

History Lecture #20 The Realities of Modern War

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The Mobilization of Consent



Audio 1

- You have to get as much of the country behind the war, there has to be support for the war and you have to contest anyone who opposes the War
- At the beginning of the war Ottawa used The War Measures Act of 1914 to enforce this
- It empowered it to enforce "the security, defense, peace, order, and welfare in Canada"
 - This piece of legislation gave the government power to do anything it wanted to with the excuse of security for Canada
- The first thing Canada did was intern enemy aliens: people of Austro-Hungarian, Turkish, and German descent in Canada
 - They had to live with certain restrictions and if they didn't abide by these restrictions then they would be placed in internment camps
 - The internment of enemy aliens was a reasonable response to a reasonable situation
 - Racism was a minor factor
- Every other country in the world involved in the war interned enemy aliens
- The very people who were interned represented a real threat to the allied order
 - Most European armies operated under a system of compulsory military service
 - So if you lived in the Austro-Hungarian empire as soon as you turned 21 you were a full time soldier
 - When you finish this term you were placed on a reserve - meaning you were a part time soldier
 - After the 7-10 year period ended until the age of 42 you were still liable for military service
 - This existed wherever you were in the world
 - As the Austro-Hungarians mobilized they started to call up reservists
 - There was a huge amount of Austro-Hungarians returning to their country to fight for their country
 - So Canadian government had to think should all these trained soldiers be allowed to go back to Europe and fight against Canada on the front or should these people be placed in internment?
 - Obviously internment
- Bishop Nykyta Budka
 - He professed a great amount of loss for the Archduke
 - He also said everyone should go home and fight for the Austro-Hungarian empire
 - Even if they lived in Canada they had to return to Europe and fight for the fatherland
 - This was an open call to people in Canada to join the enemy
 - Eventually he retracted the letter but he couldn't retract the meaning of it, it was too late
- Thus it made sense for the government to place these people in internment camps
- People in these camps weren't slave laborers
- There was no way to force these men to work if they didn't want to
- These ideals of internment camps are opposite to our values of the 21st century

Protecting the Family

- The male in the family was the main breadwinner
- Families were also larger
- So if the main breadwinner went to war the family would suffer
- The soldiers were barely paid - \$1.10 day
 - To be a soldier was to take a reduced income
- The government knew it had to do something to support these families when the men were gone
 - Important for recruitment and humanitarian purposes
- The government didn't want to do full scale welfare
- Married men were forced to give half their pay each month to their wife
 - If you're in the army there's not much to spend your money on anyways
- Many families were forced to turn to the Canadian Patriotic Fund
 - It was private, received no money from government, all private donors
 - Raised a lot of money for soldiers families

"Why Can't a Girl Be a Soldier?"

- Women were not eligible for combat service
- Many women wished they were eligible
- Women's rifle clubs
- Essentially when society thought of women being soldiers they thought of women fighting on the domestic front not really meeting the Germans

- The women was expected to do everything for the war effort
 - Fundraising was a primary domain of women
 - Over 100 million were raised privately largely engineered and administered by women
- Cooking became a contribution for war - cooking responsibly
 - Any food to buy had to support the war effort
- Mothers in Canada were the major teachers in ensuring that children knew about the stakes of the war
 - Provide children with toys with military themes
 - Tiny toy soldiers, stories of the Great War
 - This way children could understand everything that was happening
- In all of these ways were expected to be large and active supporters of the war.
- For many women this wasn't enough, they wanted an active role
- They could be nurses
 - This could be done through voluntary experiences
- Florence Nightingale
 - She was a nurse who worked in British hospitals during the Crimean war
 - She was horrified by the awful conditions
 - She was critical to the emergence of the nursing profession
 - She established the first nursing school in Britain
- Nursing was a difficult field to get into
- It was also very strict
 - Cant live out of the hospital cant stay out late, very strict schedule
- Senior nurses were paid \$12/month
- There was a lot of status associated with nursing
 - It went from being a disreputable pursuit to a respected profession
- 3000 women joined the Canadian medical core

Total War

- Does the mobilization of consent imply that Canada was involved in a total war
 - No?
- Total war refers to the production capacity of the war
 - All of the things produced goes to the war effort
- Nevertheless there is a remarkable level of consistency in support for the war.
- Civilian moral and support was inexplicably strong
- There was one way that it was a total war
 - There was war everywhere, it was inescapable
- Everything was effected by the war
- Lucy Montgomery
 - Horrified by the war
 - Anxiety of war caused her to lose a her baby
 - Stopped writing stories
 - She seems to understand the pulse of Canadian life
 - We get how pervasive the war was

Themes

- How far inhumanity is allowed during the war
- Women's role in the war