

1.3.1 Wilson's Fourteen Points

- U.S President Woodrow Wilson outlined his **FOURTEEN POINTS** in January 1918; it was his plan for peace at the end of W.W.I.
 - 1) No more secret agreements/alliances
 - 2) Free navigation of the seas
 - 3) Free trade
 - 4) Countries are to reduce armaments/military
 - 5) All colonies are to become self-governing
 - 6) German army to leave Russia and left to develop on its own
 - 7) Belgium to be evacuated of German troops
 - 8) France liberated and to recover lost territory (Alsace – Lorraine)
 - 9) Italy's borders adjusted to allow all Italians to live in Italy
 - 10) Austria allowed to develop on its own
 - 11) Balkan states to be evacuated of troops
 - 12) Turkish people to govern themselves, non-Turks govern themselves
 - 13) Creation of an independent polish state
 - 14) Creation of the League of Nations

1.3.2 France & British Objectives at the Paris Peace Conference

- France and Britain were very much involved in the setting of terms at the peace conference at the end of the war; however, they had different goals.

A. *France:*

- Had **2** goals they were insistent upon achieving:
 - 1) *National Security:*
 - To ensure national sovereignty - France wanted to remove the threat of German military power.
 - France demanded the return of Alsace-Lorraine, which they lost to Germany.
 - They also demanded the German Rhineland to serve as a buffer zone between the two countries.
 - However, if France could not have the Rhineland, it demanded the region to be neutralized.
 - The compromise was a demilitarized zone, with no German troops within 50km of the Rhine and an Allied force would be in the area for 15 years.
 - 2) *Financial Reparations:*
 - France wanted compensation for losses during the war.
 - Northern France had been devastated after four years of German occupation.
 - The Germans also destroyed what was left as they retreated (fields, mines, factories, railways, etc.).
 - France negotiated reparation payments in the treaty to cover the costs

B. Britain:

- Had 1 main goal:
 - 1) *The British wanted to ensure security of the sea lanes to its empire.*
- This meant that German sea power had to be crippled.
- This was achieved by reducing the German navy to a token force of 6 warships, prohibiting German submarines and redistributing German colonies to the allies.
- Britain was not prepared to support French demands for huge reparations payments or territorial goals.

1.3.3 The Main Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

- The main terms of the Treaty of Versailles that were presented to Germany were as follows:
 - 1) *Territorial Changes:*
 - a) Alsace-Lorraine to be returned to France
 - b) Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia to receive German border areas
 - c) Poland re-established as an independent state with access to the Baltic sea (the Polish Corridor to Danzig)
 - d) Danzig to be a free city under the League of Nations
 - e) Germany to give all overseas colonies to the League of Nations; mandates for administrating former German colonies assigned to Britain, France and Japan
 - 2) *Military Terms:*
 - a) German army reduced to 100 000
 - b) Germany forbidden to have an air force
 - c) Most German naval vessels, including the submarine force, to be handed over to the allies
 - d) Germany forbidden to have heavy military frontier fortifications
 - 3) *Admission of War Guilt:*
 - a) Germany forced to accept responsibility for starting the war
 - 4) *Reparations:*
 - a) Germany to pay war reparations to France and Belgium for damages caused during the war
 - b) Germany to pay reparations for shipping damages by turning over part of its merchant marine fleet
 - 5) *Other Terms:*
 - a) Germany to cede Saar coal mines to France for fifteen years
 - b) Allied troops to occupy the Rhineland for fifteen years
 - c) East bank of Rhine to be demilitarized

1.3.4 Treaty of Versailles – Just or Unjust?

- Review notes and handouts on the topic, make your **OWN** conclusions.

1.3.5 Establishing the League of Nations

- The League formally came into existence on January 20th, 1920 with its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Its ideas were optimistic and noble while its establishment hoped to do the following:
 - 1) Deal with disputes among nations
 - 2) Prevent war
 - 3) Protect independence of countries and safeguard borders
 - 4) Encourage each country to reduce armaments
- As it eventually turned out, the League of Nations was not successful in following its aims.

1.3.6 Impact of the Treaty of Versailles

- In May 1919, the allies summoned a German delegation to Versailles and told them to sign the treaty.
- At first the Germans refused to sign such a severe treaty.
- When the allies threatened to renew hostilities, the Germans had no choice but to sign.
- The date was June 28th, 1919, exactly 5 years to the day of the assassination of Franz Ferdinand.
- The treaty created a controversy from the very beginning and would be used later by German leaders to illustrate how unfairly the world was treating Germany.
- The terms of the treaty would change the face and direction of Germany.
- **Reparation** payments led to staggering inflation and economic collapse.
- To make the payments, the German government printed paper money until the German currency was worthless.
- The impact was great; in 1918 a loaf of bread was 0.69 marks, in 1922 it was 163 marks, in 1923 it was 201 billion marks.
- This was called **hyperinflation** and led to the German people facing much hardship.
- The military restrictions imposed on Germany were seen as harsh and humiliating.
- Thousands of demobilized troops, resenting the terms of the treaty and disgruntled with the political system that could make a better deal, joined right wing political groups.
- The groundwork for the emergence of the Nazi party had been laid.
- The treaty provided fertile ground for propaganda against the Allies treatment of Germany and was employed with great success.
- German violations of the treaty grew bolder and more flagrant until finally Hitler effectively killed it in the early 1930's.
- In reality the treaty had been a missed opportunity.
- They had made “a peace which was no peace”.
- Europe had not been made safe for democracy.
- It has been said that, “defeat was snatched from the jaws of victory”, while disillusion, resentment and despair were the seeds for future conflict.