

MAKING THE PEACE

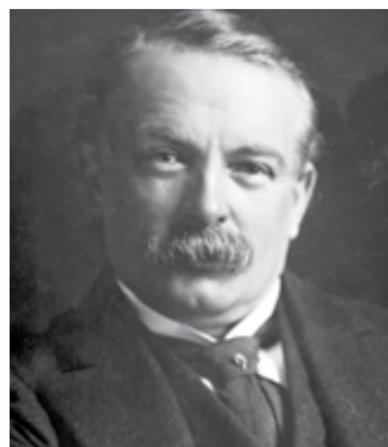
The peace negotiations which were held at Versailles, revealed big differences between the Allies about how Germany should be treated. The French Prime Minister **Clemenceau** wanted Germany punished for her militarism and made too weak to be a future threat. On the other hand **President Wilson** of the U.S.A. wanted more moderate treatment for Germany and the redrawing of the map of Europe to hopefully reduce the national and racial tensions which had caused the conflict. He proposed setting up a **League of Nations** to discuss international problems. **Lloyd George**, the British Prime Minister, did not want to treat Germany too harshly but was under pressure from British public opinion which wanted revenge for the sufferings of the last four years. As for the Germans, they were not consulted. They simply had to accept what the Allies decided. On 28th June 1919 two German officials were summoned to the Hall of Mirrors to sign the Treaty. [This later allowed Hitler to condemn what he called the "Diktat" of Versailles.]



Clemenceau



President Wilson



Lloyd George

Under the terms of the treaty, Germany lost all her colonies which were handed over to the Allies to run as mandated territories. **Alsace and Lorraine** were returned to France. Much of eastern Germany, including a rich mining area, was handed over to the new state of **Poland**, which was created from former German, Russian and Austrian lands. East Prussia remained German but separated from the rest by the Polish Corridor, which gave the new state access to the sea. Belgium and Denmark also got small slices of land from Germany. Russia, embroiled in a bitter civil war, took no part in the discussions. Her former Baltic lands, taken by the Germans in 1917, now became **Finland, Latvia, Estonia** and **Lithuania**.

Germany had to accept the reduction of her army to a token force of **100,000 men**, with **no heavy guns, tanks or airforce**. Her Navy was to have **no major warships** and **no submarines**. [When the German High Seas Fleet, anchored at Scapa Flow, heard the news, the crews scuttled their ships rather than hand them over to the British.] The Rhineland was to be occupied by Allied troops for 15 years. As an added humiliation, Germany had to accept a **war guilt clause**, taking the

blame for causing the war, and agreeing to pay reparations of £6,000,000,000 to the Allies, although her own economy was in trouble.

Separate treaties dealt with Austria and Turkey. Austria, now a republic, was reduced to its Germanic core. Out of its empire were created two new states, **Hungary** and **Czechoslovakia**, while Serbia more than doubled in size to become the new pan-Slav state of **Yugoslavia**. Italy got Trentino and Trieste, while Romania and Greece were also rewarded for their role in the war. The Turkish Empire disappeared too. Though Arabia was handed over to direct Arab rule, the wider hopes of the Arabs were dashed. Palestine, Jordan and Iraq were handed over to British control, while the French got Syria and Lebanon. These were to be run as **mandates, under the supervision of the League of Nations, and were to be guided at some future date to self-government**.

As Wilson had suggested, the League of Nations was set up, with its headquarters in Geneva. During the next twenty years it did much valuable work but it failed in its main mission, to replace conflict with discussion. It lacked the power to enforce its decisions and was weakened by what happened when the President returned home: Congress voted against U.S. membership and for the next twenty years the U.S.A. withdrew into isolationism, playing little part in affairs beyond its own borders. Meanwhile the German people, left bitter by the harsh terms of the treaty, and facing further economic problems, turned in the 1930s to a leader who promised to restore Germany's greatness – **Adolf Hitler**.



Map of Europe 1921