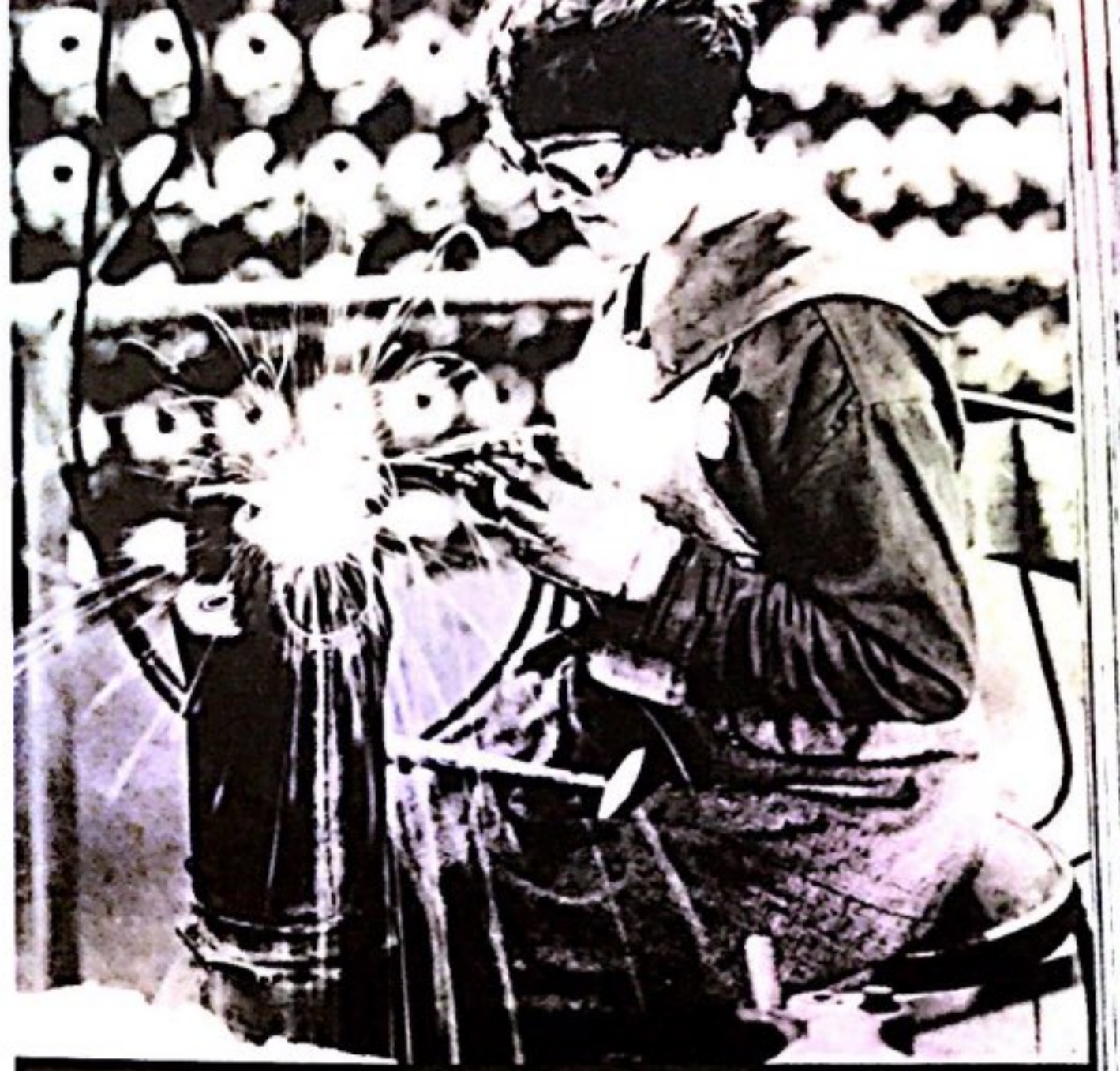


12.2 Before the war, the federal government played a minor role in the daily lives of most Americans. But during World War I, the government assumed new powers. It regulated industrial and agricultural production, worked to shape public opinion, and established a new military draft. While war required sacrifice, it also brought new economic opportunities, and many Americans migrated to other parts of the country in search of these opportunities. The war permanently changed Americans' relationship with their government.



>> As the United States went to war, many women joined the workforce. This defense worker is welding the shell casing of a depth charge—an antisubmarine explosive.

 **Interactive Flipped Video**

The Home Front During World War I

Mobilizing for War

War affects many things, but its greatest impact is on the lives of ordinary people. People fight, sacrifice, and sometimes die in war. People work to produce the food that soldiers eat and the guns that soldiers fire. People shape the information that others receive about the war. War may be the result of conflicts between nations, but it touches the lives of millions of individuals.

Expanding the Army When the United States entered World War I, the U.S. Army was only a small fraction of the size of European armies. To build the army, President Wilson encouraged Americans to volunteer for service and pushed Congress to pass the **Selective Service Act**. The act, which Congress passed in May 1917, authorized a draft of young men for military service in Europe. On the first day of its enactment, June 5, 1917, more than 9.6 million Americans registered for the draft and were assigned a number. The government held a “great national lottery” in July to decide the order in which the first draftees would be called into service. Blindfolded, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker pulled number 258 out of a jar. The group of men assigned that number became the very first draftees.

>> Objectives

Analyze how the U.S. government mobilized the public to support the war effort.

Describe opposition to World War I and how the federal government responded to it.

Analyze the causes and effects of migration and social changes that occurred during World War I.

>> Key Terms

Selective Service Act
Bernard Baruch
Committee on Public Information (CPI)
George Creel
conscientious objector
Espionage Act
Great Migration
Bernard Baruch

Over the course of the war, more than 24 million Americans registered for the draft. Of these, about 2.8 million were actually drafted into the armed forces. Including volunteers, the total number of American men in uniform during World War I reached nearly 4.8 million. More than 4 million of these were sent to help the Allies in France.

Managing Economic Effects The economic effects of the international military conflict of World War I on the United States were significant. While the Selective Service Commission raised an army, President Wilson worked to shift the national economy from peacetime to wartime production. This process proved slow and frustrating. First, the Council of National Defense, which was formed in August 1916, created an array of new federal administrative agencies to oversee different phases of the war effort. Individual agencies regulated food production, coal and petroleum distribution, and railway use. In practical terms, this meant that the government determined what crops farmers grew, what products industries produced, and how supplies moved around on the nation's trains.

Problems and administrative overlap soon led to the creation of the War Industries Board (WIB). The WIB eventually became independent of the Council of National Defense. Headed by **Bernard Baruch** (buh ROOK), an influential Wall Street investment broker who

reported directly to the President, the WIB regulated all industries engaged in the war effort. Baruch's agency determined what products industries would make, where those products went, and how much they would cost. The system of free enterprise was curtailed to fulfill the nation's acute need for war materials. Americans decided to cooperate rather than compete in order to defeat the Central Powers.

What Baruch did for industry, future U.S. president Herbert Hoover achieved for agriculture. As head of the Food Administration, he set prices high for wheat and other foodstuffs to encourage farmers to increase production. He also asked Americans to conserve food as a patriotic gesture. If the American people ate less, then more food could be shipped to America and other Allied soldiers fighting the war overseas. To this end, Hoover instituted wheatless Mondays and Wednesdays, meatless Tuesdays, and porkless Thursdays and Saturdays.

Convincing the American People Hoover's efforts would have been fruitless if the American people did not believe in supporting the war. Most Americans did not understand the reasons for the war in 1914, and many questioned why the United States became involved in 1917. It was the job of the **Committee on Public Information (CPI)** to educate the public about the causes and nature of the war. The CPI had

to convince Americans of the cause. Wilson appointed the CPI. A former American institution, the CPI distributed press releases, speakers who gave America's war message, and, in addition, the CPI distributed millions of pamphlets to America and Germany, which was toward Germany. Creel and the American war

RECALL philosophy effort?

Opposition The CPI's work was not always the war. Many Americans the Allies fervor, some prejudice, pacifists who issue raised that the trespassed differing

Opposition created an illegal private Selective The Others as 12 p respon Ma people to fight exem recog exist parti

U.S. ECONOMY IN WORLD WAR I

CHANGES IN THE WORKFORCE 1914-1918

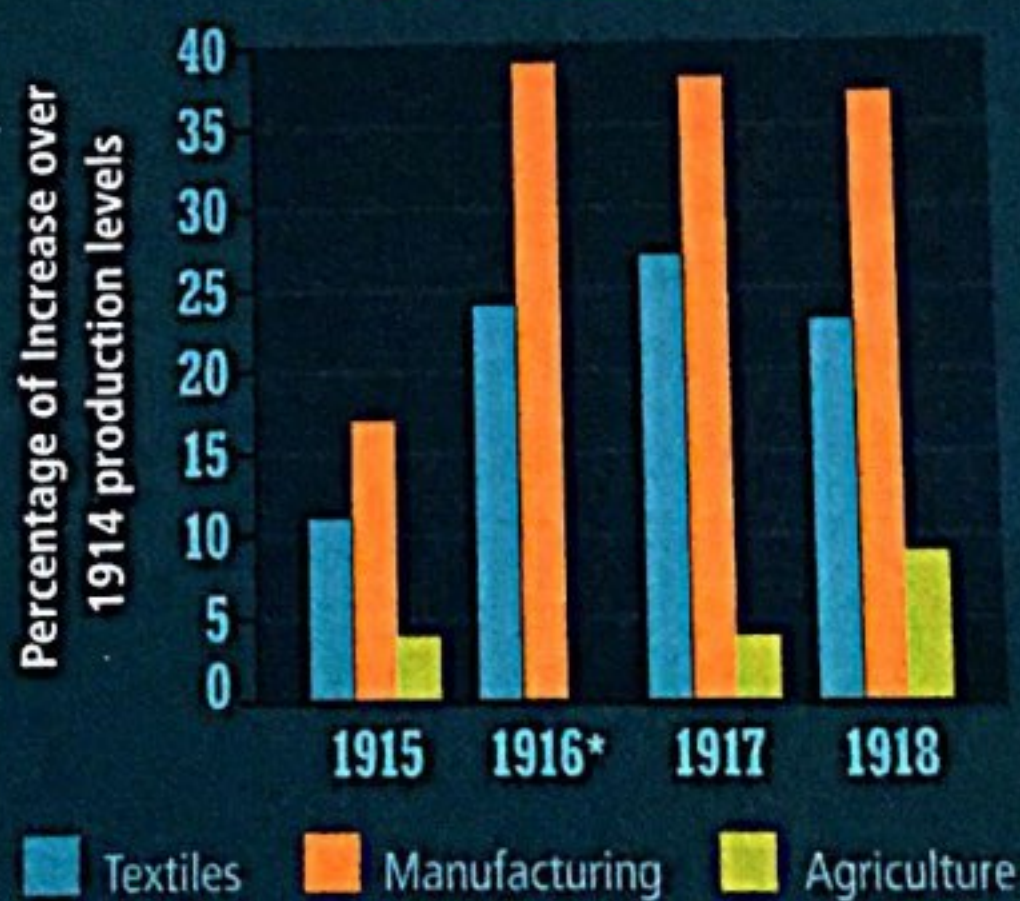
97% DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF **EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS**

240,000 APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF **MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS** most taking agricultural jobs in the Southwest

400,000 APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF **AFRICAN AMERICANS** who left the rural South for northern industrial jobs

Source: *The American Workforce*

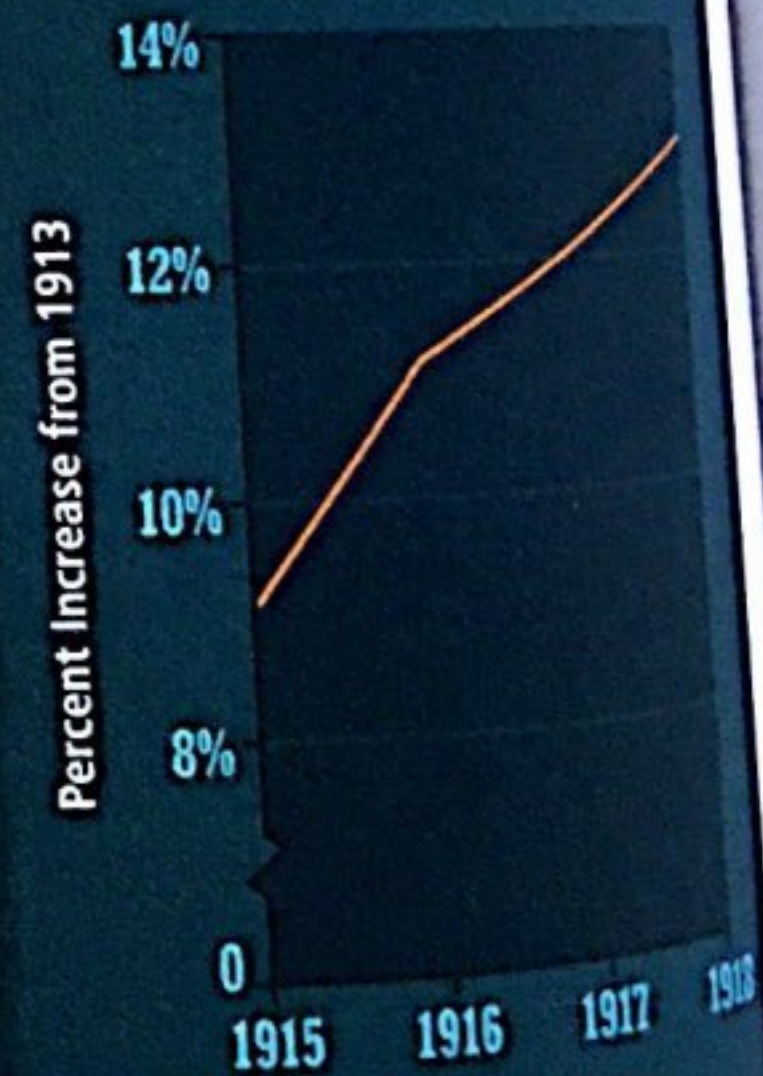
RISING PRODUCTION 1915-1918



* In 1916, agricultural output did not increase above the 1914 levels.

Source: *The American Home Front*, James L. Abrahamson

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT 1915-1918



Source: Broadberry, Stephen and Mark Harrison, *University of Warwick*, May 2008

>> Analyze Charts Which segment of the U.S. economy was strongest from 1914-1918? Why?

Wilson appointed **George Creel** as the director of the CPI. A former journalist and a passionate admirer of American institutions, Creel combined education and a widespread advertising campaign to "sell America." The CPI distributed 75 million pamphlets and 6,000 press releases, and it assembled an army of 75,000 speakers who gave lectures and brief speeches on America's war aims and the nature of the enemy. In addition, the CPI designed, printed, and distributed millions of posters that dramatized the needs of America and its allies. The CPI also stressed the cruelty and wickedness of the enemy, particularly Germany, which in some cases aggravated resentment toward German Americans. Still, using these methods, Creel and the CPI earned widespread support for the American war effort.

RECALL What cornerstone of U.S. business philosophy was partially abandoned to aid the war effort?

Opposition to the War

The CPI's work was important because Americans did not always peacefully agree with one another about the war. Members of two large ethnic groups, German Americans and Irish Americans, tended to oppose the Allies for different reasons. Swept up in patriotic fervor, some people treated German Americans with prejudice, or intolerance. Other Americans were pacifists who opposed war for any reason. One major issue raised by U.S. involvement in World War I was that the government acted in ways that sometimes trespassed on individual liberties to quiet dissent, or differing opinions.

Opposition to the Draft Without a doubt, the draft created controversy. Some Americans believed it was an illegal intrusion of the federal government into their private lives. Some men refused to cooperate with the Selective Service process.

They were often court-martialed and imprisoned. Others simply tried to avoid the draft. Perhaps as many as 12 percent of men who received draft notices never responded to them.

Many Americans were **conscientious objectors**, people whose moral or religious beliefs forbid them to fight in wars. In theory, the Selective Service Act exempted from combat service members of "any well recognized religious sect or organization . . . whose existing creed or principles forbid its members to participate in war." In practice, this policy was widely



>> Some citizens showed their opposition to the war and the draft by staging protests.

ignored. This was a constitutional issue, because the First Amendment guarantees freedom of religion. In addition, some conscientious objectors were treated badly by their local draft boards, and others were humiliated in training camps. As America's participation in the war increased, however, the government improved its treatment of conscientious objectors.

Women Oppose the War Some American women also opposed the war. Before the war, a number of leading American feminists, including reformer Jane Addams, formed the Women's Peace Party and, with pacifist women from other countries, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Jeannette Rankin, the first woman to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives, voted against the declaration of war. After America joined the Allies, some women continued to oppose the war, but most supported American war efforts. For example, the influential National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) dropped its initial peace initiatives and supported America's war objectives. After adopting this new policy, NAWSA doubled in size.

The Federal Government Stifles Dissent Constitutional issues raised by federal government policy during World War I also centered on the First

Amendment rights of free speech. The work of the CPI created a mood in America that did not welcome open debate. Some felt the CPI stifled the free expression of controversial opinions and worried about the impact of a rigorous military campaign on democracy. They did not want the freedoms that Americans held most dear to become victims of the conflict. Americans treasured their Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

And were not U.S. soldiers fighting for freedom? At the same time, since so much depended on individuals doing their part in the military or on the home front, retaining national unity was vital to America's success in the war. As in previous and future wars, the government navigated a difficult path between respecting and restricting individual rights. Authorities tended to treat harshly individuals who worked against U.S. participation in the war.

In June 1917, Congress passed the **Espionage Act**, allowing postal authorities to ban treasonable or seditious newspapers, magazines, or printed materials from the mail. Thus, another First Amendment freedom, the freedom of the press, was compromised. It also enacted severe penalties for anyone engaged in disloyal or treasonable activities. Anyone found obstructing army recruiters, aiding the enemy, or generally interfering with the war effort could be punished with up to a \$10,000 fine and 20 years of imprisonment.

In 1918, Congress limited freedom of speech even further with the passage of the Sedition Act. The act made it unlawful to use "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" about the American form of government, the Constitution, or the military forces. The government employed the Sedition Act to prosecute socialists, political radicals, and pacifists. Eugene V. Debs, the leader of the Socialist Party in America, was imprisoned under the act. For his crime—giving a mildly antiwar speech to a convention of socialists in Canton, Ohio—he was sentenced to a 10-year term in a federal prison.

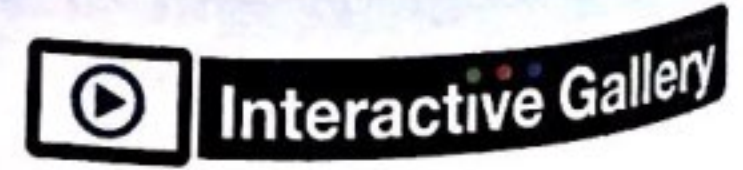
The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Sedition Act in the case of *Schenck v. United States* (1919). The Court ruled that there are times when the need for public order is so pressing that First Amendment protections of speech do not apply. The Debs case and others like it show that the war did lead the federal government to follow policies that raised important constitutional issues about the suppression of personal freedoms and individual rights.

Prejudice Against German Americans Sometimes, the war enthusiasm created by the CPI and other groups took an ugly turn. Some German Americans were treated harshly during the war. Largely because of CPI efforts, Americans regarded Germany's kaiser as arrogant, its generals as ruthless, and its soldiers

Espionage and Sedition Court Cases During World War I

DEFENDANT	ACCUSATIONS	ARGUMENT
KATE RICHARDS O'HARE	Claimed U.S. involvement in World War I was only to protect U.S. corporate interests and criticized soldiers; accused of violating the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918	First Amendment (freedom of speech)
EUGENE V. DEBS	Criticized U.S. government for prosecuting those who violated the Espionage Act of 1917 and made a speech opposing the war; accused of violating the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918	First Amendment (freedom of speech); led to the Supreme Court case <i>Debs v. United States</i> in 1919
CHARLES T. SCHENCK	Opposed military draft; accused of violating the Espionage Act of 1917 and Sedition Act of 1918	First Amendment (freedom of speech); led to the Supreme Court case <i>Schenck v. United States</i> in 1919
EMMA GOLDMAN	Opposed U.S. involvement in the war; accused of conspiring against the draft law in 1917	First Amendment (freedom of speech)

>> **Analyze Charts** Do you think Eugene V. Debs should have been arrested during World War I? Why or why not?



...patriotic movies, such as *The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin*, as well as some anti-German posters and speeches intensified this feeling by portraying Germany as a cruel enemy. Some Americans wrongly generalized that if Germany was cruel, then all German people were cruel.

As a result, Americans stopped teaching German in public schools and discontinued playing the music of Beethoven and Brahms. They renamed German measles "liberty measles," cooked "liberty steaks" instead of hamburgers, and walked their "liberty pups" instead of dachshunds. German Americans were pressured to prove their loyalty to America by condemning the German government, giving up speaking German and reading German-language newspapers, and participating enthusiastically in any patriotic drive. Occasionally, hatred of the German enemy boiled over into violence against German Americans. Some German Americans were harassed, others were beaten, and a few were killed for no other reason than they were born in Germany or spoke with a German accent.

2 GENERATE EXPLANATIONS Why was the status of conscientious objectors a constitutional issue?

The War Changes American Society

The war was not only a turning point in the economic and political lives of Americans, but it also brought substantial social changes. New opportunities opened up for women, African Americans, and Mexican Americans. Some left their homes to seek new ones where they could take advantage of these opportunities.

Women Welcome New Opportunities Before the war, some American women campaigned for women's suffrage. They won the vote in several western states and still hoped to gain the franchise nationally. Many feared that the war would draw attention away from their efforts. In fact, the war gave women new chances and won them more support for the right to vote.

As men entered the armed forces, many women moved into the workforce for the first time. Women filled jobs that were vacated by men who had gone to

They worked in munitions factories, on the railroads, as telegraph operators and trolley conductors, and in other jobs that were previously open only to men. Others labored on farms. Some joined the Red Cross or the American Women's Hospital Service and went

A CERTAIN CURE FOR THE GERMAN MEASLES.

Mix some Woolwich Powders with Tinct. of Iron or Essence of lead, and administer in pills (or shells). Have ready a little British Army (a little goes a long way) some Brussels Sprouts and French Mustard. Add a little Canadian Cheese and Australian Lamb and season with the best Indian Curry. Set it on a Kitchener and keep stirring until quite hot.

If this does not make the Patient perspire freely, rub the best Russian Bears' Grease on his chest and wrap in Berlin Wool.
Dr. Cannon's Prescrip.

P.S.—The patient must on no account have any Peace-Soup until the swelling in the head has quite disappeared.

No. 147

>> Unlike this humorous postcard with a "cure" for German measles, other anti-German sentiment was often more strident.

overseas. They worked as doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, and clerks. Thousands enlisted when the Army Corps of Nurses was created in 1918. Women proved that they could succeed in any type of job, regardless of difficulty or risk.

By their efforts and sacrifices during the war, women convinced President Wilson to support their suffrage demands. He contended that granting the vote to women was "vital to winning the war." If women could do the work of men, they certainly deserved the same voting privileges as men. Finally, in 1919, Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment giving the vote to women. The required two thirds of states ratified the amendment in the summer of 1920, a victory more than 70 years in the making.

African Americans and the Great Migration The war similarly presented new opportunities to African Americans.

From the outset, most African American leaders supported the war. "If this is our country, then this is our war," wrote African American leader W.E.B. Du Bois. He viewed the struggle as an excellent opportunity to show all Americans the loyalty and patriotism of African Americans. Thousands of them enlisted or were drafted into the army and sailed for the battlefields of France. On the battlefield, they fought in