

The U.S. and Europe Between the Wars

Chapter 9 Section I

The Futile Search for Stability

Focus Questions

- What major changes does the US experience after World War I?
- Why is leisure time important to economic growth?
- What radical change does Europe apply after World War I in regards to its colonies?
- What major economic issues does France experience?

US: Changing Lives for Women

- Women began to challenge old social norms following the war
 - Many had worked in war industries, and had demanded equal pay to men
 - Many began to demand, and won, the right to vote
- Many women adopted new fashions and social behavior, (Flappers/Vamps)
 - Increased use of make-up in public (considered indecent before)
 - Openly drinking, smoking, casually dating men



Popular Technology



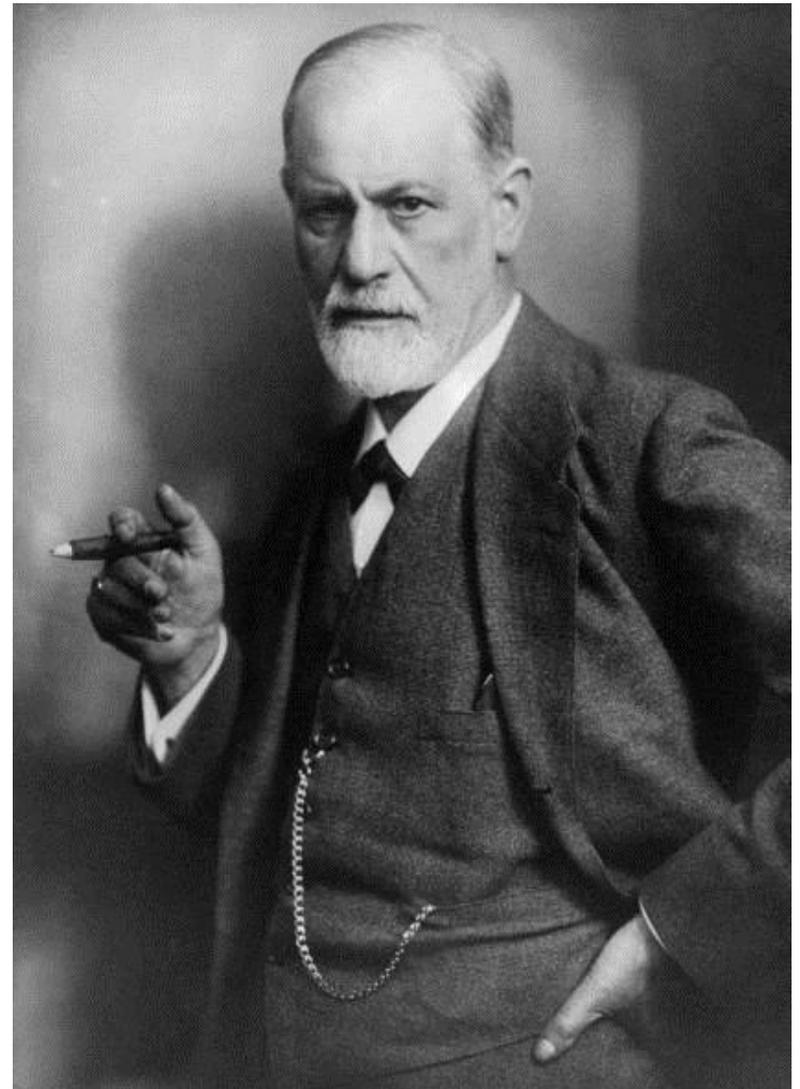
- New technology in communication and transportation increased the pace of life and the interconnectedness of society
 - Automobile – increased mobility and freedom for people (mostly for the wealthy at first)
- The beginning of popular radio led to a homogenization of culture
 - Stimulated the desire for consumer goods
 - Psychology was used in advertisements to convince people to buy

Leisure Time

- New labor-saving devices such as electronic appliances (vacuum cleaners, toasters, refrigerators, etc.) led to a growth in leisure time
- Leisure activities such as spectator sports, athletic activities (biking, tennis), and popular reading grew in popularity

Science

- New advances in science changed the way that people viewed the world
 - Albert Einstein developed the theory of relativity – governs the laws of motion and energy
 - Sigmund Freud developed theories on the human mind and subconscious to explain human behavior – growth of psychology as a discipline



Literature

- Many authors of the time began to pick new techniques and subjects to portray
 - Writers were often critical of the society of the time – materialism, middle class values
 - Many writers became interested in writing about social issues of the time
 - The Great Gatsby

Popular Culture

- Hollywood productions began to dominate movie theaters of the time
- Silent movies were popular, at the beginning
- The beginning of sound in films increased their popularity – musicals, gangster films, and horror movies
- Dance bands popularized the dance music of the era – jazz, swing

Post-war Prosperity

- World War I had given much of the economy, especially manufacturing, a boost
- Many Americans had a great deal of confidence in the economy
 - Some industrial workers had increased wages
 - Many people began to buy on credit or speculate in the stock market

Weaknesses of the Economy

- However, the economy had many underlying weaknesses
 - The farming sector of the economy was not doing well
 - Demand for products and the increase in wages across the economy were not keeping up with production – factories were making more than could be purchased

Stock Market Crash

- In 1929, the stock market crashed, and this signaled the beginning of the Great Depression
 - Loan brokers called in the collection of loans
 - Financial panic resulted in a run on the banks – not enough cash to cover
 - As banks failed, businesses closed, wages fell, workers lost their jobs
- The U.S. government mostly stayed out of providing assistance, at first

John Maynard Keynes

- Professor of economics has different take on depressions.
- Governments should deficit spend.
- Put money into hands of common working people and encourage them to spend.
- Spending would pull countries out of depressions
- Leads to New Deal in U.S. and more govt. spending in other countries

FDR and the New Deal

- In 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president of the United States
- Roosevelt and Congress worked together to pass laws that provided assistance to the economy
 - Regulated banks and the stock market
 - Established production guidelines
 - Sponsored public works programs to provide jobs
- Later laws also created social security and unemployment insurance

Great Britain: Economic Competition

- During the war, Great Britain had to turn all of its resources to fighting the war
 - Had to borrow money from the U.S. when it ran out
 - When Britain turned most of its factories to war production, it was no longer able to produce to trade with its partners
 - These trading partners eventually started trading with the U.S. and Japan, instead

The Commonwealth of Nations

- Great Britain reorganized its government into the Commonwealth of Nations
 - Voluntary linking of Great Britain with its colonies on an equal basis
 - After a series of resistances and uprisings by Irish nationalists in British Ireland, Britain granted self-government to the southern counties of Ireland – northern six counties remained in Great Britain

France's Troubles

- France had suffered greatly during World War I
 - Much French farmland was destroyed
 - Cities and towns along the battlefield were mostly reduced to rubble
 - Much of France's infrastructure was destroyed, which made it harder to recover
 - Half of the males aged 18 to 32 were killed

Economic and Political Problems

- France faced economic and political trouble after World War I
 - Unemployment, inflation, war debts
 - Unable to rebuild infrastructure
 - Political parties competed for votes, and these coalitions quickly fell apart
 - Extremist groups such as communists, socialists, fascists, anarchists, and nationalists began to struggle for power

Keeping the Peace

- France worked to try to maintain peace with Germany through different ways
 - League of Nations and the international community
 - Forming strategic alliances with other nations in case of German attack
 - Construction of the Maginot Line – defense line along the border with Germany
- France also tried to work with the government of Germany to maintain peace

Between the Wars

- This period was an era of intense economic, political, social, and cultural change that:
 - Resulted in changing lifestyles for people in the western democracies
 - Saw democratic governments in the United States, England, and France struggle to preserve democracy
 - Created fascist and communist dictatorships in Europe