

The Supreme Council of the Treaty of Versailles

January, 1919

In Attendance:

- United States: President Woodrow Wilson (US 1) and Ambassador (US 2)
- France: Prime Minister Clemenceau (Fr 1) and Ambassador (FR 2)
- Great Britain: Prime Minister Lloyd George (GB)
- Italy: Premier Orlando (IT)

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| US 1 | We are meeting here to discuss the terms of the Treaty of Versailles on the defeated Germany and her allies, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. |
| FR 1 | The only way to avoid future wars is to destroy Germany, as we know it! The German people have shown they are evil! |
| GB | Please, Prime Minister, control your anger, we must be careful what we do here. I agree, Germany must be punished, but we must be careful. |
| FR 1 | Careful? The French people want security! We must break up Germany into several separate states and return to the way it was before 1870 when that fool Bismarck used realpolitik to create it! |
| US 2 | We Americans will not allow that Prime Minister, it will cause future wars. |
| GB | I agree, Great Britain will not agree with the break up of Germany either. We can take some land away, yes, but we cannot break it up totally.. |
| IT | <i>(Butting in—ignoring the conversation)</i> Italy wants what it was promised in 1915: We want land from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. |
| FR 2 | <i>(ignoring Italy)</i> President Wilson, you must understand our feelings. Germany must never again be able to do to us what it did in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and again in 1914! |
| US 1 | I do understand your position, but breaking up Germany is out of the question. Let us consider other options, shall we? |
| FR 1 | How do you propose keeping France safe then? |
| US 1 | We will create an organization called the “League of Nations” that will help to preserve peace through diplomacy. We will create democracy in all the conquered lands and allow the voice of the people to be heard. Democracy will lead to peace. |
| FR 2 | Will this “League of Nations” have an army—something to enforce its decisions? |
| GB | I don’t think the people of Great Britain would want to have its own sons fighting for an international organization. |
| IT | <i>(Butting in—ignoring the conversation)</i> What about the land we were promised? |
| FR 1 | I agree about the League, but it must have an army of its own! |
| US 2 | Sorry, Prime Minister, we cannot agree to that. |
| GB | Neither can Great Britain |
| FR 2 | We had 73% of our soldiers killed or injured by those German pigs! We MUST have security! |
| GB | I have a solution: Let us allow Germany to only have an army large enough for police work. |
| US 1 | Great idea! We agree – Germany will no longer have an army. |
| GB | We can also make Germany weaker by taking some of its land away. A smaller population will be less of a threat. |
| US 2 | We can take land from eastern Germany and create Poland. |
| FR 1 | Agreed, creating Poland is a great idea, but France wants Alsace-Lorraine back! It was wrongly taken from us in 1870 by that pig, Bismarck, in the Franco-Prussian War. |

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| GB | No problem, it's yours. |
| IT | On the topic of land, how about what you guys promised us in 1915? You said if we joined the Allies and left the Central Powers you would make sure we got lots of land! |
| FR 2 | I propose we take more land from Germany in the east and a chunk of Austria and create a new state, Czechoslovakia. |
| US 1 | Yes, yes, the Czechs and Slovaks deserve to have their own country. |
| GB | Okay, Great Britain will agree. We will create Czechoslovakia from German and Austrian land. |
| US 2 | If the Polish and Czechs and Slovaks get their own countries, what about the Hungarians? |
| FR 2 | Well, they should have their own country too. That will leave Austria as just a small country south of Germany. |
| US 1 | Perfect. Now what about the Serbians? They want and deserve their own strong country. |
| FR 1 | If we give them Bosnia and the Balkan peninsula then they will control all the southern Slavic people. It could be the country of Yugoslavia. |
| GB | Yes, that takes care of land issues in Europe. Germany is smaller and has lost its empire. The Austro-Hungarian Empire no longer exists. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia have been created |
| FR 1 | We are satisfied with this. |
| IT | We are not satisfied! How much land do we get from Austria? Italy wants the land it was promised when we left the German side! It is time to pay up! |
| FR 1 | This still doesn't fix all the destruction that France has suffered! Remember, most of the war was fought on French soil! Germany must pay for this! |
| US 1 | I do agree Germany must pay for its wrong deeds. |
| FR 1 | Germany should pay for all the costs of the war! It should pay <i>reparations</i> to repair the damage it caused! It must be forced to pay all the costs of the war. |
| US 2 | That is too harsh. |
| FR 2 | Too harsh? The blood thirsty Germans killed 1.3 million sons of France. No, sir! It is not too harsh! |
| GB | Maybe it would be better just to make them pay for the damaged buildings and ships they sunk using submarines. |
| US 1 | The United States agrees with Great Britain. |
| FR 1 | President Wilson, your country only sacrificed 100,000 lives in this great struggle, if you were French, you would see our point! |
| US 1 | We see your point, but we cannot destroy Germany's future completely. |
| US 2 | I can see this is a point that won't be decided now. We all agree though, that Germany will pay <i>reparations</i> , war damages, of some amount. |
| GB | Yes. |
| US 1 | Yes. |
| IT | Look I am getting tired of this. We want to get paid back in land. Are we going to get it or not? |
| GB | What are we going to do about the land taken from the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East? |
| FR 1 | France wants to keep what we took. |
| GB | So does Great Britain. |
| US 2 | The United States believes each area should be allowed to have self-rule and democracy. |
| FR 2 | We want to keep the area we took as colonies. |
| GB | Great Britain agrees. We already have Egypt as a protectorate. It would make perfect sense for us to keep Palestine and Jordan as colonies. |
| US 1 | The United States will not sign this Treaty if former Ottoman land is simply given to you as colonies. We believe in self-rule! |

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| FR 2 | President Wilson, perhaps this is a good time to use your "League of Nations." We can give the Ottoman land to the League of Nations to watch over until these areas are ready for self-rule. |
| US 2 | But the League won't have the resources to govern these areas. |
| FR 2 | No problem. The League can simply allow Great Britain and France to govern these areas as "mandates," territories administered by other countries in the name of the League of Nations. When they're ready for self-rule we will set them free. That way they aren't colonies. |
| GB | What a splendid idea – we can have a mandate system. Great Britain will take Jordan and Palestine as mandates from the League of Nations! |
| FR 1 | France will take Lebanon and Syria as mandates in the Middle East! |
| IT | Wait! What about Italy? We were promised land in Europe when we joined your side in the Great War and we have yet to get it! How about giving us some "mandates?" |
| US 1 | Could we sum up what we have agreed upon here? |
| GB | One, we are going to create the League of Nations, an international organization that will promote peace by working out differences through negotiation. |
| FR 2 | Two, to enhance French security, Germany is not allowed to rebuild its military. |
| IT | That is it! Italy is leaving this idiotic meeting! We have been wronged! <i>(Premier Orlando---go take your seat)</i> |
| US 2 | Three, Germany and Austria-Hungary will have land taken away to create new countries. |
| FR 1 | Four, Germany will pay reparations in order to pay for the damage it has caused all of us, especially France. |
| GB | Five, former colonies of the Ottoman Empire shall be given to France and Great Britain as "mandates" from the League of Nations. Turkey, the former Ottoman Empire, will be now limited to Asia Minor. |
| US 1 | Excellent, I think our work is done gentlemen! |

The Treaty of Versailles: France, 1919

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| 1. Describe what France wants to do to Germany. | |
| 2. What does Wilson want to create to keep peace? | |
| 3. What does France want the League of Nations to have? | |
| 4. What happens to the German army? | |
| 5. What new countries are created after WWI? | |
| 6. What are reparations? | |
| 7. What does the U.S. believe should happen to the Ottoman Empire's land? | |
| 8. What are mandates? Who supposedly has ultimate control over mandates? | |
| 9. Which mandates are taken by Great Britain? By France? | |

Wrap up Questions: VERY IMPORTANT!!!

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| 1. What was Germany's role in the Peace Conference? Why might this cause future problems? | 1. 2. |
| 2. What is the League of Nations missing that is necessary to keep peace? | |
| 3. What conditions were forced upon Germany by the Treaty of Versailles? | 1. 2. 3. |
| 4. What was Italy's main goal at the conference? Why might they be angry with the Allies in the future? | 1. 2. |
| 5. Which empires have been destroyed by World War I? | 1. 2. 3. |