

- Seeds for WWII sewn at close of the Great War
 - 1918: Germany = “winning”
 - BUT, war machine slows
 - March: Operation Michael
 - July: Ger forces “breaking up”
 - NOTE: 4 yrs conflict = 1.8 million Ger deaths
 - Oct 1st: High Command realizes “final defeat” = “at hand”
 - Ludendorff & Hindenburg attempt to shift blame
 - Plan = create parliamentary gov’t
 - Use new gov’t as scapegoats
 - Opportunity presented by Wilson’s “peace” & “olive branch”
 - Announced peace plans & League of Nations
 - Wilson’s Peace w/out Victory = 3 principles
 - Wilson’s “olive branch” = w/in 14 Points
 - » NOTE: key principles of 14 Points
 - Baden = named Chancellor
 - Appoints ministers from political parties
 - Contacts Wilson; expresses willingness to negotiate
 - » Wilson’s “curveball”
 - » All hopes dashed
 - Has cabinet draft amendments to constitution
 - » Shifts to constitutional monarchy

- Then changes military command
 - » Kaiser removes Ludendorff
 - » Replaces w/ Groener
 - » Kaiser refuses Hindenburg's resignation
- Then works on armistice
 - » Sends Erzberger to Campiegne Forest
- Then works on Kaiser
 - » Kaiser eventually concedes
 - » Announces abdication on Nov 9
 - » Hindenburg = supreme head of army
- Finally, steps down
 - » Transfers Chancellorship to Ebert (SPD)

- Nov 10, 1918 - Erzberger reports on negotiations
 - Terms of armistice = essentially unconditional surrender
 - 5:10 am, Nov 11, 1918
 - Goes into effect 11am

- Jan 18, 1919: Paris Peace Conference
 - Date = slight to Germans
 - 27 nations & 5 nationalities
 - Powers = Brit, FR, IT, US, & JAP
 - Leaders of "Big Four" dominated
 - Decisions implemented unilaterally

- Primary focus = Wilson's 14 Points
 - 1-5 = removing "causes"
 - 6-13 = territorial readjustments
 - 14th Point = League
 - NOTE: Wilson feared revenge = another war
 - Wilson blocked by Allies
 - Ex. IT PM Orlando: focus= territorial promises
 - Ex. Lloyd George
 - » NOTE: Brit = relatively ok
 - » But hefty price
 - » Focus = securing Ger African colonies & Brit naval dominance
 - Clemenceau = greatest challenge
 - » Sought vindication
 - » Focus = restitution, reparations, & guarantees of alliances
 - Lloyd George & Clemenceau know Wilson's weaknesses
 - 1) At home - Art II, Sec 2, Cl 2
 - » Senator Henry Cabot Lodge
 - » Wilson made egotistical mistake
 - 2) Both Clem & Lloyd George know Wilson's price
- Brit & FR sort out their own needs first
 - Big Three hammer out New World order
 - May 7th: Ger delegation called in

- Delegation = stunned
 - Brockdorff-Rantzau attacks
- Treaty of Versailles (1919) = infamous
 - Terms = vengeful
 - Lost 13% of pre-war territory
 - Lost 10% of pre-war population
 - Rhineland = demilitarized for 15yrs
 - Saar = plebiscite in 15ys
 - Lost all territory under Brest-Litovsk
 - Lost all colonies
 - Lost MOST of foreign investment
 - *Reichsheer* replaced with *Reichswher*
 - *Kaiserliche Marine* handed over to Allies
 - Merchant marine reduced
 - PLUS = Open-ended reparations
 - Worst = Article 231 – “War Guilt” clause
 - Treaty also creates League of Nations
 - NOTE: Ger barred entry until 1926
 - Mission = “to promote international co-operation & to achieve international peace”
 - Three “branches”
 - » 1) the Assembly
 - » 2) the Council

» 3) Court of International Justice

- Members pledged respect other nations & resist aggressors
- NOTE: League failed
- “Just and durable peace without victory”?
 - Reality = victors want spoils
 - Proof = Leaders not tried
 - » Wilhelm II
 - » Hindenburg
 - » Ludendorff
 - PLUS Brit blockade
- Reaction = mixed
 - Ger reaction = outrage
 - Some = “Carthaginian” peace
 - Keynes’ *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*
- Only nation pleased = France
- Ger delegation wants revision
 - Drafted response; challenged terms
 - Brockhoff-Rantzau = Article 231
 - Allies dug in heels
 - Reports = Ger gov’t would reject
 - Big 3 opt for war
 - Foch prepares 42 divisions

- June 14th: one week to sign or war renewed
 - Weimar gov't divided
 - Peace delegation & cabinet resigns
 - Ebert looks to Hindenburg
 - Ebert tells Assembly to ratify treaty
- Peacemakers wait for decision
- June 21, 6:41 pm word arrives
- NOTE: also on June 21 at Scapa Flow
 - Reuter received word of terms
 - Plans to destroy fleet
 - ~ 1800 trustworthy sailors selected
 - June 21 ~11:20am flag signal sent:
- June 28th, 1919 = signing ceremony
 - Held in Hall of Mirrors
 - Clemenceau took charge
 - Ceremony almost derailed
 - Ger Reps = Müller & Bell
 - Delegates began arriving at sunrise
 - Clemenceau opens with brief statement
 - Ger delegates walk forward
 - Took 45 minutes
 - Ger people cried injustice; sought revenge

- It = *Diktat*
 - Those who agreed to it = “November criminals”
 - Ger people “stabbed in the back”
 - “*We must never forget it is only a scrap of paper. Treaties based on violence can keep their validity only so long as force exists. Do not lose hope! The resurrection day comes.*”
- Vorwärts*, June 30, 1919