

## Unit 2: World War I

### Lesson 8: War Aims and Goals for Peace

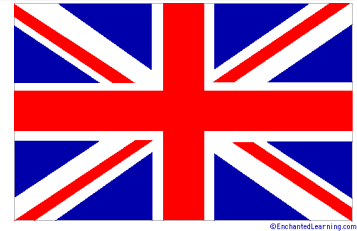
*What were each nations specific aims upon entering WWI and how did these change by the end?*

#### A. General themes

1. most nations' aims were nebulous.
  - i. Austria was really the only power that had clear war aims: to crush Serbia and increase its influence in the Balkans.
  
2. as war continued, propaganda encouraged hatred and people demanded unconditional victory and territorial concessions from the loser.
  
3. initial war aims tended to fall into three categories:
  - i. nationalist goals
  - ii. imperialist goals
  - iii. concern for security

## B. Initial war aims by country

### 1. Britain



- i. wanted to crush German militarism – esp. German navy
- ii. wanted to restore Belgium's pre-war neutral position
- iii. wanted to seize Germany's overseas colonies.
  - a) southern dominions (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa) wanted these.
- iv. wanted strategic trade-offs with the French and Russians, including control of Persia and colonial rule over Egypt.

## B. Initial war aims by country

### 2. France

i. wanted to crush German military power and to remove any threat to France's eastern frontier.



a) this involved regaining Alsace-Lorraine, taking control of Germany's Saar region and eliminating any German military positions in the Rhineland.

ii. wanted to strengthen its control of African territories, especially Morocco.

## B. Initial war aims by country

### 3. Italy

- i. wanted to gain control of areas in Austria-Hungary that were populated by Italian-speaking people.
  - a) led by Italy Irredentist movement.
- ii. wanted control of other areas, such as the Aegean Islands, part of the Turkish coast and extension of its African territory.



## B. Initial war aims by country

### 4. Russia

i. wanted the destruction and punishment of Austria-Hungary and an end to Austrian influence in the Balkans.



ii. wanted a greater Serbia that would be a Russian client.

iii. wanted control of the Straits and of Constantinople.

a) this was agreed to by France and Britain in the secret accords of April, 1915.

1) other secret agreements:

i) Britain and France agreed to divide the Arab lands of the Ottoman Empire among themselves

ii) Russia was promised all of Armenia and more of Turkestan.

## B. Initial war aims by country

### 5. Japan

i. wanted to expand its holdings on the Chinese mainland

How the Treaty of Versailles divided up German colonies between the victorious nations.



a) sparked by population pressure in Japan

b) wanted German colonies in China and also areas under Chinese control, too

B. Initial war aims by country

6. Germany

i. historian Fritz Fischer claims that Germany was consciously striking out to establish itself as a world power before Russian strength could challenge it.

ii. mainstream historians see Germany acting much the same way as other European nations: nationalist, imperialist, and concern for its security.

iii. once war was declared, most agree that Germany sought:

a) control of France's iron producing areas

b) control of Poland, the Baltic and Russia's westernmost regions

1) this would push Russia back to the borders of Peter the Great  
c) a Mitteleuropa or German dominated central Europe, which would include an economic union of Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and possibly Holland and Scandinavia.

C. 1917 as a key year

1. Enormous sacrifices by civilians and soldiers coupled with an intensive propaganda campaign that vilified the enemy meant that only unconditional victory could be used as justification.





## C. 1917 as a key year

### 2. US entry into WWI; US Aims

i. President Woodrow Wilson wanted to transform the old war aims

a) was a Calvinist and a liberal -- so he views the US as destined or appointed by God to be the mechanism to uplift the world.

ii. wanted to defend democracy and for WWI to be a war to end all wars

iii. Lenin published the secret treaties previously signed by the Triple Entente

a) hoped to spark revolution in the west and make for a worldwide communist transformation.

b) embarrassed the British and French

c) led to a US attempt to purify the war aims via of Woodrow Wilson's 14 points



C. 1917 as a key year

2. US entry into WWI; US Aims

iv. Woodrow Wilson and his 14 Points

- a) open democracy – an end to secret treaties
- b) absolute freedom of the seas – something the British were not anxious to see happen.
- c) free trade and an end to economic nationalism
- d) disarmament
- e) an end to classical imperialism, with no division of territorial spoils after the war.
- f) national self-determination – allowing all national groups to have their own countries – problem: where would it stop?
- g) a League of Nations that would preserve peace by means of a system of collective security.

## Wilson's Fourteen Points

- I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
- II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war.
- III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
- IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.
- V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based on the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty, the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
- VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and... assistance of every kind that she may need and may herself desire.
- VII. Belgium... must be evacuated [by the Germans] and restored.
- VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, the wrong done to France in the matter... of Alsace-Lorraine... should be righted.
- IX. A readjustment of frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.
- X. The people of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safe-guarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.
- XI. Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated... Serbia accorded free access to the sea.
- XII. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule...[should be allowed] autonomous development.
- XIII. An independent Polish state... should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations...[and should] be assured a free and secure access to the sea.
- XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike. "The world must be made safe for democracy."

C. 1917 as a key year

2. US entry into WWI; US Aims

v. Critics of the 14 Points

a) argued that it was ideal for the US because its economic strength meant it didn't need political control of other parts of the world.

b) others argued that this was an example of US idealism at its best by providing a framework for a much better world after the war.



Wilson delivering the *14 Points Speech* to a joint session of congress on January 8th, 1918.

### 3. Reconciling the 14 Points with the initial war aims

#### i. France

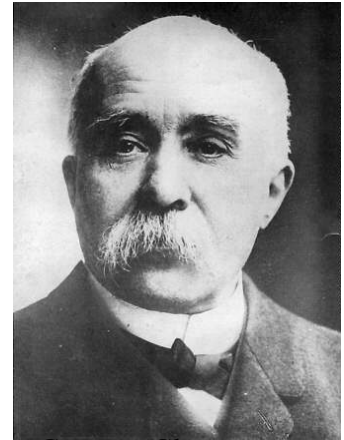
a) still sought revenge and dismemberment of Germany

b) the future balance of power must be in France's favour

c) Clemenceau regarded Wilson's blueprint cynically

i) "God gave us the Ten Commandments and we broke them. Now Mr. Wilson has given us the Fourteen Points. We shall see."

d) insisted that Germany pay reparations



Georges Clemenceau

### 3. Reconciling the 14 Points with the initial war aims

#### ii. Britain

- a) the masses were behind Wilson
- b) strong movement existed to support the League of Nations
- c) economic ties with the US were crucial and so was US involvement in European and world affairs.
- d) wouldn't allow complete freedom of the seas
- e) insisted that Germany pay reparations

#### iii. Germany

- a) military demanded politicians to make a settlement and the goal was to negotiate on the basis of Wilson's 14 points.

#### D. Armistice, 1918

1. Allied military planners ensured, via the armistice demands, that any resumption of fighting by Germany would be impossible

- i. Germany had to pull completely out of Alsace-Lorraine
- ii. German troops had to withdraw to 10 km east of the Rhine
- iii. Quick evacuation was insisted upon, with all heavy equipment left behind
- iv. German navy was to surrender all of its large ships

"All the News That's Fit to Print."

# The New York Times

THE WEATHER  
For New York, New York, New York

## ARMISTICE SIGNED, END OF THE WAR! BERLIN SEIZED BY REVOLUTIONARIES; NEW CHANCELLOR BEGS FOR ORDER; OUSTED KAISER FLEES TO HOLLAND

### SON FLEES WITH EXHAUSTED

Hindenburg Also Believed to be Among Those in His Party.

### ALL ARE HEAVILY ARMED

Advancing South with Rifles and Machine Guns at Berlin Front.

### ON THEIR WAY TO BE SEEN

Regimes Fall in Prussia, "We Are the New Way to Peace."

### Keiser Fought Hindenburg's Call for Abandonment

Faithful to Get Army's Support in Keeping Throne.

IN BRUSSELS, Dec. 11.—The Kaiser fled from his palace in Doorn, Holland, today, according to reports from the Netherlands. He is believed to have fled with his family and a few attendants. The Kaiser's flight was the result of the revolution in Germany, which has led to the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic.

### BERLIN TROOPS JOIN REVOL

Reels Shell Building in Which Officers Vainly Resist.

### THURSDAY DEMAND REPUBLIC

Revolutionary Flag on Reich Palace—Great Prisoner's Fate Not Known.

### GENERAL STRIKE IS BEGUN

Transportation and Police Stations in Berlin Closed.

### Socialist Chancellor Appeals to All Germans

To Help Him Save Fatherland from Anarchy.

BERLIN, Dec. 11.—The German revolution has reached its climax today, according to reports from Berlin. The Kaiser has fled to Holland, and the revolutionaries have seized control of the city. The new government, led by the Socialists, has declared an armistice with the Allies and has called for an end to the war.

### WAR ENDS AT 6 O'CLOCK THIS MORNING

The State Department in Washington Made the Announcement at 2:45 o'Clock.

### ARMISTICE WAS SIGNED IN FRANCE AT MIDNIGHT

Terms Include Withdrawal from Alsace-Lorraine, Disarming and Demobilization of Army and Navy, and Occupation of Strategic Naval and Military Points.

LONDON, Dec. 11.—The British Government today announced that it had received word from the German High Command that an armistice had been signed. The armistice was signed at 11 o'clock on the night of Dec. 10, and it came into effect at 6 o'clock this morning.

### Keiser Fled to Holland

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### GERMAN DIPLOMATS MORE WARSHIPS

Being Wiped Out

### JOIN THE REDS

Revolutionary Flag on Reich Palace—Great Prisoner's Fate Not Known.

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## D. Armistice, 1918

2. Germans had no alternative but to accept and hope that the peace conference would result in an improved position for Germany.

i. Germany military leaders now attempted to save face by supporting the “stab in the back theory” – that the politicians and not themselves were responsible for Germany’s humiliation.



"Germans, consider this!"

A 1924 right-wing German political cartoon showing Philipp Scheidemann, the German Social Democratic politician who proclaimed the Weimar Republic and was its second Chancellor, and Matthias Erzberger, an anti-war politician from the Centre Party, who signed the armistice with the Allies, as stabbing the German Army in the back. - Wikipedia

E. Hope and reflection: all looked toward the upcoming peace conference in Paris to resolve Europe's problem and restore order.

The prospects were not good:

1. millions lay dead and further millions were maimed and would remain wards of the state.
2. a generation of leaders lay dead
3. an influenza epidemic swept the world, killing another 20 million
4. families were broken and civilians and soldiers were psychologically shattered.
5. though workers had managed to earn raises and keep up with inflation, much of the middle class had not. These people often turned to the radical right for answers
6. four empires lay in ruins
7. prewar trade patterns had been destroyed and many of those needed to reconstruct them now lay dead.
8. national minorities who had risen in revolt now wanted freedom.

Paris Peace Conference - 1919



# Paris Peace Conference - 1919



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