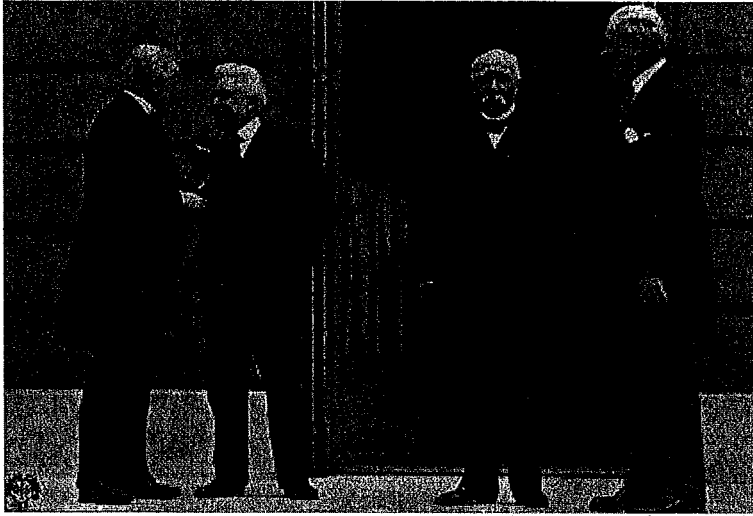


Treaty of Versailles



World War One ended at 11am on 11th November 1918. In 1919, Lloyd George of England, Orlando of Italy, Clemenceau of France and Woodrow Wilson from the US met to discuss how Germany was to be made to pay for the damage world war one had caused.

Wilson had devised a 14-point plan that he believed would bring stability to Europe.

Open Diplomacy - There should be no secret treaties between powers

Freedom of Navigation - Seas should be free in both peace and war

Free Trade - The barriers to trade between countries such as custom duties should be removed

Multilateral Disarmament - All countries should reduce their armed forces to the lowest possible levels

Colonies - People in European colonies should have a say in their future

Russia - Russia should be allowed to operate whatever government it wanted and that government should be accepted, supported and welcomed.

Belgium - Belgium should be evacuated and restored to the situation before the war.

France - should have Alsace-Lorraine and any lands taken away during the war restored.

Italy - The Italian border should be readjusted according to nationality

National Self - Determination - The national groups in Europe should, wherever possible, be given their independence.

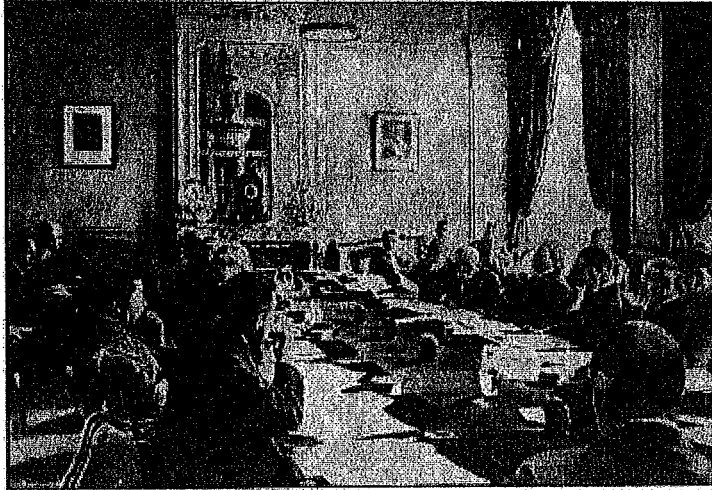
Romania, Montenegro and Serbia - Should be evacuated and Serbia should have an outlet to the sea

Turkey - The people of Turkey should have a say in their future

Poland - Poland should become an independent state with an outlet to the sea.

League of Nations - An assembly of all nations should be formed to protect world peace in the future.

Germany expected a treaty based on these fourteen points. However, negotiations between the 'big four' Lloyd George of England, Orlando of Italy, Clemenceau of France and Woodrow Wilson of America did not go smoothly. Wilson believed that his fourteen points was the only way to secure everlasting peace. The French however, wanted the defeated nations to be punished severely and believed Wilson's plan too lenient. Privately Lloyd George sided with Wilson although he was concerned about the threat from Communism, however, the British public, like Clemenceau, wanted Germany punished severely. Lloyd George knew that if he sided with Wilson he would lose the next election.



After prolonged discussion agreement was eventually reached and the Germans were summoned to Versailles to sign the treaty.

The final treaty bore little resemblance to Wilson's fourteen points:

Although Germany was not happy with the Treaty they had little choice but to sign. This cartoon clearly shows the situation Germany was in.



Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

There were a total of 440 clauses in the final treaty. The first 26 clauses dealt with the establishment of the League of Nations. The remaining 414 clauses spelled out Germany's punishment.

General Clauses

The establishment of the **League of Nations**

War Guilt clause – Germany to accept blame for starting the war.

Financial Clauses

Reparations – Germany was to pay for the damage caused by the war. The figure of £6,600 million was set some time after the signing of the treaty.

Military Clauses

Army – was to be reduced to 100,000 men and no tanks were allowed

Navy – Germany was only allowed 6 ships and no submarines

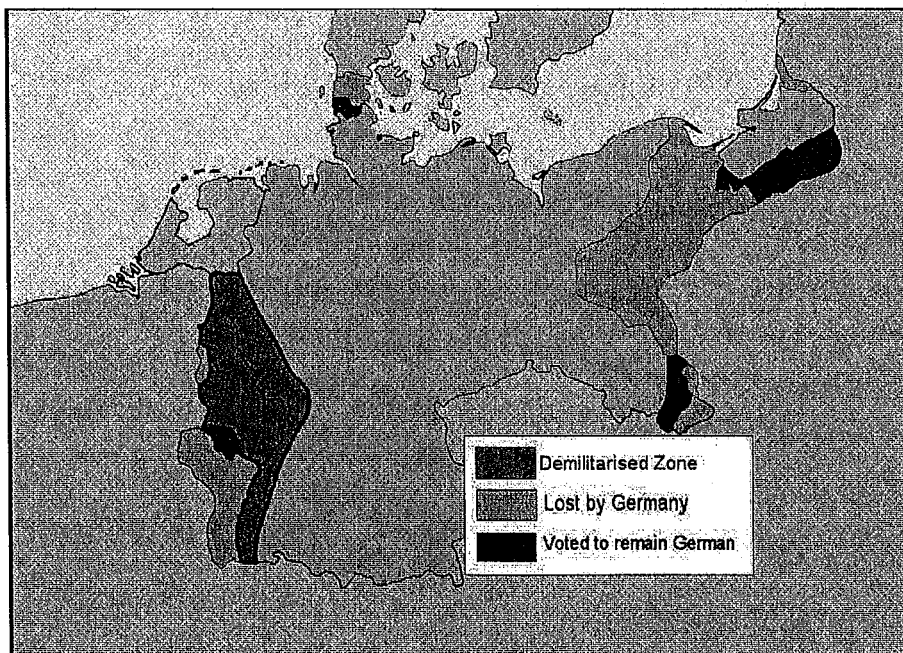
Airforce – Germany was not allowed an airforce

Rhineland – The Rhineland area was to be kept free of German military personnel and weapons

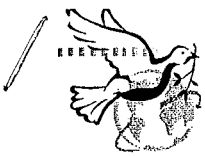
Territorial Clauses

Anschluss – Germany was not allowed to unite with Austria.

Land – Germany lost land to a number of other countries. Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France, Eupen and Malmedy were given to Belgium, North Schleswig was given to Denmark. Land was also taken from Germany and given to Czechoslovakia and Poland. The League of Nations took control of Germany's colonies.



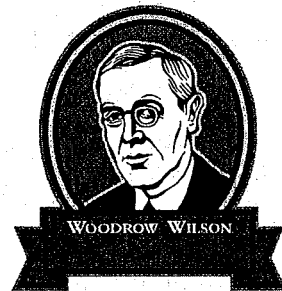
This map shows the areas that Germany lost following the Treaty of Versailles



The Treaty of Versailles

The First World War officially ended on 11th November 1918. On this day the Germans surrendered, and signed an ARMISTICE with the Allies (represented by Britain, France and USA). An armistice is an agreement to stop fighting and wait for a PEACE TREATY (a legal agreement to end a war) to be drawn up.

1. Name the Allied countries known as 'The Big Three' that fought against Germany during the First World War?



When the Germans signed the armistice, they believed that the peace treaty which would follow would be based on Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points. Wilson was the President of the USA, and his 14 Points were designed to treat Germany in a fair and democratic way. However, the other two Allied leaders, George Clemenceau of France, and David Lloyd George of Britain, had other ideas.

Clemenceau wanted Germany punished severely for her crimes, and made so weak that she could never make war again. Lloyd George was fearful however that a harsh treaty could lead to another war in future. The British public disagreed. They felt the same as Clemenceau, that Germany should be punished harshly for the damage that she had caused during war. In the end Lloyd George had to bow to public opinion and agreed with many of the demands of France (although in some cases, such as reparations, in a watered down form). Wilson's 14 Points were not put into practice, and Germany was forced to agree to the terms of a treaty, the Treaty of Versailles, drawn up by the Allies.

2. Explain the idea behind Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points.
3. Why do you think that Wilson's 14 point plan was not put into practice?
4. Using your own knowledge. Why might it have been a good idea to treat Germany more leniently when drawing up the peace treaty?



On 28th June 1919, German government officials were forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles. If they refused then Germany would face invasion. It was signed in the Palace of Versailles, near Paris. The German government did not want to sign the treaty because it was so harsh. They hated the fact that they had had no say in the Treaty negotiations, so they called it the **DIKTAT**, the '*dictated peace*'.

When the German public got to hear about the treaty they simply could not believe that their government had signed it. The public didn't understand, or could not believe, that the new government had no say during the negotiations. They felt the government had let them down badly, so many Germans referred to it as '**THE STAB IN THE BACK**'. The government had ended the war and given in to ally demands without a fight - surely the German Army could have fought on and eventually won the war! It was felt that the treaty dishonoured the soldiers and that the government had betrayed the people of Germany. In truth, many Germans never forgave the government for signing the treaty, and often referred to Weimar politicians as '**THE NOVEMBER CRIMINALS**'.

November
Criminal



5. Explain why the German government felt that they had to sign the Treaty of Versailles. How did the German public react to this?
6. Do you feel that the German public were justified in calling the members of the government 'criminals' who had 'stabbed' Germany in the back?

The Treaty of Versailles

Why did the Germans hate the Treaty of Versailles so much?

This is important to understand, because the way that the Germans reacted to the signing of the Treaty was a major factor in Hitler's rise to power.

In order to understand why the Germans hated the Treaty so much, we need to take a closer look at what some of the clauses within the treaty said.

1. **Germany had to accept total responsibility for starting the war.** This was called the 'War Guilt Clause', or Article 231.
2. **Germany had to pay £6,600 million to the Allies** to cover the damage it had caused during the war. This was a form of compensation known as reparations.
3. **Germany had to hand over 70,000 square kilometres of land to the Allies.** The allies shared this land out amongst countries within Europe. For example, Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France (the Germans had taken it off France in 1871), West Prussia and Posen were given to Poland, and Eupen and Malmedy were given to Belgium. This was supposed to make Germany weaker, and make other European countries stronger. This would help to prevent Germany invading its neighbours within Europe in future years.
4. **Germany had to hand over all its colonies to the Allies**
Colonies are areas of land that are governed by a Parent State although they are outside of that state – they are abroad. Germany's colonial Empire amounted to about one million square miles. One of the largest areas to be taken from Germany was in Africa. The Union of South Africa administered German South-West Africa. Britain, France and Belgium divided up the rest of the African land governed by Germany.
5. **The German armed forces were to be reduced greatly.** The Reichwehr (Army) were only allowed 100,000 men, and were not allowed to use conscription (forcing ordinary men to join the army for a period of time). The Navy was limited to 15,000 sailors.
6. **The German navy had to be reduced greatly.** They were only allowed to keep 6 battle ships. They were only allowed 15,000 men.
7. **The use and production of weaponry was limited.**

The Germans were not allowed an airforce or any submarines. The Navy was only allowed six battleships and the buying of any further war materials was banned.

8. **The Rhineland had to be occupied by Allied troops.**

This area bordered France and was meant to give the French greater security. The occupation was to last for fifteen years and no German troops were to be allowed into the area.

7. What impact would this type of treaty have on Germany?

Complete the table to show how you think the treaty would have affected Germany.

swarmed out of their trenches to launch a final assault against the Allies. Once again, the German people were assured that victory was near. But this was not to be, as a series of unexpected events would overtake them in the summer and fall of 1918.

How did the war end for Germany?

By July 1918, over a million U.S. soldiers had arrived to thwart the German advance. The German army suffered more than 600,000 casualties. German military leaders realized that their attempt to break through the Western Front and capture Paris would not succeed. Allied counterattacks made sizeable gains, and by mid-October the Germans withdrew from France and back across Belgium. They asked Wilson to bring about an armistice based on the Fourteen Points.

A war-exhausted Germany was also in the midst of a full-scale revolution. Hunger, economic shortages, and frustration with the policies of the kaiser led to riots in the streets and mutinies within the military. Facing social and political upheaval as well as imminent military defeat, German officials agreed to surrender, believing that Wilson's Fourteen Points would be the blueprint for the peace negotiations to be held in Paris. Until October 1918, ordinary German people, though weary of the war, had believed it could be won as their leaders had told them. The news of the

armistice, then, was surprising and confusing to many. Subsequent developments both in Germany and in their country's relations with the rest of Europe further dismayed the German public.

President Wilson's Fourteen Points January 8, 1918

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at... Diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view...
2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside of territorial waters, alike in peace and in war...
3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among the nations...
4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest points consistent with domestic safety...
5. A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims...
6. The evacuation of all Russian territory [a reference to those areas occupied by German troops]...
7. Belgium... must be evacuated and restored...
8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine... should be righted...
9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality...
10. The people of Austria-Hungary... should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development...
11. [the establishment of new states and the settlement of national boundaries in the Balkans]...
12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life... and autonomous development; and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations...
13. An independent Polish state should be erected... which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea...
14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small alike.