

US History World War I

Learning Target:

I can examine the mobilization of the home front during World War I by identifying the role of propaganda & suppressing opposition.

7. Public Support & Propaganda

Committee on Public Information (CPI) –

-Established to increase overall American support for the war

CPI Propaganda –

- Original material more upbeat and fact-based
- Material evolved into propaganda making Germans looking evil
- Hollywood produced movies supporting this image of Germans

Negative Results of CPI Propaganda –

- Propaganda often called for Americans to watch for German spies
- Distrust developed of German Americans
 - Phone taps, spying, open other's mail
- German stopped being taught in many schools
- German books removed from library shelves
- German food renamed
 - Hamburger – Salisbury Steak
 - Sauerkraut – Liberty Cabbage

Suppressing Opposition

-Despite propaganda campaign from the CPI some Americans still strongly opposed the war

Groups Who Opposed WWI –

- Quakers and Mennonites –
 - Opposed for primarily religious reasons
 - Considered traitors by many and attacked for pacifism
- Socialist Party and Industrial Workers of the World –
 - Eugene Debs –
 - Leader who would spend 10 years in jail for his opposition to the war
 - Believed warring nations were using workers as pawns in a struggle for capitalistic world markets

Espionage Act (1917) and Sedition Act (1918) –

- Outlawed acts of treason
- Made it a crime to “utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal or abusive language” criticizing the government, the flag, or the military
- Also included opposition to the draft, war bond drives, or arms industry
- Violate First Amendment?
 - Many felt these acts violated the First Amendment
 - Supreme Court disagreed in Schenck vs United States

Reading Like A Historian – Sedition In WWI

Background Information:

1. What types of American's opposed the war? What reasons did they give for their opposition?
2. What did Wilson do to promote nationalism and restrict dissent during WWI?

Document A & B

1. What type of document is this and who is directed towards?
2. What is Debs and Schenck's main message?
3. Find a quote that supports your answer to question #2.

Document C

1. In your own words summarize this law.
2. How could this law impact Debs and Schenck?

Document D

1. What does this ruling say about freedom of speech? How does it justify limiting it?