

## **The Great War**

War on such a massive scale makes extraordinary demands on a nation. Governments centralized their powers, manipulated their economies, used propaganda to hold public support, and enlisted the citizenry to produce goods for the war effort. As a result, society changed in many ways during World War I. For example, labor unions gained more power because a satisfied workforce is needed to keep the war machine rolling; in addition, governments curtailed civil liberties, announcing that anyone speaking out against the war would face charges of treason.

Women also were significantly affected by the war. Wartime contingencies forced them to take jobs usually held by men in both offices and heavy industry. They also gained the right to vote. Many Europeans were persuaded that granting women suffrage would lend a moral dimension to national politics and perhaps prevent another war.