

AQA Specification 1K; The making of a Superpower: USA, 1865-1920

Revision Guide 4; FOREIGN POLICY DEVELOPMENTS I

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions:

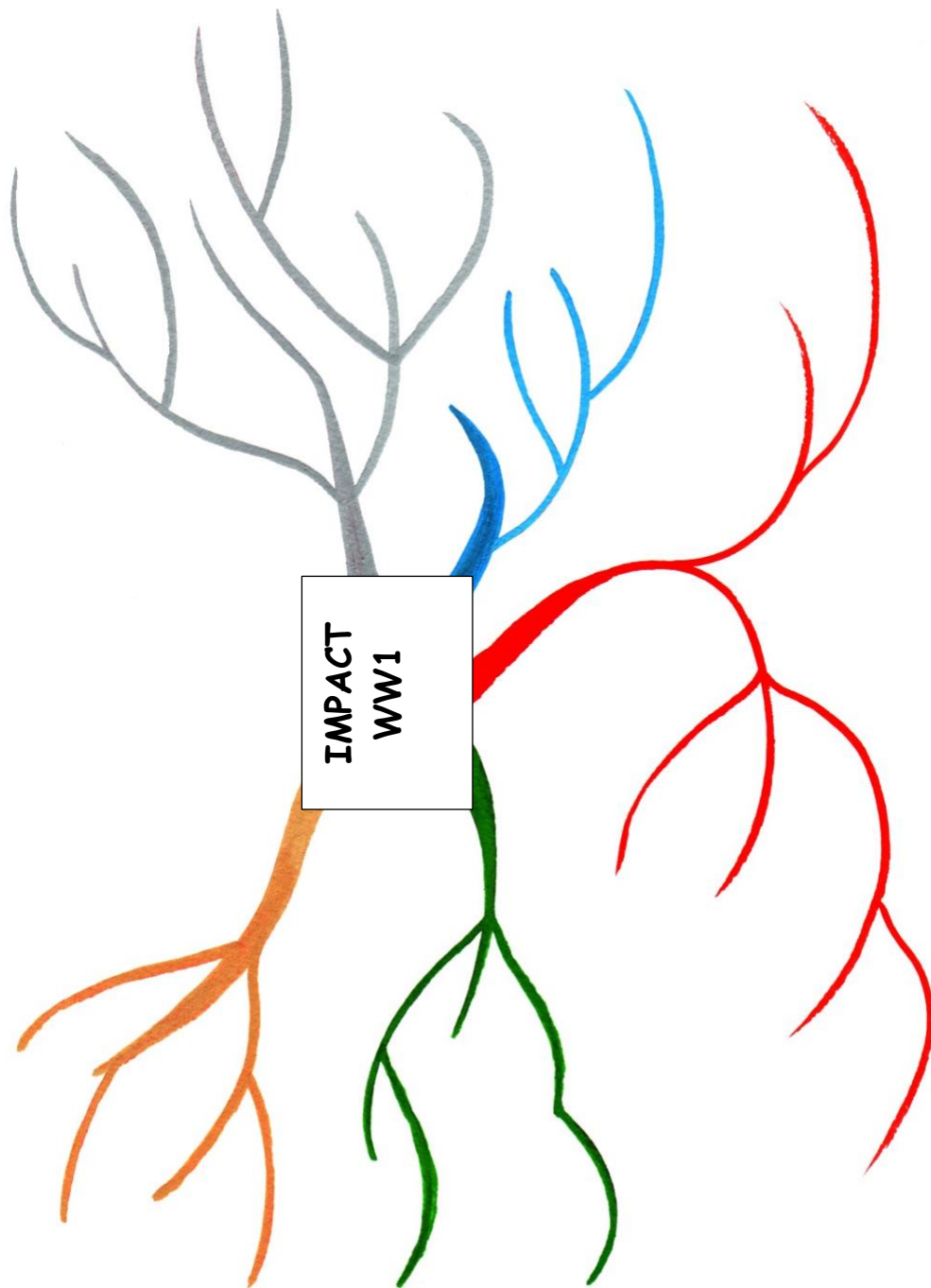
- How did government, political authority and political parties change and develop?
- In what ways did the economy and society of the USA change and develop?
- How did the role of the USA in world affairs change?
- How important were ideas and ideology?
- How united was the USA during this period?
- How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?

Populism, progressivism and imperialism, 1890-1920

- The USA by 1920: economic power; social and ethnic divisions; political reaction and renewed isolationism

FOREIGN POLICY KEY ISSUES:

1. US wartime economy
2. US and post-war peace
3. Divisions I; Red Scare and 3b. Divisions II; Prohibition
4. Position of African-Americans
5. Back to normalcy



Impact WW1

1. The American Economy at war

1914-1917 - the war had a positive effect on US' economy; why? Huge demand for manufactured goods and food/fuel supplies. GB and Fr very dependent on US for war supplies and loans. Initially difficult to keep up with production but then adapted.

ONCE THE US WAS INVOLVED IN WAR =

HUGE infrastructure developed. Bases needed for the US army. Liberty Loans raised funds, Food/Fuel Administrations established to regulate/ration resources, nationalisation of RR to control transport.

EXPORTS ROSE + FULL EMPLOYMENT

POST-WAR; economy slowed down, (de-mobilisation process) = brief recession into 1921

The US had emerged as the world's economic GIANT!



2. Post-war peace

US gained prestige from involvement in WW1 also = symbolised by Woodrow Wilson and his ideals as he dominated the Peace conference in Paris from Jan 1919. His ideals = 'Wilsonian Idealism', 'making the world safe for democracy'.

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE = WW wanted his 14 points but there were clashed of opinion between delegates and WW backed down on many, i.e. self-determination.

BUT, treaties signed, borders decided upon, League of Nations created.



AT HOME = widespread opposition. Growing political issues; 50,000 dead in war, many died from Spanish flu - public turned against 'European war'. Difficult to sell the TOV and LON to the public.

3a. Divisions I; Red Scare

US growth in patriotism during WW1. Alongside that, growth in suspicion/hostility towards socialism. Nativism grew (KKK revived in 1915). The recent immigrations were seen as non-Americans - demands grew to root out 'aliens'.

1917 Espionage Act passed = Mail could be seized/inspected, possible revolutionaries arrested

1918 Sedition Act = extended powers under Espionage Act = 1500 prosecutions (2/3 convicted - including Eugene Debs and Emma Goldman, feminist and pacifist who was deported to Russia in Dec 1919; by the 'Red Ark' USS Buford)

1918 Immigration Act = strengthened controls against immigrants



1921 Emergency Quota Act = drastic limits on immigration

RED SCARE = Oct/Nov 1917 Russian Revolution spread fear of Communism spreading by immigrants from central/eastern Europe.

Red scare extended to include; **anarchists, terrorists, pacifists, militant trade unionists, German Americans, recent immigrants.**

Put this together with; high inflation after WW1, demobilisation, rise in unemployment = strikes across US, 1919 4 million workers involved, i.e. Seattle 60,000 workers on general strike 1919, Pittsburgh 1919 Great Steel strike lasted 3 months AND RESULTED IN VIOLENCE as businesses/govt tried to crack down on strikers.

Racial tensions also grew, 20 race riots in 1919.

PALMER RAIDS = US attorney General Mitchell Palmer was convinced of a real socialist threat - heightened by April/May 1919 bomb packages sent to public figures.

Nov 1919 - Palmer's Justice Dept = raided offices of radical organisations across 12 cities. Dec 1919; 249 radicals deported. Jan 1920 33 cities forced to close Communist party HQs. Raids co-ordinated by J Edgar Hoover. Palmer Raids led to vigilante action by ordinary citizens. Supreme Court cracked down on Palmer and national outcry at Rights' violations. Palmer lost credibility.

3b. Divisions II; Prohibition

By 1917 Congress had 2/3 dry Congressmen. The war strengthened arguments of Drys; Anti-German, Wilson and Progressives were Drys.
= 18th Amendment ratified 1919. Volstead Act passed to enforce it.
But many Wets against it.

SUFFRAGE = WCTU prominent in pro-suffrage and pro-temperance movements.



4. Position of African-Americans

AAs had high hopes at beginning of WW1; many volunteered to fight believing they would be rewarded with equality. Also, huge amount of AAs moved to the North to work for the war effort in larger cities, 330,000 flowed north towards Chicago and NYC.

AA soldiers returned home with experiences/education = huge increase in NAACP membership. Assertive leaders like DuBois gained support for challenging old 'Uncle Tom' approach.

BUT, AAs still segregated in US army and treated as inferiors. 'Red Summer' 1919 = racial tensions spilled into racial riots, i.e. Race war in St Louis July 1919.

5. Back to Normalcy

1919-1920; huge change in American politics; from Progressivism and idealism towards political reaction, rejecting internationalism and WW's legacy.

1920 elections; Republicans won majority in Congress and Presidency.

WHY?

- Long-term reaction against immigration
- Red Scare
- Pres candidate Warren G Harding (+ Calvin Coolidge) - calm reasonableness, slogans = 'Law and Order', 'America First'.

ISOLATIONALISM;

WW - SPENT LONG TIME IN EUROPE, difficult to get Treaty and Versailles ratified.

- War-weariness
- Domestic concerns more pressing
- Committed isolationists like Senator William Borah made convincing speeches (Senate speech Nov 1919)
- Even Henry Cabot Lodge (interventionist) thought TOV/LON went too far (Irreconcilables)
- WW - exhausted, too stubborn - illness so replaced by James Cox (with F D Roosevelt as running mate)

1920 election;

Rep had dominated since 1896 (WW exception), so back to Republicanism.

Democrats won Southern states ONLY.

END OF PROGRESSIVISM?

Wilson's ideals rejected in 1920. LON NOT ratified, nor had TOV been. Reps dominated both Houses. Harding promised 'normalcy'; avoid excessive government, keeping internationalism low priority etc.

BUT, Progressivism not dead. 1924 Progressive Robert La Follette of Wisconsin ran for Pres and got 5 million votes. Not until New Deal and FDR did it return.

SUMMARY

- WW1 changed America
- Had huge impact; socially, economically and on the US as a world power
- But many of the trends had been apparent pre-WW1