

1919 Paris Peace Conference



Aims

- Strengthen German democracy to avoid future wars
- Jan 1918 'Fourteen Points' aimed at preventing war - inc. disarmament and setting up of League of Nations
- Free trade internationally
- Self-determination and access to the sea for all nations



Aims

- Punish Germany by confiscating navy and colonies, which were a threat to the British empire
- Not to punish too harshly - wanted to avoid another war
- Trade between Britain and Germany



Aims

- Punish Germany so they would not be a threat to France - were extremely damaged by the war
- Break Germany up into smaller states - but knew other Allies wouldn't allow this

Clashes and outcomes

- Wilson wanted all nations to have access to the sea - but Lloyd George wanted to ensure dominance of **British navy**
- Wilson's call for **self determination** threatened the **British Empire**
- Clemenceau felt Lloyd George only wanted to protect British interests, and was far more lenient with Germany in European affairs
- Clemenceau also resented Wilson's **lenient** attitude to Germany as France had been far more damaged by the war than the US

German reaction to Versailles Settlement

- Very unpopular - Weimar Government termed the 'November Criminals' for signing it - seen as a betrayal
- Hated that they had no say in its terms
- Resented the War Guilt Clause
- Civilians already suffering due to wartime British blockade - reparations payments made economic situation worse



1. PEACEMAKING

The Treaty of Versailles

- 'Diktat' - Germany had no say
- Empire taken by **League of Nations**
- Lost **10% land & 12.5% population**
- Lost **50% iron/steel industry & 16% coalfields**
- **Air force and submarines banned**
- **Navy limited to 6 battleships**
- **Army limited to 100,000 men**
- **Rhineland demilitarised**
- Had to accept **War Guilt Clause**
- **132 billion marks in reparations**



Allies' reactions to Versailles Settlement

- British leaders thought it was too harsh, but the public hailed Lloyd George as a hero and celebrated the removal of the German threat
- France thought it was too lenient - Clemenceau was voted out of office
- Wilson upset it didn't follow his 14 Points and many thought it was too harsh - US Senate refused to allow US to join the League of Nations

The Treaty of Versailles - Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Weakening of German military prevented an attack in the immediate future
- Led to the creation of the League of Nations to preserve peace
- Established peace in Europe

Weaknesses

- Angered Germans - wanted revenge
- Some terms contradicted Wilson's 14 Points
- Caused instability in Germany and weakened the government, leading to the rise of extremist parties

