but blocked by Senate filibuster

– Zimmermann note:
  • Intercepted and published on March 1, 1917
  • German foreign secretary Arthur Zimmerman secretly proposed German-Mexican alliance
  • Tempted anti-Yankee Mexico with promises of recovering Texas, New Mexico, Arizona
– Long-dreaded “overt” act in Atlantic:
  • German U-boats sank four unarmed American merchant vessels in first two weeks of March, 1917
XI. War by Act of Germany (cont.)

• Revolution in Russia toppled cruel regime of tsars:
  – America could now fight for democracy on Allies’ side, without Russian despotism in Allied fold

• Wilson, before joint session of Congress on April 2, 1917, asked for declaration of war:
  – British harassment of U.S. commerce had been galling but endurable
  – Germany had resorted to mass killing of civilians
  – Wilson had drawn clear line against depredations of submarine

• In figurative sense, war declaration on April 6, 1917 bore unambiguous trademark “Made in Germany”

XII. Wilsonian Idealism Enthroned

• For more than a century, Americans prided themselves on isolation from Old World

• Since 1914 that pride reinforced by bountiful profits gained through neutrality
  – Six senators and 50 representatives (including first congresswoman Jeannette Rankin, of Montana) voted against war resolution
  – Wilson could incite no enthusiasm by calling on nation to fight to make world safe from submarine attacks
XII. Wilsonian Idealism Enthroned (cont.)

- Wilson needed to proclaim more glorified aims:
  - Supremely ambitious goal of crusade “to make the world safe for democracy”
  - Wilson virtually hypnotized nation with lofty ideals:
    - Contrasted selfish war aims of other belligerents with America’s shining altruism
    - Preached America did not fight for sake of riches or territorial conquest
    - Republic sought to shape international order in which democracy could flourish without fear of power-crazed autocrats and militarists

- Wilsonian idealism:
  - Personality of president and necessities of history perfectly matched
  - He believed modern world could not afford hyper-destructive war used by industrial states
  - Probably no other argument could have worked to arouse Americans to unprecedented burden:
    - Americans could be either isolationists or crusaders, nothing in between

- Wilson’s appeal worked—perhaps too well
- Holding torch of idealism, president fired up public mind to fever pitch
- Lost was Wilson’s earlier plea for “peace without victory”
XIII. Wilson’s Fourteen Potent Points

• Wilson soon recognized as moral leader of Allied cause
  – On January 8, 1918, he delivered to Congress famed Fourteen Points:
    • (1) proposal to abolish secret treaties pleased liberals of all countries
    • (2) freedom of seas appealed to Germans and Americans who distrusted British sea power
    • (3) removal of economic barriers among nations had been goal of liberal internationalists everywhere

XIII. Wilson’s Fourteen Potent Points (cont.)

• (4) reduction of armament burdens gratifying to taxpayers in all countries
• (5) adjustment of colonial claims in interests of both native peoples and colonizers reassured anti-imperialists
  – Wilson’s pronouncement about colonies potentially revolutionary:
    • Helped to delegitimize old empires
    • Opened road to eventual independence for millions of “subject people”

XIII. Wilson’s Fourteen Potent Points (cont.)

– Other points proved to be no less seductive:
  • Hope of independence (“self-determination”) to oppressed minority groups (e.g., Poles)
– Capstone point (number fourteen):
  • Foreshadowed League of Nations:
    – International organization that would provide system of collective security
– Wilson’s points not applauded everywhere:
  • Some Allied leaders wanted territorial gains
  • Republicans mocked fourteen Points
XIV. Manipulating Minds and Stifling Dissent

– Committee on Public Information:
  • Purpose—mobilize people’s mind for war
  • Headed by young journalist, George Creel
  • His job to sell America on war and sell world on Wilsonian war aims
  • Employed 150,000 workers at home and abroad
    – Sent out 75,000 “four-minute men” who delivered countless speeches containing much “patriotic pep”
  • Creel’s propaganda took varied forms:
    – Posters splashed on billboards: "Battle of the Fences"

XIV. Manipulating Minds and Stifling Dissent (cont.)

– Millions of leaflets and pamphlets contained most pungent Wilson-isms
– Hang-the-Kaiser movies
– Songs poured scorn on enemy and glorified “boys” in uniform
– Extensive use of songs, esp. George Cohan’s “Over There”
– Creel typified American war mobilization:
  » Relied more on aroused passion and voluntary compliance than on formal laws
  » Oversold ideals of Wilson and led world to expect too much
  » Result was eventual disillusionment at home and abroad
XIV. Manipulating Minds and Stifling Dissent (cont.)

German Americans—over eight million:
- Most proved to be dependably loyal to United States
- A few tarred, feathered, and beaten
- Hysterical hatred of Germans and things Germanic swept nation:
  - Orchestras found it unsafe to present German-composed music
  - German books removed from library shelves
  - German classes canceled
  - Sauerkraut became "liberty cabbage"
  - Hamburg "liberty steak"

Espionage Act of 1917 and Sedition Act of 1918:
- Reflected fears about Germans and antiwar Americans
- 1,900 prosecutions of antiwar Socialists and members of radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW):
  - Socialist Eugene Debs sentenced to ten years in federal penitentiary
  - IWW leader William D. ("Big Bill") Haywood and 99 associates also convicted
- Virtually any criticism of government could be censored and punished
XIV. Manipulating Minds and Stifling Dissent (cont.)

- In *Schenk v. United States* (1919):
  - Supreme Court affirmed legality of restrictions
    - Freedom of speech could be revoked when such speech posed "clear and present danger" to nation
  - Prosecutions formed ugly chapter in history of American civil liberty:
    - With peace—presidential pardons granted, including President Harding's to Debs in 1921
    - A few victims remained in jail into 1930s

XV. Forging a War Economy

- Wilson belatedly backed preparedness measures
- Big obstacles confronted economic mobilizers:
  - Sheer ignorance among biggest roadblocks
    - No one knew precisely how much steel or explosive powder country capable of producing
  - Old ideas proved to be liabilities:
    - Traditional fear of big government hamstrung effort to orchestrate economy from Washington
    - Largely voluntary character of economic war organization
  - Wilson eventually succeeded in imposing some order on economic confusion:
XV. Forging a War Economy (cont.)

- **War Industries Board:**
  - March 1918; Bernard Baruch the head
  - Set precedent for federal government to take central role in economic planning in a crisis

- **Herbert Hoover headed Food Administration:**
  - Relied on voluntary compliance with propaganda, not compulsory edicts (i.e., ration cards)
  - Thanks to wartime spirit, Hoover’s voluntary approach worked as farm production increased

- Wartime restrictions on foodstuffs for alcohol accelerated wave of prohibition
- 1919: Eighteen Amendment banned alcohol
- Wilson expanded federal government in size and power to meet needs of war:
  - WIB set production quotas
  - Allocated raw materials
  - Set prices for government purchases
XVI. Workers in Wartime

• “Labor Will Win the War:”
  – American workers sweated way to victory:
    • Driven by War Department’s “work or fight” rule:
      – Threatened any unemployed male with immediate draft; powerful discouragement to strike
      – Government tried to treat labor fairly
    – Samuel Gompers and American Federation of Labor (AF of L) loyally supported war:
      • Loyalty rewarded as membership doubled and real wages for many unionized workers rose more than 20%.

XVI. Workers in Wartime (cont.)

• Recognition of right to organize not won and workers hit by wartime inflation:
  – 6,000 strikes broke out in war years
  – *Industrial Workers of the World* (“Wobblies”) engineered damaging industrial sabotage because
    • Victims of shabbiest working conditions
  – 1919 greatest strike in U.S. history rocked steel industry as more than 250,000 struck:
    • Wanted right to bargain collectively, but management refused to negotiate
XVI. Workers in Wartime (cont.)

- Eventually steel strike collapsed after more than a dozen strikers killed
- Setback crippled union movement for more than a decade
  - Black workers entered steel mills in 1919
  - Tens of thousands of southern blacks drawn to North to war-industry employment
  - Interracial violence resulted, esp. in Chicago in July 1919
    - 15 whites and 23 blacks killed during two weeks of terror

XVII. Suffering Until Suffrage

- Women heeded call of patriotism and opportunity:
  - Thousands entered factories and fields left by men going to frontline
  - War split women’s movement deeply:
    - Many progressive-era feminists were pacifists
      - Found a voice in National Woman’s party
      - Led by Quaker activist Alice Paul
      - Demonstrated against “Kaiser Wilson” with marches and hunger strikes
XVII. Suffering Until Suffrage (cont.)

• Larger part of suffrage movement:
  – Represented by National American Woman Suffrage Association
  – Supported Wilson’s war
  – Argued women must take part in war effort to earn role in shaping peace
  – Fight for democracy abroad was women's best hope for winning true democracy at home

• War mobilization gave new momentum to suffrage fight:
  – Wilson endorsed suffrage as "vitally necessary war measure"
  – In 1917 New York voted for suffrage at state level
  – Followed by Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota
  – Whole U.S.A followed with Nineteenth Amendment (1920)

XVII. Suffering Until Suffrage (cont.)

• Ratified 70 years after first call for suffrage at Seneca Falls
• Gave all American women right to vote (see Appendix and Table 29.3)
  – Women's wartime economic gains fleeting:
    • Permanent Women's Bureau in Department of Labor created to protect women in workplace
    • Most women workers gave up wartime jobs

XVII. Suffering Until Suffrage (cont.)

• Congress supported traditional role as mothers:
  – Passed Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act 1921:
    » Provided federally financed instruction in maternal and infant health care
    » Expanded responsibility of federal government for family welfare
• WWI foreshadowed future when women's wage-labor and political power would reshape American way of life
XVIII. Making Plowboys into Doughboys

- America’s early role in war:
  - Did not dream of sending large force to France
  - Assumed naval power and material support would suffice
  - By April/May 1917, Europeans running out of money and manpower
- Huge American army needed to be raised, trained, and transported quickly or whole western front would collapse

XVIII. Making Plowboys into Doughboys (cont.)

- Conscription only answer to urgent need:
  - Wilson disliked draft, but eventually accepted conscription as disagreeable and temporary necessity
  - Immediately ran into problems with Congress
    - Later grudgingly passed conscription
  - Draft worked effectively overall
  - Army grew to over four million men
  - Women for first time admitted to armed forces:
    - 11,000 to navy and 269 to marines
    - Army refused to enlist women
XVIII. Making Plowboys into Doughboys (cont.)

- Africans Americans served in strictly segregated units, usually under white officers.
- Military authorities hesitated to train blacks for combat:
  - Thus majority assigned to "construction battalions" or put to work unloading ships.
- Recruits suppose to receive six months of training in America and two more overseas.
- Because of urgency, many doughboys put more swiftly into battle.

XIX. America Helps Hammer the "Hun"

- Russia:
  - Bolsheviks seized power in 1917.
  - Withdrew from "capitalistic war" 1918.
  - This released many Germans from eastern front in Russia for western front in France.
- France:
  - Gradually began to bustle with U.S. doughboys (see Map 29.4):
    - First ones used for replacements or deployed in quiet sectors.
XIX. America Helps Hammer the “Hun” (cont.)

- American soldiers suffered high rates of venereal disease
XIX. America Helps Hammer the “Hun” (cont.)

– Massive German drive of spring 1918:
  • Allies united under French marshal Foch
    – Germans smashed to within 40 miles of Paris, May 1918
    – Threatened to knock France out of war
    – 30,000 Americans sent to Chateau-Thierry, right in teeth of German advance
    – First significant engagement of American troops in a European war
    – America put decisive weight on scales (see Figure 29.2) to blunt German drive
    – Americans joined in Second Battle of the Marine (July)
    – Marked beginning of German withdrawal
XIX. America Helps Hammer the “Hun” (cont.)

• Americans now demanded and got separate army
• General John J. Pershing assigned a front of 85 miles northwestward from Swiss border to French line:
  – Pershing’s army undertook *Meuse-Argonne offensive*:
    » From September 26 to November 11, 1918
    » Battle lasted 47 days
    » Engaged 1.2 million American troops
    » 120,000 Americans killed or wounded
    » Victory in sight

XIX. America Helps Hammer the “Hun” (cont.)

• Berlin ready to hoist white flag:
  – Looked to Wilson in October 1918 for peace based on Fourteen Points:
    • Wilson demanded Kaiser be removed before any armistice could be negotiated
      » War-weary Germans took hint
      » Kaiser fled to Holland, lived for his remaining 23 years
        “unwept, unhonored, and unhung”
  – Exhausted Germans laid down arms at 11:00 on 11th day of 11th month, 1918

XIX. America Helps Hammer the “Hun” (cont.)

• Costs exceeded comprehension:
  – 9 million soldiers died
  – 20 million suffered grievous wounds
  – 30 million people died in influenza pandemic of 1918-1919
  – more than 550,000 Americans—more than ten times number of U.S. combat casualties—died from flu
• U.S.’s main contributions to victory:
  – Foodstuffs, munitions, credits
  – Oil for first mechanized war
  – And manpower, but not battlefield victories
  – Yanks fought only two major battles—St. Mihiel and *Meuse-Argonne*, both in last two months of four-year war
    and were still fighting in latter when war ended
**XIX. America Helps Hammer the “Hun” (cont.)**

- It was prospect of endless U.S. troop reserves, rather than America’s actual military performances, that eventually demoralized Germans.
- General Pershing's army:
  - Purchased more supplies in Europe than shipped from United States.
  - Most of its artillery and virtually all its aircraft provided by Britain and France.
  - United States no arsenal of democracy in this war.
XX. Wilson Steps Down from Olympus

**Wilson’s role in shaping peace?**
- President towered at summit of popularity and power:
  - No other man had ever occupied so dizzy a pinnacle as moral leader of world
  - At this moment, his sense of touch deserted him, and he began to make series of tragic fumbles
  - He called for Democratic congressional victory in election of November, 1918:
    - Backfired, voters returned narrow Republican majority to Congress
    - Wilson went to Paris as diminished leader

XX. Wilson Steps Down from Olympus (cont.)

- Wilson’s trip infuriated Republicans:
  - To that time, no president had traveled to Europe
    - Looked to critics like grandstanding
  - Snubbed Senate in assembling peace delegation
    - Neglected to include a single Republican senator in delegation
  - Logical choice would have been new chairman of Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:
    - Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts
    - Wilson loathed Lodge, and feeling was reciprocated
XXI. An Idealist Amid the Imperialists

• Wilson received tumultuous welcomes:
  – From masses of France, England, Italy
  – Paris Conference (January 18, 1919):
    • Big Four: Wilson, Premier Orlando (Italy), Prime Minister George (Britain), Premier Clemenceau (France)
    • Wilson wanted to prevent vengeful parceling of colonies and protectorates of vanquished powers
    • Less attentive to fate of colonies belonging to victorious French and English

XXI. An Idealist Amid the Imperialists (cont.)

• Victors received conquered territory (Syria to France, Iraq to England) as trustees of League of Nations
  – Basically prewar colonialism
  – In future, anticolonial nationalists would wield Wilsonian ideal of self-determination against imperial occupiers
• Wilson envisioned League as a world parliament:
  – An assembly seat for all nations
  – Council controlled by great powers
• Signal victory—when diplomats made League integral part of final peace treaty
XXI. An Idealist Amid the Imperialists (cont.)

– Clemenceau pressed Wilson with French demands for rich coal area of Saar Valley
  • France finally settled for compromise
  • Saar Valley would remain under League for 15 years
  • Then popular vote would determine its fate

– Wilson’s next battle with Italy over Fiume, a valuable seaport to Italy and Yugoslavia:
  • Wilson wanted Fiume to go to Yugoslavia and appealed over heads of Italian leaders
  • Maneuver fell flat

XXI. An Idealist Amid the Imperialists (cont.)

• Wilson’s next battle with Japan:
  – During war Japan seized China’s Shandong (Shantung) Peninsula and German islands in Pacific
  – Japan received Pacific Islands under League mandate
  – Wilson strongly opposed Japanese control of Shandong as violation of self-determination for its 30 million Chinese
  – Wilson reluctantly accepted compromise:
    » Japan kept Germany’s economic holdings in Shandong
    » Pledged to return peninsula to China at later date
    » Chinese outraged by imperialistic solution

XXI. An Idealist Amid the Imperialists (cont.)

• Treaty of Versailles handed to Germans in June 1919:
  • Had been excluded from negotiations in Paris
  • Hoped for peace based on Fourteen Points
  • Vengeance, not reconciliation, was treaty’s dominant tone
  • Loud and bitter cries of betrayal burst from Germans
    – Charges Adolf Hitler would later use
XXI. An Idealist Amid the Imperialists (cont.)

- Wilson guilty of no conscious betrayal:
  - Allies torn by conflicting aims
  - Wilson had to compromise to get any agreement and especially to salvage League of Nations
  - Treaty had much to commend it:
    - Liberation of millions of minority peoples, e.g. Poles

XXII. Wilson's Battle for Ratification

- Returning to America, Wilson sailed straight into political typhoon
  - Isolationists protested treaty:
    - Especially Wilson’s commitment to usher U.S. into new League of Nations
    - Senators Williams Borah (Idaho), Hiram Johnson (California) and others were irreconcilables
      - Rejected any “entangling” alliance

XXII. Wilson's Battle for Ratification (cont.)

- Critics showered Treaty of Versailles with abuse
  - For Hun-haters, pact not harsh enough
  - Liberals thought it too harsh—a gross betrayal
  - “Hyphenated Americans” aroused because peace settlement not sufficiently favorable to native lands
    - Irish Americans feared League would empower England to crush any move for Irish independence
XXII. Wilson’s Battle for Ratification (cont.)

• Strong majority of people favored Treaty
  – July 1919, Lodge had no real hope of defeating it
  • He wanted only to amend it
  • To “Americanize,” “Republicanize,” or “senatorialize” it
  • To divide public opinion, Lodge read entire 264-page treaty aloud in Senate Foreign Relations Committee and held protracted hearings to air grievances

XXII. Wilson’s Battle for Ratification (cont.)

• Faced with such delaying tactics, Wilson decided to take case to nation:
  • Spectacular speechmaking tour undertaken despite protests of physicians and friends
  • Wilson’s frail body began to sag under strains of:
    – Death of first wife in 1914
    – Partisan strife
    – Global war
    – Stressful peace conference
XXII. Wilson's Battle for Ratification (cont.)

– Tour began September 1919 with lame start in isolationist strongholds of Midwest
– Rocky Mountain region and Pacific Coast welcomed him:
  • High point—and breaking point—of return trip at Pueblo, Colorado, Sept. 25, 1919
  • With tears coursing down, Wilson pleaded for League as only hope of preventing future wars
  • That night he collapsed from physical and nervous exhaustion

– Whisked back to Washington, where several days later he suffered stroke
  – Laid in darkened room in White House for several weeks
  – For more than 7 months, he did not meet cabinet

– Senator Lodge now at helm:
  – Came up with fourteen formal reservations:
    • Reserved rights of United States under Monroe Doctrine and Constitution to protect U.S. sovereignty

XXII. Wilson's Battle for Ratification (cont.)

– Wilson still strong enough to obstruct:
  • Sent word to all true Democrats to vote against treaty with Lodge reservations attached
  • Wilson hoped that when these were cleared away, path would be opened for ratification
  • Loyal Democrats in Senate on November 19, 1919 did Wilson's bidding
  • Combining with "irreconcilables", they rejected treaty 55 to 39

– Nation deeply shocked by verdict
XXII. Wilson's Battle for Ratification (cont.)

- In March 1920 treaty brought up again with Lodge reservations tacked on
- Wilson again sent word to loyal Democrats to vote down treaty with obnoxious reservations
- He thus signed death warrant of treaty as far as Americans were concerned
- On March 19, 1920, treaty netted simple majority but failed to get necessary two-thirds majority by count of 49 yeas to 35 nays

XXII. Wilson's Battle for Ratification (cont.)

- Who defeated treaty?:
  - Lodge-Wilson personal feud, traditionalism, isolationism, disillusionment, and partisanship all contributed
  - Wilson must bear substantial share of responsibility
    - He asked for all or nothing—and got nothing

XXIII. The “Solemn Referendum” of 1920

- “Solemn Referendum”—Wilson's solution to deadlock Treaty was to decide issue in presidential campaign of 1920
  - Republicans gathered in Chicago, June:
    - Senate bosses decided on Senator Warren G. Harding, Ohio as candidate
    - For vice-president nominated Calvin (“Silent Cal”) Coolidge of Massachusetts
XXIII. The “Solemn Referendum” of 1920 (cont.)

- Democrats meet in San Francisco:
  - Nominated Governor James M. Cox of Ohio:
    - Strong supporter of League
    - Running mate Assistant Navy Secretary Franklin D. Roosevelt
  - Democrats attempted to make election a referendum on League
  - Effort muddled by contradictory statements by Harding

XXIII. The “Solemn Referendum” of 1920 (cont.)

- Election returns:
  - Newly enfranchised women swelled vote totals
  - Harding had prodigious plurality of over seven million votes—16,143,407 to 9,130,328 for Cox
  - Largest victory margin to date in presidential election
  - Electoral count was 404 to 127
  - Debs, federal prisoner #9653 at Atlanta Penitentiary rolled up largest Socialist vote ever with 919,799

XXIII. The “Solemn Referendum” of 1912 (cont.)

- Public desire for change resulted in repudiation of “high-and-mighty” Wilsonism
  - People eager to go back to “normalcy”:
    - Willing to accept second-rate president—
      - Got third-rate one
    - Harding’s victory death sentence for League
    - Politicians increasingly shunned League as a leper
  - When Wilson died in 1924—his “great vision” of league for peace had perished long before
XXIV. The Betrayal of Great Expectations

– America’s spurning of League short-sighted:
  • Republic had helped to win war, but foolishly kicked fruits of victory under table
  • League undercut by refusal of mightiest power on globe to join it
  • Ultimate failure lay at America’s doorstep
  • League designed, along with four other peace treaties, to rest upon United States

XXIV. The Betrayal of Great Expectations (cont.)

– Senate spurned Security Treaty with France:
  • France then undertook to build powerful military
  • Thus Germany began to rearm illegally
– United States hurt its own cause when it buried its head in sand
  • U.S. should have assumed war-born responsibilities and embraced role of global leader
  • Should have used its strength to shape world events