



End of World War I

GUIDE TO READING

The BIG Idea

Order and Security After the defeat of the Germans, peace settlements brought political and territorial changes to Europe and created bitterness and resentment in some nations.

Content Vocabulary

- armistice (p. 780)
- mandates (p. 783)
- reparations (p. 781)

Academic Vocabulary

- psychological (p. 778)
- cooperation (p. 780)

People and Places

- Erich Ludendorff (p. 778)
- Georges Clemenceau (p. 781)
- Kiel (p. 780)
- Alsace (p. 782)
- Friedrich Ebert (p. 780)
- Lorraine (p. 782)
- David Lloyd George (p. 781)
- Poland (p. 782)

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information At the Paris Peace Conference, the leaders of France, Britain, and the United States were motivated by different concerns. As you read, use a chart like the one below to identify the national interests of each country as it approached the peace deliberations.

France	Britain	United States

Governments, troops, and civilians were weary as World War I continued through 1917. Shortly after the United States entered the war, Germany made its final military gamble on the Western Front and lost. The war finally ended on November 11, 1918. The peace treaties were particularly harsh on Germany. New nations were formed, and a League of Nations was created to resolve future international disputes.

The Last Year of the War

MAIN IDEA The new German republic and the Allies signed an armistice, ending the war on November 11, 1918.

HISTORY & YOU Have you heard debates about how large the U.S. military budget should be? Read to understand the role of U.S. army support in the Allied victory of World War I.

The year 1917 had not been a good one for the Allies. Allied offensives on the Western Front had been badly defeated. The Russian Revolution, which began in November 1917, led to Russia's withdrawal from the war a few months later. The cause of the Central Powers looked favorable, although war weariness was beginning to take its toll.

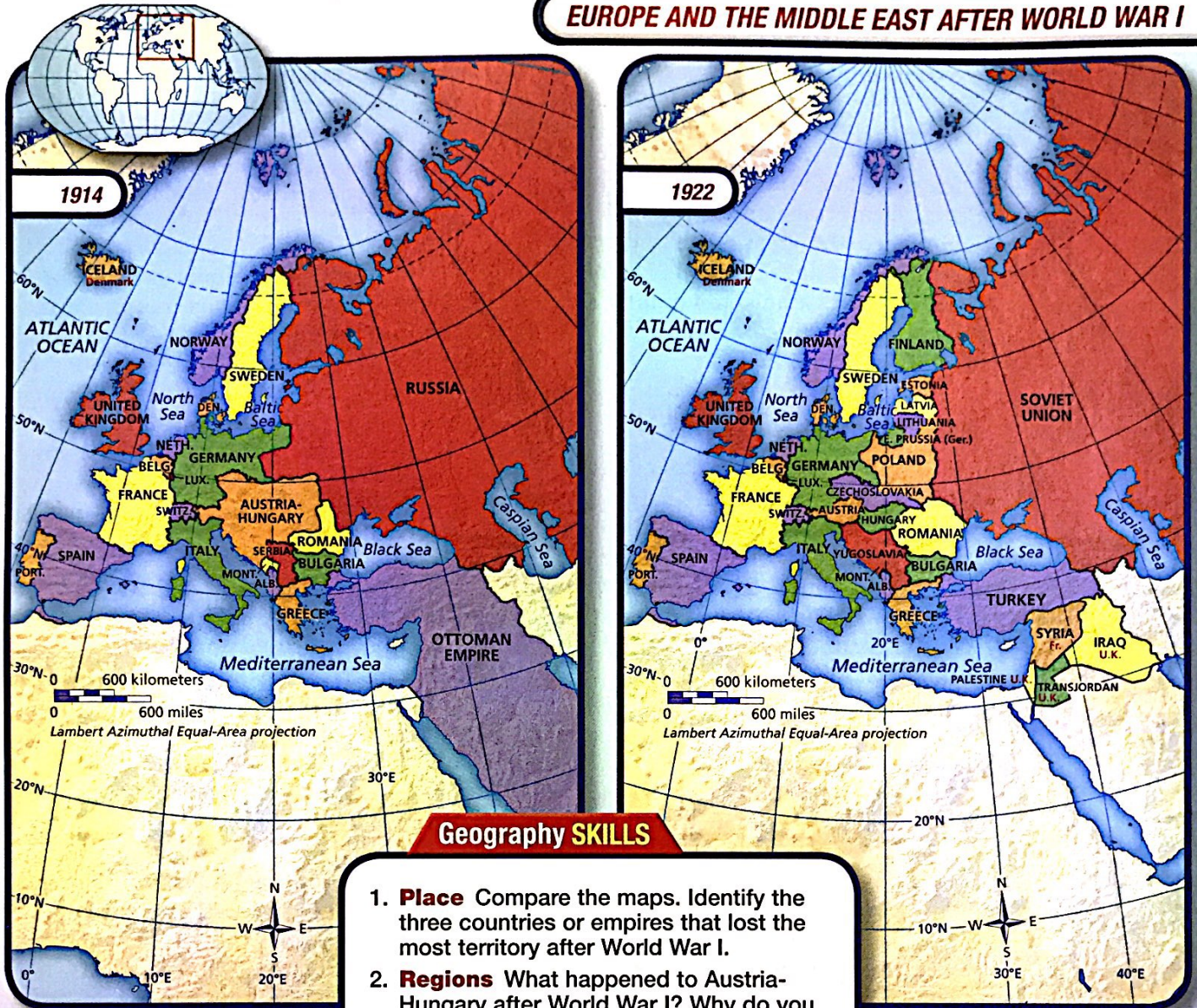
On the positive side, the entry of the United States into the war in 1917 gave the Allies a much-needed **psychological** boost. The United States also provided fresh troops and material. In 1918, American troops would prove crucial.

A New German Offensive

For Germany, the withdrawal of the Russians offered new hope for a successful end to the war. Germany was now free to concentrate entirely on the Western Front. **Erich Ludendorff**, who guided German military operations, decided to make one final military gamble—a grand offensive in the west to break the military stalemate. In fact, the last of Germany's strength went into making this one great blow. The divisions were running low on provisions, reserves of soldiers were nearly depleted, and the German home front was tired of the war.

The German attack was launched in March 1918. By April, German troops were within about 50 miles (80 km) of Paris. However, the German advance was stopped at the Second Battle of the Marne on July 18. French, Moroccan, and American troops (140,000 fresh American troops had just arrived), supported by hundreds of tanks, threw the Germans back over the Marne. On August 8, the

EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER WORLD WAR I



forces met at the Second Battle of the Somme. Ludendorff wrote of this battle: "August 8 was the black day of the German army in the history of this war." Ludendorff admitted that his gamble had failed:

PRIMARY SOURCE

"August 8 put the decline of [our] fighting power beyond all doubt, and in such a situation, as regards reserves, I had no hope of finding a strategic expedient whereby to turn the situation to our advantage."

—Erich Ludendorff, in *The Great War*, Correlli Barnett, 1980

A million American troops poured into France, and the Allies began an advance toward Germany. On September 29, 1918, General Ludendorff told German leaders that the war was lost. He demanded the government ask for peace at once.

Collapse and Armistice

German officials soon found that the Allies were unwilling to make peace with the autocratic imperial government of Germany. Reforms for a liberal government came too late for the tired, angry German people.

On November 3, 1918, sailors in the northern German town of **Kiel** mutinied. Within days, councils of workers and soldiers formed throughout northern Germany and took over civilian and military offices. Emperor William II gave in to public pressure and left the country on November 9. After William II's departure, the Social Democrats under **Friedrich Ebert** announced the creation of a democratic republic. Two days later, on November 11, 1918, the new German government signed an **armistice** (a truce, an agreement to end the fighting).

Revolutionary Forces

The war was over, but the revolutionary forces set in motion in Germany were not yet exhausted. A group of radical socialists, unhappy with the Social Democrats' moderate policies, formed the German Communist Party in December 1918. A month later, the Communists 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. 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 World War I ended, the Austro-Hungarian Empire had ceased to exist.

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?

The Peace Settlements

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

HISTORY & YOU What is the purpose of the United Nations today? Read to learn why the U.S. 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 World War I. 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, however, they were also expressing more idealistic reasons for the war.

Wilson's Proposals

No one expressed these idealistic reasons better than the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. Even before the end of the war, Wilson outlined "Fourteen Points" to the United States Congress—his basis for a peace settlement that he believed justified the enormous military struggle being waged.

Wilson's proposals for a truly just and lasting peace included reaching the peace agreements openly rather than through secret diplomacy. His proposals also included reducing armaments (military forces or weapons) to a "point consistent with domestic safety" and ensuring self-determination (the right of each people to have their 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, Wilson was enthusiastically cheered by many

Europeans. President 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. At the Paris Peace Conference, complications 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 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 for this dreadful war.

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 attacks. 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 Big Four powers. However, it played a smaller role than the other key powers—the United States, France, and Great Britain, who were 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 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.

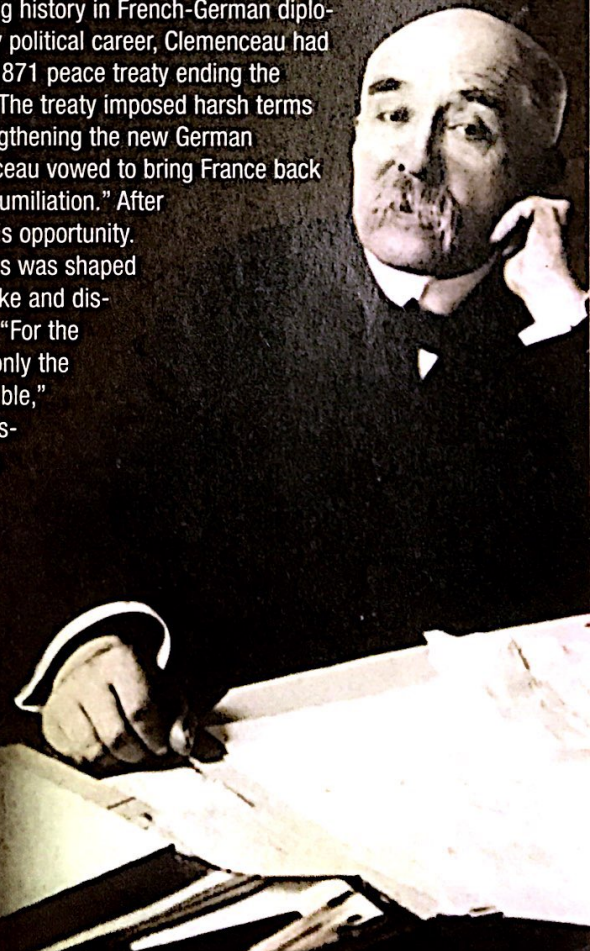
Wilson's wish that the creation of an international peacekeeping organization be the first order of business was granted. On January 25, 1919, the conference accepted the idea of a League of Nations. In return, Wilson agreed to make compromises on territorial arrangements. He did so because he believed 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. However, the U.S. Senate refused to ratify this agreement, which weakened the Versailles peace settlement.

PEOPLE *in* HISTORY

Georges Clemenceau
1841–1929 French Premier

Georges Clemenceau, premier of France during World War I, had a long history in French-German diplomacy. During his early political career, Clemenceau had been involved in the 1871 peace treaty ending the Franco-Prussian War. The treaty imposed harsh terms on France while strengthening the new German republic, and Clemenceau vowed to bring France back from this "shameful humiliation." After World War I, he had his opportunity. The Treaty of Versailles was shaped by Clemenceau's dislike and distrust of the Germans. "For the catastrophe of 1914 only the Germans are responsible," he said. "Only a professional liar would deny this." **How did Clemenceau's early political career affect his position at the Paris Peace Conference?**



The Treaty of Versailles

A German nationalist responded to the terms of the treaty:

"People and government have, during the most recent days, unambiguously made clear that we cannot sign the document which our enemies call a peace. One thing is certain, that any government which, by its signature, would confer upon this work of the devil . . . the halo of right, would, sooner or later, be driven out. . . . [N]othing is left but to remain cold-blooded, offer passive resistance wherever possible, and show contempt and pride."

—Alfred von Wegerer, May 28, 1919



DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

The Signing of Peace in the Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, 28th June 1919 by Sir William Orpen depicts the major powers at Versailles.

- Analyzing** Why is it significant that the German delegate sits on the opposite side of the table from the other delegates?
- Evaluating** According to von Wegerer, were the issues that caused World War I resolved in the Treaty of Versailles? Explain.

- ❶ Woodrow Wilson (United States)
- ❷ Georges Clemenceau (France)
- ❸ David Lloyd George (Britain)
- ❹ Vittorio Orlando (Italy)
- ❺ Dr. Johannes Bell (Germany)

The Treaty of Versailles

The final peace settlement of Paris consisted of five separate treaties with the defeated nations of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The Treaty of Versailles with Germany 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 damages that the Allied governments and their people had sustained as a result of the war.

The military and territorial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles also angered the Germans. Germany had to reduce its army to 100,000 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 the Rhine River became a demilitarized zone, stripped of all weapons and fortifications. This, it was hoped, would serve as a barrier to any future German moves against France. Although outraged by the "dictated peace," Germany accepted the treaty.

The Legacies of the War

The war, the Treaty of Versailles, and the separate peace treaties made with the other Central Powers redrew the map of eastern Europe. The German and Russian empires lost much territory. 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. Serbia formed the nucleus of a new state, called Yugoslavia, which combined Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

The principle of self-determination supposedly guided the Paris Peace Conference. However, the mixtures of peoples in eastern Europe made it impossible to draw boundaries along strict 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: Germans in Poland; Hungarians, Poles, and Germans in Czechoslovakia; Hungarians in Romania; and Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Albanians in Yugoslavia. The problem of ethnic minorities within nations would lead to many later conflicts.

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 controlled the territory of Syria, and Britain controlled the territories of Iraq and Palestine.

These acquisitions were officially called **mandates**. Woodrow Wilson had opposed the outright annexation of colonial territories by the Allies. As a result, the peace settlement created the mandate system. In this system, a nation officially governed a territory on a temporary basis as a mandate on behalf of the League of Nations, but did not own the territory.

World War I shattered the liberal, rational society that had existed in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe. The deaths of nearly 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. As a result, the power of governments over the lives of their citizens increased. Freedom of the press and speech were limited in the name of national security. World War I made the practice of strong central authority a way of life.

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

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

Vocabulary

1. **Explain** the significance of: psychological, Erich Ludendorff, Kiel, Friedrich Ebert, armistice, cooperation, David Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau, reparations, Alsace, Lorraine, Poland, mandates.

Main Ideas

2. **Specify** why Erich Ludendorff's final military gamble failed for Germany.
3. **List** some of President Wilson's proposals for creating peace. Use a chart like the one below to make your list.

President Wilson's Proposals
1.
2.

4. **Explain** why the mandate system was created. What were the mandates? Which countries governed them?

Critical Thinking

5. **The BIG Idea Making Generalizations** 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?
6. **Comparing and Contrasting** Compare and contrast Wilson's Fourteen Points to the Treaty of Versailles.
7. **Analyzing Visuals** Examine the painting on page 782. What is the significance of the setting?

Writing About History

8. **Informative Writing** Suppose that you are a reporter for a large newspaper. You are 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.

History ONLINE

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CHAPTER 23 Visual Summary

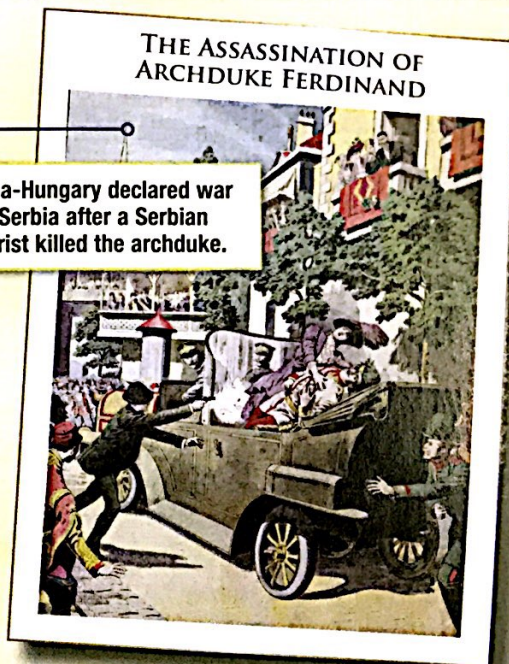


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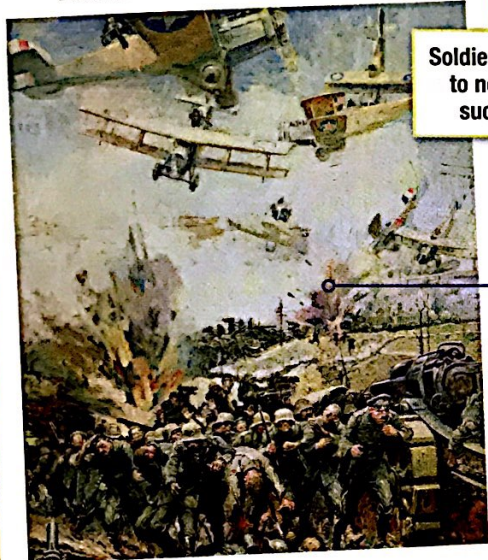
THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR I

- Nationalism contributed to the start of World War I, as rivals vied for colonies and trade.
- European nations increased the size of their militaries, heightening existing tensions.
- Serbia's desire for an independent state angered Austria-Hungary.

Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia after a Serbian terrorist killed the archduke.



GERMANS RETREAT DURING AN ALLIED AIR ATTACK, 1918



Soldiers struggled to adapt to new war technology such as the airplane.

The Reality of MODERN WARFARE

- Trench warfare brought the Western Front to a stalemate until new allies entered the war.
- Trench warfare and new technology caused a devastating loss of life.
- Governments took control of economies and rationed civilian goods, affecting all citizens.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION and THE END OF WORLD WAR I

- Russia's failure in the war and worker unrest led to the Russian Revolution in 1917.
- Bolshevik overthrow of the provisional government led to civil war and eventual Communist control.
- A defeated Germany signed an armistice with the Allies, ending the war on November 11, 1918.
- The Treaty of Versailles punished Germany, formed new nations, and created the League of Nations to solve international problems.

RESULTS OF PEACE TREATIES AFTER WORLD WAR I



Germany was forced to destroy tanks and other military equipment to conform to the Treaty of Versailles.