

The Consequences of World War One



Review: WW1

1. When was World War One?
2. Who were the main countries fighting in World War One?
3. Where did the worst battles happen?
4. Why did Britain join World War One?
5. Name one new technology from World War One.

The Impact on People

- WW1 caused the deaths of 8 million soldiers and 9 million civilians.
- In addition to this, many soldiers who survived came home with terrible injuries and mental trauma.
- In Britain, many soldiers were diagnosed with “shellshock”.
- This was a mental condition caused by the horror and trauma of experiencing the war.
- Soldiers developed symptoms such as blindness, deafness, becoming mute, paralysis, nightmares, depression and confusion.
- Doctors at the time didn’t understand how to help these men, and so many were unable to fully recover.



Physical Destruction

The destruction in the areas of fighting after the war was huge.

On the Western Front, the war destroyed 300,000 houses, 6,000 factories, 1,000 miles of railway and 112 coal mines.

Many towns and villages in northern France and Belgium had to be rebuilt after the war. For example, the town of Louvaine in Belgium was totally burned down during the war.

The fields where the war was fought were unusable for years after the war ended.

People continued to find un-exploded bombs in their fields and towns for years after the war.



Debt

The war cost Europe a lot of money, both during and after, to pay for weapons, supplies, and for rebuilding after the war.

Germany and Great Britain spent about 60% of the money their economy produced during the war.

Germany, in particular, suffered from massive debts, which led to them printing more money which made the situation worse.

America was one of the few countries that didn't suffer economically from the war. In fact, the war improved the American economy.

Britain only finished paying back this debt in 2015.



Territorial Changes



Territorial Changes

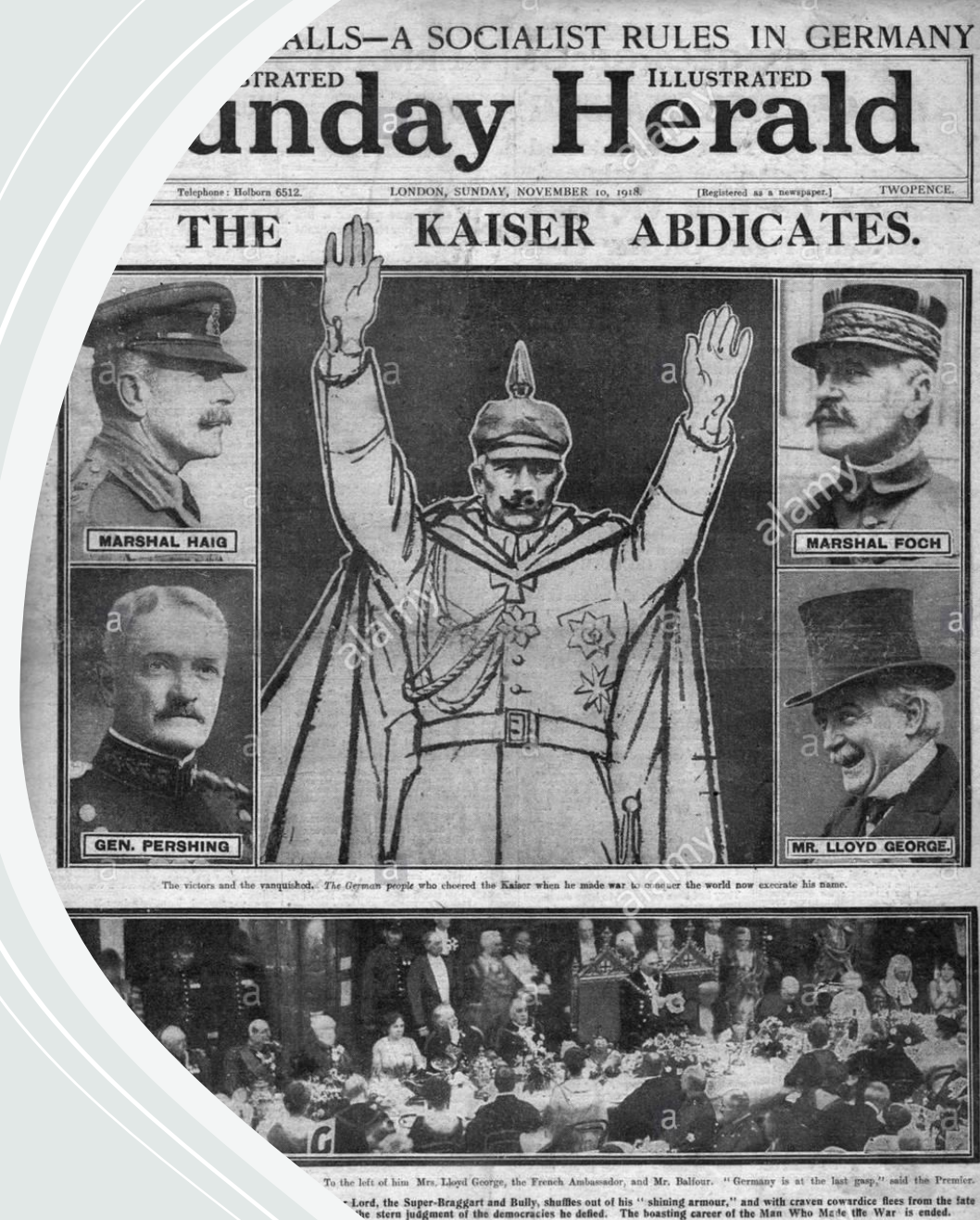
The war ended four empires – Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

As a result, the map of Europe changed significantly, with new countries being created, such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

Other countries became bigger or smaller – Germany lost some of its land to France, while Poland gained land from Germany, Russia and Austria.

Many more countries, such as Finland, gained independence.

Germany and the Ottomans lost their empires, allowing France and Britain to gain new territory in Africa and the Middle East.



Social Changes

The war led to many changes in society across Europe.

New political ideas, such as communism and fascism gained popularity.

Old ideas about gender and women's roles changed, becoming less strict. In Britain and America, some women were given the right to vote in 1918, and more women across Europe started working.



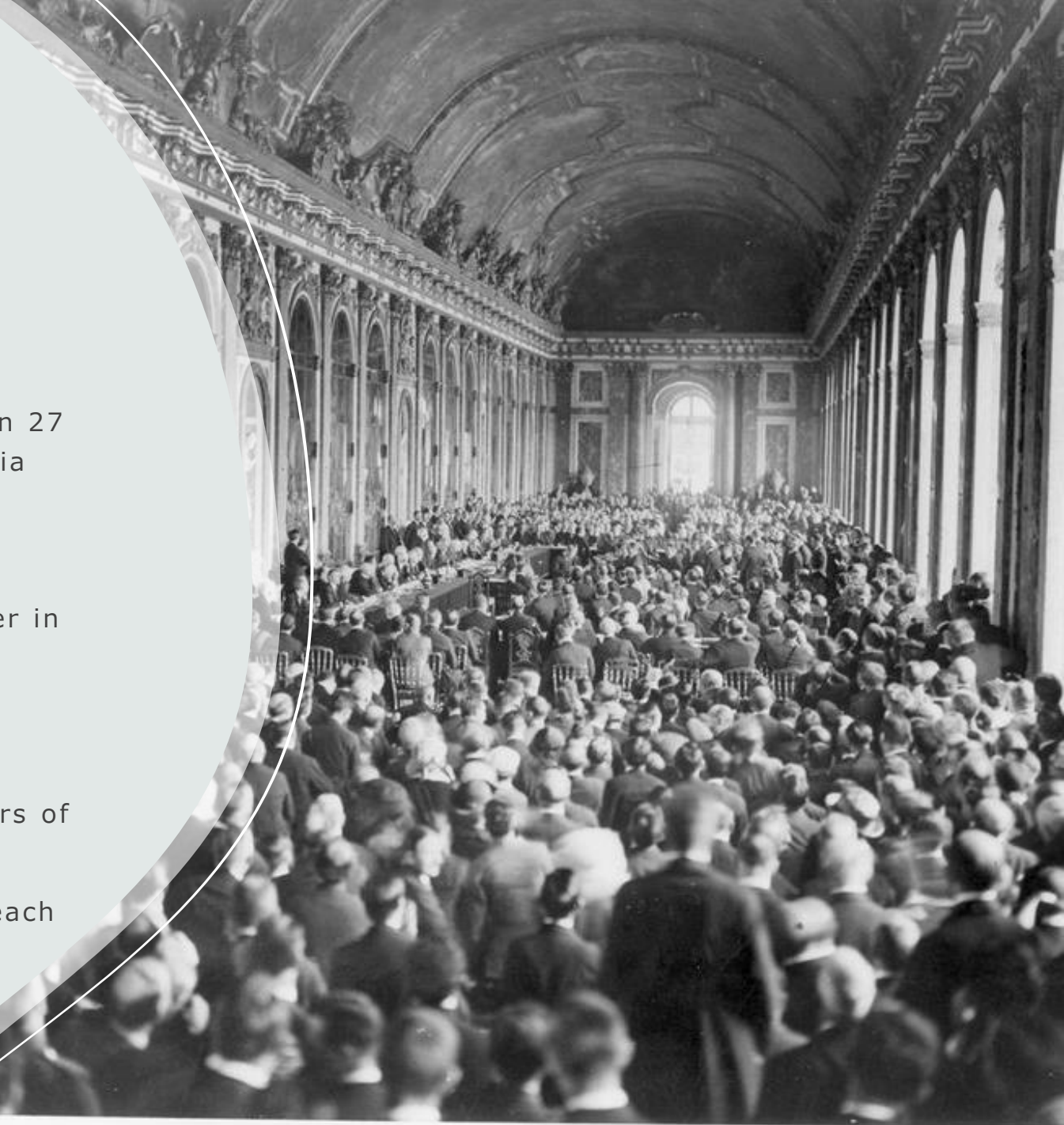
Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920)

The Paris Peace Conference was a meeting between 27 countries, but the Central Powers (Germany, Austria and Ottoman) were not allowed to participate.

It had three main aims:

- To prevent Germany becoming a European power in the future.
- To isolate Russia and prevent the spread of communism.
- To create a balance of power between the victors of the war.

The USA, Britain, France led the Conference, but each of them had different aims.

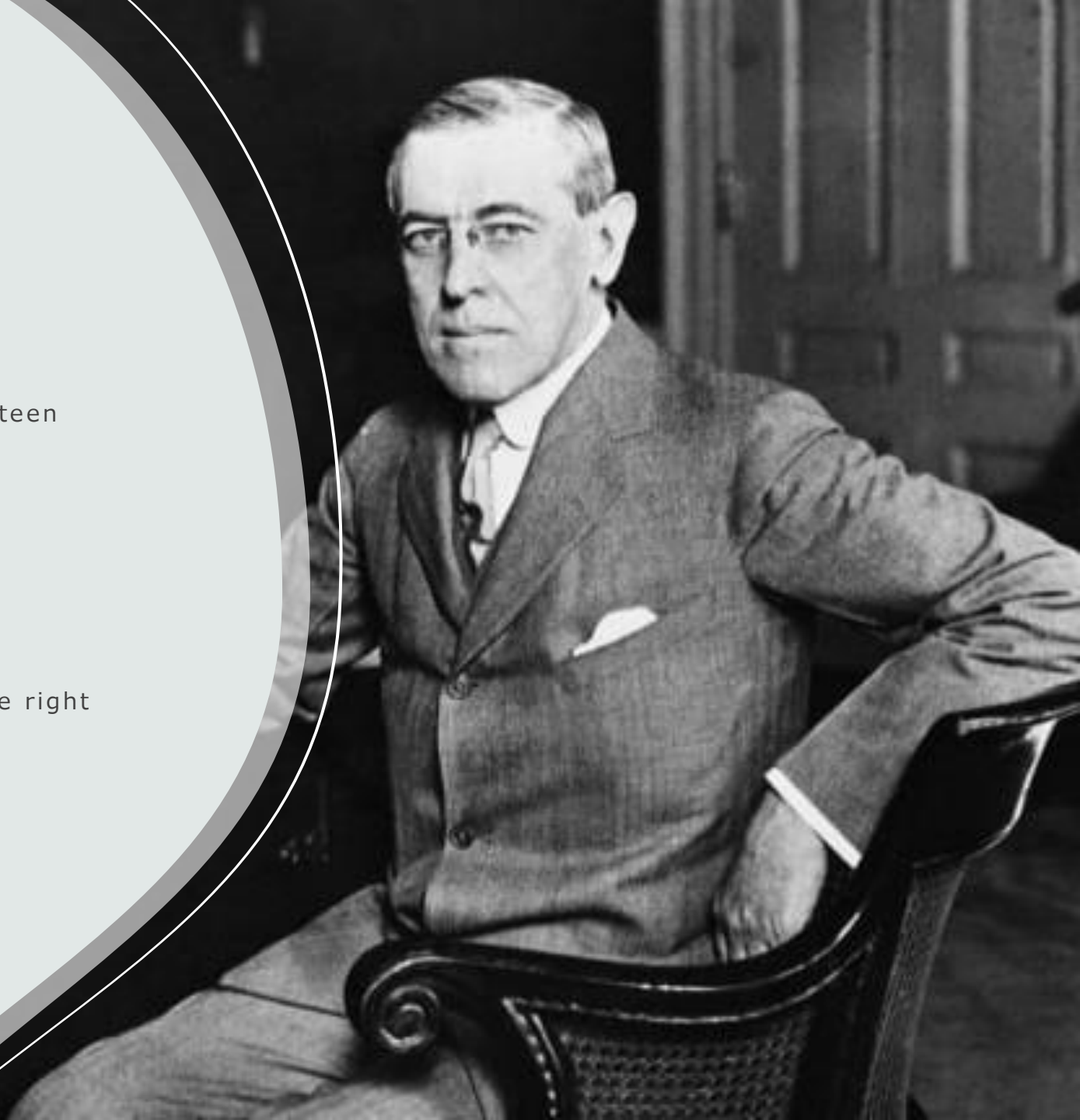


The Fourteen Points

American President Woodrow Wilson wrote the Fourteen Points as a guide to the aims of the Paris Peace Conference.

The six key principles of the Fourteen Points were:

- Setting up a League of Nations
- Disarmament
- Self-determination for the people of Europe - the right to rule themselves
- Freedom for colonies
- Freedom of the seas
- Free trade



Britain and France at the Paris Peace Conference

Britain and France did not agree with the Fourteen Points when it came to making peace with Germany.

France's main aim was to punish Germany for the war and to prevent them from ever being a threat again.

Meanwhile, Britain's aim was to prevent Germany from challenging Britain's navy, but keep Germany strong enough to do trade with.



Why did they have different aims?

America

- League of Nations
- Disarmament
- Freedom

France

- Punishing Germany
- Weaken German economy
- Weaken Germany military

Britain

- Weaken German navy
- Keep German economy strong for trade

Treaty of Versailles (1919)

Who
achieved
their aims?

The Treaty of Versailles was signed at the Paris Peace Conference in June 1919.

The main points of the treaty were:

- Territory was taken from Germany, depriving it of valuable industrial income.
- Germany had to accept responsibility for starting the war, called the "War Guilt Clause" leading to feelings of humiliation and anger.
- Germany had to pay reparations of £6.6 billion, which would ensure that the economy would not recover.
- Germany's armed forces were severely reduced. There was no air force, a maximum 100,000 soldiers and a reduced navy.

The Treaty made people in Germany very angry, and the men who signed it were known as the "November Criminals". The Treaty helped push Germany towards WW2.

League of Nations (1920-1946)

The League of Nations was created in 1920, based on the ideas of US President Wilson.

It had 48 member countries in 1920, and its aim was to allow these countries to solve problems between them without needing to go to war.

It had several parts, the most important ones being:

- An assembly, which met once a year.
- A council, which had 9 representatives and met every 3 or 4 months.
- A court, which was supposed to make sure countries were following international laws.

Germany and Russia were not allowed to join the League of Nations, and although the League was President Wilson's idea, America did not join either.



Problems with the League of Nations

The League of Nations had mixed success, but ultimately failed to prevent massive war in Europe again.

The League was ambitious in its aims but struggled to achieve them.

Its main weaknesses were:

- It had no power to enforce its aims. For example, in 1921, Poland invaded Lithuania. The League asked them to leave, but Poland refused and the League could do nothing.
- Powerful countries such as America refused to join the League.
- It could only make decisions if all members agreed, which they rarely did.
- The organization was confusing and making decisions took a long time.

Questions

1. Which country **didn't** have massive debts at the end of the war?
2. What empires were ended after WW1?
3. What changes happened for women after WW1?
4. Which countries were excluded from the Paris Peace Conference?
5. What was the aim of the League of Nations?