**6)**[**Edward M. House**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAhouse.htm)**, diary (29th June, 1919)**

June 29, 1919: I am leaving Paris, after eight fateful months, with conflicting emotions. Looking at the conference in retrospect there is much to approve and much to regret. It is easy to say what should have been done, but more difficult to have found a way for doing it.

The bitterness engendered by the war, the hopes raised high in many quarters because of victory, the character of the men having the dominant voices in the making of the Treaty, all had their influence for good or for evil, and were to be reckoned with.

How splendid it would have been had we blazed a new and better trail! However, it is to be doubted whether this could have been done, even if those in authority had so decreed, for the peoples back of them had to be reckoned with. It may be that Wilson might have had the power and influence if he had remained in Washington and kept clear of the Conference. When he stepped from his lofty pedestal and wrangled with representatives of other states upon equal terms, he became as common clay.

To those who are saying that the Treaty is bad and should never have been made and that it will involve Europe in infinite difficulties in its enforcement, I feel like admitting it. But I would also say in reply that empires cannot be shattered and new states raised upon their ruins without disturbance. To create new boundaries is always to create new troubles. The one follows the other. While I should have preferred a different peace, I doubt whether it could have been made, for the ingredients for such a peace as I would have had were lacking at Paris

The same forces that have been at work in the making of this peace would be at work to hinder the enforcement of a different kind of peace, and no one can say with certitude that anything better than has been done could be done at this time. We have had to deal with a situation pregnant with difficulties and one which could be met only by an unselfish and idealistic spirit, which was almost wholly absent and which was too much to expect of men come together at such a time and for such a purpose.

And yet I wish we had taken the other road, even if it were less smooth, both now and afterward, than the one we took. We would at least have gone in the right direction and if those who follow us had made it impossible to go the full length of the journey planned, the responsibility would have rested with them and not with us.

1. What does House argue is the consequence of redrawing boundaries?
2. How does House feel about the treaty that was created?
3. Based on your knowledge of the Treaty of Versailles, do you think a better treaty could have been written? Or was this the best they could do at the given time? Why?

**(8) Captain E. N. Bennett, speech at a**[**Union of Democratic Control**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWudc.htm)**(11th November, 1920)**

The fundamental falsehood on which the Versailles Treaty is built is the theory that Germany was solely and entirely responsible for the war. No fair-minded student of the war and its causes can accept this contention; but the propaganda story of Germany’s sole guilt has been preached so persistently from pulpit, Press and Parliament that the bulk of our people have come to regard it as an axiomatic truth which justifies the provisions of the most brutal and unjust Treaty in the world’s history.

**(9) General**[**Hubert Gough**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWgough.htm)**, speech at a**[**Union of Democratic Control**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWudc.htm)**(11th November, 1920)**

It seems to me that the Peace Treaty can be viewed from two points of view, the moral and the purely utilitarian (doing the best for the greatest amount of people). From either it appears thoroughly bad, and it has failed and must continue to fail to reach any good result, such as all who fought in the war supposed we were to gain. We hoped to establish justice, fair-dealing between nations, and the honest keeping of promises; we thought to establish a good and lasting peace which would, of necessity, have been established on good will. The Peace Treaty has done nothing of the kind.

**(10) The**[***Daily Mail***](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jmail.htm)**journalist,**[**Henry Hamilton Fyfe**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jfyfe.htm)**, was a strong critic of the**[**Versailles Peace Treaty**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWversailles.htm)**.**

If all had worked together as comrades to repair the damage done and to build up better conditions than existed before – had worked at this task without resentment, recognizing that all had been to blame, there would have been employment for all and the promises of a “better world”, made so glibly for recruiting purposes, could have been fulfilled. But that called for a clearness of foresight, an honesty of purpose, which the politicians in power at that time did not possess.

1. Why do you think Captain E.N. Bennett argues that Germany should not have accepted full responsibility for the war?
2. Based on your knowledge of the Treaty of Versailles, why do you think General Hubert Gough believes the treaty does not serve the goals initially established?
3. Based on Henry Hamilton Fyfe’s excerpt, what do you think will happen to Europe after this treaty is put into effect? Why?

**11)**[**John Maynard Keynes**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/TUkeynes.htm)**, *The Economic Consequences of Peace* (1920)**

The Treaty includes no provision for the economic rehabilitation of Europe – nothing to make the defeated Central Powers into good neighbours, nothing to stabilize the new States of Europe, nothing to reclaim Russia; nor does it promote in any way a compact of economic solidarity amongst the Allies themselves; no arrangement was reached at Paris for restoring the disordered finances of France and Italy, or to adjust the systems of the Old World and the New.

It is an extraordinary fact that the fundamental economic problem of a Europe starving and disintegrating before their eyes, was the one question in which it was impossible to arouse the interest of the Four. Reparation was their main excursion into the economic field, and they settled it from every point of view except that of the economic future of the States whose destiny they were handling.

1. **According to Keynes, what was NOT established in the Treaty of Versailles? (put these in your own words). Why is this a problem?**
2. **Why do you think the allies were not concerned with economic rebuilding in Europe?**
3. **Why do you think reparations would be a potentially dangerous issue for Europe during this rebuilding period?**

**(12) A. J. Grant & Harold Temperley, *Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1952)**

Lloyd George had no thought of exacting impossible amounts of reparation from Germany. “Was it sensible,” he said later, “to treat her as a cow from which to extract milk and beef at the same time?” But he was hampered by the ferocious demands of the British public, by the cries of “hanging the Kaiser” and “squeezing Germany till the pips squeak”. At the most crucial moment of the peace negotiations Lloyd George was confronted by a telegram from 370 Members of Parliament demanding the he should make Germany pay. Of course he had to capitulate, and he replied that he would keep his pledge. What else could he do? If it was possible to produce an arrangement such people would accept, it was not likely to be a considered one or a wise one. It is probably true to say that, in so far as Lloyd George had a bad influence on the Treaty, it was because he faithfully reflected these forces.

If these were the difficulties created for Lloyd George at home, they were equally great abroad. He had to reconcile two colleagues, one of whom wanted a peace to be based almost wholly on force, and the other a peace based almost wholly on idealism. Lloyd George had to adjust the two points of view, and the task was inconceivably difficult. It meant self-effacement on his part, sacrifice of his pledges, of his consistency, sometimes even of his dignity. Yet he succeeded in many instances. There are points in which he is liable to severe criticism. But this fact should not exclude the services which his inconceivable adroitness and flexibility rendered to the common cause. It cannot be said that he neglected any purely British interests. The charge that will lie against him in history is that he neglected nobler and more universal interests.

1. According to A.J. Grant and Harold Temperley, why did Lloyd George have to demand high reparations from Germany?
2. What were the two sides of the debate in regards to the treaty? Based on your knowledge of the treaty, what did each side (France and the U.S.) want?
3. Why do you think ‘flexibility’ was needed during peace negotiations? Do you think this flexibility made the treaty better or worse? Why?