

Scanned

Sources:

Zinn, Mandel, Dutt, Boyer/Morais (Labor's Untold Story - published by the UE) History of the CP Historical Atlas, pp. 249-265

What Happened During World War I

The two sides:

Between 1911 and 1914, the lines are drawn between Allied nations and the Entente:

Former Triple Alliance (Germany, Aust-Hung. & Italy) becomes the Central Powers = Germany, Austria-Hungary, later joined by Turkey, Bulgaria

Former Triple Entente (Brit, Fr, Rus) becomes the "Allies" = Great Britain, France, Russia later joined by Japan, Romania, Italy, Greece and the US.

Background of shifting alliances at end of century:

European nations assumed that Germany would continue to expand economically without making war. France had become isolated as it cooled to Great Britain and as it became estranged from Germany because France simply couldn't accept the rise of a new German empire which had robbed France of the primacy of Europe.

Austria-Hungary cooperated with Russia due to a mutual conservative ideology against the rise of proletarian revolution (which had become apparent in the Paris Commune of 1871 and the activities of the 2nd International, 1889). Italy later joined this group. Tensions built. At the turn of the century Austria-Hungary was threatened by Russia. Russia had interests in SE Europe where the Ottoman Empire was threatened by insurgent nationalism. Russia wanted to extend influence in the Ottoman Empire in order to secure control over the Straits of Constantinople through which passed her grain exports.

The breakdown of the Austria-Hungary and Russian Entente occurred when Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia in 1908, thereby replacing Turkey in Europe. The Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 strained tensions further. When Vienna feared that Serbian ambitions would reopen the issue, the gov't in Vienna declared war. Germany quickly supported Austria-Hungary because of its own fear of a British and French "encirclement" policy.

Synopsis of the war:

The German war plan had been drawn up since 1905. It called for trapping France by circling through Belgium, but Russia mobilized too quickly. When Germany failed to come up with an alternative strategy, Germany found itself engaged in a dreaded war on two fronts. The first major British offensive took place in 1916. A stalemate went on for a while on the western front (German/French). The German U-boat offensive, designed to break Great Britain, instead played a part in bringing the US into the war in April, 1917. Strain of war fatally weakened the Tzarist government in Russia. With the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in November, 1917, Russia withdrew from the conflict. This allowed Germany to focus on its western front. But by 1918, Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria were collapsing under the Allies. After the German fleet mutinied and the German worker's Revolution of 1918 began, the Kaiser abdicated and it was all over.

WWI in the Middle East:

War not confined to Europe. An Anglo-Indian force marched on Baghdad to protect Persian oil in 1915. That force was defeated by the Turks in 1916. The British repelled an attempt by the Turks to cross Suez, and Russia occupied Armenia until the 1917 Revolution.

Japan

Admiral Perry "opened" up Japan in 1870. Japan became a major copper producer, and had own coal deposits and adequate ore for iron industry (initially). Imported western technology/knowledge. Joint stock companies and banks. Extended rights on China mainland in the former German sphere of Shantung as well as in Manchuria and Fukien, confirmed by Versailles treaty. Japan emerges as major power with a seat on the Council of the League of Nations, mandated by treaty.

Wave of strikes after WWI swept through Japan (L. check source).

GENERAL OUTCOME OF WORLD WAR I: BASIS LAID FOR WWII (a continuation of WWI)

Territorial outcomes:

War in Africa. Germany quickly lost its colonial possessions. S. Africa conquered German SW Africa, and the British and French made gains. In the Pacific, Australian, New Zealand and Japanese troops captured the other German colonies.

Germany renounced W. Prussia to Poland, Alsace-Lorraine to France and other territory to Belgium. France got Syria and Lebanon. Britain got Iraq, Palestine and Transjordan. The Dutch remained in control of the East Indies, the Spaniards consolidated control over N. Morocco, and Italy retained Libya. The only addition to these was the taking of Ethiopia by Italy in 1936. Latvia, , created in E. Europe.

Lithuania, Finland, Estonia

The "Slave" Treaty of Versailles (Dutt, p. 135):

Heavy tribute to be paid by Germany. Disarmament clauses of treaty never strictly enforced. The US withdrew from the treaty in 1919 (leaving France to occupy the Ruhr valley) before signing it and made a separate treaty with Germany in 1921. Numerous treaties were drawn up and weren't worth the paper they were written on.

PARTICULAR OUTCOMES: Chronology of Contradictions within Classifications

Period: 1918-1923 - General proletarian awakening world-wide

100:

US Japan USSR develop^{see} of econon

US. nat. strat. in Europe

(p. 87 Zinn) Stories of labor strikes buried

The Mellon Plan of 1923 (p.86, Zinn)

Outcome of war: while Europe otherwise occupied before US joined the Allies, Monroe Doctrine basis for transforming the Caribbean into an American lake between 1914 and 1916. After the war, the US owned Puerto Rico, the Panama canal, Virgin islands and held as protectorates Haiti, Dom. Republic, Cuba, Nicaragua and Panama.

1903

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

US: The war in Europe provided the perfect opportunity for industrial and finance capitalists to destroy the IWW using force and mass media (newspapers and speakers).

300: Advanced productive forces vs. impoverishment (from the war) of the masses

Technological advances in all forms of transport (especially air power) and communications resulting from the war: Germany developed poison gas and U boats, the British invented tanks

Development of arms during WWI pushed forward the armaments industry and trade which has continued to escalate to the current period.

400: Old forms of Monarchy and Jeffersonian Democracy vs. victory of Monopoly Capitalist State.

In Germany, Kaiser defeated. In Russia, Tzar overthrown.

German Weimar Republic (1918-1932) - the "freest democracy in the world" was really a regime of old-time monarchists

US: "Democratic" US government put an end to the "dangerous, turbulent flood of immigrants" (p.84 Zinn) - tie to 700 Racism because immigrant quotas favored Anglo-saxons

Rise of Nationalism - Opposition to colonialism by Asian and North African nations.
Imperial powers exhausted

500: Germany in November, 1918 - Workers and armed soldiers vs. Social Democratic White Guard corps (made up of reactionary monarchist officers)

Contradiction changes quickly at the end of 1918 when workers disarmed and the Revolution of 1918 is defeated by Social Democracy.

500: Germany in 1920 - Social Democratic ministers themselves vs. counter revolutionary military forms.

US: "Alien" scare - war censorship and deportations under wartime deportation law in 1920 used to arrest strikers (p. 205 B&M) and the red scare used to perpetuate wartime State law for suppressing dissent vs. workers take "law" into own hands during strikes.

"Thought control" - Smith Act (indicted Big Bill Haywood at the age of 73).

1920 - Radical Division of the Bureau of Investigation headed by J. Edgar Hoover, and up and coming young man. In 1920, Sacco and Vanzetti arrested.

League of Nations (essentially a 400 administrative debating institution controlled by the victors of the war) was without military clout (idealism) - served as blueprint for the United Nations which to this day does not wield military power. Imperialist powers typically ignore "international law."

600: Absence of German revolutionary workers party vs. the critical need of the highly organized and politically conscious workers for proletarian leadership

Germany: Opportunism and corruption had made inroads in the reformist trade union leadership. (129 Dutt)

Spartacus League (1916) Socialist Party (1917) Social Democrats unite with Kaiser in 1914.

Proletariat - the most productive and educated in Europe - the world? grows desperate (due to ravages of war) and powerful by 1918 vs. systematic terror 1918-1919

Social Democratic Leadership vs. the workers and soldiers at the same time organized within the Social Democratic Party under its leadership. The rising faction remains a part of the Social Democratic party and becomes dragged down by corruption and reforms. Lenin had urged the trade unions to split off from the party, but instead became ultimately allied with the State.

600: In the US (see discussion question # 1)

With the Socialist party weakened as outcome of the war, a Communist party was organized.(p.87 Zinn) which provided leadership among trade unions. However, opportunism existed among the trade unions (esp. racism). But primarily, the US proletariat struggled against an exceedingly powerful monopoly capitalist class grown suddenly rich from the bonanza of war credits.

International Workingman's Assn (founded by Karl Marx) in US in 1867. The Socialist Labor Party became the Socialist Party of 1900. Socialist parties merged, some of their founders having been former members of IWW, into the CPUSA in 1920.

Women in US gain the vote - used by upper class women initially, but working women conceptualize the importance of the vote as means for changing institutions

700: Bourgeois ideology as tool of capitalists to maintain power over the proletariat vs. _____

Idealism of the masses (effective State propaganda) perpetuated as old divisions maintained and new ones created. State use of fear tactics: US red scare - the rich controlled the media and hired thugs to break strikes (p.85 Zinn)

"Negroes are going to take your job away" used to this day by US Capitalists to sew division

Opportunism of the masses. Media used in hate campaigns - 1920s rise of KKK to 4.5 million in US, p. 84 Zinn) racism and anti-ethnic feeling used to divide workers

Bourgeois ideology (protection of private property, etc.) embodied in the constitution.

German State slogan: "Save Germany from Bolshevism" In reality, the proletarian threat to the old State was great indeed.

800: Revolt of the masses against starvation and death vs. State repression.

Resultant - Class warfare world-wide

"The most extraordinary phenomenon of the present time...is the unprecedented revolt of the rank and file." - Russia, Korea, India (M.Ghandi), Egypt, Japan (hit hard by the war), China (Sun-Yat-Sen), Ireland, England and the USA...

US - Leader of Great Steel Strike of 1919 was former Wobbly. Foster had studied labor unions in Europe as a youth. In 1917, he organized the meat packing industry in Chicago which accepted 20,000 Negroes into the Stock yard Labor Council. The steel strike was fought under the official leadership of the AFL. Strike breakers instructed their men to "stir up as much bad feeling as you possibly can between the Serbians and the Italians." (p. 82,3 Zinn) The steel companies imported Negro workers and shifted them from plant to plant, pitting them off against white workers.(p. 210 B&M)

Du Bois saw the ingenuity of Capitalism in uniting exploiter and exploited - creating a safety valve for explosive class conflict.(p.65 Zinn) vs. the Idealism (?) of the workers

1919 - American Legion founded in Paris. Among delegates were BF Goodrich - "to offset radicalism" (p. 211 B&M) and immediately became engaged in strike breaking in the US

1922 - US Anti-lynching Crusaders (Negro women's association) formed.

1922,23 - Following example of Chicago Federation of Labor, several international unions voted for industrial unionism and to recognise Russia

1919 in Germany: Council of People's Commissars formed.

Lack of concrete programs to build links with the masses (failure of Rev. of 1918) vs. gov't apparatus and party structure to suppress revolution.

900: Germany - Theory of a peaceful, reformist "Democratic" path to Socialism vs. material lessons of the Bolshevik Revolution.

War censorship (as in US) AND PARTY censorship (p. 129 Dutt)

Failure of German proletarian leadership to summarize lessons of the Bolshevik Revolution vs material reality that Bourgeois Democracy cannot coexist with Socialism, especially within the same party.

Historically, party leaders failed to heed the warnings of Marx and Engels re. the need to further a split in the Social Democratic Party. These messages and criticisms were withheld from the membership. Resultants: (1) The Social Democratic Party leadership united with the Kaiser in support of the imperialist war in 1914, against the working class and, (2) after workers disarmed at end of the war, terror was unleashed by the White Guard corps between 1918 and 1919. (p. 131 Dutt)

US myth of the classless society and the "Bootstrap" theory used to divide working class vs. Workers/soldiers having made the world "Safe for Democracy," US imperialism took the first step in the break with American isolationism. The final break would not come til World War II. (p.32 Mandel)

000: US capital expansion (based on war credits and increased productivity) and overproduction vs. no corresponding increase in market demand

Expansion of finance capital, esp. in the US, and intensification of need for raw materials vs. no corresponding market demand (impoverishment of war - other nations did not have abundant capital.

Weakened Britain and France (old colonial empires) vs. US emerges as dominant imperialist nation. Prosperity concentrated, particularly in the US (p. 84 Zinn)

US: Replaced Britain as largest source of foreign investment. War strengthened the bourgeoisie - increased profits for a few monopoly capitalists within a few industrialized countries, esp. the US

1914,15 - Wall street agitated for extending credit to Europe
House of Morgan approved huge loan (Zinn p. 64) to Britain & France: (if Germany had won the war, the US would have been plunged into depression).
But for workers, the cost of living had doubled since 1914 while real wages were less in 1919. (see also Zinn, p. 84, 1921-1927). Farmers were worse off than before the war (p.238 B&M). Prices of food and raw materials declined, worsening terms of trade for countries dependent on exporting food and raw materials.

Germany: Inflation ruin of petit-bourgeoisie by end of 1923 (p.137 Dutt)
"Unlimited funds, not only from German bourgeois, but also from foreign bourgeois sources, were poured into the National Socialist coffers.

Period: 1924-1929 (this part of outline to be developed further)

General: Rise of Fascism on the eve of world depression

Paraphrased dictionary definition of fascism: "centralized, autocratic government headed by dictator who's military force imposes severe economic and social regimentation in the name of nation and race."

Dutt's definition of fascism:

300: By 1925, industrial production had regained its prewar level in Soviet Russia.
US - Unprecedented migration of negro workers from South to North (1 million b/t 1910 and 1930 -p.241 B&M)

Advances in war production continue: 1st aircraft carrier developed in late 20s.

400: Rise of Nationalism (international independence movements) vs. further consolidation of State power
Italy dropped any pretense of "Socialism"

1928 - CI takes position on self-determination of nations
Lesson from Germany and Italy: Fascism, although it can develop differently under particular conditions, inevitably grows out of decaying, unfettered Capitalism

500: Rise of military police states
Germany - disarmament of Fascist murder gangs never carried out - (p. 133 Dutt)
Prohibition and the rise of crime syndicates

Italy - Fascism in place by 1926 after years of the appearance of a multi-party system and a "show of parliamentary forms alongside government violence and terrorism." Example of "classic transition to Fascism." (p. 126, Dutt)

(p. 136,7 Dutt) Fascism can, however, as the Italian example had already shown, only reach a mass basis AFTER Social Democracy has fully exposed itself and created widespread mass disillusionment in the midst of growing economic crisis and gathering revolutionary issues.

600: Italy/Germany perpetuate illusion of multi-party systems
Germany - December, 1924, Nazi vote fell from previous year to 900,000.
1928 Nazi vote fell to 800,000 (compared to 9 million for the Social Democrats and 3 million for the Communists
US - Rise of CP (p. 87 Zinn) that provides strong leadership in trade union struggles after completed phase of suppression of the Socialists

How the Fascisti came to power in Italy:

1. Revolutionary wave broken by weakness from within.
2. Fascism came to front only after proletarian advance was broken.

3. Fascism was a continuation of bourgeois policy - fostered under the cloak of a "liberal" bourgeois democracy

700: US - Anti-Communism and Jim-Crow policies severely weaken the labor movement

800: Reactionary US skilled Craft unionists (AFL) vs. progressive militant industrial unionists

US - Gompers (AFL) died in 1924, but his policies held back industrial unionism and independent political action were held back until the New Deal.

US - Trade Union League (p. 87 Zinn) Industrial trade unionism at low point in 1928

American Legion invites Mussolini to speak to its San Francisco convention in 1923. (p. 211 B&M)

1925 - International Labor Defense founded by Communists

900: same contradiction continues in Germany - Reformist theory guiding the Social Democrats

900: US - Capitalist ideological theory vs. lack of development of indigenous revolutionary theory

Such theory does grow with the black liberation struggle later in the century

It is generally believed that Fascism can never take root in one of the most highly developed industrialized country in the world. (127 Dutt) which had previously been thought to be possible only in underdeveloped countries.

000: False sense of prosperity in the US (rise in general level of wages for workers) vs. increasing disparity between the "haves" and tenant farmers and immigrants.

Speed-up - a predominant characteristic of this period, also increased unemployment and industrial accidents (p. 237, B&M).

1922-1928 apparent boom times in US - record Wall Street profits - the roaring 20s trickle down a few benefits for urban dwellers

Germany took steps to strengthen its economy in the 20s whereas the US did not do so until the 30s.

Discussion Questions

1. List the features of fascism. What conditions (summarizing the experience of Germany, Italy and Japan) give rise to fascism?
2. List causes of the Great Depression in different countries.

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NOTE: If you can, brush up on the Russian Revolution - most of us don't have any more time than to refresh our memories by going over p. 5 of the National Q. outline which covers from Feb. through Nov. 1917.