Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ HW#6 – Peace & Turmoil

**After the War**

Delegates from a group of European countries met at the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919. Europeans looked to President Wilson for leadership in dealing with the challenges they faced after World War I. European countries lost millions of soldiers and civilians, had much property destroyed, and had large homeless and hungry populations. Russians were in the middle of a civil war. Many groups of people wanted to form their own independent nations out of empires that had collapsed. Peace and stability were threatened by social and political problems. President Wilson’s proposal for peace was a plan known as the ***Fourteen Points.***

Wilson believed the people should decide how they want to be governed. He suggested boundary changes in Europe and the establishment of new countries. The plan included rules for improved international relations, including free trade between nations, freedom of the seas, the ending of secret agreements, the peaceful settling of problems, and the reduction of weapons in all countries.

The final part of President Wilson’s plan involved forming a ***League of Nations,*** made up of delegates from many countries who would preserve the peace and prevent future conflicts. Members would have to agree to respect one another’s’ territories and political independence. Many Europeans liked his plan, but they disagreed with how territories were divided. Each country was looking out for its own interests.

**The Peace Conference**

Germany and Russia were not invited to the Paris Peace Conference. The four countries that dominated the conference were the United States, France, Britain, and Italy. The Allies disagreed about whether or not Germany should be punished for the war. President Wilson opposed punishment, but some of the Allies wanted revenge. France and Great Britain wanted Germany to pay for the damage the war caused, through ***reparations,*** or large payments. President Wilson compromised with the Allies. France, Britain, and the United States agreed to support anti-Bolshevik groups in Russia. They each sent troops to help stop the spread of communism.

After many months of negotiations, the Allies and Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles. Germany agreed to accept responsibility for the war, pay billions of dollars in damages, surrender all of its colonies overseas and some European territory, and give up all of its weapons. The treaty, signed in June 1919, created new nations out of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires. There were disagreements over the borders, however. The League of Nations was included in the treaty, but many of President Wilson’s Fourteen Points were not. The Germans did not like the harsh terms of the treaty, but they had little choice.

**Opposition at Home**

The Congress of the United States had to approve, or ratify, the treaty before it became final. Some people thought it punished Germany too severely. The Republican Congress saw this as an opportunity to embarrass and get back at their Democratic president before the elections of 1920. They were upset that President Wilson did not invite any Republicans to attend the Paris Peace Conference. Others were not sure if

they supported the idea of a League of Nations. They worried that it would control their own foreign policy. The head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Henry Cabot Lodge, was strongly opposed to the treaty. He believed the treaty would tell America when and where American ships and troops would be sent.

President Wilson traveled the country talking to the citizens about why the treaty should be approved. He suffered a stroke while on tour, which left him partially paralyzed. His wife decided which issues he would be bothered with while he was recovering. Lodge made changes to the treaty, and Wilson urged Democrats to vote against it. The Treaty of Versailles was defeated. The United States negotiated separate treaties with each country in the Central Powers. It never joined the League of Nations. Wilson did not run for a third term in the elections of 1920.

**Fear of Radicalism**

After World War I, many Americans did not trust other people who had different practices or beliefs. They were suspicious of people from foreign countries or of foreign heritage. Some Americans were also suspicious of people whose beliefs were different from their own.

The Senate did not approve the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Americans were concerned about the Communist government formed by the Bolsheviks in late 1917. Bolsheviks opposed ***capitalism,*** the economic system based on private businesses and free enterprise. American businesses and the government support capitalism. The Bolsheviks encouraged working people around the world to fight capitalism. This idea

threatened the way of life in the United States.

People who were opposed to any form of government scared Americans in 1919. These people are called ***anarchists*.** Many public officials received packages containing bombs believed to be sent by anarchists. Many anarchists were foreign-born. As a result, Americans began to distrust all foreigners.

The fear of foreigners led to the government to arrest Communists, or “Reds.” The government also went after people with radical or extreme beliefs. People suspected of being Communists or anarchists were arrested in late 1919 and early 1920. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer and his deputy, J. Edgar Hoover, approved raiding the headquarters of suspicious groups. Thousands of people were arrested. Houses and

offices were searched and records were taken. Palmer and Hoover were looking for weapons and dynamite, which they never found. Many people from foreign countries who were arrested were ***deported,*** or forced to leave the United States. Other people were let go because there was no evidence of wrongdoing. Palmer and Hoover exaggerated the threat of a possible revolution in the United States. This period became known as the Red Scare.

A murder case in Massachusetts was an example of this widespread fear of people with radical beliefs. Two anarchists were arrested for robbery and murder. Some people thought the men were accused of the crime because of their threatening anarchist views. The men, Italian immigrants named Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, had no criminal history. They were convicted and executed. Some Americans, including future

Supreme Court justice Felix Frankfurter, believed the two men were wrongly convicted on little evidence. The case is still debated by historians.

**Labor Unrest**

In 1919 after the war, American workers participated in more than 3,600 strikes. They called for higher wages or pay to keep up with the rising cost of goods and services. Many Americans believed anarchists and Bolsheviks were responsible for the strikes. The largest strike happened in the steel industry in 1919. Refusing to work until a better agreement was reached, 3,500 workers went on strike. Workers wanted an eight-hour workday and higher pay. The strike caused violence on both sides.

When police officers went on strike in Boston in 1919, the entire police force was fired. The governor of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge, supported the firings. The police officers were fired because they wanted to form a union. Many Americans falsely believed unions were connected with radicals and Bolsheviks. Membership in unions declined in the 1920s. Employers and the government pressured workers not to

join unions.

An African American named A. Philip Randolph formed a new union called the

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. This union increased in size during the 1930s.

Randolph later became a leader in the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

**Racial Unrest**

African Americans from the South competed with Northern whites for jobs after the war. The competition caused violence and hatred. The hate crimes left many people injured or dead. An African American leader named Marcus Garvey encouraged other African Americans to leave the United States to form their own country in Africa. He did not believe in integration or mixing of the races. Marcus Garvey established an organization called the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) to help promote racial unity and pride. The organization helped African Americans start businesses and held unity rallies and parades. African Americans were encouraged to be proud of their race.

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. Please use complete sentences.

**1.** What did President Wilson propose at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919?

**2.** What countries dominated the Paris Peace Conference?

**3.** Why did the Senate reject the Treaty of Versailles?

**4.** Why were many Americans afraid of foreigners and people of different races?

**5.** Why were many Americans opposed to forming and joining unions?

**6.** What did Marcus Garvey want African Americans to do?