

# Korean War

## **9 How justified was President Truman's claim that the Korean War ended successfully for the USA? [30] October/November 2015 9389 42**

In terms of 'justified', it could be argued that Truman was convinced that the North Korean attack on South Korea was part of a Stalin-inspired plot to spread communism. He argued that such aggression should not be appeased in the way that Hitler's had been and that the UN should confront it in a manner which the League of Nations had not. At the end of the war, Truman could legitimately argue that the USA, with the support of the UN, had successfully prevented the spread of communism – the policy of containment had been successfully implemented. Conversely, it could be argued that, during the War, the USA's policy had changed from containment to roll-back and that this had failed. China had launched a counter-offensive, pushing UN troops back to the 38th parallel. Moreover, there had been a dispute over strategy between MacArthur and Truman's government. Korea had been devastated and many Republicans argued that the USA had missed an opportunity to destroy communism in China, leading to the later excesses of McCarthyism. The USSR had been able to denounce the UN as a 'tool of the capitalists'. Moreover, US relations were now permanently strained with China as well as with the USSR, leading to the creation of SEATO. Truman's statement was largely politically inspired – his Democratic Party was being attacked by the Republicans for being too weak against communism.

## **9 'The USA lost more than it gained from its involvement in the Korean War.' How far do you agree? [30] October/November 2016 9389 43**

Agree – The USA became involved in what was essentially a civil war about national unification because it wrongly assumed that North Korea's attack on the South was the result of Stalin's desire for Soviet expansionism. Taking advantage of the Soviet boycott, the USA exploited its advantageous position within the UN in an attempt to justify and support its involvement in Korea. This seriously undermined both the UN itself (referred to by the USSR as 'the tool of the capitalists') and the USA's own international prestige. Soviet propaganda was able to portray the USA as imperialist, supporting an undemocratic and unpopular pro-American government in South Korea and seeking to unify Korea in order to extend its power. The deployment of rollback was a failure; although the invasion of North Korea gained initial success, it alarmed China and led to the involvement of Chinese forces which drove the American advance back. This split opinion amongst the USA's high command, MacArthur arguing that the best way to defeat communism was to attack China using atomic weapons, Truman fearing that this would lead to a large-scale war and preferring to settle for a restoration of the 38th parallel border. Many Republicans argued that Truman missed the opportunity to destroy the new communist government in China, leading to the subsequent excesses of McCarthyism. Instead, the PRC had shown itself to be a major world power; US relations were now strained with China as well as with the USSR. The USA's determination to keep the PRC out of the UN now seemed even more unreasonable. The USA attempted to develop alliances in Asia designed to encircle China (e.g. SEATO); the fact that only three Asian countries agreed to join is indicative of their desire

to avoid becoming entangled in the Cold War, together with the decline in American prestige. American involvement in Korea had greatly enhanced the scale of the war, creating devastating misery for its people. Disagree – The USA's primary objective when becoming directly involved in the Korean War was to end the North Korean invasion of the South. This invasion was perceived as unwarranted and unprovoked aggression against an independent nation, the very thing which the UN had been created to deal with. To Truman, allowing the North Korean attack to go uncontested would be similar to the appeasement which had allowed Hitler to get away with so much before the outbreak of WWII. By the time American and UN forces arrived, North Korean communist forces had taken the whole country with the exception of the south-east region around the port of Pusan. Under the leadership of MacArthur, the UN forces gained success very quickly, the North Koreans being forced to retreat beyond the 38th parallel. Although the subsequent attempt to rollback communism from North Korea failed, Truman could claim that the USA had succeeded in its primary objective – defending South Korea and containing communism at the 38th parallel. The USA had worked with the support of the UN and its success issued a warning designed to dissuade world communism from further aggression.

**9 How far should the outcome of the Korean War be seen as a victory for the USA?  
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Arguments in favour of a 'victory' include: The primary aim of the USA's involvement in the Korean War was to protect the 'independence' of South Korea. Truman was convinced that the North Korean attack on South Korea was part of a Stalin-inspired plot to spread communism. He argued that such aggression should not be appeased in the way that Hitler's had been and that the UN should confront it in a manner which the League of Nations had not. At the end of the war, Truman could legitimately argue that the USA, with the support of the UN, had successfully prevented the spread of communism – the policy of containment had been successfully implemented.

Arguments against this view include: During the War, the USA's policy had changed from containment to roll-back; this ended in defeat. China had launched a counter-offensive, pushing UN troops back to the 38th parallel. Moreover, there had been a dispute over strategy between MacArthur and Truman's government. Korea had been devastated and many Republicans argued that the USA had missed an opportunity to destroy communism in China, leading to the later excesses of McCarthyism. The USSR had been able to denounce the UN as a 'tool of the capitalists'. Moreover, USA relations were now permanently strained with China as well as with the USSR, leading to the creation of SEATO.

**9 'An example of the containment policy in action.' How valid is this assessment of American involvement in the Korean War? October/November 2018 9389/43**

Valid

The containment policy was developed to prevent the global spread of communist ideology which, in the context of the Cold War, was seen as a major threat to the USA. The USA misinterpreted what was essentially a civil war in Korea as part of a communist plot, orchestrated by Stalin's USSR. President Truman was under pressure from Republicans for his failure to take action against what they perceived as the dangerous spread of world

communism. With UN backing, therefore, the USA entered the war, ostensibly to defend South Korea from communism.

When agreement was finally reached in 1953, the border between North and South Korea remained on the 38th parallel, where it had been when the war started. Truman claimed that American involvement had been a success – communism had been effectively contained and communism had been dissuaded from further aggression.

Invalid

American involvement in the Korean War was considerably more complex than simply the deployment of a containment policy. Firstly, it was based on the inaccurate assumption that there was indeed something to contain. Secondly, following the initial success of American and UN troops in repelling the North Korean attack on South Korea, the USA adopted a very different policy – roll back.

Having achieved the original objective, Truman ordered an invasion of North Korea, aiming to unite the country and hold free elections. UN and American incursions close to the Chinese border alarmed China, which launched a massive counter-offensive. American troops were forced to retreat back into South Korea. McArthur suggested using nuclear weapons against China, but Truman was afraid that this would provoke a full-scale war. McArthur was sacked and the USA settled for its original objective of containing communism by preserving South Korea's independence from North Korea. Many Republicans argued that the USA had missed a clear opportunity to destroy communism in China. American involvement in the Korean War, therefore, went far beyond the simple deployment of its containment policy.

### **9 Assess the reasons why the USA became directly involved in the Korean War when the USSR did not. October/November 2019 9389/42**

The USA became directly involved in the Korean War in line with its containment policy. Although Korea was not in Acheson's original defensive perimeter, President Truman was convinced that the USSR was behind the North Korean attack on South Korea. The fall of China to communism in 1949 was a significant blow to American prestige and American economic and political interests in SE Asia. Many senior American officials became increasingly convinced that there was a communist plot to secure world domination, orchestrated by the USSR and supported by China. Truman, already afraid of repeating the error of appeasing Hitler, faced increasing domestic anti-communism pressure. The USA was able to depict itself as defending a weak and vulnerable country from unwarranted aggression by North Korean forces under the influence of the communist powers. This enabled the USA to gain the support (and involvement) of the UN.

Stalin did not want to come into direct confrontation with the USA, his priority being the consolidation of the Soviet bloc within Europe. Nevertheless, he was willing to exploit circumstances in order to enhance the USSR's influence in the region. The USA had not intervened to prevent the communist victory in China and, by mid-1949, American troops had withdrawn from Korea. Stalin's belief that the USA would not become involved in a war in Korea seemed to be reinforced when Korea was not in Acheson's defensive perimeter. Stalin therefore began a more aggressive strategy in Asia, promising economic and military aid to China and arming North Korea. In 1950, Stalin gave Kim permission to invade South Korea.

However, this was on the clear understanding that Soviet forces would not engage in direct conflict if the Americans should enter the war, and that Kim would get assistance from Mao's China if required. Stalin was, therefore, following a win-win strategy. If the USA did not come to the aid of South Korea, North Korea (backed by Soviet weaponry and military advisers, together with indigenous Korean troops with extensive experience of fighting in the Chinese Civil War) would win; this would greatly enhance communist influence in the region. If the USA did become involved, there would be no direct confrontation with Soviet troops and the USA would be distracted while the USSR enhanced its own position in Europe. Moreover, the USA's involvement in Korea was to have a detrimental effect on American prestige and influence within the UN.

**10 'The Korean War resulted in stalemate with few positive outcomes.' Assess this view. October/November 2021 9489/41**

The war ended in a truce and the countries remained divided at the 38th parallel. Bombing destroyed much of North Korea's agricultural lands and most of its transportation system. North Korea's population declined by 12% from 1949 to 1953. The South, too, suffered significant loss of life and families were separated. Other negative consequences were specific to the countries involved. The United States defended South Korea at a cost estimated at \$15 billion and over 54 000 deaths and it also failed to rollback communism from North Korea. Cold war tensions with the Soviet Union remained high. The Soviet Union failed to achieve its objective of unifying the Korean peninsula under Kim Il Sung. Its relations with China were damaged and the countries of the capitalist bloc were united. The United States still refused to normalise relations with the People's Republic of China. China's involvement in the war meant that it lost the opportunity to unite Taiwan with China. Truman had assumed that Taiwan would inevitably fall to Beijing, but the outbreak of the Korean War prompted him to intervene again and send the Seventh Fleet to neutralise the Taiwan Strait. During the war, an estimated 21 800 Chinese troops were taken prisoner by the Allies; over two-thirds refused to return to China and settled in Taiwan. In addition, the war contributed to the decline of Sino-Soviet relations; there was the view that the Soviets had just used them as proxies. China had a Soviet loan to pay for Soviet arms. The Korean War also had an impact on the broader Cold War conflict and changed the course of the war itself. The Korean War was the first armed confrontation of the Cold War, which initially began as an ideological war between the nations and set the standard for many later conflicts. It embodied the idea of a 'proxy war', where the two superpowers would fight via another country, forcing the people in that nation to suffer the bulk of the destruction and death involved in a war between such large nations.

The Korean War sped up the conclusion of a peace agreement between the United States and Japan and the creation of military and political blocs, ANZUS in 1951 and SEATO in 1954. South Korea was saved from communism. The United States' policy of containment was successful. A further result of the Korean War was the beginning of racial integration in the US military service. Korea also played an important role in sustaining Taiwan's economic stability. Truman's decision to send American warships to the Formosa Strait as well as an increase in aid is evidence of this. By entering and fighting in the Korean War, China achieved its original goal to keep North Korea from falling. The fact that Chinese forces held their own against United Nations' forces boosted China's standing as a world power. Much of the material used in the war was bought from nearby Japan which had a positive impact on its economy. Japan also became an invaluable base for the United States in the Korean conflict. The Korean War resulted in significant advancements in technology as the Russians and the Americans invested heavily in technology to outdo each other, both in the missile race and in the space race, which were major events of the Cold War. The authority of the Soviet Union had grown as demonstrated by

its readiness to interfere in developing countries to promote socialism. and the fact that it was not heavily involved militarily limited its costs. The Korean War was the first war in which the UN participated; it was argued that it showed that the UN was a powerful organisation for helping to keep peace in the world.

**10 'In the Korean War, the United States used the United Nations only to promote its own interests.' Evaluate this view. February/March 2022 9489/42**

The USA believed they had a responsibility to show their commitment to the Truman Doctrine as they had promised to help countries threatened by communism. The invasion of South Korea by the North took place on 25 June 1950. The Security Council of the UN met the same day, but the Soviet delegation to the Security Council did not attend the meeting. They were boycotting the UN for recognising Chiang Kai-shek's government in Taiwan as the official government of China. The Soviet Union was unable to use its veto. The USA claimed that North Korea had broken world peace by attacking the South and demanded that North Korea withdraw to the 38th parallel. Nine out of the eleven countries in the Security Council supported this resolution. The demand was ignored by North Korea and on 27 June 1950, the United States requested that the UN use force against the North Koreans to stop the communist threat and to restore peace. The Soviets could not use their veto as they were still boycotting the UN. It was agreed that sixteen member states would provide troops under a United Nations Joint Command. It would fight with the South Korean Army. Intervention had been organised by the Security Council and had received the support of the bulk of the membership. Such action would help to strengthen the UN. It was the UN members that agreed to deal with the North Korean aggression, and the UN received much support for taking action against an aggressor nation. The UN General Assembly had reaffirmed at each session since 1947 that its objectives were to establish a united and democratic Korea, but the Soviet Union maintained that this was a one-side resolution of the assembly. However, it can be argued that the UN was very much under the control of the United States during the war, and that the United States effectively made the decisions only in its own interests. Policies had already been determined in Washington; the UN was used to give them legitimacy. The United States had decided to intervene in the war long before the Security Council passed the resolutions authorising it. They would not tolerate communist infiltration into South Korea. They were concerned about the domino effect, and that Japan would be the next to fall to communism affecting US trade. The UN command consisted of American officers who reported to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, and the UN took no practical part in determining the tactics. It was American pressure that led to the General Assembly's agreement to cross the 38th parallel, and the decision to advance to the Manchurian border was taken without UN consent. The UN reluctantly condemned the Chinese as aggressors at American request. It was an American war and UN policy was made and executed by the US government. On 15 September 1950, UN troops landed at Inchon. The landing was a great success and the UN effectively cut the North Korean army in half and pushed them out of South Korea. MacArthur then advanced into North Korea ignoring the warnings from communist China. This resulted in a Chinese attack on UN troops and between November 1950 and January 1951, the Chinese managed to push back the UN force. After a clash with President Truman, MacArthur was sacked, and the war degenerated into a war of stalemate. Nearly 90% of all army personnel, 93% of all air power and 86% of all naval power for the Korean War came from the United States. In 1953, a ceasefire was agreed at Panmunjom. South Korea regained its independence and continued to be supported by the United States.

**10 Analyse the reasons why the division of Korea led to war in 1950. October/November 2022 9489/43**

Indicative content At the end of the Second World War, when Korea was freed from Japanese occupation, the Potsdam Conference decided it should be divided along the 38th parallel. US forces took over control of South Korea which would last for the following 3 years. They celebrated this occasion with Soviet forces at the 38th parallel but they were no longer allies as the two ideologies of communism and capitalism clashed. The Moscow Conference of 1945 agreed that the rival US and Soviet military commands would set up a Joint Commission to make recommendations for a single free government in Korea but they could not reach an agreement. In September 1947, the United States handed over the governing of the Korean peninsula to the United Nations. After the North's objections, the UN decided that only South Korea should hold elections. On 15 August 1948, the Republic of Korea was established. Syngman Rhee, the President, was determined to reunite Korea; he pursued strong anti-Communist policies. Soviet occupying forces formed a provisional government for northern Korea and Kim Il Sung became premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Kim wanted to unite Korea under communist rule. By June 1949, both Soviet and American troops had withdrawn from Korea. US interest in South Korea appeared to be faltering. In a speech in January 1950, Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, omitted the country from a list of Pacific Rim states vital to US defence interests. His Perimeter Speech defined the American 'defensive perimeter' in the Pacific as a line running through Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines. This excluded US military protection to the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China on Taiwan. Acheson was criticised for giving Pyongyang the belief that it could pursue forcible reunification, believing that the United States had ruled out military intervention to defend South Korea. Meanwhile, in South Korea, President Syngman Rhee had unleashed a brutal campaign against suspected communists. This encouraged the North to use force against the South. Stalin cautiously supported Kim's invasion plan, dependent on endorsement by Mao Zedong which Kim received. Stalin was concerned about the military weakness of the North and the possibility of American intervention but by January 1950 he had changed his mind. A war in Asia would draw attention away from Eastern Europe especially after the failure of the Berlin Blockade in 1948. Syngman Rhee also lacked domestic support in South Korea and Kim was convinced that he could win. Stalin also wanted to preserve Soviet strategic interests in the Far East and to prevent US influence in the region. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance, signed in February 1950, meant that the balance of power in Asia had changed from the United States to the Soviet Union. However, Stalin also feared that China could challenge the Soviet Union's dominant position in the international Communist movement. Stalin wanted both to unify the Korean peninsula and to keep China under Soviet influence; the Korean operation seemed a perfect means of achieving both ends. He believed that the outbreak of the Korean War would prevent China from attacking Taiwan. China's military at the service of Soviet strategy. Stalin had to ensure that China would actively support North Korea before he approved Kim's invasion plans. The war was triggered when, in 1950, Syngman Rhee boasted that he was going to attack North Korea. This provided the excuse for the North Koreans to invade South Korea.

## Vietnam War

**9 To what extent was President Johnson responsible for the USA's involvement in the Vietnam War? [30] May/June 2016 9389 41**

Yes – As US President from 1963 to 1969, Johnson was responsible for committing the USA to large-scale military intervention in Vietnam. Convinced that the Vietcong were being supplied

and controlled by Ho Chi Minh, he began the bombing of North Vietnam in 1965. He also sent over 500 000 American troops to South Vietnam. Johnson claimed that the USA was seeking to defend the independence of the Vietnamese people, but the reality was that the USA was determined to avoid South Vietnam falling into the communist bloc. Having failed to defeat communism in Korea or Cuba, American prestige could not allow another failure while its economic interests in SE Asia seemed to be under threat. Unlike in Korea, the USA was acting without the support of the UN, many members of which were heavily critical of American involvement in what they considered to be an independent country. Despite its enormous military presence in Vietnam, the USA was unable to defeat the Vietcong, and Johnson was forced to suspend the bombing of North Vietnam, freeze troop levels and seek a negotiated settlement (1968). American public opinion had grown strongly resentful of the USA's involvement in Vietnam; the President was seen as the person responsible and, increasingly, the war was referred to as 'Johnson's War'. No – American involvement in Vietnam did not begin with Johnson. President Eisenhower had supported the Ngo regime in South Vietnam with economic aid and military advisers since 1954. This was despite the fact that South Vietnam had failed to carry out elections. The USA was convinced by Ngo's claims that communists were responsible for the problems facing South Vietnam, and felt that it was necessary to take a strong stand against the threat which communism posed. President Kennedy (1961–63) increased the USA's commitment in Vietnam; he provided South Vietnam with helicopters, military equipment and 16 000 'advisers'. He also introduced the 'safe village policy', which failed to make any inroads into the successes of the Vietcong. When Johnson became President, fear of communism remained intense in the USA. With Kennedy's strategies failing, Johnson had a choice – either increase American involvement in Vietnam or back down entirely. Backing down would have been political suicide, so Johnson felt he had no alternative but to honour the American commitment to South Vietnam which he had inherited from Eisenhower and Kennedy. More recent historians have dismissed the view that Vietnam was 'Johnson's War', arguing that he was more interested in carrying out social reform within the USA and that he was afraid that increasing American involvement in Vietnam would bring China into the war. The dilemma which Johnson faced in 1963 was replicated when Nixon became President in 1969 – on the one hand, he bowed to public pressure and prepared for the gradual withdrawal of American troops under the policy of 'Vietnamization', yet, on the other hand, he began bombing North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

**9 'The USA lost the Vietnam War because of its own mistakes.' How far do you agree?**  
**May/June 2017 9389/43**

It could be said that the USA misinterpreted the situation in Vietnam. Having failed to defeat communism in North Korea and Cuba, the USA felt it needed to make a firm stand in Vietnam to avoid the domino effect (communism spreading further). Whereas in the Korean War the USA had been able to gain UN support, this was no longer possible (due to the increased membership following decolonisation). The USA supported the undemocratic government of President Ngo Dinh Diem, refusing to listen to the views of opposition groups which formed the NLF; this steadfast refusal to listen to alternative views actually encouraged the spread of communism in South Vietnam.

US involvement on the ground in fighting the war was ineffective and counter-productive due to its own tactical shortcomings and the strength of the North. Domestic public support for US international policy diminished in response to perceived military failings and partly because of its high costs and negative impact on the economy. Bombing raids on Laos and Cambodia caused an international outcry and embarrassment for the US government.

As the War continued it became increasingly clear that relations between China and the USSR were strained; this undermined the whole basis of American involvement in the War, to suppress the advance of communism. International opinion became increasingly critical of the USA's involvement in the war, and this threatened to further undermine the USA's power-base in the UN. The longer the War continued, the more it became apparent that the US would not be able to secure victory. Nixon's policy of 'Vietnamization' aimed for US withdrawal and passing over military responsibility to South Vietnamese forces. This policy failed and international perceptions of the US were damaged.

**10 'Preventing the spread of communism was the main reason for the United States' growing involvement in Vietnam.' Assess this view. October/November 2021 9489/42**

US intervention in Vietnam was a gradual process ranging from economic aid, diplomacy and eventually the use of military force to save South Vietnam from communism. The United States believed in the containment of communism and feared the domino theory becoming a reality. However, as time went on, it was more evident that the United States was also fighting a proxy war as part of the wider Cold War. In addition, the United States became increasingly determined to maintain its own credibility. From 1947 the United States backed the return of the French in Vietnam. It considered Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Vietminh, to be a communist. By the time of the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Washington had spent almost \$3 billion trying to save Indochina from communism. The Geneva Accords of 1954 agreed a two-year division of Vietnam until elections and reunification in 1956. However, the Americans wanted this division to be permanent. Ngo Dinh Diem was appointed Prime Minister of South Vietnam; he was provided with massive US support. He was an anti-communist catholic who was opposed by the Buddhist peasants in South Vietnam. It was his assassination in 1963 and the anarchy it created that led to rising US involvement. South Vietnam was largely a failed state incapable of defending itself and the North was aiming to achieve reunification. In the late 1950s, the Viet Cong unleashed a number of terror attacks on the South. In the 1950s and early 1960s the aim of the US was to defend South Vietnam from communism without direct military involvement. Another reason for the increasing involvement of the United States was the fact that the communists in Vietnam were supported and guided by the Soviet Union and China. Therefore, the war could not be separated from the Cold War and the struggle to contain communism around the globe. They did not see the strength of Vietnamese nationalism and believed that the aim was the spread of communism. Eisenhower's domino theory was adhered to by his successors and hence Johnson escalated the war starting with the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in which Congress authorised him to use military force without declaring war. The United States gave economic and military aid to South Vietnam, while the Soviet Union and China offered similar assistance to North Vietnam. Thus, the Cold War power struggle between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China was significant in shaping the Vietnam War. The presidents themselves also influenced the role played by the United States. Eisenhower doubted that the United States could fight a land war in Southeast Asia but Kennedy felt he had



to prove his resolve to defeat communism. Johnson considered the war as a test of his courage; it was he who instigated the bombing of North Vietnam and sent the marines to the South in early 1965 when there was little opposition to the war effort. When a North Vietnamese torpedo boat attacked a US destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin, Johnson persuaded congress to give him unlimited power to direct events in Vietnam. 'Operation Rolling Thunder' was launched against North Vietnam; factories, fuel dumps and supply routes were bombed. He sent in large-scale ground forces to fight the Vietcong. There was soon increasing opposition at home to US involvement and Johnson lost support.

**10 'China's support for North Vietnam in its conflict with the United States was more significant than that of the Soviet Union.' Assess this view. May/June 2022 9489/41**

In 1954 Vietnam was divided into North and South at the 17th Parallel, with the Viet Minh in control of North Vietnam, and a non-communist government in control of South Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh's government allied with Communist China and the United States pursued its policy of containment fearing the domino theory would become a reality and supported the anticommunist South Vietnamese dictator, Ngo Dinh Diem, who refused to hold elections to unify the country. In August 1964 the destroyer USS Maddox, an American naval vessel, was attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, just off the coast of North Vietnam by North Vietnamese torpedo boats. This gave President Johnson an excuse to order attacks on North Vietnam. At first, the Chinese were not keen to become involved but China's policy towards Vietnam became more radical in late 1962 when the North emphasised that the United States might attack it. China took immediate steps to move forces south towards the border with Vietnam and sent MIG jet aircraft to Hanoi to bolster the North's defensives. The military support was an important factor in the North's victory. The Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1964 and the arrival of US combat troops in 1965 led to an escalation in Chinese support with 320 000 Chinese troops deployed in North Vietnam. However, perhaps the most significant factor was that Chinese support affected the way that the United States waged war. Critics of President Johnson have argued that he allowed his fear of China to impede his handling of the war and that his gradual escalation of the war when he expanded the bombing from south to north was due to his fear of angering China. His critics maintained that China was bluffing, but recent evidence suggests that Mao was prepared to intervene. There was a secret agreement between Hanoi and Beijing that if the Americans launched a ground invasion of North Vietnam, China would send ground troops into the country. Mao took the American escalation seriously; he criticised the Soviet Union for not giving enough support to national liberation movements and for pursuing détente with the United States. Soviet support for North Vietnam remained lukewarm through the 1950s and early 1960s. The Soviet Union supplied Hanoi with information, technical advisers and moral support but Khrushchev preferred to limit his backing. However, in 1965 the new Soviet Premier, Kosygin, signed a defence treaty that would provide North Vietnam with both financial aid and military equipment and advisers. The Soviet Union was now the North's main supporter and increased its aid after the US military escalation in 1965. It was later disclosed that around 3,000 Soviet personnel served in North Vietnam in 1964–65 and that some were responsible for shooting down US planes and by the late 1960s, more than three quarters of the military and technical equipment received by North Vietnam was coming from the Soviet Union. This was supplied as aid rather than loans in the case of China. As the Sino-Soviet split became more serious Hanoi was forced to choose between China and the Soviet Union. In November 1968, the Soviet Union and North Vietnam signed a new set of military and economic agreements. Mao Zedong responded by winding back Chinese aid and ordering the withdrawal of all Chinese personnel from North Vietnam. Mao had come to consider the role that the United States could play in China's security needs.

**10 Evaluate the consequences of the United States' failure in Vietnam.**  
**October/November 2022 9489/42**

Indicative content The United States' failure in Vietnam led to the unification of the country and the establishment of a communist state. After years of warfare, an estimated 2 million Vietnamese were killed, while 3 million were wounded and another 12 million became refugees. The country's infrastructure was ravaged by bombing and landmines, and parts of its landscape had been stripped by toxic chemicals like Agent Orange. In 1976, Vietnam was unified as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, though sporadic violence continued over the next 15 years, including conflicts with neighbouring China and Cambodia. After withdrawing from the country in 1975, the United States imposed a trade embargo on Vietnam, which cut off imports and exports from the United States and other countries. US pressure was also put on international bodies not to help Vietnam. The North Vietnamese government took several steps to consolidate its political control over the south. This included eliminating potential rivals, 're-educating' those who were suspected of disloyalty, and preventing other ideologies and beliefs from competing with socialism. A mass exodus in 1975 of people loyal to the South Vietnamese cause was followed in 1978 by another wave of 'boat people', refugees fleeing the economic restructuring imposed by the communist regime. However, by the early 1980s, Vietnam's government realised that communism would not provide a miracle cure for growing its economy. A broad free market policy was put in place in 1986, and the economy began to improve. Trade and diplomatic relations between Vietnam and the United States resumed in the 1990s. The United States had intervened in a civil war in Vietnam with the purpose of preventing the spread of communism and pursuing its policy of containment. The policy of containment had failed militarily. Despite the United States' vast military strength, it could not stop the spread of communism. The guerrilla tactics used by the Vietcong and their absolute commitment to the cause, far outweighed the desire of the Americans to keep going. The policy had also failed politically. The United States' actions in Laos and Cambodia also helped to bring communist governments to power there. The image of the United States was tarnished because of the atrocities it had committed such as the use of chemical weapons. The Vietnam War had far-reaching consequences for the United States. It led Congress to replace the military draft with an all-volunteer force and the country to reduce the voting age to 18. The War Powers Act 1973 restricted a president's ability to send American forces into combat without explicit Congressional approval. The Vietnam War severely damaged the US economy. Unwilling to raise taxes to pay for the war, President Johnson unleashed a cycle of inflation. The war also weakened US military morale and undermined, for a time, the US commitment to internationalism. During the 1970s and 1980s, the United States was wary of getting involved anywhere else in the world out of fear of another Vietnam. Equally important, the war undermined liberal reform and made many Americans deeply suspicious of government. Psychologically, the effects ran even deeper. The United States was not invincible, and the war had divided the nation. Many returning veterans faced negative reactions from both the opponents of the war who viewed them as having killed innocent civilians and its supporters who blamed them for losing the war. They had also suffered physical damage including the effects of exposure to the toxic herbicide agent orange.

## Arms Race

**9 To what extent did the nuclear arms race make the world safer in the period from 1950 to 1975? [30] October/November 2015 9389 43**

It could be argued that the arms race created a balance of power in which neither superpower dare use nuclear weapons for fear of its own destruction (MAD). A compromise was reached in the Cuban missile crisis precisely because neither superpower was willing to risk nuclear war. Superpowers were keen to avoid direct confrontation. The arms race helped to create periods of détente, during which attempts were made to improve relations and impose limits on the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons – eg the Test Ban Treaty, NNPT, SALT. It led the superpowers to create alternative defence strategies (e.g. flexible response.) Conversely, it could be argued that the arms race greatly increased tension between the superpowers. It led to the stockpiling of ever-increasing numbers of weapons and technological innovations as both the USA and the USSR sought to tip the balance of power in their favour by developing ever-more sophisticated missiles and launch systems. It greatly added to the mutual fear and distrust between the USA and the USSR. The Cuban missile crisis brought the world close to destruction. It involved other countries – e.g. deployment of American missiles in Europe. Proliferation meant that other countries gained possession of nuclear weapons, greatly adding to international tensions (e.g. India and Pakistan, already in dispute over Kashmir). Potential use by countries or terrorist groups which would not be constrained by balance of power issues added to the risk.

### **9 How effective were attempts during the 1960s to control the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons? [30] October/November 2016 9389 41**

Effective – The Cuban missile crisis had exposed the dangers involved in massive retaliation and brinkmanship, and clearly demonstrated the need for greater communication and understanding between the superpowers and, indeed, other states which possessed (or had the potential to possess) nuclear capability. The Test Ban Treaty of 1963 was initially signed by the USA, the USSR and Britain, other countries following thereafter. It banned the testing of nuclear weapons above ground and below water, clearly aiming to inhibit the development of new weapons. Testing could only be carried out underground and within the confines of the country concerned. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 was designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states. Its effectiveness can be gauged by the fact that it is still in existence today and the number of states with nuclear weapons remains relatively small. Moreover, the 1960s saw the beginning of the process of negotiation to reduce the threat posed by nuclear weapons, these treaties being vital precursors to subsequent agreements.

Not effective – The Test Ban Treaty of 1963 was only a partial or limited treaty. Testing underground was still permitted, and both the USA and the USSR undertook ‘cratering tests’ – these complied with the Treaty since they were underground, but they were designed to break the surface, therefore causing radioactive fallout. The Test Ban Treaty, therefore, did not prevent the development of new weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty had major limitations and it did not inhibit the development of new and more powerful weapons by the superpowers. Some countries refused to sign the Treaty (e.g. India, Pakistan and Israel), others (e.g. North Korea) have subsequently withdrawn their support for it and some are believed to have been in breach of it (e.g. Iran). The Treaty is extremely difficult to monitor and enforce. Moreover, it did not prevent the superpowers planting their own nuclear weapons in non-nuclear states. The concept of MAD (mutually assured destruction), which emerged during the 1960s, was based

on the assumption that both the USA and the USSR had sufficient weapons to act as a deterrent; any development by one side therefore necessitated a similar or improved development by the other. For example, in its attempt to close the missile gap with the USA, the USSR increased its development of ICBMs and SLBMs.

**9 'The 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty had achieved little by 1975.' How far do you agree? October/November 2017 9389/41**

By 1975, the NNPT had essentially failed to achieve its main aim of restricting the number of countries which possessed nuclear weapons or the technological capability to possess them. Of the five nations which possessed nuclear weapon capability in 1968, France and China refused to sign the Treaty and had still not done so by 1975. Many non-nuclear states also refused to sign, including many which were close to being able to develop nuclear weapons, e.g. Argentina, Brazil, India, Pakistan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. Indeed, India joined the 'nuclear club' by detonating its first nuclear weapon in 1974.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), charged with checking compliance with the Treaty, was largely ineffective and it was relatively easy for countries to 'hide' their nuclear development programmes if they so wished. The Treaty was also weakened by the practice of weapon sharing, e.g. the USA placing American-owned and managed nuclear weapons in the territory of their European NATO allies. The ultimate goal of the NNPT – to lead to an overall reduction in nuclear weapons, thereby reducing the risk of nuclear war – was far from successful by 1975.

The NNPT was successful because it set a precedent for international cooperation in tackling the fear of nuclear war. It encouraged close cooperation between the USA and the USSR, and played no small part in leading to future agreements, such as SALT. Both the USSR and the USA had a vested interest in making the NNPT work; they appreciated that any proliferation of nuclear capability would undermine the balance of power between them, a balance which acted as a deterrent to the use of nuclear weapons (MAD). Moreover, both wanted to limit the ever-increasing costs of maintaining the nuclear arms race, costs which were endangering their economic well-being.

Of the non-nuclear states which did not sign the Treaty, only India had developed and tested nuclear weapons by 1975. The vast majority of countries had signed the Treaty by 1975, although it is true that some did not fully comply with the agreements they had made. At a time when the skills required to make nuclear weapons were widely covered in the scientific press, and when plutonium was readily and relatively cheaply available, the NNPT played a key role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to states, private companies and terrorist organisations. At the same time, however, it legitimised the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. That the NNPT still exists, and many recalcitrant states have now joined, is testament to the fact that it must have achieved some success by 1975.

## **9 How real was the threat of nuclear war in the period from 1950 to 1975?**

**October/November 2018 9389/41**

### **Real**

The arms race greatly increased tension between the superpowers. It led to the stockpiling of ever-increasing numbers of weapons and technological innovations, as both the USA and the USSR sought to tip the balance of power in its favour by developing ever-more sophisticated missiles and launching systems. It greatly added to the mutual fear and distrust between the USA and the USSR. The Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world close to destruction. The risks were increased by the involvement of other countries, for example, the deployment of American missiles in Europe. Proliferation meant that other countries gained nuclear capability, greatly adding to international tensions – Britain (1952), France (1960), China (1964). India tested its first nuclear weapon in 1974, while Pakistan (at war with India over Kashmir) gained nuclear capability shortly thereafter. There was also the risk that nuclear weapons might fall into the hands of terrorist organisations, such as the PLO.

### **Unreal**

The nuclear arms race created a balance of power in which neither superpower dared deploy nuclear weapons for fear of its own destruction (MAD). Similarly, President Truman did not bow to pressure to use nuclear weapons against China during the Korean War because he feared the possible implications. A compromise was reached over the Cuban Missile Crisis precisely because neither the USA nor the USSR was willing to risk nuclear war. The superpowers were keen to avoid direct confrontation, thereby keeping the Cold War cold. The nuclear arms race helped to create a period of détente, during which attempts were made to improve relations and impose limits on the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons (e.g. Test Ban Treaty, NNPT, SALT). It led the superpowers to create alternative defence strategies (e.g. flexible response).

## **9 Assess the impact of the nuclear arms race on the conduct of the Cold War in the period from 1950 to 1963. May/June 2019 9389/42**

The dangers inherent in the use of nuclear weapons clearly had an impact on the nature of military strategy. The fear of initiating nuclear war restrained both the USA and the USSR from engaging in direct armed confrontation (as demonstrated by the Cuban missile crisis in 1962). Accordingly, other strategies had to be deployed. This led to the notion of 'limited war', i.e. keeping wars localised and avoiding escalation, a key factor in the globalisation of the Cold War. Prior to 1962, American nuclear strategy consisted of 'massive retaliation' – the threat of using nuclear weapons in retaliation to communist aggression. This, it was assumed, would act as a deterrent at a time when the USA still had nuclear supremacy. This, in turn, led to the kind of brinkmanship displayed by Kennedy over the Cuban crisis. After 1962, MAD (mutually assured destruction) led to the development of smaller, targeted nuclear weapons and to an increase in the development of conventional weapons. This provided an alternative to nuclear war, a strategy which Kennedy dubbed 'flexible response'. Whilst nuclear weapons were not used during the Cold War, they formed a significant part of the conflict. The arms race was an integral part of the struggle for supremacy, a measure of technological superiority which both sides saw as central to highlighting the pre-eminence of their politico-economic systems. Subsequent attempts to control the proliferation and development of nuclear weapons, whilst of limited success, could be seen as vital in bringing the USA and the USSR together, at least during periods of détente.

## **9 How far did the threat of nuclear war reduce during the 1960s? October/November 2019 9389/41**

The Cuban missile crisis had exposed the dangers of the brinkmanship fostered by the concept of massive retaliation. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev had been desperate to find a face-saving solution to the crisis in order to avoid nuclear war. The USA and the USSR both appreciated the need for better relations to avoid the threat of future nuclear confrontation.

Accordingly, the notion of mutually assured destruction (MAD) emerged. A hot-line telephone link between the leaders of the USA and the USSR was established in 1963, with the aim of preventing future misunderstandings. The USA and the USSR signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963 – attempts to sign a similar treaty in 1961, prior to the Cuban missile crisis, had been unsuccessful due to its rejection by the USSR. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, designed to prevent the dangerous spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states, was signed in 1968.

However, one of Khrushchev's motives for placing nuclear weapons in Cuba was his fear that the USSR lagged behind the USA in terms of nuclear weapons. MAD was based on the assumption that the USA and the USSR had sufficient nuclear weapons to ensure security. It relied on maintaining a balance of nuclear power and, therefore, any development by one side necessitated a similar or improved development by the other, thus intensifying the arms race. The USSR's determination to catch up with the USA led to the increased development of Soviet ICBMs and SLBMs. The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was only a limited ban and did not completely prevent the testing of nuclear weapons. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty had significant limitations and did not prevent some countries developing their own nuclear capabilities. China tested its first nuclear weapon in 1964.

## **9 How effective was arms control in the 1960s and 1970s? May/June 2021 9389/43**

Discussion might consider a range of agreements that encouraged the control of arms. In particular, the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, Salt 1 in 1972 may each be identified. These all may be discussed as being effective measures for the control of arms, establishing a potential foundation for long term peace. Additionally, the Helsinki Accords and the failure to ratify SALT 2 may be considered. As examples of how the measures put in place were not totally effective. The Soviet Union's support for the Helsinki Accords was varied and the failure to extend the gains of SALT 1 with agreement at SALT 2 evidences limited success. Ideological motivations and mutual distrust may be identified as influencing factors, as might the unwillingness of both sides to really allow effective enforcement and monitoring of the nuclear arsenals. The rise of additional nuclear powers such as Britain, France and China might also be considered.

## **9 Evaluate how far attempts to control nuclear weapons improved US– Soviet relations. May/June 2022 9489/41**

The nuclear arms race occurred because neither side wanted the other to gain the upper hand. However, Khrushchev had spoken of peaceful coexistence and both Eisenhower and Dulles realised the need for a dialogue with the Soviet Union. In 1959, Khrushchev visited the United States and met Eisenhower at Camp David indicating both superpowers were willing to talk. However, in 1962 the Cuban Missile Crisis further fuelled the tensions between them; many

believed that the world was on the brink of a nuclear war. Following the Cuban Crisis, the Limited Test Ban Treaty was signed in 1963 by the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union. A hotline was also set up connecting the leaders of the United States and Soviet Union. In 1967, Johnson initiated the SALT talks and met Kosygin in New Jersey. Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense, argued that limiting the development of both offensive and defensive strategic systems would make relations between the two countries more stable. The Nuclear NonProliferation Treaty was signed on 1 July 1968. Richard Nixon, also believed in SALT, and on November 17, 1969, the formal SALT talks began in Helsinki. Nixon and Brezhnev signed the ABM Treaty and interim SALT agreement on 26 May 1972 in Moscow. For the first time during the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union had agreed to limit the number of nuclear missiles in their arsenals. The two superpowers had entered the era of détente. Negotiations for a second round of SALT began in late 1972. At the Vladivostok Summit in 1974, Ford and Brezhnev agreed on the basic framework of a SALT II agreement. On 17 June 1979, Carter and Brezhnev signed the SALT II Treaty in Vienna but Carter withdrew it from the Senate. Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union did not improve until Gorbachev came to power. He was willing to negotiate a reduction in nuclear weapons with Reagan and in December 1987, they signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty calling for the elimination of intermediate-range missiles. In July 1991 the Strategic Arms Reduction Act was signed by which time the Cold War was over. Both powers continued to build up arms in the 1960s. During the late 1960s the United States was concerned that the Soviet Union was aiming to achieve parity with the United States by building up ICBMs. In January 1967 President Johnson announced that the Soviet Union had begun to construct a limited ABM defence system around Moscow. Even after the Vladivostok agreements, the two nations could not resolve the two other outstanding issues from SALT I, the number of strategic bombers and the total number of warheads in each nation's arsenal. There were also rising tensions in different areas of the world. Conflicting alliances during the 1973 Yom Kippur War drew the two powers to the brink of confrontation. Sino-US relations were improving while the Sino-Soviet split continued. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, President Carter withdrew the SALT II treaty from the Senate. The United States boycotted the 1980 Olympics in Moscow and the Soviet Union retaliated by boycotting the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. When President Reagan assumed office, he referred to the Soviet Union as an 'evil empire' and he felt that he should negotiate from a position of strength. It seemed once again that US-Soviet relations had deteriorated. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan announced the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). The intent of this programme was to develop a sophisticated anti-ballistic missile system in order to prevent missile attacks from other countries, specifically the Soviet Union.

## SALT Treaties

### **10 Assess the significance of the SALT Treaties. [30] May/June 2016 9389 41**

Significant – The SALT Treaties marked the high point of détente and established the principle of discussion/negotiation which subsequently led to more effective treaties, such as START. The ABM Treaty (part of SALT I) limited the number of ABM systems which each superpower could have to two (one for their capital city and one to protect their nuclear missiles); this effectively meant that both the USA and the USSR would retain retaliation capability, which would clearly deter nuclear attack. Limits were placed on the number of ICBMs and SLBMs (1 618 and 740 for the USSR, 1 054 and 740 for the USA). Moreover, the Basic Principles Agreement (part of SALT I) did lead to greater understanding and calmer relations between the USA and the USSR

(e.g. trade agreements and joint visits). Not significant – The difficulties involved in reaching agreement on nuclear arms limitation is clearly reflected in the length of time it took to negotiate the treaties; discussions began in 1968, yet SALT I was not agreed until 1972, whilst SALT II was not signed until 1979, by which time relations between the superpowers had deteriorated and, accordingly, it was never ratified by the US Senate. There were disagreements over how arms should be limited and, indeed, what types of weapons to include (Soviet and American weapons were not easily comparable, and there were doubts regarding the reliability of information regarding how many weapons each superpower actually had). There was a tendency to focus on limiting existing weapons, yet this took no account of the new technologies which both superpowers were developing (for example, the Interim Treaty on Offensive Weapons, part of SALT I but only due to last until 1977, limited ICBMs and SLBMs, but ignored MIRV, which carried multiple warheads on a single missile. Similarly, SALT II set limits on missile launchers and strategic bombers, but ignored Cruise Missiles). Public opinion in the USA, fostered by a resurgence of right-wing political views, increasingly opposed arms control, viewing it as a mechanism by which the USSR could catch up with superior American weaponry. Moreover, the USA increasingly saw the USSR as untrustworthy, a country which could not be relied upon to carry out its agreements

#### **10 To what extent did the SALT Treaties improve East-West relations? May/June 2018 9389/43**

The SALT Treaties mark the high point of détente. Concerned by Nixon's visit to China in 1972, and the possibility that its two superpower rivals might combine against it, the USSR agreed to the SALT I Treaty. This greatly reduced tension. The ABM Treaty was crucial to maintaining the balance of power – ABM systems were designed to reduce the chance of retaliation following a nuclear attack, thus encouraging first strike; the Treaty limited each side to two ABM sites, so that retaliation was still possible, thus acting as a deterrent to first strike. Although full agreement was not reached, the Interim Treaty placed limits on the number of ICBMs and SLBMs which the USA and the USSR could have. The Basic Principles Agreement established a code of conduct for nuclear war. SALT I therefore marked a shift from confrontation to restraint and a willingness to negotiate. This was reflected in trade agreements and Nixon's visit to Moscow in 1972 and 1974, and Brezhnev's visit to Washington in 1973. Negotiations continued, leading to the signing of SALT II by Carter and Brezhnev in June 1979.

The SALT Treaties simply confirm the difficulties involved in the USA and the USSR reaching agreement over the issue of nuclear weapons. Negotiations for SALT I took from 1968 to 1972, delays caused by American anger over Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and by difficulties over how arms should be limited and what weapons should be included – the different weapons of each superpower made comparison difficult. SALT I concentrated on existing weapons; both the USA and the USSR realised that the arms race would be won through new developments, which were not covered by SALT I. For example, the Interim Treaty omitted new technological developments such as MIRVs. Even after SALT I, both sides retained enough nuclear weapons to destroy each other several times over. Negotiations for SALT II took even longer. Right wingers in the USA, believing that the SALT Treaties simply allowed the USSR to catch up with



the USA's nuclear capability, made it difficult for President Ford to negotiate with Brezhnev, whose own illness slowed down proceedings. President Carter began renegotiations after 1977, but the details were highly technical and complicated.

Although Brezhnev and Carter signed SALT II in June 1979, there was never any possibility of the US Senate ratifying the Treaty – the USA was increasingly concerned about the USSR's expanding influence in the developing world and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was the final straw.

#### **10 'The SALT Treaties achieved nothing significant.' How far do you Agree? October/November 2019 9389/42**

In support it could be said that the difficulties involved in reaching agreement on nuclear arms limitation is clearly reflected in the length of time it took to negotiate the treaties. Discussions began in 1968, yet SALT I was not agreed until 1972, whilst SALT II was not signed until 1979, by which time relations between the superpowers had deteriorated and, accordingly, it was never ratified by the US Senate. There were disagreements over how arms should be limited and, indeed, what types of weapons to include (Soviet and American weapons were not easily comparable, and there were doubts regarding the reliability of information regarding how many weapons each superpower actually had). There was a tendency to focus on limiting existing weapons, yet this took no account of the new technologies which both superpowers were developing (for example, the Interim Treaty on Offensive Weapons, part of SALT I but only due to last until 1977, limited ICBMs and SLBMs, but ignored MIRV, which carried multiple warheads on a single missile. Similarly, SALT II set limits on missile launchers and strategic bombers, but ignored Cruise Missiles). Public opinion in the USA, fostered by a resurgence of right-wing political views, increasingly opposed arms control, viewing it as a mechanism by which the USSR could catch up with superior American weaponry. Moreover, the USA increasingly saw the USSR as untrustworthy, a country which could not be relied upon to carry out its agreements.

However the SALT Treaties marked the high point of détente, and established the principle of discussion/negotiation which subsequently led to more effective Treaties, such as START. The ABM Treaty (part of SALT I) limited the number of ABM systems which each superpower could have to two (one for their capital city and one to protect their nuclear missiles); this effectively meant that both the USA and the USSR would retain retaliation capability, which would clearly deter nuclear attack. Limits were placed on the number of ICBMs and SLBMs (1 618 and 740 for the USSR, 1 054 and 740 for the USA). Moreover, the Basic Principles Agreement (part of SALT I) did lead to greater understanding and calmer relations between the USA and the USSR (e.g. trade agreements and joint visits).

## **Cuban Missile Crisis**

#### **9 How far do you agree with the view that the Cuban missile crisis ended in victory for Kennedy? [30] October/November 2015 9389 41**

In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, western writers generally argued the US had been highly successful. Khrushchev had been forced to back down and remove Soviet missiles from Cuba. Kennedy's imposition of the blockade around Cuba and effective use of brinkmanship

diplomacy were seen as successful strategies in the face of Soviet aggression/expansionism. That Khrushchev's intentions had been defeated seemed to be confirmed by the criticism he received from China and from his own dismissal from office in the USSR. However, subsequent historians have viewed the outcome of the crisis rather differently, arguing that Khrushchev's aims went deeper than merely seeking to test out a new and inexperienced US President. While Kennedy's agreement to remove US missiles from Turkey was not of great significance (since they were already scheduled for removal anyway), the USA's agreement not to attack Cuba in the future was an important concession. If Khrushchev's primary aims were to protect a new and vulnerable communist state and to create a greater sense of balance in the nuclear arms race, it could be argued that he succeeded in both. Evidence shows that both leaders were keen to avoid a nuclear engagement over Cuba; both made strenuous efforts to work closely with UN Secretary U Thant in seeking a peaceful solution.

**9 'The missile crisis of 1962 was caused by the USA's determination to regain political and economic control over Cuba.' How far do you agree? [30] May/June 2016 9389 42**

Agree – Since the Spanish-American War of 1898, the USA had effectively controlled the island. Under the Platt Amendment (1903), the USA controlled Cuban foreign policy, while American business and commercial interests flourished. The education system was used to impose American culture on the Cubans. From 1934, the pro-American Batista ruled Cuba in a corrupt, ruthless and undemocratic manner. When Batista was overthrown by Castro's nationalist revolution in 1959, American commercial interests were threatened; this became clear when Castro nationalised American-owned factories and business interests. Moreover, Castro's actions posed a threat to the USA's control over the Caribbean region, a vital element of its Monroe Doctrine. Kennedy's USA therefore imposed economic sanctions on Cuba and supported the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion. When this failed, Kennedy's government sank Cuban merchant ships, sabotaged Cuban institutions and carried out military invasion exercises. Fearing an American invasion of Cuba, Castro declared himself a communist and turned to the USSR for protection and economic assistance. Khrushchev was, therefore, simply seeking to protect a new and vulnerable communist state. Disagree – The USSR exploited the situation in Cuba. Far from simply providing Cuba with protection, Khrushchev had more general Cold War motives for placing nuclear weapons on the island. The USSR hoped to gain international prestige by supporting a vulnerable country against potential American invasion; this would help it to gain support from newly independent states. Having lost the lead in the development of ICBMs, Khrushchev was aiming to regain the initiative. The USSR felt threatened by the development of American missile bases in Turkey and parts of Europe, and Khrushchev felt that placing missiles in Cuba would provide him with a bargaining tool to get the US missiles removed. Khrushchev was also keen to get the West out of Berlin, and he felt that Soviet Cuban missiles might help in negotiations to achieve this. Moreover, Khrushchev was keen to test the resolve of the USA's new, young and highly inexperienced president. Castro himself was prepared to exploit Cold War rivalry between the USA and the USSR in order to protect his revolutionary government and Cuba's newly-won independence. In declaring himself a communist and seeking economic and military aid from the USSR, Castro was inflaming the USA's animosity towards him.

## **9 How far do you agree that Khrushchev's gamble in placing nuclear weapons in Cuba ended successfully? October/November 2017 9389/42**

Although the Soviet missiles in Cuba posed a threat to major cities in central and eastern USA (e.g. New York, Washington, Chicago, Boston), it was never Khrushchev's intention to use them as anything other than a bargaining tool. Having lost the lead in ICBMs, Khrushchev was seeking to restore balance by threatening the USA in the same way that American missiles in Turkey and Europe threatened the USSR. He may also have intended to use the Cuban missiles as a means of achieving the withdrawal of the West from Berlin. With a new, young and inexperienced president, 1962 seemed the perfect time to seek concessions from the USA.

Although Khrushchev was publicly perceived as the first one to back down, in reality he achieved four significant objectives. Firstly, in return for the removal of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the USA agreed to remove its missiles from Turkey. Secondly, and most significantly, Kennedy agreed that the USA would not attack Cuba; given the threat which the USA had posed to Castro's Cuba prior to the missile crisis, this was no mean achievement. Thirdly, the USSR had gained a communist ally located within the Americas; although Castro was initially angered by Khrushchev's decision to remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba, good Soviet- Cuban relations were soon restored. Fourthly, the USSR could be seen supporting a new and vulnerable communist state from the imperialistic actions of the USA; this was important in terms of the USSR's international prestige during the Cold War, particularly at a time of decolonisation, when the superpowers were competing for influence in newly independent states.

Placing Soviet nuclear missile bases in Cuba was both provocative and extremely risky. In reality, the Cuban missiles posed no new threat to the USA (long-range missiles could already reach the USA from the USSR itself), yet the decision inevitably led to a hostile reaction from the USA, which could have led to nuclear war. There was no guarantee that the Soviet missiles would protect Cuba; there was pressure on Kennedy at the time to call Khrushchev's bluff by attacking Cuba and deposing Castro (and some criticism of him subsequently for not having done so).

When Kennedy imposed a blockade to prevent Russian ships bringing missiles to Cuba, Khrushchev was forced to back down, ordering the ships to turn back. Kennedy's strategy was highly praised by many Americans at the time, while Khrushchev faced heavy criticism both in the USSR and from China. Castro himself was critical of Khrushchev's decision to remove the missiles; he had urged Khrushchev to launch a nuclear attack on the USA in the event of an American invasion of Cuba.

Although Kennedy agreed to remove American Thor and Jupiter missiles from Turkey, he insisted that this should not be made public; in reality, this was no real victory for Khrushchev anyway since the missiles had already been scheduled for removal. Khrushchev's decision to back down in the Cuban crisis was part of the reason for his removal from office in 1964.

## **9 To what extent was the USA responsible for causing the Cuban missile crisis?**

**October/November 2017 9389/43**

Indicative content

Cuba, under the leadership of the US-backed dictator Batista, had been part of the American sphere of influence in the Caribbean. The USA was incensed when, following his successful revolution in 1959, Fidel Castro nationalised American-owned estates and industries. The USA broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba in January 1961, and Castro looked to the USSR to provide economic aid. Convinced that Cuba was now a communist state, Kennedy approved the Bay of Pigs campaign with the intention of restoring Batista. It was then that Castro declared that Cuba was a Marxist state.

The USA continued to seek ways to remove Castro from power, including the sinking of Cuban merchant ships and various invasion exercises. Fearing an impending full-scale American invasion, Castro turned to the USSR for military help. Khrushchev placed nuclear weapons in Cuba in order to protect a new and vulnerable communist state against American aggression.

Khrushchev had other motives beyond simply protecting a vulnerable communist state, and was exploiting Cuba in order to gain the initiative in the Cold War. He was attempting to restore parity in the nuclear arms race, using Soviet missiles in Cuba as a bargaining tool to gain the removal of American missiles in Turkey and Europe generally. He was testing the resolve of the new, inexperienced American President, Kennedy. He was able to use the example of Cuba as a way to gain greater prestige for the USSR internationally; he could portray the USSR as the defender of an independent state against the imperialist ambitions of the USA. This was particularly important as both superpowers were seeking to gain the support of newly-independent countries. It is possible that Khrushchev intended to use the Cuban missiles as a bargaining tool to gain the withdrawal of the West from Berlin. The placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba was clearly a provocative move which greatly heightened Cold War tensions.

## **9 'The Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world close to nuclear war.' How far do you agree?**

**May/June 2018 9389/43**

The Cuban Missile Crisis certainly caused great alarm at the time and, at certain points, nuclear war seemed inevitable. Soviet and American diplomats and military personnel were undoubtedly ready (and, in some cases, willing) to take the necessary actions to precipitate a nuclear war. Kennedy was under intense pressure to take firm action against the USSR. Many of his military and political advisers urged him to order air strikes on the Cuban missile bases while, at the same time, he faced criticism for allowing an island in the USA's own 'backyard' to turn communist, damaging American economic interests. Had he chosen to take more strident action, a nuclear war would have ensued. Similarly, his bluff having been called, Khrushchev was well aware that backing down would mean damage to the USSR's Cold War credibility as well as to his own political position. There were great pressures on him to break the USA's blockade, which would have forced Kennedy to take stronger action. Despite being able to claim

some success from the crisis, the fact remains that it was Khrushchev who backed down, ordering Soviet missile-carrying ships not to cross the USA's blockade. The Soviet armed forces never forgave him and this was a contributory factor in his dismissal as Soviet leader in 1964. That both the USA and the USSR were deeply concerned by how close they had come to nuclear war over the Cuban crisis is evidenced by the attempts at controlling the nuclear arms race which followed – e.g. hot line between Moscow and Washington, Nuclear Test Ban Treaty 1963, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty 1968.

The Cuban Missile Crisis was simply an example of brinkmanship in action. Khrushchev felt that it was important in terms of the USSR's Cold War credibility to be seen as supporting a newly-communist country threatened by the power of the USA. He also wanted to use the Soviet missiles in Cuba as a bargaining tool to gain concessions from the USA, which had nuclear advantages over the USSR. He clearly had no intention of actually using the missiles against the USA; Soviet long-range missiles based in Europe already had the capability to reach the USA anyway.

Similarly, Kennedy realised that nuclear war would have been counter-productive, choosing to blockade Cuban ports to prevent Soviet ships delivering missiles rather than taking nuclear action against the USSR. The ease with which U Thant, Secretary-General of the UN, was able to broker a negotiated deal between Kennedy and Khrushchev is clear evidence that neither was prepared to resort to nuclear war. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev could claim victory – the USA agreed to remove its missiles from Turkey and promised not to threaten Cuba's independence again. Kennedy could claim victory by ensuring the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba.

**9 'The United States was responsible for the Cuban Missile Crisis.' How far do you agree? October/November 2021 9389/42**

Arguments may look at the Cuban Crisis from the point of view of the USA, the Soviet Union and Cuba and also to put it into the context of the Cold War. From the USA point of view there was a danger to them following the seizure of power by Fidel Castro in 1959. They had worsened relations by the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and refusing to trade with Cuba. At the time of the missiles being sent to Cuba they escalated the crisis and Kennedy followed a policy of brinkmanship, even threatening nuclear retaliation and employing a naval blockade. Despite this, the USA did withdraw their missiles secretly from Turkey. The Soviet Union under Khrushchev decided to be provocative and supported the Castro regime, not least as it was just off the coast of the United States. Sending missiles was a direct provocation, although they were within their rights as Cuba was a sovereign independent state. Candidates can examine whether the intention was really to put nuclear weapons on Cuba, or to force the USA to remove their missiles from Turkey. Kennedy certainly made the whole crisis very public and never mentioned USA missiles in Turkey or Western Europe. Castro likewise was being provocative by aligning himself with the Soviet Union at a time of Cold War but was possibly simply looking after Cuban interests.

**9 'The Cuban Missile Crisis was a defeat for the Soviet Union.' Evaluate this view. October/November 2021 9489/41**

The Cuban Missile Crisis ended in a clear victory for the United States. The Soviet Union agreed to move the missiles from Cuba and Kennedy's image was strengthened domestically and internationally. In 1962, Khrushchev's prestige had already fallen due to rifts with the military over stringent defence cuts in 1960, and rapid rises in food prices: this made the Soviets more critical of the 1962 events. Many important Russians believed Khrushchev had lost the crisis, seeing the outcome as a Soviet humiliation. Khrushchev had capitulated to the Americans; he was regarded as a failure and by 1964 he was replaced. Leonid Brezhnev became First Secretary and Alexei Kosygin was Premier. The Chinese also resented the Soviet Union's withdrawal of the missiles and Mao Zedong accused Khrushchev of backing down with Khrushchev responding that Mao's policies would lead to nuclear war. By 1962 China had become isolated from the Soviet Union. The Soviets had refused to support Chinese attempts to reach a settlement over Taiwan and the Chinese strongly opposed the Soviet pursuit of peaceful coexistence with the West. The removal of the missiles led to a new low in relations between the two countries and it was a further step towards the Sino-Soviet split which was a reality by 1965 when all contact between the two nations was severed. While, after an initial setback, the Soviet Union was able to maintain a good relationship with Cuba after Castro's initial outrage, it proved to be costly as Cuba became economically dependent on Soviet markets. Khrushchev had maintained that he had placed the missiles in Cuba to maintain the independence of the Cubans. After the crisis Cuba remained a communist country and it appeared that the United States had altered its policy towards Cuba having pledged not to invade it. They had sponsored an invasion of the country in 1961, were planning a new one and had never accepted Castro's regime. The Soviets were thus aiming to defend Cuba from a US attack and they also wanted strategic parity as the United States had missiles in Turkey next to the Soviet border. Khrushchev may have also wanted to exert pressure to try to resolve the problem of Berlin. However, the escalation of the crisis meant that his main aim became to defuse it. Nevertheless, as well as obtaining a US pledge not to invade Cuba, a secret agreement that the Jupiter missiles would be removed from Turkey was made. The deal was reached privately in a conversation between Robert Kennedy and Ambassador Dobrynin. The secrecy of this agreement which Khrushchev kept to avoid Cuban anger gave the public perception that Khrushchev had agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba without anything in return. In fact, Soviet long-range missiles could already reach the United States from Russia itself, so the missiles in Cuba did not really pose a new national security threat.

Both sides mutually benefited from the establishment of the 'crisis hotline', a direct telephone link between the White House and the Kremlin. The crisis also led to the signing of the Limited Test-Ban Treaty in Moscow on August 5, 1963, by the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom that banned all tests of nuclear weapons except those conducted underground. Both sides also learnt that risking nuclear war in pursuit of political objects was far too risky. The two powers continued to fight each other in proxy wars in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and southern Africa and competed in the space race. There was now a move towards détente as well as further arms control treaties.

## **9 Evaluate the impact of the Cuban Missile Crisis on US–Soviet relations. May/June 2022 9489/42**

Both sides in the crisis believed that they had won a victory. Khrushchev had saved Cuba from invasion by the US and secured a secret deal for the removal of the US Jupiter missiles from Turkey. On the other hand, Kennedy had stood up to the Soviet Union and kept nuclear missiles out of Cuba. Neither side had lost face, and both kept to the agreements they had made and were keen for a dialogue between them to continue. As a result of the crisis, Kennedy became convinced of the dangers of nuclear brinksmanship. A Moscow-Washington hotline was set up

giving a direct phone link between the White House and the Kremlin. The crisis also provided the impetus to renew the test ban negotiations which had first started in 1955. Kennedy, in his letter of 28 October 1962 to Khrushchev, suggested that it was necessary to put greater efforts toward limiting nuclear arms testing and the Soviet Union agreed. In 1963, the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed by the US, Britain, and the Soviet Union. The treaty banned nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. More progress was made in 1969 with the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty. Both countries promoted the idea of 'peaceful coexistence'. The resolution of the crisis made Khrushchev unpopular with the hardliners in the Soviet Union; they were opposed to his withdrawal of weapons but unaware of his secret agreement with Kennedy. Whereas Khrushchev had made his decisions to withdraw the weapons from Cuba public, Kennedy had made a secret agreement over the Jupiter missiles which left Khrushchev facing mounting criticism leading to him being ousted from office two years later; he was accused of reckless decision-making and of lacking the ability to lead the Soviet Union with the crisis being listed among his greatest mistakes by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. His deal was seen as a retreat from the standoff, and a great victory for the US. His successor, Brezhnev sought to ease tensions with the US. The Cuban Missile crisis did pave the way for a period of détente at the beginning of the next decade and there was closer co-operation between the superpowers on human rights, nuclear disarmament, and trade. However, while both sides were keen to avoid a repetition of the crisis, this did not prevent them from continuing to build up arms. Brezhnev and Kosygin led the Soviet Union on a massive military build-up. The Soviet government increased their research and funding of ICBMs in the years that followed, leading to a stockpiling of advanced missiles capable of hitting targets in the US. Similarly, the US continued to build up its military hardware and resources in the years to come. Within a year of the crisis, Secretary of Defense McNamara announced that the US would triple its ICBM fleet to 1700 by 1966. Kennedy felt encouraged to be more assertive against the Soviet Union's Communist allies in Vietnam and US policy makers used the crisis as justification for the nuclear arms build-up which was to become an essential part of the foreign policy towards the Soviet Union.

**9 'US reaction to the Cuban Revolution was the main cause of the Cuban Missile Crisis.' Assess this view. October/November 2022 9489/41**

Indicative content The Cuban Revolution brought Fidel Castro to power. US refusal to accept his rule and failure to overthrow him drove Castro into an alliance with the Soviets. The United States wanted to retain their influence in Cuba and during the 1950s had supported the corrupt and oppressive rule of Batista. Much of Cuba's industry was owned by US business and its main export, sugar, was controlled by the United States. Batista's government was very unpopular, and Fidel Castro led a revolution against him in 1958. Havana fell in 1959 and Batista fled from Cuba. Castro formed a government, but he wanted to be free from US influence. He nationalised businesses and geared the economy to help the poorer Cubans. US refusal to accept Castro's communist government drove Castro to seek Soviet support. However, the United States regarded itself as the protector of South and Central American countries from outside interference and believed that if Cuba remained communist, this would also spread to Latin America affecting US interests. The United States stopped selling arms to Cuba and considered banning the purchase of sugar and Castro asked the Soviet Union to buy it instead. Some of Batista's supporters formed part of a US plan to invade Cuba in 1961 and overthrow Castro. The Bay of Pigs landing proved to be a humiliating failure, but Castro was certain that the United States wanted to overthrow him. Kennedy and the CIA then approved Operation Mongoose whereby Cuban exiles and the CIA attacked industry and farmland and assassinated members of Castro's government. Kennedy was obsessed with defeating Castro and removing any communist threat so close to the United States. The US provided the

opportunity for Khrushchev to protect Cuba. Khrushchev was unpopular in the Soviet Union; it was felt that he would not be able to bring about a worldwide communist revolution. By the late 1950s, he was losing support in Russia. He was disliked for his 'Secret Speech' in which he criticised the communist regime and many of its leaders. He also faced rebellions in Poland and Hungary in 1956 and the Berlin Wall, erected in 1961, showed that he had to imprison citizens to prevent them from escaping from East Germany. Relations had also deteriorated with China. The opportunity to assist Cuba made it look as if he was helping a communist state in danger and he might have the chance to spread communism to Latin America. He had also underestimated Kennedy and thought that he could risk putting intermediate-range ballistic missiles on Cuba in 1962. He believed that Kennedy was weak because of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Kennedy had not taken military action after the building of the Berlin Wall and Khrushchev believed he would not be able to deal with Soviet military presence in Cuba. Khrushchev certainly misjudged the situation in 1962. He felt justified in helping to spread communism and protecting Castro. The crisis began with his decision to install intermediate and medium-range nuclear missiles in Cuba. Kennedy saw U2 pictures of the missiles on 16 October 1962; they had been secretly deployed by Khrushchev in April. The Americans had been lied to about the Soviet intentions making a US response inevitable. Such missiles could threaten most US cities. However, he could have defended Cuba with conventional weapons. It seems likely that Khrushchev wanted to appear to have greater military strength than the United States. Appearing to defend the Cuban Revolution gave Khrushchev the opportunity to try to score a nuclear success over the Americans

## Germany

**9 'The event which had the most significant impact on US-Soviet Union relations in the 1950s and 1960s was the building of the Berlin Wall.' How far do you agree? May/June 2020 9389/43**

The building of the Berlin Wall worsened relations and was the culmination of the West refusing to leave Berlin. President Kennedy was to visit in 1963 and make his famous 'Ich Bin Ein Berliner' speech, reaffirming the USA's commitment to Berlin. Berlin was always seen as potential flash point for an outbreak of war. Mention might be made of Berlin 1953, when US and Soviet tanks faced each other. The Berlin wall made the division of Berlin seem very permanent. Candidates should also consider the other key events such as Korea 1953, Hungary 1956, Cuba 1959-62 and possibly the Prague spring 1968. They might also look at Détente post 1963.

Evidence that the Berlin Wall was the event that had the most significant impact on US-Soviet relations could include:

- It symbolised the permanent physical division in Europe between East and West.
- Crisis over Checkpoint Charlie showed US was not willing to challenge USSR in its sphere of influence. It had accepted the reality of Soviet control in Eastern Europe.
- On the one hand, the Wall showed that communism would survive in Eastern Europe; on the other, the West had protected democracy in this enclave. The Wall became a symbol of defiance against communism.



- Created impression in Moscow that Kennedy was weak and could be forced to back down. This was to have repercussions for the later Cuban Missile Crisis.

Evidence that the Berlin Wall did not have the most significant impact on US-Soviet relations could include:

- The building of the wall came at the end of an extended period of crisis – both sides had failed to sort out the problem, so perhaps less impact
- Settled the issue of Berlin for the time being – ‘a wall is better than a war’ – so may have reduced tensions in Europe. This could be seen as a reason for the importance of building a wall.
- Other events can be seen as more significant, e.g. the Cuban Missile Crisis because it was closer to American interests and threatened actual war more so than Berlin; Hungarian Uprising because it showed the USSR could act with impunity in Eastern Europe; launching of Sputnik as it broadened the Cold War into a space race.

### **9 Evaluate the extent to which the Berlin Crisis of 1958–61 led to increased tension between the United States and Soviet Union. October/November 2022 9489/42**

Indicative content It seemed that Khrushchev never intended peaceful coexistence to end competition between the two superpowers, merely that it would be peaceful competition. Suspicion existed between both sides even before the Berlin crisis. Eisenhower's 'New Course' foreign policy included the use of greater nuclear weapons, a policy of massive retaliation and brinkmanship. In 1955 Khrushchev set up the Warsaw Pact with plans of how to wage nuclear war against NATO. However, the Berlin crises exacerbated the tension as both sides came close to war. Just ten years after the agreement on the ending of the Berlin Blockade, on 10 November 1958, Khrushchev announced that within six months he would declare this agreement 'null and void' and place all of Berlin under Soviet control. He maintained that there would be war if the West resisted. By the autumn of 1958 East Germany had lost 2 million people who were using East Berlin as an escape route and Khrushchev was determined to stop this. Hopes of an agreement between the United States and Soviet Union were soon dashed when the Soviets shot down a U-2 spy plane capturing the pilot, Gary Powers. Democrats in the United States spread reports that the Soviets were ahead of the United States in ICBMs. Eisenhower believed this to be false based on the evidence produced by U-2 spy planes but he ordered one more flight to take place in May 1960. The plane was shot down by the Soviets and Eisenhower, assuming that Powers was dead, lied and said that the plane must have veered off course but the Soviets learnt the truth from Powers. Thus, suspicion and distrust were exacerbated by Eisenhower's actions. Khrushchev cut off talks with Eisenhower hoping that the new administration in the United States might achieve a resolution. In the summer of 1961, he met Kennedy in Vienna but no solution was found to the Berlin problem and Khrushchev again gave the United States 6 months to withdraw from Berlin. Kennedy responded by preparing for a potential conflict. Khrushchev's own response was seen on 13 August 1961 when a barbed wire fence was erected on the order of Walter Ulbricht separating East and West Berlin making the city the heart of the Cold War. It can be argued that Khrushchev was only bluffing in 1958 and that he was in no position to alienate the United States. The fact that the two sides agreed to talks suggests they wanted to avert war. Khrushchev returned from his talks at Camp David with an agreement from Eisenhower to a summit in Paris the following year. Berlin and disarmament would be discussed. In January 1960, he gave a public speech to the Supreme Soviet, laying out a disarmament plan in which the Soviets would unilaterally withdraw 1 million troops from Eastern Europe and invite NATO to respond in kind. He would also destroy all Soviet missiles and discuss on-site inspection to verify that the United States did the same.

Kennedy did not agree to a resolution as he was prepared to defend the interests of capitalism. A standoff between US and Soviet troops on either side of the diplomatic checkpoint led to one of the tensest moments of the Cold War in Europe. The United States stationed tanks on its side of the checkpoint, pointing towards the East German troops just beyond the wall. Concerns that US forces would either attempt to take down the wall or force their way through the checkpoint led the Soviet Union to station its own tanks on the East German side. However, Kennedy suggested that Khrushchev remove his tanks and the US Army would reciprocate. The standoff ended peacefully but the Cuban Crisis of 1962 saw the two sides on the brink of nuclear war.

## China-USSR-US

### **9 Assess the importance of the Vietnam War in bringing about improved relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1970s. October/November 2021 9389/41**

Arguments may focus on how relations were poor at the height of the Vietnam war, but by the 1970s these relations had improved. For example, the SALT I nuclear agreement is signed in 1972, the Helsinki Accords in 1975 and the SALT II agreement in 1979. The US policy of détente which was first begun under Kennedy and Johnson but was extended by Nixon and Carter may also be considered. Arguments may also discuss the idea that the Soviet Union felt threatened by China and the US policy of improving relations with China under Nixon put pressure on the Soviet Union to set about improving their own diplomatic relationship with the US, leading to Nixon visiting both China and the Soviet Union. Challenges facing the Soviet economy may also be considered as influential factors encouraging better relations – in 1972 the Soviet Union signed a three-year agreement with the US to buy grain. Arguments may also consider how failure in Vietnam made the USA less combative and more amenable to improving relations with the Soviet Union and accepting more coexistence rather than pursuing the more traditional policy of containment. Relations only really began to improve in the 1970s, although it could be argued that in the 1960s relations improved but because of Cuba and not Vietnam.

### **11 To what extent was the Sino-Soviet split caused by disagreement over relations with the West. October/November 2021 9389/43**

Irreconcilable differences between the leaders of the two countries who were unprepared to compromise explain the reasons for the split. Mao distrusted the Soviet Union and hated the fact that it tried to exert its superiority over China. There was also a clash of ideology between the two countries; Mao was seeking world revolution whereas the Soviet Union was prepared to pursue peaceful co-existence with the West. Mao was prepared to openly criticise Soviet policy and its betrayal of the revolution and always remained suspicious of its motives towards China; the Soviet Union was prepared to retaliate. Both sides became engaged in a war of words and recriminations but it was Khrushchev's willingness to appease the West that made the split a reality. Distrust and suspicion existed even before the death of Stalin laying the foundations for the split. Mao thought that Stalin wanted a weak China that he could dominate. Mao's interpretation of Marxism focused on using the peasants as the revolutionary class but Stalin believed revolution should be based on the urban working class. Relations were to worsen under Khrushchev. In 1956 Khrushchev's 'Secret Speech' made a detailed attack on Stalin Mao believed this was a criticism of his own style of leadership; he believed in world revolution. He also believed that de-Stalinisation was responsible for the protests in Eastern Europe in 1956 and did not want China to face dissent. Ideological differences made it impossible for the two countries to agree and made relations increasingly difficult. In 1957 Mao attended a conference

in Moscow of the world's communist parties; he insisted that Moscow was too accommodating to the West and the Soviet Union should abandon revisionism. Mao was suspicious that the Soviet Union was following a policy of détente with the West to leave China internationally isolated. Khrushchev's visit to China in 1958 resulted in humiliating treatment. In 1959 there was open criticism of each other at the Romanian Communist Party Congress. The Soviet Union withdrew economic advisers from China and cancelled commercial contracts. Thus, the Soviet Union made the first move in severing ties with China but not without provocation from Mao. Mao also gave aid to Albania after the Soviet Union had withdrawn aid in 1961. Both sides attacked each other through propaganda and disputes. Mao also ridiculed Khrushchev for withdrawing from the Cuban Crisis. He believed co-existence was a betrayal of the revolution and China would not engage in it. The signing of the Test Ban Treaty in 1963 between the Soviet and western nuclear powers was viewed by Mao as another move by the Soviet Union to abandon its nuclear role. The Soviet Union was co-operating with imperialism. By 1964, Mao was asserting that there had been a counter-revolution in the Soviet Union, and that capitalism had been restored. Relations between the CCP Communist Party of the Soviet Union broke off, as did relations with the Communist parties of the Warsaw Pact countries.

### **10 Analyse how far the issue of Taiwan affected Sino–US relations during the Cold War. October/November 2022 9489/41**

Indicative content The ability of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States to find common ground when the communist state was established was impeded by both domestic politics and global tensions. Truman's administration was accused of having 'lost' China. The fact that there was an exiled Nationalist Government and army on Taiwan increased the feeling among US anti-communists that the outcome of the struggle could be reversed. The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 in which the PRC and the United States were on opposing sides ended any opportunity for an agreement between the PRC and the United States. Truman wished to prevent the Korean conflict from spreading south and this led to the US policy of protecting the Chiang Kai-shek government in Taiwan. In 1954 the PRC began to bombard Jinmen, Mazu and the Dachen Islands in the Taiwan Straits and the United States signed the Mutual Defense Treaty with the Republic of China (ROC). It promised support if the ROC engaged in a broader conflict with the PRC. In January 1955, the US Congress passed the 'Formosa Resolution' which gave President Eisenhower total authority to defend Taiwan and the off-shore islands. However, Chiang Kai-shek agreed to withdraw his troops from Dachen. In 1958 the PRC shelled Nationalist outposts on Jinmen and Mazu Islands and the United States again intervened by sending ships into the Taiwan Straits. For more than twenty years after the Chinese revolution of 1949, there were few contacts, limited trade and no diplomatic ties between the two countries. President Nixon wanted to take advantage of the Sino–Soviet split to drive a deeper wedge between the Soviet Union and the PRC wanted an ally. In October 1971 the UN voted to give the PRC a place on the UN Security Council which was supported by the United States although it voted against Taiwan's expulsion from the General Assembly. In 1972 Nixon met with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The Shanghai Communiqué pledged that it was in the interest of all nations for the United States and China to work towards the normalisation of their relations. The United States and China also agreed that neither they nor any other power should seek to dominate the Asia-Pacific region. The Soviets were very concerned about Nixon's visit as two major enemies seemed to have resolved their differences. The rapprochement with China altered the Cold War context and made possible the détente with the Soviet Union. In 1979 the Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations normalised relations with the PRC, the 'One China' policy, but President Carter signalled that the United States would continue to sell arms to Taiwan, which almost derailed the normalisation process. Congress in the Taiwan Relations Act of April 1979 authorised continued arms sales to Taiwan and stated a

US political commitment to the island's security. In August 1982, the Reagan administration agreed to a communiqué with China that Beijing believed included a US commitment to reduce the quantity and quality of US arms provided to Taiwan and then stop arms sales. The communiqué caused tension between the two countries as US continued arms sales were justified because China continued to acquire military capabilities. The student protests in 1989 badly hurt the PRC's reputation in the United States at the same time as Taiwan had begun the transition towards democracy. With the collapse of the Soviet Union the need for China's help had gone and US politicians began calling for positive changes in the Taiwan policy.

#### **10 Assess the extent to which ideological differences affected Sino-US relations during the Cold War. May/June 2022 9489/42**

The People's Republic of China (PRC) replaced the Republic of China (ROC) after the Chinese Communists won the civil war and drove the Nationalist government to Taiwan. The PRC leaders persisted in proclaiming 'Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought' as the ideological foundation of China during the Cold War. In October 1949, the PRC, comprising a quarter of the world's population, had extended the Cold War to East Asia as the US was determined to prevent the spread of communism. China stood out as the world's leading revolutionary state and a threat to western democracy. Mao believed that a strong coalition of Third World countries could be decisive in Cold War confrontations and supported national liberation struggles both to force out the remaining colonial regimes and to overthrow those independent Third World governments most closely allied with the West. Lack of economic assistance and military equipment meant that it wasn't successful, but it was an example of China trying to spread revolutionary ideology, which the US vehemently opposed. This clash inevitably led to the two nations being on opposing sides in the Cold War. The US did not formally recognise the PRC until 1979. Instead, it maintained diplomatic relations with the ROC government on Taiwan, recognising it as China's sole legitimate government. However, it was not ideological differences alone that led to tension. The entry of China in the Korean War in 1950 led to a change from minimal support of the Nationalist government in Taiwan to US protection for it. The CCP believed a Soviet alliance could offset the US threat; the Sino-Soviet Treaty was signed in 1950. Mao announced that the New China would 'lean to one side'. The US perceived the PRC as a major threat to its key interest in Asia, and to the security of Japan. It aimed to isolate the PRC politically. Sino-US relations remained hostile until the 1970s with Mao frequently referring to the US as a dangerous imperialist power. However, it was more than a war of words between the two nations. In 1954 the PRC's shelling of Jinmen aimed to foil the US -Taiwan security treaty as Beijing was concerned about the division between mainland China and Taiwan. Both countries felt that they needed to maintain contact and the ambassadorial talks began in August 1955 on issues such as Taiwan, US embargo of China, and cultural exchanges with little progress. They continued in the 1960s. The Sino-Soviet split pushed Mao into improving relations with the US in the early 70s. Despite its previous confrontations with the US, the Sino-American rapprochement resulted in limited détente in the 70s. In 1971, the PRC was admitted as a UN member and a permanent member of the Security Council. Kissinger made visits to Beijing in 1971 followed by Nixon in 1972. The focus was on the common concerns over the Soviet threat. Deng Xiaoping became China's leader in the late 70s; he wished to combine successful reform and openness to capitalistic international economy with the continued one-party rule of the CCP. Deng virtually ended China's remaining practical support for revolutionary movements abroad and reduced China's aid to the Third World. The ideological differences could be ignored once both sides stood to benefit.

# Overall Relations

## **9 To what extent did relations between the USA and the USSR improve in the period from 1953 to 1961? [30] May/June 2015 9389 41**

Following Stalin's death in 1953, the new Soviet leadership of Malenkov and, subsequently, Khrushchev wanted to improve relations with the USA. Khrushchev argued that 'peaceful coexistence' was the only way of preventing a war (probably nuclear, since both superpowers now had the hydrogen bomb). In the USA, McCarthyism was discredited and Eisenhower argued for better relations with the USSR. Evidence of the thaw might include: • the ending of the Korean War • Soviet suggestions for the reunification of Germany (1954) • Soviet agreement to give up its military bases in Finland (1955) • lifting of the Soviet veto on the admission of 16 new members to the UN (1955) • the abandonment of the Cominform (1955) • the reunification of Austria (1955) • the agreement regarding cultural exchanges following the Geneva Summit (1955), the first meeting of American and Soviet leadership since Potsdam in 1945 • Khrushchev's acceptance of an invitation to visit the USA in 1959 • the USSR's improved relations with Yugoslavia. However, despite Khrushchev's conciliatory statements, he remained sceptical of the USA's intentions and determined to maintain control over the USSR's satellite states. Examples of remaining tensions between the superpowers might include: • military coordination of the communist bloc in Eastern Europe being strengthened with the establishment of the Warsaw Pact in 1955. The USA interpreted this as a gesture against West Germany's membership of NATO • the ruthless crushing by the USSR of the Hungarian rising in 1956 • denied access to Disneyland during his visit to the USA in 1959, which led to Khrushchev accusing the Americans of hiding rocket launching pads there • a summit meeting between Kennedy and Khrushchev in Paris (May 1960) collapsing when an American U-2 spy plane was shot down over the USSR • nothing being achieved at the meeting between Kennedy and Khrushchev at the Vienna summit (June 1961). Khrushchev, however, became convinced that he could dominate the young and inexperienced Kennedy • both the USA and the USSR continuing to enhance their military capabilities • the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961 • Khrushchev's brinkmanship over Cuba.

## **10 How effective were the Helsinki Accords in improving East-West relations? May/June 2018 9389/42**

The Helsinki Accords emerged from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (1973–75) with the aim of improving relations between the Communist bloc and the West. The agreements reached mark the high point of détente, with both sides prepared to make concessions. The agreement declared that the borders of European countries were 'inviolable' and could not be altered by force. This meant that the USA and all European countries finally accepted the existence of the Soviet Bloc in Eastern Europe, including East Germany. Brezhnev was able to claim that this was a significant achievement for the USSR.

In exchange, the USSR made concessions demanded by the West, in particular an agreement to respect human rights, such as freedom of speech and freedom of movement across Europe. The West saw this as a significant step forward, since it would undermine the hold of oppressive

Soviet regimes in Eastern Europe, especially since organisations were established to monitor its implementation. The West could claim that it had gained significant concessions from the USSR in exchange for simply accepting the reality of Soviet control over Eastern Europe. The Accords also encouraged trade between East and West, another factor in the improved relations between them.

In reality, the Helsinki Accords achieved very little. The West had simply admitted formal acceptance of a situation (Soviet control over Eastern Europe) which had emerged after WWII and about which they could do nothing anyway. In return, the USSR had made promises regarding human rights which would be very difficult to monitor and enforce. Moreover, the Accords did not have treaty status and, as such, were not binding on any of the signatories. President Ford responded to right-wing criticism of the Accords in the USA by stating that the USA was merely going along with European states' acceptance of a fait accompli and committing itself to nothing. He added that it was worth doing this in order to extract human rights concessions from the USSR; if these proved to be worthless, the USA would have lost nothing in the attempt. From the start, therefore, it is clear that the USA had doubts regarding the USSR's commitments regarding human rights.

These doubts proved to be well founded. It did not take long before people in the USSR and other communist states were accusing their governments of failing to allow basic human rights. The USSR could not allow open criticism of governments in the Communist bloc for fear that this would encourage mass protests which would rapidly spread. The Accords, while symbolising the illusion of better East–West relations brought about by détente, actually achieved very little.

**9 'In the period 1950 to 1963 the Soviet Union was more successful in spreading communism than the USA was in containing it.' How far do you agree? May/June 2020 9389/41**

This question requires candidates to evaluate the hypothesis which can be argued in different ways: both sides can claim to have been more successful or it could be argued that both cancelled the other out. Better responses may note that the superpowers were by no means in complete control of global events and often they were reacting. The key point is that candidates argue a reasoned case.

Evidence that the Soviet Union was more successful in spreading communism than the USA was in containing it could include:

- The Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty 1950 saw close ties being formed between the USSR and the newly founded People's Republic of China. This helped support the notion that communism was becoming a dominant force in the world.
- The Korean War showed that communism was spreading and Americans had a growing enemy with North Korea becoming an aggressive communist country
- The Hungarian Uprising of 1956 was suppressed with little US response which showed USSR's firm grip over Eastern Europe. The powerlessness of the USA was also demonstrated by the failure to prevent the Berlin Wall being constructed in 1961.
- Cuba: Eisenhower's embargo policy after the fall of Batista in 1959 helped consolidate links between Castro and the USSR. The Bay of Pigs fiasco failed to limit communism in Cuba and encouraged closer links, which culminated in the Cuban Missile Crisis of

October 1962; US was forced to remove missiles from Turkey after CMC as part of the secret deal with USSR.

- It could be argued that the US attempts to prevent French loss of Indochina to the communist Vietminh was unsuccessful. With the USSR's support the establishment of North Vietnam after the Geneva agreement of 1954 and the increasing communist influence in South Vietnam by 1963 was evidence for Soviet success and US failure.

Evidence that the Soviet Union was less successful in spreading communism than the USA was in containing it could include:

- JFK's handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis was seen as a victory for the USA. Cuba was prevented from obtaining nuclear weapons and the USSR was forced to back down.
- Korean War – the USA prevented the fall of South Korea and the subsequent feared 'domino theory' of East Asia; the support of the UN was a valuable boost to the USA's claim that it was defending the free world against aggression.
- Events in Eastern Europe (Hungary and Berlin Wall) can as easily be argued to have been own-goals by the USSR showing that they could only impose communism by force.
- The USA prevented any spread of Communist influence in both Latin America (apart from Cuba) with CIA organised coups against suspect democratic regimes in Guatemala. Similarly CIA sponsored coups in Syria and Iran limited the spread of Soviet influence in the Middle East.

## **9 Assess the impact of the Prague Spring on US–Soviet relations. March 2021 9489/42**

Pursuing détente with the Soviet Union was very important to President Lyndon B Johnson; it was an opportunity to end his presidency on a positive note. However, the Soviet invasion to crack down on political reform in Czechoslovakia put the negotiations on hold and it destroyed Johnson's last chance to leave a legacy he could be proud of. He did not want to upset the Soviets and in the process pursued a policy of no resistance and demonstrated that the United States was not prepared to defend democracy if it was not in its interests. Nevertheless, it soured the relationship between the two superpowers. Johnson was under so much pressure at home with his attempts to create the 'great society' and resistance to American involvement in Vietnam. The assassinations of civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, and presidential candidate, Robert Kennedy, also reduced people's faith in the political system. Success with détente would help to raise his standing and give the Americans a chance to establish an exit strategy for Vietnam. On 20 August 1968 Johnson was making his final preparations for a nuclear arms limitation summit meeting with the Soviet leaders on the following day. The Soviet invasion coincided with the planned meeting. This forced him to postpone his plans and his hopes of being recognised as a great peacemaker; it was left to Richard Nixon to receive that honour. Johnson made every effort to protect his personal and political goals by his minimal reaction to the invasion. However, the United States did protest about the invasion in the UN Security Council. It also gave a diplomatic warning to the Soviet Union that it would be more forceful if there were similar action in Romania. Romania had been pursuing a more independent foreign policy and the United States hoped that Romania might become a neutral state in the Cold War. It also resulted in fresh commitments across the NATO alliance, with the United States confirming that it would continue to station its troops in West Germany. Czechoslovakia returned to full Soviet control and the successful invasion saved the shattering of communism in Eastern Europe. Johnson's fixation on détente enabled the Soviets to escape any direct intervention from the United States. Events clearly demonstrated that both Brezhnev and Johnson were prepared to put their own interests first. Brezhnev prioritised maintaining Soviet control of the satellites against pursuing détente. For him détente was just delayed by a

few years; for Johnson it had a permanent effect on his legacy. It also led to the Brezhnev Doctrine whereby the Soviet Union maintained its right to intervene in any country where communism had been threatened. While the Prague Spring played a pivotal role in delaying détente, it also increased Soviet confidence that it could deal with its satellite unimpeded by the United States. On the other hand, it was also a wake-up call to the United States that Johnson had given the impression that in his determination to attain the co-operation of the Soviets he would allow the Warsaw Pact to do as it pleased.

## US Policy

### **9 Compare and contrast the strategies used by Presidents Johnson and Nixon in their handling of the Vietnam War. October/November 2018 9389/42**

The strategies adopted by the two presidents were, in many ways, dictated by circumstances. Johnson is often blamed for committing the USA to the war in Vietnam, but he faced a difficult decision: either pull out of Vietnam entirely, which would have damaged the USA's international prestige and would have been unpopular with American public opinion, or honour Kennedy's commitment to South Vietnam by increasing American involvement.

Assuming that the Vietcong were controlled by Ho Chi Minh, he ordered the bombing of North Vietnam in the hope that Ho would call off his campaign. He also increased American military support to South Vietnam, over half a million US troops being sent there. As public opinion in the USA turned against involvement in the war and it became clear that the USA could not win the war at any reasonable cost, he suspended the bombing of North Vietnam, froze troop levels and sought a negotiated peace.

With negotiations achieving little, Nixon realised that a different approach was required. By now, public opinion would not have allowed him to send more troops to Vietnam. He adopted the strategy of 'Vietnamisation' – the USA would train and equip the South Vietnamese army to defend South Vietnam, thereby allowing the gradual withdrawal of US troops. At the same time, however, he repeated Johnson's strategy of bombing North Vietnam. He also ordered the bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail through Laos and Cambodia. This was intended to prevent troops and supplies coming from North Vietnam and to strengthen the USA's negotiating position. Nixon was now under intense pressure, both domestically and internationally, to withdraw from Vietnam.

Nixon eventually acknowledged that there was no monolithic plot, orchestrated by the USSR and China, to dominate the world – an acceptance that the USA's interpretation of the Vietnam War had been wrong. All American troops were withdrawn from Vietnam. By 1975, Vietnam became united under a communist government. Communist governments were also formed in Laos and Cambodia.

### **9 'American policy in the 1950s regarding the spread of communism was inconsistent.' How far do you agree? May/June 2019 9389/41**

In 1950, many Americans believed that they were losing the Cold War. NSC-68 clearly displays American insecurities relating to foreign policy, arguing for a change from containment to roll-back as part of a stronger attack on communism. This was to result in confusion relating to the USA's involvement in the Korean War. What began as an attempt to protect South Korea from an invasion by North Korea (containment) led to a 'thrust north' beyond the 38th parallel



(roll-back). This had not been the original intention; however, the success of the USA-dominated UN forces in pushing back the North Koreans (who had been afforded very limited assistance by Stalin) presented the USA with an opportunity to weaken communism in Asia. However, the incursion across the border into North Korea led to the involvement of China, which caused the Americans to re-think policy yet again. Despite MacArthur's arguments in favour of deploying nuclear weapons (itself a reflection of confusion in American foreign policy), US policy again became the preservation of South Korea at the 38th parallel. The war dragged on until 1953, ending in stalemate and a treaty signed by all participants except South Korea, which had little alternative but to accept the situation. US policy was rather more restrained after the Korean War – for example, the USA took no action when the USSR put down the Hungarian revolution in 1956.

The basic thrust of American foreign policy was consistently to prevent the spread of communism, especially in strategically important areas such as Southeast Asia. The USA managed to enlist the support of the UN for its campaign in the Korean War, and was successful in resisting the invasion of South Korea by North Korean forces. The incursion north of the 38th parallel was simply to ensure that there was no future attempt by North Korea to attack South Korea. Therefore, the policy of containment had not only been successfully implemented, but had also been supported by the majority of member states of the UN. Moreover, the USSR had not become directly involved in the Korean War, thereby further enhancing US prestige. President Truman was able to claim that the USA had been successful in the Korean War because it had contained the spread of communism, which had been its primary aim. The policy remained consistent throughout the 1950s – preventing the further spread of communism.

### **9 How effective was the US policy of containment in the period from 1950 to 1962?** **October/November 2020 9389/42**

Containment was intended to prevent the spread of communism and it formed part of the United States' wider Cold War politics in the mid to late 20th century. In Korea, war broke out between the North and South with the United States supplying significant resources and military support to the South. The outcome of this conflict was that communism was successfully contained within North Korea. In Hungary in 1956 the Russian military subdued a popular uprising using brutal tactics while the West did little in response. This event might be viewed as showing the inability of the West to prevent USSR doing what it wanted in Eastern Europe. After events in Cuba during 1959–62 when Russian nuclear missiles were based on the island, the threat of communism reached its peak in the minds of most Americans. In one sense the Cuban Missile Crisis could be viewed as a successful containment of communism as the missiles were eventually removed after tense negotiations. However, the United States itself only achieved this by secretly agreeing to withdraw their own missiles from Turkey. Additionally, the communist leader in Cuba, Fidel Castro, remained in power and communism continued only twenty miles off the coast of the United States. Finally, US involvement in Vietnam after 1955 which eventually led to an extended military campaign against the communist forces of North Vietnam.

### **9 How effectively did the United States uphold the Truman Doctrine in the period 1950 to 1963?** **May/June 2021 9389/41**

Discussion about the extent to which the Truman Doctrine was effectively upheld might identify the importance of geography, for example the doctrine was successfully followed in certain parts of the world and not in others. The creation of East Germany and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 could be identified as a symbol of how it was not possible to stop the communist

regimes. Hungary is an example whereby the communists crushed revolution and the United States, together with western European powers, were powerless to help. Cuba might be considered as a partial success as the Castro regime was to continue but the spread of Soviet military power was stopped, albeit the USA had to remove their missiles from Turkey. Conversely Korea might be discussed as an example of successful containment, involving the United Nations and an international coalition. Vietnam was only a success in the early stages and the USA was determined to replace France and stop the spread of communism, which was ultimately unsuccessful.

**10 'It was the failure of the US post-war policy in China which enabled the Chinese Communist Party to gain power in 1949.' Assess this view. March 2021 9489/42**

After the surrender of Japan on 10 August 1945, Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist China was admitted to the UN as a permanent member of the Security Council. The United States still hoped to maintain Nationalist China as an ally to stop the advance of communism. Truman wished to avoid a renewal of the Chinese civil war. However, US forces were over-stretched in Europe and Asia and heavy military commitment in China was unrealistic. General George Marshall was sent to persuade Mao and Chiang to form a government of national unity. Marshall arrived in China on 20 December 1945. His goal was to unify the Nationalists and Communists hoping that a strong, non-Communist China, would prevent the intervention of the Soviet Union. Even though Marshall conducted negotiations with both sides, no significant agreements were reached and in January 1947 Marshall left China. Although the United States were aware of the corruption of Chiang's administration, they wished to contain communism. They therefore increased their aid to the Nationalists, supplying aircraft and sending teams to Taiwan to train their troops. American public opinion was firmly against fighting a war in China. The United States supported the losing side and they limited their commitment in the area. Responses may also consider other factors that influenced the communist victory, such as how it was the Nationalists themselves that helped the Communists secure victory. Chiang's troops often turned and fled rather than face the enemy. His army also had a reputation for arrogance and cowardice and was accused of looting and stealing. He lost support in the cities because of heavy taxes, inflation, unemployment and food shortages. Economic discontent led to strikes and there were protests demanding an end to the civil war and the creation of a government that included the Communists. The Nationalists responded with repression including censorship, mass arrests and assassinations. The Nationalists supported business and the landlords; they ignored the suffering of the peasants. Giving more US funds to the corrupt Nationalists would have been a huge waste of money. The Nationalists played a large part in their own defeat. However, the Communists themselves played a huge part in their victory. The People's Liberation Army was unified under a tightly controlled central command. In 1945 the CCP's liberated zone contained 19 base areas which included about a quarter of the country's territory. The Soviet Union turned over all of its captured Japanese weapons to the CCP who also received Manchuria from the Soviets. Mao appointed loyal generals including Lin Biao and Zhu De whose tactics contributed greatly to the Communist success. The ordinary soldiers in the army were treated with respect and, in contrast, thousands of Nationalists deserted. Large numbers of well-trained KMT deserted and joined the communists and they were able to take full advantage of their skills. In June 1947 the Communists successfully defeated the KMT New First Army; they now had tanks and heavy artillery at their disposal. In 1948 they launched an attack south of the Great Wall that cut off Nationalist troops from their supply bases in Xi'an. They then secured the South East Central section of China and by the end of January 1949 most of China was in the hands of the Communists.

# USSR Policy

**10 Assess the reasons why Gorbachev undertook reform in the Soviet Union after 1985. May/June 2021 9389/41**

Discussion about the motives of Gorbachev in trying to reform the Soviet Union after 1985 might identify the Policies of Glasnost and Perestroika, the ending of the Brezhnev Doctrine and the ultimate failure to reform the Communist Party. The domestic and international situation might be discussed as being a significant motivation. For example, the United States administration under Reagan, the Second Cold War, SDI and the failure of the war in Afghanistan all created compelling circumstances for introducing some reform. Equally significant were the economic problems facing the Soviet Union and the increased realisation that the system, as it stood, needed to be adapted. Gorbachev's main aim was arguably to ensure the survival of the Soviet Union by making it stronger and by laying a basis for it to be ruled by the Communist party, but also being a better society for the citizens. Discussion might also assess how the policies did not turn out as expected, with Eastern Europe breaking free, the growth of nationalism in Eastern Europe and ultimately in the Soviet Republics themselves.

## Detente

**10 'Détente did little to stabilise international relations during the 1970s.' How far do you agree? [30] May/June 2015 9389 41**

In support of the view, it could be argued that détente was merely a change in the tactics of superpower conflict, as a result of changed political and economic circumstances, rather than a move towards ending the Cold War. Little of any substance was achieved. Armaments increased during the period of détente despite the SALT Treaties, and SALT II was never ratified. Many of the signed agreements were ignored (for example, the USSR did not keep to the promises it made in the Helsinki Accords regarding human rights). Tensions between the USSR and China remained high, with both competing for American support and for leadership of the communist world while in dispute over Vietnam. Conflict in the Third World intensified; events in Iran, Angola and Afghanistan showed that the USSR had continued to extend its influence during the period of détente. In challenging the view, it could be argued that, despite its limitations, SALT marked a spirit of cooperation between the USA and the USSR and a mutual desire to move away from confrontation. US-Soviet trade increased; for example, the USSR came to rely on American wheat imports. The Helsinki Accords of 1975 did lead to better links across the iron curtain, through trade and technology exchanges. Willy Brandt's policy of 'Ostpolitik' led to greater stability in Europe. Under the Basic Treaty of 1972, West Germany accepted the existence of East Germany as a separate state and agreed to increase trade links. As a result of the Helsinki Accords, the West accepted the existence of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe, including East Germany.

**10 To what extent did the USA benefit from the period of détente during the 1970s? [30] October/November 2015 9389 41**

For the USA, détente was a way of coming to terms with the realisation that there was a limit to its international power following humiliation in Vietnam. The Vietnam War had led to massive budget deficits, high inflation and a significant change in public opinion regarding the threat of communism. Détente allowed the USA to uphold its interests without the need for military intervention. Closer ties with China enabled American leaders to argue that the communist bloc was weakening. Détente enabled resources to be diverted from military expenditure to tackle vital domestic social and economic issues. Agreements such as SALT and the Helsinki Accords seemed to be reducing the threat of war between the superpowers. However, many Americans argued that the USA gained little from détente – the USA's 'soft' approach towards the USSR enabled it to ignore its Helsinki agreements and continue to spread communism across the world (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia). Negotiations with the USSR were held back by Brezhnev's failing health. Right-wing Americans blamed the USA's weak approach towards its enemies for the actions of Islamic militants in Teheran (1979). They argued that détente had merely extended the Cold War – a more aggressive stance towards the USSR would, they argued, have ended the Cold War earlier.

**10 'More illusion than reality.' How far do you agree with this assessment of détente in the 1970s? [30] October/November 2015 9389 42**

In support of the statement, it could be argued that détente achieved little substantial. While it was convenient for both the USSR and the USA at the beginning of the 1970s, it merely recognised the existing status quo. SALT II was never ratified by the USA, while the USSR continued to globalise the Cold War (e.g. Iran, Angola, Afghanistan) and largely ignore its Helsinki agreements on human rights. As the USA recovered from the humiliation of Vietnam, right-wing anti-communist views again began to gain credence – it was argued that détente had merely extended the Cold War and that a more aggressive approach was needed to counter the threat of communism. President Carter was increasingly seen as weak against communism, and Reagan adopted a far more assertive approach. In challenging the statement, it could be argued that détente stabilised superpower relations and minimised the risks of nuclear war. Both the USA and the USSR demonstrated a greater willingness to compromise and negotiate, as evidenced by the SALT Treaties and the Helsinki Accords. The USA finally formally recognised the existence of the Soviet Bloc in Eastern Europe, while West Germany formally recognised the existence of East Germany as a separate state. Even staunch anti-communists, such as Nixon and Kissinger, supported détente, recognising the need for pragmatism. Moreover, détente enabled the USA to pursue more friendly links with China.

**10 'Détente in the 1970s simply prolonged the Cold War.' How far do you agree? [30] October/November 2016 9389 43**

Agree – One of the most significant elements of détente was Brandt's policy of Ostpolitik; this led to a series of treaties (the most significant of which was the Basic Treaty of 1972) under which West Germany for the first time accepted the existence of East Germany. Although designed to improve East-West relations, such agreements effectively meant legal recognition

of Cold War divisions in Europe and the West's acceptance of Soviet control over East Germany and Eastern Europe in general. From the late 1970s onwards, American right-wingers claimed that the USSR was exploiting the USA's post-Vietnam political and economic weaknesses, suggesting that the USA was being too soft on communism. They argued that the USSR could not be trusted to keep to its promises, citing its poor record on human rights despite the Helsinki Accords as evidence. This view gained credence when Reagan's hard-line policies towards the 'evil empire' were portrayed as the reason for the USSR's sudden willingness to negotiate under Gorbachev. The implication of this view is that the Cold War would have ended sooner if the USA had continued to put pressure on the USSR rather than seeking détente. Despite lengthy negotiations, the SALT Treaties had no real impact on the nuclear arms race, both superpowers continuing to develop new and more efficient systems of delivery. Throughout the period of détente, the USSR continued to extend its influence in the Third World (e.g. Iran, Angola, Mozambique), a factor which became even more evident with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Disagree – In the early 1970s, there seemed little prospect of an end to the Cold War. Détente was not seen as a way of bringing the Cold War to an end, but a method of stabilising relations within it. Both the USA and the USSR had political and economic reasons for seeking a reduction in tensions, while instability on both sides of the iron curtain in Europe highlighted the need for better East-West relations. It is significant that the main architects of détente in the USA were Nixon and Kissinger, both staunch anti-communists; they argued that American interests could best be upheld by negotiation rather than the type of military intervention which had proved costly, unpopular and, as in Vietnam, ineffective. Ostpolitik brought stability to Europe, while the SALT Treaties, despite their limitations, were symbolic of the new accord between the superpowers. The Helsinki agreements brought concessions from both sides, not least the USA's recognition of the European borders as they had existed since 1945, together with closer trade and technology ties between the superpowers. The principle of negotiation, which was to lead to more effective subsequent agreements (e.g. START), had been established, while improved relations between the USA and China did much to reduce international tension. Détente was, therefore, perceived as a better way of dealing with the Cold War than outright confrontation. The notion that it failed to create stability only came about because of the resurgence of the American right wing (neo-conservatism) at a time when the USA felt stronger both politically and economically, and when its international prestige seemed threatened by issues such as Islamic fundamentalism.

### **9 To what extent was the move towards détente in the 1970s caused by fear of nuclear war? May/June 20179389/42**

There are several factors supporting the idea. The Cuban missile crisis of 1962 had highlighted the dangers of superpower confrontation leading to nuclear war. As the arms race led to the development of ever-more destructive weapons, the fear of future war increased. While nuclear parity between the superpowers provided a balance of power (MAD), continued development of nuclear weapons threatened to destroy this balance. Moreover, the costs of maintaining the arms race were having devastating effects on the economies of both the USA and the USSR. This was particularly evident in the USSR, whose satellite states were facing economic problems leading to political unrest. The need to reduce the risk of future war therefore pushed both the USA and the USSR towards détente. At the same time, countries in Western Europe were growing increasingly concerned that they would be in the front line in the event of nuclear

war breaking out. As a result, Willi Brandt (Chancellor of West Germany from 1969) worked for better relations with Eastern Europe through his Ostpolitik policy.

But arguing against the proposition, the move towards détente was the result of particular circumstances which meant that it was in the interests of both superpowers to seek a reduction in Cold War tensions. In the USA, the Vietnam War had caused high inflation, a large budget deficit and increasing public opposition to military intervention overseas. Western Europe was showing less support for the USA's aggressive Cold War policies; indeed, France had withdrawn from NATO in 1966. Urban riots in the USA during 1968 showed the need for more resources to be spent on improving social conditions; this would require a significant reduction in Cold War expenditure. The USA, therefore, looked to negotiation rather than confrontation as a way of dealing with superpower rivalry. Meanwhile, the USSR was finding it difficult to maintain expenditure on the arms race; having gained nuclear parity with the USA, it felt now was a good time to negotiate from a position of strength. Negotiations would help the USSR to stabilise its control over Eastern Europe, especially if the USA formally accepted it. The USSR was also concerned by improving relations between the USA and China; this posed a potential threat to the USSR whose own relations with China had been strained by the Sino-Soviet split. Better relations would also allow the USSR to benefit from improved trade and technical liaison with the West, allowing the development of more consumer industries in order to address growing discontent both within the Soviet Union and in its satellite states.

#### **10 'Détente had already broken down before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.' How far do you agree? October/November 2017 9389/41**

As early as 1976, US President Carter responded to growing American concerns regarding Soviet violations of the human rights agreements reached at Helsinki and the USSR's increasing influence in the Third World (e.g. Angola, Mozambique). Carter increased supplies of arms to anti-communist groups in the developing world (e.g. El Salvador, Nicaragua). Brezhnev's failing health meant that negotiations were both difficult and slow; many Americans (especially the 'neo-conservatives') interpreted this as the result of Soviet prevarication and urged a more hardline approach.

By June 1979, when Carter and Brezhnev reached agreement over SALT II, there was growing opposition to it in the USA and it seemed increasingly unlikely that it would receive the support of the Senate. American weakness in international affairs was highlighted when Islamic militants took American diplomats and their families hostage in Teheran (November 1979); this led to further calls in the USA for a firmer stance against aggressors. At the same time, there was increasing opposition to détente in the USSR – members of the Politburo were angry at American criticisms of the USSR and military leaders were urging a resumption in arms increases to strengthen the USSR's position against the USA.

While there was growing opposition to détente in both the USA and the USSR in the late 1970s, negotiations continued until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 – only then did Carter withdraw SALT II from the Senate. Moreover, American reaction to the invasion was a key factor in the election of Reagan with his hardline approach to the 'evil empire'. Prior to the invasion, both the USA and the USSR continued to pursue negotiations despite ongoing tensions between them. Both saw advantages in maintaining détente. For the USSR, concerned

by its split with China, it legitimised Soviet control over Eastern Europe, enabled arms control talks from a position of strength (virtual nuclear parity) and allowed access to Western technology and grain supplies.

For the USA, it accommodated the post-Vietnam realisation of American international weaknesses, allowing it to protect its interests without the need for military intervention. For both, it meant reducing military expenditure, enabling economic problems to be addressed and budgets diverted to much-needed internal issues. Although Carter occasionally adopted hardline approaches, as advocated by his National Security Adviser (Brzezinski), his long-term policy was more in tune with the negotiation approach advocated by Vance, his Secretary of State.

**10 To what extent did détente in the 1970s reduce superpower tensions?  
October/November 2017 9389/42**

Both the USA and the USSR had political and economic reasons for seeking a reduction in Cold War tension, while instability on both sides of the iron curtain in Europe highlighted the need for better East-West relations. There was, therefore, a mutual desire to move away from confrontation. This new spirit of cooperation and compromise led to a series of significant agreements. The SALT negotiations, despite their limitations, were symbolic of this new accord between the superpowers; they established the principle of negotiation which was to lead to more effective subsequent agreements (e.g. START).

The Helsinki agreements brought concessions from both sides, not least the USA's recognition of the European borders as they had existed since 1945, together with closer trade and technology ties between the superpowers and across the iron curtain. Willy Brandt's policy of 'Ostpolitik' led to greater stability in Europe. Under the Basic Treaty of 1972, West Germany accepted the existence of East Germany as a separate state and agreed to increase trade links. US-Soviet trade increased; for example, the USSR came to rely on American wheat imports.

Détente was merely a change in the tactics of superpower conflict, as a result of changed political and economic circumstances, rather than a move towards ending the Cold War. Little of any substance was achieved. Armaments increased during the period of détente despite the SALT treaties, and SALT II was never ratified. Many of the signed agreements were ignored (for example, the USSR did not keep to the promises it made in the Helsinki Accords regarding human rights). Tensions between the USSR and China remained high, with both competing for American support and for leadership of the communist world while in dispute over Vietnam. Conflict in the Third World intensified; events in Iran, Angola and Afghanistan showed that the USSR had continued to extend its influence during the period of détente. The frailties of détente quickly became evident with the rise of neo-conservatism in the USA, leading to Reagan's hardline approach towards 'the evil empire'.

**10 'It was the Soviet Union's increasing influence in the Third World which led to the end of détente by 1979.' How far do you agree? October/November 2017 9389/43**

## Indicative content

Increasing Soviet influence in the Third World (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia) was seen in the West as evidence of the USSR's continuing desire to spread communism. US President Carter increased supplies of arms to anti-communist groups/governments in the developing world (e.g. Nicaragua, El Salvador) with the aim of preventing the spread of Soviet influence. The invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was perceived in the USA as yet another example of the USSR's expansionist ambitions. Carter, often criticised as being 'too soft' on communism, reacted strongly – he withdrew SALT II from the Senate and increased spending on armaments (including nuclear). The American people's growing disillusionment with détente was reflected in the election of Reagan, with his heavily hostile views on the USSR, as president. Suffering a crisis of confidence following the humiliation of the Vietnam War, the USA had entered détente because it was in its political and economic interests to do so. As confidence returned, neo-conservatism began to question the value of détente and openly criticised Carter's government for being 'too soft on communism'. The USSR's failure to honour its Helsinki Agreement commitments to improve human rights was seen by many Americans as evidence of the need for a firmer stance against it. In view of Brezhnev's failing health, negotiations with the USSR became increasingly difficult and drawn-out. The delay in SALT II negotiations, for example, led to rising opposition to it in the USA and it seemed unlikely that the Senate would have ratified the Treaty even before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The USA's growing impotence in international affairs was also highlighted when Islamic militants took American diplomats and their families hostage (1979). Events such as this led to increasing demands in the USA for a firmer stance on foreign policy. Reagan's call for a more aggressive anti-communist approach was in tune with the growing disenchantment of détente in the USA. Moreover, it had the support of Thatcher's British government. Therefore, while the USSR's perceived expansionist policy in the Third World was a factor in the ending of détente, it was the development of neo-conservatism in the USA which was the main factor.

### **9 To what extent was the USA's defeat in the Vietnam War responsible for the development of détente in the 1970s? May/June 2018 9389/42**

For the USA, détente was a way of coming to terms with the realisation that there were limits to its international power. Failure in the Vietnam War had clearly exposed these limits. In addition, it had led to high inflation, a massive budget deficit and a major decline in public support for American involvement in international issues.

Moreover, Western Europe was also showing greater independence from the USA; France had gone so far as withdrawing from NATO in 1966. Faced with these realities, the USA decided that negotiation was a better option than confrontation. In particular, it would release funds for much needed domestic social reform and enable the USA to invest more resources into its economy, which was suffering from increasing rivalry from Western Europe.

Fear of nuclear war was a key factor in encouraging détente. With technological advancements threatening to erode the delicate balance of power and the huge financial outlays required draining the economies of both the USA and the USSR, détente seemed more appealing. The



USSR had achieved greater nuclear parity with the USA, and saw this as a good opportunity to negotiate from a position of strength.

The USSR also needed to strengthen its hold over Eastern Europe following the Czech crisis of 1968 and strikes in Gdansk (Poland); recognition of the USSR's control over Eastern Europe was a clear aim of the USSR in seeking détente. The Sino-Soviet split was also a source of concern in the USSR, which wanted to ensure that the USA would not side with China. Détente would also allow the USSR to gain from trade with the West, helping to reduce the enormous problems facing its economy. In Europe, Willy Brandt of West Germany was encouraging better links between East and West Europe (Ostpolitik). Thus, there was a range of factors encouraging better relations which led to détente, of which the USA's defeat in the Vietnam War was only one.

### **10 To what extent was the USSR more responsible than the USA for ending the period of détente in the 1970s? May/June 2019 9389/42**

Throughout the period of détente, the USSR continued to enhance its influence in the Third World (in Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia, for example). To American right-wing politicians, this was clear evidence of the USSR's continuing ambition to spread communism. Despite agreeing to the Helsinki Accords of 1975, the USSR continued to violate human rights. To many in the USA, this was a clear sign that the USSR could not be trusted and that negotiations were, therefore, pointless. This problem was enhanced by the USSR's lack of effective leadership as a result of Brezhnev's ill-health; this made decision making slow and laborious, which, to right-wing Americans, was perceived as prevarication.

Determined to maintain a pro-Soviet government in Afghanistan, the USSR invaded in 1979. This is commonly seen as the act which ended détente and began the Second Cold War. Unwilling to let the USSR get away with another intervention in a foreign country, Carter immediately withdrew the USA from SALT II, cut off trade contracts with the USSR and encouraged a Western boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980. Carter also increased arms spending, which included nuclear weaponry. Despite this, Carter's perceived weakness in dealing with the 'Soviet threat' led to his defeat by Reagan in the 1980 presidential elections.

Détente had initially suited the USA; defeat in Vietnam, high inflation and a large budget deficit meant that the USA needed to reduce its intervention in world affairs. Even staunch anti-communists, such as Nixon and Kissinger, had supported the move to détente, preferring negotiation to confrontation. However, by the time Carter became president in 1976, right-wing conservatism was regaining strength in the USA. The view that détente was too soft on communism began to prevail. Carter increased supplies of arms to anti-communist groups and governments in the developing world (for example, El Salvador and Nicaragua). Although he reached agreement with Brezhnev on the SALT II Treaty in June 1979, opposition to the Treaty was already mounting in the USA and it seemed unlikely that the Senate would ratify it. With Brezhnev's health failing, negotiating with the USSR became slow and difficult, so it was easier to adopt a more hardline stance. When Islamic militants occupied the US embassy in Teheran in 1979, the incident seemed to symbolise American impotence in world affairs; this led the right-wing to call for a tougher foreign policy. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was, therefore, the last straw for Carter, who immediately withdrew SALT II from the Senate. With the USSR already threatened by the spread of Muslim Fundamentalism, the USA's threat to support anti-Soviet factions in Afghanistan could be seen as a key reason for the USSR's decision to invade Afghanistan.

**9 'Economic problems were the main factor leading to the détente of the late 1960s and the 1970s.' How far do you agree? October/November 2020 9389/41**

There are various economic considerations that led to the détente of the late 1960s and the 1970s. These include the increased financial viability of the USSR, which meant it was able to compete with the USA. The USSR's general inability to fund the Cold War encouraged some progress towards détente. The 1973 oil crisis and the rising cost of the nuclear arms race might also be considered as influencing factors.

Challenging the suggestion that it was economic considerations that lead to détente are a range of alternative motivations. This might include the desire to limit nuclear weapons following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The Crisis also led to the adoption of the Hotline link between the USA and USSR and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Equally significant was the Non-Proliferation Agreement leading to SALT 1, and the plans for SALT 2. Also useful are the improving US relations with China under Nixon including the advent of Ping Pong Diplomacy and its role in putting pressure on the USSR. Furthermore, Nixon's desire to split China and the USSR, the Triangulation policy and the failure of the USA in Vietnam could also be explored. The improving situation in Germany with Ostpolitik also played an important role in the development of détente.

**10 'Détente in the 1970s gave the appearance, rather than producing the reality, of better relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.' How far do you agree? October/November 2020 9389/42**

This question calls for an evaluation of Détente in the 1970s and how successful it really was at easing hostilities between the United States and USSR. It could end with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the non-ratification of SALT 2 and the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 as a rejection of the policies of Carter. SALT 1 was a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty for which talks began in 1969 and culminated in a formal agreement between US President Nixon and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in 1972. In addition to these successful negotiations, in 1975 the Helsinki Accords were signed between Western democracies and the countries of the Warsaw Pact.

This was arguably a turning point in the Cold War with the West acknowledging the borders of those countries' in the Warsaw Pact, and, in return, those nations accepting a range of internationally accepted principles such as human rights. These successes encouraged further attempts at arms reduction and warmer political and economic relations between the United States and USSR under Carter. Enhancing this 'thaw' was also the development of Ostpolitik in Germany and the improving relations between the United States and China.

However, the extent to which the Helsinki Accords were followed is open to debate. In addition, the difficulties of the early 1970s, with the 1973 Oil Crisis and Fall of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), offered some broad strain on the relationship between East and West. In addition, SALT II negotiations which had begun in 1972 were still unratified in 1979 when the USSR invaded Afghanistan. This action threatened to promote the extension of communism and effectively ended SALT II talks and also Détente.

**9 Assess the extent to which there was a 'thaw' in US-Soviet relations in the period from 1953 to 1963. October/November 2020 9389/43**

The impact of Khrushchev and the Secret Speech he made influenced the Soviet Union's relationship with the United States. The speech was arguably made in the context of a policy of

de-Stalinisation and a willingness to have more open relations with the United States and the West. The context of the end of the Korean war in 1953 and the Berlin Crisis of 1953 also had some impact on the relationship between these two countries and encouraged a shift in future relations. Equally significant might be the responses to Hungary in 1956, the Berlin Wall in 1961 and Cuba in 1962. Post Cuba (1962) and the beginnings of detente with the Hotline and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty at the end of the period also helped to define the relationship.

In contrast, it could be said that the two powers continued an adversarial relationship. Increasing US involvement in Vietnam after 1954 and particularly the deployment of troops later, served to keep the relationship 'frosty'. This can also be seen with the beginning of the Space Race and the United States' continuing commitment to Containment. It could also be said that the effect of the Cuban Missile Crisis would only be felt after the period.

**9 'The United States wanted détente in the 1970s more than the Soviet Union did.' How far do you agree? May/June 2021 9389/42**

Discussion might consider the motives of both superpowers in the 1970s and the general international situation by that time. The United States had come out of the Vietnam War battered, humiliated, and consequently lacking confidence which arguably encouraged a more conciliatory approach towards the Soviet Union. Additionally, the OPEC Oil crisis of 1973 was also very significant in the US government's shifting attitude. The Watergate scandal in 1974, and Richard Nixon's subsequent departure from office, further dented the confidence of the United States and the traditional policy of containment was called into question. Budgetary considerations also influenced policy decisions and encouraged the Salt 1 agreement. Following from this the Helsinki Accords and the Carter Doctrine all emerged. On the Soviet side, the economic costs of the Cold War were increasingly damaging while improving Sino-US relations were also worrying for the Communist Party. The Soviet Union also did not fully respect the Helsinki Accords.

**10 'Détente in the 1970s was largely a failure.' How far do you agree? October/November 2021 9389/43**

Arguments supporting the statement may discuss how a Second Cold War ended the administration of Jimmy Carter in the late 1970s and how the rise of Ronald Reagan and Neoconservatism after 1980 created greater tensions between the USA and USSR. Additionally, arguments may also discuss the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and how this military action undermined the Carter Doctrine and encouraged a more strained relationship. Arguments challenging the statement may point at the positive steps taken during the 1970s to reduce tensions between the USA and USSR, such as the signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975 and also the SALT I and SALT II agreements. Furthermore, there were improved trade links between the USA and USSR and a better relationship beginning to flourish between the US and China. Responses may discuss a range of motivations for these improvements such as the weakened military position of the USA following its defeat in the Vietnam War and the 1973 Oil Crisis which presented economic challenges for that country. Additionally, Soviet fears of an improved Sino-US relationship may be discussed.

# Kruschev

**9 'Confused and inconsistent.' How accurate is this assessment of Khrushchev's foreign policy? [30] May/June 2015 9389 42**

In support of the view, it could be argued that Khrushchev's policy was a curious mixture of conciliatory statements and aggressive anti-western behaviour which the USA found difficult to comprehend. In terms of conciliation, he talked of 'peaceful coexistence', agreed to relinquish Soviet military bases in Finland, lifted the Soviet veto on the admission of 16 new members to the UN, abandoned Cominform, agreed to the reunification of Austria, met with American leaders at the Geneva Summit, improved Soviet relations with Tito's Yugoslavia and accepted an invitation to visit the USA. Yet, at the same time, he strengthened the communist bloc in Eastern Europe with the establishment of the Warsaw Pact, crushed the Hungarian uprising in 1956, complained bitterly when a US spy plane was shot down over the USSR, continued to enhance Soviet military capabilities, erected the Berlin Wall and practised brinkmanship over Cuba. In challenging the view, it could be argued that 'peaceful coexistence' did not mean that Khrushchev had abandoned the idea of a communist-dominated world, merely that this could be achieved without war against the USA. He remained sceptical and fearful of the USA's intentions, e.g. when he was denied access to Disneyland, he accused the USA of hiding rocket launching pads there, and he saw the U-2 plane incident as an example of American aggression against the USSR. He was determined to maintain control over Eastern Europe, which is why he ruthlessly put down the uprising in Hungary and built the Berlin Wall to prevent American influence leading to the reunification of Germany. He supported the reunification of Austria as a way of preventing a merger between Western Austria and West Germany. He remained keen to extend Soviet influence across the world by providing lavish economic aid. As leader of the communist world he felt that it was vital to protect Cuba's revolution from American interference.

**9 How far do you agree with the view that Khrushchev's decision to place nuclear weapons in Cuba was both irrational and counter-productive? [30] May/June 2016 9389 43**

Agree – Placing Soviet nuclear missile bases in Cuba was both provocative and extremely risky. In reality, the Cuban missiles posed no new threat to the USA (long-range missiles could already reach the USA from the USSR itself), yet the decision inevitably led to a hostile reaction from the USA, which could have led to nuclear war. There was no guarantee that the Soviet missiles would protect Cuba; there was pressure on Kennedy at the time to call Khrushchev's bluff by attacking Cuba and deposing Castro (and some criticism of him subsequently for not having done so). When Kennedy imposed a blockade to prevent Russian ships bringing missiles to Cuba, Khrushchev was forced to back down, ordering the ships to turn back. Kennedy's strategy was highly praised by many Americans at the time, while Khrushchev faced heavy criticism both in the USSR and from China. Castro himself was critical of Khrushchev's decision to remove the missiles; he had urged Khrushchev to launch a nuclear attack on the USA in the event of an American invasion of Cuba. Although Kennedy agreed to remove American Thor and Jupiter missiles from Turkey, he insisted that this should not be made public; in reality, this was no real victory for Khrushchev anyway since the missiles had already been scheduled for removal. Khrushchev's decision to back down in the Cuban crisis was part of the

reason for his removal from office in 1964. Disagree – Although the Soviet missiles in Cuba posed a threat to major cities in central and eastern USA (e.g. New York, Washington, Chicago, Boston), it was never Khrushchev's intention to use them as anything other than a bargaining tool. Having lost the lead in ICBMs, Khrushchev was seeking to restore balance by threatening the USA in the same way that American missiles in Turkey and Europe threatened the USSR. He may also have intended to use the Cuban missiles as a means of achieving the withdrawal of the West from Berlin. With a new, young and inexperienced president, 1962 seemed the perfect time to seek concessions from the USA. Although Khrushchev was publicly perceived as the first one to back down, in reality he achieved four significant objectives. Firstly, in return for the removal of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the USA agreed to remove its missiles from Turkey. Secondly, and most significantly, Kennedy agreed that the USA would not attack Cuba; given the threat which the USA had posed to Castro's Cuba prior to the missile crisis, this was no mean achievement. Thirdly, the USSR had gained a communist ally located within the Americas; although Castro was initially angered by Khrushchev's decision to remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba, good Soviet-Cuban relations were soon restored. Fourthly, the USSR could be seen supporting a new and vulnerable communist state from the imperialistic actions of the USA; this was important in terms of the USSR's international prestige during the Cold War, particularly at a time of decolonisation when the superpowers were competing for influence in newly independent states

## **9 Assess the extent to which Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence eased Cold War tensions. October/November 2021 9489/42**

Khrushchev's adoption of the policy of peaceful coexistence with the West, alongside his de-Stalinisation policy, signalled a thaw in the Cold War. In 1955 he agreed to negotiate an end to the post-war occupation of Austria and allow a neutral country to be created. In the same year he told Tito, the Yugoslav leader, that 'there are different roads to communism'. He also called for a reduction in defence expenditures and reduced the size of the Soviet armed forces. On 24 February 1956, at the Communist Party's Twentieth Congress, Khrushchev made a speech denouncing Stalin. It became known as the 'secret speech' as it was read in a closed discussion but the US State Department soon obtained a copy. It seemed as if there would be a relaxation of Cold War tensions. In the late 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union initiated a cultural exchange programme and, in 1959, Nikita Khrushchev visited the United States briefly meeting Eisenhower at Camp David. Predictions of improved future relations were reported which praised 'the spirit of Camp David' showing both superpowers were willing to enter into dialogue. It seemed that Khrushchev never intended peaceful coexistence to end competition between the two superpowers, merely that it would be peaceful competition. Both sides remained suspicious of each other's ideological stance. Eisenhower's New Course' foreign policy included the use of greater nuclear weapons, a policy of massive retaliation and brinkmanship. In 1955 Khrushchev set up the Warsaw Pact and its members had plans of how to wage nuclear war against NATO. Khrushchev also rejected Eisenhower's 'Open Skies' proposal at the Geneva Summit in 1955 which proposed that United States and the Soviet Union exchange maps indicating the exact location of every military installation in their respective nations. In addition, the United States was suspicious of Khrushchev's intentions, especially after he sent troops into Hungary in 1956 to crush the revolts there. In 1957 the Soviets launched their first intercontinental ballistic missile which created US fears of a missile gap between the Soviet Union and the United States and began the space race with the launch of Sputnik 1, the first satellite. The problem of Berlin caused tension too; in November 1958,

Khrushchev announced that unless the West removed its forces from West Berlin within six months, he would allow the East Germans to control the access routes. The West stood firm and Khrushchev eventually backed down but West Berlin remained an area of tension. A summit meeting in Paris in 1960 was stopped by the shooting down of a U2 spy plane over Moscow and in 1961 Khrushchev ordered the building of the Berlin Wall after Kennedy's 'Ich bin ein Berliner' speech. Moscow also took every opportunity to promote its interests in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In January 1961, Khrushchev declared at an informal summit meeting in Vienna that Moscow would provide active support to national liberation movements throughout the world. The Cuban Crisis of 1962 saw the two sides on the brink of nuclear war. The crisis ended when Khrushchev agreed to remove Russian missiles from Cuba in exchange for a promise from the United States to respect Cuba's territorial sovereignty. It also led to a hot line being established between the Kremlin and the White House and the Limited Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty was signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963, by the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom.

## Second Cold War

### **10 To what extent was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan responsible for the onset of the 'Second Cold War'? [30] May/June 2015 9389 42**

In support of the view that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was responsible, it could be argued that it led to widespread condemnation of the USSR and, to the West, was viewed as evidence of the continuation of the expansionist aims of the USSR. In retaliation, the USA withdrew from the SALT II Treaty. US President Carter was unwilling to allow the USSR to get away with another intervention in the affairs of a foreign country – he cut off trade links with Moscow, encouraged a Western boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980 and increased US expenditure on arms (including nuclear weapons). Despite this, US public opinion saw Carter as weak in confronting the threat of communism, and he lost the 1980 election to Ronald Reagan, a staunch anticommunist right winger. In challenging the view, it could be argued that the period of détente was effectively already over before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The USSR had continued to violate human rights agreements made at Helsinki, while Brezhnev's failing health had done little to enhance USSoviet relations. The development of renewed superpower hostility can be seen as early as 1976. Conservatism was regaining strength in the USA, and it viewed the increasing influence of the USSR in the Third World as further evidence of Soviet expansionism (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia). Carter supplied US arms to anti-communist groups (e.g. El Salvador, Nicaragua) in an attempt to prevent the spread of Soviet influence. Opposition to SALT II was high in the US Senate well before the invasion of Afghanistan, and it already seemed unlikely that the USA would sign. When Islamic militants occupied the US embassy in Teheran (1979), American conservatives viewed this as evidence of the USA's impotence in world affairs and argued that this needed to be addressed. Détente, therefore, was no longer seen as beneficial to either the USA or the USSR. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan could be seen as the event which started the 'Second Cold War' rather than its cause.

**10 To what extent was the USA responsible for the onset of the 'Second Cold War'? [30]  
May/June 2016 9389 43**

Responsible – Détente had initially suited the USA; defeat in Vietnam, high inflation and a large budget deficit meant that the USA needed to reduce its intervention in world affairs. Even staunch anti-communists, such as Nixon and Kissinger, had supported the move to détente, preferring negotiation to confrontation. However, by the time Carter became president in 1976, right-wing conservatism was regaining strength in the USA. The view that détente was too soft on communism began to prevail. Carter increased supplies of arms to anti-communist groups and governments in the developing world (e.g. El Salvador, Nicaragua). Although he reached agreement with Brezhnev on the SALT II Treaty in June 1979, opposition to the Treaty was already mounting in the USA and it seemed unlikely that the Senate would ratify it. With Brezhnev's health failing, negotiating with the USSR became slow and difficult, so it was easier to adopt a more hardline stance. When Islamic militants occupied the US embassy in Teheran in 1979, the incident seemed to symbolise American impotence in world affairs; this led the right-wing to call for a tougher foreign policy. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was, therefore, the last straw for Carter, who immediately withdrew SALT II from the Senate. With the USSR already threatened by the spread of Muslim Fundamentalism, the USA's threat to support anti-Soviet factions in Afghanistan could be seen as a key reason for the USSR's decision to invade Afghanistan. Not responsible – Throughout the period of détente, the USSR continued to enhance its influence in the Third World (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia). To American right-wing politicians, this was clear evidence of the USSR's continuing ambition to spread communism. Despite agreeing to the Helsinki Accords of 1975, the USSR continued to violate human rights. To many in the USA, this was a clear sign that the USSR could not be trusted and that negotiations were, therefore, pointless. This problem was enhanced by the USSR's lack of effective leadership as a result of Brezhnev's ill-health; this made decision making slow and laborious, which, to right-wing Americans, was perceived as prevarication. Determined to maintain a pro-Soviet government in Afghanistan, the USSR invaded in 1979. This is commonly seen as the act which ended détente and began the Second Cold War. Unwilling to let the USSR get away with another intervention in a foreign country, Carter immediately withdrew the USA from SALT II, cut off trade contracts with the USSR and encouraged a Western boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980. Carter also increased arms spending, including nuclear weaponry. Despite this, Carter's perceived weakness in dealing with the 'Soviet threat' led to his defeat by Reagan in the 1980 presidential elections.

**10 To what extent was the Soviet Union responsible for the 'Second Cold War'? May/June  
2017 9389/41**

The USSR was responsible in that, throughout the period of détente, the USSR had continued to increase its influence in the Third World, particularly in Africa (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia). This caused increasing alarm in the USA, which believed that the USSR was seeking to take advantage of détente in order to extend its international influence. The USSR continued to violate the human rights agreements of the Helsinki Accords (1975), refusing to allow free speech and freedom to travel abroad. In 1979, NATO became concerned when the USSR deployed 150 new SS-20 missiles, posing a significant threat to Western Europe. Brezhnev's

failing health made Soviet decision-making slow and laborious, a factor which seriously hindered effective negotiations between the superpowers. In December 1979, the USSR invaded Afghanistan. The USA saw this as yet another Soviet interference in the affairs of a foreign country; in response, the USA withdrew from the SALT II talks, ended trade contracts, increased arms spending and encouraged a Western boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics. It is widely acknowledged that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan marks the end of détente and the start of the 'Second Cold War'.

Arguments against include: In reality, the relaxation in superpower relations that had taken place during détente in the 1970s had already broken down long before the USSR invaded Afghanistan. This was largely due to the rise of neo-conservatism in the USA. As the USA regained its confidence following the disaster of Vietnam, the view that détente meant being too soft on communism began to prevail and there were increasing calls for a more forceful approach towards the USSR. Under such right-wing pressure, President Carter (often considered a 'dove' in terms of foreign policy) had already begun to increase pressure on the USSR from 1976. Concerned about what were perceived as the USSR's attempts to gain greater international influence, Carter increased supplies of arms to anti-communist groups in the developing world (e.g. El Salvador, Nicaragua). Although Carter had negotiated the details of SALT II with Brezhnev, opposition was already mounting in the USA and it was looking increasingly unlikely that the Senate would ratify the treaty even before the USSR invaded Afghanistan. When Islamic militants occupied the US Embassy in Teheran, holding diplomats and their families hostage, it seemed to symbolise the USA's growing international impotence. This added weight to the neo-conservative demands for a stronger stance against the enemies of the USA including the USSR. Therefore, prevailing opinions in the USA were moving towards the re-establishment of a more forceful approach to the USSR.

### **10 'The US Senate's failure to ratify SALT II resulted from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.' How far do you agree? October/November 2018 9389/41**

Agree

In June 1979, Carter and Brezhnev had finally agreed terms and formally signed the SALT II Treaty. In December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Carter was unwilling to let the USSR get away with another intervention in the affairs of a foreign country. He condemned the invasion, cut off trade contacts between the USA and the USSR and encouraged a western boycott of the Moscow Olympics of 1980.

He also decided to increase spending on arms, Presidential Directive 59 authorising an increase in nuclear weaponry. Most significantly, Carter withdrew SALT II from the US Senate, as a result of which the Treaty was never ratified by the USA. With a presidential election due in 1980, Carter could not afford to be seen as weak in dealing with the Soviet Union. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was, therefore, the reason why SALT II was never ratified by the US Senate.

Disagree

While the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan may have been the final straw for Carter, leading to his change of heart about SALT II, there is little doubt that the Treaty would have been rejected by the Senate even if the invasion had not taken place. There had been growing opposition to the Treaty from many right-wing Senators, who saw arms control as allowing the USSR to catch up with the USA's superior weaponry. There was also a growing public perception, fuelled by the rise of neo-conservatism in the USA, that Carter had been too 'soft' on communism.



Increasing Soviet influence in the Third World (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia) was seen as evidence of continuing Soviet ambitions to spread communism. Moreover, the USSR had failed to keep the human rights agreements which it made in the Helsinki Accords. When Islamic militants occupied the US Embassy in Teheran in November 1979, it seemed to symbolise the USA's growing impotence in world affairs.

American public opinion and right-wing politicians were, therefore, encouraging a firmer stance against aggressors, including the USSR. In this climate, there was little prospect of the Senate ratifying SALT II, even before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

**10 To what extent was the rise of neo-conservatism in the USA responsible for the onset of the 'Second Cold War'? October/November 2018 9389/42**

Yes

As the USA regained its confidence following the humiliating defeat in Vietnam, many right-wingers became increasingly critical of détente. They argued that increasing Soviet influence in the Third World (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia) showed that the USSR still had ambitions to spread communism. Moreover, they were troubled by the USSR's continued violation of human rights, in contravention of the Helsinki Accords. Neo-conservatives argued for a more forceful approach to the USSR, which would involve resuming the arms race in order to exploit the USA's technological and economic superiority.

When, in November 1979, Islamic militants occupied the US Embassy in Teheran, the USA's apparent impotence in world affairs was exposed. This gained support for the right-wing view that the USA should adopt a firmer stance against aggressors, including the USSR. Even President Carter, normally perceived as preferring negotiation to confrontation with the USSR, increased arms supplies to non-communist groups in the developing world (e.g. El Salvador, Nicaragua) in order to prevent the spread of Soviet influence. Even before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it was clear that the US Senate would refuse to ratify the SALT II Treaty.

No

Opposition to détente was also growing within the USSR. There was increasing unease over the criticism directed at the USSR over the Helsinki Accords and the impact which this might have over Soviet control of Eastern Europe. The Soviet military was also encouraging an increase in arms in order to support Soviet policy in the developing world and to strengthen its position against the USA. The Soviet government lacked firm direction as a result of Brezhnev's illness; this slowed down negotiations with the West (making it easier for American right-wingers to argue in favour of a firmer stance with the USSR) and made it easier for the Soviet military to argue its case.

Despite this, both the USA and the USSR remained committed to détente, as evidenced by the fact that Carter and Brezhnev signed the SALT II Treaty in June 1979. It was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 which ended détente and began the 'Second Cold War'. Carter immediately withdrew SALT II from the Senate, cut off trade contacts with the USSR and encouraged a boycott of the Moscow Olympics of 1980. He also ordered an immediate increase in the USA's arms spending. The invasion of Afghanistan became a key issue in the US presidential election of 1980, which led to the inauguration of President Reagan, a staunch right-winger who hated communism.

**10 'The Second Cold War was more the result of the policies of the United States than of those of the Soviet Union' How far do you agree? May/June 2020 9389/43**

This question requires candidates to examine and evaluate the actions of both the Soviet Union and the United States. The actions/policies of the Soviet Union might include the invasion of Afghanistan, the shooting down of Korean Flight 007 and the response to Exercise Able Archer in 1983. With regards to the actions/policies of the United States, the election of Reagan and the neo-detente and winning the Cold War by economic means could be considered. Carter's boycott of Moscow in 1980 and the Soviet response by boycotting Los Angeles in 1984 could also been seen as relevant in answering this questions as well as the non-ratification of SALT II.

Evidence that shows the Second Cold War was the result of US policies could include:

- Team B's exaggerated assessment of Soviet nuclear capacity led to the increase in US military spending and renewal of the arms race.
- Carter's strong reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan – 'the most serious threat to peace since the Second World War' and his actions to stop shipments to the USSR and support the boycott of the Olympics.
- Reagan's hostile rhetoric – e.g. 'evil empire' speech – and stated wish to 'rollback Communism' ramped up tensions between the countries
- Dramatic increase in military spending under Reagan and provocative actions and military exercises – e.g. SDI programme, Fleet-Ex 83 and Able Archer.- provoked alarmed reactions in the USSR such as the shooting down of KAL 007
- US support for Mujahidin fighters in Afghanistan and involvement in Central America increased tensions with the USSR

Evidence that shows the Second Cold War was the result of Soviet policies could include:

- Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 went against spirit of détente and alarmed the USA by reviving fears of Soviet plans of global domination.
- Deployment of medium range SS-20 missiles in East Germany and Czechoslovakia was seen as a direct threat to NATO and the USA. It went against the spirit of the arms limitations treaties of the 1970s so provoked the refusal of congress to ratify SALT II.
- Soviet support of proxies in the Middle East and Africa and the subsequent instability provoked responses from the USA.
- Weak leadership by a series of geriatric rulers in the USSR from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s made USSR's policy erratic and confusing. This increased suspicion amongst the USA's leadership.

**10 'The Second Cold War was the direct result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.' How far do you agree? October/November 2020 9389/41**

The invasion may be put in context of Carter's previous efforts at détente and Brezhnev's attempts to spread Soviet influence in Africa and Asia, as well as Latin America. The Soviet motives and how they were perceived in Washington and globally might be also be considered.

Challenging the suggestion that it was the invasion of Afghanistan that caused the Second Cold War is the shooting down of Korean Flight 007 by a Soviet military plane after it had entered restricted Soviet airspace. Equally influential to escalating tensions was NATO's Exercise Able Archer in 1983, and the election of Reagan and the Neo-Conservatives in 1980. Reagan's 'Evil Empire' speech, the desire to end Carter's detente and win the Cold War by economic means might also be explored. Carter's boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980, the Soviet response by boycotting Los Angeles in 1984 and the non-ratification of SALT 2 are also important. Ronald Reagan's motivations are also useful for answering the question. This could include discussion of whether he deliberately increased tensions so as to win the Cold War and end the influence of communism.

**10 How far was the USA's ideological determination to defeat the USSR the main cause of the Second Cold War? May/June 2021 9389/43**

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and this ended the Carter Doctrine and the policy of détente and led to a ramping up of tensions. Carter ordered the boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games and reduced trade. However, even before Afghanistan the Soviet Union had been consciously expanding its influence in Africa Asia and Latin America and many felt the USA was being weak in foreign policy. On the other hand, the election of Reagan in 1980 led to an Administration that was determined to win the Cold War and followed a policy of increased defence spending, introduced SDI (Star Wars) and then responded in a hawkish manner to Soviet actions such as the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007 and both sides inadvertently followed brinkmanship in Operation Able Archer in 1983 and the boycott of the Los Angeles Olympic Games. The Neoconservatives had been planning on defeating the Soviet Empire and Reagan calling it the 'Evil Empire' and then urging Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall was all part of this rhetoric.

**10 How significant was the invasion of Afghanistan in bringing about the Second Cold War? October/November 2021 9389/41**

Arguments may discuss the impact of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and how this helped to end Carter's policy of detente and indeed his presidency. In evaluating the importance of the invasion, responses may identify how the invasion was a direct attempt to further Soviet interests using physical force, an action that contravened earlier agreements between the two nations. Arguments challenging the importance of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in causing the Second Cold War may also consider the rise of the Neo-Conservatives and the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and the conviction amongst that group that the USA could and would win the Cold War. They might also discuss events such as the Moscow Olympics boycott in 1980, the shooting down of Korean Airlines flight 007, Operation Able Archer in 1983, Star Wars (SDI), and the Los Angeles Olympics boycott which all enhanced the declining relationship between the US and USSR.

**9 Assess the extent to which President Reagan was responsible for the outbreak of the Second Cold War. May/June 2022 9489/43**

Tension had already increased between the two superpowers before the election of Reagan in 1980. During the period of détente in the late 1960s and 1970s Cold War mistrust persisted and both the Soviet Union and the United States secretly supported political leaders, revolutionaries and paramilitary groups around the world, mainly in Africa and South America. Both

superpowers continued to initiate and support secret operations. President Ford began the Team B project in May 1976, inviting a group of outside experts to evaluate classified intelligence on the Soviet Union. Their report claimed American intelligence agencies had grossly underestimated the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal, weapons systems and battle plans. Though many of the findings were later discredited, they helped bring about the end of détente and the Carter administration began to increase military spending. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 to prop up the left-wing regime there was regarded by Carter as 'the most serious threat to peace since the Second World War'. He ordered grain and goods shipments to Russia be halted and supported a US boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games held in Moscow. Thus, the ground had already been prepared to revive the Cold War and détente was crumbling. Reagan was elected in 1980 and he rejected the idea of peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union believing that détente had been a disaster for the United States. The first years of Reagan's presidency were marked by increases in military spending and hostile rhetoric. Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko responded likewise giving rise to the term, 'Second Cold War'. Reagan argued that the Cold War was a fight between good and evil. He urged Americans not to 'ignore facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire'. He increased defence spending and revived the arms race. The United States believed there was a missile gap with the Soviets. He resolved to roll-back communism. In 1983, he initiated the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) to defend the United States from a ballistic missile attack. This would be accomplished by ground-based defences and, eventually, through the use of space technology. The programme became known as 'Star Wars'. However, it can also be argued that what Reagan was aiming to do was to end the Cold War. National Security Decision Directive 75, a policy directive issued by Reagan in January 1983 outlined how he planned to win the Cold War. The United States would 'contain and over time reverse Soviet expansionism'. He was aware of the economic problems the Soviet economy was facing and he wanted to pressure the Soviet Union to speed up change. The arms race would put more pressure on the Soviet economy. However, Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika ultimately led to huge changes in Eastern Europe leading to the collapse of communism. Reagan, too, in his second term discovered that Gorbachev was a man he could negotiate with. In December 1987, he and Reagan signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty calling for the elimination of intermediate-range missiles.

## Collapse of USSR

**10 How far was Gorbachev responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union? [30]**

**May/June 2015 9389 43**

In support of the view that Gorbachev was responsible, it could be argued that he made a fundamental error in trying to achieve economic and political reform at the same time through his policies of glasnost and perestroika. China survived the crisis of communism by undertaking economic reform while maintaining strict one-party control of the state. In seeking political reform, Gorbachev undermined the power and authority of the communist party. In ending the Brezhnev Doctrine, Gorbachev encouraged nationalist movements both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. As a result, the USSR disintegrated. In challenging the view, it could be argued that Gorbachev's reforms may have hastened the collapse of the USSR, but were not the fundamental cause of it. Long term economic problems and political inertia under previous leaders meant that the USSR was in a very weak state when Gorbachev became

leader. With its finances drained by the need to maintain the arms race with the USA, reliant on imports of American wheat, facing nationalist dissension and unable to sustain the financial commitment of maintaining its control of Eastern Europe, Gorbachev had little option but to seek improved relations with the West. This could only be achieved by showing a willingness to undertake political reform. Gorbachev was, therefore, seeking to address the problems which faced the USSR while, at the same time, developing improved relations with the USA.

**10 'The growth of nationalism in Eastern Europe was the main reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union.' How far do you agree? [30] October/November 2015 9389 43**

In support of the view, it could be argued that the growth and success of nationalism in Eastern Europe put tremendous pressure on the limited resources of the USSR, and encouraged nationalist uprisings within the Soviet Union itself. The collapse of the Eastern Bloc undermined the prestige and influence of the USSR and, indeed, communism as a political ideology. Conversely, it could be argued that the growth of nationalism in Eastern Europe was a symptom rather than a cause of the wider problems facing the USSR: for example, long-term economic stagnation and political atrophy; Reagan's heavily anti-communist policies, including the stepping up of the arms race (Star Wars). Gorbachev's decision to reduce expenditure on the arms race, which necessitated improved relations with the west, which itself required him to provide evidence of the USSR's willingness to reform. Gorbachev's reforms (e.g. perestroika and glasnost) were designed to improve the Soviet economy and provide greater political and social freedoms. Gorbachev's decision to end the Brezhnev Doctrine meant that the USSR was no longer able to resist rebellions in Eastern Europe.

**10 How justified is the claim that Ronald Reagan was responsible for ending the Cold War? [30] May/June 2016 9389 42**

Justified – Reagan's policy of militarised counter-revolution demonstrated the USA's determination to pursue the Second Cold War on all fronts. He vastly increased defence expenditure (13% in 1982; 8% in 1983; 8% in 1984). New methods of deploying nuclear missiles were developed (e.g. Stealth Bomber, Trident submarines). His development of SDI was so costly that the USSR would simply not be able to match American expenditure. Under the Reagan Doctrine, the USA sent assistance to anti-communist insurgents and governments, with the aim of reducing the USSR's influence in the Third World (e.g. supporting the Contras in Nicaragua; supporting the right-wing government of El Salvador). The USA used radio broadcasts to encourage anti-communist sentiments in Eastern Europe. The USA used economic sanctions against Poland when its government banned the independent trade union Solidarity. Thatcher's Britain supported Reagan's hard line against the 'evil empire'; by allowing US nuclear missile bases in Britain, she was imposing further pressure on the USSR. Unable to match the USA's military expenditure, the USSR had no choice but to call an end to the arms race and the Cold War. With the pressure which his policies imposed on the USSR clearly working, Reagan was prepared to negotiate with Gorbachev. Unjustified – Support for the 'triumphalist' argument has come largely from right-wing historians; other historians have argued that a hardline stance against the USSR had been ineffective in the past (e.g. in Vietnam in the

1960s) and that, therefore, there must have been other reasons for the USSR's decline. When Gorbachev became its leader in 1985, the USSR was suffering from economic and political stagnation. A succession of old and infirm leaders following Brezhnev's death in 1982 (Andropov, Chernenko – the gerontocracy) had led to inertia, while there were increasing calls for political reform in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev saw the need to make the USSR more productive and economically viable; this could only be achieved by reducing military expenditure and spending on supporting communist governments throughout the world. Gorbachev's New Political Thinking led to domestic reform (perestroika, glasnost, democratisation) and a willingness to negotiate with the West. Gorbachev ended the Brezhnev Doctrine, partly to reduce expenditure and partly because he believed that the best way to rejuvenate communism was to introduce a degree of liberalism. As a result, the USSR effectively gave up control of Eastern Europe. Rather than pressure from Reagan's USA, it was internal issues which led to the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War.

**10 'The Soviet Union collapsed because of its long-term economic weaknesses.' How far do you agree? [30] October/November 2016 9389 41**

Agree – With poor quality land and the financial inability to use fertilisers, Soviet agriculture had long found it difficult to increase production; as early as the 1960s, the USSR needed to import grain (often from the USA). By the 1970s, Russian industry was outdated and inefficient; overcentralised, too focused on heavy industry and lacking investment in new technology. Brezhnev refused to allow any reduction in state control of the economy, fearing that this would lead to independence of thought in the satellite states. Under Andropov and Chernenko, the Soviet economy suffered further from inertia. The biggest strain on the Soviet economy was defence spending, both to maintain control of the satellite states (Brezhnev Doctrine) and to keep pace with the USA in the arms race. When he came to power in 1985, Gorbachev's main priority was economic reform. He argued that the economy was too centralised, too focused on defence and heavy industry and failing to produce consumer goods. However, Gorbachev believed that economic reform could not happen without political reform and without a massive reduction in defence spending. His reforms (glasnost, perestroika, ending the Brezhnev Doctrine) were designed to encourage the USA to negotiate and, thus, to facilitate economic reform. His attempt to reduce state control of the economy was not popular with right-wing members of the Party, while those who supported Yeltsin criticised Gorbachev for not going far enough. Moreover, his reforms did not produce results quickly enough, basic goods (e.g. soap and food) remaining in short supply. This enhanced nationalist sentiment both inside the USSR itself and in Eastern Europe. As a result, the USSR collapsed. Disagree – Triumphalists argue that the USSR collapsed because of the pressure imposed upon it by the USA. A constant stream of Western propaganda encouraged nationalist fervour in Eastern Europe, while Reagan's massive increase in arms spending (including SDI) was something which the USSR simply could not match. Others blame Gorbachev for the collapse of the USSR, arguing that it would have been possible to reform the economy without the political reforms which undermined the control of the Communist Party (just as Deng did with his move towards 'market socialism' in China). By allowing greater democracy and free speech, Gorbachev's policies led to splits within the Party and encouraged the independence of thought within the satellite states

which Brezhnev had been so determined to suppress. Gorbachev's decision to end the Brezhnev Doctrine effectively guaranteed that the Eastern European states would seek and gain independence, which, in turn, enflamed nationalist feelings within the USSR itself (e.g. Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia). Conclusion – the best answers will show evidence of understanding how the various causal factors interlink. For example, Gorbachev's desire to reform the economy required a reduction in defence spending; this meant entering negotiations with the USA; this would not have been possible without showing signs that the USSR was willing to allow more human rights and freedoms (so that Reagan and Thatcher would perceive Gorbachev as a man they 'could do business with')

**10 'The collapse of the Soviet Union was caused by external rather than internal factors.'**  
**How far do you agree? [30] October/November 2016 9389 42**

Agree – There were three main external pressures which threatened the existence of the USSR. Firstly, pressure imposed by the USA. Maintaining Cold War rivalry and, in particular, seeking parity in the nuclear arms race had a destabilising effect on the Soviet economy. The USSR was unable to produce sufficient food or consumer products because an excessively large proportion of its budget was devoted to military-based heavy industry and nuclear technology. This problem was enhanced when Reagan greatly increased the USA's military budget and began developments on SDI. Unable to compete with these measures, the USSR had no option but to seek negotiations. Secondly, pressure imposed by nationalism in Eastern Europe. Inflamed by American propaganda, low standards of living and the desire for political independence, nationalism in Eastern Europe had been controlled under the Brezhnev Doctrine; this was costly, both financially and in terms of its adverse effects on the USSR's international prestige. Thirdly, the costs involved in supporting communist movements around the world added another significant burden to a Soviet economy already under strain. It was to address these issues that Gorbachev carried out his reforms, seeking to modernise industrial processes and, at the same time, convince the USA that the USSR was serious in its desire to negotiate. Disagree – The Soviet economy had been stagnating since the 1960s. Overcentralised and too focused on heavy industry, industrial output remained low, while agriculture, suffering from poor soil and inadequate investment, was unable to supply enough food to feed the country's population. The USSR was forced to import foodstuffs, an additional strain on its finances. The political system was marred by corruption and suffered from inertia under Andropov and Chernenko. As a federal state consisting of fifteen different republics, the Soviet Union also suffered from nationalistic pressures internally. When Gorbachev rose to power in 1985, he was determined to address these problems. He wanted to ease state control of the economy, allowing greater initiative and competition to improve output. However, he believed that economic reform was not possible without political reform, so he intended to allow a greater degree of democracy. However, his reforms of glasnost and perestroika had detrimental effects. The economy did not revive quickly enough, leading to criticism (now possible under the new freedoms which his policies allowed). Moreover, they created a split in the Party between conservatives, who felt the reforms went too far, and liberals, who felt the reforms did not go far enough. His reforms also encouraged nationalist movements, both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. His removal of the Brezhnev Doctrine effectively meant that Eastern European countries were

able to gain independence without interference from the USSR. It was, therefore, Gorbachev's reforms, and the long-standing problems which they were attempting to address, that were responsible for the collapse of the USSR

**10 'Gorbachev's reforms were responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union.' How far do you agree? May/June 2017 9389/42**

In support of the proposition, it could be argued that Gorbachev made a fundamental error in seeking to achieve economic and political reform at the same time through his policies of glasnost and perestroika. China was able to survive the crisis of communism by undertaking economic reform while maintaining strict one-party control of the state. Gorbachev was naïve to believe that economic reform was only possible if accompanied by political reform. In seeking political reform, Gorbachev undermined the power and authority of the Communist Party, which imploded as a result. In ending the Brezhnev Doctrine, Gorbachev encouraged nationalist movements both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself.

Against the proposition, it could be said that, while Gorbachev's reforms may have hastened the USSR's collapse, they were not the fundamental cause of it. Long-term economic problems and political inertia under previous leaders meant that the USSR was in a very weak state when Gorbachev became leader. With its finances drained by the need to maintain the arms race with the USA, reliant on imports of American wheat, facing nationalist dissension and unable to sustain the financial commitment of maintaining its control of Eastern Europe, Gorbachev had little option but to seek improved relations with the West. This could only be achieved by showing a willingness to undertake political reform. Gorbachev was, therefore, seeking to address the problems which faced the USSR while, at the same time, developing improved relations with the USA. Comparisons with China are unfair because the circumstances facing the two countries were substantially different. Pressure imposed on the USSR by the USA was also a key factor.

**10 To what extent was the collapse of the Soviet Union caused by pressure imposed upon it by the USA? May/June 2017 9389/43**

The USSR had been under pressure from the USA throughout the Cold War; the cost of matching the USA's nuclear/military developments, maintaining control of its satellite states and supporting international communist groups had imposed severe economic problems for the USSR. This pressure was greatly increased when Reagan introduced his policy of militarised counter-revolution. Reagan increased military spending (e.g. SDI) – his aim was to regain the USA's military supremacy to such an extent that the USSR would not be able to keep up and would have to make concessions. The Reagan Doctrine aimed to halt the influence of the USSR in the Third World by supporting anti-communist groups (e.g. El Salvador, Grenada, Afghanistan, Nicaragua). Radio Free Europe was used to encourage anti-communist sentiment in the people of Eastern Europe. Reagan was supported by the British PM, Thatcher, who allowed US missiles to be based in the UK. The USA was asserting such military, social and economic pressure on the USSR that Gorbachev had little option but to negotiate; he could only



do that by making concessions which, inevitably, involved political changes which speeded up the collapse of the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the USA was simply exploiting weaknesses within the USSR which made its eventual collapse inevitable. The USSR had long suffered from major economic problems; the costs of maintaining the Cold War and the inefficiencies of state-controlled industry meant that consumer goods were in short supply. Rising oil prices in the 1970s had added to the problem and led to increasing calls for major reform, both within the USSR and in its satellite states of Eastern Europe (e.g. East Germany, Poland, Romania). The USSR had also suffered from ineffective leadership throughout the early 1980s, often referred to as the gerontocracy. Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko were all old, ill men, determined to avoid all reform. When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he fundamentally changed the USSR's policies by adopting New Political Thinking. This involved seeking better relations with the West, no longer supporting international communist movements, reducing military expenditure and focusing on social and economic reform. While a committed communist, Gorbachev was seeking to rejuvenate the USSR through perestroika, glasnost and democratisation. He made it clear that he would not uphold the Brezhnev Doctrine. Reform on such a scale had dramatic effects. The USSR's control over Eastern Europe rapidly fell apart, leading to a rise in nationalism within the USSR itself. The Communist Party itself was split. Gorbachev was caught between liberals, who wanted more reform, and conservatives, who wanted the restoration of full communist control. As a result, it was Gorbachev's policies which hastened the collapse of the Soviet Union, a collapse which had been inevitable due to fundamental economic weaknesses.

**10 To what extent was Gorbachev's decision to end the Brezhnev Doctrine responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union? October/November 2018 9389/43**

Yes

The USSR had always been plagued by the existence of nationalism in Eastern Europe. Controlling it had imposed a great burden on the USSR's financial and military resources while, at the same time, causing enhanced friction with the West (e.g. Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1978).

Gorbachev's decision to end the Brezhnev Doctrine enabled this latent nationalism to gain further strength in Eastern Europe. No longer able to count on military assistance from the USSR, communist governments in Eastern Europe were no longer able to maintain power. The success of peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe led to an increase in nationalism within the USSR itself, and Soviet forces were deployed in an attempt to maintain control, e.g. Nagorno-Karabakh, Lithuania, Armenia, Latvia, Estonia. The USSR effectively imploded from within as a result of Gorbachev's decision.

No

Gorbachev's decision to end the Brezhnev Doctrine was a symptom rather than a cause of the USSR's collapse. Long-term economic problems, exacerbated by attempts to maintain the arms race and the political stagnation which followed the death of Khrushchev, were the main causes of the collapse of the USSR. Reagan's hardline policies against the USSR, including the

escalation of the arms race, created a further burden. Gorbachev sought to address these problems by carrying out reforms (e.g. glasnost and perestroika) and seeking improved relations with the West (which required evidence that the USSR was adopting a more liberal approach). In allowing greater freedoms (both economic and political), Gorbachev inadvertently created the demand for still more reforms.

Nationalism had always existed in Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe; given the problematic state of the Soviet economy and the pressures imposed upon the USSR by Reagan's USA, Gorbachev appreciated that military support for communist regimes in Eastern Europe (which was of no economic benefit to the USSR anyway) was no longer possible. The decision to end the Brezhnev Doctrine was, therefore, effectively forced upon him by the other, more significant factors which led to the collapse of the USSR.

### **10 How important was the USA in the collapse of the Soviet Union by 1991? May/June 2019 9389/41**

The USA built up enormous financial pressure on the USSR throughout the arms race. The Soviet economy simply could not continue to cope with the ever-increasing commitment, especially when Reagan instituted his 'star wars' programme. American aid to Soviet enemies in Afghanistan and elsewhere added to the USSR's economic burdens. Improving American relations with China also impacted on the USSR, while Eastern European states of the Soviet Union, targeted by American propaganda, became increasingly aware of the very different economic circumstances prevalent in the West.

There were other, more significant, reasons for the economic problems facing the USSR, while nationalism (both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself) was another key factor behind the collapse of the USSR by 1991. Political stagnation occurred under a number of Soviet leaders and by the time Gorbachev came to power, the USSR was in a parlous state. Gorbachev's reforms of Glasnost and Perestroika were unable to redress the problems and, arguably, made them worse. Gorbachev's decision to rescind the Brezhnev Doctrine added to the impact of nationalism, making the disintegration of the USSR inevitable.

### **10 'National uprisings in Eastern Europe were a consequence, rather than a cause, of the decline of the Soviet Union in the 1980s.' How far do you Agree? May/June 2019 9389/42**

The main reason for the disintegration of the USSR was long-term economic stagnation, together with political inertia under elderly and ineffective leaders. Moreover, the hard line adopted by Ronald Reagan and the West, together with an enhancement of the USA's nuclear programme which the USSR was economically unable to counter, encouraged Gorbachev to seek improved relations with the West. In a desperate attempt to address these problems, Gorbachev instituted a series of reforms, in particular glasnost and perestroika. In providing extra freedoms, these reforms encouraged latent nationalist movements, both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself, while also contributing to political upheaval within the Communist Party. Gorbachev's abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine, primarily for reasons of economic necessity, gave added impetus to the nationalist uprisings in Eastern Europe, enabling them to develop largely unchallenged.

Nationalist uprisings in Eastern Europe were largely due to increasing exposure to Western culture, technology and propaganda. Eastern Europeans were able to compare their own economically disadvantaged situation with the prosperity of Western Europe. The speed with which changes occurred throughout Eastern Europe following the success of Solidarity in

Poland in 1988 was the key factor in hastening the collapse of the USSR. Communist governments were quickly removed in Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. This encouraged nationalist uprisings within the Soviet Union itself (for example, Nagorno-Karabach, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia). The USSR's inability to respond decisively and effectively led to political dissensions within the Communist Party, and it was these which led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

**10 'The Soviet Union collapsed because Gorbachev introduced too much reform too quickly.' How far do you agree? October/November 2019 9389/41**

It could be argued that Gorbachev made a fundamental error in seeking to achieve economic and political reform at the same time through his policies of glasnost and perestroika. China was able to survive the crisis of communism by undertaking economic reform while maintaining strict one-party control of the state. Gorbachev was naïve to believe that economic reform was only possible if accompanied by political reform. In seeking political reform, Gorbachev undermined the power and authority of the Communist Party, which imploded as a result. In ending the Brezhnev Doctrine, Gorbachev encouraged nationalist movements both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself.

While Gorbachev's reforms may have hastened the USSR's collapse, they were not the fundamental cause of it. Long-term economic problems and political inertia under previous leaders meant that the USSR was in a very weak state when Gorbachev became leader. With its finances drained by the need to maintain the arms race with the USA, reliant on imports of American wheat, facing nationalist dissension and unable to sustain the financial commitment of maintaining its control of Eastern Europe, Gorbachev had little option but to seek improved relations with the west.

This could only be achieved by showing a willingness to undertake political reform. Gorbachev was, therefore, seeking to address the problems which faced the USSR while, at the same time, developing improved relations with the USA. Comparisons with China are unfair because the circumstances facing the two countries were substantially different. Pressure imposed on the USSR by the USA was also a key factor.

**10 'The inability to cope with national uprisings, both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union, was the main reason why the USSR collapsed by 1991.' How far do you agree? October/November 2019 9389/43**

Changes occurred rapidly in Eastern Europe following the success of the trade union, Solidarity, in Poland in 1988. Communist governments were speedily removed in Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. Gorbachev was seeking negotiations with the West, and this would have been undermined if he had chosen to rigidly apply the Brezhnev Doctrine. The success of uprisings in Eastern Europe encouraged latent nationalism within the Soviet Union itself, leading to uprisings in, for example, Nagorno-Karabach, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Such uprisings caused enormous and unsustainable strain on limited Soviet resources.

However, nationalist uprisings were more a symptom than a cause of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Eastern Europeans under Soviet rule had become increasingly aware of the disparity between their socio-economic conditions and those of people living in the West. The USSR's long-standing economic problems were exacerbated by the war in Afghanistan, the enormous financial burden imposed by sustaining the nuclear arms race, political atrophy and pressures imposed by the USA (e.g. SDI). Gorbachev attempted to address the USSR's massive political

and economic problems by seeking negotiations with the West and introducing reforms, such as glasnost and perestroika. These reforms did not have the immediate impact on the Soviet economy which was required, while the decision to give greater political freedoms simply encouraged nationalist movements both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. Gorbachev abandoned the Brezhnev Doctrine, partly because this was essential in order to pursue negotiations with the West, but largely because the USSR could not afford to implement it.

**10 'Gorbachev tried to do too much too soon.' How far does this explain the reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991? October/November 2020 9389/43**

Gorbachev's policies such as ending the Brezhnev Doctrine might be suggested as a significant reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union. It opened the Iron Curtain and arguably helped spread nationalism within the Soviet Union itself. It can be said that this decision led to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc by the end of 1989. Perestroika, which led to Catastroika and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union was also influential – as was the growth of dissatisfaction inside the Soviet Union, encouraged by Glasnost and the growth of public criticism. Nationalism in Eastern Europe, the growth of nationalism in the Soviet Republics and the clash with Boris Yeltsin were also important.

Ideas challenging the statement might include the long-term problems of the USSR and the failure of Gorbachev to really reform the Communist Party until it was too late. It is important to distinguish between the actions of Gorbachev and the results and factors beyond his control – for example, pressure from the West in terms of military spending, the impact of the war in Afghanistan and Gorbachev's unwillingness to really reform away from Democratic Centralism.

**10 To what extent was the collapse of the Soviet Union caused by the ending of the Brezhnev Doctrine? October/November 2021 9389/42**

The Brezhnev Doctrine's replacement with the Sinatra Doctrine was vital to the spread of nationalism in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. This in turn led to nationalist demands growing within the Baltic States and finally within the Soviet Union itself. Ultimately even Russia left the Soviet Union. Arguments may also look at the policies of Perestroika that culminated in Catastroika, Glasnost and the failure of the relationship between Gorbachev and Yeltsin as contributory factors in the collapse of the Soviet Union. To this could be added the previous structural problems of the Soviet Union, economic decline, the pressure applied by the West in the Second Cold War. The policies and their failure of Gorbachev do need close examination and also an evaluation of the view that a totalitarian regime cannot ever successfully reform itself.

## End of Cold War

**10 'The person who deserves most of the credit for ending the Cold War is Mikhail Gorbachev.' How far do you agree? May/June 2018 9389/41**

When Gorbachev became its leader in 1985, the USSR was suffering from economic and political stagnation. A succession of old and infirm leaders following Brezhnev's death in 1982 (Andropov, Chernenko – the gerontocracy) had led to inertia, while there were increasing calls

for political reform in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev saw the need to make the USSR more productive and economically viable; this could only be achieved by reducing military expenditure and spending on supporting communist governments throughout the world. Gorbachev's New Political Thinking led to domestic reform (perestroika, glasnost, democratisation) and a willingness to negotiate with the West. Gorbachev ended the Brezhnev Doctrine, partly to reduce expenditure and partly because he believed that the best way to rejuvenate communism was to introduce a degree of liberalism. As a result, the USSR effectively gave up control of Eastern Europe. Reagan and Thatcher hailed Gorbachev as a man with whom they could 'do business'. Negotiations between Reagan and Gorbachev at a series of summit meetings led to their joint declaration that the Cold War was over (Malta 1989).

Given the parlous state of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev had little option but to attempt reform in the USSR and seek negotiations with the West. In addition to the USSR's dire economic and political situation, Gorbachev faced enormous pressure from the USA. Reagan's policy of militarised counter-revolution demonstrated the USA's determination to pursue the Second Cold War on all fronts. He vastly increased defence expenditure (13% in 1982; 8% in 1983; 8% in 1984). New methods of deploying nuclear missiles were developed (e.g. Stealth Bomber, Trident submarines). His development of SDI was so costly that the USSR would simply not be able to match American expenditure. Under the Reagan Doctrine, the USA sent assistance to anti-communist insurgents and governments, with the aim of reducing the USSR's influence in the Third World (e.g. supporting the Contras in Nicaragua; supporting the right-wing government of El Salvador). The USA used radio broadcasts to encourage anti-communist sentiments in Eastern Europe. The USA used economic sanctions against Poland when its government banned the independent trade union Solidarity. Thatcher's Britain supported Reagan's hard line against the 'evil empire'; by allowing US nuclear missile bases in Britain, she was imposing further pressure on the USSR. Unable to match the USA's military expenditure, Gorbachev had no choice but to call an end to the arms race and the Cold War. With the pressure which his policies imposed on the USSR clearly working, Reagan was prepared to negotiate with Gorbachev from a position of strength.

### **10 'The Cold War ended as a result of the Second Cold War.' How far do you agree? May/June 2020 9389/41**

This question requires the candidate to look at the toughening approach of the USA in the early 1980s under Reagan and the hawkish rhetoric and the increased defence spending and the impact of all these upon the USSR at the time but also the impact on the next Soviet Leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. Candidates need to balance this with the détente after 1985, the changing policies of the USSR and the more amenable policies followed by the West towards the USSR. In essence was it the USA's strength and increased belligerence that made the USSR seek a peaceful solution to end the Cold War?

Evidence that could be used to argue that the Second Cold War ended the Cold War includes:

- The sharp rise in tensions 1979-85 after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan saw the failure of the US Congress to ratify SALT II and increased US research and expenditure on weapons

such as the B1 bomber, the SDI programme & Pershing II MRBM. This then put increased pressure on the USSR's weaker financial and economic position, which was struggling to keep up with the USA's economic power.

- The USA under Reagan was committed to 'roll back' communism. This caused the escalation of conflicts in Central America and increased support for the Mujahidin in the Soviet-Afghan War. These actions were designed to weaken the USSR and arguably forced Gorbachev to change to a more realistic policy after 1985 and bring the Cold War to an end.

- Increased US aggression deeply alarmed the USSR: the angry Soviet reaction to North Pacific exercises in 1983 led to the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007; NATO exercise Able Archer 83 convinced the USSR that a nuclear attack was imminent – both episodes exposed inefficiencies in the Soviet military system and led a loss of confidence in the USSR's élites.

- Reagan's "Evil Empire" rhetoric and aggressive policies led to increased concern about Western economic sanctions. This led the USSR to hesitate and then not intervene in Poland during the Solidarity crisis of 1980-81. These events expose the USSR's lack of will to maintain its grip over Eastern Europe by force.

Evidence that could be used to argue that other factors ended the Cold War includes:

- The Second Cold War coincided with short-lived Soviet geriatric leaders – Brezhnev's death, Andropov, Chernenko – and there were no meaningful changes made to policy in the face of US pressure. Much of the USSR's weak response was due to internal political stasis, not US pressure.

- Gorbachev's leadership after 1985 onwards was also significant – his policies (perestroika, glasnost, end of Brezhnev Doctrine) were the culmination of a long-term realisation within reformist circles that the USSR needed to reform its economy. Living standards were falling and the USSR could no longer match the west. Arms expenditure and subsidies for the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe and other communist countries were simply too expensive. This arguably would have happened anyway, without the Second Cold War.

- The softening of Reagan's hard-line approach after 1985 - summit diplomacy and the establishment of a good working relationship with Gorbachev were arguably more important in bringing an end to the Cold War than the aggression of 1979–85

## **10 'The end of the Cold War was brought about by the actions of Mikhail Gorbachev' How far do you agree? May/June 2020 9389/42**

This question requires an assessment of how Gorbachev's policies such as ending the Brezhnev Doctrine, Perestroika and Glasnost, helped improve relations with the USA as well as loosening Soviet hegemony over Eastern Europe thus undermining the basis of the Cold War. It is important to distinguish between the actions of Gorbachev and their results and factors beyond his control such as the long-term economic problems caused by the Soviet Union's military budget. The relative importance of the role of the USA and Reagan also needs to be assessed with a reasoned judgement.

Evidence that agrees that Gorbachev's actions helped end the Cold War includes:

- The unintended consequences of Gorbachev's signature policies of Glasnost and Perestroika: instead of the expected revitalisation of the party and economy these policies undermined the political stability and authority of the Communist Parties in the USSR and Eastern Europe making the Cold War unsustainable.
- Gorbachev realised that the USSR's military expenditure was unsustainable with his economic reforms and so pursued a foreign policy that established a good relationship with western leaders allowing for the introduction of arms control and the winding down of superpower tensions.
- Gorbachev formally ended the Brezhnev Doctrine in 1989 when he refused East German requests for troops to put down protests, which ensured no return of conflict with the USA.
- The results of Glasnost's political changes within the USSR were an opening of debate and greater choice; 1989 elections saw creation of the IRDG with a radical anti-communist agenda and strengthening of nationalists who wanted to break up the USSR; the focus on internal change eased tensions with the USA.

Evidence that disagrees that Gorbachev's actions helped end the Cold War includes:

- Gorbachev's actions hoped to revive the USSR rather than deliberately end the Cold War.
- The ending of the Brezhnev Doctrine pre-dated Gorbachev: the refusal to intervene in the Polish Solidarity crisis in 1980-81 encouraged other eastern Europeans that the USSR no longer had the means or the will to intervene.
- There was little prospect of the USSR 'winning' the Cold War given the state of the economy after the stagnation of Brezhnev and his successors.
- It was arguably pressure from Reagan and the west in the 1980s – 'evil empire', SDI initiative, increased defence budget – that brought the Cold War to an end.
- Role of Thatcher in brokering talks between Reagan and Gorbachev.

## **10 How far was Gorbachev responsible for the end of the Cold War? May/June 2021 9389/42**

Discussion might consider a range of policies followed by Gorbachev – in particular, those of Glasnost, Perestroika, ending the Brezhnev Doctrine and the opening-up of relations with the West via the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, and US President, Ronald Reagan. Argument may also discuss the Arms Limitations Agreements, Summits with Reagan and Gorbachev's willingness to not intervene as the Eastern Bloc broke free from the Warsaw Pact. Discussion might also identify how Gorbachev continued to work with George Bush from 1989. Additionally, discussion might also consider the role of the USA – notably US policy from 1980, the Second Cold War and its impact on the Soviet Union. The change of approach post 1985 and the role of Thatcher in getting Reagan to meet with Gorbachev is also fertile ground for discussion. George Bush's careful handling of the reunification of Germany was also a key element, as was the collapse of Soviet power and the communist party within it.

**9 Evaluate the role played by Gorbachev in ending the Cold War. Gorbachev wanted to reform communism. February/March 2022 9489/42**

However, his reforms caused a revolution driven from below which because of his refusal to use force, destroyed the communist system, ended the Soviet Empire and the Cold War. Gorbachev believed in co-operation and in holding only a minimal number of nuclear weapons for protection. He also believed that Soviet control over an empire in Eastern Europe was costing too much and that the invasion of Afghanistan had been a costly disaster. He was responsible for the loosening of governmental power too. This created a domino effect though, and the Eastern European alliances began to crumble. This spurred countries such as Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia to declare their independence. Unlike his predecessors, Gorbachev understood that the Soviet Union could never advance economically if it continued to devote 20% of gross national product and 40% of its budget to military spending. He wanted to demilitarise Soviet foreign policy so that he could divert resources to fixing a broken economy. Gorbachev's policies of Glasnost and Perestroika played a major role in ending the Cold War. He recognised the inefficiency of the communist system. He wanted moderate change with perestroika (economic restructuring) and glasnost (political openness) which he believed would help to restore the legitimacy of the Communist Party. Instead, the public became aware of the Party's shortcomings. The Soviet Union was also losing its grip on its satellite states and ethnic groups took the opportunity to free themselves from its control. Gorbachev had failed to realise that communism would be destroyed once factors like nationalism took hold and once people became more aware of economic issues. By the summer of 1989, East Europeans were given more freedom and seized the chance to reject communism. By November, the Berlin Wall had fallen. Eastern Europe's rejection of communist ideology removed a major obstacle to the ending of the Cold War. Gorbachev has been regarded as the enabling factor in ending the Cold War, with Reagan playing the minor role. However, historians are divided about Reagan's role; he has been accredited with both winning it and ending it. Many of the events that defined the end of the Cold War occurred after Reagan left office, these included the destruction of the Berlin wall, the unification of Germany, the Strategic Arms Treaty, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. At a press conference in Moscow in 1988, Reagan described himself essentially as a supporting actor maintaining that 'Mr Gorbachev deserves most of the credit, as the leader of this country'. However, Reagan also wanted to abolish nuclear weapons, stop the strategic arms race, and avoid Armageddon. Reagan saw that there was the prospect of changing relations with the Soviet Union. He first met Gorbachev in Geneva in November 1985 to discuss a reduction in nuclear weapons. By seeking to talk to Gorbachev about ending the Cold War, Reagan helped to win it. He was able to reassure Gorbachev that the United States was not seeking the destruction of the Soviet Union and this enabled Gorbachev to pursue his new policies. He helped to set the framework for the changes. At their face-to-face summit of October 1986 in Reykjavik, Reagan suggested that the two sides get rid of nuclear weapons altogether and jointly build an SDI system to guard against a nuclear revival. No agreement on that was reached, but Gorbachev was convinced that Reagan did not intend to make a first strike against the Soviet Union. This provided Gorbachev with the confidence to pursue the policies that resulted in the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

**9 'Gorbachev ended the Cold War by causing the collapse of the Soviet system.' Assess this view. October/November 2022 9489/43**

Indicative content Mikhail Gorbachev's announcement of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and his resignation on Christmas day 1991 effectively confirmed the end of the Cold War. Gorbachev had wished to retain the integrity of the Soviet Union but in December 1991, Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Russia declared independence and the Soviet Union was dissolved.



It broke into 15 independent republics, making the United States the sole global superpower. It was Gorbachev who created the circumstances that enabled the collapse to happen so rapidly. Gorbachev came to power in 1985 during a period of economic stagnation; he saw the inefficiency of the communist system. He wanted moderate change with perestroika and glasnost to restore the legitimacy of the communist party; instead the public became aware of its shortcomings. The Soviet Union was also losing its grip on its satellite states and ethnic groups sought to free themselves from Soviet control. Gorbachev did not realise that communism would be destroyed once factors like nationalism took hold and people became more aware of economic issues. By the summer of 1989, East Europeans had more freedom and they rejected communism. By November, the Berlin Wall had fallen. Eastern Europe's rejection of communist ideology removed a major obstacle to the ending of the Cold War. Gorbachev was responsible for the loosening of governmental power which created a domino effect in which Eastern European alliances began to crumble, inspiring countries such as Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia to declare their independence. He wanted to reform communism but his reforms caused a revolution driven from below which, because of his refusal to use force, destroyed the communist system, ended the Soviet Empire and the Cold War. When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he inherited economic stagnation. His predecessor, Brezhnev, had used profits from the boom in the oil industry on the arms race with the United States rather than taken the opportunity to raise living standards. The Soviet defence budget had begun to undermine other aspects of Soviet society such as healthcare. Liberal ideas had been spreading and Western economic success was clearly visible. Belief in communist ideology was declining and Soviet actions in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Poland in 1981 led to a loss of faith in the system. Gorbachev may have hastened the events that ended the Cold War but it could be argued that they would have happened eventually. He wanted to demilitarise Soviet foreign policy so that he could divert resources to fixing a broken economy. He needed assurances of external security and Ronald Reagan gave them to him. Reagan saw that there was the prospect of changing relations with the Soviet Union. He first met Gorbachev in Geneva in November 1985 to discuss a reduction in nuclear weapons. Reagan, unknown to Gorbachev, shared his view of nuclear weapons and believed them to be immoral. Gorbachev was convinced that Reagan did not intend to make a first strike against the Soviet Union. Finally, in December 1987, they agreed the INF Treaty, the first agreement on actually reducing nuclear weapons. He believed in co-operation and in holding only a minimal number of nuclear weapons for protection. He also believed that Soviet control over an empire in Eastern Europe was costing too much and that the invasion of Afghanistan had been a costly disaster. He was responsible for the loosening of governmental power which created a domino effect in which Eastern European alliances began to crumble, inspiring countries such as Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia to declare their independence.

## Globalization of Cold War

**9 To what extent was the globalisation of the Cold War in the period from 1950 to 1975 caused by the USA's misinterpretation of Soviet motives? [30] May/June 2015 9389 43**

It could be argued that the USA greatly over-estimated the threat posed by communism, in particular through the assumption that there was a monolithic communist plot with the aim of world domination. This misinterpretation led to containment, rollback and belief in the 'domino effect', which, in turn, led to American involvement in Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, the Middle East and South America, escalating regional issues into Cold War crises. In reality, there was no

monolithic communist plot, the Sino-Soviet split making such a thing impossible. For example, the USSR played a far less direct role than the USA in Korea and Vietnam. In challenging this view, it could be argued that the USA had a great deal to fear from the expansion of communism, in particular its economic interests (e.g. in SE Asia). The USSR, while not directly involved in the Korean War, had given 'permission' for the North to attack the South. Both the USSR and the PRC played significant roles in the Vietnam War, supplying the Vietcong with the weaponry necessary to eventually achieve victory. Despite Khrushchev's stated policy of 'peaceful coexistence', the USSR exploited post-colonial problems in Africa in an attempt to spread its influence and supported communist-style governments in Latin America. In Cuba, the USSR created greater tension by placing nuclear weapons close to the USA itself.

**9 To what extent was the globalisation of the Cold War in the period from 1950 to 1975 caused by the expansionist ambitions of the Soviet Union? [30] October/November 2016 9389 42**

Yes – Stalin had made it clear that the USSR's intention was to encourage world-wide revolution. The USSR's involvement in regional conflicts throughout the world, even after Khrushchev's announcement of 'Peaceful Coexistence', suggests that its primary aim was to expand its own international power, prestige and influence. Communism's victory in China in 1949 owed much to Soviet support, while its early survival relied on Soviet aid and advice, North Korea's invasion of South Korea would not have occurred without Stalin's permission, and would have been less effective without Soviet military assistance. Khrushchev exploited the situation facing Cuba following Castro's take-over of power, expanding Soviet influence into the Americas. The USSR greatly enhanced Arab-Israeli tensions in the Middle East, its provision of weapons to the Arab states based on the desire to expand its influence into a region of strategic and economic importance. Following decolonisation, the USSR sought to extend its influence into the newly independent states (e.g. Angola and other African countries), a process which continued even during the period of détente in the 1970s. No – The globalisation of the Cold War was caused by the USA's misinterpretation of the USSR's motives. The USA perceived communism as a threat, both politically and economically. It assumed that the USSR was seeking world domination and, after 1949, believed that there was a monolithic communist plot hatched by the USSR and the PRC to achieve this. As a result, the USA overreacted, implementing policies such as containment and roll-back based on fear of the 'domino theory'. Stalin had no interest in Korea, and only gave his permission for the North's invasion of the South on the basis that the USSR would offer no direct support for it. In Cuba, Khrushchev was merely supporting a new communist state which was vulnerable to an American invasion. In the Middle East, the USSR was merely seeking to counterbalance the advantage which American support gave to Israel. The USSR was attempting to support newly-independent states in their struggle to avoid the dangers of neo-colonialism. Conversely, American involvement in regional conflicts was designed to protect its own interests, mainly economic (e.g. the fear that the loss of South Korea and Vietnam would threaten US economic interests in Japan). Similarly, American involvement in Central and South America was based on its determination to maintain political and economic control of the region. Conclusion – It could be argued that neither the

USA nor the USSR had expansionist ambitions. They were merely seeking to maintain their international prestige, a necessity in a Cold War setting.

**9 Which of the two superpowers was more responsible for causing the globalisation of the Cold War in the period from 1950 to 1975? May/June 2018 9389/41**

USSR – Stalin had openly spoken of a worldwide communist revolution, and the USSR supported pro-communist groups in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. Although Khrushchev spoke of ‘peaceful coexistence’, he still believed that communism would spread worldwide and was willing to support what he saw as vulnerable communist states, such as Cuba. The USSR provided military support to communist forces in both Korea and Vietnam, and Stalin was at least implicitly involved in the invasion of South Korea by North Korea. The creation of many new, vulnerable and unstable states which occurred as a result of decolonisation provided an opportunity for the USSR to spread its influence, prestige and power.

USA – The USA saw communism as a threat to the free market economy on which it depended for its trade and economic prosperity. The fall of China to communism in 1949 convinced the USA that there was a plot, orchestrated by the USSR, to spread communism globally. The USA therefore adopted the policy of containment (and, at times, roll back) to prevent this. Convinced that Stalin was behind North Korea’s invasion of the South, the USA became involved in what was essentially a regional, nationalistic war, thus globalising the Cold War. Concerned about the ‘domino effect’, the USA also became involved in Vietnam, Cambodia, etc., thereby spreading the Cold War to SE Asia. With the same aim of preventing the spread of communism, the USA became involved in Latin America (e.g. Chile, Guatemala, Brazil, Nicaragua), Africa (e.g. Ghana, Congo) and the Middle East (fearing that the USSR was trying to gain influence in the region, thereby threatening American oil supplies). The USA misinterpreted the extent of the USSR’s involvement in these events and, in over-reacting, spread the Cold War globally.

**9 ‘It was the US government’s excessive fear of communism which caused the globalisation of the Cold War.’ How far do you agree? May/June 2019 9389/42**

The USA greatly overestimated the threat posed by communism, in particular through the assumption that there was a monolithic communist plot with the aim of world domination. This excessive fear led to containment, roll-back, belief in the ‘domino effect’ and the determination to maintain nuclear superiority. This fear, in turn, led to American involvement in Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, the Middle East and South America, escalating regional issues into Cold War crises. In reality, there was no monolithic communist plot, the Sino-Soviet split making such a thing impossible. Both China and the USSR played a far less direct role in Korea and Vietnam than the USA, for example.

The USA had a great deal to fear from the expansion of communism. Not only did it pose a threat to the USA’s economic interests (in SE Asia, for example, and the Middle East), but it also damaged the USA’s international prestige and controlling interest in the United Nations. While not directly involved in the Korean War, the USSR had given ‘permission’ for the North to attack the South.

Moreover, both the USSR and the PRC played significant roles in the Vietnam War, supplying the Vietcong with the weaponry necessary to eventually achieve victory. In Cuba, the USSR created greater tension by placing nuclear weapons close to the USA itself. Furthermore, the USSR exploited post-colonial problems in Africa in an attempt to spread its influence.

### **9 To what extent was the globalisation of the Cold War caused by the Soviet Union's determination to increase its international influence? October/November 2019 9389/43**

Stalin had spoken openly of a world-wide communist revolution. Soviet actions were interpreted by the West as part of a concerted attempt to bring about such a revolution by enhancing the international influence and power of the USSR. The USSR's active support for the communist takeover of China was a major blow to American prestige and vested interests. Soviet involvement in Korea, Cuba, Africa and the Middle East provided justification for western fears regarding Soviet expansionism. Moreover, the USSR was clearly endeavouring to gain greater power and influence within the UN – through its extensive use of the veto, by supporting newly-independent states in their struggle against what the USSR termed as 'neo-colonialism' and by seeking to secure fundamental reform of the UN Secretariat.

However, the globalisation of the Cold War was largely caused by the USA's over-reaction to what it incorrectly perceived as a monolithic communist plot seeking world domination. The USA's excessive and irrational fears led to policies such as containment, roll-back and the domino theory, which inevitably led to direct American involvement in what were essentially regional conflicts (e.g. Korea, Vietnam, SE Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East). The USA was determined to protect and enhance its own political and economic interest world-wide. The impact of decolonisation was another vital factor in leading to the globalisation of the Cold War. Both superpowers were forced to become involved in the regional conflicts which resulted from decolonisation, not only to protect their own interests, but also to prevent their Cold War rivals extending their own influence. The newly-independent countries which emerged as a result of decolonisation joined the UN, changing its composition significantly. The USA sought to retain the power and influence which it had hitherto enjoyed within the UN, while the USSR sought to challenge American dominance in the UN.

### **9 Assess the reasons for the spread of the Cold War to Latin America after 1950. May/June 2020 9389/42**

Although much of the Cold War played out between the United States and Soviet Union in the European theatre, the general outlines of Latin America's Cold War experience are well known, too. As a peripheral arena in the broader East–West contest, the Cold War in Latin America pitted the United States and its anti-communist but often undemocratic regional allies against real and perceived Soviet proxies in Cuba, Chile, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and beyond. While America's intervention and containment policies targeted its ideological opponents in the Western Hemisphere, regional anti-communist regimes encouraged, installed, or supported by Washington employed implements of repression against subversives real and imagined. Groups such as campesinos, dissidents, innocents, leftists, politicians and political parties, students, and workers bore the brunt of these efforts, often with devastating effects. Many scholars have suggested that Cold War concerns about the spread of communism in the region alone drove US policy, especially in the wake of Cuba's alignment with the Soviet Union. Others have argued that, while Cuba was deeply troubling, the United States operated simply as a traditional

imperial state, attempting to ensure it retained political and economic control over its weaker neighbours.

#### Reasons for spread

- USA wanted to defend the Monroe Doctrine and saw Latin America as their backyard.
- USA and USSR testing each other out globally. Arguably post Berlin 1949 and the Korean War, the USSR needed to find other areas to spread its influence.
- USSR wanted to broaden the Cold War.
- Latin American regimes wanted financial and other aid and the USSR saw an opportunity to spread their influence here.
- Rejection of Batista in Cuba and the coming to power of Fidel Castro spread fear in the USA but also hope in other Latin American Countries.
- The Cuban Crisis was a high point in the Cold War and worsened relations between USA and USSR.
- USA reacted to Cuba by supporting authoritarian regimes in Latin America to counter the spread of communism.
- It became another front in the Cold War, particularly post the Korean War.
- Rejection of US influence in certain Latin American countries, but also the adoption of very pro-USA stances in others.

#### **9 Examine the view that the globalisation of the Cold War up to 1975 was caused by the stalemate between the Soviet Union and the USA in Europe. October/November 2021 9389/43**

Responses considering the cause behind the expansion of the Cold War might look at a range of different countries such as Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia but also Africa, Latin America, Afghanistan. They might look at the policies of Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev. Equally as well as the global expansion of the Cold War, it is necessary to look at the situation in Europe and the division of Europe behind the Iron Curtain and following the Berlin Crisis of 1948–49, the inability of either side to change the status quo as shown by Hungary 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the creation of the two Germanies in 1949. Responses may consider whether, in reality, there was an acceptance of coexistence in Europe, possibly enshrined from Yalta 1945 onwards and if globalisation was simply both sides looking for weak points in their opponents. Discussion may also consider decolonisation as reason for globalisation of the Cold War, for example in the Middle East and Far East.

## Other Questions

#### **10 Analyse the reasons why the Dutch were unable to reestablish colonial control in Indonesia by 1949. May/June 2022 9489/43**

The Indonesian War of Independence 1945–49, was an armed conflict and diplomatic struggle between Indonesia and the Netherlands. Indonesian nationalism and movements supporting independence from Dutch colonialism, such as Budi Utomo, the Indonesian National Party Sarekat Islam, and the Indonesian Communist Party joined the Dutch Volksraad hoping that Indonesia would be granted self-rule. Others demanded selfgovernment; the most well-known of these leaders were Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta, two nationalists. Japan's occupation of Indonesia from 1942–1945 was to be a crucial factor in the revolution. The Japanese created new Indonesian institutions and encouraged nationalism; they elevated political leaders like Sukarno. Although on the brink of losing the war, the Japanese wanted to help Indonesian nationalists prepare for selfgovernment. Sukarno and Hatta proclaimed Indonesian independence on 17 August 1945. The job of re-occupying Indonesia fell to the British; their main task was to disarm the Japanese troops and return them to Japan. The British did not want to become involved in trying to overturn Sukarno's government, but they continued with their reoccupation of Indonesia throughout 1945. The Battle of Surabaya was the heaviest single battle of the revolution and became a national symbol of Indonesian resistance. Defeat in the battle galvanised the nation in support of independence and helped gain international attention. It also convinced Britain to become neutral in the revolution. Most Dutch politicians did not take the unilateral declaration of Indonesian independence seriously as it was issued by those who had collaborated with Japan. The Dutch, following their liberation from the Germans wanted Sukarno and the other nationalist leaders removed as quickly as possible. However, the Netherlands' harbours had been destroyed in the war, they had only a few ships and lacked finance to buy petrol, but the Dutch were determined to restore the pre-war situation. This Dutch stubbornness led to Indonesia becoming the scene of a four-year war of decolonisation. Dutch weakness was also exacerbated because of lack of support from the British and also by the UN. In 1946 Sjahrir, the new Prime Minister, held peace talks with the Dutch who offered to set up a Commonwealth of Indonesia with a degree of self-government under the Dutch monarchy. The terms were rejected. A further conference was held at Linggadjati in August 1946. This set up the United States of Indonesia but many groups within Indonesia rejected it. The Dutch then sent troops to Java, Madura and Sumatra. At this stage the UN intervened. They wanted to stop the fighting and to prevent the Dutch from suppressing the rights of the Indonesians. The UN ordered a cease-fire and set up a Committee of Good Offices to settle the dispute. A conference was held at Renville in January 1948 but again the agreement made was not adhered to. The Dutch sent in troops, captured the capital and imprisoned Sukarno, Hatta and Sjahrir. The UN passed a resolution calling on the Dutch to withdraw. The Dutch only obeyed the resolution after the United States decided to support the UN resolution by threatening to cut off Marshall Aid to the Netherlands. The United States favoured Sukarno and Indonesian Independence hoping to keep independent Indonesia out of communist hands. US pressure on the Dutch resulted in the transfer of sovereignty to the nationalist government of Indonesia in 1949 with the exclusion of the Dutch part of New Guinea.