

KEY TERMS

**abdicate** to give up a position of authority

**socialist** a believer in a political and economic system in which the means of production and distribution in a country are publicly owned and controlled for the benefit of all members of a society

**Central Powers** the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Kingdom of Bulgaria

**Hundred Days Campaign** the final Allied offensive against the Central Powers on the Western Front, from August 8 to November 11, 1918

**armistice** an agreement by warring parties to end hostilities

**Paris Peace Conference** a meeting in Paris in 1919 to discuss the terms of a peace agreement after the First World War

**Treaty of Versailles** one of the treaties that ended the First World War; it imposed strict sanctions on Germany

# The End of the War

After three long years in a stalemate on the Western Front, two important events in the spring of 1917 changed the direction of the war. Like the other members of the Triple Entente, Russia dedicated its resources to the war. Thousands of soldiers died fighting along the Eastern Front. At home, supplies and food were limited and prices soared. People became increasingly frustrated, and a series of revolutions forced Czar Nicholas to **abdicate** in March of 1917. The Provisional Government was formed, but the Russian people were still dissatisfied with it and the war. In October 1917, **socialist** revolutionaries, called **Bolsheviks**, overthrew the Provisional Government, promising the war-weary public "peace and bread." They began negotiating with the **Central Powers** to end the war.

While Russia's internal politics weakened the Allies on the Eastern Front, another important event of early 1917 shifted power on the Western Front. The United States, still angered by the sinking of neutral ships such as the *Lusitania*, learned that Germany promised to support Mexico if it attacked the United States. On April 2, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. In eight months, American soldiers reached the Western Front.

## \* The Hundred Days Campaign

On March 3, 1918, Russia and the Central Powers signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. This truce on the Eastern Front freed German troops to fight on the Western Front. Germany knew that it needed a quick victory before American troops reached France. In a desperate offensive beginning in March 1918, the German army struck at weak points in the Allies' lines and drove deep into France. Positions that had been won at great cost in lives, including Ypres, the Somme, and Passchendaele, were lost within weeks. By the summer of 1918, the new front line was only 75 kilometres from Paris.

With the arrival of the Americans, the Allies rallied and were able to stop the German advance. In August 1918, the Allies launched a series of attacks that came to be known as the **Hundred Days Campaign**. Canada's offensives were among the most successful of all the Allied forces during this campaign. Canadian troops, under the disciplined command of General Currie, broke through German lines and won important battles at Arras, Cambrai, and Valenciennes.

## \* The Central Powers Collapse

Their final offensive in France and the battles of the Hundred Days Campaign exhausted the Germans and the rest of the Central Powers. They had no reserves and could not continue without fresh troops, food, and supplies. The Central Powers collapsed one by one. In November 1918, the German Kaiser abdicated and fled to Holland and Austria-Hungary agreed to a ceasefire. An **armistice**, or truce to end the war, on the Western Front was finally signed in a railway car in France at 5:00 a.m. on November 11, 1918. The war was to stop at 11:00 a.m. This corresponds to the date and time of our modern-day Remembrance Day ceremonies.



FIGURE 2-32 Workers march with banners of the Russian Revolution, 1917

## THE END OF WORLD WAR I

### The Central Powers Collapse

(p.42-47)

Two important events in 1917 changed the direction of WWI:

- 1) **Czar Nicholas II of Russia was forced to abdicate** in March 1917 and a Provisional Government in Russia was formed. By October 1917, Revolutionaries called Bolsheviks, overthrew the Russian Government and promised the people "peace and bread". So the Bolsheviks signed a peace treaty with Germany= Russia was now out of the war. The Eastern Front was shut down, and the Germans now focused on the trenches of the Western Front.
- 2) **The United States declared war on Germany** on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1917. The Americans were fresh and ready to fight which helped support the weak allied forces in Europe.

### BUT WHAT ABOUT THE GERMANS?

- The Germans had tried very hard to win the western front but in doing so, had exhausted themselves. They had no reserves, were without fresh troops, food, supplies, and realized that they could not continue. The German Generals knew the war was over by Summer of 1918.
- The final months of the war were known as the \_\_\_\_\_ and this was when Canadian offensives were the most successful.
  - Canadian Battles near the end of the war included:
    - Arras
    - Cambrai
    - Valenciennes

The Central Powers (Germany and AH) collapsed one by one.... German Kaiser abdicated and fled to Holland. An **ARMISTICE** (or truce) was finally signed at 11am on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918 on a railway car in France officially ending the war. An unfortunate Canadian soldier (George Price) was the last man to die on the Western Front just minutes before the armistice.

# THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE and CANADA'S ROLE

After the Armistice was signed, the Allies and the new leadership of Germany (the Weimar Republic) met in Paris at the Palace of Versailles to discuss the terms of the peace agreement. Prime Minister Borden fought and won for Canada to have its own seat at the conference and not simply be represented by Britain. He also insisted that he be included among those leaders who signed the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.

## WHO WAS AT THE CONFERENCE?

### THE BIG 'FOUR'

Britain- Prime Minister David Lloyd George

France- President George Clemenceau

USA- President Woodrow Wilson

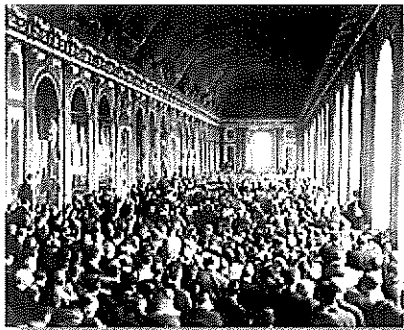
Italy- President Vittorio Orlando



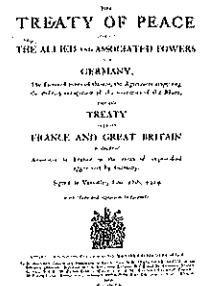
Canada- Prime Minister Robert Borden

Germany- Weimar Republic (new German government)  
(and many other nations as well)

## THE OUTCOME OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES?



- Germany had to agree to the War Guilt Clause
- Germany had to pay \$30 billion in reparations
- Map of Europe to be re-drawn including reduction of German territory, and newly created Poland
- German army was to be limited to 100,000 men and they were not allowed any u-boats or air force
- France wanted a buffer zone (Alsace Lorraine/Saar)
- Creation of the LEAGUE OF NATIONS



The Treaty was signed in the HALL OF MIRRORS at the Palace of Versailles on June 28<sup>th</sup> 1919. The German government of the Weimar Republic signed and agreed to the terms of the Treaty. This would be a major cause in the start of WWII....

## Canada's Emerging Autonomy

After signing the armistice, the leaders of the Allies and the other countries that won the war met in Paris in 1919 to discuss the terms of a peace agreement. The **Paris Peace Conference** lasted for six months and resulted in a number of treaties that defined new borders and compensation for losses suffered during the war. More than 30 countries attended the conference, each with their own agenda. Germany and its allies were not allowed to participate. Russia, which had already negotiated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany in 1918, was not invited.

● What factors contributed to Canada's emerging autonomy?

### What If...

Imagine Canada had not been given a separate seat at the Paris Peace Conference. How might that have affected Canadian autonomy?

### Participating in Peace

The Paris Peace Conference marked an important moment in Canada's emerging autonomy from Britain. Because Canada had contributed so much to the war and its soldiers had fought under Canadian leaders on the battlefields, Prime Minister Borden demanded Canada have its own seat at the conference. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson opposed Canada's participation. He thought that Britain should vote on behalf of the British Empire and that a separate vote for Canada was really just another vote for Britain. But British Prime Minister Lloyd George reminded Wilson that Canada had fought longer and supplied more troops than other countries. In the end, Canada won a seat at the conference and Borden insisted that he be included among those leaders who signed the Treaty of Versailles. For the first time, Canada gained international recognition as an independent nation.

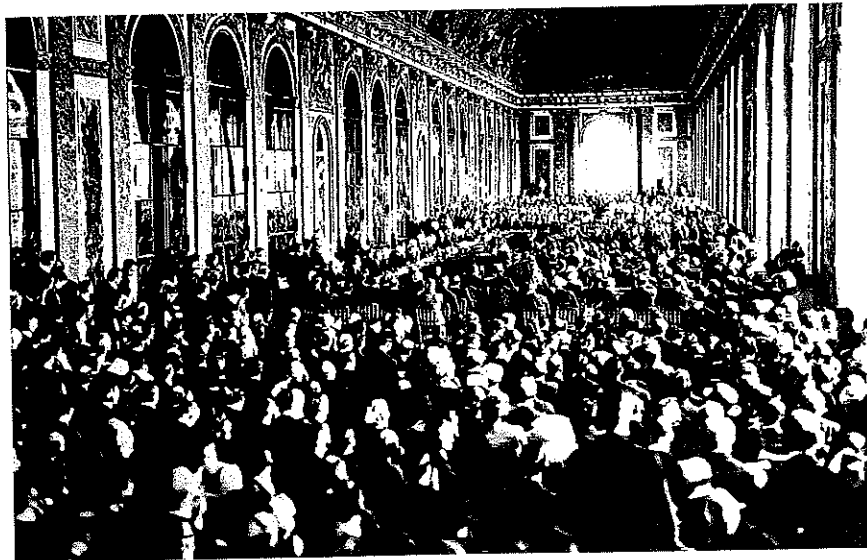
	Dead	Wounded	Missing	Total
Canada	57	150	unknown	207
Britain	659	2032	359	3050
France	1359	4200	362	5921
Germany	1600	4065	103	5768
Russia	1700	5000	unknown	6700
Austria-Hungary	922	3600	855	5377
United States	58	190	14	262

**FIGURE 2-33** Approximate\* number of military casualties of the First World War (in thousands)

\* Although precise casualty numbers for the First World War are not available, these numbers can be considered a reliable estimate of the casualties incurred by these countries.

### The Treaty of Versailles

One of the treaties that came out of the Paris Peace Conference was the **Treaty of Versailles**. This document laid out the terms of peace between Germany and the Allies. Initially, U.S. President Wilson proposed a 14-point plan for "just and lasting peace" that emphasized forgiveness and future international cooperation. But some Allied leaders wanted to shame Germany and make it pay for the damage their countries had suffered during the war.

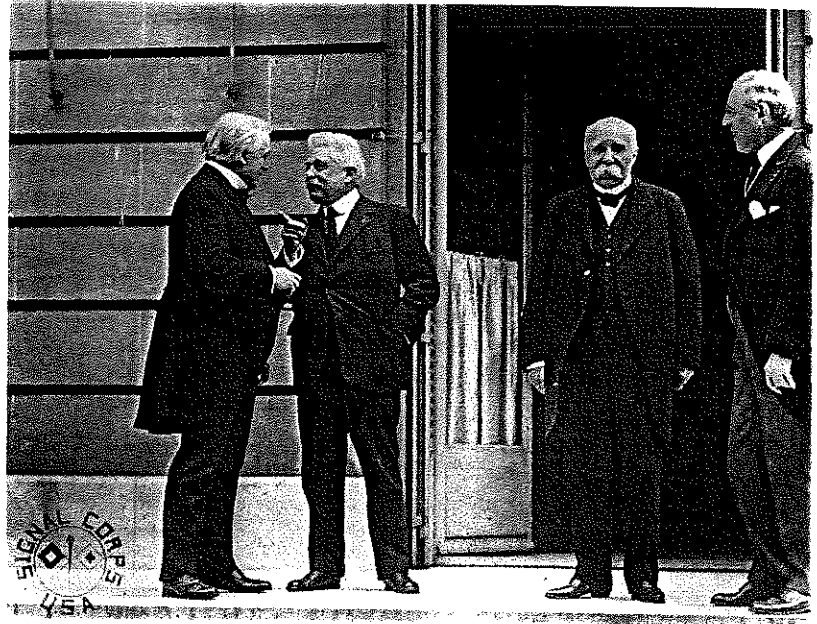


**FIGURE 2-34** Leaders from around the world gathered in Versailles, outside of Paris, to negotiate a peace agreement, which became known as the Treaty of Versailles.

## WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS

Woodrow Wilson made these recommendations for political and economic reconstruction:

1. Open covenants of peace in which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind.
2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, except by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.
3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers, and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations.
4. The reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety. An impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon the principle that the interests of the populations concerned must be considered.
5. An impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon the principle that the interests of the populations concerned must be considered.
6. The evacuation of all Russian territory, and Russia to be given the opportunity for the independent determination of its own political development and national policy.
7. The evacuation and restoration of Belgium.
8. All French territory freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine should be righted.
9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy to be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.
10. The assurance that the peoples of Austria-Hungary be accorded the freest opportunity for autonomous development.
11. The evacuation of Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro; the restoration of occupied territories; and the assurance of free and secure access to the sea for Serbia.
12. The assurance that the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire be given an opportunity for autonomous development, and the Dardanelles be permanently opened.
13. The formation of an independent Polish state which would be assured a free and secure access to the sea.
14. The formation of a general association of nations for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike. All states must undertake to deal collectively with any threat to peace whenever it occurs.



Men like (from l to r) David Lloyd George (Britain), Vittorio Orlando (Italy), Georges Clémenceau (France), and Woodrow Wilson (USA) made decisions about post-war Europe at the January 1919 conference in Versailles.