

CHAPTER
11

GUIDED READING *The War at Home*

Section 3

A. As you read this section, take notes to answer questions about how World War I changed American society.

What were some things accomplished by the following wartime agencies and laws?		
1. War Industries Board	2. Railroad Administration	3. Fuel Administration
4. National War Labor Board	5. Food Administration	6. Committee on Public Information
7. Espionage and Sedition Acts		

What changes did the war bring about for the following groups of Americans?		
8. Immigrants	9. African Americans	10. Women

B. On the back of this paper, briefly explain why **Bernard M. Baruch** and **George Creel** are significant historical figures.



RETEACHING ACTIVITY *The War at Home*

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Outlining

Below is a partial outline of events on the home front during World War I. Complete the outline by adding supporting details for each heading.

I. Federal Government Takes Greater Control of Economy

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

II. Washington Attempts to Sell the War

A. _____

B. _____

III. Attacks on Civil Liberties Increase

A. _____

B. _____

IV. The War Encourages Social Change

A. _____

B. _____

Reading Comprehension

Use the following list of words to complete the sentences below.

William Monroe Trotter

George Creel

flu epidemic

Bernard M. Baruch

W. E. B. Du Bois

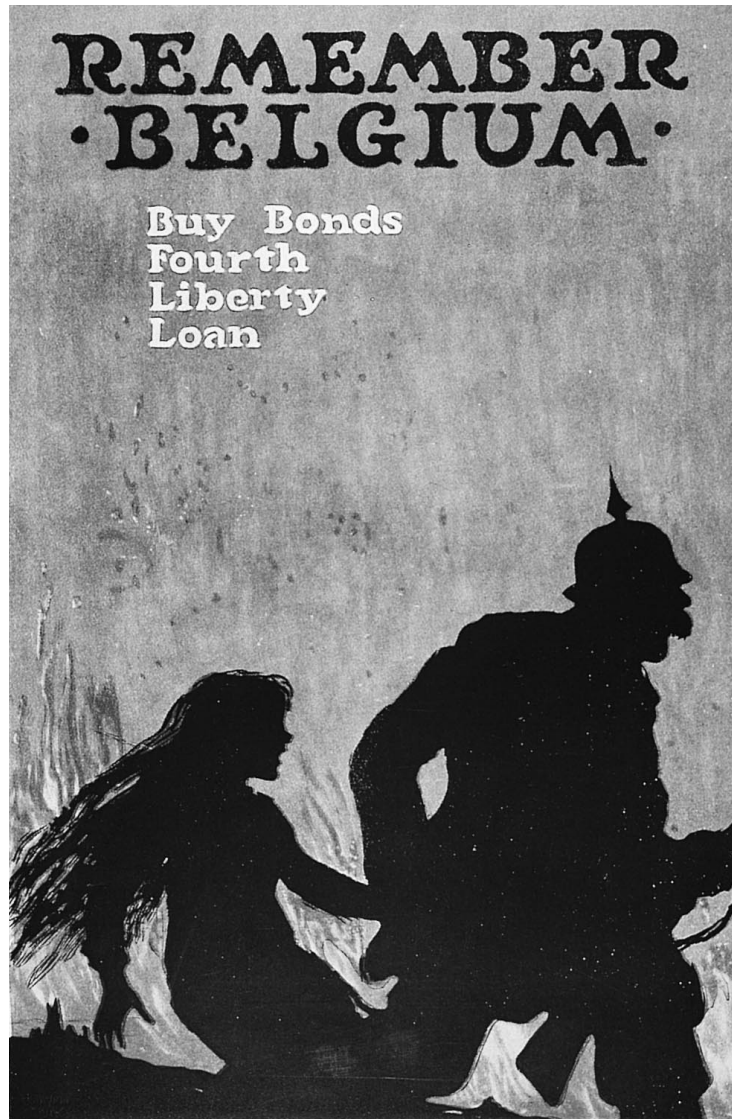
1. _____ believed that African Americans should support the war effort.
2. The United States and the rest of the world suffered a major _____ during the war years.
3. _____ was the head of the propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information.

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PRIMARY SOURCE **Liberty Bond Poster**

Treasury Secretary William G. McAdoo raised millions of dollars for the war effort by selling Liberty Bonds. When people bought these war bonds, they essentially loaned the government money, which was to be paid back with interest at a future date. How did this poster encourage Americans to buy Liberty Bonds?



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Research Options

1. Research other methods that the government used to persuade Americans to buy bonds. List these methods and compare your list with those of your classmates.
2. Research the economic impact of Liberty Bonds. How much money was raised for the war

through the sale of Liberty Bonds? On average, how much did every American spend on Liberty Bonds? How did the sale of Liberty Bonds affect the national debt? Then discuss your findings with your classmates.



Section 3

PRIMARY SOURCE “Returning Soldiers”
by W. E. B. Du Bois

W. E. B. Du Bois urged African Americans to support the war effort but also criticized racism in the military and on the home front. In May 1919 he published this short essay in The Crisis magazine. As you read, think about what Du Bois wanted returning African-American soldiers to do.

We are returning from war! THE CRISIS and tens of thousands of black men were drafted into a great struggle. For bleeding France and what she means and has meant and will mean to us and humanity and against the threat of German race arrogance, we fought gladly and to the last drop of blood; for America and her highest ideals, we fought in far-off hope; for the dominant southern oligarchy entrenched in Washington, we fought in bitter resignation. For the America that represents and gloats in lynching, disfranchisement, caste, brutality and devilish insult—for this, in the hateful upturning and mixing of things, we were forced by vindictive fate to fight, also.

But today we return! We return from the slavery of uniform which the world’s madness demanded us to don to the freedom of civil garb. We stand again to look America squarely in the face. . . . We sing: This country of ours, despite all its better souls have done and dreamed, is yet a shameful land.

It lynch.

And lynching is a barbarism of a degree of contemptible nastiness unparalleled in human history. Yet for fifty years we have lynched two Negroes a week, and we have kept this up right through the war.

It disfranchises its own citizens.

Disfranchisement is the deliberate theft and robbery of the only protection of poor against rich and black against white. The land that disfranchises its citizens and calls itself a democracy lies and knows it lies.

It encourages ignorance.

It has never really tried to educate the Negro. A dominant minority does not want Negroes educated. . . .

It steals from us.

It organizes industry to cheat us. It cheats us out of our land; it cheats us out of our labor. It confiscates our savings. It reduces our wages. It raises our rent. It steals our profit. It taxes us without representation. It keeps us consistently and universally poor, and then feeds us on charity and derides our poverty.

It insults us.

It has organized a nation-wide and latterly a world-wide propaganda of deliberate and continuous insult and defamation of black blood wherever found. It decrees that it shall not be possible in travel nor residence, work nor play, education nor instruction for a black man to exist without tacit or open acknowledgment of his inferiority to the dirtiest white dog. And it looks upon any attempt to question or even discuss this dogma as arrogance, unwarranted assumption and treason.

This is the country to which we Soldiers of Democracy return. This is the fatherland for which we fought! But it is *our* fatherland. It was right for us to fight. The faults of *our* country are *our* faults. Under similar circumstances, we would fight again. But by the God of Heaven, we are cowards . . . if now that that war is over, we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land.

We return.

We return from fighting.

We return fighting.

Make way for Democracy! We saved it in France, and by the Great Jehovah, we will save it in the United States of America, or know the reason why.

from W. E. B. Du Bois, “Returning Soldiers,” The Crisis (May 1919), 13–14.

Discussion Questions

1. According to Du Bois, what positive principles did African Americans fight for during World War I?
2. Why does he characterize the United States as “a shameful land”?
3. What fight does he believe should be fought now that African-American soldiers have returned home?
4. Members of Congress accused Du Bois of inciting race riots. What evidence, if any, do you find in this excerpt to support their accusations?

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AMERICAN LIVES *Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.*
Thinker in Action

“War, when you are at it, is horrible and dull. It is only when time has passed that you see that its message was divine. . . . But some teacher of the kind we all need. In this smug, over-safe corner of the world we need it, that we may realize that our comfortable routine is no eternal necessity of things.”
—*Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Memorial Day speech (1895)*

He joined the Union army while he was still in college and fought with distinction in the Civil War. At age 61, he took a seat on the Supreme Court, where he served for 30 years. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., (1841–1935) dedicated most of his 94 years to serving his country. His goal throughout was to put his mind and learning to work on important questions.

Two influences shaped Holmes’s life. First was his background. He came from a line of prominent New England families. His father was an admired doctor and famous author. Holmes developed a deep love for New England traditions. At the same time, he was not bound by these traditions. He questioned what he read. He had a probing mind.

Second was the Civil War. The war broke out as he was completing college. He enlisted and after graduation marched to the front as a second lieutenant. In his three years in the army, Holmes was wounded three times—once so severely that he was given up for dead. The war gave him a sense of a larger purpose in life and shaped his career. Holmes’s questioning mind had led him to philosophy. However, a desire for public service aroused by his war duty led him to the law. He wanted not just to think but “to think for action.”

After graduating from law school in 1866, Holmes combined a legal practice with intense study. He also worked as editor of the *American Law Review* and he taught. In 1881 he revealed his legal philosophy in *The Common Law*. “The life of the law has not been logic,” he wrote. “It has been experience.” To know the law, a person had to understand its present interpretation and the past that shaped it.

The next year, Holmes was named to the Massachusetts Supreme Court. After twenty years on that bench, he joined the U.S. Supreme Court, where he remained for 30 years. When he resigned in 1932, the 90-year-old Holmes said it was time to

“bow to the inevitable.”

He judged cases in light of his idea of the law. “The provisions of the Constitution,” he wrote, “are not mathematical formulas. . . . They are organic living institutions.” However, he was careful not to impose his own opinions on a case. A judge may disagree with a law, he believed, without the law becoming unconstitutional.

Holmes wrote hundreds of decisions, some for the majority and some in dissent, explaining his reasons for disagreeing with the majority decisions. Two of his most famous opinions, both from 1919, involve free speech. First was *Schenck v. United States*. Charles Schenck had been convicted of trying to interfere with the military draft during World War I. Schenck argued that the arrest violated his right to free speech. Holmes wrote the opinion of the unanimous majority that upheld the convictions. The government has the right to restrict speech, he wrote, when the speech presents a “clear and present danger” to society. The context in which speech occurs determines whether the speech is protected. The first amendment does not protect someone from “falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic.”

That same year, Holmes wrote a minority opinion in *Abrams v. United States* that urged allowing free speech in another context. Abrams had been convicted of distributing pamphlets that criticized the government’s war policy. The majority upheld the convictions. Holmes argued that the pamphlets represented free speech.

Questions

1. What value did Holmes see in war?
2. What does Holmes mean by saying that law is based on experience, not solely on logic?
3. Why did Holmes rule differently in the two free speech cases, *Schenck* and *Abrams*?