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The Great Debate

Directions: As America teetered on the precipice of war, the country erupted in debate over entry or avoidance of war. Outline the two perspectives with ten pro war perspectives and ten anti war perspectives.

Pro War Perspective	Anti War Perspective

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Pro War Perspective	Anti War Perspective
Preparedness advocates believed that defending the country's security and borders outweighed other considerations.	Many feared that a large army would threaten American democracy and that an expanded arsenal would menace other countries.
Many Americans celebrated the economic opportunities the war presented including bankers, munition makers, and other domestic food and goods suppliers.	Some war opponents believed the greed of munitions makers, bankers, and others who stood to profit from war might draw Americans into an expanded conflict.
America had a duty to suppress autocratic governments like Germany because of the atrocities committed against other nations such as Belgium.	Peace activists, pacifists, and others dreaded the inevitable loss of lives and drain on the economy that going to war would bring.
Germany was a menace to the national safety of America and of all other countries with liberal systems of government.	American entry into the war on the side of the Allies was hypocritical as it could be asserted the United States was contributing to the same tyranny the Central Powers were accused of.
Unrestricted submarine warfare showed that the Germans had no respect for international law and were barbaric in their actions.	The United States was entering into a contract of war without any knowledge of the extent to which it was committing to the foreign policies of the Allies.
The Zimmermann Telegram sent on the part of the German government demonstrated an act of war against the government and people of the United States as it showed German designs for international dominance by promoting third-party attacks on America.	While America declared it was a war for democracy, if the Allies partitioned smaller nations, the United States would be party to autocratic peace.

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Pro War Perspective	Anti War Perspective
<p>Promoting democracy worldwide as opposed to the prevailing monarchies of the time would fundamentally reshape the political landscapes of Europe.</p>	<p>Peace advocates believed military preparations would create an international atmosphere of rivalry, suspicion, and increased taxation.</p>
<p>America had no selfish ends to serve. It desired no conquest, no dominion. It saw no indemnities for itself, no material compensation for the sacrifices it would freely make.</p>	<p>Mounting fears over a growing U.S. armed forces bringing a militarized culture to the United States was perceived by some as a threat to American values.</p>
<p>Warfare against mankind meant that the United States could not choose the path of submission and suffer or ignore the violations of the most sacred rights of the nation and its people.</p>	<p>Pacifists encouraged President Wilson to concentrate his efforts on the opportunity to establish permanent peace that the world crisis offered rather than escalate international tensions.</p>
<p>President Wilson suggested that the world must be made safe for democracy stating “peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty, tested through war.”</p>	<p>Many in the radical labor movement argued that the war was not being waged for democracy but for domination over the capitalist system built on the backs of the laboring class.</p>
<p>Nationalists argued that every U.S. citizen must deny their ancestral European heritage and formally declare themselves American or be labeled a traitor.</p>	<p>America was a nation of immigrants with a large ethnic element of Germans, Irish and other minorities who railed against the war.</p>