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# What Affected Final Draft Of The Treaty of Versailles

## Treaty of Versailles Factors That Affected Leaders and Terms

Following the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, five separate peace settlements were drafted in Paris, the most famous being the Treaty of Versailles. Constructed under the influence of several political leaders such as Woodrow Wilson—President of the United States, Georges Clemenceau—French Premier, and David Lloyd-George—British Prime Minister, many domestic and foreign factors affected their decisions and the final terms of the treaty. The political desires for self-determination and international comradery clashed with the social interests of retribution and economic wants for superiority and colonies. Ultimately the interests of all the major leaders affected final draft of the Treaty of Versailles.

The diplomacy and political optimism of President Woodrow Wilson greatly affected the Treaty of Versailles. With none of the war fought on American soil and America suffered significantly fewer casualties than France or Great Britain, Wilson easily acted as a conciliator during the creation of the treaty. He tried to shape the discussions around his Fourteen Points, a document that detailed how to reduce global tensions by maintaining free trade and an end to secret negotiations, by promoting national self-determination and an international congress called the League of Nations. Wilson also faced few domestic problems, with a great economy and the greatest issue being the Women's Rights Movement, letting him focus primarily on foreign affairs and ending the war.

Dissimilarly, the French Premier, Georges Clemenceau disagreed with Wilson's idealism and needed to ensure Germany would no longer threaten France. Having suffered the most from the war—5.5 million casualties and a majority of the French landscape destroyed—France demanded German retribution. The French economy also suffered, as agriculture was nonexistent and many villages were decimated and a huge debt was owed to the United States. Both socially and economically destitute, Clemenceau needed to find a way to rebuild France while ensuring Germany could never threaten or destroy France in the future. Clemenceau demanded Germany pay reparations and accept all responsibility for the war. The greatly weakened France needed insurance of protection from any future conflicts and money to reboot their ruined economy. British Prime Minister David Lloyd-George acted as a moderator between the two extremes of Wilson and Clemenceau. While not nearly as inflexible as the French Premier, the Prime Minister also wanted the German's to be punished. But, having to deal with social and colonial problems throughout the war, Lloyd-George had little interest in monetary retribution and instead continued to focus on building the empire. England wanted more colonies and naval superiority throughout the world. With a still functioning economy and little social upheaval other than Women's suffrage, Great Britain could afford to gain more colonies and build up their weakened military.

The ideas of all three countries' leaders were combined to form the Treaty of Versailles. Although Clemenceau's position triumphed over Wilson's idealism, several of Wilson's ideas made it into the final draft of the treaty. The treaty established the League of Nations, an international body designed to prevent further war and injustice, and allowed for the creation of new countries—allowing self-determination and independence for many ethnic groups.

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Clemenceau achieved his desires for compensation and security, as Germany was forced to claim all responsibility for the war and therefore pay reparations of the amount of 132 billion gold marks to the Entente powers. France then gained back Alsace-Lorraine, and were granted the liberty of stationing French troops on the western bank of the Rhine in Germany—enforcing the limitation of demilitarization on Germany. Germany could not have an air force, and the treaty limited them to a military of no more than a hundred thousand men. France then could control the coal and iron mine in the Saar border region for many years. Lloyd-Georges imperialistic focus was also respected in the treaty, as France and Great Britain divided Germany's colonies between them—ignoring the promises of independence they issued during the war. The interests of the victorious three main powers, France, Great Britain, and The United States, all affected the final terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

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