

READING CHECK

Why did the “irreconcilables” oppose the treaty to end World War I?

VOCABULARY BUILDER

What does the word *mutual* mean in the underlined sentence? What clues can you find in the surrounding words, phrases, or sentences?

READING SKILL

Sequence Sequence the events that led the U.S. Senate to not ratify the treaty ending World War I.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the conflict had become a deadly stalemate. Hoping to end the conflict before the Americans could make a difference, Germany renewed unrestricted submarine warfare. British and American **convoys** provided mutual safety by sending warships to protect the merchant ships. As a result, shipping losses from U-boat attacks fell sharply.

In November 1917, radical communists led by **Vladimir Lenin** gained control of Russia. Fighting stopped between Russia and Germany, which allowed Germany to launch an all-out offensive on the Western Front. American troops under the command of **John J. Pershing** helped stop the German offensive and launch successful counteroffensives. On November 11, 1918, Germany surrendered, officially ending World War I.

In what became known as the **Fourteen Points**, President Woodrow Wilson promoted openness, encouraged independence, and supported freedom. Wilson also advocated **self-determination**, or the right of people to choose their own form of government. Finally, he asked for a **League of Nations**, a world organization where countries could gather and peacefully resolve their quarrels.

In 1919, the victorious Allies held a peace conference in France. Although Wilson’s hope for the League of Nations was fulfilled, the various peace treaties created almost as many problems as they solved. The other Allied leaders insisted that Germany make **reparations**, or payment for war damages. When the map of Europe was redrawn, national self-determination was violated many times.

In the United States, many people opposed the treaty. A handful of senators known as the “**irreconcilables**” believed that the United States should not get entangled in world organizations such as the League of Nations. A larger group of senators, led by **Henry Cabot Lodge** and known as the “**reservationists**,” was opposed to the treaty as it was written. Wilson and his opponents refused to put aside their differences and compromise, and the Senate did not ratify the treaty. Without full American support, the League of Nations proved unable to maintain peace among nations.

Review Questions

1. Describe the aims of the Fourteen Points.

2. How did convoys contribute to the success of the Allies?
