Section 3 Notes: Americans Join the Allies

Supplying the Allies

Allies’ problems in 1917:
  o exhausted from years of trench warfare
  o low morale/French troops refused to continue fighting
  o British were running out of war supplies and food >> starvation
  o German u-boats were sinking one of every four ships that left British ports.

Two main ways that American entry into the war made an immediate difference for the British:
  o U.S. Navy helped the British destroy German submarines
  o Convoys of navy destroyers escorted both soldiers and groups of merchant ships across the Atlantic.

Russian Withdrawal:

  o Russians withdrew from the war in the face of food and fuel shortages, as well as the Bolshevik revolution (a communist revolution we will cover in our next unit).
  o Vladimir Lenin signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany. The Russians lost land to Russia as a result.
  o Germans moved thousands of troops to the Western front, which caused a need on the allied side for American help.

New German Offensive
  o March 1918 – Germans launched massive attack along the Western Front. Germany broke the stalemate pushing the Allies within 40 miles of Paris and it looked like Germany might win the war.

American Troops Arrive in France
  o kept the American force separate from the French and the British

Doughboys in Battle
  o June 1918 -- AEF turned back a German offensive east of Paris, at Belleau Wood, and stopped the Germans on the Marne and the Somme rivers.

The Battle of the Argonne Forest
  o mid-September 1918 – Allied offensive in which Germany was defeated east of Verdun.
  o late-September 1918 – Battle of the Argonne Forest – Allies pushed back the Germans and the Germans were now faced with an invasion of their own country
The End of the War
- Ottoman Empire on the brink of collapse
- revolution in Austria-Hungary, which led to end of the empire
- Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary declared independence
- Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires surrendered to the Allied Powers

Request for an Armistice
- Germans realized that they had little hope of winning.
- Germans suffering at home due to shortages of food and supplies.
- October 4, 1918, Germany asked President Wilson of an armistice.
- Wilson agreed to the armistice with these conditions: Germany had to accept his plan for peace and promise not to renew hostilities; all German troops must leave Belgium and France; and, the U.S. would only deal with civilian leaders.
- revolution in Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II stepped down, Germany declared a republic
- new leaders of Germany agreed to Wilson’s terms for an armistice

Peace Begins
- Armistice began on November 11, 1918.
- Germany agreed to withdraw all land forces west of the Rhine River, withdraw its fleet to the Baltic, and surrender huge amounts of equipment
- fighting stopped, the Great War ended