

1.2.1: Definitions

Schlieffen Plan:

- Germany's military strategy in 1914 for attacking France through its unprotected Belgian border.

[Schlieffen Plan Part I](#) (13:01)

[Schlieffen Plan Part II](#) (13:01)

Battles of the Marne (1914 & 1918):

- 1914 - Battle where British and French stopped the German advance.
- 1918 - Allied counter offensive against the Germans involving British, French and American troops.

Battle of Tannenberg:

- In August 1914, the Germans easily defeated the Russians.
- We will come back to this when discussing the Eastern Front (1.2.5)

Battle of the Somme:

- Fought mainly between the British and German armies in 1916.
- The plan was to relieve the French at Verdun but the battles bleed both British and German armies and achieved little. (**Battle of Beaumont-Hamel and NL disaster**)

Zimmerman Telegram:

- It was a secret message from the German foreign secretary **Alfred Zimmerman** to the Mexican government.
- We will come back to this when discussing American involvement (**1.2.6**)



Treaty of Brest-Litovsk:

- Signed between Russia and Germany.
- It took Russia out of the war in 1917 and took huge amounts of Russian land away from the country.

Armistice:

- A temporary truce between two opposing forces.
- **November 11, 1918** - the Allies and Germany signed the armistice agreement to end W.W.I.

1.2.2: W.W.I Alliances World Map













1.2.3: Trench Warfare leads to Stalemate on Western Front

- The nature of trench warfare lends itself to a defensive style of fighting.
- During WW1 on the western front trench warfare was employed as the main battle strategy by both sides.

- Life in the trenches was not pleasant and the conditions experienced by soldiers, while in the trenches, was a significant factor leading to stalemate.
- Both the British and the German front lines dealt with such things as lice, trench foot, mice, etc.
- All of these things took a toll on the soldiers causing sickness and impeding fighting.

- Battle tactics and weapons technology used during trench warfare also made troop advancement difficult.
- Using old battle tactics of a frontal charge, while facing the machine gun, led to tremendous casualties for both sides.

1.2.4: Impacts of New Technology

- Advances in technology and the types of weapons turned out by European and later American industries made the war longer and bloodier and changed the nature of war.

A. Tank

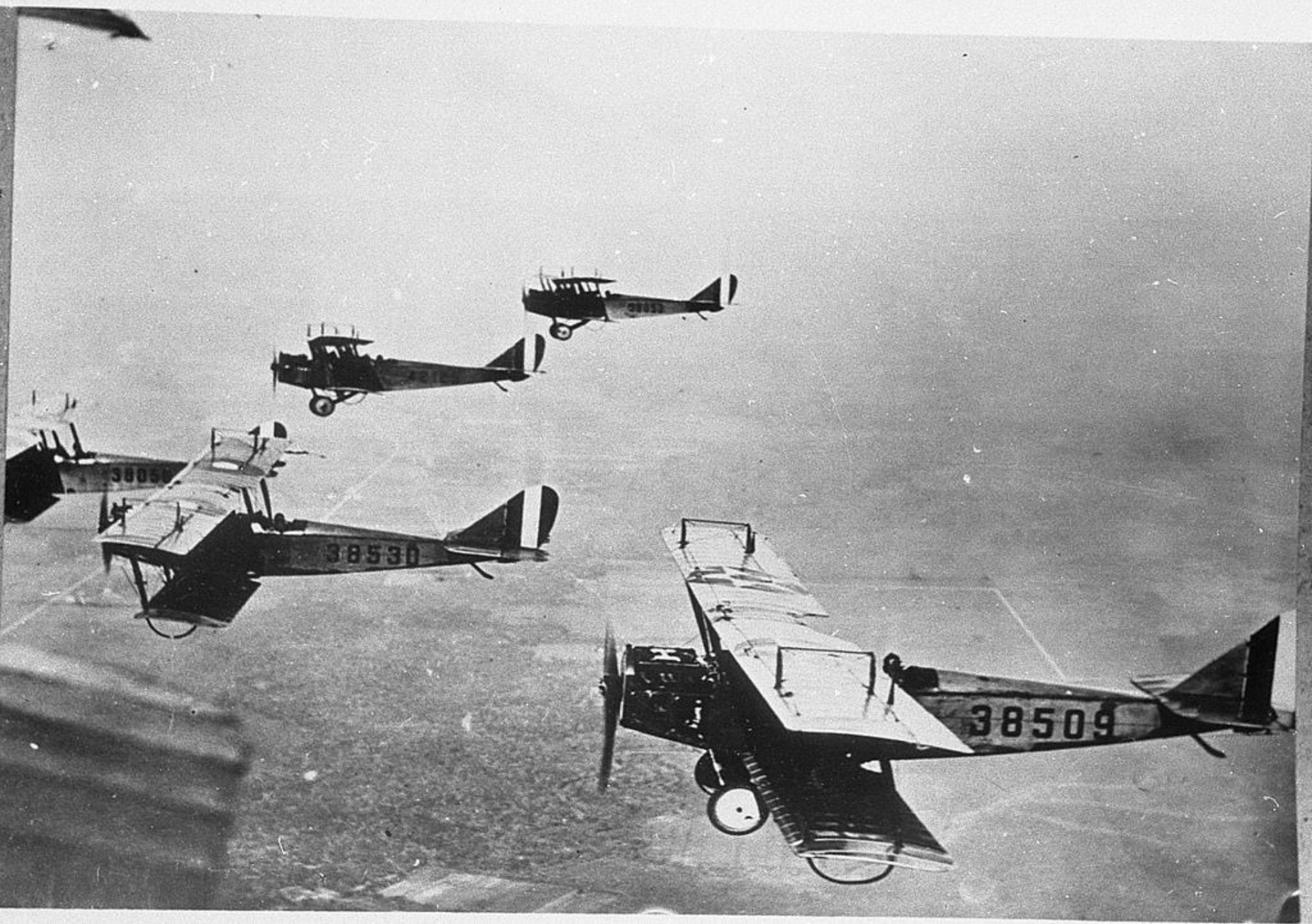
- Developed in 1916 and used by the British in the Battle of the Somme, were primitive and ineffective because crews were slow and the vehicles were often caught in the muddy battlefields.
- However with mechanical improvements and more experienced drivers the tank became a very effective troop mover and useful in overcoming battlefield obstacles toward wars end.



B. Airplane

- When war began, aviation technology was in its infancy.
- Airplanes were weak and unreliable.
- However, military aviation made rapid advances and planes became more numerous, durable and powerful.

- Planes took aerial photographs of enemy defences to observe enemy troop movements and study artillery placements before attacks were launched.
- By 1915, they were taking a more offensive role. Initially they had little impact but by the end of the war there were dogfights in the air and regular bombing missions.
- The air plane had become a significant military factor.

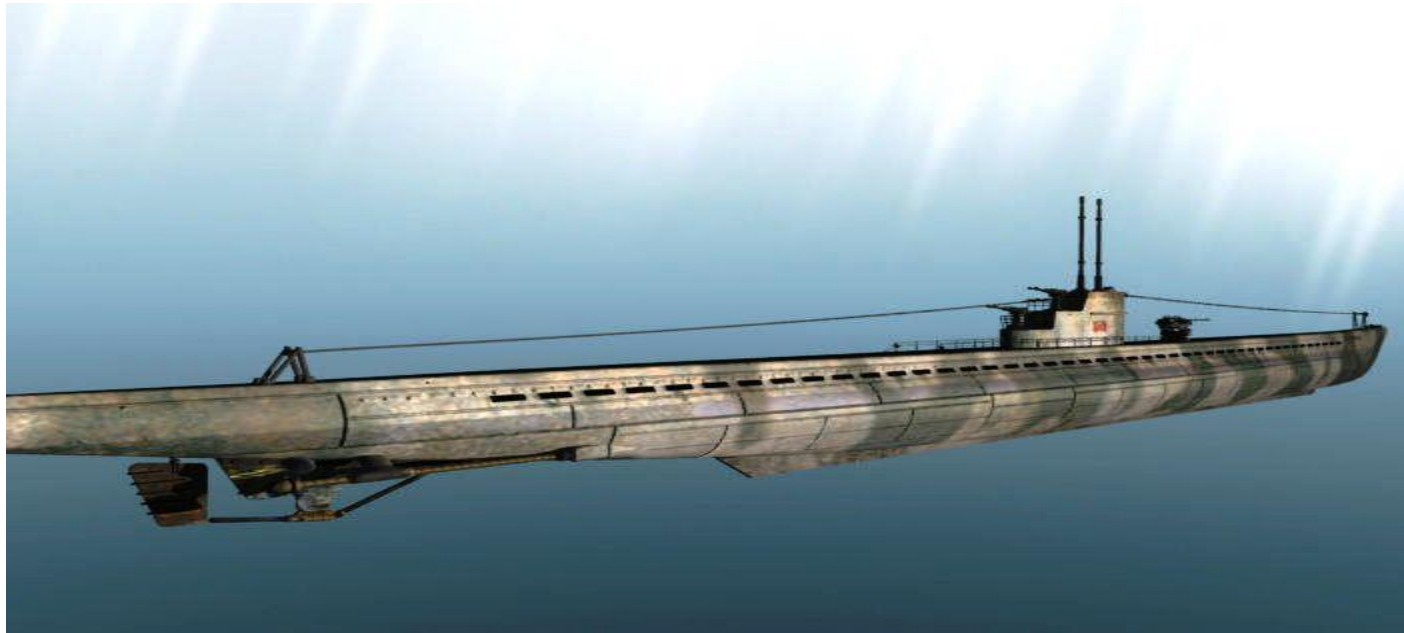
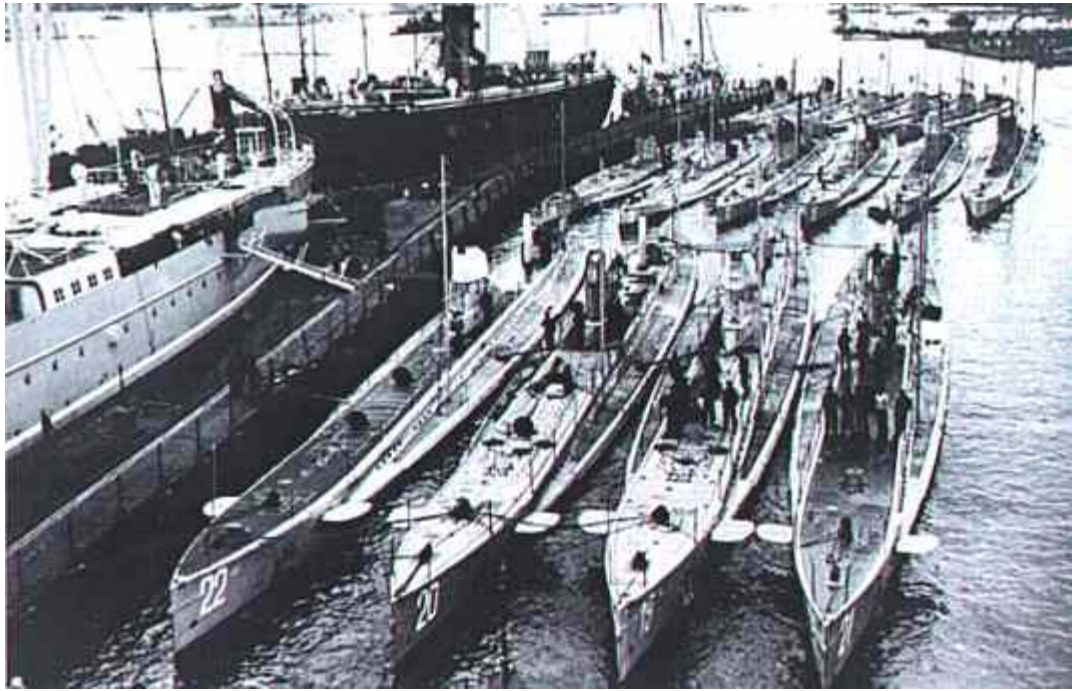


C: U-Boats

- On the seas there were no full scale naval battles between British and German fleets until the **Battle of Jutland** in the North Sea in 1916.
- The British sailed towards Denmark to intercept the German fleet.
- The British had superior naval strength yet failed to destroy the German fleet and suffered greater losses.
- The battle ended in a draw but both sides claimed victory.

- The British retained control of the North Sea and the Germans remained confined to the Baltic Sea for the remainder of the war.
- However German submarines were successful in destroying British shipping.
- In 1915, Germany announced that any allied merchant ships entering British water would be sunk by German U-Boats or submarines.

- By October of 1917 the Germans had destroyed 8 million tonnes of shipping thus threatening Britain's lifeline to the US.
- **The submarine war brought the US into the war.**



Weapons Summary:

1. **Machine Guns:**

- were the fastest firing device known, it mowed down waves of men in seconds as they roared across no-mans land.
- It made one man as effective as 20-30 riflemen.

2. **Tanks:** noted above

3. **U-boats/Submarines:**

- were very effective in launching sneak attacks and roam the seas inflicting immense damage on merchant ships bringing supplies to Britain.



4. **Airplanes:**

- went from observers to fighters with mounted machine guns; **Zeppelins** (blimps) were used for bombing.

5. **Poison gas:**

- with chemicals such as chlorine and mustard gas were somewhat effective, but were abandoned because if the wind was blowing at you, the gas would be blown back onto the troops.



6. Grenades:

- Enabled soldiers to kill a group of troops from a distance and provided some safety for the soldier throwing the grenade as it gave him time to get away.



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Technology of W.W.I Part I (15:01)

Technology of W.W.I Part II (15:00)

Technology of W.W.I Part III (12:57)

1.2.5: War on the Western and Eastern Fronts



Western Front (France):

- The allies stalled the initial attacks by Germany during the first 2 months of fighting.
- By October 1914 both sides had dug a line of trenches and both faced each other across mud and barbed wire.
- The tragic stalemate of trench warfare had begun.

- Over the next **4** years, the line of trenches remained virtually stationary in spite of massive battles.
- Tremendous losses were experienced by both sides.
- Millions were casualties and millions were conscripted or enlisted to take their place.
- When war ended on **November 11th, 1918** the lines were almost in the same position as they were when established in **1914**.

Eastern Front (Russia):

- **On the Eastern Front the lines were much more mobile.**
- In August 1914, the Battle of Tannenburg the Germans easily defeated the Russians.
- For the Russians their supply system failed, troops were exhausted and communications were poor.

- As a result the 2nd Russian army was captured (30 000 dead, 100 000 captured).
- In September 1914, at the Battle of Maurisan Lakes, the Russians fought bravely but by 1917, 3 million Russians were dead or captured.
- **Shortly after the Russians were forced to abandon the war on the Eastern Front and the Germans moved the majority of the forces to the Western Front.**

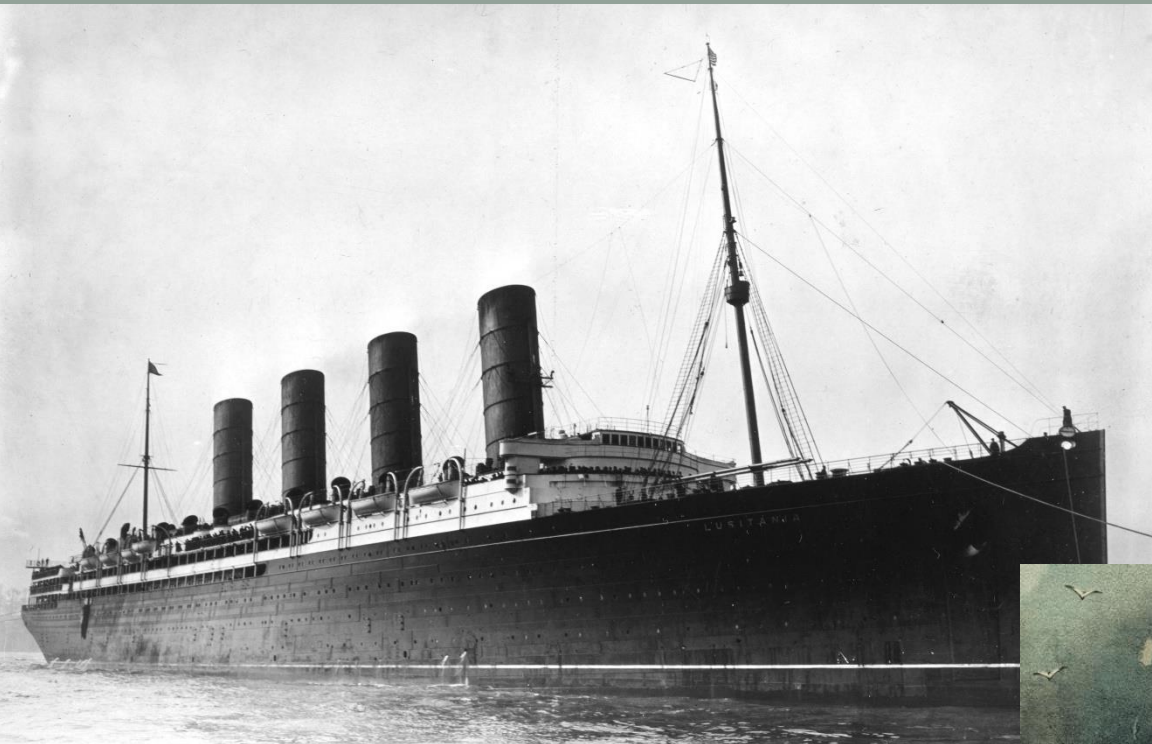
[Battle of Tannenberg Video](#) (4:25)

1.2.6: United States Enters the War

- At the start of the war the Americans proclaimed neutrality (**“splendid isolation”**) stressing that they had to be “impartial in thought and in actions”.
- As the war progressed, certain incidents occurred making impartiality impossible to stand by.
- **The following events helped swing American opinion and ultimately drew the Americans into the war.**

1. Sinking of the Lusitania:

- On May 7th, 1915 the British liner, The Lusitania was torpedoed by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland.
- The Germans believed it was carrying ammunition for the allies.
- Among the 1198 victims, there were **128** Americans.
- The incident shocked the U.S and started to turn public opinion in the U.S against Germany.
- However, they did not enter the war at this point.



2. The Zimmerman Telegram:

- American public opinion turned towards war when newspapers published the Zimmerman Telegram.
- It was a secret message from the German foreign secretary Alfred Zimmerman to the Mexican government.
- **It stated that if Mexico joined Germany against the U.S that Mexico could, “regain lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.”**
- The United States government felt tremendous pressure from the public to declare war at this point, but **did not**.



WESTERN UNION
TELEGRAM

RECEIVED AT: []
 NO. []
 DATE []
 TIME []
 CLASS []
 RATE []

TO: []
 FROM: []
 MESSAGE: []

via Galveston

GERMAN LOCATION
 MEXICO CITY

150	12042	13402	0501	105	3028	618	17214	6492	11310
18147	18212	21590	00247	10518	23877	15805	3494	14038	
08082	0805	11301	10362	10371	0502	21290	5081	20895	
12075	17504	11298	18276	20101	0217	0228	17894	6473	
12284	32200	19452	21589	87983	0029	13828	8956	12137	
1533	4725	4458	8928	17108	12851	8458	17148	14473	8706
13880	12224	8929	14991	7382	05827	07883	14218	38477	
1870	17633	87801	8470	6154	18103	18217	23801	57138	
05023	17348	7448	33838	18232	8714	14331	35021	23645	
8104	03952	20058	21804	8797	0427	20471	30829	4377	
25900	38140	23290	8905	12345	20420	30680	25122	20887	
0089	5078	28077	82092	1260	20049	13329	11285	22288	
10430	14814	4178	5992	8704	7022	7357	8428	22282	11887
23102	21272	8348	5859	22474	15874	08022	08020	13827	
2284	8278	7381	38052	27107	13440	8230	9120	78038	14218
8044	0021	17026	11247	07142	13164	7887	7702	15099	9130
30482	89328	3085	2870						

RECEIVED AT: []

Charge Serial: []

3. Unrestricted Submarine Warfare:

- In early 1917, Germany proclaimed unrestricted submarine warfare, which meant sinking any ship that sailed into restricted areas as outlined by Germany.
- The Germans wanted to cut off supplies to Britain, which would lead to a quick surrender before the U.S could enter the war.
- As a result of the action the U.S cut off relations with Germany and turned towards war.
- In April 1917, they declared war on Germany stating they were, “fighting to make the world safe for democracy”.

• SO?????????

1.2.7: American influence on WWI

- The entry of the United States was of significant to the outcome of WWI, however they started slowly.
- The U.S was unable to significantly add to the war effort in Europe for almost a full year.
- WHY? - Time was needed to enlist, conscript, mobilize and train troops.
- Also, they needed time to prepare materials to fight a war.

- Thus, 1917 was a year of hardship for the allies in Europe.
- By late 1917 and early 1918, 50 000 American troops were landing in Europe each month.
- **Their arrival boosted morale of soldiers who had been fighting for over three years.**
- However, only six full divisions had arrived by March (120 000 – 180 000).

- The Germans realizing this pushed for a decisive victory.
- From March to July the Germans attacked and made some advances to positions not held since 1914.
- In a counterattack on July 1918, the Second Battle of the Marne, the Americans helped the allies push the Germans back.
- This turned the tide of the war as the Germans were sent into retreat for the remainder of the war.
- **The allies with American assistance now had the initiative.**

- **At sea, U.S battle groups almost immediately helped the British in stopping the German U-boats by providing extra destroyers for convoy work and laying mines.**
- **Also merchant ships brought extra supplies of food and munitions to help the allied cause.**
- Perhaps the timing of the American entry into the war was just as important as the resources they provided.

- **In March 1918, the Russians withdrew from the war, which allowed the Germans to move more troops to the Western Front.**
- As well, the Germans now had control of agricultural regions in Russia which they used to relieve food shortages.
- **Therefore, it can be said that the arrival of the Americans with fresh troops and resources counteracted the advantage gained by the Germans with the Russian withdrawal.**