

SUBJECT: History

UNIT: Conflict & Tension –The Treaty of Versailles



Key facts/background

Armistice- Germany had no choice but to sign the armistice (end of war) in **November 1918**. Very unpopular in Germany. 'Big Three' had many different ideas about how to deal with Germany.

Paris Peace Conference Jan 1919: 'Big Three' met in Paris- Overall aim of lasting peace, punish the defeated, and redraw boundaries

Treaty of Versailles signed by Germany June 1919

TERMS:

LAND: Alsace-Lorraine returned to France, other land went to Belgium, Denmark and Lithuania. West Prussia, Posen and Upper Silesia given to Poland (a country erased from the map in 1795 and now recreated) League of Nations would control Saar in western Germany for 15 years but France controlled the coalfields. Germany lost all land taken from Russia. Germany was forbidden to unite with Austria. Germany lost all its colonies. In total they lost 10% of their land, all colonies, 16% of coalfields, 50% iron and steel industry and 12.5% of its population.

ARMS: German army limited to 100,000 soldiers. Conscription was banned. No tanks, submarines or military aircraft. Rhineland (near French border) became a demilitarised zone.

MONEY: Germany was made to pay for the war. Payments called reparations. It was set at £6.6 billion. Germany would pay a certain amount each year for 42 years.

BLAME: War Guilt Clause: Article 231- Germany had to accept full responsibility for the war. This humiliated Germany- most unpopular

OTHER: League of Nations formed no Anschluss

REACTION/IMPACT ON GERMANY:

ECONOMIC: Land/industrial areas caused economic problems for Germany- e.g Saar, wouldn't be able to pay reparations. Germany failed to pay reparation in 1922 and led to French invasion of Ruhr

SOCIAL- 13% land lost and 6 million no longer German. They felt vulnerable and they could be easily attacked by their enemy & military part of pride. People hated the war guilt clause and felt humiliated.

POLITICAL: Weimar government was seen as weak for signing the treaty- November Criminals. The German people thought they were winning the war so believed they had been stabbed in the back. DIKTAT- dictated peace. Political chaos in Germany with attempted revolutions. Led to rise of Nazis

USA WOODROW WILSON: Wanted a fair treaty

Fourteen Points Jan 1918-before the war had ended (list of principles to make sure war did not happen again)

These included- self determination no secret treaties, free trade, disarmament, Poland to become an independent state, France to regain Alsace-Lorraine and a League of Nations to be set up

WHY- USA not joined war until 1917- lost 100,000 men. USA not hugely affected by war

BRITAIN DAVID LLOYD GEORGE: Wanted a fair treaty but many British wanted Germany to be punished harshly

Wanted to get Germany's colonies to add to Empire But he had won an election with the promise that he would 'squeeze the German lemon until the pips squeak'.

He wanted to protect British naval and trade interests so disliked some of the Fourteen Points.

WHY-He wanted Germany and Britain to start trading again but weaken Germany's empire and navy.

FRANCE GEORGE CLEMENCEU: Wanted Germany to be punished harshly

Alsace Lorraine taken by Germany in 1870 to be given back

Germany to pay for French suffering (in the form of money and land)

Germany to be weakened

WHY- France invaded by Germany in 1870 & 1914. 2/3 French soldiers killed or injured in the war. War destroyed towns, farm land etc in France.

Aims of the Big 3

Reaction of the Big 3

What about the allies? After World War I, Germany's allies—Austria-Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory and was split into several new nations, the Ottoman Empire gave up its Arab lands to Britain and France, Bulgaria ceded land to Greece, Yugoslavia, and Romania, all had their armies drastically reduced (e.g., Austria to 30,000 men, Bulgaria to 20,000), were ordered to pay reparations (like Bulgaria's 2.25 billion francs), and were forced to accept blame for their role in the war.

	LIKED	DISLIKED
FRANCE 	Military restrictions on Germany Gained Alsace-Lorraine Reparations	Not harsh enough- wanted Rhineland taken away More reparations League of Nations Saar only gained for 15 years
BRITAIN 	Punishment of Germany Mandates of ex-German colonies Naval restriction	Too harsh- threat of war again Reparations too high so difficult to re-establish trade links
USA 	Creation of League of Nations- some of other 14 points followed e.g. Self determination in eastern Europe	Too harsh Reparations payments Failure to agree on disarmament Failure to implement self-determination throughout world

