Woodrow Wilson‘s 14 points

On January 18, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson gave a speech to Congress that outlined Fourteen Points for peace and the end to World War I. Wilson wanted lasting peace and for World War I to be the "war to end all wars."

Leading up to Wilson's Speech

The United States entered World War I on the side of the Allies on April 6, 1917. However, the U.S. entered the war reluctantly. Unlike many European nations, the U.S. wasn't fighting over territory or in revenge for past wars. Wilson wanted the end of the war to bring out lasting peace for the world. He put together what he thought was a fair plan for peace. This plan became the Fourteen Points.

Purpose of the Fourteen Points

The main purpose of the Fourteen Points was to outline a strategy for ending the war. He set out specific goals that he wanted to achieve through the war. If the United States was going to fight in Europe and soldiers were going to lose their lives, he wanted to establish exactly what they were fighting for. Through this speech and the Fourteen Points, Wilson became the only leader of the countries fighting in the war to publicly outline his war goals.

Summary of the Fourteen Points

1-No more secret agreements between countries. Diplomacy shall be open to the world.

2-International seas shall be free to navigate during peace and war.

3-There shall be free trade between the countries who accept the peace.

4-There shall be a worldwide reduction in weapons and armies by all countries.

5-Colonial claims over land and regions will be fair.

6-Russia will be allowed to determine its own form of government. All German troops will leave Russian soil.

7-German troops will evacuate Belgium and Belgium will be an independent country.

8-France will regain all territory including the disputed land of Alsace-Lorraine.

9-The borders of Italy will be established such that all Italians will be within the country of Italy.

10-Austria-Hungary will be allowed to continue to be an independent country.

11-The Central Powers (Germany & its’ allies) will evacuate Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania leaving them as independent countries.

12-The Turkish people of the Ottoman Empire will have their own country. Other nationalities under the Ottoman rule will also have security.

13-Poland shall be an independent country.

14-A League of Nations will be formed that protects the independence of all countries no matter how big or small.