

Canada in World War One

Socials 11 Exam Review: PSII

Canada before WW1

- Canada was still a very young country (only became a country in 1867)
- "Let me tell you, my fellow Canadians, that all the signs point this way, that the twentieth century shall be the century of Canada ... Canada shall be the star towards which all men who love progress and freedom shall come." - Wilfrid Laurier (Prime Minister from 1896-1911)
- Canada was growing rapidly. Between 1901 and 1911, Canada's population increased from 5,371,315 to 7,206,643.

Canada in 1905



Canada in 1912



How people lived

- Mostly lived on farms or small towns
- Mostly White, Christian (discrimination against growing number of immigrants from Ukraine, Poland, India and Asia). Prime Minister Bennett said in 1907: “Canada must remain a white man’s country.”
- Most Canadians wanted to assimilate Aboriginal people: “The white man of Canada is slowly, steadily and surely absorbing his red brother” (MacLearns, 1913). Height of residential school era and Indian Act restrictions.
- Women had few rights
- Economy and cities were expanding

Canadian Government

- Government still very controlled by Britain: Canada could not resolve international disputes—this was role of British government (ex: Alaska negotiation was resolved in favor of US).
- French Canadians felt Canada should be independent from Britain, whereas many Anglo-Canadians were still very patriotic to British.

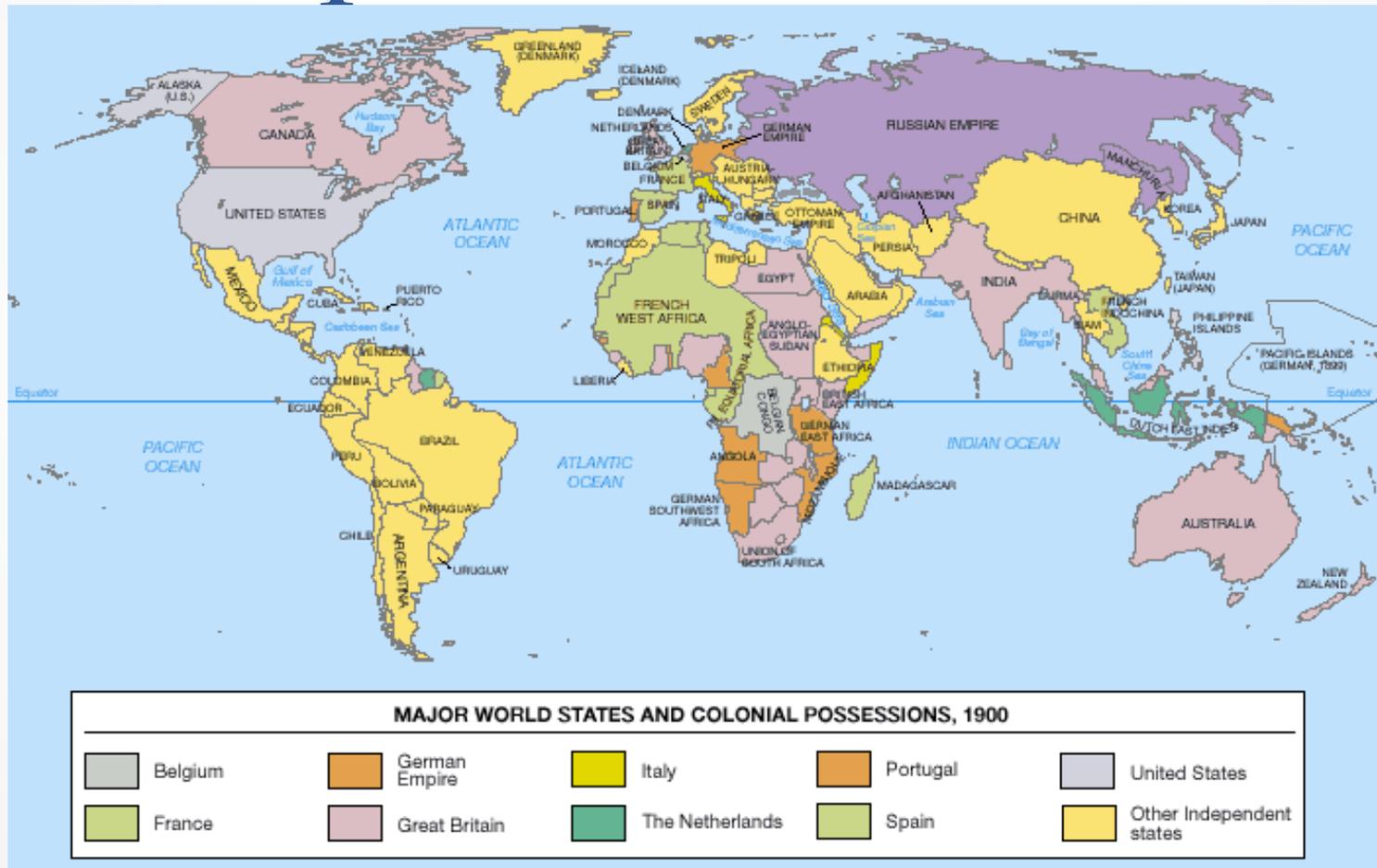


Lead up to WW1

- 1800-1900 was the height of Imperialism
- Countries in Europe dominated almost the entire globe
- A massive race for wealth, power and control
- European countries developed alliances to protect themselves and their interests
- An arms race occurred as countries tried to maintain power



Imperialism: 1900



Alliances: 1914



How the war started

- Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy
- Triple Entente: Britain, France, Russia (hoped to reduce threat of war by surrounding Germany)
- June 1914: Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Crown-Prince of Austria-Hungary, was assassinated by a Serbian Nationalist group.
- Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
- Russia, Serbia's ally, declared war on A-H.
- Germany declared war on Russia and Serbia.
- Soon all the countries of Europe were at war.



IF YOU TOUCH ME I'LL-

IF YOU MAKE A MOVE I'LL-

IF YOU HIT THAT LITTLE FELLER I'LL-

IF YOU STRIKE MY FRIEND I'LL-

IF YOU HIT HIM-

HO THERE, IF YOU CHAPS-

Why was Canada involved?

- Because Britain still controlled Canadian foreign policy, when Britain declared war on Germany, Canada was automatically at war.
- 30,000 Canadians signed up in the first month (August 1914)
- They were very patriotic to Britain, and also thought it would be a short war and they would “be home by Christmas”



Warfare in WW1

- The war was long and brutal
- Before WW1 war in Europe was generally fought with both sides lining up and charging each other
- WW1 was the first war with machine guns, tanks and airplanes playing an active role
- Charging would be suicidal
- Therefore they built trenches and charged in short bursts
- In between was a deadly “no-man’s land”
- Strategy of attrition: trying to wear the enemy down over time



Trench Warfare



They literally lived in these trenches.

They were full of mud, rats, and lice.

They were crowded and noisy from gunfire and bombs.

Battles involved going over the trench and trying to get to the enemy's side.

Thousands could die in minutes.

Canada's Contribution

- Ypres (1915): 6000 Canadians died, Germans used chlorine gas with deadly fumes
- The Somme (1916): Wave upon wave of troops were ordered to march across open field to German trench, and were mowed down by machine guns. Over a million people died.
- Vimy Ridge: French had failed to capture this small hill. Canadians did it and gained more ground than any previous British offensive. Was a milestone for recognition of Canadian soldiers.

Vimy Ridge Success



Canada's Contribution

- Passchendele: Very bloody battle in which Canadians won but over 500,000 people were killed to capture a small ridge.
- Canada's 100 Days: A series of battles at the end of the war in which Canadian soldiers played a significant role in causing the Germans to retreat.
- War fought in the air and at sea too. German U-boats (submarines) challenged British navy.



Deaths in the war

- 60,000 Canadians died in the war.
- Over 16 million people died in the war.

Canada on the homefront

- War Measures Act: Passed by PM Borden at the start of the war. Gave Canadian government the power to do everything necessary for the “security, defense, peace, order and welfare of Canada.”
- Gave Canadian government unprecedented power.
- Used against “Enemy Aliens:” Canadians from Germany or Austria-Hungary. They had to carry special identity cards. About 10,000 were sent to internment camps.

Canadian Economy and the War

- Manufacturing of war goods led to a booming economy
- Most goods were exported to Europe and became scarce in Canada—goods had to be rationed
- To pay for the war the government introduced
 - first income tax
 - Victory bonds—people would buy them from the government and be repaid with interest after the war
- Canada still had to borrow from other countries and ended up in debt.



Halifax Explosion

- A boat carrying explosives was hit by another boat in Halifax harbour, destroying the harbour and much of the city. Many people killed and injured.



Women during the war

- Many more women took work in factories while men were away at war
- Women participated as nurses in the war
- Strengthened campaign for suffrage
- Women got the right to vote in 1918



Conscription Crisis

- By 1917 not enough Canadians were volunteering for the war
- PM Borden put into place the Military Service Act to enlist soldiers (even though he had promised not to)
- Many opposed this:
 - French Canadians: Didn't feel as connected to Britain or France and didn't want to go to war
 - Farmers and workers: People who were already struggling to make ends meet

Election in 1918

- Government gave the right to vote to women related to soldiers and took the right to vote away from immigrants from enemy countries and conscientious objectors.
- They won the election but with much anger and resentment from opponents of conscription.

Impact on Canadian Autonomy

- Canada became more independent from Britain
- Canadian corps created (separate Canadian corps that was part of British Army rather than spreading them throughout British Army)
- PM Borden successfully fought for Canada to have their own seat at the Paris Peace Conference after the war, not be represented by Britain
- Canada was a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles, which set out the terms of the peace agreement, and became a member of the League of Nations



Other impacts on Canada

- Government intervened in people's lives more than ever before (rationing, income tax, victory bonds, regulating wheat production, nationalized railways)
- Issue of conscription divided French and English Canadians (French-English school issue, riots in the street)

Impact on the World

- Map of Europe was redrawn



Impact of WW1

- Germany was harshly punished in Treaty of Versailles: Had to accept the blame for the war, pay \$30 billion in reparations, lose much land, and restrict army. Countries went for revenge rather than forgiveness.
- Russian revolution: Monarchy overthrown and became USSR (communist)
- League of Nations established—pre-cursor to the UN, but limited because it had little buy-in from member countries and no force of its own. Also, US refused to join.



Impact of WW1

- Beginning of rise of north America and decline of Europe
- End of monarchies in Europe
- Influenza (Spanish Flu) Epidemic in 1918: Killed 50-100 million people (4-8 times the number killed in the war). Brought to Canada by soldiers coming home. Attacked mostly healthy young adults.
- Industrialization, urbanization, and the development of workers movements
- Women's rights movements.
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1920s and 30s overview

- At first Canada prospered after the war: Roaring 20s, prohibition, cars, phones, radios, movies
- 1929: Great depression hit
- By 1933 more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of workforce was unemployed



Canada's Growing Independence

- Halibut Treaty (1923): A treaty over fishing rights with the US. Canada fought for the right to negotiate it without a British official.
- King/Byng Crisis (1925): PM King asked governor general to call an election because conservatives wanted to vote against his government. GG refused and King said it was wrong for an official appointed by Britain to control Canadian politics. Never again did a GG act against the wishes of a Prime Minister.
- Statute of Westminster (1931): At conference of British colonies, they argued for more autonomy. The British Commonwealth was created, giving Canada full status as an independent country.