

CHAPTER 30

CHAPTER THEMES

Theme: Entering World War I in response to Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare, Wilson turned America's participation into a fervent ideological crusade for democracy that successfully stirred the public to a great voluntary war effort, but at some cost to traditional civil liberties.

Theme: After America's limited but important contribution to the Allied victory, a triumphant Wilson attempted to construct a peace based on his idealistic Fourteen Points. But European and senatorial opposition, and especially his own political errors, doomed American ratification of the Versailles Treaty and participation in the League of Nations.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Germany's declaration of unlimited submarine warfare, supplemented by the Zimmerman note proposing an alliance with Mexico, finally caused the United States to declare war. Wilson aroused the country to patriotic heights by making the war an idealistic crusade for democracy and permanent peace based on his Fourteen Points.

Wartime propaganda stirred voluntary commitment to the war effort, but at the cost of suppressing dissent. Voluntary efforts also worked wonders in organizing industry, producing food, and financing the war. Labor, including women, made substantial wartime gains. The beginnings of black migration to northern cities led to racial tensions and riots.

America's soldiers took nearly a year to arrive in Europe, and they fought in only two major battles at the end of the war. America's main contribution to the Allied victory was to provide supplies, personnel, and improved morale. Wilson's immense prestige created high expectations for an idealistic peace, but his own political blunders and the stubborn opposition of European statesmen forced him to compromise his lofty aims.

As Lodge stalled the treaty, Wilson tried to rouse the country on behalf of his cherished League, but his own physical collapse and refusal to compromise killed the treaty and the League. Republican isolationists effectively turned Harding's victory in 1920 into a death sentence for the League.

CHAPTER 31

CHAPTER THEMES

Theme: A disillusioned America turned away from idealism and reform after World War I and toward isolationism in foreign affairs, domestic social conservatism, and the pleasures of prosperity.

Theme: New technologies, mass-marketing techniques, and new forms of entertainment fostered rapid cultural change along with a focus on consumer goods. But the accompanying changes in moral values and uncertainty about the future produced cultural anxiety, as well as sharp intellectual critiques of American life.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

After the crusading idealism of World War I, America turned inward and became hostile to anything foreign or different. Radicals were targeted in the red scare and the Sacco-Vanzetti case, while the resurgent Ku Klux Klan joined other forces in bringing about pronounced restrictions on further immigration. Sharp cultural conflicts occurred over the prohibition experiment and evolution.

A new mass-consumption economy fueled the spectacular prosperity of the 1920s. The automobile industry, led by Henry Ford, transformed the economy and altered American lifestyles.

The pervasive media of radio and film altered popular culture and values. Birth control and Freudian psychology overturned traditional sexual standards, especially for women. Young literary rebels, many originally from the Midwest, scorned genteel New England and small-town culture and searched for new values