Questions to ask when approaching propaganda:

- Who is making it?
- What is it?
- Where is it coming from?
- Why is it being produced

Morale

What is morale?

Morale is a complex web and there are highly diverse reasons for fighting. Memoirs and diaries illustrate the difficulty of pinpointing the main motivation for fighting. The things that motivate people to **endure** and those that motivate them to **fight** are subtly different.

What causes mutiny?

During the war, writing poetry and letters is cathartic and helps soldiers preserve their dignity and humanity but this does not necessarily mean they were accurate; complaints, for example, may be overplayed and these did not necessarily motivate soldiers to resist. British soldiers, contrary to what literature suggests, would only spend 3 to 7 days at the front before they were rotated through the system.

It is often military events that make the difference to long term conditions as these were out of the ordinary and thus act as the catalyst or trigger for many mutinies. The conditions and military events make soldiers question their motivation. Mutiny breaks out when:

1. Nivelle had pushed back Germans at Verdun and had a positive reputation
2. The Nivelle Offensive was pitched as the solution to the stalemate and trench warfare
Economic Organisation

Economic organisation at front

The German First Army outran its supply lines and its horses began to sicken when it pressed into north-eastern France in August 1914. The Army’s 84,000 horses, consuming 900 tons of fodder per day, had to eat green corn. The Schlieffen Plan was halted by age-old problems of food and fodder and their solution was little different; by the Battle of the Marne, this had changed. Early modern armies were small enough to ‘live off the land’ and could transport the ammunition they needed, with only besieging armies facing significant supply problems. Railways, by delivering massive supplies, inverted that advantage. The advancing German armies in summer 1914 and spring 1918 were crippled when they got 30 or 50 miles in front of their railheads.

By 1917, the British had perfected seaborne delivery of supplies to French ports and a train ferrying them to supply trains that took them to railheads, seven or eight miles from the front. A dense set of light railways then carried the supplies forward to artillery batteries or to be horse transported the last distance. There was also a double set of light railways parallel to the trenches and running the entire length of the western front, 3,000 to 6,000 yards behind the trenches, which enabled the redistribution of material across sectors. On a 12 mile sector of the active front during the Somme offensive, the daily delivery of supplies peaked at 20,000 tons and weekly expenditure of ammunition averaged 20,000 tons. Britain’s centrality to the world economy gave critical leverage in moving resources towards the Allies and away from the Central Powers, which was as important as the US’ giant productive capacity. This leveraged operated through imperial policies, finance and transport. The longer the war lasted, the greater the advantage conferred on the Allies by their power to harness the world economy to their own efforts. The proportion of overall supply...
devoted to the war was small in the less industrialised states. In France, it was amounted to just over a quarter in the last two years of the war; in Russia it reached a similar level in 1916 before the onset of the Revolution; and in Austria-Hungary, it started at a quarter in 1914 before tailing off to a fifth in 1916 and 1817. The Ottoman Empire saw government spending peak at 10% of 1913 national income in 1914/15 and 1915/16. By contrast, the proportion of supply allocated to war in the two more industrialised states, the UK and the US, was considerably higher, at around one-third in the last three war years.

**Raw materials** In 1915-1918, half of the French steel supply was imported from Britain and the US to make up for the loss of northern heavy industrial districts. Especially in 1917-18, Britain supplied France with ammunition and small arms but France became the Allies' leading arms producer and provided most of the equipment for the AEF in 1918. Britain was dependent on the US for iron, steel, shells and propellants at their peak in 1916, about 40% of British ammunition came from the US. Russia, due to difficulties of overseas transportation and finance, was proportionately less dependent on foreign procurement, but about 40% of Russia shells were imported in 1916. Inter-allied economic cooperation was at a lower level between Germany and Austria-Hungary; Austria-Hungary could add only 12% to her limited pig iron and steel output from German imports, little coal and little ammunition. In all belligerent states, except Turkey, the preference was for domestic supply; this military mobilisation on the front required economic mobilisation at home.

**Supply** War caused an economic decline in all belligerent countries, with the possible exception of the UK. This decline, affect industry and agriculture, was caused by supply shortages; the conscription of adult males created acute labour shortages, the organisation of pre-war production was disrupted and the necessary material inputs for production became scarce. All of the major European belligerents could increase supply by reducing exports relative to imports; unlike Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Britain and France were able to make up for these shortfalls from peacetime domestic output by increased net imports. The Central Powers were prevented from doing so by the British blockade, which limited trade to that with nearby neutrals. Russia was similarly affected by the German and Turkish blockade of the Baltic and Black seas.

**Borrowing** Foreign borrowing was a severe constraint on increased net imports. British official pressure on New York issuing houses, supported by J. P. Morgan prevented the Central Powers from raising more than small loans in the US. German imports were limited by the appetite of neutral suppliers for German trade credit. Britain lent a lot to the Entente, while France lent to Russia and Italy. Britain’s loan-raising abilities were limited and relations with US financial markets teetered on the brink of bankruptcy throughout American neutrality. Acquisition of dollars through the sale of US securities did not solve the problem, although Strachan argues that even if the US had remained neutral, ways would have been found to stave off British bankruptcy to avoid a US slump. American entry to the war brought significant, if not generous, lending to the allies. British powers of importing were strengthened of British shipping services, benefiting from a tenfold increase in freight rates. This centrality to the global economy through this enabled the easing of the British war effort.

**Financing** The supply given to the war effort depended partly on state power and partly on real purchasing power, which depended on taxation and borrowing. Since taxation made up less than 30% of revenue in all belligerents, borrowing was more crucial, making up more than 70% of wartime state revenue. Most nations borrowed from their own central banks (essentially printing money), which created inflation. In Britain, France and Germany, prices more than doubled in the war, while in Austria-Hungary, they multiplied six-fold by the end of 1916 and in Russia, three or four-fold.

Controlling the war economy comprised two important roles: the management of the supply of actual munitions and of the demands for labour, raw materials and intermediate goods.

**Management of Munitions**

Besides Britain, European great powers, with large standing armies, also had state arsenals; in Germany these supplied 40% of munitions, 75% in France and virtually all munitions in Russia at the outset of war and also benefited