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Austria-Hungary; for example, Austria itself and the parts of Czechoslovakia that Germans called the Southlands, the Sudetenland. Furthermore, since Wilson had hinted broadly that Germans should get rid of their old regime and become a republic, and since this had in fact happened at the end of the war, many Germans assumed that there was now a new Germany which should not have to pay for the sins of the old one.

There is another and very significant difference between the ends of the First and Second World Wars which affected the ways in which peace came. In 1918, very little of Germany was occupied by Allied troops. There was discussion at the time and there has been since about whether the Allies should have pursued the war to the end. General Pershing, the American commander-in-chief, whose troops were still relatively fresh and enthusiastic, wanted to go on. He wanted to carry the war into Germany and Allied troops marching in victory through Berlin. From the point of view, though, of Marshal Foch, the French commander-in-chief and Supreme Allied Commander in Chief, the armistice terms which the Germans were prepared to accept, which included their surrendering their heavy armaments and the German navy, were tantamount to a complete capitulation. Foch also pointed out, and he was probably right, that Allied opinion would not stand for more waste of lives when victory seemed assured. His political masters agreed: it would have been politically and militarily very difficult for Britain and France to go on fighting against Germany, once an Armistice had been publicly requested. In retrospect, knowing what we now know, it might have been better to make the sacrifice and occupy Germany in 1918 because many Germans were later able to persuade themselves that Germany had not been defeated and that the peace terms imposed by the Allies were deeply unfair. As it was most Germans never saw Allied troops and the German army which marched back in Berlin was greeted by what was now the President of a Republic as the undefeated.

Germany came out of the war weakened and smaller. It has been argued, though, by a number of historians that Germany in some ways was in a stronger position strategically after 1919 than it had been before 1914. It no longer had an Austria-Hungary on its eastern