

The Treaty of Versailles

France and Clemenceau: Wanted revenge and to cripple Germany so they wouldn't be able to attack France again.

Britain and Lloyd George: Britain wanted revenge on Germany for the British lives lost however Lloyd George wanted to trade with Germany in future. He was worried that treating Germany harshly would make them want revenge.

American and Wilson: Least damaged by the war as had only fought for 11 months.

Americans didn't want to cripple Germany as they wanted a stable Germany, and to stay out of European affairs (isolationism). Wilson wanted to help Europe recover and he came up with 14 points for an ideal world, one being the LoN.

Terms of the Treaty: LAMB

Land – Germany lost 13% of their territory and 6 million people were lost.

Army – limited 100,000 and the Rhineland was demilitarised.

Reparations – set at £6.6 billion

Blame – War Guilt Clause (231) Germany must accept complete blame for WWI.

Germany was also banned from joining the LoN.

Aftermath of the ToV:

France and Clemenceau: Thought the treaty should have been harsher, in a subsequent election Clemenceau was voted out.

Britain and Lloyd George: The public supported the treaty, Lloyd George was treated as a hero, and he felt that the treaty was too harsh.

American and Wilson: The public felt the treaty was too harsh and the US voted to stay out of the LoN, Wilson was devastated.

Germany: The public felt with the Kaiser gone there was no need for punishment, they were shocked with the terms of the treaty and branded the govt who were forced to sign it November Criminals.

Questions...

1. How do you know Source A opposes..... (4 marks)
2. How useful are sources B and C.....? (12 marks)
3. Write an account of how X led to a crisis. (8 marks)
4. The main reason for X was.....How far do you agree with this statement? (16+4 marks)

Aims of the League of Nations (LoN)

The league was idealist rather than realistic.

It aimed to:

- Stop war from breaking out
- To encourage disarmament
- To improve working conditions
- To tackle deadly diseases

It planned to give moral condemnation to aggressive countries and had no army.

Structure of the LoN

Assembly – met yearly to discuss and vote on matters. It was in charge of new members, the Court and money. Every country had an equal vote but had to be unanimous in decisions.

Council – Made up of the 4 permanent members (Britain, France, Italy and Japan) met more frequently and they could stop a ruling with a veto.

Permanent Court of Justice: Could settle international disputes but it could only advise which made it weak.

Special commissions: these included the Commission for Refugee, the Slavery Commission, the Health Organisation and the International Labour Organisation

The league in the 1920s

1920: Vilna

Lithuania and Poland were two of the new countries created after WWI.

Vilna was supposed to be the capital of Lithuania however the Polish army took control of it. The LoN asked them to leave and they refused.

Poland took Vilna and the LoN did nothing.

1921-1925: Upper Silesia

On the border between Germany and Poland, both claimed Upper Silesia. The League oversaw the partitioning of the area, part to Germany and part to Poland.

Germany and Poland agreed to this but neither was happy with that they received. This led to poor relations between the two countries.

Paper 1 Section B Conflict and Tension 1918-1939

The league in the 1920s cont...

1921: The Aland Islands.

Finland and Sweden both claimed the Aland Islands and threatened to go to war over it. The LoN investigated and decided the islands should go to Finland if they promised not to build forts on them – both sides agreed to this. The LoN avoided war with two small countries.

1923: Corfu

When Italian officials were murdered in Greece Mussolini demanded that the murderers be executed and compensation be paid. Greece didn't know who the murderers were so Mussolini invaded and occupied Corfu, killing 15 people. The LoN said Greece should pay compensation and Mussolini should withdraw his troops. Mussolini wasn't satisfied so he complained to Britain, France and Japan. They undermined the league, forced Greece to pay compensation and apologise while Mussolini kept his troops in Corfu.

1925: Bulgaria

When Greek soldiers were killed in the Bulgarian border Greece invaded. The LoN condemned Greece and told them to withdraw. Greece felt that after Mussolini the LoN were being hypocritical; however as a small nation they did not want poor relations with the LoN so they obeyed.

The Wall St Crash 1929

When economies around the world crashed the league was powerless to help as people turned to extremist parties who promised to help people.

The Manchurian Crisis

Causes: Japan had an increasing population and needed extra raw materials. Manchuria was large resource rich. Japan had heavily invested in Manchuria and controlled the South Manchuria Railway. The people of Japan looked to the army rather than the weak politicians to help them.

Chronology:

1. The Mukden Incident, Sept 1931 – explosion on the South Manchurian Railway. The Japanese blamed the Chinese.
2. The Chinese denied this and said their soldiers had been asleep.
3. The Kwantung army used the events to take over Manchuria.
4. The people of Japan celebrated the invasion; the govt wasn't happy but had to go along with it.
5. In 1932 Japan named Manchuria Manchukuo.

Consequences: LoN commissioned the Lytton inquiry which concluded Japan was in the wrong and should not have invaded. However the many in the LoN felt Japan had rights to Manchuria and they didn't want a fight with powerful Japan. Japan left the league and by 1938 controlled most Chinese cities.

The Abyssinian Crisis

Causes: Italy had tried and failed to conquer Abyssinia in 1896 and Mussolini wanted to restore national pride and rebuild the Ancient Roman Empire. Mussolini also believed the invasion would be easy and the LoN wouldn't stop him.

Chronology:

1. Dec 1934 – Italian and Abyssinian soldiers fought at Wal Wal, 150 were killed.
2. Oct 1935 – Italy entered Abyssinia despite moral condemnation from the league. Italy used chemical weapons.
3. The Abyssinian Emperor pleaded for help
4. The Hoare Laval Pact, Dec 1935 – Britain and France met with Mussolini in secret and agreed that it could keep parts of Abyssinia. Details were leaked to the press and there was outrage, but it was too late.
4. May 1936 – Italian troops marched into the capital..

Consequences: May 1936 Italy left the League. This left Britain France and USSR (joined in 1934) to run the LoN. From this time on the LoN lost respect and its days as an international police force were over.

The Road to War

The Dollfuss Affair, 1934 – Dollfuss, the Austrian Chancellor strongly opposed unification with Germany so with the backing of Hitler Austrian Nazis assassinated him. The Austrian army restored order and Italian troops moved to the border so Hitler backed down.

Rearmament, 1935 – Hitler bought in conscription in Germany, breaking the terms of ToV.

The Saar Plebiscite, 1935 – when 90% of the population voted to join Germany again Hitler used this to show that German speaking people wanted to unite with the Nazis.

Stresa Front, 1935 – Britain, France and Italy agreed to guarantee Austrian independence.

Anglo – German Naval agreement, 1935 – Britain agree that Hitler could build up the German navy, Hitler saw this as Britain admitting ToV was unfair.

German expansion - Lebensraum

Reoccupation of the Rhineland, March 1935 – 22,000 troops sent to the Rhineland and were greeted with flowers, they faced no resistance and this gave Hitler confidence. Britain and France started to rearm.

Anschluss, 1938 – The Nazis invaded Austria and were again greeted with flowers. Mussolini allowed it to happen this time.

Sudeten Crisis, 1938:

Cause: 3 million Germans lived in the Sudetenland; some claimed they were being persecuted. The area was rich in resources and was a perfect base to launch a full scale invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Events: Hitler stirred up trouble and caused mass demonstrations. He promised to invade to protect German speaking people. Chamberlain (British PM) met with Hitler and appeased him by agreeing to let him have the Sudeten land if he promised to keep peace in Europe. With this policy of appeasement Chamberlain said he secured 'peace in our time'. Hitler invaded the Sudetenland in Oct 1938.

Consequences: Invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 – this was different as no German speaking people lived there. Chamberlain had to admit appeasement failed and Britain had isolated Russia. Chamberlain guaranteed Poland's independence but Hitler did not take this seriously.

The Nazi Soviet Pact

In August 1939 Germany and Russia signed a pact that stated that if Hitler invaded Poland Russia would not attack Germany.

The invasion of Poland

On the 1st September Germany invaded Poland. On the 3rd September Britain declared war on Germany.