

Treaty of versailles during world war i

War



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One of the most important documents ever, The Treaty of Versailles was proposed to be a peace settlement between the victorious Allies and the defeated Germans at the outcome of World War I. The document was a major disaster and did not serve any of the purposes it was drawn for. The harsh provisions of the treaty along with its unfair orders to Germany led to the worlds most horrific leader come to power and also set the platform for another war. The treaty became a worldwide example of history how greed and injustice can lead to disasters no one thought possible.

World War I came to an end on November 11, 1918. Germany had surrendered and signed the Armistice agreement. The Allies were engaged in tailoring a peace settlement with a defeated Germany. In December of 1918, the Allied leaders met in The Allies hoped that writing a peace agreement would be a quick and easy process; however, once the process of writing the treaty started, the Allies found that they had much greater task ahead. President Woodrow Wilson had his Fourteen Points and knew revenge was a bad idea, and he was right. However, France and Great Britain wanted Germany to pay for all the damages she caused and wanted to cripple her completely of her strengths. Germany was in financial ruins and had to cope with harsh changes at the same time.

There were vast land grabs by France and Britain as they took over various colonies of Germany. Some territorial losses were: Alsace-Lorraine being returned to France, the Polish Corridor being taken by Prussia and Russia, the Saar Basin under League of Nations control for 15 years and turned the coal mines over to France, Danzig became a free city under the League. All of her colonies were distributed as mandates among the Allies. New

countries were being formed and old countries were being destroyed, all to the arrangements and ease to the Allies. Germans leaders were especially angered because the land grabs and borders created by Britain and France separated many Germans from their homeland and forced to live under new countries being formed. Anschluss was also forbidden. One of the restrictions that really hit home to the Germans was the extreme limitation of Germany's pride, its army.

The German army was restricted to 100, 000 men who had to serve for 12 years. Her navy and air force were also severely restricted in size, and the production of weapons, tanks, submarines and planes were forbidden and so was the German Naval fleet entirely surrendered to Great Britain. If such tough measures weren't humiliating enough the Germans had to deal with another insult. Article 231: The War-Guilt Clause, Germany was compelled to accept responsibility for all the loss and damage caused by the war and to pay reparations for damages done to civilians which was said to be 6. Billion Pounds paid in gold. All these factors really put Germans back home a difficult change to cope with. The terms of treaty of Versailles such as reparations, war guilt, disarmament, and loss of German territory made the Germans anger rise and their hatred towards against the allies.

No peace can be made if all the leaders around the world make their decision in haste and greed. Instead on focusing on the wellbeing of all countries in the future with a much more comforting and modern manner, all the country leaders were simply there to gain more territories for themselves. The treaty was supposed to prevent another disastorous war from repeating itself, and ironically it was a platform for the next World War.

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A generous peace would have eased resentment in Germany, but was probably impossible, given public opinion of the citizens of France and England. The League of Nations was too weak to survive and handle all the countries bulldozing Germany with different factors from left, right, centre and above. First, the forced signature required of Germany, placing full blame for the war on her shoulders -made her the scapegoat of Europe which in reality was every countries fault. Second, the border drawing by the great powers France and Britain - creating new nations such as Czechoslovakia.

Third, the newly arranged borders that left large German minorities under the rule of other ethnic groups. Fourth, the attempted total destruction of German military power which meant that opportunistic and expansionist countries would be able to take advantage of their weak neighbor. All these factors led to Hitler taking over Germany, preparing her for another war which would bring her back to her feet. In hindsight, World War II was almost inevitable given the terms of the Versailles treaty. Some would argue that it wasn't the direct cause, while others would say it was one of the most important factors. The restrictions imposed by the Versailles treaty created a social and economic depression in Germany, with widespread bitterness among its people. The allies placed a huge burden on Germany to pay for the cost of World War I that had just occurred.

This act alone essentially spelled doom for the Weimar Republic and a peaceful Germany. The people of Germany felt the Treaty was an insult to their honour, and that they were not the only guilty player in the war. Also, by their leaders signing the Treaty and agreeing, they felt betrayed. They

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were desperate for hope. Germany needed a saviour to save herself from slipping further down the dark road she was headed for and got Hitler. He swept in and used his charisma to win an entire country and channel their thoughts and he did that by the opportunity that landed in his lap. If the treaty hadn't been so heartless on Germany, they wouldn't have needed a hero to save their country from slipping in a situation no one would have imagined.

Hitler rebelliously ignored the treaty's orders on every restriction Germany had. The remilitarization put the Germans back to work and oiled her economic wheels so she could start moving ahead and soon become the strongest military power in the world. Suddenly there were jobs and apparent prosperity, and the German people could see a brighter future. This all helped sell the belief that the Nazis and their policies were righteous and that Hitler was a great leader. Adolf Hitler was one of those people. He gave the German people a reason for the problems Germany was facing in Jewish people, gypsies, and homosexuals (among many others). He created a whole new realm of brutality with the Jewish people, known as the Holocaust.

Hitler seemed to present all the answers, and was eventually made High Chancellor and the first Führer, creating totalitarianism in Germany. The Treaty of Versailles was a culmination of hostility and revenge and provided the perfect environment for Hitler to rise to power, and set the stage for a second World War. Germany's punishment caused a train of events that led only up to disaster. The unfair and selfish land grabs and distribution by Britain and France, the unimaginable amount of money to be paid by Germany and the refraining military orders just set a very bitter feel in the

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German air. This caused for the rise of Adolf Hitler who just brought more disaster and loss of innocent lives. Hitler also “ fulfilled” his promises by creating a new World War which could have been entirely avoided if the Treaty of Versailles would have stuck to making peace, not deals. Evidence suggests that there was no single major cause for World War I but in effect there was several major events associated with its commencement.

It is clear that the articles of the Treaty of Versailles, claiming sole German responsibility for causing World War I was unjust, it was a shared responsibility for the cause of the next World War.