

# Aims of the treaty of versaille



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The Treaty of Versailles was one of numerous treaties signed and discussed at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 after World War I, the five main countries involved were the Great Britain, USA, France, Italy and Germany. The Treaty of Versailles focused on the compensation Germany had to pay to the allies after the war.

Great Britain, USA, France, Italy were known as the “ Big Four”, they were chosen out of the countries that participated in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Each of these countries had differing aims and goals in regards to the Treaty. This was because the War affected all of them differently. The representatives for the countries were British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau and American President Woodrow Wilson.

France was attacked numerous times by Germany from 1870 to 1914, which explains why France’s demands were one of the harshest and most aggressive. To ensure Germany wouldn’t be able to attack them again, Frances aim was to destroy Germany completely, militarily and economically. Clemenceau demanded that The Rhineland be taken from Germany, and be set up as an independent state, they asked for extensive demilitarization of Germany as well, this was to ensure that Germany would be incapable of attacking France again. They also ordered Germany to return Alsace-Lorraine, which was taken by them in 1871. The last demand Clemenceau made was that Germany should compensate the damage the war had brought to France, including paying for the war pensions to French soldiers and the war widows. These were the aims and demands made by France.

Britain's demands were more focused on achieving independence for the countries and regions taken over by Germany, and in comparison to France, their aims were less focused on themselves. The British Prime Minister David Lloyd George was elected near the time the treaty was signed, so he was expected to represent the British's position and ask Germany to cover up for the damage it had caused. Even though the war had never taken place on British land, many British soldiers had been killed or injured during the war.

Britain wanted to make Germany pay, however Lloyd George didn't want to crush the German economy completely as they still expected Germany to be economically independent. Britain's views were in the middle of France's and USA's attitudes as they insisted on making Germany pay but they didn't want to destroy and destabilize the whole country. This is why they only expressed three demands in the Treaty. They wanted Germany to return all the land they claimed during the war, they asked for an independent Polish state to be created and lastly they demanded the nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the non-Turkish people within the Ottoman Empire to be self governed.

Although World War I didn't directly influence the USA, they had their say and demands written on the Treaty of Versailles. Because the war wasn't fought on American land, their aim was to make sure that the war or any situation similar to this didn't happen again. American President Wilson listed fourteen points and aims for a world safe for democracy, the points consisted the return of sovereignty rights for Belgium, the return of any German

occupied French land as well as the evacuation of other nations like Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.

Wilson wanted to prevent this happening again in the future, but his demands were mainly focused on evacuating the countries Germany had occupied over the war. Other than the freedom of other countries, Wilson's points weren't really objective. Clemenceau and Lloyd Georges attitudes towards Wilson's fourteen points were filled with doubt and hesitation. Clemenceau was more realistic and straightforward, he simply wanted Germany to pay rather than involve themselves in the almost impossible points Wilson had brought up. Despite the uncertainty Clemenceau and Lloyd George was feeling, they agreed to Wilson's points because he threatened to make a separate peace with Germany.

Vittorio Orlando represented Italy; he mainly demanded the independence of Dalmatia Islands, but the fact that Orlando was the only representative out of the four countries that couldn't speak English put him at a disadvantage. But the Dalmatia Islands and Istria were able to regain their independency, as a result Italy managed to have their say at the peace conference.

The Treaty of Versailles was really powerful but according to some historians, it wasn't the best treaty they could come up with. The reason for this was that the three representatives have absolutely different aims and some of them were exactly the opposite of each other. But however good or bad the Treaty of Versailles was, it still managed to order Germany to compensate over six thousand million pounds in total. Many historians made the guess that the harsh demands made by each country, was the reason of the rise of

Hitler, even though this is just a guess, there is a possibility that the start of the Second World War could be influenced by the Treaty of Versailles.