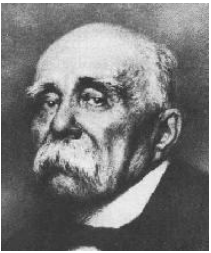


Treaty of Versailles Revision Notes

Background

- The Treaty was drawn up at the Paris Peace Conference, which was held in Versailles in France.
- The purpose of the Conference was to allow the leaders of the victorious powers to meet in order to decide how to deal with the defeated powers.
- The Conference last for a year, with the Treaty of Versailles finally being signed in June 1919.

The Leaders

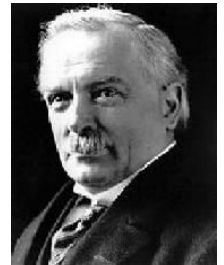


Georges Clemenceau (Prime Minister of France)

A hard, tough politician with a reputation for being uncompromising.

David Lloyd George (Prime Minister of Britain)

A realist and very experienced politician.



Woodrow Wilson (President of the USA)

An idealist and a reformer.

The Aims of the Leaders

Georges Clemenceau (France)

- France had suffered very severely in terms of damage to the country and loss of life during WWI. They were determined not to allow such devastation to ever happen again.
- They wanted Germany to pay for all of the damages from the war.
- They wanted Germany to lose all of the land they had gained and more.
- They wanted the German armed forces to be destroyed completely.
- The purpose behind all of these demands was to ensure that Germany was crippled so that it could not attack France again.

David Lloyd George (Britain)

- Britain had suffered during WWI, but not to the same extent as France. Lloyd George was aware that there would have to be compromises.
- He thought that Germany should be punished justly (not too harshly)
- His main aim was to stop Germany from having a navy as he wanted Britain to 'rule the seas' so that they could maintain their empire.

Woodrow Wilson (USA)

- The USA had not suffered much during the war as they had joined late and there was no fighting in their own country.

- At the Treaty of Versailles Wilson proposed the Fourteen Points, which he believed would end the war fairly and prevent another war in the future.
- His two main ideas at the Conference were self-determination (independence/the right to choose their own future) for the countries of eastern Europe and the League of Nations.

The Terms of the Treaty (GARGLE)

Guilt - clause 231, Germany accepted blame 'for causing all the loss and damage' of the war.

Armed forces - army: 100,000

- conscription banned
- no submarines
- no aeroplanes
- 6 battleships
- Rhineland de-militarised

Reparations - £6,600 million – in instalments, until 1984

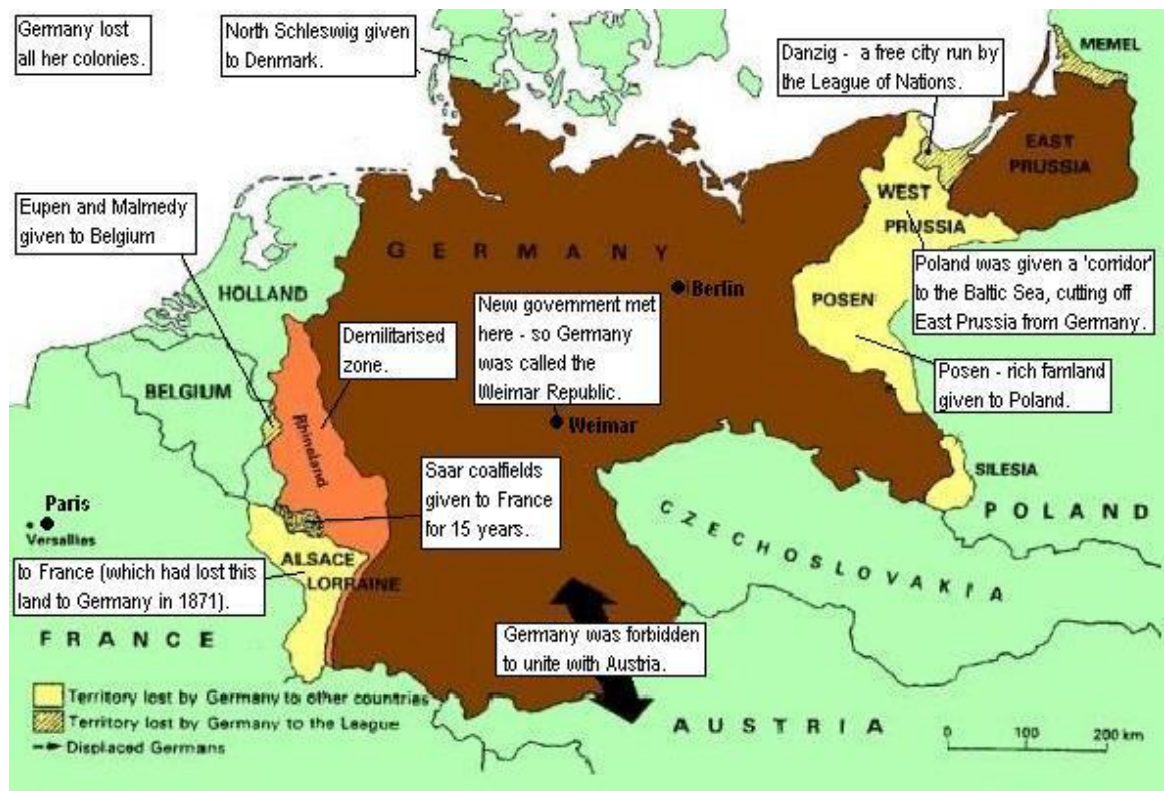
Germany lost land

League of Nations

Extra points - forbade Anschluss (union of Austria with Germany)

- Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania independent states.

The impact of the Treaty of Versailles on the borders of Europe.



The Allies' Reactions to the Treaty

Georges Clemenceau (France)

Liked the harsh things that were in the Treaty:

1. Reparations (would repair the damage to France)
2. The tiny German army (would prevent Germany from attacking France)
3. The de-militarised zone in the Rhineland (would protect France by creating a buffer zone)
4. France got Alsace-Lorraine, and some German colonies.

But he was disappointed with the Treaty:

- a. He wanted the Treaty to be harsher
- b. He wanted Germany to be split up into smaller countries.

David Lloyd George (Britain)

Many British people wanted to 'make Germany pay', and Lloyd George liked:

1. The fact that Britain got some German colonies (expanded the British Empire),
2. The small German navy (helped Britain to continue to 'rule the waves').

But Lloyd George was disappointed with the Treaty:

- a. He thought that the Treaty was far too harsh and would ruin Germany,
- b. He thought it would cause another war in 25 years time

Woodrow Wilson (USA)

Wilson got:

1. A League of Nations,
2. Self-determination for the peoples of Eastern Europe,

But he was disappointed with the Treaty:

- a. Some of his 'Fourteen Points' did not get into the Treaty,
- b. When Wilson went back to America, the Senate refused to join the League of Nations, and even refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles.



'Peace and future cannon fodder' - a British cartoon of 1920.

'The Tiger' was a nickname for Clemenceau. In the caption, Clemenceau is saying: 'Curious! I seem to hear a child weeping'.

How old will the weeping child be in 1940? This cartoon is suggesting that there will be another war in the future because of Versailles, when the child will be old enough to be a soldier. Why would Versailles cause another war?

German reaction to the Treaty (U BRAT)

Unfair – Germany thought it was unfair that they were not represented at the Treaty so they had to accept a harsh Treaty without any choice or even a comment. It was also an insult that they were not allowed to join the League of Nations.

Blame – Germany thought that the war guilt should be shared.

Reparations – Germany was crippled by the reparations, the country was already practically economically destroyed after the war and people could not even afford to buy food.

Armed forces - With such small armed forces Germany would be unable to defend themselves if they were attacked and German pride in the army was also hurt.

Territory – Loss of so much German territory was a blow to their pride. The loss of industrial areas such as the Saar (coalfields) also damaged the economy.

The impact of the Treaty on Germany

- At first Germany refused to sign the Treaty because they thought it was so unfair.
- Rather than hand over their ships, the German navy sank them in protest.
- It then looked as though war would break out again. It was clear that Germany would not be able to win and so the German leader, Ebert, was forced to sign the Treaty.

- Ebert's right-wing opponents attempted a revolution against him (the Kapp Putsch), but this ended due to strikes in Berlin as essential services such as power and transport were stopped.
- In 1922, Germany then fell behind with reparation payments.
- As a result French and Belgian soldiers entered the industrial Ruhr region to take what was owed to them in the form of goods and raw materials.
- The German government ordered the workers to go on strike to prevent France and Belgium from being able to take anything. The French, however, killed 100 workers and expelled 100,000 protesters from the region.
- The strike had also meant that Germany no longer had enough goods to trade in order to make money.
- The government attempted to solve this problem by printing more money. This in turn cause hyper-inflation (the money became virtually worthless). Workers had to be paid daily instead of weekly as they had to carry all the money in wheelbarrows and the price of food soared.



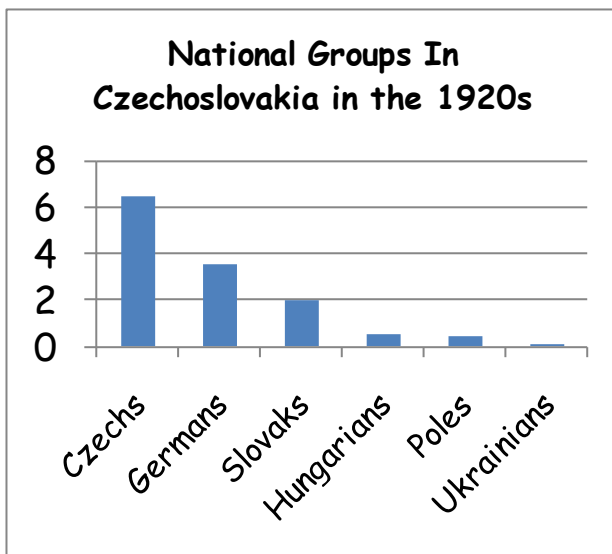
Children use money as building blocks - due to the effect of hyper-inflation it

is virtually worthless.

The impact of the treaties on eastern Europe

Czechoslovakia

- As well as the Treaty of Versailles, other smaller treaties were also agreed at the Paris Peace Conference which dealt with the establishment and expansion of countries in eastern Europe.
- The most important country that was created was Czechoslovakia. The Allies hoped that it would provide a country which would be economically and politically stable in eastern Europe.
- In reality, it was not very stable, as it contained many different national groups, and as a result there were many ethnic tensions. (see graph)



Poland

- Poland had been an important country in the 1600s but had been divided up by Russia, Germany and Austria.
- The Allies wanted to re-create Poland so that it could act as a watchdog on Germany and also for a barrier against communist Russia.
- Poland, however, had no natural frontiers such as rivers or mountains, which made it vulnerable to attack.
- As a result from the very outset there was fighting between Poland and Russia.
- Poland had also been given access to the sea, through the 'Polish corridor' which covered a German city called Danzig. This was bitterly resented by the Germans.

Yugoslavia

- Yugoslavia was an example of Wilson's idea of self-determination in action.
- It was also meant to make the area it was in more stable.

- Like Czechoslovakia, the new state contained a lot of different national groups, which again led to ethnic tensions. (see map below)



Yugoslavia and the different ethnic groups that it contained.