

## US Senate Opposition to the League of Nations Document Analysis

**Essential Question: Why did US Senators oppose joining the League of Nations?**

Directions: Read and annotate each document, and answer each question. Then answer the essential question in the space provided citing specific evidence from the documents.

### Document A: Senator Henry Cabot Lodge

Source: Address by Senator Lodge to the United States Senate, February 28, 1919.

[By ratifying the Treaty of Versailles], we abandon entirely the policy laid out by Washington in his Farewell Address and the Monroe Doctrine...Washington declared against permanent alliances...Now, the Washington policy is to be entirely laid aside and we are to enter upon a permanent and dissoluble alliance...Let us not overlook the profound gravity of this step.

If we put aside forever the Washington policy, we must always remember that it carries with it the Monroe Doctrine...Europe will have the right to take part in the settlement of all American questions...Europe and Asia are to take part in policing the American continent...

There is no need of arguing whether there is to be...force behind this league. It is there in article 10 absolutely and entirely by the mere fact of these guaranties. The ranks of the armies and the fleets of the navy made necessary by such pledges are to be filled and manned by the sons, husbands, and brothers, of the people of America.

We now in the draft bind ourselves to submit every possible international dispute or difference either to the league court or to the control of the executive council of this league. That includes immigration, a very live question, to take a single example. Are we ready to give to the other nations the power to say who shall come into the United States?...If we accept this plan for a league, this is precisely what we promise to do.

1. What are four reasons that Lodge gives for opposing the Treaty of Versailles?

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### Document B: Senator Henry Cabot Lodge

Source: Address by Senator Lodge at Union College, June 9, 1915.

What can we do in the larger sense toward securing and maintaining the peace of the world?...Nations must unite in order to preserve peace and order. The great nations must be so united as to be able to say to any single country, you must not go to war, and they can only say that effectively when the country considering war knows that the force which the united nations place behind peace is irresistible.

2. What was Lodge's argument in 1915 (Document B)?

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3. Why might Lodge's argument be different in 1919 (Document A) than it was in 1915 (Document B)?
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**Document C: Information Compiled by Historian John Milton Cooper**

Source: *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations* written by John Milton Cooper, 2001.

*The following information was compiled by historian John Milton Cooper. The column on the far right shows the percentage of votes cast in the Senate that supported President Wilson's policies on the Treaty of Versailles. The column second from the right shows the percentage of senators in each region who were Republican.*

Region of the Country	Number of Senators	% of Senators who are Republican	% of votes in support of President Wilson
Northeast	26	85%	27%
South	25	0%	90%
Midwest	26	85%	31%
West	26	50%	65%

4. What does the data in the table suggest about who supported the treaty of Versailles?
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5. What might the data in the table suggest about why some Senators opposed the Treaty of Versailles?
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**Document D: Senator George Norris**

Source: Speech by Senator Norris to the United States Senate, November 11, 1919.

The real object of article 10 is to maintain the world supremacy of the British Empire...It is there to stifle the cry of freedom from Ireland; it is there to keep in subjection the 400,000,000 of people in India...By its terms we are bound to turn a deaf ear to the struggling cry of freedom, no matter from what part of the world it may come, and we mortgage thereby the lifeblood of unborn American boys to stifle the cry and uphold the cruel aristocratic reign of greedy kings and pagan monarchs the world over.

6. What reasons does Senator Norris give for opposing the Treaty of Versailles?

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**Document E: Senator Hiram Johnson**

Source: Speech by Senator Norris to the United States Senate on June 2, 1919.

It is absolutely clear that questions like immigration, those arising from the alien land law of California and similar matters will be within the jurisdiction of the league...As a Californian, I am not willing to submit any race problems we may have to the jurisdiction of the Council of the League of Nations, nor to the League itself...

I am unwilling that either body should pass upon possibly the gravest questions that confronts us. You, gentlemen from the South, would resent the suggestion that a race problem of yours should be decided by nations bound to the race affected by secret treaties.

7. What reasons does Senator Johnson give for opposing the Treaty of Versailles?

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