HOW COULD WILSON ARGUE THAT HIS FOREIGN POLICY WAS COMMITTED TO PEACE AFTER HE ASKED CONGRESS TO DECLARE WAR?

Wilson's Fourteen Points
- President Wilson proposed the Fourteen Points in 1918 that convinced the Germans they would be treated fairly if they surrendered
- The goal of Wilson's Fourteen Points was to provide a plan for a just and lasting peace
- All of the following were part of Wilson's Fourteen Points:
  - National Self-Determination
  - Open Diplomacy
  - Freedom of the Seas
  - A League of Nations: Creation of an international organization to preserve the peace & security of its members
- Of his Fourteen Points, Wilson was most concerned with establishing Point 14: A general association of nations formed to provide political independence & territorial integrity of all nations

Treaty of Versailles
- Wilson's idealism led to conflicts with European leaders
- Germany was excluded from the Treaty of Versailles negotiations
- In the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Versailles, Wilson was willing to sacrifice other portions of his 14 Points in order to gain Allied approval of a League of Nations
- The Senate was angry at Wilson for the way he handled the negotiations and for the treaty that the peace conference produced. Wilson refused to compromise on various treaty provisions and the Senate rejected the treaty both times it was sent to them
- Treaty of Versailles was defended by Wilson on the grounds that it provided for a League of Nations committed to preserving the peace
- Following WWI, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge led the fight against the League of Nations & the Treaty of Versailles
- During the time of Wilson's presidency, the "Irreconcilables" & the "Reservationists" had strong feelings concerning the Treaty of Versailles
- Wilson hardened Senate opposition to the treaty of Versailles by his refusal to compromise on the issue of the unconditional adherence of the U.S. to the charter of the League of Nations
- Wilson was partially incapacitated by illness during the years of 1919-1920
- The U.S. Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles because it required increased American involvement in European affairs
- The rejection of the Versailles Treaty by the U.S. Senate signaled the future for American foreign policy: The U.S. retreated into isolationism and backed away from a world leadership role
- Isolationists felt there is no reason why the U.S. should be committed to other political units or involved in entangling alliances

TO WHAT EXTENT WERE WILSON'S ILLNESS AND HIS REFUSAL TO COMPROMISE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEFEAT OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES IN THE U.S. SENATE?

- Wilson, "We had a chance to gain the leadership of the world. We lost it, and soon we shall be witnessing the tragedy of it all."
- A historian writing about Wilson's foreign policy after the Armistice would be interested in examining:
  - The Treaty of Versailles
  - The covenant of the League of Nations
  - The memoirs of Henry Cabot Lodge
  - Senate debates of 1919
- The main consequence of the Senate's refusal to ratify the treaty of Versailles was the League of Nations was greatly weakened
- During WWI the massive depletion of resources and manpower led to conditions that encouraged the rise of fascism & communism
- The conditions of the treaty of Versailles led to the rise of German nationalism and the Third Reich
- The widespread devastation of Europe's industrial base is considered to be a factor in contributing to the Great Depression