

## TREATY OF VERSAILLES PROVISIONS - 1919

**INTRODUCTION:** A controversial issue facing the United States Senate in the post World War I period was the question of whether or not to sign the Treaty of Versailles and thus commit the United States to membership in the new world organization, the League of Nations. Membership in the League, one of the Treaty provisions, was the idea of President Woodrow Wilson who viewed the organization as an instrument to prevent future wars through the peaceful resolution of disputes. In the Senate, members were confronted with strong criticism from opponents such as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge who criticized the Treaty provisions and questioned the constitutionality of League membership. As the debate ensued, specific Treaty provisions became an important focus for the Senators.

- PROVISIONS:**
1. Article 231 - Germany was solely responsible for all losses and damages caused by World War I. Germany started the war. (Known as Guilt Clause)
  2. Article 227 - Kaiser Wilhelm should be tried along with others (900 Germans) as war criminals.
  3. Germany and Turkey lost all their colonies. Mandates were given to France, England, and Russia. Germany lost 13% of all its territory. Austria lost territory to Rumania and Italy.
  4. The Rhineland became a de-militarized zone under Allied control (last 15 years).
  5. All German Rivers were placed under an Allied Control Commission.
  6. All arms and munitions factories were placed under Allied control.
  7. Germany had to give France its best coal mines in the Saar and Upper Silesia. Each year for ten years, Germany had to give France 40 million tons of coal from its other coal mines.
  8. Germany was forbidden to collect tariffs on goods shipped in from France, Poland, or Belgium, but goods sent from Germany to those countries would be charged duties.
  9. As a favor to the United Soviet Socialistic Republic, (USSR), Germany must renounce the Treaty of Brest Litvosk.
  10. Germany must pay 24 million francs to Belgium workers who were forced to work in Germany during the war.
  11. Germany's military was reduced:
    - (a) Army - limited to 100,000 troops who were to be used strictly as a police force with restrictions as to the types of weapons they could use.
    - (b) Air Force - placed under Allied control; airplanes would be used only for domestic flying.

- (c) Navy - limited to six battleships, six light cruisers, 12 destroyers, 12 torpedo boats and NO submarines. Naval force was limited to 15,000. All extra ships were sunk or taken over by the Allies.
- (d) Merchant Vessels - Allies got all German merchant ships over 1,600 tons, one-half of all 100 to 1,200 tons, and one-fourth of all fishing ships.
12. France and Belgium were to each receive from Germany - 500 stallions; 30,000 fillies and mares; 2,000 bulls; 90,000 cows; 1,000 rams; 100,000 sheep; and 10,000 goats.
  13. Monetary Reparations: Germany had to pay \$5 billion to Allies by 1921; \$10 billion each year 1921-26; after 1926, pay \$600-900 million per year until total reparation bill is paid. Exact total was not specified and thus Germany had to sign a "blank check." Allied troops would remain in Germany until all payments were made.
  14. Germany had to pay for all costs of keeping the Allied Army in Germany and pay for all war pensions.
  15. A democratic government (Weimer Republic) was to be set up in Germany; its organization determined by the Allies.
  16. Jews were to be given a homeland - Palestine, in the Middle East (a British Mandate).
  17. A new world organization, known as the League of Nations, was formed. Its purpose was to prevent future war through the peaceful resolution of disputes among nations. It was based on the principle of COLLECTIVE SECURITY. If one nation is the victim of an act of aggression, the rest of the League members will come to its defense. Anyone signing the treaty automatically became a member of the League. (Note: The United States did not request nor receive any type of reparation.)