

Disarmament

Section V 'In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes strictly to observe the military, naval and air clauses ...' This meant:

- Abolition of conscription and reduction of army to 100,000. No tanks or military aircraft allowed
- Navy limited to 6 battleships, 6 cruisers, 12 destroyers, 12 torpedo boats. No submarines allowed

War guilt

The principle of war guilt and the resulting reparations was laid down in Article 231:

'The Allied Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.'

The process

- 1918 Oct: The German government seeks an armistice on the basis of Wilson's Fourteen Points. Britain and France broadly accept but stipulate that there should be compensation for damage to the civilian population
- 11 Nov: Armistice
- 1919 Jan: Peace Conference begins. Germany not invited
- 7 May: Terms formally presented. Germany allowed fifteen days (later extended to 21) for observations
- 29 May: German counter-proposals lead to only minor changes
- 16 June: Germany presented with the final terms; acceptance required within seven days. The German government discusses the possibility of renewed fighting; Hindenburg says success is impossible, but favours heroic defeat
- 20 June: Chancellor Scheidemann resigns rather than sign terms; President Ebert persuaded not to resign
- 22 June: Constituent Assembly accepts terms by 237 to 138
- 28 June: Foreign Minister Müller signs the treaty. Nineteen minutes before the deadline the German fleet is scuttled at Scapa Flow

The estimated cost of the war

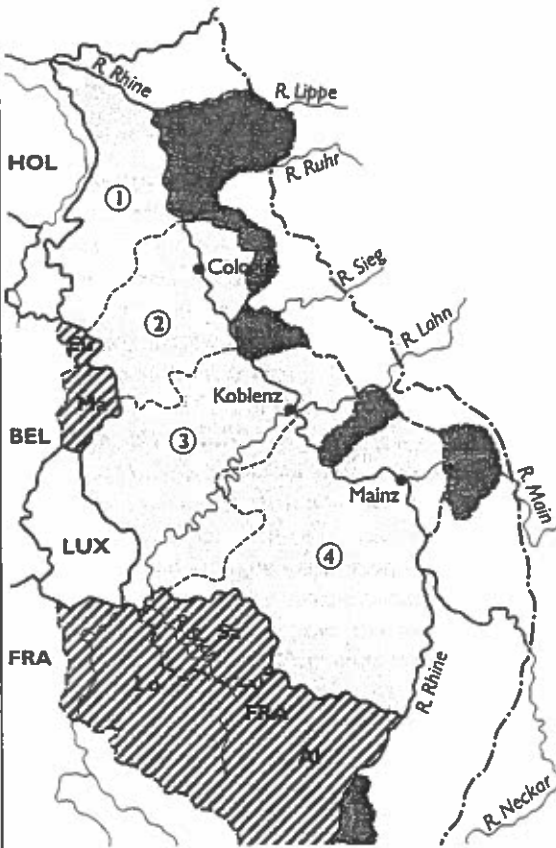
Cost	France	British Empire	Germany
Dead (m)	1.3	1	2
Wounded (m)	4	2	6.3
Physical damage	300,000 buildings destroyed 21,000 km ² farmland destroyed	Small	Small
Financial costs	£29,000m		£8,500m

Reparations

Germany was made liable to pay for physical damage caused in the war (most of which would go to France and Belgium), but also for war pensions (so Britain would gain major reparations). The actual amount of compensation was left to a commission to decide. In the meantime, 20,000 million marks of reparations (mainly paid in kind, e.g. industrial goods) were paid. In April 1921 the Allies fixed the total amount at 132,000 million gold marks over 30 years. See pages 82-3

Learning trouble spot

The Rhineland and the Ruhr



The Rhineland

The economically and militarily strategic area of the Rhineland played a crucial part in German history from 1919 to 1936. Under the Treaty of Versailles the areas either side of the river Rhine were DEMILITARISED, that is Germany could not keep troops there and had to disband fortifications. This was stated to be permanent. In addition, to ensure German compliance with Versailles, especially the paying of reparations, the four Allied powers occupied the west bank and a few areas on the other side. This was expected to last for fifteen years. There was the possibility of phased withdrawal or extended occupation depending upon Germany's behaviour. From 1924 some troops were withdrawn.

In the Locarno Pact of 1925 (see pages 81 and 85), Germany voluntarily accepted her western borders, including permanent demilitarisation; and France agreed not to invade unilaterally as she had done in 1923 (see below). The Allies withdrew their last troops in 1930.

The Ruhr

France and Belgium extended their occupation of Germany by marching into the adjacent Ruhr region briefly in 1921 and for over a year in 1923 in reaction to Germany's technical infringement of reparations payments. The French invasion provoked a major crisis in Germany.

Key

- Left bank of Rhine and 50 km of right bank up to this limit permanently demilitarised
- Occupied in 1918 by:
 - 1 Belgium
 - 2 Britain
 - 3 France
 - 4 USA
- Occupied by French and Belgian troops, January 1923-5
- Territory lost by Germany at Versailles:
 - Sa Saar (until 1935 plebiscite)
 - Lo Lorraine
 - Al Alsace
 - Eu Eupen
 - Ma Malmédy

HOL Holland LUX Luxembourg
 BEL Belgium FRA France