

Conflict: The Treaty of Versailles & League of Nations

1) The aims of the Big 3

USA: Wilson's aims: Create a League of Nations based on his Fourteen Points. Not to blame Germany for the war

France: Clemenceau's aims: Revenge and to punish Germany. To return Alsace-Lorraine to France. Create an independent Rhineland. Huge reparations. Reduce the German army so that Germany would never be strong enough to attack France again. **Britain: Lloyd George:** A 'fair' peace that would be tough enough to please the electors who wanted to 'make Germany pay', but would leave Germany strong enough to trade. To reduce the German navy so that Britain kept its place as the biggest and best navy in the world.



4) The League of Nations

Aims: Stop wars, Improve working and living (the amount of weapons) and Encourage cooperation around the world (**SIDE**)

Organisation: the assembly, met once a year; a council, which met more regularly to consider crises; a small secretariat to handle the paperwork; a Court of International Justice; and a number of committees such as the International Labour Organisation and the Health Committee to carry out its humanitarian work.

Strengths: set up by the Treaty of Versailles, which every nation had signed, and it had 58 nations as members by the 1930s. To enforce its rules, it could offer *arbitration* (negotiation), or apply trade sanctions (stop trade) as a punishment

Weaknesses: set up by the Treaty of Versailles (which every nation hated so it was a bad start); that its aims were **too ambitious**; that **Germany, Russia and the USA were not members** so sanctions wouldn't work and powerful countries were missing; that it had **no army**; that its organisation was **complicated and slow**; and that decisions had to be **unanimous** (everyone agrees).

Permanent members of the League : Britain, France, Italy, Japan. A space was saved for the USA **who never joined**



2) The terms of the Treaty

- Land: Alsace and Lorraine back to France, Germany's colonies taken away, Germany lost 10% of its land which included resources and German people, the Saar was given to the League for 15 years, Anschluss (union) with Austria was banned
- Army: German army reduced to 100,000 men, no conscription, no tanks, aircraft or submarines, 6 ships, 15,000 sailors, Rhineland demilitarised but still belonged to Germany
- Money: Germany had to pay £6.6bn in reparations
- Blame: Germany had to accept 100% of the blame for causing WW1



3) Reactions to the Treaty:

USA- too harsh on Germany, liked League of Nations being set up

Britain- OK but concerns about trade being damaged

France- not harsh enough

Germany- Treaty very unfair, hated everything

Other treaties:

Germany's allies in WW1 were punished with similar treaties that limited their armies, set reparations and took land away

Austria: Treaty of Saint Germain

Hungary: Treaty of Trianon

Bulgaria: Treaty of Neuilly

Turkey: Treaty of Sèvres

5) The League in the 20s

Name	Description
Aaland Islands 1921 ✓	Sweden and Finland accepted the League's arbitration to give the Aaland Islands to Finland.
Vilna 1921 ✗	The Poles invaded Vilna (the capital of Lithuania). The League ordered Poland to withdraw. Poland refused; the League could do nothing
Corfu 1923 ✗	Mussolini ignored the League's orders to pull out of Corfu, and made Greece pay money to Italy.
Bulgaria 1925 ✓	Greece obeyed the League's orders to pull out of Bulgaria in 1925.
Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928	Sixty-five countries signed a treaty to end war - but then they just ignored it.
Locarno Pact 1925	Germany, France and Belgium agreed to respect the borders set at Versailles, whilst Germany agreed with Poland and Czechoslovakia to settle any border disputes peacefully. Germany had previously complained bitterly about their loss of territory.

6) Manchurian Crisis 1932

Japan had invaded and conquered Manchuria. It took the League nearly a year to send a commission and declare that Japan ought to leave – in response Japan left the League. The League couldn't send an army, and it needed America's support to impose sanctions successfully. In the end, it did nothing. Japan got away with it but the League lost a key member and its weaknesses were exposed.

8) Effects of Manchurian and Abyssinian crises:

- if a strong nation was prepared to ignore the League, the League could do nothing about it.
- slowness made it look scared.
- Sanctions were shown to be useless without the USA.
- Britain and France were not prepared to use force.
- The four major powers - Japan, Italy, Britain and France - all betrayed the League.
- Smaller nations realised that the League would not protect them.
- Britain and France decided that the League was useless to stop war, and followed instead the policy of appeasement.
- Hitler was encouraged to move ahead with his plans.

7) Abyssinian crisis 1935-6

Italy, who were one of the key members of the League invaded Abyssinia, breaking one of the main rules. Although the Abyssinian emperor went to the League himself to ask for help, all the League did was to ban weapons sales, which did Abyssinia more harm than Italy.

The Hoare Laval secret pact between Britain and France offered Italy 2/3rds of Abyssinia, which betrayed the whole principle of the League. Italy invaded the rest of Abyssinia.

It was a total failure for the League and all of the key members had betrayed it. Hitler saw that the League was finished and began to push for more in Europe.

START:1) Hitler's aims

- Make Germany great again
- Overturn the Treaty of Versailles
- Unite German Speaking people
- Lebensraum (living space/land)
- Destroy Communist Russia



Conflict: Hitler's Foreign Policy

Box 7) Invasion of Czechoslovakia March 1939

15 March 1939, German troops marched into Czechoslovakia. Hitler's invasion of Czechoslovakia was the end of appeasement:

- It proved that Hitler had been lying at Munich.
- It showed that Hitler was not just interested in a 'Greater Germany' (the Czechs were not Germans).
- Chamberlain gave a speech saying that he could not trust Hitler not to invade other countries.
- Chamberlain guaranteed to defend Poland if Germany invaded

Box 6) Results of appeasement:

- **Czechoslovakia was weakened.**
- **Britain gained a year to build up its armed forces**, but so did Hitler.
- **Hitler decided that Britain and France were afraid of him**, and that they would not stop him whatever he did.
- **Russia** decided that Britain and France would never stand up to Hitler, and that war with Germany was inevitable.
- The people of Britain realised that they had been **duped**, and decided that war was inevitable.
- It improved the **war morale** of the British people, who knew they had done everything possible to avoid war.

Box 2) 1933-35:

1933: Hitler comes to power

1934: Hitler tries to take power in Austria. Austrian Nazis murder the chancellor, **Dolfuss**. Italy moves its army to the border and Hitler backs down.

1935: As planned in the Treaty of Versailles, the people of **Saar** (which had been given to the League for 15 years) voted to return to Germany.

1935: Hitler breaks the Treaty by reintroducing **conscription** which increases the size of the German army to half a million members. Britain, France and Italy do nothing.

1935: Anglo German Naval agreement: Britain helps Germany break the Treaty of Versailles by signing an agreement to allow Germany a navy 35% of the size of Britain's.

Box 8) The Nazi Soviet Pact 1939

Everybody realised that **Hitler's next target was Poland**, so **Chamberlain** promised to defend Poland BUT Britain was too far away to help and only had a small army.

In April 1939, Stalin suggested an **alliance of Russia, France and Britain** against Germany. Hitler would not have been able to invade Poland if taking that action would have meant war with Russia.

However, the alliance was never made because.:

- Chamberlain did not like communist Russia.
- Poland would not let Russian troops go into Poland.
- Stalin did not trust that France and Britain would resist Germany.

August 1939, Hitler made the **Nazi-Soviet Pact** with Stalin - a promise not to go to war with each other and (secretly) a promise to invade Poland and split it between them.

With the confidence to invade Poland knowing he wouldn't have to fight Russia, Hitler invaded Poland on 1st Sept 1939. Britain kept their promise & declared war on Germany.

END: WW2 began.



Box 4) 1938: Anschluss

Hitler encouraged the Austrian Nazis to demand a union with Germany. Then he invades when the Austrian chancellor announces a vote to see what Austrians want. After the German invasion, 99 per cent of Austrians vote "Yes". Britain and France do nothing, even though the rules of the Treaty had clearly stated Anschluss was banned

Box 5) 1938: The Sudetenland and appeasement

The Sudetenland was part of Czechoslovakia and contained German speaking people.

Hitler encourage the leader of the Sudeten Nazis, to rebel, and demands a union with Germany.

When the Czech government declared martial law, Hitler threatened war. Chamberlain went to see Hitler and without consulting Czechoslovakia, he promises to give Hitler all the areas where more than 50% of the population is German. Then he persuades France to agree.

Chamberlain told Hitler about the decision, but Hitler then demanded ALL the Sudetenland. Chamberlain refuses; it looks like war.

A conference is held at Munich. Russia and Czechoslovakia are not invited. France, Britain, Italy and Germany agree to give Hitler the Sudetenland.

Chamberlain waves 'a piece of paper' with Hitler's statement that he does not want to go to war. German troops march into the Sudetenland, and are welcomed as heroes.

This is called appeasement: giving Hitler what he wants to stop a war from breaking out. It was used because (TRAP)

Treaty of Versailles had been too harsh on Germany and they deserved a fair deal

Fear of Communism was greater than the fear of Hitler- many people believed that having Germany as an ally could block any expansion of **Russia**

To avoid war- Britain wasn't ready and needed time to rebuild the **Army**

Public (Britain) were scared- they remembered WW1 and did not support a war

Box 3) 1936: Remilitarisation of the Rhineland.

32,000 lightly armed troops sent in. They are given orders to retreat if France offers any resistance. France does nothing. Britain say the "Germans are only going into their own backyard" and that the Treaty had been too harsh and also do nothing.

