

Treaty of Versailles Committee Activity

SETTING THE STAGE World War I was over. The killing has stopped. The terms of peace, however, still had to be worked out. On January 18, 1919, a conference to establish those terms began at the Palace of Versailles, outside Paris.

YOUR COUNTRY: Great Britain

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD WAR I: Although you got pulled in to this war because Germany declared war on your allies, France and Belgium, your leader - Prime Minister David Lloyd George - wants to go easy on Germany and the rest of the Central Powers because it could lead to more trouble in the future. However, the rest of Great Britain's population feels like the Central Powers should receive the worst punishment possible, especially Germany, because of 908,000 dead that resulted from Britain being pulled in to fight the Germans. Also, your country is in deep debt because this war cost so much to fight.

YOUR TASK: You have to decide as Great Britain's representative what should be done to make sure everyone is treated fairly and that another war like this never happens.

- Should Germany be blamed for everything?
 - o If so, what are the terms/your demands?
 - o If not, who does get blamed? Does anyone get blamed?
- Will you give up anything? Land? Resources?
- What will you contribute/give to help with this Conference in order to make sure everything goes over smoothly?

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YOUR COUNTRY: France

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD WAR I: You are not happy with this war for several reasons. *First*, you're still bitter from the beat down your country took from Germany 40 years ago in the Franco-Prussian War. *Second*, in that loss, valuable land full of natural resources like iron ore and coal called Alsace-Lorraine was taken from you by the Germans as well. *Third*, Germany has pulled you into another long vicious war that kills 1.3 million troops, literally destroys Northern France (because 90% of the war is fought there), and creates a massive debt therefore ruining your economy. Your leader, Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau, as well as the rest of the French population ticked. So much that you want Germany to pay for everything they did to destroy your country NO MATTER THE COST.

YOUR TASK: Now that the war is over you need to decide as France's representative at the Versailles Conference what should be done to rectify the situation.

- Should some type of punishment/reward be placed on those involved?
 - o Should Germany be blamed? Austria-Hungary? Ottoman Empire?
 - o If so, what are your terms/demands? Explain in detail.
 - Do you want them to pay back money? Land?
 - What should you do with their military?
 - o If not, who is to blame? Is anyone to blame? Do you think the blame should be placed on someone else not mentioned? Explain in detail.

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YOUR COUNTRY: United States

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD WAR I: Prior to entering the war, you were one of the most influential countries on the war effort because of your contributions to the Allies (food, rations, weapons). However, because of the sinking of the Lusitania and the Zimmerman note you were provoked by the Germans into joining the war. Although only 116,000 of your troops died while fighting in combat, the American census is that the Europeans should decide for themselves as to what should happen now that the Allies have won. Your leader, President Woodrow Wilson calls it "Self-Determination" but feels that to ensure a peaceful resolution the US should at least attend the Versailles Conference as a mediator.

YOUR TASK: You have to decide as the United States' representative what should be done to make sure everyone is treated fairly and that another war like this never happens.

- Should Germany be blamed for everything?
 - o If so, what are the terms/your demands?
 - o If not, who does get blamed? Does anyone get blamed?
- Will you give up anything? Land? Resources?
- What will you contribute/give to help with this Conference in order to make sure everything goes over smoothly?

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YOUR COUNTRY: Italy

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD WAR I: You declared war on Germany because of secret treaty with France and Britain. In that treaty you were told that if you help the allies fight the Central Powers then your country will be given the Adriatic coast at the end of the war. The Prime Minister Viottorio Orlando hopes that France and Great Britain will keep their promise now that the allies have won. However, you still feel the need to attend in the hopes that a compromise will be made to make sure another war like this will never be fought again.

YOUR TASK: You have to decide as the Italy's representative at the Versailles Conference what should be done to make sure everyone is treated fairly and that another war like this never happens.

- Should Germany be blamed for everything?
 - o If so, what are the terms/your demands?
 - o If not, who does get blamed? Does anyone get blamed?
- Will you give up anything? Land? Resources?
- What will you contribute/give to help with this Conference in order to make sure everything goes over smoothly?

Also, you want to make sure that France and Great Britain fulfill their ends of the bargain.

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YOUR COUNTRY: Germany

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD WAR I: People are not very happy with you. After Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, you felt the need to declare war on all other countries allied with Serbia (France, Great Britain, Russia). After declaring war you then proceed to unlawfully enter neutral Belgium, march within 20 miles of Paris and then proceed to destroy northern parts of France for the next four years before you and the rest of the Central Powers are defeated. Also, your leader, Kaiser Wilhelm II has fled the country out of fear for his life so you have to figure out who is going to run your country.

YOUR TASK: You have to hope as Germany's representative at the Versailles Conference what should be done to make sure everyone, especially yourself, is treated fairly and that another war like this never happens.

- Who is to blame?
- What efforts should be made by all countries involved to ensure a peaceful ending?
- What are you going to give up/contribute to this conference to make sure the Allies are not too harsh on you.
- How will you decide how your country/government was going to be run?