

# America Joins the Fight: World War I

1917-1918



## United States Neutrality



throughout the early days of the war (1914-17), the US continued to trade with both sides

the British imposed a \_\_\_\_\_ against Germany and expanded contraband lists

the US loaned \$2 billion to the Triple Entente

( \_\_\_\_\_ )

the American public bought \$2 billion in British and French war bonds

# Submarine Warfare



German

(U-Boats / submarines)  
began sinking unarmed US ships

## Pledge

1916: Germans sank French ship *Sussex*

President Woodrow Wilson warned Germany to

Germany agreed to stop sinking US ships & to pay the US a fine for the ones they'd already sunk

*President Wilson started to arm*

the \_\_\_\_\_

British passenger liner  
sunk in 1915 by German U-Boat

nearly \_\_\_\_\_ passengers drowned  
(128 Americans)

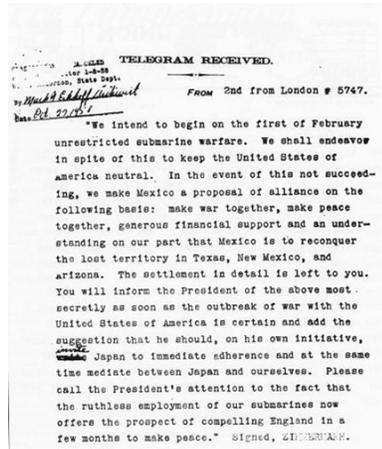
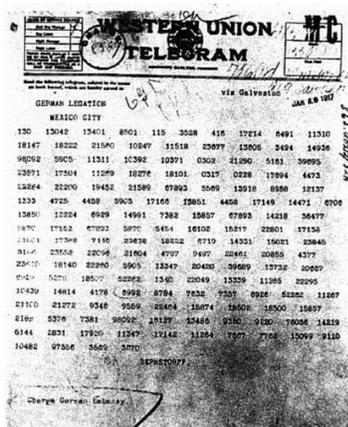


# Telegram

German foreign minister Arthur Zimmerman sent a telegram to his ambassador in Mexico

asking Mexico \_\_\_\_\_,  
promising to give them Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico

the \_\_\_\_\_ intercepted it and US newspapers printed it - Americans VERY upset



Germans sink four more passenger liners

Wilson asks Congress for the US to enter war on April 2, 1917

Congress declares war on \_\_\_\_\_

# Raising an Army

standing US army had only 200,000 troops, 1500 machine guns, 55 planes

## Act

(the draft)

all men 21-30 had to register for military service  
 10 million signed up for the draft  
 2.8 million were drafted, 2 million volunteered  
 first US troops - " " -  
 arrive in France in June, 1917



**WORLD WAR I  
 DRAFT REGISTRATION  
 CARD INDEX**



370,000 African Americans drafted, 200,000 served overseas  
 encountered rampant discrimination and prejudice  
 not allowed to serve in the Marine Corps, 10,000 in navy  
 restricted to \_\_\_\_\_  
 highly praised and decorated for fighting on Western front



# “Over There”

On the morning of April 6, 1917, newspaper headlines across America announced the news that the United States had declared war on Germany, effectively entering WWI. George Cohan was an actor, singer, dancer, songwriter, playwright, and Broadway producer who had composed hundreds of songs, including such famous songs as “You’re a Grand Old Flag,” “Give My Regards to Broadway,” and “I’m a Yankee Doodle Dandy.” Cohan’s reaction to reading the headlines that morning was to hum - and soon to add some lyrics. By the time Cohan arrived at work that morning, he already had the verses, chorus, tune, and title of what became the very popular song, “Over There.”

“Over There” was an instant success, selling over two million copies by the end of the war. The song “Over There” is about the “Yanks” (i.e. Americans) going “over there” (i.e. across the Atlantic) to help fight the “Huns” (i.e. the Germans) during World War I.

In 1936, Cohan was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for writing the song.



## “Over There”

by George M. Cohan

Johnnie get your gun, get your gun, get  
 your gun  
 Take it on the run, on the run, on the run  
 Hear them calling you and me  
 Every son of liberty  
 Hurry right away, no delay, go today  
 Make your daddy glad to have had such  
 a lad  
 Tell your sweetheart not to pine  
 To be proud her boy's in line.

CHORUS (repeated twice):  
 Over there, over there  
 Send the word, send the word over there  
 That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are  
 coming  
 The drums are rum-tumming everywhere  
 So prepare, say a prayer  
 Send the word, send the word to beware  
 We'll be over there, we're coming over  
 And we won't come back till it's over over  
 there.  
 Over there.

# War on the Home Front

needed to gear industry for war machine, raise \$ for war, mobilize Americans' support

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headed by wall street stockbroker Bernard Baruch  
handled purchasing of war materials



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charged w/boosting coal and oil production and encouraging conservation  
introduced daylight savings time and shortened workweeks for nonwar-related factories



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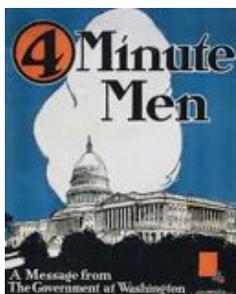
headed by Herbert Hoover  
reduced food consumption  
asked Americans to “serve just enough”  
Wheatless Mondays, Meatless Tuesdays

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citizens encouraged to grow their own vegetables



## Controlling Public Opinion



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headed by journalist and author George Creel

printed millions of pamphlets to distribute explaining the causes and aims of the war

“four minute men” spoke at theaters and public gatherings in support of the war



## Controlling War Protesters



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imposed severe penalties to silence war opposition

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organized by Creel, encouraged Americans to spy on each other

Postmaster General given authority to ban certain newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets

thousands people imprisoned, sometimes for private conversations(!)

*(persecution of Germans)*



