



Mains Practice Question

Q. Critically examine the impact of the First World War on the global political and economic order. (250 words)

17 Jul, 2023 GS Paper 1 History

Approach

- Start your answer with a brief introduction of First World War 1
- Explain the impact of the First World War on the global political and economic order
- Conclude accordingly

Introduction:

The First World War (1914-1918) was a global conflict that involved most of the world's major powers and resulted in unprecedented death and destruction. It also had far-reaching consequences for the political and economic order of the world, as it reshaped the balance of power, the map of territories, the nature of international relations, and the role of ideologies.

Body:

- **Balance of Power:**
 - The war weakened the old European empires such as Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Ottoman Turkey, and gave rise to new powers such as the United States, Japan, and Soviet Union. The war also led to the emergence of nationalist movements in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, which challenged the colonial domination of the West.
 - The war also paved the way for the rise of fascism and communism as alternative ideologies to democracy and capitalism.
- **Map of Territories:**
 - The war resulted in the redrawing of the map of Europe and the Middle East, as new states were created or enlarged from the disintegration of old empires. For example, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan were some of the new or modified states that emerged after the war.
 - The war also led to the creation of the League of Nations, which was an attempt to establish a collective security system and prevent future wars.
- **Nature of International Relations:**
 - The war marked a shift from a multipolar to a bipolar world order, as two rival blocs emerged after the war: the Allies (led by Britain, France, and later the United States) and the Central Powers (led by Germany, Austria-Hungary, and later Italy).
 - The war also introduced new forms of warfare such as trench warfare, chemical weapons, submarines, tanks, airplanes, and propaganda.
 - The war also increased the role of public opinion and mass media in influencing foreign policy decisions.
- **Role of Ideologies:**
 - The war exposed the flaws and contradictions of the existing ideologies such as

nationalism, imperialism, liberalism, and socialism. It also stimulated new ideologies such as fascism (in Italy and Germany), communism (in Russia), Zionism (in Palestine), Pan-Arabism (in the Middle East), and Pan-Africanism (in Africa).

- The war also generated a sense of disillusionment and alienation among many intellectuals and artists who questioned the values and meanings of civilization.

Conclusion:

The First World War was a watershed event in world history that transformed the global political and economic order in profound ways. It altered the balance of power among nations, changed the map of territories and peoples, reshaped the nature of international relations and cooperation, and challenged or inspired new ideologies and movements. The war also set the stage for further conflicts and crises in the 20th century such as the Second World War, the Cold War, decolonization, globalization, and terrorism.

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