

## World War I

### Section 2



#### MAIN IDEAS

1. The United States entered the war after repeated crises with Germany.
2. The United States mobilized for war by training troops and stepping up production of supplies.
3. Labor shortages created new wartime opportunities for women and other Americans.

## Key Terms and People

**Lusitania** a British passenger ship sunk by a German U-boat in 1915

**Zimmerman Note** a secret telegram from the German foreign minister Zimmerman to Mexico proposing an alliance against the United States

**Selective Service Act** a law that required men between ages of 21 and 30 to register to be drafted into military service

**Liberty bonds** bonds issued to raise billions of dollars for the Allies' war efforts

**National War Labor Board** an agency formed in 1918 to help settle labor disputes and avoid strikes during the war

## Section Summary

### THE UNITED STATES ENTERS WORLD WAR I

Many Americans were immigrants or children of immigrants from European countries. Even so, they wanted the United States to remain neutral in the European conflict.

German U-boats attacked ships carrying supplies to the Allies. Then they began attacking passenger ships, such as the *Lusitania*. Later the Germans began attacks on American vessels. When Americans found out about the **Zimmerman Note**, a secret telegram, they were outraged. President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany. War was declared on April 6, 1917.

Circle the name of a non-combat ship sunk by the Germans during World War I.

How did Americans react after they learned about the Zimmerman Note?

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### MOBILIZING FOR WAR

Rallies were used to build public support as the country prepared for war. At the same time,

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some freedoms were limited. Freedom of speech was restricted, and opponents of the war were jailed.

The **Selective Service Act** was passed in 1917 to prepare the military for war. Almost three million Americans, including many African-Americans, were drafted into service. War preparations were very expensive, so money was raised through the sale of **Liberty Bonds**.

The government took other actions to provide supplies for the troops. Metals, cement, and rubber were produced. Farmers got price guarantees to increase crops. Citizens were encouraged to use less food and to grow their own.

**How were so many men enrolled in the military during World War I?**

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**NEW WARTIME OPPORTUNITIES**

American factories needed to run work nonstop to produce weapons and supplies. But the war cut off immigration, and many young men were fighting in Europe. These factors combined to create a labor shortage in the United States. Labor shortages led to new opportunities for many workers. More than 1.5 million women worked in factories, and others helped in Europe.

Even with many women workers, factories needed more people. Mexican Americans from the West and African Americans from the South moved to northern industrial cities. Because labor was scarce, workers could demand better conditions. Union membership increased.

President Wilson set up the **National War Labor Board** in 1918. It settled disputes between workers and management. The board also helped establish a minimum wage and limited work hours, and it tried to get fair pay for women.

**Why did so many more women work in factories during the war than before the war?**

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**Why were workers able to demand better working conditions?**

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**CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

**Critical Thinking: Identify Cause and Effect** Write a paragraph explaining how the need for military supplies led to a migration of people to northern cities.