

## Question

Assess how useful Source E would be for a historian studying the goals of the Big Three in creating the Treaty of Versailles.

In your answer, consider the perspective provided by the source and the reliability of each source.

### *Source E*

John Maynard Keynes, a British official, observes the 'Big Three' at the Peace Conference in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, 1920.

Clemenceau was by far the most eminent member of the Council of Four, and he had taken the measure of his colleagues. He alone both had an idea and had considered it in all its consequences...

His principles for the Peace can be expressed simply. In the first place he was a foremost believer...that the German understands and can understand nothing but intimidation, that he is without generosity or remorse in negotiation, that there is no advantage he will not take of you, and no extent to which he will not demean\* himself for profit, that he is without honour, pride, or mercy. Therefore Clemenceau believed you must never negotiate with a German or conciliate him; you must dictate to him. On no other terms will he respect you.

\*Demean means 'to put down'

Source E by John Maynard Keynes, written in 1920 gives us one official British **perspective** of the French Leader Clemenceau. Despite having an economic interest and being of British decent, Keynes **perspective** here is strongly pro Clemenceau, as seen by the comment, "most eminent member" and should be considered **reasonably reliable** as a source as he has no specific pro French bias and many of the comments he has made reflect common understanding of Clemenceau's perspective. Keynes was also present at Versailles as the treaty was being formulated. Therefore we can conclude that this source is **quite reliable** and the information contained it can be taken with a reasonable level of authority.

John Maynard Keynes is a significant Historical figure and so his perspective that Clemenceau was the most shrewd member of the big three is **useful** for a Historian but one can assume that other British officials shared his point of view. The source is also **useful** as it gives us a clear idea of the French attitude of loathing toward the Germans. In terms of the Goals of the Big Three in creating the Treaty of Versailles, this source is **useful** in confirming the hard-line attitude of Clemenceau and is evidence of the French goal to dictate terms to the Germans with no negotiation. The tone of the source is also **useful** as it suggests that Clemenceau's goal would be to punish the Germans severely.