



0. Inglourious Basterds - Story Preface

1. THE FALL of FRANCE
2. LIFE in VICHY and OCCUPIED FRANCE
3. FRENCH RESISTANCE
4. GOEBBELS and PROPAGANDA FILMS
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Scene from the Armistice train, in the forest of Compiègne, after negotiators agreed to terms of an Armistice ending World War I. Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the lead negotiator for France, is second-from-right. Although the terms of the later Versailles Treaty were harsh, for Germany, Foch believed they were not harsh-enough. After all parties had signed the Treaty, Foch said: "This is not a peace. It is an armistice for twenty years." Twenty years and sixty-five days later, World War II began.

*You only have power over people
so long as you don't take everything away from them.
But when you've robbed a man of everything
he's no longer in your power - he's free again.*

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
In The First Circle, Chapter 17

It is the 11th of November, 1918. Two trains approach each other in the Compiègne forest. A meeting, between the occupants, is about to take place.

At this spot, not far from Paris, warring nations end their conflict. Although the fighting (with ghastly consequences) has led to a stalemate, one side (the Allies) makes costly demands. The other (Germany) reluctantly agrees.

That agreement, the first step toward a treaty (signed in the palace of Versailles the following year), effectively requires Germany to give-up war making in general. It also demands the defeated county to pay huge reparations.

When the harsh terms are made public, people are stunned. One foot soldier, Adolf Hitler, later vows to do something about it.

That's where our story begins.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Inglourious-Basterds>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Inglourious-Basterds>

Questions 2 Ponder

Is It True that Robbing People of Everything Means They are "Free Again?"

The Versailles Treaty, which ended World War One, included very harsh terms for Germany. The consequences of that treaty caused Germans to become resentful.

Not only were Germans required to pay huge war reparations, they were forbidden from re-arming or building-up their country's military forces.

This brings to mind something which Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn once said "...when you've robbed a man of everything, he's no longer in your power - he's free again."

What do Solzhenitsyn's words mean to you?

Do you think that concept also applies to countries? Why, or why not?

Might that concept have applied to Germany at the end of World War I (via the harsh terms of the Versailles Treaty)? Explain your answer.

Media Stream



Armistice, 1918 - Germans Raise a White Flag

Photo - of German delegation traveling under a flag of truce, just before the Armistice - online, courtesy [National Archives of Australia](#).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Armistice-1918-Germans-Raise-a-White-Flag>



Armistice, 1918 - Compiègne Forest Clearing

Photo online, courtesy [National Archives of Australia](#).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Armistice-1918-Compiègne-Forest-Clearing>



Armistice - Trains Approach to End WWI

Photo online, courtesy [National Archives of Australia](#).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Armistice-Trains-Approach-to-End-WWI>



Armistice, 1918 - German Delegation

Image online, courtesy [Bundesarchiv](#) (picture archives) of the Federal Archives of Germany.

Quoted references:

Matthias Erzberger, quoted in Stanley Weintraub, *A Stillness Heard Round The World: The End of the Great War*, November 1918, New York, 1985, p.157.

Instructions to Erzberger, quoted in Nicholas Best, *The Greatest Day in History*, Public Affairs, 2008, p. 56.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Armistice-1918-German-Delegation>



Armistice, 1918 - Place of Armistice Talks

Image online, courtesy [Archives nationales](#) (the National Archives of France).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Armistice-1918-Place-of-Armistice-Talks>



Armistice, 1918 - Both Sides at the Railway Carriage

Image online, courtesy [Archives nationales](#) (the National Archives of France).

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Armistice-1918-Both-Sides-at-the-Railway-Carriage>



Adolf Hitler - Foot Soldier in WWI

Photo online, courtesy U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Adolf-Hitler-Foot-Soldier-in-WWI>



Inglourious Basterds

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Last Day of World War I - The Armistice

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Armistice of 1918 - Thousands Die During Last Hours

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