

DBQ

Why did the United States Enter World War I?



DIRECTIONS: Read all the following **documents** and answer the **questions** in full sentences on a separate sheet of paper. Label each set of questions with the title and number of the document first. Be sure that your answers include specific outside information, details, and analysis. You may consult your class notes, homework, or textbook for help with any question. Whatever you do not finish in class you will have for homework.

The *Lusitania*, The *Arabic* Pledge, The *Sussex* Pledge and Unrestricted Submarine Warfare

On May 7, 1915, a German **U-boat** sank the British ship *Lusitania* off the coast of Ireland. The Germans attacked the *Lusitania* without warning, leading to the deaths of 1,198 people, including 128 Americans.

President **Woodrow Wilson**, outraged at Germany's violation of the United States' neutral rights, threatened to end **diplomacy** with Germany. Still, many Americans opposed war, and a large number of German-Americans favored the **Central Powers**.

Germany continued submarine warfare. In August of 1915, another U-boat torpedoed the British passenger liner *Arabic*, killing approximately forty passengers and crew, including two Americans.

Afraid that the U.S. might now enter the war on the side of the Allied Powers, the German government issued the *Arabic* Pledge in 1915. Germany promised that it would warn non-military ships thirty minutes before it sank them. This would allow passengers and crew time to escape safely on lifeboats.

Germany, though, broke the *Arabic* Pledge in March of 1916, when a U-boat torpedoed the French ship *Sussex*. Although no Americans were among the fifty people who died aboard the *Sussex*, President Wilson was furious that Germany had broken the *Arabic* Pledge.

In 1916, afraid more than ever that its attacks on neutral ships might draw the United States into war, Germany agreed to a new a pledge — the *Sussex* Pledge. The *Sussex* Pledge promised a change in Germany's naval warfare policy and stated that German U-boats would:

- not target passengers ships
- not sink merchant ships unless the presence of illegal war supplies or weapons had first been established, if necessary by a search of the ship
- not sink merchant ships unless Germans had first ensured the safety of passengers and crew onboard

At the time, the *Sussex* Pledge calmed Wilson and eased the anger of Americans who were beginning to call for war. Even if Americans sided with the Allies, few people actually wanted to involve themselves in a hellish trench war thousands of miles away that they did not fully understand. For the time being, most followed the President's initial advice and tried to remain neutral "in thought and deed."

However, in February of 1917 Germany became convinced that it could defeat the Allied Powers by adopting a policy of **unrestricted submarine warfare** in which German U-boats would sink any enemy ship without warning, including merchant ships.

Based on the reading above, answer the following questions.

1. Define / identify the KEY ID terms marked in **bold** type.
2. After the sinking of the *Lusitania*, why did the U.S. decide to remain neutral?
3. Why did the *Arabic* Pledge help keep the United States from declaring war on Germany?
4. How did Germany break the *Arabic* Pledge? What new pledge did Germany then make?
5. Why do you think the *Sussex* Pledge kept the U.S. from joining the Allied Powers against Germany?
6. Why did Germany adopt a strategy of unrestricted submarine warfare?
7. Do you agree with Germany's strategy of unrestricted submarine warfare? What effect might this have on the United States' entry into the ongoing war in Europe?

U.S. Merchant Ships Attacked, Sunk, or Damaged During WW I

Look at the statistics below and answer the following questions:

8. How many American ships were sunk or damaged from May 1, 1915 until February 1, 1917?
 9. How many Americans were killed on these ships?
 10. How many American ships were sunk or damaged from February 1, 1917 through April 1, 1917?
 11. How many Americans were killed on these ships?
 12. What might explain the dramatic change in these numbers as of February 1, 1917?
 13. How might these statistics affect the United States' neutrality in the spring of 1917?
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May 1, 1915: Steamship *Gulflight*, tanker, gross 5,189 tons; torpedoed by German submarine U-30, 20 miles west of Scilly Islands; towed in; 3 killed.

May 25, 1915: Steamship *Nebraskan*, gross 4,409 tons; torpedoed by German submarine 40 miles south by west of Southcliffe, off southwest; salvaged; no casualties.

July 25, 1915: Steamship *Leelenaw*, gross 1,923 tons fired on, torpedoed and sunk by German submarine off the north coast of Scotland about 60 miles northwest of the Orkney Islands; no casualties.

August 4, 1915: *Pass of Balhamas*, motor vessel, gross 1,571 tons, voluntarily surrendered to a German submarine in the North Sea; converted into raider Seeadler; wrecked August 2, 1917; no casualties.

September 1, 1915: *Arabic* Pledge

October 28, 1916: Steamship *Lenao*, gross 692 tons; bombed and sunk by a German submarine 30 miles off Cape Vincent, Portugal; no casualties.

November 7, 1916: Steamship *Columbian*, gross 8,673 tons; bombed and sunk by German submarine U-49, 50 miles northwest of Cape Ortegal, Spain, no casualties.

November 26, 1916: Steamship *Chemung*, gross 3,061 tons; torpedoed and sunk with gunfire by Austrian submarine in Mediterranean, 14 miles east of Cape de Gata, no casualties.

May 4, 1916: *Sussex* Pledge

January 4, 1917: Steamship *Norlina*, gross 4,596 tons; damaged by torpedo fired by German submarine U-88 in Atlantic Ocean about 180 miles northwest of Inishtrahull Island off the north coast of Ireland, did not sink; no casualties.

January 13, 1917: Steamship *Nyanza*, damaged by gunfire from German submarine; 1 wounded.

Document 2

February 1, 1917: Germany Declares Unrestricted Submarine Warfare

February 3, 1917: Steamship *Housatonic*, gross 3,143 tons; bombed and sunk by German submarine U-53, 20 miles south of Bishops Light off Scilly Islands, Great Britain, no casualties.

February 12, 1917: *Lyman M. Law*, schooner, gross 1,300 tons; captured and sunk by German submarine U-35 in the Mediterranean about 25 miles from land near Cagliari, Sardinia, no casualties.

March 12, 1917: Steamship *Algonquin*, gross 2,832 tons; sunk with gunfire and bombs by German submarine U-62, 65 miles west of Bishops, off Scilly Islands, Great Britain, no casualties.

March 16, 1917: Steamship *Vigilancia*, gross 4,115 tons; torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-70, 145 miles west of Bishops, off Scilly Islands, Great Britain; 15 killed.

March 17, 1917: Steamship *City of Memphis*, gross 5,252 tons; sunk with gunfire by German submarine (UC type), 33 miles south of Fastnet, Ireland; no casualties.

March 18, 1917: Steamship *Illinois*, tanker, gross 5,225 tons; sunk with bombs by German submarine (UC type) in the English Channel, 20 miles north of Alderney, Channel Islands; no casualties.

March 21, 1917: Steamship *Healdton*, tanker, gross 4,489 tons; torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine 25 miles north of Terschelling, Holland, 20 killed.

April 1, 1917: Steamship *Aztec*, gross 3,727 tons; torpedoed and sunk by an enemy submarine (UC type), off Ushant Light, Quessant Island, northwest coast of France; 28 killed.

The Zimmermann Note

In January of 1917, British intelligence intercepted a message from German foreign minister Arthur Zimmermann. After breaking the German code and deciphering the message, the British Government shared **The Zimmermann Note** with the United States, which published the text on March 1, 1917.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to:

GERMAN LEGATION
MEXICO CITY

via Galveston

JAN 19 1917

862.2022/11A

130	13042	13401	8501	115	3528	416	17214	6491	11310
18147	18222	21560	10247	11518	23677	13805	3494	14938	
98092	5905	11311	10392	10371	0302	21290	5101	39695	
23571	17504	11269	18278	18101	0317	0228	17694	4473	
23284	22200	19452	21589	67893	5569	13918	8958	12137	
1333	4725	4458	5905	17166	13851	4458	17149	14471	6706
13850	12224	6929	14991	7382	15857	67893	14218	38477	
5870	17553	87803	5870	5454	16102	15217	22801	17138	
21001	17388	7446	23638	18222	6719	14331	15021	23845	
3156	23552	22096	21604	4797	9497	22464	20855	4377	
23410	18140	22260	5905	13347	20420	39689	13732	20667	
6929	5275	18507	52282	1340	22049	13339	11265	22295	
10439	14814	4178	6992	8784	7632	7357	6926	52282	11267
21160	21272	9340	9559	22464	15874	18502	18500	15857	
2188	5378	7381	98092	16127	13486	9350	9220	76038	14219
5144	2831	17920	11347	17142	11264	7667	7762	15099	9110
10482	97556	3569	3670						

BEPNSTOPFF.

Charge German Embassy.

The Zimmermann Note

RECEIVED
 October 1-8-58
 Mr. C. G. Ladd, State Dept.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED.

FROM 2nd from London # 5747.

By *Mark A. Eckhoff, Assistant*
 Date *Oct. 27, 1917*

"We intend to begin on the first of February
 unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavor
 in spite of this to keep the United States of
 America neutral. In the event of this not succeed-
 ing, we make Mexico a proposal of alliance on the
 following basis: make war together, make peace
 together, generous financial support and an under-
 standing 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 the above most
 secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the
 United States of America is certain and add the
 suggestion that he should, on his own initiative,
~~write~~ *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 ruthless employment of our submarines now
 offers the prospect of compelling England in a
 few months to make peace." Signed, ZIMMERMANN.

14. Who sent the Zimmermann Note? **HINT:** This is not a trick question.
15. To whom do you think the Zimmermann Note was sent? **Please be as specific as possible.**
16. Based on the telegram, do you think Germany wants to the U.S. to enter the War?
17. What offer does Germany make to Mexico in the event that America does enter the war?
18. What other nation does Germany suggest that Mexico also recruit to join in this new alliance?
19. Why is Germany confident that the war will end quickly? Find a **quote** to support your answer.
20. How might the Zimmermann Note affect American neutrality in the spring of 1917?

Revolution in Russia, March 1917

New York Times (1857-Current file); Mar 17, 1917; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2004)

New Russian Government Asks People's Support; States Its Policy as Freedom and Suffrage for All

LONDON, March 16.—The Provisional Government in Russia has issued an appeal to the people, according to a Reuter dispatch from Petrograd. The document begins:

"Citizens.—The Executive Committee of the Duma, with the aid and support of the garrison of the capital and its inhabitants, has succeeded in triumphing over the obnoxious forces of the old régime in such a manner that we are able to proceed to a more stable organization of the executive power, with men whose past political activity assures them the country's confidence."

The names of the members of the new Government are then given and the appeal continues:

"The new Cabinet will base its policy on the following principles:

First.—An immediate general amnesty for all political and religious offenses, including terrorist acts and military and agrarian offenses.

Second.—Liberty of speech and of the press; freedom for alliances, unions, and strikes, with the extension of these liberties to military officials within the limits admitted by military requirements.

Third.—Abolition of all social, religious, and national restrictions.

Fourth.—To proceed forthwith to the preparation and convocation of a constitutional Assembly, based on universal suffrage, which will establish a governmental régime.

Fifth.—The substitution of the police by a national militia, with chiefs to be elected and responsible to the Government.

Sixth.—Communal elections to be based on universal suffrage.

Seventh.—The troops which participated in the revolutionary movement will not be disarmed, but will remain in Petrograd.

Eighth.—While maintaining strict military discipline for troops on active service, it is desirable to abrogate for soldiers all restrictions in the enjoyment of social rights accorded other citizens.

"The Provisional Government desires to add that it has no intention to profit by the circumstances of the war to delay the realization of the measures of reform above mentioned."

21. Who lost power in the Russian Revolution in March 1917? What type of leader lost power?
22. How did President Wilson feel about Russia's form of government before the revolution?
23. Describe the principles and policies of the new government in Russia?
24. How was the new government in Russia similar to the government of the United States?
25. How would this change in Russia's government affect Woodrow Wilson's feelings towards joining the war on the side of Russia and the Allied Powers?

“The world must be made safe for democracy.”

Woodrow Wilson’s War Message, April 2, 1917

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made *immediately*

On the 3d of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the 1st 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.... 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....

Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people can not be. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind.

It is a war against all nations.... The challenge is to all mankind....

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 ... 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.

One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted [Zimmerman] note to the German Minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

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. We are to fight 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. **The world must be made safe for democracy.**

26. Why did Woodrow Wilson feel that the United States should enter the war?
27. According to Wilson, what wrongdoing has Germany done against the United States?
28. What were Wilson’s ultimate objectives in entering the war?
29. Do you believe that it is the responsibility of the United States to “make the world safe for democracy.”? **Why or why not?** What should be the role of the United States in protecting the rights and liberties of people around the world?