

The Treaty of Versailles

June 1919



Woodrow Wilson USA



David Lloyd-George Great Britain

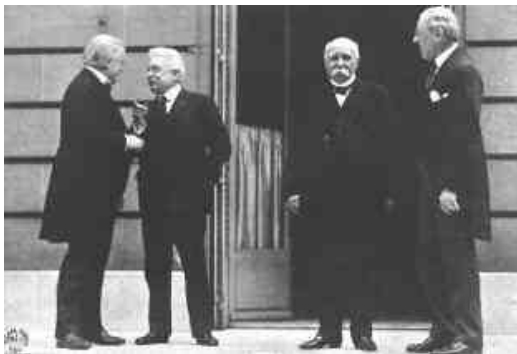


Georges Clemenceau France

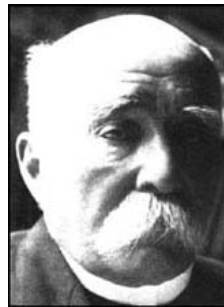
The Big Four



Vittorio Orlando Italy



The Big Four at Versailles in 1919



Clemenceau : The Tiger

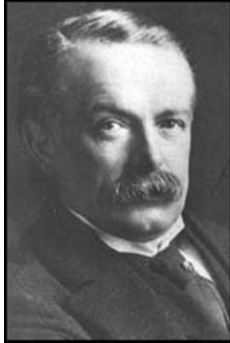
What did France want from the treaty?

Security

Revenge

Reparations

Clemenceau wanted to make sure that Germany could not invade France in the future. He was determined that Germany should be made to pay for the damage that had been caused in northern France by the invading German armies.



David Lloyd-George

What did Britain Want?

In public Lloyd-George said he wanted to punish the Germans. The British public was very anti-German at the end of the war.

In private he realised that Britain needed Germany to recover because she was an important trading partner.

He was also worried about the "disease from the east", communism. The Russian government had been overthrown by a communist revolution in 1917. Lloyd-George believed that the spread of communism had to be stopped. A strong Germany would be a barrier against it.



Woodrow Wilson

What did America Want?

Woodrow Wilson wanted the treaty to be based on his **Fourteen Points**

He believed Germany should be punished but not severely. He wanted a just settlement that would not leave Germany feeling resentful

Wilson wanted to set up an international organisation called **The League of Nations** which would settle disputes

The American public did not support him. They were fed up with involvement in European affairs. The USA became more **isolationist**.

What were the terms of the Treaty of Versailles?

To do with Germany's armed forces :

The German army was to be reduced to 100,000 men. It was not allowed to have tanks.

Germany was not allowed an airforce

The area known as the Rhineland was to be de-militarised

The Allies were to occupy the west bank of the Rhine for fifteen years

The German navy was to have no submarines or large battle-ships



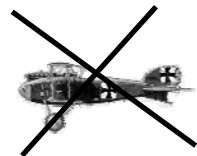
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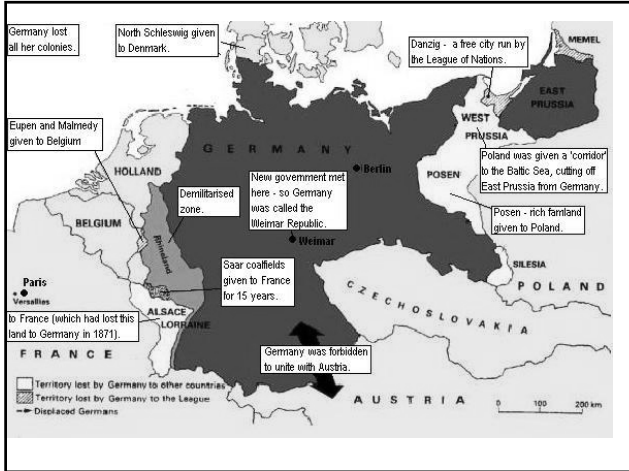


De-militarised





The Military Clauses






Territorial Losses

Germany lost ALL of her overseas colonies





Alsace-Lorraine was given to France

Eupen and Malmedy were given to Belgium





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North-Schleswig was given to Denmark






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Posen was given to Poland so that she would have access to the Baltic Sea. This area became known as the Polish Corridor. It meant that East Prussia was cut off from the rest of Germany.










The Rhineland was to be demilitarized

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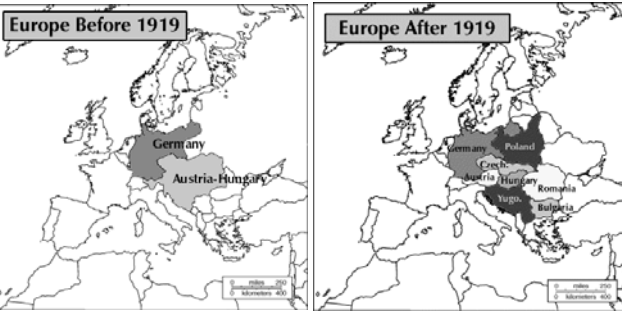
The Saar coalfields were given to France for fifteen years

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The port of Danzig was made a Free City under the control of the League of Nations



The War Guilt Clause

"The Allied and Associated Governments affirm, and Germany accepts, the responsibility of Germany and her Allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associate Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of a war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her Allies."

Article 231

GERMANY ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR STARTING THE WAR

REPARATIONS

Germany agreed to pay for the damage caused by her armies during the war. The sum she had to pay was later fixed at £6,600 million

Germany was forbidden to unite with Austria



How did Germans React to the Treaty?

Germans thought the Treaty was a "diktat" : a dictated peace. They had not been invited to the peace conference at Versailles and when the Treaty was presented to them they were threatened with war if they did not sign it.

The Treaty was NOT based on Wilson's Fourteen Points as the Germans had been promised it would.

Most Germans believed that the War Guilt Clause was unjustified. The French and British had done just as much to start the war

The loss of territory and population angered most Germans who believed that the losses were too severe.

Many Germans believed the German economy would be crippled by having to pay reparations.

The Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28th June 1919. It officially ended the 1st World War. Many historians believe that it was a major cause of the 2nd World War.

Most Germans were horrified by the harshness of the Treaty. There was anger amongst all groups in Germany, no matter what their political beliefs. Some German newspapers called for revenge for the humiliation of Versailles.

However anger was also directed against the government in Germany. Already there was a myth growing in the country that the German army had been "stabbed in the back" by politicians...the so called "November Criminals". Now these same politicians had signed the "Diktat", the dictated peace. The new democracy in Germany was now closely linked with the humiliation of Versailles.