

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE START OF WWI

1. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
2. Russia mobilized forces to support Serbia along the Austro-Hungarian and German borders.
3. Germany ordered Russia to cancel mobilization.
4. France promises support to Russia.
5. Germany declared war on Russia.
6. Germany declared war on France.
7. Germany moves to invade neutral Belgium, using the Schlieffen Plan to avoid the heavily fortified border with France by going through Belgium. Germany wanted to quickly take over France, so it doesn't have to fight France and Russia at the same time. England warns Germany not to violate Belgium neutrality.
8. Germany invaded Belgium. England declared war on Germany.
9. Italy remained neutral, claiming that the Triple Alliance didn't count if Austria-Hungary and Germany were invading, not being invaded. Italy also decided to stick to its secret alliance with France to get some of the Austria-Hungarian territory in northern Italy if the Triple Alliance lost.
10. Turkey joined the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary) in November 1914 to fight its old enemy Russia.

## THE CHARACTER OF THE GREAT WAR

- A. the prelude to total war (World War II) → "stacked the cards for the future"
- B. The early illusions
  - \* brevity expected → quick victory
  - \* Russian manpower vs. German technical excellence?
  - \* at first fate rested with France
  - \* Austria and Russia slow and disorganized
  - \* Germany: aristocratic weakness
- C. The failure of strategy and of military technique
  - \* unprecedented in its bungling and wasteful character
  - \* deadlock reached by end of 1914 - no more than 10-mile shift in front line in 3 years
  - \* great surprise: trench warfare (a colossal siege)
- D. Psychological shocks and attrition of morale
  - \* revulsion follows early enthusiasm
  - \* first 16 months: 600,000 French dead
  - \* first year: one half of French families received the "telegram"
  - \* Germany never returned to normal
  - \* Russian generals squandered lives recklessly
- E. The Balance Sheet –
  1. 10 to 13 million dead:
    - Germany: 2,000,000
    - Russia: 1,750,000
    - France: 1,500,000
    - Britain: 1,000,000
    - Italy: 500,000
    - America: 100,000
  2. 20 million are wounded
  3. France is devastated
  4. Vienna and Berlin near starvation
  5. Influenza, typhus, cholera took millions
  6. Social revolution in Central and Eastern Europe

## THE COURSE OF THE GREAT WAR

### I. Global war

#### A. The guns of August: triggered a chain reaction

1. June 1914, Austrian Archduke assassinated by Serbian nationalist
2. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, July 28
3. Russia mobilized troops to defend its Serbian ally against the Central Powers
4. Germany: July 31, sent ultimatums to Russia and France, which were ignored
5. Germany declared war on Russia and France, invaded Belgium to reach France
6. August 4: to protect Belgium's neutrality, Britain declared war on Germany

#### B. Mutual butchery

1. War was greeted with enthusiasm on all sides; was expected to be brief
2. The western front
  - a. German invasion of France halted along the river Marne for three years
  - b. Trenches on the western front ran from the English Channel to Switzerland
  - c. Italy entered war with Allies, maintained defensive line against Austria-Hungary
3. Stalemate and new weapons
  - a. New technologies favored defensive tactics over offensive tactics
    - 1) Poisonous gas: introduced by Germans, used by both sides
    - 2) Eight hundred thousand casualties from mustard gas
  - b. Armored tanks used to break down trenches toward end of the war
  - c. Airplanes used mainly for reconnaissance
  - d. Submarines used especially by Germans against Allied shipping
4. No-man's-land littered with dead, the grim reality of trench warfare
5. On the eastern front, battle lines more fluid
  - a. Austrian-German forces overran Serbia, Albania, and Romania
  - b. Russia invaded Prussia 1915, but was soon driven out
  - c. Russians' counterattacks in 1916-1917 collapsed in a sea of casualties
6. Bloodletting: long, costly battles
  - a. At Verdun: French "victory" with 315,000 dead, defeated Germans lost 280,000
  - b. At the Somme, Britain and Germany saw losses of 420,000 each
7. New rules of engagement
  - a. Civilians became targets of enemy military operations
  - b. Air raids against civilians; naval blockades common

#### C. Total war: the home front

1. On the home front: the economy mobilized to the war effort
  - a. Governments militarized civilian war production
  - b. Imposed wage and price controls
  - c. Extended military draft in Germany from ages sixteen to sixty
2. Women served the war by entering the workforce
  - a. Took over jobs vacated by soldiers
  - b. Did hazardous work with explosives, shells, TNT
  - c. A liberating experience, especially for middle- and upper-class women
  - d. Women granted the vote in western nations after the war
3. Propaganda campaigns to maintain national support for the war
  - a. Included censorship and restrictions on civil liberties
  - b. Criticism of the war regarded as treasonous
  - c. Propaganda designed to dehumanize the enemy

#### D. Conflict in east Asia and the Pacific

1. Expansion of the war beyond Europe
  - a. European animosities extended to the colonies
  - b. British and French forces recruited colonials into their armies
  - c. Eventually, Japan, United States, Ottoman empire entered the war

2. Japan entered war with the Allies, 1914
    - a. Seized German-leased territory in China
    - b. New Zealand and Australia likewise seized German-held lands in the Pacific
  3. The Twenty-One Demands
    - a. Japan advanced its imperial interests in China
    - b. The Twenty-One Demands were designed to reduce China to Japanese protectorate
    - c. Britain intervened, prevented total capitulation of China to Japan
- E. Battles in Africa and southwest Asia
1. The war in sub-Saharan Africa
    - a. Allies targeted the four German colonies in Africa
    - b. Togoland fell quickly, but not the others
    - c. Many Allied soldiers and workers died from tropical diseases
  2. Battle of Gallipoli, 1915, in Ottoman Turkey
    - a. British decided to strike at the weakest Central Power, the Ottomans
    - b. Battle of Gallipoli a disaster, with 250,000 casualties on each side
    - c. Weakened ties of loyalty between Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Britain
  3. The Ottoman empire lost ground after Gallipoli
    - a. Lost Caucasus to Russians
    - b. Successful Arab revolt aided by British

## II. The end of the war

### A. Revolution in Russia

1. February Revolution of 1917: uprising against shortages, mounting deaths in the war
  - a. Facing mutinies, Nicholas II abdicated throne
  - b. Provisional government established
2. Struggle for power between provisional government and Petrograd soviet
  - a. New government passed many liberal reforms
  - b. Did not undertake land reform, did not withdraw from the war
3. V. I. Lenin (1870-1924) stepped into unstable situation
  - a. German authorities delivered Lenin to Russia, 1917, to take Russia out of war
  - b. Headed radical Bolshevik Party: demanded power to soviets, withdrawal from war
4. The October Revolution
  - a. Minority Bolsheviks gained control of Petrograd soviet
  - b. Bolsheviks' slogan "Peace, Land, and Bread" appealed to workers and peasants
  - c. Armed force seized power from provisional government in name of all soviets
5. Russia withdrew from war, made a separate peace with Germany, lost one-third of Ukraine

### B. U.S. intervention and collapse of the Central Powers

1. 1914-1916, United States under President Woodrow Wilson officially neutral
  - a. American public opposed participation in a European war
  - b. U.S. companies sold supplies, gave loans to Allies
  - c. By 1917, Allied ability to repay loans depended on Allied victory
2. The submarine warfare helped sway American public opinion
  - a. German blockade sank merchant ships, intended to strangle Britain
  - b. 1915, Germans sank *Lusitania*, a British passenger liner, killing 1,198 passengers
3. United States declared war on Germany, 6 April 1917
4. Collapsing fronts after years of bloodletting
  - a. April 1916, Irish nationalists attempted to overthrow British rule
  - b. Central Powers: shortages, food riots, mutinies
  - c. 1917, mutiny of fifty thousand French soldiers
  - d. Spring 1918, massive Germany offensive on western front failed
  - e. With fresh American troops, Allies broke the front and pushed the Germans back
  - f. Central Powers collapsed, one after another; accepted armistices November 1918