

The Social Democrats under **Friedrich Ebert** then announced the creation of a democratic republic. Two days later, on November 11, 1918, this government signed an **armistice**—a truce or an agreement to stop the fighting.

Revolutionary Forces The war was over, but the revolutionary forces it had set in motion were not exhausted yet. A group of radical socialists, unhappy with the moderate policies of the Social Democrats, formed the German Communist Party in December 1918. A month later, they tried to seize power in Berlin.

The new Social Democratic government, backed by regular army troops, crushed the rebels and murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht (LEEP•KNEHKT), leaders of the German Communists. A similar attempt at Communist revolution in the city of Munich, in southern Germany, was also crushed.

The new German republic had been saved from radical revolution. The attempt at revolution, however, left the German middle class with a deep fear of communism.

Austria-Hungary, too, experienced disintegration and revolution. As war weariness took hold of the empire, ethnic groups increasingly sought to achieve their independence. By the time the war ended, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was no more.

The empire had been replaced by the independent republics of Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, along with the large monarchical state called Yugoslavia. Rivalries among the nations that succeeded Austria-Hungary would weaken eastern Europe for the next 80 years.

✓ Reading Check **Describing** What happened within Germany after the armistice?

People In History

Georges Clemenceau

1841–1929—French statesman

Georges Clemenceau was one of France's wartime leaders. He had a long political career before serving as French premier (prime minister) from 1917 to 1920. When Clemenceau became premier in 1917, he suspended basic civil liberties for the rest of the war. He had the editor of an antiwar newspaper executed on a charge of helping the enemy. Clemenceau also punished journalists who wrote negative war reports by having them drafted.

Clemenceau strongly disliked the Germans. "For the catastrophe of 1914 the Germans are responsible," he said. "Only a professional liar would deny this."



The Peace Settlements

Main Idea **The Treaty of Versailles punished Germany, established new nations, and created a League of Nations to solve international problems.**

Reading Connection What recent world issues has the United Nations focused attention on? Read to learn why the American president wanted a League of Nations after World War I.

In January 1919, representatives of 27 victorious Allied nations met in Paris to make a final settlement of the Great War. Over a period of years, the reasons for fighting World War I had changed dramatically. When European nations had gone to war in 1914 they sought territorial gains. By the beginning of 1918, more idealistic reasons were also being expressed.

Wilson's Proposals No one expressed these idealistic reasons better than the U.S. president, Woodrow Wilson. Even before the war ended, Wilson outlined "Fourteen Points" to the United States Congress—his basis for a peace settlement that could justify the enormous military struggle being waged.

Wilson's proposals for a just and lasting peace included reaching the peace agreements openly rather than through secret diplomacy; reducing armaments or military forces to a "point consistent with domestic safety"; and ensuring self-determination, the right of each people to have its own nation.

Wilson portrayed World War I as a people's war against "absolutism and militarism." These two enemies of liberty, he argued, could be eliminated only

by creating democratic governments and a “general association of nations.” This association would guarantee “political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.”

Wilson became the spokesperson for a new world order based on democracy and international cooperation. When he arrived in Europe for the peace conference, he was enthusiastically cheered by many Europeans. Wilson soon found, however, that more practical motives guided other states.

The Paris Peace Conference Delegates met in Paris in early 1919 to determine the peace settlement. Complications soon became obvious. For one thing, secret treaties and agreements that had been made before the war had raised the hopes of European nations for territorial gains. These hopes could not be totally ignored, even if they did conflict with the principle of self-determination put forth by Wilson.

National interests also complicated the deliberations of the Paris Peace Conference. **David Lloyd George**, prime minister of Great Britain, had won a

decisive victory in elections in December 1918. His platform was simple: make the Germans pay.

France’s approach to peace was chiefly guided by its desire for national security. To **Georges Clemenceau** (KLEH•muhn•SOH), the premier of France, the French people had suffered the most from German aggression. The French desired revenge and security against future German aggression. Clemenceau wanted Germany stripped of all weapons, vast German payments—**reparations**—to cover the costs of the war, and a separate Rhineland as a buffer state between France and Germany.

The most important decisions at the Paris Peace Conference were made by Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George. Italy, as one of the Allies, was considered one of the so-called Big Four powers. However, it played a smaller role than the other key powers—the United States, France, and Great Britain, called the Big Three. Germany was not invited to attend, and Russia could not be present because of its civil war.

In view of the many conflicting demands at the peace conference, it was no surprise that the Big

Opposing Viewpoints

Who Caused World War I?

Immediately after World War I, historians began to assess which nation was most responsible for beginning the war. As these four selections show, opinions have varied considerably.

“The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.”

Treaty of Versailles, Article 231, 1919

“None of the powers wanted a European War. . . . But the verdict of the Versailles Treaty that Germany and her allies were responsible for the War, in view of the evidence now available, is historically unsound. It should therefore be revised.”

—Sidney Bradshaw Fay
Origins of the World War, 1930

Three quarreled. Wilson wanted to create a world organization, the League of Nations, to prevent future wars. Clemenceau and Lloyd George wanted to punish Germany. In the end, only compromise made it possible to achieve a peace settlement.

Wilson's wish that the creation of an international peacekeeping organization be the first order of business was granted. On January 25, 1919, the conference accepted the idea of a League of Nations. In return, Wilson agreed to make compromises on territorial arrangements. He did so because he believed that the League could later fix any unfair settlements.

Clemenceau also compromised to obtain some guarantees for French security. He gave up France's wish for a separate Rhineland and instead accepted a defensive alliance with Great Britain and the United States. The U.S. Senate refused to ratify this agreement, which weakened the Versailles peace settlement.

The Treaty of Versailles The final peace settlement of Paris consisted of five separate treaties with the defeated nations—Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The Treaty of Versailles with Ger-

“In estimating the order of guilt of the various countries we may safely say that the only direct and immediate responsibility for the World War falls upon Serbia, France and Russia, with the guilt about equally divided.”

—Harry Elmer Barnes
The Genesis of the World War, 1927

“As Germany willed and coveted the Austro-Serbian war and, in her confidence in her military superiority, deliberately faced the risk of a conflict with Russia and France, her leaders must bear a substantial share of the historical responsibility for the outbreak of general war in 1914.”

—Fritz Fischer
Germany's Aims in the First World War, 1961

You Decide

1. Write a quote of your own that reflects your views on which nation caused World War I. Support your quote with passages from the text.

many, signed at Versailles near Paris on June 28, 1919, was by far the most important.

The Germans considered it a harsh peace. They were especially unhappy with Article 231, the so-called War Guilt Clause, which declared that Germany (and Austria) were responsible for starting the war. The treaty ordered Germany to pay reparations for all the damage Allied governments and their people had suffered from a war “imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.”

The military and territorial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles also angered the Germans. Germany had to reduce its army to a hundred thousand men, cut back its navy, and eliminate its air force. **Alsace** and **Lorraine**, taken by the Germans from France in 1871, were now returned. Sections of eastern Germany were awarded to a new Polish state.

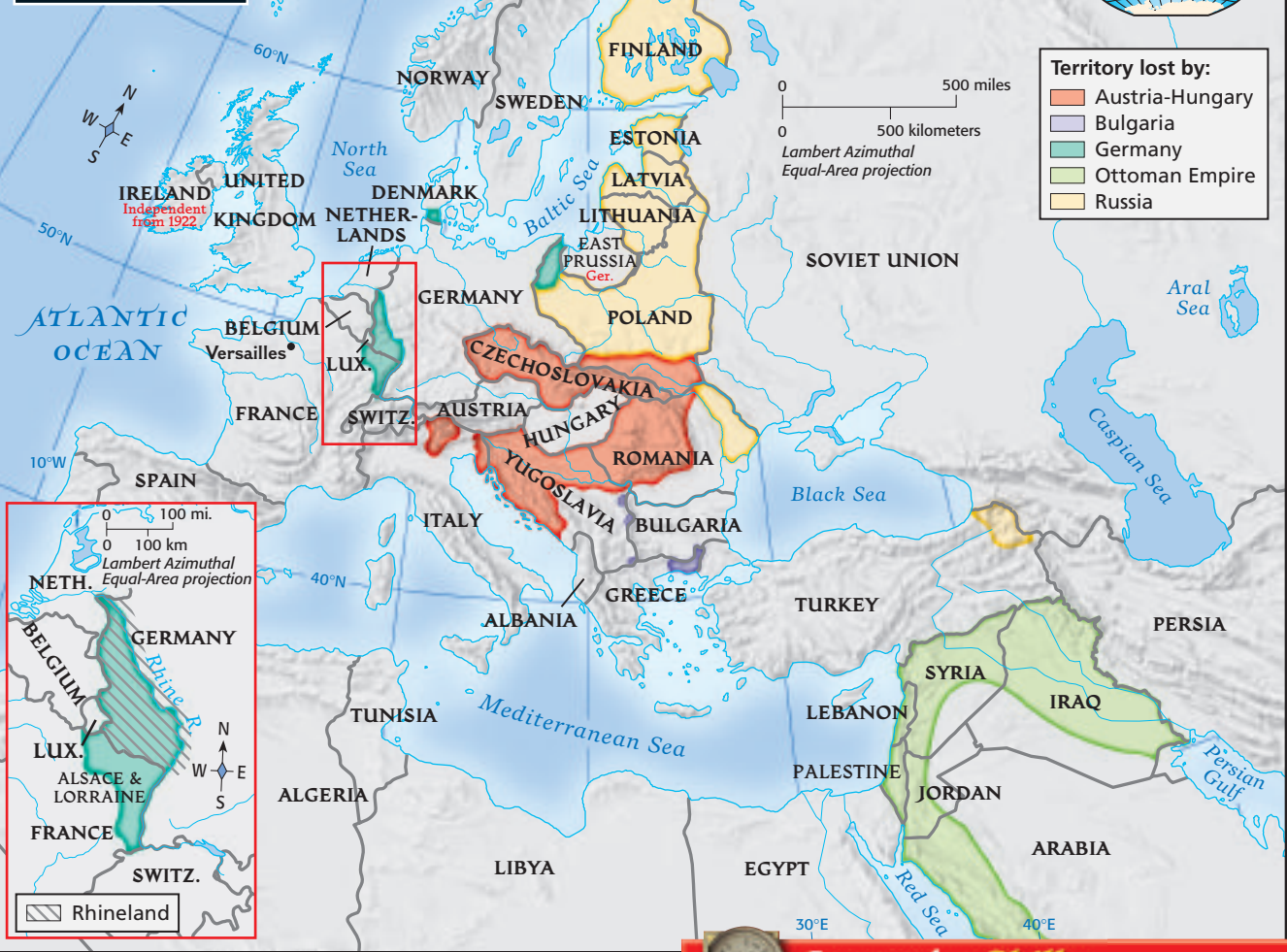
German land along both sides of the Rhine was made a demilitarized zone and stripped of all weapons and fortifications. This, it was hoped, would serve as a barrier to any future German military moves westward against France. Outraged by the “dictated peace,” the new German government complained but, unwilling to risk a renewal of the war, they accepted the treaty.

A New Map of Europe As a result of the war, the Treaty of Versailles, and the separate peace treaties made with the other Central Powers—Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey—the map of eastern Europe was largely redrawn. Both the German and Russian empires lost much territory in eastern Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Empire disappeared.

New nation-states emerged from the lands of these three empires: Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, **Poland**, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Hungary.

New territorial arrangements were also made in the Balkans. Romania acquired additional lands from Russia, Hungary, and Bulgaria. Serbia formed the nucleus of a new state, called Yugoslavia, which combined Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

The Paris Peace Conference was supposedly guided by the principle of self-determination. The mixtures of peoples in eastern Europe made it impossible, however, to draw boundaries along neat ethnic lines. Compromises had to be made, sometimes to satisfy the national interests of the victors. France, for example, had lost Russia as its major ally on Germany's eastern border. Thus, France wanted to strengthen and expand Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania as much as possible. Those states could then serve as barriers against Germany and Communist Russia.



As a result of compromises, almost every eastern European state was left with ethnic minorities. There were Germans in Poland, and Hungarians, Poles, and Germans were living in Czechoslovakia. Romania also had a significant population of Hungarians, while Yugoslavia had a mixture of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Albanians. In some cases, these ethnic groups had a long history of conflict over territory. Not surprisingly, the new boundaries were not always satisfactory.

Yet another centuries-old empire—the Ottoman Empire—was broken up by the peace settlement. To gain Arab support against the Ottoman Turks during the war, the Western Allies had promised to recognize the independence of Arab states in the Ottoman Empire. Once the war was over, however, the Western nations changed their minds. France took control of Lebanon and Syria, and Britain received Iraq and Palestine.

Woodrow Wilson was opposed to the Allies' annexing territory. Therefore these acquisitions were

Geography Skills

World War I dramatically changed political boundaries.

- 1. Interpreting Maps** Rank the countries and empires listed in the map legend according to the amount of lost territory, from largest loss to smallest loss.
- 2. Applying Geography Skills** Look back at the map on page 423, then examine the map above. Now, knowing the outcome of the war, predict which countries would lose the most territory. Why does the actual loss of territory, as shown above, differ from (or match) your predictions?

officially called **mandates**. As a result, the peace settlement created the mandate system. According to this system, a nation officially governed another nation as a mandate from the League of Nations, but it did not own the territory.

The War's Legacy World War I shattered the liberal, rational society that had existed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The death of



▲ In this painting of the Paris peace talks, American president Woodrow Wilson (second row, center right) shows British leader Lloyd George a report. French premier Georges Clemenceau sits on Wilson's other side.

almost 10 million people, as well as the incredible destruction caused by the war, undermined the whole idea of progress. Entire populations had participated in a devastating slaughter.

World War I was a total war—one that involved a complete mobilization of resources and people. During its course, the power of governments over the lives of citizens increased. Freedom of the press and speech were limited in the name of national security. World War I thus made the practice of strong central government a way of life.

The turmoil of the war also seemed to open the door to greater insecurity. Revolutions broke up old empires and created new states, which led to new problems. The hope that the world would return to normalcy was, however, soon dashed.

✓ Reading Check Identifying What clause in the Treaty of Versailles particularly angered the Germans?

HISTORY  **Study Central**
Online

For help with the concepts in this section of *Glencoe World History—Modern Times*, go to wh.mt.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central**.

SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

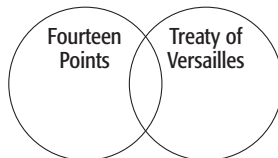
- 1. Vocabulary** Define: concentrate, armistice, consistent, reparation, clause, mandate.
- 2. People** Identify: Erich von Ludendorff, Friedrich Ebert, David Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau.
- 3. Places** Locate: Kiel, Alsace, Lorraine, Poland.

Reviewing Big Ideas

- 4. List** some of President Wilson's proposals for creating a lasting peace. Why did he feel the need to develop these proposals?

Critical Thinking

- 5. Historical Analysis Connecting Events** Although Woodrow Wilson came to the Paris Peace Conference with high ideals, the other leaders had more practical concerns. Why do you think that was so? **CA HIT**
- 6. Compare and Contrast** Using a Venn diagram like the one below, compare Wilson's Fourteen Points with the Treaty of Versailles.



Analyzing Visuals

- 7. Compare** the photograph of troops going to war on page 431 with the painting on page 417. How do you think the soldiers' expectations compared to their actual experiences?

Writing About History

- 8. Informative Writing** You are a reporter for a large newspaper, sent to the Paris Peace Conference to interview one of the leaders of the Big Three. Prepare a written set of questions you would like to ask the leader you have selected.

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