

Although America did not declare war on Germany until 1917, she had been involved in the war from the beginning supplying the allies with weapons and supplies.

On May 2nd 1915 the British passenger liner Lusitania was sunk by a torpedo from a German submarine. 1195 passengers, including 128 Americans, lost their lives. Americans were outraged and put pressure on the government to enter the war.

Woodrow Wilson campaigned for a peaceful end to the war. He appealed to both sides to try to settle the war by diplomatic means but was unsuccessful.

In February 1917, the Germans announced an unrestricted submarine warfare campaign. They planned to sink any ship that approached Britain whether it was a military ship, supply ship or passenger ship.

On April 3rd 1917, Wilson made a speech declaring that America would enter the war and restore peace to Europe.

The United States declared war on Germany on April 6th, 1917. American troops joined the French and British in the summer of 1918. They were fresh and not war-weary and were invaluable in defeating the Germans.

The allied victory in November 1918 was not solely due to American involvement. Rapid advancements in weapon technology, helped by American funding meant that by 1918 tanks and planes were commonplace.

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.

The Other Defeated Nations

The Treaty of Versailles determined the punishment that Germany should face. Other treaties determined the fate of those countries that had fought with Germany - Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey. Austria and Hungary were divided and therefore signed separate treaties.

Austria - The Treaty of St Germain 10th September 1919

Land - Austria lost land to Italy, Czechoslovakia and Serbia.

Army – Was to be reduced to 30,000 men.

Anschluss – Union with Germany was forbidden

Reparations – Austria was to pay reparations but went bankrupt before the rate could be set.

Hungary – The Treaty of Trianon 4th June 1920

Land – Hungary lost land to Czechoslovakia, Romania and Serbia reducing its size from 283,000 sq km to less than 93,000 sq km.

Population was reduced from 18.2 million to 7.6 million. **Army** - To be reduced to 35,000 men

Reparations - Hungary was to pay reparations but the amount was never set.

Bulgaria – The Treaty of Neuilly 27th November 1919

Land – Bulgaria lost land to Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia.

Reparations – Bulgaria had to pay £90 million in reparations

Army - restrictions were made on the size of Bulgaria's army

Turkey – The Treaty of Sevres 20th August 1920

Land – Turkey lost land to Greece. The League of Nations took control of Turkey's colonies.

The German commander Erich Ludendorff (left) was a brilliant military commander and had won decisive victories over Russia in 1917 that led to the Russian withdrawal from the war.

In 1918 he announced that if Germany was to win the war then the allies had to be defeated on the Western Front before the arrival of American troops.

Although his offensive was initially successful the allies held ground and eventually pushed the Germans back.

By 1918 there were strikes and demonstrations in Berlin and other cities protesting about the effects of the war on the population. The British naval blockade of German ports meant that thousands of people were starving. Socialists were waiting for the chance to seize Germany as they had in Russia.

In October 1918 Ludendorff resigned and the German navy mutinied. The end was near. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated on November 9th 1918.

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