

The End of WWI and its Effects

In 1915 the Ottoman Empire entered the War on the side of Germany. The Young Turks had relied upon German military advisors and financing and were convinced the Germans were going to win the war. To help the Germans, they opened up a front against Russia. Because of poor generalship and planning, the Russians pushed the Ottomans back. Looking for someone to blame, the Young Turks blamed the **Armenian** population in the eastern part of the empire. The first genocide of the 20th century took place as a result; about 1 million Armenians were massacred by the Turks.

The war had become a contest in the industrial production of arms and ammunition. Factories were retooled to produce the new weapons of war. The British began to fall behind and the Russians were horribly ill equipped. To help supply the Russians the British attempted to take Istanbul from the Ottoman Empire. This led to the failed battle of Gallipoli which became important for the forming of Australian and New Zealand national identities (Britain used a lot of colonial troops at this battle; the death toll was terrible.) This battle also produced the hero of the modern Turkish state, Ataturk.

As British industrial production struggled to keep up with the war, they depended more and more on American aid. To stop this the Germans began to use their U-boats to sink ships at sea. More than anything else, the sinking of passenger ships at sea became the reason American public opinion began to turn against Germany.

Germany's biggest strategic problem: fighting on two fronts
Russia, on Germany's eastern front, had experienced horrific losses and domestic discontent with the war was high. The Czar was removed from power, but the new government continued to go on with the war. There was popular discontent over the war and Germany sought to exploit that discontent to its advantage.

Germany's other problem was the British blockade that cut Germany off from her colonies. Germany's best hope in breaking this blockade was its use of U-boats, a practice that was diplomatically dangerous.

The blockade of German sea power prompted the Japanese to attack and control German colonies in China and the Pacific.

The German solution to a two-front war was to support the overthrow of Russia's government and replace it with one that would pull out of the war. Vladimir Lenin, the leader of Russia's Bolshevik party, had been exiled in Switzerland and the Germans met with him and agreed to secretly send him back to Russia and give him financing. Lenin arrived in Petersburg and began rally the Bolsheviks, the Russian Communists. A full scale revolution broke out in October 1917 and Russia became the first communist nation. Lenin quickly pulled out of the war allowing Germany to transfer many troops to

the western front in France. But by this time the Americans had entered the war. After one last offensive by the Germans failed, they agreed to an armistice.

The Peace Negotiations at Versailles, 1919.

Wilson brought the US into this war with high hopes: it would be a war to end all wars. This would be accomplished, he believed, by reconstructing Europe as democracies. However, at Versailles Wilson quickly learned the Allies did not share his idealism. They merely wanted to punish Germany as much as possible.

The provisions of the Treaty of Versailles included the following:

- 1) Germany had to accept full blame for war, reparations
- 2) The map of Europe was redrawn. Austria-Hungarian Empire dismembered
Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia created from Austrian land
Poland reborn, constituted from lands carved from Russia and Germany. The Ottoman Empire was dismembered, mandate system created in Middle East
- 3) A new international organization was created: the League of Nations.

Effects of the war on the old Colonial order

- 1) To the colonized peoples, the Europeans no longer seemed the superior, invincible race of humans.

Battle of Gallipoli: Ordered by Winston Churchill to attack the Ottoman Empire in the Dardanelles and open a war weather supply route to the Russians. This was the largest military operation outside of Europe. The Allied troops landed on the beach and were pinned down by Ottoman troops fortified atop the cliffs. 250,000 men died and nine months went by before the Allies would even admit to the mistake. What made this disaster more important was that Allied troops were comprised mostly of troops from British Dominion settlements, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This day became an important day helping to solidify nationalism in these areas. Also, it launched the political career of Mustapha Kemal, better known as Ataturk—the architect of modern Turkey.

- 2) The Europeans pulled manpower from their colonies and had to allow native people take on real administrative positions for the first time. Once this step had been taken, it was hard to retreat.
- 3) Europeans promised independence to many colonies who sent up troops. They quickly forgot these after the war.

The weakening of the European Colonial Order

Similarities in anti-colonial movements in India, Africa, and the Middle East:

- 1) the lead taken by western educated elites

- 2) charismatic leaders
- 3) use of non-violent protest

India

In India the path to independence was pioneered by the Indian National Congress party (INC). It became a contact point for western-educated elites increasingly worried about English racism and colonial policies. At Congress meetings, Indians could assemble and express their grievances in a new common language: English.

British policies toward India:

- 1) British administrators were brought over to do jobs that Indians were qualified to do. Moreover, the lucrative pensions of these British were paid for by Indian taxes.
- 2) Indians protested the “drain” of Indian resources for Britain’s own prerogatives. Land that had been used to produce local food consumption was forced into opium production for export to China. Famine and starvation came, with the British remaining insensitive to the plight of the Indian people.

A mass movement against the British began but confined mainly to Hindus and the Bombay region.

With the outbreak of WWI no other colony helped the British more.

Effects of WWI on India:

- 1) India provided troops to fight in Africa and the Middle East. As more and more died in a fight that really had nothing to do with them, they became more discontented.
- 2) Britain called many of its colonial administrators home. As a result, many Indians were allowed to take positions formerly held by British.
- 3) The British said they would take steps to allow India self government if India contributed to the war effort. At the war’s end, the British backed down.

The **Rowlatt Act** (1918) severely limited Indian’s civil liberties, such as freedom of the press, fueled protests throughout India. This was designed in part to limit India’s burgeoning independence aspirations.

The local protests across India were consolidated into a mass movement by **Gandhi**.

Western Education (Oxford)

Advocated peaceful boycotts, **satyagraha** (truth force)

“Gandhi combined the career of a Western-educated lawyer with the attributes of a traditional Hindu ascetic and guru. The former had given him considerable exposure to the world beyond India and a rather astute understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the British colonizers. These qualities and his soon legendary skill in negotiating with the British made it possible for Gandhi to build up a strong following among middle

class, Western-educated Indians, who had long been the dominant force behind the nationalist cause. But the success of Gandhi's protest tactics also hinged on the involvement of ever-increasing numbers of the Indian people in anticolonial resistance. The image of a traditional mystic and guru that Gandhi projected was critical in gaining mass support from peasants and laborers alike. . . . Gandhi's widespread popular appeal gave him even greater influence among nationalist politicians."

Gandhi's leadership was the most important cause of the surge in Indian nationalism and colonial protest in the 1920s and 1930s.