Question 9 (10 marks)

How useful would Sources E and F be for a historian studying the different goals of Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson in creating the Treaty of Versailles?

In your answer, consider the perspectives provided by the TWO sources and the reliability of each one.

SOURCE E is a letter by Chandler Seymour, a member of the US delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. The letter was written on the 11th of June 1919.

The recipient of the letter is unknown. This limits the source's reliability. The letter could have been written to the press, members of the US Congress or to his family. This makes the motive unknown and therefore the way he reports events and people could be subject to different degrees of bias. The facts about the motives of Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson are supported by other sources, increasing the letter's reliability. Furthermore, Chandler Seymour was the composer, as a part of the US delegation. This means that his knowledge is likely first hand but as a member of the US delegation his attitude towards...
Question 9 (continued)

the French is likely to be biased due to the fact...

the French expected different aims to the US. Overall...

this source is credible. Despite the fact it is...

an extract, and thus has omissions, it...

uses little emotive language and is fairly objective.

This source is very useful as it briefly discusses the...

overall aims of each leader, however the information...

provided is brief and other sources are required to gain...

more detail.

Source F is an extract from The Truth about the...

peace...brought by Lloyd George, the British Prime Minster...

at the time of the creation of the Treaty of Versailles...

The source in itself was written in 1933. This was...

many years after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and...

it is thus unlikely Lloyd George still harboured strong feelings...

towards the other signatories as he was looking back...

in hindsight. This raises the reliability. However, it...

still contains some emotive language such as ‘great...

trouble’ and ‘extortionate’ this then suggests a limited ability...

to remain objective and thus lowers the reliability. The...

source was published in 1933, this would have created...

some bias towards the French as there was a degree...

of guilt amongst the Allies for forcing such harsh terms...

on Germany, evidenced in reparation reductions and the British...

policy of appeasement towards Hitler. This lessens the source’s...

reliability. Also as an individual who assisted in ‘drawing up’ the Treaty he would have...

had first-hand knowledge. This raises the reliability.

The source is very useful to a historian. It discusses the...

public opinion in France, influencing Clemenceau’s intention...

of giving harsh penalties to Germany and briefly explains...

the British and US motives and briefly describes the...

conflicting opinions of the British, US and French.

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