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Unit 2: History of world affairs since 1789

Senior 6

Term 1

Topic 9: World War I and Its Aftermath

Competency: The learner analyses one of the international conflicts by evaluating the causes and effects of World War I to appreciate how the war has shaped world order since 1918.

World War I (1914–1918)—also known as the **Great War**—was one of the most devastating and transformative conflicts in modern history. It involved most of the world's major powers and reshaped global politics, societies, and borders.

9.1 World War I (1914–1918)

Causes of World War I

1. **Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand:** On **June 28, 1914**, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was assassinated in **Sarajevo** by **Gavrilo Princip**, a Bosnian Serb nationalist. This triggered a chain reaction of alliances and declarations of war.
2. **Militarism:** European powers had built up massive armies and navies, believing that military strength was key to national greatness.
3. **Alliances: The formation of two major competing alliance systems** i.e. **Triple Entente** (France, Britain, Russia) and **Triple Alliance** i.e. **Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy (Italy later switched sides)** escalate a regional crisis into a global conflict.
4. **Imperialism:** Competition for colonies in Africa and Asia heightened tensions among European powers.
5. **Nationalism:** Ethnic groups within empires (especially in the Balkans) sought independence, fueling internal instability.

Additional Factors

- (i) **Balkan instability:** The region was a hotbed of nationalist movements and recent wars (e.g., Balkan Wars 1912–1913).

- (ii) **German aggression:** Germany’s support for Austria-Hungary and its military planning (Schlieffen Plan) made war more likely.
- (iii) **Diplomatic failures:** The inability of European powers to resolve the crisis peacefully during the **July Crisis of 1914** sealed the path to war.

Final Thought: World War I wasn’t caused by a single event—it was the result of **decades of tension, competition, and mistrust**. The assassination of Franz Ferdinand was the spark, but the powder keg had been building for years.

Major Phases of the War

Phase	Description
1914	War begins with German invasion of Belgium and France (Schlieffen Plan); trench warfare begins on the Western Front.
1915–1916	Stalemate deepens; major battles include Gallipoli, Verdun, and Somme .
1917	Russia exits after the Bolshevik Revolution; USA enters the war in April.
1918	Final offensives; Germany collapses; Armistice signed on November 11, 1918 .

Global Scope

- Though centered in Europe, the war extended to **Africa**, the **Middle East**, and the **Pacific**.
- Colonial troops from **India, Africa, and Australia** played key roles.
- The war also contributed to the **Spanish Flu pandemic**, which killed millions globally.

The reasons for the defeat of the Central Powers

The **defeat of the Central Powers** in World War I (Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria) was the result of a combination of **military setbacks, economic collapse, internal unrest, and strategic miscalculations**. Although they began the war with strong momentum, they were unable to sustain it against the growing strength and coordination of the Allied Powers.

1. **Military Defeats and Strategic Failures:** Firstly, the **Schlieffen Plan failed** i.e. Germany initial strategy to quickly defeat France by invading through Belgium failed at the **Battle of the Marne**, leading to a prolonged two-front war. Secondly, major defeats in battles like **Amiens, Meuse-Argonne, and Verdun** wore down Central Powers’ forces. Thirdly the collapse of allies; Bulgaria surrendered in September 1918, followed by the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary, leaving Germany isolated.

2. **Entry of the United States:** The U.S. joined the war in **April 1917**, bringing fresh troops, resources, and morale to the Allies. This **tipped the balance** in favor of the Allies, especially as Germany struggled with manpower and supplies.
3. **Economic Hardships and Blockades:** The **British naval blockade** severely restricted imports to the Central Powers, causing **food shortages, malnutrition, and civilian unrest**. Economic exhaustion led to **strikes, riots**, and a breakdown in war production.
4. **Internal Political and Social Collapse:** **Austria-Hungary** faced nationalist revolts and disintegration of its multi-ethnic empire. **Germany** experienced growing dissent, culminating in the **German Revolution of 1918** and the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II. While The **Ottoman Empire** was weakened by internal divisions and external defeats.
5. **Failure to Adapt and Coordinate:** The Central Powers lacked **effective coordination** among themselves, unlike the more unified Allied command. Germany's overreliance on military solutions and failure to pursue diplomatic alternatives contributed to its downfall.
6. **Impact of Propaganda and Morale:** Allied propaganda successfully **undermined morale** in Central Powers' territories. President Wilson's **Fourteen Points**, especially the call for **self-determination**, inspired nationalist movements within Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

Final Reflection: The Central Powers were ultimately defeated not just on the battlefield, but by a **convergence of military, economic, and political pressures**. Their inability to adapt to changing conditions, combined with the resilience and resources of the Allies, sealed their fate by late 1918.

Consequences of World War I

The First World War (1914-1918) had profound and far-reaching consequences on East Africa. Here are some key impacts:

- (i) **Human Casualties and Displacement:** The war in East Africa resulted in significant loss of life and displacement. Over 300,000 people lost their lives, and many more were displaced due to the conflict.
- (ii) **Economic Disruption:** The war disrupted trade and agriculture in the region. The focus on military activities led to a decline in agricultural production, causing food shortages and economic hardship for the local population.
- (iii) **Infrastructure Damage:** The conflict caused extensive damage to infrastructure, including roads, railways, and buildings especially in Tanzania. This hindered economic development and made post-war recovery challenging.
- (iv) **Labor Exploitation:** The colonial powers conscripted large numbers of Africans to serve as soldiers and porters. These conscripts faced harsh conditions, and many suffered from disease, malnutrition, and exhaustion.
- (v) **Political Upheaval: Collapse of four empires: Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, Russian, and German. Rise of communism in Russia and fascism in Italy and Germany.**

- (vi) **Treaty of Versailles (1919): Imposed harsh penalties on Germany: territorial losses, military restrictions, and reparations. Created the League of Nations, a precursor to the United Nations.**
- (vii) **Redrawing of Borders: New countries formed: Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, among others. Middle East carved up into British and French mandates, sowing seeds for future conflict.**
- (viii) **Social Impact:** The war exacerbated social tensions and inequalities. The conscription of African laborers and soldiers highlighted the exploitative nature of colonial rule, contributing to growing resentment and resistance against colonial authorities.
- (ix) **Health Crisis:** The movement of troops and laborers facilitated the spread of diseases such as influenza, which caused additional suffering and mortality among the local population.
- (x) **Rise of Nationalism:** The war contributed to the rise of nationalism in East Africa. The experiences of African soldiers and porters, as well as the hardships faced by civilians, led to increased political awareness and demands for independence. The war highlighted the exploitative nature of colonial rule and fueled the desire for self-governance.

Final Reflection: World War I was not just a war—it was a **global turning point**. It shattered old empires, redrew maps, and changed the way wars were fought. Its legacy shaped the 20th century, leading directly to World War II and the modern geopolitical landscape.

Lessons from World War I

World War I (1914–1918) was a cataclysmic event that reshaped global politics, warfare, and society. Though it was called “the war to end all wars,” its aftermath proved otherwise. The conflict left behind **critical lessons** that continue to inform diplomacy, military strategy, and international cooperation today.

1. **Diplomacy Must Be Exhausted Before War:** The war showed how **poor communication and rigid alliances** can escalate a regional crisis into a global conflict. Historians and diplomats emphasize the need for **open, trustful channels** and **multilateral dialogue** to prevent war. “Force has to be the last option. You really have an obligation to your people to exhaust diplomacy before you use force.” — Nicholas Burns, Harvard Kennedy School
2. **Unchecked Nationalism and Militarism are Dangerous:** National pride and military buildup fueled aggressive policies and public support for war. The glorification of war led to **massive human loss** and disillusionment, as captured in the poetry of soldiers like Wilfred Owen. “**Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori**” or “**It is sweet and proper to die for one's country.**” — once a patriotic motto, became a bitter irony in the trenches.
3. **Modern Warfare Requires New Thinking:** WWI introduced **trench warfare, chemical weapons, tanks, and aerial combat**, changing the nature of war forever. Military leaders learned that **industrial-scale conflict demands innovation**, coordination, and adaptability.

4. **Peace Settlements Must Be Just and Inclusive: The Treaty of Versailles (1919)** imposed harsh penalties on Germany, sowing resentment and paving the way for World War II.

A key lesson: **punitive peace breeds instability**. Future treaties must balance justice with reconciliation.

5. **Global Cooperation Is Essential:** The war led to the creation of the **League of Nations**, an early attempt at global governance. Though it failed, it laid the foundation for the **United Nations**, emphasizing the need for **collective security and diplomacy**.
6. **War Has Long-Term Social and Psychological Costs:** Millions of soldiers returned with **physical injuries and psychological trauma** (then called “shell shock”). The war accelerated **social change**, including shifts in gender roles, class structures, and political ideologies.

Final Reflection: World War I taught the world that **technological progress does not guarantee peace**, and that **human lives must never be collateral in power struggles**. Its legacy urges leaders to prioritize diplomacy, build inclusive institutions, and remember the cost of conflict before choosing confrontation.

The role of the World War I in shaping international relations

World War I (1914–1918) was a seismic event that **redefined international relations** and laid the foundation for modern global diplomacy. It shattered old empires, redrew borders, and forced nations to rethink how they interact, negotiate, and maintain peace. Here's a breakdown of its transformative role:

1. **Birth of International Relations as a Discipline:** The war's devastation prompted scholars and policymakers to **study the causes of conflict systematically**, giving rise to **International Relations (IR)** as an academic field. The year **1919**, following the war, is widely considered the **birth of IR**, with institutions like the **London School of Economics** and **Georgetown University** establishing IR programs.
2. **Creation of the League of Nations:** The Treaty of Versailles (1919) established the **League of Nations**, the first global organization aimed at **preventing war through collective security and diplomacy**. Though it ultimately failed to prevent WWII, it was a **crucial experiment** in multilateralism and inspired the later creation of the **United Nations**.

3. **Shift from Balance of Power to Collective Security:** Pre-war diplomacy relied on **alliances and military deterrence** (balance of power). Post-war thinking emphasized **collective security**, where aggression against one state would be met by a united response from others.
4. **Rise of New Theories in IR:** **Realism** emphasized power politics and the anarchic nature of the international system, using WWI as a case study of failed diplomacy and inevitable conflict. **Liberalism** advocated for international cooperation, institutions, and democratic peace, inspired by Woodrow Wilson's **Fourteen Points**. While **constructivism** later emerged to highlight the role of **ideas, identities, and norms** in shaping state behavior.
5. **Redrawing of Global Borders:** The collapse of the **Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and German Empires** led to the creation of new states like **Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland**. These changes introduced **new ethnic tensions and border disputes**, influencing future diplomatic challenges.
6. **Legacy of War Guilt and Reparations:** The Treaty of Versailles placed **blame on Germany**, demanding heavy reparations. This fostered resentment and instability, influencing **interwar diplomacy** and contributing to the rise of **revisionist powers** like Nazi Germany.

Final Reflection: World War I reshaped international relations by exposing the **limits of militarism**, the **fragility of alliances**, and the **need for global cooperation**. It taught the world that peace requires more than treaties—it demands **institutions, dialogue, and shared norms**. The lessons of WWI continue to inform how nations navigate conflict, diplomacy, and global governance today.

9.2 The Versailles Treaty of 1919

Summary of the Paris Conference and the Versailles Peace Treaty/Settlement, 1919

The **Paris Peace Conference** of 1919 was a pivotal diplomatic meeting held to establish the terms of peace after World War I. It took place at the Palace of Versailles, just outside Paris, from January 18, 1919, to January 16, 1920. The conference was dominated by the leaders of the **Big Four** nations: **France, Britain, the United States, and Italy**.

Key outcomes of the conference included:

1. **Treaty of Versailles:** The most notable treaty, signed on June 28, 1919, which formally ended the state of war between Germany and the Allied Powers. It imposed heavy reparations on Germany and restricted its military capabilities.
2. **League of Nations:** The establishment of the League of Nations, an international organization aimed at maintaining peace and preventing future conflicts.

3. **Territorial Changes:** Redrawing of national boundaries and the redistribution of territories, including the transfer of German and Ottoman overseas possessions as "mandates" to Britain and France.
4. **War Guilt Clause:** Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles, which placed full responsibility for the war on Germany and its allies.

Strength of the Versailles settlement 1919/ Reasons why the terms of the Versailles Treaty could prevent another World crisis

1. **The 1919 Versailles Treaty ended the First World War I and created relative peace in Europe from 1919 to 1939**
2. **Establishment of the League of Nations:** The creation of the League of Nations aimed to promote international cooperation and prevent future conflicts, marking a significant step towards collective security.
3. **Reduction of Military Threats:** The treaty imposed military restrictions on Germany, reducing its ability to wage war and temporarily eliminating it as a major military threat.
4. **Territorial Adjustments:** The redrawing of national boundaries and the redistribution of territories aimed to reflect the principle of self-determination and create more stable nation-states.
5. **Forum for Diplomacy:** The League of Nations provided a platform for countries to discuss their issues and come to compromises, potentially avoiding armed conflicts.
6. **Economic and Political Stability:** The settlement sought to establish a fairer and more stable world by addressing the causes of the war and preventing future conflicts.
7. **Granting Independence to some states like Yugoslavia, Serbia, Montenegro, Poland, Iraq and Kuwait promoted peace.**
8. **Exchange of prisoners of war. Viable arrangements were put in place to exchange prisoners of war reducing tension.**
9. **Free navigation of all big body water was granted reducing tension among world powers.**
10. **France regained her last territories of Alsace and Lorraine.**

Weaknesses of the Versailles Settlement 1919/ Reasons why the terms of the Versailles Treaty were bound to lead to another World crisis

1. The 1919 Versailles was just imposed on Germany without consultation.
2. The Treaty was seen as biased document because the Chairperson George Clemenceau was an enemy of Germany
3. **Harsh Reparations:** The treaty imposed heavy reparations on Germany, which crippled its economy and led to widespread poverty and resentment.
4. **War Guilt Clause:** Article 231, known as the **War Guilt Clause**, placed full responsibility for the war on Germany. This caused deep humiliation and anger among the German population.
5. **Territorial Losses:** Germany lost significant territories, including Alsace-Lorraine to France and parts of Prussia to Poland. These territorial changes disrupted communities and economies.

6. **Military Restrictions:** The treaty imposed strict limitations on the German military, reducing its army to 100,000 men and banning conscription, tanks, military aircraft, and submarines.
7. **Economic Instability:** The economic terms of the treaty contributed to political instability in Germany, creating fertile ground for extremist movements, including the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party.
8. **Failure to Address Self-Determination:** While the treaty aimed to promote self-determination, it often ignored ethnic and cultural realities, leading to future conflicts and tensions.
9. **Lack of Enforcement Mechanisms:** The League of Nations, established to enforce the treaty, lacked the necessary power and support to effectively maintain peace and prevent future conflicts.

Effects of Versailles Treaty on the Germans

1. **Economic Impact:** Germany was required to pay heavy reparations, amounting to **£6.6 billion**. This led to economic hardship, hyperinflation, and significant social unrest.
2. **Territorial Losses:** Germany lost substantial territories, including Alsace-Lorraine to France, parts of Prussia to Poland, and the Saar Basin to the League of Nations. These losses reduced Germany's industrial capacity and national pride.
3. **Military Restrictions:** The treaty imposed strict limitations on the German military, reducing its army to **100,000 men**, banning conscription, and prohibiting tanks, military aircraft, and submarines.
4. **Political Instability:** The harsh terms of the treaty undermined the legitimacy of the Weimar Republic, leading to political instability and the rise of extremist groups, including the Nazis.
5. **Social Disruption:** The economic and political turmoil caused widespread social disruption, leading to frequent strikes, uprisings, and violence.

Reasons why Germans Rejected the Versailles Treaty of 1919

Germans rejected the Versailles Treaty of 1919 for several reasons:

1. **War Guilt Clause:** Article 231, known as the **War Guilt Clause**, placed full responsibility for the war on Germany. This was seen as a national humiliation and deeply resented by the German people.
2. **Economic Burden:** The treaty imposed heavy reparations on Germany, amounting to **£6.6 billion**. This crippled the German economy, leading to hyperinflation and widespread poverty.
3. **Territorial Losses:** Germany lost significant territories, including Alsace-Lorraine to France and parts of Prussia to Poland. These territorial changes reduced Germany's industrial capacity and national pride.
4. **Military Restrictions:** The treaty imposed strict limitations on the German military, reducing its army to **100,000 men**, banning conscription, and prohibiting tanks, military aircraft, and submarines.

5. **Political Instability:** The harsh terms of the treaty undermined the legitimacy of the Weimar Republic, leading to political instability and the rise of extremist groups, including the Nazis.
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To what extent did the Versailles Treaty of 1919 contributed to peace in Europe?

The **Treaty of Versailles (1919)** was intended to establish lasting peace in Europe after the devastation of World War I. However, its contribution to peace was **limited and controversial**, with both short-term successes and long-term failures.

Short-Term Contributions to Peace

1. **Formal End to World War I:** The treaty officially ended hostilities between Germany and the Allied Powers, bringing a **temporary halt to warfare** across Europe.
2. **Creation of the League of Nations:** It established the **League of Nations**, the first global organization aimed at preventing future wars through diplomacy and collective security. Though flawed, it marked a **new era of international cooperation**.
3. **3. Demilitarization of Germany:** Germany's military was severely restricted, and the **Rhineland was demilitarized**, reducing its capacity to wage war in the near term.

Long-Term Failures and Destabilization

4. **Harsh Terms and German Resentment:** Germany was forced to accept **full responsibility for the war** (War Guilt Clause), pay massive **reparations**, and cede territory. These terms created **economic hardship, national humiliation, and political instability, fueling the rise of extremism and Adolf Hitler**.
5. **Unbalanced Peace:** The treaty was seen as a **victor's peace**, with little input from Germany or other defeated powers. It failed to address underlying tensions and **excluded key players** like the Soviet Union and the United States (which never ratified the treaty).
6. **Redrawing Borders Without Stability:** New states were created (e.g., Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia), but many had **ethnic tensions and weak institutions**. These unresolved issues contributed to future conflicts in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Historical Assessment: Most historians agree that the Treaty of Versailles **did not create a durable peace**. Instead, it laid the groundwork for **World War II**, just two decades later. As noted in World History UK's analysis, the treaty's punitive nature fostered resentment and instability rather than reconciliation.

Final Reflection: The Treaty of Versailles contributed to **short-term peace** by ending World War I and introducing new diplomatic frameworks. However, its **harsh terms, exclusionary politics, and failure to foster genuine reconciliation** meant that it ultimately **sowed the seeds of future conflict** rather than securing lasting peace in Europe.

9.3 The League of Nations of 1920–1939

Summary of the League of Nations, January 1920-December 1939

The **League of Nations** was the first worldwide intergovernmental organization whose principal mission was to maintain world peace. It was founded on **January 10, 1920**, by the Paris Peace Conference that ended World War I. Here are some key points about its history from 1920 to 1939:

1. **Foundation and Early Years:** The League was established as part of the Treaty of Versailles. Its primary goals included preventing wars through collective security and disarmament and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration.
2. **Membership:** Initially, the League had 42 founding members, and over time, a total of 63 countries joined. However, some countries, including the United States, never joined.
3. **Key Achievements:** The League worked on various issues such as labor conditions, treatment of native inhabitants, human trafficking, arms trade, global health, prisoners of war, and protection of minorities.
4. **Challenges:** The League faced significant challenges, including the lack of its own armed force and the reluctance of major powers to enforce its resolutions. The Great Depression and the rise of aggressive regimes like Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy further undermined its effectiveness.
5. **Dissolution:** The League ceased operations on **April 18, 1946**, and many of its functions were transferred to the newly formed United Nations.

Aims of the formation of League of Nations in 1920

The **League of Nations** was formed with several key aims in mind:

1. **Maintaining World Peace:** The primary goal was to prevent future wars through collective security, negotiation and disarmament. Article 10 of its Covenant committed members to **defend the territorial integrity and independence** of fellow members.
2. **Resolving International Disputes:** The League aimed to settle international disputes through negotiation and arbitration rather than through conflict.
3. **Promoting International Cooperation:** It sought to foster cooperation among nations on issues such as labor conditions, health, human trafficking and the treatment of native inhabitants.

4. **Promote Disarmament:** Member states pledged to **reduce their armaments**, aiming to limit the capacity for war and redirect resources toward development.
5. **Oversee Mandated Territories:** The League supervised former **German and Ottoman colonies**, placing them under the “tutelage” of advanced nations until they could become independent. This was part of the **Mandate System**, designed to ensure responsible governance and eventual self-rule.
6. **Protect Minority Rights and Administer Disputed Regions:** The League helped implement **minority treaties** and oversaw regions like the **Free City of Danzig** and the **Saar territory**, promoting stability in post-war Europe.

Final Reflection: The League of Nations was a visionary step toward **global governance**, born from the horrors of World War I. While it ultimately failed to prevent World War II, its legacy lives on in the **United Nations**, which inherited many of its principles and structures.

Positive Achievements of the League of Nations 1920-1939

The **League of Nations** achieved several positive outcomes during its existence from 1920 to 1939:

1. **Resolving Territorial Disputes:** The League successfully resolved disputes such as the **Upper Silesia dispute** between Poland and Germany and the **Aaland Islands dispute** between Sweden and Finland.
2. **Humanitarian Efforts:** The League facilitated the repatriation of half a million prisoners of war and provided aid to Turkish refugees.
3. **Combating Slavery and Drug Trade:** It took measures to combat slave trading and drug trafficking, promoting human rights and global health.
4. **Health Initiatives:** The League supported measures against diseases like leprosy and malaria, contributing to global health improvements.
5. **Minority Protection:** It worked to protect the rights of minorities in various countries, promoting social justice and equality.
6. It promoted independence of several countries including Iran, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Hungary and others.
7. It established the International Labor Organization (ILO) to promote the working conditions of employees in member countries.
8. In 1922 the League of Nations ordered Peru to hand over Leticia to Colombia and the conflict was settled.
9. Established the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1923 to manage health and diseases in member countries.
10. It settled the dispute of Iraq over Mosul oil deposits.
11. The leagues extended financial aid member countries such Iraq and Turkey to improve on their economies.

Failures of the League of Nations 1920-1939

The **League of Nations** faced several significant failures during its existence from 1920 to 1939:

1. **Failure to Prevent Wars:** The League was unable to prevent major conflicts such as the **Japanese invasion of Manchuria** in 1931 and the **Italian invasion of Ethiopia** in 1935.
2. **Lack of Enforcement Power:** The League had no standing army and relied on member nations to enforce its resolutions, which they often failed to do.
3. **Economic Depression:** The Great Depression strained international cooperation and led to increased nationalism and protectionism.
4. **Unilateral Actions by Major Powers:** Countries like Britain and France often acted in their own interests rather than following the League's principles, undermining its authority.
5. **Slow and Bureaucratic:** The League's decision-making process was slow and required unanimous votes, making it difficult to respond quickly to crises.
6. **Failure in the Spanish Civil War:** The League was unable to prevent or resolve the Spanish Civil War, which resulted in significant loss of life and the rise of fascist regimes.
7. **It failed to incorporate USA.** This weakened its financial and military strength.
8. **The League failed to establish its own financial sources** and relied on hand out from member states which hindered its independence.
- 9.

Challenges faced by the League of Nations/Reasons why the League of Nations failed to maintain World Peace between 1920 and 1945

The **League of Nations** faced several challenges that hindered its ability to maintain world peace between 1920 and 1945:

1. **Absence of Major Powers:** The United States, one of the world's most powerful nations, never joined the League. This significantly reduced its influence and effectiveness.
2. **Lack of Enforcement Power:** The League had no standing army and relied on member nations to enforce its resolutions, which they often failed to do.
3. **Economic Challenges:** The Great Depression strained international cooperation and led to increased nationalism and protectionism.
4. **Failure of Disarmament:** The League was unable to convince major powers to disarm, undermining its goal of reducing armaments.
5. **Political Instability:** The rise of aggressive regimes like Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, which pursued expansionist policies, posed significant challenges to the League's efforts.
6. **Structural Weaknesses:** The League's decision-making process was slow and required unanimous votes, making it difficult to respond quickly to crises.
7. **Appeasement Policies:** Britain and France, two influential members, often ignored the League in their efforts to appease aggressive nations, leading to further instability.
8. **The league lacked independent source of income to fund its activities.**
9. **The league had unstable membership**
10. **The principle equality or one man one vote** discouraged the support of Britain and France.

11. **Reliance on weak economic sanctions against aggressors.** This was ineffective punishment without the support of USA.
12. Neville Chamberlain's adoption of an **appeasement policy** in the 1930s confirmed Britain's desire to seek peace through independent mediation, rather than international collaboration thus undermining collective security endorsed by the League of Nations.

What does the League of Nations was an instrument of peace after World War I teach us

The experience of the **League of Nations as an instrument of peace after World War I** offers powerful lessons about the **promise and limitations of international cooperation**. Though the League ultimately failed to prevent another global war, its legacy shaped how the world understands diplomacy, collective security, and global governance.

Here's what it teaches us:

1. **Peace Requires More Than Good Intentions:** The League was born from a noble vision: to prevent war through dialogue and unity. However, without **enforcement power**, its resolutions were often ignored.

Lesson: Peacekeeping needs both moral authority and practical tools—including the ability to act decisively.

2. **Global Cooperation Is Essential but Fragile:** The League was the first attempt to bring nations together under a shared framework. Yet key powers like the **United States never joined**, and others (Germany, USSR) were excluded or joined late.

Lesson: Inclusivity and commitment from major powers are crucial for any global peace initiative to succeed.

3. **Justice Must Be Balanced with Reconciliation:** The League was closely tied to the **Treaty of Versailles**, which imposed harsh terms on Germany. This fostered resentment and undermined the League's credibility.

Lesson: Lasting peace requires fairness—not punishment—and a willingness to heal divisions.

4. **Institutions Must Be Built to Endure Crisis:** The League lacked its own military force and depended on member states to enforce decisions. When aggression occurred (e.g., Japan in Manchuria, Italy in Ethiopia), the League was powerless.

Lesson: Strong institutions need clear mandates, resources, and unity to respond to threats.

5. **Ideas Can Outlive Their Institutions:** Though the League collapsed, its principles—**collective security, diplomacy, and international law**—inspired the creation of the **United Nations** in 1945.

Lesson: Even imperfect efforts can lay the groundwork for future success.

Final Reflection: The League of Nations teaches us that **peace is a process**, not a promise. It requires vision, cooperation, and resilience. While the League failed to prevent World War II, it planted the seeds for a more robust global system—reminding us that every attempt at peace, no matter how flawed, is a step toward a better world.

9.4 The Economic Depression

Summary of the Great World Economic Depression, 1929-1935.

The **Great Depression** was a severe worldwide economic downturn that began in **1929** and lasted until about **1939**. Here are some key points about this period:

1. **Stock Market Crash:** The Depression started with the **stock market crash** in October 1929, often referred to as **Black Tuesday**. This event shattered confidence in the American economy and led to sharp reductions in spending and investment.
2. **Bank Failures:** The early 1930s saw numerous bank failures, which decreased the pool of money available for loans and further deepened the economic crisis.
3. **High Unemployment:** Unemployment rates soared, reaching about **25%** in the United States by 1933. Many people lost their jobs, homes, and savings.
4. **Global Impact:** The economic downturn spread worldwide, affecting industrial production, trade, and employment in many countries.
5. **Government Responses:** Different governments responded in various ways. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt implemented the **New Deal** programs to provide relief, recovery, and reform.
6. **Social Impact:** The Depression led to widespread poverty, homelessness, and a significant increase in soup kitchens and breadlines.

Causes of the Great World Economic Depression, 1929-1935.

1. **Stock Market Crash of 1929:** The sudden and dramatic crash of the stock market in October 1929 led to a severe loss of confidence in the American economy, resulting in reduced spending and investment.
2. **Bank Failures:** The early 1930s saw numerous bank failures, which decreased the pool of money available for loans and further deepened the economic crisis.
3. **Reduction in Consumer Spending:** As people lost their jobs and savings, consumer spending plummeted, leading to reduced industrial output and further job losses.
4. **Overproduction:** Industries produced more goods than could be sold, leading to a surplus and falling prices, which hurt businesses and workers.
5. **High Tariffs:** The **Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act** of 1930 imposed steep tariffs on imported goods, leading to retaliatory measures from other countries and a contraction in global trade.

6. **Global Economic Weakness:** The economic downturn was not limited to the United States; it spread to other countries, exacerbating the global economic crisis.
7. **World War 1:** caused widespread economic losses and losses of human resource.
8. High war indemnity imposed on Germany crashed Germany economy.
9. Weakness and failure of Gold Standards which limited money supply in countries with limited gold.
10. The weakness of League of Nations to establish proper and meaningful economic cooperation among the World Economies.
11. Shortage of experienced and skilled labor force.
12. Destruction transport and communication infrastructure during World War I that would ease movement of goods and service.
13. Use of technology in production that led massive unemployment.
14. Ban on immigration adopted by various countries leading shortage of labor force.
15. Widespread income inequalities in many countries
16. Risk of another world war led to low investments.

Consequences of the Great World Economic Depression, 1929-1935.

The **Great Depression** had profound consequences on economies and societies worldwide:

1. **Mass Unemployment:** Unemployment rates soared, reaching about **25%** in the United States by 1933. Many people lost their jobs, homes, and savings.
2. **Poverty and Homelessness:** Widespread poverty and homelessness became common as people struggled to make ends meet.
3. **Bank Failures:** Numerous banks failed, leading to a decrease in available credit and further deepening the economic crisis.
4. **Reduction in Industrial Production:** Industrial production declined sharply, with the United States experiencing a nearly **47% drop** between 1929 and 1933.
5. **Global Trade Decline:** The Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930 led to a contraction in global trade as countries imposed retaliatory tariffs.
6. **Social and Political Changes:** The Depression led to significant social and political changes, including the expansion of labor unions and the welfare state.
7. **Changes in Economic Policy:** Governments around the world implemented new economic policies to address the crisis, such as the New Deal in the United States.
8. **League of Nations was weakened** due to lack of finances to fund its operation.
9. **World Economic Depression led to fall of government.** For example in Germany Hitler overthrew Weimar republic in 1934, in Spain General Franco rose to power in 1939 and in USA Franklin Roosevelt defeated Hoover in 1932 elections.
10. **Led to formation of various economic cooperation/blocks/integrations.** For instance, Scandinavian countries in 1933 form OSLO economic Block.
11. **Lead to abandonment of the gold Standard in USA and other countries**
12. **Led to outbreak of the World War II.**

Solutions of the Great World Economic Depression, 1929-1935.

1. **Government Intervention:** Many European governments adopted interventionist policies to stabilize their economies. For example, public works programs were

introduced to reduce unemployment and stimulate economic activity. In Germany, the Nazi regime implemented extensive infrastructure projects, such as the construction of autobahns, which helped revive the economy.

2. **Abandonment of the Gold Standard:** Several countries, including Britain, abandoned the gold standard, allowing their currencies to devalue. This made exports more competitive and boosted trade.
3. **Trade Protectionism:** Some nations imposed tariffs and trade restrictions to protect domestic industries. While this approach had mixed results, it was a common strategy during the recovery period.
4. **Economic Alliances:** Regional economic cooperation, such as the formation of trade blocs, helped stabilize economies and promote recovery.
5. **Social Welfare Programs:** Governments introduced social welfare measures to support the unemployed and reduce poverty, which helped maintain social stability.
6. **Industrial Recovery:** By the late 1930s, industrial output in many European countries had surpassed pre-Depression levels, driven by rearmament and increased government spending.
7. **Monetary Policy Changes: Central banks around the world adjusted monetary policies to increase liquidity and stimulate economic activity.**
8. **Banking Reforms:** Reforms were introduced to stabilize the banking sector, including the establishment of deposit insurance and the separation of commercial and investment banking.

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