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11 speakers (Theo Mayer, Mike Schuster, Ed Lengle, Indy Neidell, Announcer, Alexis Marion, Dan Dayton, Mike Mullen, Howard Schultz, David Pietrusza, Catherine Akey)

[0:00:09]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to World War I Centennial News, episode number 77. It's about World War I then. What was happening a hundred years ago this week and it's also about World War I now, news and updates about the centennial and the commemoration. This week, we're going to highlight a special and exclusive segment featuring Howard Schultz, who transformed a small retail chain of coffee stores into a global juggernaut called Starbucks. Mr. Schultz and others tell us why it's imperative that we support and donate to the National World War I Memorial in Washington DC. Also this week, Mike Schuster, takes a look at German morale a hundred years ago on the western front. Ed Lengle tells the little known story about the US Army at Hill 204 near Belleau Wood. Author, David Pietrusza in a fascinating look at a larger than life character, President Theodore Roosevelt during World War I. Catherine Akey highlights the commemoration of World War I in social media and a lot more on World War I Centennial News, a weekly podcast brought to you by the US World War I Centennial Commission, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library and the Starr Foundation. I'm Theo Mayer, the chief technologist for the commission and your host. Welcome to the show. Welcome to our history segment. What was happening a hundred years ago this week and the war that changed the world. Now, this week, we're gonna shift our focus away from the events on the western front near Paris and Flanders, and head to the northern part of Italy in the forbidden and craggy Dolomite Mountains that separate Italy and Austria. Nine months earlier, in late October of 1917 during the Battle of Caporetto, a disastrous event for the Italians, the Germans and Austrian forces drove the Italians back to a river named, Piave, just a short 30 kilometers north of Venice. Now, the human cost of that campaign is actually hard to wrap your head around. The Italian Army lost 700,000 men at Caporetto. Now, that includes 40,000 men killed or wounded, 280,000 men captured by the enemy and an equally staggering 350,000 men who simply deserted and went home. Now, with that as a background, let's jump into our centennial time machine and go back a hundred years ago this week to look at a very different series of events as they unfold in the war that changed the world. It's the third week of June and on June 16, 1918, the second battle of the Piave River begins on the Italian front. Germany is demanding that the Austro-Hungarians knock the Italians out of the war. After Caporetto, maybe they figured that would be cinch but it doesn't work out that way. The Italians are pretty much hunkered down in a defensive posture with the Piave River in front of them. Now, they thought through what happened back in October and they've decided that they needed to change some of their basic organization and tactics to be more fluid. Now, who knows? Maybe somebody gave them a copy of Sun Tzu's famous The Art of War. I'm just kidding. Importantly, the Italians have been bolstered by French and British troops and critically they've received new shipment of arms from Allied ammunition factories. This offensive being planned by the Austro-Hungarian armies pretty much being forced on the Austrian emperor, Karl by the German high command and being increasingly dependent on Germany, he complies but reportedly with some very serious misgivings. In contrast to the Italians, his army is a much worse shape than it was nine months earlier. Supplies are low and equally important, the troop morale is low. The offensive starts against the bulked up forces against the bulked up forces across on the other side of the river. As the Austrians get across the bridges, bombardments by the Allies destroyed most of them. Now, a lot happens in the battle but in overview with the bridges knocked out, the Austrians are cut off from resupply from the rear and maybe worse. With the snow melts, swollen river behind them, they have no place to retreat to. An estimated 20,000 Austrians soldiers drown trying to get back across the river. The Allied forces are able to block the attack and then counterattack the trapped Austrian armies flank. By the time it's all over, a total of 150,000 Austro-Hungarians are dead or wounded. I have to say that the World War I numbers are constantly just staggering my comprehension. After the Austrian retreat, the Italian commanding General Armando Diaz is pressed by the allies and in particular by France's General Ferdinand Foch to chase down the Austrians for a decisive victory over the empire but Diaz, he gets the same tactic that created his effective defense also prevents an immediate offense. The flexible Italian formations can't quickly be coordinated into a decisive assault. Besides, he reasons that once the Italians cross over the river to the East, they'll have to face the same logistic problems as the Austrians when they came over to the west. He'd be cutoff from resupply and retreat back across the river might be impossible. Maybe he did read Sun Tzu. In any case, this is a total reversal from Caporetto and a watershed moment for the Austro-Hungarian empire. The great defeat here signals the end of its army as a fighting force and the beginning of an internal political collapse of the empire itself which happens just a few months later. Coming back from Northern Italy, we return to the Western Front near Paris with Mike Schuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for the Great War Project blog. Mike, your post this week talks about a turning tide on the western front as well. It seems like things are starting to fray a bit for Germany as they also struggle running low on resources and morale aren't they?

[0:06:58]

Mike Schuster: That's right, Theo. The headline reads on western front now a flood of Americans, balanced of forces changed for good, blame the pacifist and shirkers. This is special to the Great War Project. On the western front, a century ago, the tide is beginning to turn away from Germany and in favor of the Allies, France, Britain and now most importantly, the United States, so writes one German officer in his diary the threat of an American Army gathers like a thunder cloud and every week brings that threat closer according to historian, Adam Hochschild. He adds, "The brief window of opportunity for a decisive German victory was starting to close. As the Germans probe deeper into France, the very speed of their advance," writes Hochschild. Add close to the problem that commanders had not anticipated. Short of food for months consuming a diet of turnips and horse meat, exhausted German troops kept halting against orders to gorge on tempting supplies of captured French wine, British rum, canned beef, bread, jam and biscuits left by the retreating allies. It was a bad blow to the German morale to see how well fed the Allies were especially after soldiers had been repeatedly told that the U-boat campaign had left the enemy starving. The fight for Belleau Wood is a victory for the allies in one of the first large scale battles for the Americans and now number hundred of thousands of fresh deployed troops in Northern France. The balance of forces on the western front was not changed for good. In early June writes historian, Martin Gilbert, "French code breakers do just that. They break the German codes and this become aware of imminent German plans to launch an attack on the French sector of the western front. When the German defensive comes, the French are prepared." This precious intelligence reports Gilbert, enabled the French to make diligent preparations. German troops were once more only 45 miles from Paris on July 6th a century ago, the day before the new German assault, British forces surprised the Germans in an effective assault of their own including the massive use of aircraft. Gilbert writes, "Above the warring armies, a thousand British and French air craft were in continuous fierce conflict." At midnight on July 7th, the Germans unleashed their offensive with a massive artillery of bombardment a million rounds of mustard gas, 15,000 tons of gas shells. It does not look good for the French and General Pershing tells the French prime minister so but Pershing says, "It may not encouraging just now but we are certain to win in the end." A fascinating story later that summer illustrates just how weary the Germans had become. A joint French American attach pushed the Germans back in a series of battles, writes historian, Adam Hochschild. "During 1, a corporal Adolf Hitler got into a fist fight with the newly arrived soldier who insisted it was foolish to keep fighting." According to a man in his unit, Hitler became furious and shouted in a terrible voice, the pacifist and shirkers were losing the war, just a glimpse into how one more begets another and that's the news for this week from the Great War Project.

[0:10:14]

Theo Mayer: Thank you, Mike. Mike Schuster is the curator for the Great War Project blog. The link to his post is in the podcast notes. That leads to another segment of America Emerges: Military Stories from World War I with Dr. Edward Lengle. Last week, our focus was on the Battle of Belleau Wood and the marines that led the fight there. However, during our interview with author, Alan Axelrod, we talked about the fact that the US army played a big role, not just the marines which is a perfect lead in for this week as Ed Lengle tells us the mostly untold story of the US Army's assault on Hill 204. Ed.

[0:10:57]

Ed Lengle: The US Marines carried the brunt of the fighting at Belleau Wood just to the east of those terrible woods however the US Army's 30th regiment took part in the conquest of German Hill 204. Although forgotten today, this was an important and tactically brilliant operation in which French and American soldiers fought side by side. Its results raised the question of whether the Marine assault on Belleau Wood was necessary or had to be so bloody. Hill 204 was probably a prime real estate. Captured by the Germans in May 1918, it overlooked Chateau-Thierry to the east and positions held by the US 2nd Division to the west. German machine guns firing from Hill 204 had inflicted heavy casualties on the marines on June 6th, the first day of the Battle of Belleau Wood. Without capturing Hill 204, the Americans could not hope to advance any further in this sector. Tactically in fact, Hill 204 was more important than Belleau Wood. Hill 204 wooded at the top and had partially open slopes. It was rough terrain, held in strength by the German 231st Division. The French 10th Colonial Division determined to drive out the Germans with help from the US 3rd Division's 30th Infantry Regiment. On the night of June 5th to 6th, just as the marines prepared to attack Belleau Wood, a pioneer company of the 30th regiment worked with French colonial infantry to capture the village of Monneaux right next to Hill 204. Next, instead of assaulting Hill 204 frontally, French and American infantry began infiltrating up the hillside. Moving carefully forward, when possible under cover of night, they would occupy a little territory and then dig pits for carefully sited machine guns. Then they waited for the enemy to attack. When the German infantry came to root out the machine gun nests, the French and Americans opened fire, shot them down, and drove them back. The next night, the American and French soldiers would move uphill a little further, set up new machine gun pits, and wait for the enemy to attack. The Germans always did, and were always driven back. By mid-June, while the Marines were still fighting savagely for Belleau Wood, the French Colonials and U.S. Army had largely captured Hill 204, taking light casualties and essentially destroying the German 231st Division. The Marines learned vital lessons at Belleau Wood, but the Marine Brigade was largely destroyed in the process. The U.S. Army's 30th Regiment, meanwhile, learned equally vital lessons on Hill 204, and most of its officers and men lived to share those lessons. Their willingness to take instruction from cautious but smart French officers was vital. One wonders what would have happened if the Marines had used the same tactics, with French cooperation, at Belleau Wood.

[0:13:47]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Edward Lengel is an American military historian and our segment host for America Emerges: Military Stories from World War I. We put a link on the podcast notes for Ed's post and his author's website. As a follow up to our previous week's stories about submarines in World War I and the attacks along the eastern seaboard, our friends at the Great War Channel on YouTube posted a really interesting episode this week about submarine attacks on the US coast. Following is host Indy Neidell with a short clip from the episode entitled The Only German Submarine Attack on the US Shores in World War I.

[0:14:27]

Indy Neidell: An HS1L flying boat piloted by Ensign Eric Lingard and Ensign Edward Shields and with chief special mechanic Edward Howard in the bomber seat took off from the station and headed toward the action. They would participate in the first and only naval air action to occur in the American theater of World War I in the Western Atlantic. The HS1L carried only Mark 4 bomb which meant there was no room for error in this era of inaccurate bomb sites. If the bomb came near the submarine and exploded, there was no doubt the sub would be at least severely damaged if not completely destroyed. By the time Lingard and his crew arrived over the scene, the U-156 has been bombarding the boats offshore for about half an hour. In that time the beach had become crowded with hundreds if not thousands of beach goers who had come out of their summer cottages to witness the German navy use a tug a few barges as target practice just two to three miles from land. That must have been absolutely a staggering site to see. These same witnesses were also about view the fight between the American airmen and the U-156. I don't know if there's a movie about this. There has to be a movie about this.

[0:15:44]

Theo Mayer: To watch the whole episode, search for the Great War Channel in YouTube or follow the link in the podcast notes. Now it's time to fast forward into the present with World War I Centennial News now. This part of the podcast focuses on now and how we're commemorating the Centennial of World War I. In a special and exclusive segment on the World War I Centennial News podcast we're gonna take you to a unique event held this past Monday on June 18th aboard the USS Intrepid, the centerpiece of New York's remarkable Intrepid Sea and Air Space Museum. There, the US World War I Centennial Commission hosted a memorable evening on behalf of the national World War I memorial in Washington DC. After a special welcome by the Intrepid's Alexis Marion, VP of institutional advancement and some remarks by our own Dan Dayton. Admiral Michael Mullen, the 17th chairman of the joint chiefs of staff took the stage to introduce the keynote speaker, Howard Schultz, who transformed a small retail chain of coffee stores into a global juggernaut called Starbucks. Mt. Schultz, a very committed supporter of veterans. Also, created quite a buzz recently when he announced that he's stepping down as an executive chairman and as a member of the company's board of directors, effective June 26, 2018. Take a listen to this exclusive report on World War I Centennial News as Mr. Schultz and the others explain why we need to support and donate to build our national World War I memorial in the nation's capital.

[0:17:34]

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome to the stage, the vice president of institutional advancement for the Intrepid Air, Sea, and Space Museum, Ms. Alexis Marion

[0:17:50]

Alexis Marion: Good evening. On behalf of our entire staff and the board of trustees, it is an honor to host this important World War I Centennial Commission event and to welcome you to the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum, I realized that you're here as part of an effort when we wholeheartedly support to commemorate the heroes of the great war, World War I while this great ship, the USS Intrepid was commissioned 75 years ago during World War II. It is the fitting venue to reflect upon the sacrifices that our nation service men and women have made and continue to make each and every day. Thank you to the World War I Centennial Commission for your important work and for choosing Intrepid for this meaningful event tonight.

[0:18:37]

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome to the stage, the executive director of the World War I Centennial Commission and president of the US Foundation for the Commemoration of the World Wars retired navy captain Dan Dayton

[0:18:55]

Dan Dayton: One hundred years ago, 4.7 million American families sent their sons and daughters off to fight a war and what would turn out to be the war that changed the world as our chair, Terry Hamby is fond of saying they were sent in to battle to offer their lives in defense of freedom in places they have never seen and for people they had never met. More than two million Americans fought on the western front to help win the Great War for the Allied powers and to set the stage for the American century. Our nation and our world would never, ever, again be the

same. Shocking to so many, as you saw on the video is the fact that there's no national World War I memorial in Washington so the capstone effort for the commission is to create one, to take its rightful place among the other Great War memorials in our nation's capital and we need the help of all Americans to get it done. It will take about \$42 millions and there's no taxpayer dollars in the construction. I'm pleased to report that thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors, we've raised more than 20 million to date and the momentum is accelerating as you can tell. Tonight is a very special night for us. We're here to celebrate the great work that's been accomplished to thank those who have answered the call to share our exciting plans for the memorial and for us to ask you to consider coming aboard to help in any way you can. America is not a country who forgets its vets ever. It's just not who we are as Americans. Who we are as Americans is exemplified by our next two speakers. One has been called a new model for military officers and a case study in 21st century leadership. The other a Brooklyn native followed his vision and built a company that has touched nearly everyone on the planet. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming our two very special guests, Admiral Mike Mullen and Mr. Howard Schultz.

[0:21:10]

Mike Mullen: Someone asked me earlier what I'm doing with my life now that I've retired, and I get asked to do a lot of things. Dan came to see me 18 months ago, two years ago, 18 months ago and presented the case for the memorial and asked me if I'd help. I was incredibly impressed with him and his organization in a town that doesn't make much a reality anymore in Washington. If you've been involved in trying to establish memorials in that town, every bit is tough and bureaucratic is anything that we do. Dan, your leadership has been particularly important and I'm really grateful for that so thanks. It does take resources to do something like this and it takes very generous for organizations, companies and individuals to make something like this happen. As Dan said, we are not a country that forgets and yet in World War I, we lost 116,000 Americans and we have virtually forgotten. It is the charge quite frankly of this memorial to make sure that that ends, that those 116,000 that sacrificed so much and the millions of Americans that those losses affected are not forgotten and that we never, ever forget their sacrifice. I've talked about two things. One is this theme of disconnect between the American military and our people and the other is the losses that occur, and the sacrifices which are so unique. My Howard Schultz story doesn't go back that long, certainly not as long as he's been working on putting Starbucks on the map. It goes back not too long after I retired. He had been brought to my attention by Bob Gates who was on his board, who I was very close to and Pete Chiarelli who was the vice chief of the army and both Pete and Bob said, "This is somebody you need to meet because he does care about our military." In his book, one of the things that I admired the most about the book is Howard admitted that he knew very little about our military but Howard is different in that regard because when he sees a problem and he recognizes a fault, he works hard to fix it and so he agreed to go and meet our people and he would tell you more eloquently than I of the people that he met the quality that they were which we knew and are and the difference that they make. He subsequently wrote a book about this, about 10 individuals that he had met some in theater, some back here who are extraordinary individuals, serving their country, not just in the military but also America. As he is one to do, he had set a goal to hire 10,000 veterans so he committed to hiring veterans which is a hugely critical issue for all of us. There are leaders from many veterans organizations here tonight and I want to thank you for what you do as well but Howard did that and he set an example, and I know I've spent enough time with him to know how much he cares about our military and our veterans and what a difference he's made in their lives which is what makes it pretty easy for me when asked to come up and say a few words about Howard. It was an easy yes because he's such a special man so Howard I actually came up to say as publicly as I can. Thank you. Thanks for all you've done for our men and women in uniform, for our veterans, whatever you choose to do in the next chapter of your life. I know that our citizens, our country and our world is gonna be better for it. Ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome an extraordinary American, Mr. Howard Schultz.

[0:25:30]

Howard Schultz: Thank you very much. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the World War I Centennial Commission for hosting this event and in particular for its effort to establish a national memorial commemorating the service and sacrifice of those who served in the First World War. This acknowledgement is obviously long overdue. Our nation honors the veterans of every major world war of the 20th century with a national memorial in Washington DC. There's one glaring exception the veterans of World War I. The last of the doughboys is gone but what they did, the courage they showed, the quiet dignity they possess, the world they created can never be forgotten and thanks to the efforts of the World War I Centennial Commission what these men and women did a century ago will finally be remembered and forever honored as part of the great American story. When World War I veterans finally get the memorial they deserve, they'll move from a few pages in history to a central place in the nation's capital. Now, World War I was one of the most consequential events of the 20th century. It was a conflict of unparalleled ferocity. It resulted in the collapse of several empires and a devastated continent. It was the first modern war and it ushered in the modern world. America was neutral when the war began but when peace was declared and our army suffered 375,000 casualties and more than 116,000 deaths. That casualty rate was almost doubled in World War II. In fact, Americans died on the western front, men and women who died almost twice that of the Vietnam and Korean War. World War I was America's first major conflict fought in foreign soil. For the first time the United States stood up on the world stage for the principals of liberty and self-determination. We all know now it would not be the last time. As a

result of World War I, the 20th century became the American century. It's been said that the revolution America became a nation, that in the civil war, America became a United Nation and in the Great War, America became a world nation. We've been a world nation ever since. We've learned sometimes the hard way that the United States can't be indifferent to conflicts and disorders in the world beyond our shores. However, we need to lead in the world with wisdom and with modesty. In World War I, we fought in common cause side by side with the British, with the French and yes with the Canadians. They were our allies then and they are certainly our allies now. World War I not only changed the role of America in the world, it changed the meaning of America. America reshaped the course of the war and the war also reshaped America. The United States emerged as the strongest economy in the world and we emerged as a country ready for change. The war became a defining moment for women who's the first war in which American military women had served stateside and overseas. Their participation and sacrifice paved the way to the acceptance of women in the armed forces. Because so many men went off to war, women finally got the jobs they rightfully deserve, and guess what, they did a remarkable job. It's no accident that women secured the right to vote just two year after the great war ended. Here's something to listen to especially when you think about what's going on in the southern border. Immigrants, yes, immigrants also made vital contributions to the war effort. This number shocked me when I first heard it. 800,000 immigrants or first generation Americans served in the armed forces. During the war, American men between ages of 18 and 45 were required to register the draft. This included non-citizen residents who had filed a declaration of intent to become a citizen but this is what really got me. Immigrants who had not yet filed such a declaration were exempt from the draft but thousands, thousands of them volunteered to serve and they did so with distinction and think about that in relationship to what's going on as we speak in the southern border of the United States of America. More than 350,000 African-American soldiers who served with the American expeditionary forces on the western front, despite facing racially segregated units and housing as well as lower pay. The rapid expansion of industry in the north that was a result of the war offered a better life to blacks. The First World War help contribute to the great migration that fundamentally recast the American landscape that inspired African-Americans who returned home from the war to oppose Jim Crow laws in the south and it began to accelerate the Civil Rights movement. It was difficult for America to fight for democracy abroad while at the same time denying it to fellow citizens at home. There's always a danger when war is conducted on a colossal scale to forget individual stories of courage and resilience. The fact is wars are not won by nation so much as they are by individuals who one by one fight on behalf of the country. Here's an amazing story, remarkable story, probably one of thousands that occurred during World War I that I want to share with you. In 1917, Henry Johnson all five-foot four inches and 130 pounds of them enlisted in the all black 15th New York National Guard Regiment. Poorly trained, the unit was assigned to menial task. You can just imagine unloading ships, digging the trench until they were sent to France. There the men were lent to the French 4th Army which was short on troops. The unit became known famously as the Harlem Hellfighters. They came home as one of the most decorated units in the entire US Army. They showed the world and America itself the skill and bravery of black soldiers. On May 4th, 1918, Henry Johnson found himself manning a listening post with another private, Needham Roberts. As the Germans attacked, Johnson began tossing grenades at them. When he ran out of grenades, he began firing his rifle but it jammed on him. As the Germans moved in on Johnson and Roberts, Private Johnson used his rifle as a club literally until the butt of his rifle began to splinter. When he saw German's attempting to take Roberts prisoner he charged them with the only weapon he had left which was simply a bolo knife. Henry Johnson, although severely wounded kept fighting until French and American troops arrive. When they did, he literally collapsed. The result of 21 wounds he had sustained in the fight. Private Henry Johnson was awarded France's highest award for valor given to Allied soldiers. President Teddy Roosevelt called Johnson one of the five bravest Americans to serve in the First World War. He was the epitome of the American soldier but this is what really is so unfortunate about this whole story and why we're here today because it took decades for him to probably be honored by his country. It wasn't until 1996, that President Clinton awarded Johnson posthumously a Purple Heart and finally president Obama in 2015 awarded Johnson the congressional medal of honor. A hundred years is too long to wait. This is a type of person who fought on behalf of America and its ideals in World War I despite having to live under segregation and injustice. The United States recognized the bravery and contributions of Henry Johnson far later than it should have just as we have collectively failed to fully recognize the bravery and contribution to those Americans white and black who served alongside Private Johnson but that collective failure can finally be undone. Those that deserve recognition and honor can finally receive it and each of you here this evening can help make that happen. The men and women of World War I were by and large people who were self-reliant, and modest. It was a generation that did not call much attention to itself. These are admirable human qualities especially in the age of vanity and self-indulgence and it explains why returning veterans did not push for a national memorial. From their perspective, they did their duty and that's what citizens did. They did their duty, but I have a much different view and by your presence here tonight, I know that you do as well. These gallant individuals shouldn't be denied of placing the American story because of their humility and we're foolish if we continue to deny ourselves access to their inspiring stories. General John J. Pershing, commander of the American expeditionary force said time will not dim the glory of their deeds but in fact sadly time did dim the glory of their deeds. In building a national memorial we'll reacquaint ourselves with some of the most remarkable accomplishments in American history building this national memorial, will ensure we remember their achievements. It will honor the heroes finally of the Great War. It will inform this and future generations about the causes and consequences of the conflict to which we all can learn and it will commemorate an epic conflict, the first global war in history a century after

it ended. The sacrifices of the doughboys will finally have a lasting physical presence in the nation's capital. Thank you very much.

[0:36:59]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to the Historian Corner. Now, we've talked a lot about the many amazing men and women of this amazing period in history and today we're gonna focus on a historical figure whose name we all know. A really interesting man and one of the biggest personalities of the turn of the century. The man who was president of the United States from 1901 to 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt. With us is historian, David Pietrusza who's here to help us understand the man and his role leading up to and during the war that changed the world. David, thank you for joining us today.

[0:37:38]

David Pietrusza: Thank you.

[0:37:39]

Theo Mayer: Let me start by briefly asking to describe Roosevelt's two terms ending five years before the war broke out so we have some context.

[0:37:49]

David Pietrusza: They're just incredibly energetic. TR just exhaust the American public and observers of his administration at himself. If he's not busting trust, he's creating national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, passing a pure food and drug act, regulating the railroads and their rates, creating the Panama Canal, ceasing that land from Colombia, circumventing congress, getting the job done by hook or crook, resolving the Russo-Japanese war and winning the Nobel Peace Prize and sending the Great White Fleet around the world. He's just so busy all the time and when he's not doing that, he's reading a book a day and raising a brood of about five children, running all over Washington, riding horses and forwarding the Rock Creek. Just really fascinating. The American public, the American media like no president had in a very long time, maybe if ever.

[0:38:44]

Theo Mayer: Pretty outspoken as well and as America was not joining the war, and as the election of '16 happened, he was pretty outspoken about that, wasn't he?

[0:38:54]

David Pietrusza: At first, oddly enough, he's quite circumspect. When the Germans invade Belgium, he sounds almost Wilsonian about, "Well, the German have to do what they have to do. Nations have to do that," but then, particularly when the Lusitania is sunk, he is absolutely outraged and he verbally declares war on Germany and on the Wilson administration which he thinks is not doing enough, not being tough enough with Germany and not preparing for a war. If war comes, you should be prepared to fight it the old speak softly and carry a big stick.

[0:39:32]

Theo Mayer: He actually campaigned to become the general of the armies during all this when we finally declared war, didn't he?

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David Pietrusza: Not to be the general of the armies. Remember he has some perspective. His ego has its limits. He is known after leaving the presidency as Col. Roosevelt so he wants to lead a division of volunteers and Woodrow Wilson wisely says, "No. TR is blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, 50-ish, overweight and seriously insubordinate." Afterwards he's complaining that he cannot go over to France and says, "All I was asking was permission to go over and die." Pretty heavy stuff but the person who respond to him which is probably says, "Did you make that perfectly clear to the president, Mr. Roosevelt?"

[0:40:25]

Theo Mayer: Dark humor but really funny. If Roosevelt were to describe Wilson in one word, what word do you think he'd use?

[0:40:32]

David Pietrusza: Skunk, and he did, okay? Two words, Byzantine Logothete which I'm not sure what that means but it doesn't sound good. He just regards him as a liar, a weakling, an all around scoundrel and downright evil. TR really cannot stand the guy.

[0:40:56]

Theo Mayer: Okay. The other way around. If Wilson were to describe Roosevelt in a word or a couple of words what do you suppose he'd say?

[0:41:03]

David Pietrusza: Oddly enough charming. He kills them maybe not with kindness but he kills them with silence. He knows when not to respond. He knows that TR has this attraction which he creates with the American people at an emotional level, Woodrow Wilson creates that on an intellectual level and it's not the same thing.

[0:41:24]

Theo Mayer: What's the most important thing we should remember about Teddy Roosevelt regarding World War I?

[0:41:28]

David Pietrusza: Teddy Roosevelt is really a war lover and this is not to be admired. In the 1890 he doesn't care who we go to war against. He just wants us to get involved in a rumble but he is right about preparedness, the soldiers are training with broomsticks on Governors Island in New York City. We have to rely on the British for tanks and on the French for airplanes, but there's a reason why we don't get to make that big push against the Germans for a very long time after we'd become involved in the war.

[0:42:02]

Theo Mayer: Now, Teddy Roosevelt really gave a lot to World War I in a personal way. Can you talk about that a bit?

[0:42:09]

David Pietrusza: Well, he got his war and he paid his price. He was not able to go over to France but one of his daughters went over as a nurse. Four of his sons went over. Kermit originally went to Mesopotamia with the British army. Ted Jr. Is seriously wounded in France. Archie is seriously wounded. He's held together by scotch tape at the end of the war and TR's youngest son, most beloved son, Quentin volunteer for the army, air corps and on his second combat mission, he takes a German, pull it right between the eyes, TR is of course really saddened by the eyes, grief stricken. He gets the news. It's all stiff upper lip because TR is a real 19th century kind of guy but he walks alone to the stable where Quentin's old pony, a little Shetland, a miniature is and he wraps his arm around that pony and weeps uncontrollably.

[0:43:13]

Theo Mayer: Wow. Sorry. You got me there for a moment.

[0:43:16]

David Pietrusza: Gets me every time I tell it.

[0:43:18]

Theo Mayer: Well, David. Thank you for giving us these wonderful perspectives of really most colorful American.

[0:43:24]

David Pietrusza: Thank you.

[0:43:25]

Theo Mayer: David Pietrusza is a historian and author of several books including TR's last war, Theodore Roosevelt: The Great War and a Journey of Triumph and Tragedy. Learn more about Theodore Roosevelt during the war and David's book by following the links in the podcast notes. Now, for our weekly feature, Speaking World War I where we explore the words and phrases that are rooted in the war. Sometimes, things just go wrong and often when they do, we calmly take stock of the situation, correct the issue and move on. There are those times when things just seem to go totally out of control and that's our word for this week Speaking World War I, tailspin. According to Oxford English dictionary that's now a common word meaning and uncontrollable decent was first used by the Royal Navy Air Service's publication wing in 1916 to describe the action of an out of control aircraft that was literally spinning in the air. Quote, "The old hands will remember the clever flying of a certain officer named, Schneider and the tailspin that nearly cut short the career of this very daring pilot." The word entered the American vernacular shortly after the war's end. In 1921, the New York Times used it to illustrate the implosion of the German Monetary system, An immediate and disastrous consequence of the war. Quote, "The abnormal and paradoxical conditions resulting from the German mark's tailspin are strikingly illustrated." Tailspin, still here and with us, and this word for Speaking World War I. There are links for you in the podcast notes. Moving on to World War I Word Tech following up on our history segment. We're headed back to the high Dolomite Mountains where the Austro-Hungarians and the Italian armies fought bitterly during World War I and we're gonna look at the Ice City. Now, fighting in those craggy steep mountains created a set of logistical problems quite unlike those of the muddy, flooded field of Flanders or the chalky wooded terrain of Northern France. Italian and Austro-Hungarian soldiers needed to fight off hypothermia, frostbite and rock

slides as they fought each other from stalemate to bloody stalemate. The armies had to carry drag and hoist artillery way up the mountain to 12,000 feet and when the artillery was fired across the enemy, it didn't have mud to sink into as it exploded, instead it sheared off sharp rocks and sent stone shards flying in all directions. Now, way up in the rocky crags, digging trenches just wasn't an option so they went inside the mountain and underground. The Italians built outpost attached to the sheer cliff sides while the Austro-Hungarians took to tunneling deep inside of the mountains and the glaziers including what's known today as the Ice City. From the summer of 1916, Austrian lieutenant, Leo Handle led an effort to build tunnels deep into the glazier to avoid both Italian fire and the unstable environment of alpine warfare. After more than 10 months of hard work over seven miles of tunnels had been dug out of the ice providing room for more than 200 soldiers with barracks, kitchens, chapels and food stores for good measure. To help the soldiers navigate the endless web of tunnels, signs were made, the names of celebrities, world cities and fairytales. The Ice City worked and the Austrian casualties from Italian attacks and the harsh mountain weather dropped significantly but there were problems. Even though they built a very clever ventilation system, smoke from stoves and fires was always a problem. Also, glaziers aren't very stable so warping tunnels and new crevasses meant that you always had to watch yourself but it was apparently a heck a lot better than the Italian open air cliff forts. In the fall of 1917, the soldiers and the Ice City abandoned their project. Today, much of the cave structure has fallen apart but remnants can still be located in the summer time when they appear at the front of the glaziers, the snow melts. A museum dedicated to this grand architectural undertaking can be found at Rocca Pietore in the province of Belluno in Italy. The Ice City, an incredible feat of engineering and a time of desperation and this week's subject for World War I War Tech. Learn more by following the links in the podcast notes. That brings us to The Buzz. The centennial of World War I this week in social media with Catherine Akey. Catherine, what did you pick this week?

[0:48:30]

Catherine Akey: Hey, Theo. Just a few tidbits for The Buzz this week. We shared on our Facebook page an article from PBS. Their website for the Great War documentary has a lot of really excellent article expanding on topics they couldn't cover on such depth in the documentary itself. This article in particular is called Preludes of the Red Scare: The Espionage and Sedition Acts and goes further into the topic of the sedition act which we covered in the World War I then section of episodes 72 of our podcast. It's an in-depth look at the act and its effect on the 20th century, the set up of a pattern of fear and uncertainty that have repeated itself with the Red Scare, the Cold War and other conflicts. Also, this week, Sabin Howard, sculpture for the National World War I memorial in Washington DC had another great feature in another great publication. You can read the piece in Whitehot Magazine, a contemporary art periodical. It covers the legacy of war and memorial sculpture both classical and more contemporary, and lays out where Howard's peace for the memorial fits into that lineage. Finally, this week, you should take a moment to head over to our Instagram feed. You can find us at @ww1cc. We're gonna post a series of images complimenting the theme of this week show, The White War on the Italian Front. The fighting there high in the alps produce some of the most amazing photographs of the war and we wanted to share the dizzying reality of that front with you. You can also follow a link in the notes to watch a video from the Great War Channel. A few months ago, they went to the Dolomite Mountains and filmed on the battlefields. A link to our Instagram feed is in the podcast notes as well along with links to the other articles. That's it this week for The Buzz.

[0:50:18]

Theo Mayer: That also wraps up episode number 77 of the World War I Centennial News podcast. Thank you for listening. I want to let you know that starting this week, we have a new Twitter handle just for the podcast. You can make comments and even send us questions. Just tweet to @theww1podcast. That's the WW and the number 1 podcast. We also want to thank our show guests, Mike Schuster, curator for the Great War Project blog. Dr. Edward Lengle, military historian and author. David Pietrusza, historian and author. Catherine Akey, World War I photography specialist and the line producer for the podcast. Many thanks to Mac Nielsen, our hard working sound editor and World War I Centennial Commission intern, Jay L. Michaud, for his enthusiastic support. I'm Theo Mayer, your host. The US World War I Centennial Commission was created by Congress to honor, commemorate and educate about World War I. Our programs are to inspire a national conversation and awareness about World War I including this podcast. We're bringing the lesson of 100 years ago to today's teachers and to their classrooms. We're helping to restore World War I memorials and communities of all sizes across and of course we're building America's National World War I Memorial in Washington DC. We want to thank the commission's founding sponsor, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library as well as the Starr Foundation for their support. The podcast can be found on our website at ww1cc.org/cm including our interactive transcript ideal for students, teachers and writers. You'll find WW1 Centennial News in all the places to get your podcast and even using your smart speaker by saying play WW1 Centennial News podcast and you'll find the episodes on YouTube. The podcast Twitter handle is @theww1podcast. The commission's Twitter and Instagram handles are both @ww1cc and we're on Facebook at WW1 Centennial. Thank you for joining us and don't forget to share the stories that you're hearing here today about the war that changed the world. (singing) All right. Why we're World War I pilots very careful, never to fly with spiders? Well, because they only how to tailspin. So long.

[0:53:28]