

ANALYZING THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

Read the excerpts from the Treaty of Versailles.¹ As you read, highlight, or underline phrases that address how Germany would be held responsible for the war.

Articles from the Treaty	Meaning
<p>Article 45: “As compensation for the destruction of the coal mines in the north of France, and as part payment towards the total reparation due from Germany for the damage resulting from the war, Germany cedes to France in full and absolute possession, with exclusive rights to exploitation, unencumbered and free from all debts and charges of any kind, the coal mines situated in the Saar Basin.”</p>	<p>Article 45: Germany gives France possession and all rights to the coal mines located in the Saar Basin. This concession is payment for destroying coal mines in northern France. Rights to the mines include full and exclusive rights to mine for coal without any expectation of payment to Germany. (The Saar Basin is located on the western border of Germany, forming part of the German border with France and Luxembourg.)</p>
<p>Article 119: “Germany renounces in favour of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers all her rights and titles over her overseas possessions.”</p>	<p>Article 119: Germany relinquishes all power over its colonies (including extensive colonization in Africa and the Pacific islands) to the Allied and Associated Powers (United States, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, and France).</p>
<p>Article 160: “By a date which must not be later than March 31, 1920, the German Army must not comprise more than seven divisions of infantry and three divisions of cavalry. After that date, the total number of effectives in the Army of the States constituting Germany must not exceed one hundred thousand men, including officers and establishments of depots. The Army shall be devoted exclusively to the maintenance of order within the territory and to the control of the frontiers.”</p>	<p>Article 160: To be completed no later than ten months after the treaty is signed, Germany will reduce the size of its Army to a maximum of seven infantry divisions (foot soldiers) and three cavalry divisions (mobile via horses and vehicles). These regiments combined may not exceed 100,000 men, including officers. The duties of the Army are restricted to defense of the country only—maintaining order and controlling its borders.</p>
<p>Article 173: “Universal compulsory military service shall be abolished in Germany. The German Army may only be constituted and recruited by means of voluntary enlistment.”</p>	<p>Article 173: Germany may not impose a military draft on any citizen. The German Army is to be made up entirely of volunteers.</p>

¹ Alpha History. (2021, Jan 30). Extracts from the Treaty of Versailles. <https://alphahistory.com/weimarrepublic/treaty-of-versailles-1919/>

Articles from the Treaty	Meaning
<p>Article 181: “After the expiration of a period of two months from the coming into force of the present Treaty the German naval forces in commission must not exceed: Six battleships of the Deutschland or Lothringen type, Six light cruisers, Twelve destroyers, Twelve torpedo boats, No submarines are to be included.”</p>	<p>Article 181: Within no more than two months after the treaty is signed, the German Navy will reduce its fleet to no more than the following: six battleships; six cruisers; twelve destroyers; twelve torpedo boats. No submarines are permitted. The Navy will be used for defensive purposes only.</p>
<p>Article 183: “After the expiration of a period of two months from the coming into force of the present Treaty, the total personnel of the German Navy, including the manning of the fleet, coast defenses, signal stations, administration and other land services, must not exceed fifteen thousand, including officers and men of all grades and corps.”</p>	<p>Article 183: Within no more than two months after the treaty is signed, the German Navy will reduce its personnel for all naval services to a maximum of 15,000 sailors, including officers.</p>
<p>Article 231: “The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjects as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.”</p>	<p>Article 231: Germany and its allies accept responsibility for all loss and damage that occurred to the Allied countries and their peoples as the consequence of the war.</p>
<p>Article 233: “The amount of the above damage for which compensation is to be made by Germany shall be determined by an Inter-Allied Commission, to be called the Reparation Commission and constituted in the form and with the powers set forth hereunder... Germany shall pay in such instalments and in such manner (whether in gold, commodities, ships, securities or otherwise) as the Reparation Commission may fix, during 1919, 1920 and the first four months of 1921, the equivalent of 20,000,000,000 gold marks.”</p>	<p>Article 233: An International Reparation Commission will determine the amount of compensation Germany must pay to countries damaged by war. In an effort to rapidly restore industrial and economic life to the Principal Allies, Germany must immediately compensate these countries an equivalent of 20 billion marks before no later than May 1, 1921. These payments will be subtracted from the total amounts claimed as war damages. No one has the authority to cancel this debt. Note: <i>Historians estimate that German reparations were equivalent to half a trillion contemporary US dollars.</i></p>