

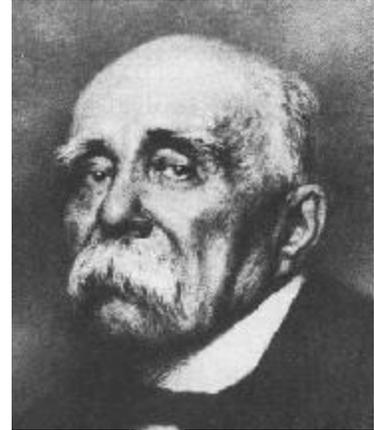
## Georges Clemenceau

He was the Prime Minister of France.

He wanted **revenge**, and to **punish** the Germans for what they had done.

He wanted to **make Germany pay** for the damage done during the war.

He also wanted to **weaken** Germany, so France would never be invaded again.



### Source

America is far away, protected by the ocean. Not even Napoleon himself could touch England. You are both sheltered; we are not.

Georges Clemenceau, debating with Wilson and Lloyd George on 27 March 1919. Wilson had pressed Clemenceau for 'moderation'.

### Did You Know?

Clemenceau summed up his attitude: 'There are 20 million Germans too many!'

[http://www.johndclare.net/peace\\_treaties3.htm](http://www.johndclare.net/peace_treaties3.htm)

Details: He was nicknamed "The Tiger". He wanted to make Germany pay for all of the damage that

France had suffered during the four years of fighting. He also wanted to make sure that a war like this would never happen again. He had three main demands:

- Germany must return Alsace-Lorraine to France; this had been taken by Germany in 1871.
- Germany must pay Reparations to France to cover the cost of rebuilding the parts of France that had been destroyed during the war (750,000 houses and 23,000 factories had been destroyed).
- France should be allowed to take possession of the Rhineland (the area near the River Rhine); this was to stop Germany attacking France in the future.

[http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/year9links/wwi/Versailles\\_roleplay.PDF](http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/year9links/wwi/Versailles_roleplay.PDF)

## Georges Clemenceau, speech at the Paris Peace Conference (16th June 1919)

In the view of the Allied and Associated Powers the war which began on August 1st, 1914, was the greatest crime against humanity and the freedom of peoples that any nation, calling itself civilised, has ever consciously committed. For many years the rulers of Germany, true to the Prussian tradition, strove for a position of dominance in Europe. They were not satisfied with that growing prosperity and influence to which Germany was entitled, and which all other nations were willing to accord her, in the society of free and equal peoples. They required that they should be able to dictate and tyrannise to a subservient Europe, as they dictated and tyrannised over a subservient Germany. Germany's

responsibility, however, is not confined to having planned and started the war. She is no less responsible for the savage and inhuman manner in which it was conducted.

Though Germany was herself a guarantor of Belgium, the rulers of Germany violated, after a solemn promise to respect it, the neutrality of this unoffending people. Not content with this, they deliberately carried out a series of promiscuous shootings and burnings with the sole object of terrifying the inhabitants into submission by the very frightfulness of their action. They were the first to use poisonous gas, notwithstanding the appalling suffering it entailed. They began the bombing and long distance shelling of towns for no military object, but solely for the purpose of reducing the morale of their opponents by striking at their women and children. They commenced the submarine campaign with its piratical challenge to international law, and its destruction of great numbers of innocent passengers and sailors, in mid ocean, far from succour, at the mercy of the winds and the waves, and the yet more ruthless submarine crews. They drove thousands of men and women and children with brutal savagery into slavery in foreign lands. They allowed barbarities to be practised against their prisoners of war from which the most uncivilised people would have recoiled.

The conduct of Germany is almost unexampled in human history. The terrible responsibility which lies at her doors can be seen in the fact that not less than seven million dead lie buried in Europe, while more than twenty million others carry upon them the evidence of wounds and sufferings, because Germany saw fit to gratify her lust for tyranny by resort to war.

The Allied and Associated Powers believe that they will be false to those who have given their all to save the freedom of the world if they consent to treat this war on any other basis than as a crime against humanity.

Justice, therefore, is the only possible basis for the settlement of the accounts of this terrible war. Justice is what the German Delegation asks for and says that Germany had been promised. Justice is what Germany shall have. But it must be justice for all. There must be justice for the dead and wounded and for those who have been orphaned and bereaved that Europe might be freed from Prussian despotism. There must be justice for the peoples who now stagger under war debts which exceed £30,000,000,000 that liberty might be saved. There must be justice for those millions whose homes and land, ships and property German savagery has spoliated and destroyed.

That is why the Allied and Associated Powers have insisted as a cardinal feature of the Treaty that Germany must undertake to make reparation to the very uttermost of her power; for reparation for wrongs inflicted is of the essence of justice. That is why they insist that those individuals who are most clearly responsible for German aggression and for those acts of barbarism and inhumanity which have disgraced the German conduct of the war, must be handed over to a justice which has not been meted out to them at home. That, too, is why Germany must submit for a few years to certain special disabilities and arrangements. Germany has ruined the industries, the mines and the machinery of neighbouring countries, not during battle, but with the deliberate and calculated purpose of enabling her industries to seize their markets before their industries could recover from the devastation thus wantonly inflicted upon them. Germany has despoiled her neighbours of everything she could make use of or carry away. Germany has destroyed the shipping of all nations on the high sea, where there was no chance of rescue for their passengers and crews. It is only justice that restitution should be made and that these wronged peoples should be safeguarded for a time from the competition of a nation whose industries are intact and have even been fortified by machinery stolen from occupied territories.

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWclemenceau.htm>