World War I
The Home Front
HTA Study Day 2012

Matt Leeds
St Andrew’s Cathedral School
Outline

• Syllabus and breakup of topic

• German Home Front

• British Home Front

• Exam Tips
Frequency of Home Front Questions

(10 mark question in 2006, 2008, 2009)

HSC 2007 & 2010
1 War on the Western Front
   - the reasons for the stalemate on the Western Front
   - the nature of trench warfare and life in the trenches dealing with experiences of Allied and German soldiers
   - overview of strategies and tactics to break the stalemate including key battles: Verdun, the Somme, Passchendaele
   - changing attitudes of Allied and German soldiers to the war over time

2 The home fronts in Britain and Germany
   - total war and its social and economic impact on civilians in Britain and Germany
   - recruitment, conscription, censorship and propaganda in Britain and Germany
   - the variety of attitudes to the war and how they changed over time in Britain and Germany
   - the impact of the war on women’s lives and experiences in Britain

3 Turning points
   - impacts of the entry of the USA and of the Russian withdrawal
   - Ludendorff’s Spring Offensive and the Allied response

4 Allied Victory
   - events leading to the Armistice, 1918
   - reasons for the Allied victory and German collapse
   - the roles and differing goals of Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson in creating the Treaty of Versailles
Britain

- Total war and its social and economic impact on civilians
- Recruitment, conscription, censorship and propaganda
- The variety of attitudes to the war and how they changed over time
- The impact of the war on women’s lives and experiences

Germany

- Total war and its social and economic impact on civilians
- Recruitment, conscription, censorship and propaganda
- The variety of attitudes to the war and how they changed over time
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- Germany and Total War
  - German War Organisation
  - Financing the War
  - What do historians say about Germany and Total War
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- Germany and Total War
- **German War Organisation**
- Financing the War
- What do historians say about Germany and Total War
Kriegsrohstoffabteilung
Ersatz Goods

The first step was the appearance of *Kriegsbrot* (war bread). Despite its name it was very palatable. It consisted of 55% rye, 25% wheat, and 20% potato meal, sugar and shortening. The potato element was said to prevent its getting stale. Kriegsbrot’s flavor improved by the third day and loaves a week old showed no deterioration. Although this first war bread was superior, rye and wheat flour were not always plentiful. Oats, Indian corn, barley, beans, peas and buckwheat meal had to be added as time went on.

Advertising on a Bakery in 1916
National duty of every baker is to produce only the highest nutritional value of bread, for only through the existing 'bread values' exploited properly. War bread.
German Government Agencies set up to Deal with Shortages

- Imperial Grain Office 1915
- War Food Office 1916
- Weapons and Munitions Procurement Agency 1916
- Imperial Potato Office
- Patriotic Auxiliary Service Law 1916
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- Germany and Total War
- German War Organisation
- Financing the War
- What do historians say about Germany and Total War
German Coins WW1
“We can cling to the hope that, once peace has been concluded, we can present our enemies with the bill for this war which has been forced upon us”

Minister of Finance Karl Helferrich
## German Government

### Taxation/Expenditure Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>Deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>8620</td>
<td>2351</td>
<td>6269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>25694</td>
<td>1735</td>
<td>23959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>27732</td>
<td>2029</td>
<td>25703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>52003</td>
<td>7830</td>
<td>44173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>44020</td>
<td>6795</td>
<td>37225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>158069</strong></td>
<td><strong>20740</strong></td>
<td><strong>137328</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HYPERINFLATION
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- Germany and Total War
- German War Organisation
- Financing the War
- What do historians say about Germany and Total War
“The effectiveness of this hastily impoverished effort stood out in the annals of Germany’s economic mobilisation for war. Despite the anxieties of the War Ministry, the German armies did not collapse in late 1914 for want of weapons or munitions; and in this respect at least, German soldiers were well supplied for the duration of the conflict. There was no munitions crisis in Germany.”
R.Chickering Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918 p.39

The German war economy presents one of the earliest and least successful examples of a ‘military industrial complex’ in action. The corporatist solution to Germany’s economic difficulties was no solution at all.
Winter, J. The Upheaval of War, p.56

“These measures undoubtedly helped Germany weather the crisis of war to the summer of 1916. But ‘war time collectivism’ … was the undoing of the German government in the long run. Precisely because the state was intervening so actively in the regulation of the economy ordinary Germans began to blame it for its manifest failure to protect their living standards in the second half of the war”
Carr, W. A History of Germany, 1815 – 1945
HSC 2006

Question 1 (5 marks)

(a) Using Source A:

(i) Name ONE way Germany retaliated against the British and French naval blockade.

Source A


The blockade of European ports by the British and French navies forced Germany into making desperate improvisations . . . In retaliation the German U-boats attempted to starve Britain by sinking supply ships. Continued violations of American neutral shipping forced the USA to declare war on Germany in April 1917 . . . but it took her many months to raise and equip an army to send to Europe. Meanwhile the defeat of Russia in the east had allowed Germany to send massive reinforcements to the west, where the German forces launched a new offensive in March 1918.
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment and Conscription
  - Propaganda
  - Censorship
  - Effectiveness of German Propaganda
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment and Conscription
- **Propaganda**
- Censorship
- Effectiveness of German Propaganda
You we shall hate with enduring hate;
We shall not forbear from our hate;
Hate on water and hate on land,
Hate of the head and hate of the hand,
Hate of the hammer and hate of the crown,
Hate of seventy millions pressing down.
We love as one; we hate as one;
We have one foe, and one alone - ENGLAND!

From the third stanza of the **Hymn of Hate** (1914), by Ernst Lissauer
Map of Germany **surrounded** by hostile nations?
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment and Conscription
- Propaganda
- Censorship
- Effectiveness of German Propaganda
German Newspaper Reports

• British soldiers were accused of using bullets known as Dumdum bullets. These bullets would explode inside the body just after impact causing maximum damage.
• Belgian priests were accused of firing from behind their altars when German troops entered their churches.
• There were also stories of Belgian civilians mutilating the bodies of wounded German soldiers.
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment and Conscription
- Propaganda
- Censorship
- Effectiveness of German Propaganda
Gibst du in meiner Klein
noch so klein in Göttin Sie
mir's Gesagten sein.
HSC 2011

1. What is the purpose of Source A?

   (A) To promote conscription
   (B) To show the discipline of the British Army
   (C) To encourage British men to enlist voluntarily
   (D) To gain the support of British women for the war effort

2. Using Source A and your own knowledge, which statement best describes the situation regarding conscription at the start of World War I?

   (A) Both Britain and Germany had conscription.
   (B) Britain had conscription and Germany did not.
   (C) Neither Britain nor Germany had conscription.
   (D) Britain did not have conscription and Germany did.
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

- Early Response
- Opposition and Growth
- The Strike Movement
- Wartime Politics and Dissent
- Revolution
1. There was **great** enthusiasm for the war

2. The **authoritarian** nature of the government did not tolerate dissent.
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

- Early Response
- **Opposition and Growth**
  - The Strike Movement
  - Wartime Politics and Dissent
  - Revolution
In the third winter of the war, owing to a breakdown of means of transportation and want of labourers, coal became very scarce. All public places, such as theatres, picture galleries, museums and cinematograph shows were closed in Munich for the want of coal...Light was economised. All the apartment houses (and all Berlin lives in apartment houses) were closed at nine o'clock. Stores were forbidden to illuminate their windows, and all theatres were to be closed at ten...Of the three lights in each [street] lamp, only one was lit...

Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

- Early Response
- Opposition and Growth
- **The Strike Movement**
- Wartime Politics and Dissent
- Revolution
There were only a few policemen there, and they were taken by surprise, to the extent that the thousand people were able to stand for more than half an hour unmolested in front of Portal V of the Reichstag, through which the Reichstag representatives entered the building. One after another they came, the 'representatives of the people'. 'We want peace! Give us back our husbands! Give us back our fathers and brothers!' These words rang out to the bourgeois Reichstag representatives—

And then came Karl, our Karl. Excited calls receive him. Everyone wants to shake his hand. Soon he is wrapped in a crowd of people. Again and again hats and caps are tossed into the air: 'Up with Karl Liebknecht, down with the war!'

A larger police contingent moved towards us. We retreated in a closed line down the Linden—we crossed the Alexanderplatz individually. In Landsbergerstrasse we decided to gather again. We walked together to the cemetery of those who fell in the 1848 revolution—There were only two wreaths but they said a lot—

18 March—the anniversary of your deaths
4 August—the anniversary of our deaths
Anonymous

Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

- Early Response
- Opposition and Growth
- The Strike Movement
- **Wartime Politics and Dissent**
- Revolution
Text of the Peace Resolution

- As on August 1, 1914, so also now on the verge of a fourth year of war, the words of the speech from the throne still hold: "We are not impelled by the lust of conquest."
- Germany took up arms in defence of her freedom, her independence, and the integrity of her soil. The Reichstag strives for a peace of understanding and a lasting reconciliation of peoples. Any violations of territory, and political, economic, and financial persecutions are incompatible with such a peace.
- The Reichstag rejects any plan which proposes the imposition of economic barriers or the solidification of national hatreds after the war. The freedom of the seas must be maintained. Economic peace alone will lead to the friendly association of peoples. The Reichstag will promote actively the creation of international organizations of justice.
- However, as long as the enemy governments refuse to agree to such a peace, as long as they threaten Germany and her allies with conquest and domination, so long will the German people stand united and unshaken, and they will fight until their right and that of their allies are made secure.
- Thus united, the German people remain unconquerable. The Reichstag feels that in this sentiment it is united with the men who have fought with courage to protect the Fatherland. The undying gratitude of our people goes out to them.
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

• Early Response
• Opposition and Growth
• The Strike Movement
• Wartime Politics and Dissent
• Revolution
Ludendorff, Kaiser & Hindenburg
German Navy at Kiel

Armistice Signed
10 Mark 2008

Assess how useful Sources C and D would be for a historian studying the variety of attitudes to the war on the home fronts and how they changed over time in Britain and Germany.

In your answer, consider the perspectives provided by the TWO sources and the reliability of each source.

Source C

The Argus newspaper, Melbourne, 19 July 1915

Women Must Work - London Demonstration

Fifty thousand women, including many in society, marched through London on Saturday, demanding the right to serve the State by making munitions.

The procession was a mile long, and was divided into 125 sections, each headed by a banner. Among the inscriptions were:
'Men must fight - Women must work!'
'We are not slackers!'
'We want to save our country and to keep the Kaiser out!'
'We demand war service for all!'

Source D

An account given to a Times reporter by the Portuguese Ambassador to Berlin, Sidonio Pais, immediately after his departure from the city on 9 March 1916. Times History and Encyclopedia of the War, August 1916.

The German people are feeling the pinch of war. The lack of butter, bread and other necessary commodities is severely felt. But the people are far too disciplined to do more than grumble, for a long time to come. The result of the war is not in doubt, but the Allies must be prepared for a protracted and sullen resistance on the part of Germany, and ought not to underestimate the difficulty of wearing down the spirit of a people which, after all, is profoundly patriotic and schooled to accept with fatalistic resignation the decisions of its Government.

The word 'fatalism' best expresses the mood of Germany today. Warlike enthusiasm has gone. Hope of a sweeping victory has departed, but nothing justifies the supposition that the German masses are likely to revolt against the authorities for many a long day. The Allies must, therefore, redouble their efforts to render the blockade increasingly stringent, and make up their minds to the fact that, although half beaten, Germany is far from recognising in practice the hopelessness of her plight.
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- **Britain and Total War**
- Government Controls
- Government Controls over Food
- Financing the War
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

• Britain and Total War
• **Government Controls**
  • Government Controls over Food
  • Financing the War
Postal Censorship.

The communication returned in this cover constitutes a breach of the Defence of the Realm Regulations. The writer is warned to be more careful in future.

N.B.—The communication will be allowed to proceed if the passage or passages referring to [redacted] are omitted, and if it is re-posted to the addressee in the usual way.
H.M. King George V's visit to the National Shell-Filling Factory (Chilwell Depot), 15 December 1916
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- Britain and Total War
- Government Controls
- **Government Controls over Food**
- Financing the War
Total War and its Social and Economic Impact on Civilians

- Britain and Total War
- Government Controls
- Government Controls over Food
- Financing the War
Why did Britain not face the same crippling economic effects as Germany?
2006 10 mark

Assess how useful Sources C and D would be for an historian studying the impact of total war on the home fronts during World War I.

In your answer, consider the perspectives provided by the TWO sources and the reliability of each one.

Source C

Extract from former American ambassador James Gerard’s My Four Years in Germany, London, 1917.

As food became scarce green vegetables and fruits were exempt from the ration card system, as were chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys and game. Because of these exemptions the rich usually managed to live well, although the price of a goose rose to ridiculous heights . . .

In the third winter of the war, owing to a breakdown of means of transportation and want of labourers, coal became very scarce. All public places, such as theatres and picture galleries, were closed in Munich for want of coal. In Berlin the suffering was not so great, but even the circus elephants were pressed into service to draw the coal carts from the railway stations . . .

As more and more men were called to the front, women were employed in unusual work. The new underground railroad in Berlin is being built largely by female labour. Women are employed on the railroads, working with pickaxes on the road bed. The card system was applied to meat, potatoes, milk, sugar, butter and soap.
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment Efforts
  - Conscription
  - Conscientious Objectors
  - Censorship and Propaganda
  - Effectiveness of British Propaganda
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

• Recruitment Efforts
• **Conscription**
  • Conscientious Objectors
  • Censorship and Propaganda
  • Effectiveness of British Propaganda
UNDER

LORD DERBY’S SCHEME

A MERE

Promise to Enlist

is of No Value.

If a man wishes to be placed in a Group he

Must be Attested by

December 11th

Derby

Scheme

1915
FIRST & SECOND MILITARY SERVICE ACT 1916

MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1916

Every man to whom the Act applies will on Thursday, March 2nd, be deemed to have enlisted for the period of the War unless he is excepted or exempt.

Any man who has adequate grounds for applying to a Local Tribunal for a CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION UNDER THIS ACT

Must do so BEFORE THURSDAY, MARCH 2

Why wait for the Act to apply to you?

Come now and join of your own free will.

You can at once put your claim before a Local Tribunal for exemption from being called up for Military Service if you wish.

ATTEST NOW
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

• Recruitment Efforts
• Conscription

• Conscientious Objectors
• Censorship and Propaganda
• Effectiveness of British Propaganda
Recruitment, Conscriptio, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment Efforts
- Conscription
- Conscientious Objectors
- **Censorship and Propaganda**
- Effectiveness of British Propaganda
BRITAIN AT WAR

The Daily Mirror

BRITAIN'S MAGNIFICENT ATLANTIC AIR TRIUMPH

"HOW I FLEW THE ATLANTIC" BY CAPT. ALCOCK

The Victoria-York machine, on which the flight was accomplished.

A map showing the course of the historic flight. The airmen passed through a succession of mist, low clouds, rain, drizzle and equally vicious conditions.
Rudyard Kipling
“the world contains human beings and Germans”
The Daily Mirror
The Church and Propaganda
Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship and Propaganda

- Recruitment Efforts
- Conscription
- Conscientious Objectors
- Censorship and Propaganda
- **Effectiveness of British Propaganda**
General Ludendorff mentioned that Germany had been hypnotised by Allied propaganda as a rabbit by a snake.

He said it had been exceptionally clever and conceived on a grand scale.

As a result of this propaganda Germany had experienced a sort of moral blockade by neutral countries.
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

• **Early Response**
  • Appearance of Opposition
  • Growth of Opposition
  • Lloyd George and the Handling of Dissent
  • Why did Britain Experience so Little Anti-War Dissent?
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

• Early Response
• **Appearance of Opposition**
  • Growth of Opposition
  • Lloyd George and the Handling of Dissent
  • Why did Britain Experience so Little Anti-War Dissent?
In January 1915, two Zeppelin naval airships flew over the east coast of England and bombed great Yarmouth and King's Lynn.

The first Zeppelin raid on London took place on May 31st, 1915. The raid killed 28 people and injured 60 more. Zeppelins were used at Verdun but four were brought down by ground-fire.

This brought an end to their use over the Western Front, but they continued to bomb England. In June 1917 the German military stopped using Zeppelins for bombing raids over Great Britain.

In total, there were forty-three air-raids during the war and 474 people killed.
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

• Early Response
• Appearance of Opposition
• **Growth of Opposition**
• Lloyd George and the Handling of Dissent
• Why did Britain Experience so Little Anti-War Dissent?
UDC & NCF

• Union of Democratic Control
  UDC was one of the loudest anti-war voices in Britain. This group was more concerned with the world after war. It sought to ensure another outbreak of war would not take place post WWI. It sought to end secret diplomacy as well. It was formed 1914.

• No Conscription Fellows
  Formed in 1915 the NCF sought to assist men who refused to serve in the army.
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

- Early Response
- Appearance of Opposition
- Growth of Opposition
- **Lloyd George and the Handling of Dissent**
- Why did Britain Experience so Little Anti-War Dissent?
“I appealed to the workmen to give up, for the period for the war, the unwritten rules by which output was limited, and I gave an understanding that piece rates should not be reduced. In the same way I urged the suspension of trade union rules forbidding dilution in order that unskilled men and women might be brought in to make up for the shortage of skilled men.”
Lloyd George
Attitudes to the War and How They Changed Over Time

- Early Response
- Appearance of Opposition
- Growth of Opposition
- Lloyd George and the Handling of Dissent

Why did Britain Experience so Little Anti-War Dissent?
Why did Britain Experience so Little Anti-War Dissent?

• Several factors have been suggested for why Britain experienced much less dissent than other countries:
  – Britain was in a much better economic position than the other Allied powers and so experienced less economic strain. Their navy was able to maintain an adequate supply of food to the home front.
  – British government paid close attention to the needs to workers and sought to cater for them as much as possible. This increased cooperation between workers and the government.
  – British propaganda was effective in maintaining morale.
  – Historian JM Winter suggests that a rigid class based society allowed for a lack of dissent. Lower classes knew their place and accepted instructions of their ‘betters’ as they had done for centuries. This rigid class system would not be challenged until the 1960s.
The Impact of the War on Women's Lives and Experiences in Britain

- **Women and Munitions**
- Women in Other Industries
- Women in the Armed Forces
- The War and Female Suffrage
- Social Impact of the War on Women
The Impact of the War on Women's Lives and Experiences in Britain

- Women and Munitions
- **Women in Other Industries**
- Women in the Armed Forces
- The War and Female Suffrage
- Social Impact of the War on Women
Join

Red Cross work must go on!

—all you need is a heart and a dollar
The Impact of the War on Women’s Lives and Experiences in Britain

• Women and Munitions
• Women in Other Industries
• **Women in the Armed Forces**
• The War and Female Suffrage
• Social Impact of the War on Women
Women in the Armed Forces

Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC)
The Women’s Royal Air Force (WRAF)
The Women’s Royal Naval Service (WRNS).
The Impact of the War on Women's Lives and Experiences in Britain

- Women and Munitions
- Women in Other Industries
- Women in the Armed Forces
- The War and Female Suffrage
- Social Impact of the War on Women
Argument for Granting women vote

- Some people have the view that women were granted the vote as a result of the role they played in the war by the 1918 Representation of the People Act however this view is unlikely from historical evidence.
- By and large the issues that were holding women back from receiving the vote pre1914 had changed post 1918. These included:
  - Opposition of Prime Minister Asquith
  - Female suffrage was no longer a party issue as Britain had a coalition government.
  - Worldwide trends towards female suffrage had already begun. Examples New Zealand and Australia.
- The Act that gave women the right to vote was very conservative. Only women over the age of thirty who were householders or the wives of householders could vote. This means the majority of those who received the vote were middle-class older ladies. Not the young female workers who participated in the munitions factories.
The Impact of the War on Women's Lives and Experiences in Britain

- Women and Munitions
- Women in Other Industries
- Women in the Armed Forces
- The War and Female Suffrage

**Social Impact of the War on Women**
Social Impact of the War on Women

• The war certainly improved the position of women in society.
• The press played up on female patriotism and the effort of women towards the war.
• Depending on age, class and geographical location the impact of the war on women’s lives varied greatly. For example working class women were working long hours in physically demanding jobs prior to 1914 already. Middle-class women on the other hand were freer from the restraints of the home. These stories of middle-class women were told much more regularly due to their high literacy levels and education.
• While there were some advances for women during war time they were largely encouraged to go back into the home or return to traditionally female dominated jobs. By 1921 employment rates for women were no higher than in 1914.
10 mark 2009

Assess how useful Sources C and D would be for a historian studying the impact of World War I on women’s lives and experiences in Britain.

In your answer, consider the perspectives provided by the TWO sources and the reliability of

Source C

A British government photograph of a female munitions worker checking shell primers in 1917.

Source D


Just under five million [British] women were in work before the war, well over six million by 1919 ... Munitions work had attracted large numbers of women, not because they all burned with ambition to begin careers outside the home, but because war work paid far better than the traditional jobs open to women, such as domestic service ... Yet working in munitions was hard, dirty work ...

For those women who needed the money, the decision to leave [once the war was over] was not one they necessarily wished to take, but the pressure was put on them. It had once been their patriotic role to fill the gap, whether in an office or on the factory floor; now it was their duty to leave and return to the home.
EXAM TIPS

Doh!!
Exams are coming...
THANK YOU

Matt Leeds
St Andrew’s Cathedral School

mleeds@sacs.nsw.edu.au