**CHAPTER 1: IMPACT OF WORLD WAR 1 (WW1)**

**Background of WW1 leading to the Treaty of Versailles**

* WW1 started**:** 28th July 1914
* WW1 ended**:** 11TH Nov 1918
* WW1 was between the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente.

**Causes of WW1**

* **Alliance Systems:** European countries formed rival alliances:
  + **Triple Alliance:** Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy.
  + **Triple Entente (also known as the Allies) :** Britain, France, Russia, USA (will join the war in 1917)
  + These alliances increased tensions and escalated the conflict when war broke out.
* **Militarism:** Countries built up their armies and navies, creating a sense of competition and fear.
  + Germany had one of the largest and most advanced militaries, threatening other powers.
* **Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand:** Triggered a chain reaction of alliances declaring war.

**Germany's Role in the War**

* Germany was seen as **aggressive**:
  + Supported Austria-Hungary in attacking Serbia.
  + Invaded Belgium, violating its neutrality, and dragged Britain into the war.
  + Waged **unrestricted submarine warfare**, targeting civilian ships and intensifying the conflict.

**Impact of the War**

* **Massive Destruction:** Millions killed and vast destruction in Europe, particularly in France and Belgium.
* **Economic Losses:** War drained resources and devastated economies.
* Germany was seen as the main aggressor and blamed for the war.

**Deaths by country (selected countries)**

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| **Country** | **Deaths** | **Injuries** |
| **Germany** | 2.5 million | 4.2 million |
| **Britain** | *1 million* | *1.7 million* |
| **France** | **1.7 million** | 4.3 million |
| **USSR** | *3.3 million* | *4.9 million* |
| **USA** | *117,000* | *204,000* |

**Treaty of Versailles**

* The Treaty was seen to hold Germany **responsible** for:
  + Starting the war.
  + The **death and destruction** caused across Europe.
  + Justifying harsh penalties like reparations, territorial losses, and military restrictions.

**What you should know from this chapter:**

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| **PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE** |

Aims of Paris Peace Conference:

* To officially end WW1 by establishing treaties between the victorious and defeated nations of WW1.
* The Big 3 (Leaders of USA, Britain and France) met at Versailles to discuss the way forward after World War 1.

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| **THE BIG THREE** |

* Leaders of USA, Britain and France were known as the Big Three.
* This was because they were the most powerful countries among the Allies.
* What did each leader want?

**SUMMARY OF WHAT EACH OF THE BIG THREE WANTED:**

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| **USA** | * Establish long lasting peace * Countries to be given independence and not colonized. * League of Nations to be set up. * Germany to be punished not too harshly. |
| **BRITAIN** | * Germany to be punished but not too harshly. * Ensure Britain’s economic growth. * Maintain Britain’s naval supremacy. * Maintain its overseas colonies and empire. |
| **FRANCE** | * Wanted revenge. * Wanted Germany to be punished harshly. * Wanted to weaken Germany. |

**USA’s President**

**Woodrow Wilson**

**World Peace**

* **Wilson's Goal:** Global peace and stronger democracy in Europe.
* **Beliefs:** Countries should cooperate for peace.
* **Fourteen Points:**
  + Proposed setting up the **League of Nations** to resolve disputes peacefully.
* **About Germany:**
  + Wanted a **democratic Germany** where leaders are elected by people to avoid wars.
  + Supported **punishing Germany**, but not harshly, to:
    - Prevent future wars.
    - Allow Germany to rebuild and trade.

**Self-Determination**

* **Belief in Independence:** Supported the idea that nations should govern themselves.
  + Example: Ethnic groups in Eastern Europe (e.g., Poles, Czechs, Slovaks) should rule themselves instead of being under the Austria-Hungary Empire.
  + Goal: Reduce ethnic tensions and promote peace.

**Challenges to Wilson’s Ideas**

* Seen as **unrealistic and idealistic** by British and French leaders.
* Differences due to:
  + British and French **experiences during WW1**.
  + Their focus on **national interests** rather than Wilson’s vision.

**British Prime Minister**

**David Lloyd George**

* **Balanced Approach:** Lloyd George wanted the best outcome for Britain, often finding middle ground between:
  + **Wilson’s idealism** (focus on peace and self-determination).
  + **Clemenceau’s desire for revenge** (demanding harsh punishment for Germany).

**Lloyd George’s Aims:**

* **Rebuild Britain’s Economy:**
  + Needed Germany to recover and become a trading partner.
  + Saw Germany as a potential deterrent against the rise of communism.
  + Opposed overly harsh punishment on Germany to achieve these goals.
* **Maintain Naval Power:**
  + Wanted Britain to remain the dominant naval power.
  + Ensured Germany would not threaten Britain’s supremacy.
* **Preserve the British Empire:**
  + Opposed Wilson’s idea of **self-determination**, fearing it would lead to the loss of Britain’s colonies.

**French Prime Minister**

**Georges Clemenceau**

1. **Desire for Revenge:** Clemenceau demanded severe punishments for Germany, driven by:
   * **Historical invasions:** Germany invaded France in 1870 and 1914.
   * **WW1 losses:** France lost 1.7 million lives, the highest proportion of any of the Big Three (4% of its population).

**Clemenceau’s Aims:**

* **Ensure Future Security:**
  + Wanted Germany broken into smaller states to prevent its resurgence.
  + Feared Germany’s young population and strong industrial base would allow it to recover quickly.
* **Demand Reparations:**
  + Insisted on harsh reparations for the damages caused by Germany.
* **Popular Support for Punishment:**
  + The French people supported harsh measures against Germany due to the suffering and destruction during the war.
  + A harsh punishment would weaken Germany and would not pose a threat to France anymore.

**After 6 months of discussion, the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were announced in June 1919.**

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| **AIMS of the Big 3** | **Were their aims justified?** |
| **USA**   * Establish long lasting Peace * League of Nations to be set up. * Germany to be punished not too harshly. * Countries to be given independence and not colonized. (self-determination) | * A sustainable peace would prevent future large-scale conflicts like WW1, which had caused unprecedented devastation. * Very harsh measures could destabilize Germany and increase the likelihood of Germany seeking revenge. * A less harsh punishment would allow Germany to recover economically and resume trading. This will benefit all nations economically. * A stable Germany could prevent the spread of communism which was beginning to spread from Russia. * Self-Determination would reduce ethnic tensions that had contributed to the war. |
| **BRITAIN**   * Ensure Britain’s economic growth. * Germany to be punished but not too harshly.. * Maintain Britain’s naval supremacy by ensuring Germany’s navy remained weak. * Maintain its overseas colonies and empire | * Germany was Britain’s second-largest trading partner before the war. A completely crippled Germany would harm Britain’s economic recovery by reducing trade opportunities and destabilizing Europe. * Eexcessively harsh terms could lead to resentment and future conflict. This foresight was justified, as history later proved with the rise of Hitler and WW2, fueled by German anger over the Treaty of Versailles * Britain’s empire and economy depended on strong naval control to protect its trade routes and colonies. Limiting Germany’s navy helped ensure this. * A stable Germany could prevent the spread of communism which was beginning to spread from Russia. * Ensuring Germany’s ability to pay reparations and recover economically would help Britain’s economy as well as it would provide funds for rebuilding and stimulate trade. |
| **FRANCE**   * Wanted revenge * Wanted Germany to be punished harshly. * Wanted to weaken Germany. | * France had been invaded twice by Germany within a generation (in 1870 and 1914), resulting in massive loss of life and destruction. By demanding harsh military restrictions on Germany, Clemenceau sought to protect France from another conflict * France experienced the most deaths with 1.7million casualties. Clemenceau’s demand for harsh reparations was justified to rebuild France’s economy and infrastructure, which had been severely damaged by German attacks * French public overwhelmingly supported severe punishment for Germany. Clemenceau’s aims were justified as they aligned with the expectations of his people, who demanded justice for the suffering and destruction caused by the war. * Germany’s large population and industrial base meant it could quickly recover and pose a future threat to France. Weakening Germany was seen as a necessary step to maintain peace. * Compensation for the massive economic losses caused by the war. Germany had deliberately destroyed French infrastructure, including coal mines and farmland, making reparations essential for France’s recover |

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| **REASONS FOR THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES** |

**1.To Prevent Another War**

* **Impact of WW1:**
  + Massive loss of life and destruction.
  + Over 9 million people killed in Britain and France, with shortages of food and other necessities.
* **Citizens’ Demands:**
  + French and British citizens demanded harsh punishment for Germany.
* **Key terms in the treaty to Prevent War:**
  + **Germany accepted blame:** Forced to take responsibility for starting the war.
  + **Reduced military:** Germany’s army and navy were significantly reduced to prevent future aggression.
  + **Territorial losses:** Germany lost key territories, weakening its power.
  + **Reparations:** Heavy financial penalties to prevent Germany from rebuilding its military strength.
* **Goal:** A weakened Germany would be less likely to threaten other countries, reducing the chances of another war.

**2.To Punish Germany**

* **Compensation for Damage:**
  + Germany was held responsible for compensating the Allies for the destruction and loss of life during the war.
  + WW1 caused **40 million deaths** and widespread property damage.
* **France’s Anger:**
  + France suffered the most during the war (1.7 million deaths, 4% of its population) and demanded revenge.
  + French leaders pushed for harsh terms to ensure Germany paid for the devastation.
* **Reparations:**
  + Germany had to pay large sums to help the Allies rebuild their war-torn countries.

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| **TERMS OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES** |

1. **Article 231: War Guilt Clause**

* Germany had to accept full blame for starting WW1.
* This clause justified other harsh punishments, including military restrictions and territorial losses.

**How Did Germans Feel?**

* **Humiliated:** Felt the treaty was unfair and unreasonable.
* **Unjust Blame:** Argued Germany did not start the war but only supported Austria-Hungary.
* Believed all countries involved in WW1 should share responsibility.

1. **Reparations**

* Germany was required to pay £6.6 billion pounds to compensate the Allies for war damages.

**How Did Germans Feel?**

* **Angered and Humiliated:** Reparations caused immense suffering, poverty, and starvation.
* **Economic Strain:** Already weakened by the war, Germany’s economy struggled to recover under the burden of reparations.
* Felt unable to rebuild due to the financial strain.

1. **Territorial Losses**

* Germany lost **10% of its land** and **12.5% of its population**:
  + **Saar coal region** given to the League of Nations.
  + **Alsace-Lorraine** returned to France.
  + **Polish Corridor** created, cutting off Germany from some of its land and resources.
  + Germany’s overseas colonies given to the League.
  + **Union with Austria** forbidden.

**How Did Germans Feel?**

* **Loss of Power:** No longer a powerful empire; prestige and pride damaged.
* **Economic Impact:** Resource-rich regions like the Saar were taken away, reducing income.
* **Displacement:** Thousands of Germans were separated from their homeland, e.g., Germans in Danzig.
* Felt furious at the hardships and humiliation imposed by the treaty.

1. **Military Reductions**

* Army limited to **100,000 men**; no conscription, tanks, or air force allowed.
* Navy restricted to six battleships; no armored vehicles permitted.
* **Rhineland demilitarized:** No German troops could be stationed there.

**How Did Germans Feel?**

* **Vulnerable:** Left open to attacks from other nations, especially France.
* **Loss of Pride:** Once the most powerful military in Europe, Germany felt weak and humiliated.
* Viewed the reductions as degrading and unacceptable.

1. **League of Nations**

* An international organization created to maintain world peace and resolve disputes.
* Key members included Britain and France.
* Germany was **excluded** from membership.

**How Did Germans Feel?**

* Felt isolated and excluded from the international community.
* Believed this was another humiliation imposed by the treaty.

**Summary of how Germans felt towards the treaty.**

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| * Anger, resentment, hatred. * Unfair -> Described the treaty as a diktat as they were not invited to the Paris Peace Conference to negotiate the terms of the treaty. * Unfair -> they did not feel they should be the only country to be blamed for the war as other countries had also caused significant damage. * Unfair -> they did not surrender -> felt their army had not lost the war. |

**2. Political Crisis: Unpopularity of the Weimar Republic**

* **Armistice of 1918:**
  + Many Germans believed the **Weimar government backstabbed the army** by agreeing to the armistice.
  + Labelled as **“November Criminals”** for surrendering.
* **Treaty of Versailles (1919):**
  + Signing the treaty further damaged the Weimar Republic's reputation.
  + Germans were furious at its harsh terms, calling it a **“diktat”** (dictated peace) because:
    - Germany had **no say in the negotiations**.
    - Believed they didn’t lose the war and didn’t deserve such punishment.
* **Political Instability:**
  + **Widespread discontent** fueled attempts to overthrow the Weimar government.
  + **Violent uprisings** occurred, showcasing deep dissatisfaction and mistrust of the republic.

**Was the Treaty justified?**

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| **No, it was too harsh!** | **But for the allies, it was justified!** |
| * The harsh Treaty of Versailles led to deep anger and hatred towards the Weimar, the Big Three and the Treaty. * Germans felt the treaty was unfair and humiliating. * The Treaty caused immense suffering and hardship. * It would lead to the rise of extremist political parties such as the Nazi party who promised to overturn the Treaty. * It would eventually lead to the outbreak of WW2 in Europe in 1939. | * Reparations paid by Germany allowed the Allied countries to rebuild and repair after the war. * Removing territories and reducing Germany’s military meant that Germany was weakened and will be unable to start another war -> ensuring peace. * Germany was blamed for causing suffering and damage -> by ensuring it took responsibility for the war, the citizens in Allied countries can be appeased. |

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| **THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS** |

**Aims of the League of Nations (LON)**

**1. Resolve International Disputes**

* **Formation and Purpose:** Established after WW1 to prevent future wars.
* **Peaceful Resolutions:**
  + Encouraged **negotiations and discussions** to settle disputes without war.
* **Collective Security:**
  + Members agreed not to attack each other.
  + Promised to defend each other against external threats.
* **Discourage Aggression:**
  + Aggressive nations were deterred by the League’s collective presence.
  + The League could impose **economic sanctions** to hurt aggressors’ economies and stop hostile actions.
  + If sanctions failed, the League could take **military action** against aggressors.
* **Goal:** To reduce armed conflicts and promote peaceful dispute resolution.

**2. Promote Disarmament**

* **Military Reduction:**
  + Countries were encouraged to reduce their military sizes and spending.
* **Avoiding Arms Races:**
  + Aimed to prevent a repeat of WW1, where nations competed to build up arms.
* **Disarmament Conferences:**
  + Conferences like the **Geneva Disarmament Conference** were held to discuss reducing military forces.
* **Impact of Disarmament:**
  + Smaller militaries reduced the risk of war.
  + Lower tensions between nations and encouraged **peaceful dialogue**.
  + Reduced ability to wage war, promoting long-term peace.

**Weaknesses of the League of Nations (LON)**

**1. Unable to Convince Countries to Disarm**

* **Failure to Promote Disarmament:**
  + Member nations were unwilling to reduce their military strength, prioritizing their own defense.
  + **Lack of Trust:** Countries did not trust others to disarm, leading to continued military build-ups.
* **Impact:**
  + The League failed in its objective to reduce the risk of war through disarmament.
  + Countries strengthening their militaries made war in Europe more likely.
* **Perception of Weakness:**
  + The League appeared weak and ineffective as a peacekeeping organization.

**2. Unable to Deter Aggressive Countries**

* **Limited Membership:**
  + Key powers like the **USA, USSR, and Germany** were not members, weakening the League’s authority and influence.
* **Economic Sanctions Ineffective:**
  + Countries like the **USA continued trading** with aggressor nations despite sanctions.
  + Member nations were hesitant to impose sanctions, fearing harm to their own economies.
  + As a result, aggressive countries were unaffected by sanctions and continued to wage war.
* **Lack of Military Power:**
  + The League had no army of its own and relied on member nations for military action.
  + Without support from major powers like the USA, the League struggled to take strong action against aggressors.
* **Encouragement of Aggression:**
  + Aggressive countries saw the League as weak and continued with expansionist plans, undermining its peacekeeping role.

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| **HOW SUCCESSFUL WAS THE LEAGUE?** |

**Failures of the League of Nations (LON)**

**1. Unable to Prevent Conflicts**

**Corfu Incident (1923):**

* Italy invaded the Greek island of Corfu after three Italian officials were killed.
* Greece appealed to the League for help, but Mussolini insisted the case be handled by the **Conference of Ambassadors**.
* France was not keen to get involved as they were busy with resolving their own problems with Germany at that time.
* Britain did not want to get involved as France was not keen.
* Result:
  + Greece was made to pay compensation to Italy.
  + It showed that the League had to rely on Britain and Francea to stop aggressive countries. But if they were reluctant, it made the League ineffective.
  + The League appeared **weak** and discredited for failing to protect a smaller country (Greece) from a more powerful aggressor (Italy).

**Vilna Incident (1923):**

* Poland took control of Vilna, Lithuania’s capital.
* Lithuania sought help from the League, but the League failed to make Poland withdraw.
* Britain and France refused to intervene as Poland was their ally.
* Result:
  + The League showed **bias** by prioritizing its members’ interests over peace.
  + This failure undermined its credibility and encouraged other aggressive nations.

**Summary**

* Members were reluctant to impose **economic sanctions** or take **military action**:
  + Economic sanctions hurt their own economies.
  + The League had no army to enforce decisions.
* Result:
  + The League failed in **collective security** and appeared ineffective as a peacekeeping organization.
  + These weaknesses emboldened aggressive nations to defy the League.

**Successes of the League of Nations (LON)**

**1. Resolving Disputes**

* **Upper Silesia Dispute (1921):**
  + A conflict between Germany and Poland over the territory.
  + The League organized a **peaceful vote** and divided the region, resolving the dispute.
* **Greek Bulgarian Border Dispute (1925):**
  + The League demanded Greece stop its invasion of Bulgaria.
  + Greece complied, and the conflict was resolved peacefully.

**Result:**

* These successes showed that the League could be effective in smaller disputes when members cooperated.

**2. Humanitarian Efforts**

* Helped resolve issues such as:
  + Repatriating prisoners of war after WW1.
  + Fighting slavery, drug trafficking, and disease.
* Demonstrated the League’s ability to address global humanitarian challenges.